

Ermine Pollard
February 9, 1989

Interviewer
Mark Greenberg

MG I'll identify that this is Mark Greenberg on February 9, 1989 in Proctorsville, Vermont conducting an interview with Ermine, is that?

EP Ermine.

MG Ermine, okay, Ermine Pollard for the Vermont Historical Society's Green Mountain Chronicles series. Okay, we're going to talk about Calvin Coolidge and anything else interesting that comes along while we're doing that. You were just giving me some of your family background in this area. It sounds like you have been in these parts for quite awhile?

EP Righto!

MG Can you give me a little bit again about when the family first settled in the area and what your roots here are?

EP Yes, my great grandfather, Roland Parker Pollard, was born in Plymouth and had the store in Plymouth and in 1863, he and his son, Don Pollard, came to Proctorsville and rented a store so that they would be near the railroad because he felt that if you're going to be successful in the retail business, you needed to be near the railroad. And they had lived there, some of the family has lived there ever since. The store after they, they leased it for three years and then at the end of three years they bought that particular store and it had a place for people to live up over the store and so the family lived over the store til about 1872 when they bought a house in Proctorsville on Main Street which is right next to the house where I live which is, and my grandfather Don Pollard gave my father, Fred, the land on which he built his house when he was married in 1891 and we've, so the house has been here and I have been away and done other things. I taught school, but I'm retired now probably in the same, sitting in the very room probably in which I was born some time ago, 1902 to be exact, some years ago. Is that what you want?

MG Sure. Now can you tell me what your relationship to Calvin Coolidge was?

EP My grandmother was Sarah Moor, M-O-O-R. She was born in Plymouth and, to Hiram and Abigail Franklin Moor and they had five children. They had, she was the oldest, Sarah Moor. Then there was Gratia Moor. She married John Wilder and if you go to Plymouth you see the Wilder House which is where they lived. And then there was another girl, Victoria Moor and she married John Coolidge. In other words, my grandmother was an aunt to Calvin Coolidge

Ermine Pollard

Page 2

and his mother died when he was about twelve or fourteen. And he was very, he was very fond of Aunt Sarah. In fact he wrote in his autobiography that she had been almost a mother to him after the death of his own mother. He went to high school in Ludlow, Black River Academy and spent quite a few weekends with her. Of course in those days, he could walk very easily the three and a half miles from Ludlow to Proctorsville. And of course sometimes, his father came down to get him in Plymouth with the horse and buggy and he went up to, well he must have spent the weekend up there with his family that lived there, when his sister, he had a younger sister Abigail who died young too.

MG That would make you his cousin is that right?

EP Yes, my father was his first cousin.

MG Your father was his first cousin, so you're his second.

EP My grandmother was his aunt, his own aunt, Aunt Sarah.

MG Do you have memories of him as a child?

EP Yes and I was thinking the other day that I had early memories in the 20th century. Sort of forgotten about it. My grandmother and grandfather had their 50th wedding anniversary in January 7, 1911 and they had a family dinner. And they had a great entertainment in the evening. They belonged to the Rebecca's and the Masons and the Odd Fellows and so forth, so we had quite a party in the evening. But we had a family dinner and Calvin and Grace came to it as did other relatives. And so I saw Calvin in the early century, Calvin and Grace because I was old enough of course then to. The fact the thing that I was most disturbed about at the Golden Wedding, was the fact that I had to sleep in my crib because we had so many relatives that came in that I had to sleep for one night in a crib and I thought I was too old for a crib. Of course, I didn't, well after a dance another thing, other activities down at the Masonic Hall, most of the young people of course went out skating. I didn't get a chance to do that. I had get early into my crib, yea, so that I didn't have a chance to have all that excitement in the early hours of the morning after July 7, 1911.

MG Did Calvin go out skating do you know?

EP I don't think he did.

MG What makes you think that he wouldn't have gone?

EP Oh I think he might have, I don't know. I don't know, there are a lot of cousins of course that came that were young and of course I had, there were six in my family, so there were quite a few good skaters in that. And at that time, it was canal right in back of the house. At, it was very easy. I could put my skates on in the barn and then walk right out to the canal. Unfortunately, there is no longer a canal to skate on or for any other purpose. Of course it wasn't used in my youth as power for the mill, but they did use it of course in the dye room to wash the cloth and so forth which they made in the mill which was here for many years. But, and in fact when I sent to see my Uncle Dallas who lived to be 97 years old, he was then in a nursing home around, somewhere around Hanover, I don't remember just where it was and I told him that there was no canal and now that's three times that day he said, "You tell me there's no canal anymore?" Of course he had lived, he had been brought up beside a canal and nothing to look at now but just the hole that was there and it's been filled in quite a lot of the way that there was and there's a store in Proctorsville that's built in what used to be the canal, so that I hope they have good food insurance in case we have another flood comes along and takes the store away.

MG What kind of a person was Calvin Coolidge?

EP Well he was a very pleasant person. Everybody complained he wasn't a great talker, but we didn't see that very much because he knew who he was talking to and of course he knew, and he knew all his relatives. If you went to the White House and said you were related to him and you weren't, you didn't get very far because he knew his relatives and he had a speaking acquaintance with them, so that he knew just exactly who were cousins and who weren't of course. He didn't have too many cousins on his father's side of course because he was a, Colonel Coolidge was an only son and of course Grace was an only daughter. So he didn't have any near relatives on either his father or his mother's side or that, but of course my grandmother and grandfather went to the wedding that they had in Burlington. Went up on the Rutland Railroad and had a, so. I found the invitation not too long ago to the wedding or to the I guess.

MG You're saying he wasn't a particularly taciturn man, that he was, that the silent Cal reputation is not quite accurate?

Ermine Pollard

Page 4

EP Well he, I mean, around, you know because he, he knew something to talk about you know and if he couldn't think of anything else, he could talk about some of his relatives. And we'd understand what he was talking about. Maybe we wouldn't when he was President, we wouldn't understand about the tariff, but we'd understand if he'd been down to see his uncle in Texas as he went down one time. He lived in Louisiana. He stopped one day at a, at a, he stopped his train and took his uncle with him to Texas and it was a place just like Gassets where they lived. I've been down there. Took him to the whatever it was he was going to in Texas at that particular time.

MG So did you see much of him while he was still living in Vermont?

EP Well, he always stopped to see my grandmother, so we always saw him at least that time. He never went by the house without it. He started when he was a, a, had a job in the, in the city and then of course he was Mayor of North Hampton at the time of the wedding and he was the MC and the only thing I remember was that I wouldn't have remembered if people hadn't talked about it. Somebody asked him if he had anything to do with getting a four footed animal in Black River Academy on the second floor of a flight of stairs and finding it there in the morning at the principal's desk. And he said, "I do not choose to comment on that question." I probably wouldn't have thought anything about it if people hadn't mentioned it.

MG What was the animal?

EP A mule.

MG So that's a little preview of his I do not choose to run statement?

EP Well that's what I wondered if it was. In other words, he always maintained that choose, you didn't need all these editorials with the word choose. Choose means means just what it says. You don't choose. There isn't anything in back of it. In other words, there isn't any, you aren't expecting to have a great fan fair of some sort or a great hullabaloo about something when you say you don't choose to do anything. You mean choose, you don't, you just don't choose, that's all. You don't need to look up the derivation of it in the dictionary. It just means what it says.

MG And that's what happened a great hullabaloo after when he made that statement, "I do not choose to run?"

Ermine Pollard

Page 5

EP Yes of course. And even, they had editorials and a good many have seen quite a few of the things that came. Well it meant, well he was just sort of in the wings and he didn't want to come out and say he wanted to be the principal player, but he was there, all he had to do is just open up the little screen or something or just open up a little bit of the scenery and he'd come right out in front because he was just doing that as a way to test the waters as it were, test the atmosphere for a new thing.

MG So he was, in to your mind, he was not saying, "I will not run?"

EP Well, that was it yes, "I will not run." "I will not run." And he didn't go as far, the other man say, "I will not run if I'm elected." I've forgotten what man it was that said that...

MG Yes, "If elected, I will not serve."

EP They will not serve. So he didn't need to because the word choose, "I do not choose that." That means I, there's no choice. I've made my choice. It is, I'm not going to run. I'm not going to have another, of course, I think he was greatly colored by the death of Calvin, Jr. because he felt that here he was at the time, most powerful man in the world in lots of ways, couldn't save his own son.

MG How did his son die?

EP He had a, he'd been playing tennis and a, some sport, I think it was tennis and he had, as everybody had in those days, black stockings you know and the dye in the black stockings got into the, into a blister and he had blood poisoning. Of course, two years after that, two years after that he would have, the penicillin came along, but of course it wasn't, it wasn't around at that time, so there wasn't anything they could do to.

MG When was that?

EP In 1924.

MG So it was during, it was while Calvin was President?

EP Oh yes, while he was President. Uh huh. They came up with a special train of course from, to bury him in the cemetery in Plymouth and got off at Ludlow and of course went up by . And we were up there and Grace was, Grace Coolidge was introducing us to some of the people

that were there and my Aunt Gratia Wilder, that's spelled G-R-A-T-I-A, Gratia Wilder was very, a very independent sole and she introduced him, her to Hughes. He was Chief Justice I think at the time. And of course he had a beautiful mustache and of course it was golden, it was beautiful. And Grace, Aunt Grace said to him, "Is that real?" to Chief Justice Hughes. And he says, "Madam," he says, "You may pluck a hair if you wish to?" She says, "Oh no, no." But, I've always thought that, of course I wouldn't dare say anything like that, but she didn't get away with hit. It was a very handsome, of all the ones that you've seen, it was a very handsome one, very well groomed too. There were no hairs that she could easily get hold of. She'd have to really pull. And, but he was of course so terribly disturbed by by the fact that he couldn't, couldn't do anything, couldn't do anything.

MG And you think that that was the main reason for his not choosing to run?

EP I think really it was. I think it was, I think it loomed very high. There may have been some reason, other reason politically, but of course what did he have. When he went in, he went in the, didn't he go in with the greatest nose that anybody had had up to that time in '24. There certainly was no reason and I don't think he was enough of a, I don't think he could see the stock market crash coming. He may have, maybe he was more of a, of a status issue than I think that said he could see that something was going to be a bad time to be in, be President of the United States. But I think that, so many other people didn't see it. It seemed strange that he would be the only one to really feel that. It's a poor thing. I think he just had decided that he didn't want it anymore. He'd had it and it wasn't all that it was suppose to be according to all the things that we'd read about in the days. I know he saw a one President at the, I think it was the dedication of the Bennington Monument in Bennington, he and his father went down to it. And he made some comment about what a, a very wearing job it must be to be President to his father. So maybe that, maybe he found that it was wearing. But he took a nap every day that as the newspaper always said. I never questioned him about it, but the newspaper always said he had a nap, had a nap every day and wasn't it wonderful to think that we were living in a time where we wouldn't find that your best friend had been shot by somebody with a gun just because she had to be walking along the street and had a coat on that somebody didn't like, for no other reason than that sometime. In those days, of course they had several tax reductions. Mr. _____ had enough money

of his own so that he understood about money and what it could do and what it couldn't do. But he was certainly able to manage the Treasury of the United States so that everybody benefited by his skill as a holder of money, so we had several tax reductions and no raises and that's what we hear about these days in Vermont particularly, raises mostly. Have more people so we have to have more taxes. But we got to get in more money all the time.

MG Were you saying before when you said that they had opened the curtain a little bit that if, though he did not choose to run, had he been drafted he would have, he would have accepted?

EP I don't think he would have, I'm sure. He didn't mean that, I'm sure he didn't mean that. But I mean that's what the editorials and the people said at that time. I'll bet after he said, "I do not," the word choose.

MG They thought he was being coy?

EP Being coy and just sort of feeling the air, putting out a trial balloon to find out what they want. But of course he, I'm sure he wasn't, he wouldn't have, he decided he didn't want it for what reason I don't know. But as I say, I really think it was, found out it wasn't all it was cracked up to be.

MG Did he return to Vermont after he, after he...

EP Oh no, he never lived, he never lived in Vermont for any time except vacations. He was here for vacations. Of course he spent the summer here often times. Of course he spent a lot of his vacations, but of course he went, often times when he was President to other places. He went out in the Black Hills. One time he was down at _____ I think for his holiday, for his summer holiday. But he always came here. And of course he always came on occasions to see his father, many of them, because he was very, I think there was a very close bond between the two of them and of course there was a very close bond I think between young Calvin and his father. They saw eye to eye in anything. You'd see them walking together and seemed to be talking the same language a little bit more than John I think. I think John was a little bit more, I don't know, maybe not use the word formal, I'm sure it wasn't quite that, but I think he wasn't quite as close to his father. He liked him I'm sure just as much, I don't mean that. But they, he found a kindred, more of a kindred spirit perhaps in young Calvin.

Ermine Pollard

Page 8

MG What would the President do when he came to Vermont? Would you see family, friends, did he go fishing, did he have little things that he liked to do?

EP Well of course he always put on that frock and he wrote somewhere that, I think in the autobiography, that he never realized what, what fun it would be to put on that frock of a farmer when he hadn't liked it to well when he had, when he had lived and had to use it and had to work in it. He wasn't too pleased about it, what a joy it was to put it on and to go out and gather a little hay or do a little bit of the farming that they had. I don't think they had many cows, maybe they did. They must have had some at one time. Every farmer had one, at least one cow. They probably had some. At least his grandfather had some that lived over in that farm that's right next to the house where the houses that he had. Of course, that John has now. Of course, John took the part of the house that was given to the State, that Calvin added on. Of course while he was President he always washed in the sink. It was an iron sink and of course they had a _____, you didn't have to go outdoors. It was hitched to the shed and you could go, you could walk to it under cover of a roof, but that's all he had of course. And of course lamps part of the time. They did have electricity I guess after awhile, the, in the house. And when he, after he got out of being President he added on there seven or eight rooms I've forgotten how many, three or four, at least three bathrooms I think and then one room with bookcases of about three-quarters of the way up to the ceiling for the many books that he had collected. And when they gave the building to the State for a historical site, they just took that part off that had been added in 1928 and moved it in the winter. It was the same winter that they moved the Ticonderoga on the snow away from the lake to the museum in the northern part of the State. And then, and for many years, Lawrence said they used one of the rooms as a make shift kitchen, but a few years ago, they did put in, they added a kitchen, a real kitchen for it. And also when he sold his house in Farmington where he lived, he had a tool house and so when he sold that he added a tool shed to the house. A separate one, it wasn't part of the house up here, up in Plymouth. That was John of course that did that, not not Calvin.

MG You mentioned before about him being Mayor somewhere?

EP He was Mayor of North Hampton.

MG North Hampton, Massachusetts.

Ermine Pollard

Page 9

EP That was a first _____. Of course he had been, he ran for oh, alderman, whatever they called it. Ward healer and what not and he won all, I think there was one time he didn't win out when he was running on the Board of Education. I think that's the only time he lost.

MG Where was that?

EP In North Hampton.

MG In North Hampton.

EP I think, I think that's, I think I'm accurate in that. That was the only time he ever lost an election. And of course he wasn't, hadn't been married too long then so he didn't have any children, what, maybe they thought he wouldn't understand about education of children.

MG Had he been involved in local politics while living in Vermont?

EP No, no. Of course Colonel Coolidge wasn't really. I think, I think he did go to the Legislature once. He was a Colonel, I'm not sure whether he was a Kentucky Colonel or what he's another Colonel, whatever we always called him Colonel Coolidge.

MG This was his father?

EP His father. I don't think he did anything. Of course, he really wasn't there at all because he went to high school in Ludlow, Black River Academy as it was and stayed in Ludlow paying \$7.00 a week or so for his board and room and then when he graduated he went to Amherst. And when he graduated from Amherst, he immediately started the law, started his law interests by reading law with a man. Of course he did not go to law school but he read, was it Mr. Field's, I'm not sure of the man. Some man in North Hampton. So then he settled right down in North Hampton. Some of his letters that he wrote to his father showed that he was thinking of joining a law firm in Ludlow. There was one, Stickney, Sergeant and Scales which was very commendable and Mr. Sergeant was the Attorney General of the United States at one time. Calvin, I think Marie just coming _____ of me. I'm talking about Calvin and you can depart at the mail and see if we, sometimes I don't have some, and sometimes I do and sometimes I have quite a lot. And then there was a Mr. Waterman who ran for Representative for the United States at one time, but he didn't make it from St. Johnsbury who was a very good lawyer and he thought in this letter there's a book about

some of his letters that's been published and in some of those, he wrote to his father and he had considered those. For some reason Mr., we didn't hear from Mr. Waterman, but finally he decided to settle right down with, in North Hampton with the, in the firm I think that he had been reading in to get his experience so he could take the bar exam and of course it was, they have certain, you can still do that I believe today. You don't need to go to a law school. You can read law in a lawyer's office with a certain probably certain time, certain type of experience that you have to have. I don't know what it is. But I think you can still do it today.

MG Were you or the others in the family surprised when he went into politics?

EP Oh no, I don't think so. I think he was very interested in. Of course my grandfather was a Democrat, the one that married his aunt. And he was very aware of that and in fact he, grandfather was one of the first Democrats to sit in the Legislature in Vermont because he ran as Senator of Windsor County in 1912 when the Bull Moose thing sort of changed a little bit, the voting habits of some of the people. So he got in as a Democrat. So he was one of the early Democrats to sit in the halls of Montpelier. And one of the letters that after grandmother had written to him compliment him on the fact that he'd been reelected. I guess it was when he was re-elected that he said, "I think that Uncle Don would approve of some of the things I did at least." So, I think he, I think he was very aware of, of course I don't think, I don't know whether that I didn't talk to him about it at first in those days. When I, if I saw him, I didn't say anything about, I don't believe they were very much surprised because I think he was interested, interested and of course a lot of lawyers did go into politics in those days. They weren't, they didn't have so many cases that they didn't have so many people that are always willing to sue somebody in those days. There wasn't much business for them. So they, that was a place to go. And of course it enhanced him a little bit and he got probably more clients.

MG Can you tell the story of the night that Calvin Coolidge was sworn in, when he received the news of Harding's death?

EP Of course all I had known is what I read in the paper.

MG Yea, well you could just tell it your way.

EP Well of course the telegram came to Bridgewater and there was, there was no telephone in Calvin's home. And there was a telegram, there was a telephone in the store, but of course the store was closed. So the people came up by car from Bridgewater with the telegram saying that Harding had died and Calvin of course was in bed. So he got up and got dressed and he went to _____ room to go downstairs, didn't wake her up, poor old _____ never got to see the swearing in. And of course he, and he did _____ somebody when he decided to ask his father to swear him in. He was a Justice of the Peace, but by, before he got to Washington, he realized that it really wasn't legal that he could only swear in a officer of Vermont, not of the United States. And so there was no fan fare, but about one of the first things he did in Washington was to be sworn in by the then Chief Justice. I don't know who it was. So he called some people I think and asked them to come. And he got some, and of course the sheriffs immediately, they didn't have any secret service to soften, but they had some local sheriffs so they got some sheriffs so he'd be guarded safely in Plymouth. I don't know what would disturb him except a few cows stewing and mooing, mooing in the middle of the night. And of course _____ for some reason was there. I don't know whether he was, whether he was called but in some way he got wind of it. And he was there and he wrote an article about the telephone. There was a great discussion afterwards as to where the telegram, they, people apparently in Bridgewater realized that maybe they need a telephone and so I guess they alerted the people so that in the middle of the night they came up with a telephone and as to whether it was actually in the kitchen or never got further into the house than being on the, on the porch. _____ has an article and they say that he wrote about that and I've forgotten. He was there and I think it never really did get into the kitchen, that they used it on the porch if they needed to. But they did have, as I say, the sheriff, they alerted the sheriff local and then he got some other ones that he got up there. And then there was some newspaper there, people there and I don't know who got those to come. And then his father swore him in of course and of course they had a lamp because that's what they had, by the lamp and they had it for many years and they used to leave it there. You wouldn't dare to probably in this generation, but they used to leave the real lamp there. And finally John took it and he has given back to, so the real lamp is up there now. They keep an eye, of course you don't go into the room now. Of course in the old days, they used to go right into the room and sit down in the chair if they wanted to, do anything they wanted to. When _____

was there, _____ Pierce was the housekeeper for many days and Grace told me once that she said she found in back of the sofa, no more today, so she said, "I guess _____ got tired sometimes." So she put that sign in the door up there to have it. And then they had somebody had contacted the President of the Rutland Railroad and so he said he would put his car at his disposal and Calvin says, "Well we don't want any special train, just put it on the next train that's going towards Washington." So then they started down with of course the sheriff and the States Attorney and other people in the, official people with him. I said to John, "How did you miss out that historic occasion?" Well he said, "That day I took the train to Ft. Devans because my father was very interested in this, it was something to do for civilians being better soldiers I guess it was." And so he had taken the afternoon train to Ft. Devans and of course as you read in the paper the next day, he said, "I didn't get the paper in the morning." And he said, "My officer came up," and he said, "Well John do you know you're going to live in the White House?" He says, "What do you mean I'm going to live in the White House?" He said, "Your father was sworn in President last night." So, that was, that was how he learned it. So Calvin didn't call him. He learned it from his officer in the barracks there. And so they, when they got around to it, they took the, took a car to Rutland and got on the, and sat in the car, sat in the President of the Rutland Railroad's private car until such time as there was a train going in the direction of Washington and then they went to Washington in the car. And then of course then went to the, and of course everybody was surprised. We didn't know about it of course til the morning when the I guess the Rutland Herald did get in the _____ paper because it was, it was enough news so I think they they splashed a little extra edition sometime in the middle of the night so that everybody knew about it.

MG And what was the reaction?

EP Oh of course everybody was pleased. But, he was a Vermonter and he was a quiet Vermonter and he would do well and he would be and of course it was one of the things that he had to handle right off was of course something that had was not in the best interest of the the scandal of the oil fields and of course he didn't hesitate a minute as to what to do.

MG Teapot Dome. _____.

Ermine Pollard

Page 13

EP Tea Pot Dome striated right in and went right to headquarters and got rid of the ones and saw to it that they were taken care of and didn't have another chance to make any such arrangements with people and then establish somebody to be to punish people without wondering who am I going to hurt. He didn't wonder a minute about that. So, I think everybody was very much pleased.

MG Do you remember your own feelings?

EP _____ related to the President. It's always nice to be related to the President. I didn't get any job out of it. They did go down to visit him one time, father and mother and grandmother and my cousin Minnie Pollard went down to visit him at the White House. And Calvin wrote several times before that saying he was so pleased they were coming and after they went there. And while they were there, they went on the Mayflower on Sunday afternoon. And the next day at lunch, I happened to be in Washington because I'd gone down to the for the _____. Congress appoints money to paint a picture of the President, but the President's wife has to go around begging and get somebody to pay one, pay for one for her. So the _____ decided to pay for one and they got Howard _____ Christie to paint the one which they did for her.

MG Excuse me for one second. I have to change the tape.

EP Uh huh.

MG Be continuing with Ermine Pollard about Calvin Coolidge. What was that word _____?

EP Pibetafi, a sorority, Pibetafi, we always called it PiFi, not always, but and in a very short while of course the money, I can't remember, but I think it may have been \$3,000 that the fraternity paid for it for the painting. And then they had a special meeting in Washington to present it to the White House and it happened to be at the very weekend, the very time that my family were in Washington. And practically that had \$.05 in PiFi's in Burlington went down to _____ it. Grace Coolidge had been very interested and in fact she, her father had a room, one of the rooms that he'd fixed up for them when they were starting the organization and they joined the PiFi and it was called Vermont Beta because there was already one in Middlebury so they were Vermont Alpha. And at this meeting, _____ was the speaker to the PiFi's which we were, was very interested in of course. And then they presented the portrait at the White House in the East

Room and I was apt to have _____ away hair going ever which way more so than I do now _____. So they wanted to be sure that I was a credit to the PiFi's and they got me in some hotel room and they did me up and I don't know why they needed to do very much with me because I had a hat on that was really like a helmet. It came down, you could really see only about the tip of the, my nose from it of course it was very stylish. So all of a sudden I came to and I said I'm suppose to be at the White House right now. So I rushed over and of course to the White House and of course _____ about 4,000 people were there waiting to get in of course and I'd go to the head and something and when I got in there Mr. Hoover, who was the, Major _____ said, "Where have you been?" He said, "I've called every hotel in Washington." Of course I wasn't registered at a hotel. I was just at this friends getting fixed up. And Grace, my sister said she heard Grace tell on a few occasions opening a, showing a, what do you call it when you do a open picture anywhere? Not an opening, but...

MG A bill

EP A billing of portrait didn't mean much to somebody in Vermont. She said, "I knew somebody that almost didn't make it." She wasn't that much impressed by it. But I did make it and we were standing there and the President of PiFi, Amy _____ who made the presentation turned around and said, "Does the back of my hair look alright?" I didn't know anything else that went on that day. The President of PiFi had spoken to me a senior. Senior heavens, that was _____ on high heaven. Then we all had our picture taken with Grace, the Vermont Betas did of course as well as the others. She had been a officer in PiFi working with the alumni. In fact the year that he was chosen Vice President, she had planned to take an office again, but of course she didn't do that.

MG Was she a Vermonter?

EP Yes, she was born in in Burlington, Vermont and her father was a steamboat captain, Capt. Goodhill. He was the one that had a steamboat that went around the lake. She lived on Maple Street. She lived in three or four houses in Burlington. The, last June, the University of Vermont gave a room in Waterman Building and the Calvin Coolidge Memorial Association worked with them. So there's a room on the campus dedicated to Grace Coolidge and in it are the pictures of the houses in which he lived in Washington, different ones. And there are a few things displayed. Her honorary degree that she got from the

University of Vermont. He diploma from Vermont and some other mementos and there are two pictures, this picture that I unveiled in April 1924 in the White House, a replica of it because of course the real one is in the White House and when Mrs. Kennedy was there, she liked it and she put it in a room that was downstairs that people went through. So many people, more people saw it. And then the, I don't know what I was going to say. That's nice anyway, nice, and then there's a picture by _____ who painted a portrait of Grace Coolidge and that portrait is in the room up there and there are some other things. And this Spring, this Fall or sometime, I guess it was in the Fall, this Dr. Clifford _____ who was working to get the room dedicated and was from the organization in Plymouth, he had made a trip tics in which he has a portrait of Grace and then information about her. In the lobby of the Coolidge Dormitory so that people that go in there will realize that that dormitory is named so named because of Grace Coolidge who of course went to the University of Vermont.

MG What was she like? What kind of person was she?

EP Oh she was a _____, so she was a wonderful, wonderful person, wonderful person. So and of course quite the contrastor, very talkative and very interested in things. And a little bit of a tease. When I went to Washington my sister was near there and she'd write into Grace and say that I was coming down. I'd come see her if it was alright. And one time they had a racoon, Rebecca, and at that time, they were not in the White House. They were doing some roofing or something and so they were in the Washington Club which is in very _____ Washington Club on Dupont Circle. So we went there to have a visit with Grace. And so just as I was leaving she said, "Don't worry, you're going to see Rebecca." And she said to Mary, she said, "Looking at the letter," and she showed the letter, she said, "See how much space is devoted to Rebecca and see how much space is devoted to seeing me, are interested in seeing me?" She was a great tease at times with that. But she said, "Don't worry, you're going to see Rebecca alright." _____ I've got somebody to take you right out so you can look over Rebecca. And she, oh she was so, so nice and so thoughtful. And she was very thoughtful to the PiFi's. Of course they'd always get me to write to her when we were having a real important meeting and she'd always send flowers from the White House. The wine carnations which were the colors, which were the flowers on the Pibetafi's, so I've got quite a few things that they trim the White House on flowers. But she was, and of course quite a different

one. Well went on the Mayflower, of course they went to church, I didn't go to church, but she invited me to come to lunch and then we went to the Mayflower and of course we were _____ on and Grace, and Calvin put on his hat, his _____ hat and we hadn't been there, we were sitting down, I was visiting with Calvin telling him what a thrill it was to be on the boat and the sailors came up and a couple of the sailors, and they said, "Mr. Pearson, we've got a movie we could show." He said, "It's Sunday." And they said, "Yes, but it's semi-religious." It was a white sister, it's very semi, the semi is practically lost, but well he said, "Alright, as long as you got it show it." So to go, to see movies on Sunday which we never did, to see it on a boat was too much for me. And I'm afraid my cousin and I took all the stationery practically on the Mayflower that day. I don't think anybody else got any. So we, when we got down to Mt. Vernon, we got off, we were piped off and everybody that was in Mt. Vernon had to get out and let us go through. And then we got back on the boat and then we had dinner on the boat and I had _____, A Rebel in Arms, I can't think of his name right now, but he was a very well known writer. And we were, of course those were the days of the finger bowls and he said, "I think we better do something with that doily." He said, "Otherwise, we're going to have to eat the doily." Because he said, "I can see that they're put, we should have taken the doily off with the finger bowl when they took the finger bowl off the glass plate." So we took it off because it was a desert which was put directly on the glass plate. And the next day, Minnie and I went around to see the Bureau of Printing and Engraving and we were introduced of course to every place of course that we were from the White House. And we went through the cafeteria _____ we didn't dare to ask for an orange _____, but when we got through, she said, "Why don't we have lunch?" And I said, "Well somebody said that the, that the Senate was pretty good." So we went up to the Senate House, Senate and had lunch. So that night at dinner, Grace said, "Where did you girls eat today?" And we said, "The, we ate up at the Senate dining room." "No flies on you, the best place to eat in Washington," she said. And then she said, "How did you like your dinner companion," to me. She said, "I chose the youngest man that I had." Of course I can't think who he was but he was a very well known author. And he was from Maine and he wrote the "Rebel in Arms". Anyway, I had a good time with him and we didn't eat the doily on the plate. We were forehanded enough. He was writing an article about Calvin which came out in Colliers and I saw _____ when it finally came out. In fact, I recognize the little tidbits that I

had dropped by the wayside. Of course I don't remember what they are now. I'm sure that the, that the magazine is somewhere in the barn however, but I'm not going to get it out today.

MG Was Calvin Coolidge a religious man?

EP I think they went to church every Sunday. I think they did. I'm sure they did.

MG Was he, did he have a sense of humor?

EP Very much so. Uh huh. A very dry one. And they tell about one, of course they had the, there's one over there, I don't know where it is about the, when they found in _____ Presidents and they found 20 pages, about 15 pages for Calvin and some of them they couldn't find any things that he said. And I think one of them was that there was some when he was a President of the Senate in Massachusetts as Vice Lieutenant Governor. Somebody came up and said that somebody had said that he did, he'd have to go to hell for something. I don't know what the occasion was. And Calvin said, "Well you don't have to do what anybody tells you to." And that their allowed. It's a small book of humor and of course some of the time _____ and the _____ is the one that got wide _____ of course. When he was leaving the White House and even got an editorial, there everybody scurrying around, he's sitting on one of those things, thing, and there's one, oh _____, one _____, one _____. Mr. Coolidge refused to leave the White House until they find the other rubber. And there was an editorial and said, "Well, why should he leave? What good is one rubber?" And you believe there was an editorial on it. And of course it is quite humorous and another one. He had a very good sense of humor.

MG What do you think his legacy was as President?

EP Well I think he, he thought that you got along with as little government as possible. I don't think he was anxious in standing up and pounding and pounding, and said you got to do this and you got to do this and this is something you've got to do. I read somewhere that he talked with enough people so that he was aware of their sentiments and what those sentiments might lead to so that when he got around to say, "I think it will be a good idea to do this," he was with the people because he had realized from talking with them that that was something that they were ready for so that they, there wasn't, and so that practically everything that he suggested went

through because he, he put it at the right time. He, he made this whatever move it was at the right time so that people realized and they followed along with him. Of course they did all the time, they were always very fond of him and glad to see him interested in what he was doing. And of course as I said, they were always glad to have a tax reduction. That always helps. If you can do something with, get back money, that's always a help.

MG Anything else you'd like to add about Calvin Coolidge?

EP Oh after that trip on the Mayflower, when we were having lunch, my father said, "Well that was a wonderful trip Calvin yesterday to go, to go down on the Potomac and this to go into a a place where Washington lived." And Calvin said to father, "Well Fred," he said, "I used to have a pretty good time with that rowboat you used to let me use on the canal when I was down there to see you." See if there was any comparison which we were all in that thing, so that. And he, he wrote a letter to the, to the, he sent the store, well he sent father, father with a, a pharmacists, he wasn't really a pharmacist, but he put up prescriptions. Of course he never went to pharmacy school but he learned from a doctor. And fortunately, nobody ever died from any prescription that he put up, he was very careful naturally of course. And he did give him a pharmacy scale at one time with all the little things that you had to measure and what not. But he wrote a letter at one time to father, and Uncle _____, his brother was in business with him and he said, "I realize now what an awful bother I must have been to you." He said, "You gave no evidence when I was asking questions and was down there at the store that I wasn't _____, that you were anything but delighted to have me there." But he said, "I realize now I must have been an awful bother to you. To come into the store as I did often when I was visiting Aunt Sarah." And that's my concession that people don't often make. They don't go back at least and write about it and say that I realize that I was, asked maybe too many questions when I was young.

MG Okay, the only other thing is if we could sit quietly for about a half of minute, I just need to let the tape run for about 30 seconds.

EP Uh huh.

MG Okay thank you Mrs. Pollard.

EP Well, I forgot to tell you about my uncle.

Ermine Pollard
Page 19

MG Okay.

EP Uncle Park who was running for the Senate, United States Senate.

MG Uh huh.

EP A Democrat. He said when we could have a Democratic Convention in _____ . And one time, every time he came by, I said he stopped. And when he was Vice President of course he had a lot of photographers. So Uncle Park got in the back row. He's afraid he'd lose some votes. Of course he couldn't get anywhere as a Democrat in those days. But he says, so he got in the back row when they were taking pictures outside which was very good. But that's always, always good to have, good Democrats around. He later found of course, he was around when Uncle Park lived to see them have a big place in Burlington for a convention of Democrats. So he lived to see that so he realized he was in the right party after all, I guess.

MG Great, thank you.

EP Uh huh.