

Jonathan Miles Coolidge

3/3/1832 – 12/12/1912

Plot 20 Lot 6

Jonathan Miles Coolidge was born on March 3, 1832 in Bolton, New York to Jonathan and Mary Ophilio Wright Coolidge. Jonathan worked on the family farm and as a lumberman until moving to Glens Falls in 1865 at the age of thirty three. He came to Glens Falls to enter into the firm of Coolidge and Lee sellers of fashionable shoes, boots and quality groceries. This store was opened by his brother Thomas Coolidge and his long time associate George W. Lee.

In 1879 Jonathan, Thomas, George Lee and Wallace D. Jeffers engaged in the manufacture of wood pulp in the community of Ticonderoga, NY. They added a paper mill and named the business 'Lake George Pulp and Paper Company'. On January 1, 1898 the mills became one of the many mills purchased by the International Paper Company. Jonathan Coolidge became Vice President of the First National Bank of Glens Falls, a director of the Glens Falls Paper Mill Company and president of the Glens Falls Terra Cotta and Brick Company. He served two years as Bolton Supervisor and three years in the same position for the Town of Queensbury and was one of the oldest members of the Warrensburg Masonic Lodge.

Jonathan married Hannah McEchron while they were living in Bolton and they had no children. Jonathan died on December 12, 1912 at the home which was at 161 Glen Street. He was eighty years old. Hannah died six years later on September 8, 1918 at the family home. She was born in Schuylerville, New York to David McEchron and Hannah Selfridge. She was eighty two years of age.

The following is a tributes were written by Glens Falls citizens ran in the Glens Falls papers the day after Jonathan Miles Coolidge's death:

Addison Colvin

Good morning: we are having the weather and everyone is enjoying it. These were the characteristic words of neighborly greeting spoken by Jonathan M. Coolidge to the writer exactly one week ago this morning, as we met on Glen Street and both paused a moment for exchange of pleasantries as we have frequently done for many years. That was the last time it was my pleasure to see him alive. I shall always remember his cordiality, modesty and manifest sincerity.

In 1876, Mr. Coolidge gave me my first order for printing. The business cards were for the firm of Coolidge, Lee & Company. They were printed on a hand press that cost

\$6.00 and secondhand type was used. He said when he received and paid for them, "They are satisfactory." I have one of them now and do not believe, as I inspect the cards, an amateurish specimen of work, even at that time they would have been very satisfactory to anyone but Jonathan M. Coolidge.

He was my friend for more than fifty years. He was the friend of everyone, figuratively speaking. He was the only man I ever knew who really appeared interested when importuned promiscuously to dispense funds for the thousand and one opportunities submitted to a man who is generally credited with liberality in such directions.

In my early experiences there was more than one town in the County where the question first asked about a candidate for office was: 'How do the Coolidges feel about the man's worth? Not is he a Democrat or Republican?'

To have lived eighty years in the same community, respected, honored and revered by all classes of citizens is a rich possession, more valuable than heritage, estates and titles. One of the substantial, influential, benevolent 'old guard' of the early history of Warren County has passed on to the life eternal. To recount his activities would necessitate a recital of every public movement and most commercial enterprises, as well as a review of political and municipal advancement, and public spirited, religious and charitable achievements of fifty years last past.

"Others will go more into detail and speak with greater fluency of this man whose smile possessed such warmth of fellowship, whose sincere interest in his friends was a benediction. No one has more respect for the memory of the deceased nor realizes with greater force the loss this community sustains by his inevitable departure for the abode which a life's work exceptional in all respects; has fitted him to enjoy to its full saturation.

There are faces whose radiation never lessens; individuals whose influence is never removed; temperaments that are always exemplary and characteristics that leave an indelible impress upon all time.

"Any one of these exceptional graces is written about in history. They are recorded in the great Book of Life and angel voices chant their praises. To possess all is not far removed from Divinity."

S. B. Goodman

"In the passing from this life of Jonathan M. Coolidge, Glens Falls loses one of its best citizens, and one whose loss will be felt for years to come. He was a Christian gentleman in every sense of the word. For several years it has been my good fortune to be in close touch with him, not only in a business way, but in his home life also, and never have I detected the slightest selfish act. Many times he has said to me, 'We must

do as we would be done by'. The Golden Rule was his text for his life's sermon. Not long since, he said; 'When I come to my journeys end, if I can look back and see that I have made a few people happier, or their burden less hard to bear, I shall be satisfied. Personally, I feel that I have lost a friend whose place will never be filled.'

F. W. Wait

"Mr. Coolidge was certainly one of nature's noblemen – a kind and true friend. He had a most kindly disposition. In an acquaintance of many years I have owes found him true to the highest ideals in business and friendships."

B.B Fowler

"I have known Jonathan M. Coolidge over forty years and during some of those earlier years we were both engaged in the same line of work, only upon opposite corners of the street, therefore I may be able to speak of him from more than one standpoint. Everybody certainly admires a loving and generous nature. This eminently belonged to Mr. Coolidge for no occasion or occasion or opportunity prevented him from doing the right and generous act at all times. Some men are good but lacking patience. He timed every act with the greatest forbearance. Some men are just, but with too much riditry and tremor – he solved the problem while he held your hand in a hearty grasp and smile as only men smile who think and do right throughout the busy hours of the day. His memory will be precious for he died as he lived in truth, trust and the square deal."

Henry Crandall

"Mr. Coolidge was one of our best citizens and his demise is a great loss to the community. I have known him for thirty years and have always found him to be straightforward and honorable in his business dealings, etc. The death of such a man is a great loss to any city or community."

Prepared by Wayne Wright, City Historian with information from the Glens Falls Times and The Post Star newspapers.

Questions and comments should be directed to the Glens Falls City Historian at: City Hall 42 Ridge St. Glens Falls, NY historian@cityofglensfalls.com 518-761-3871.



The grave stones of Jonathan and Hannah Coolidge at the Glens Falls Cemetery. Photos taken by Wayne Wright, City Historian.

