

THE FIRST JAZZ BAND AT THE WHITE HOUSE

BY EDWARD ALLAN FAINE

On October 17, 1924, the Ray Miller Jazz Band accompanied vaudeville singer Al Jolson and a chorus of Broadway theatrical stars at a campaign rally for President Coolidge on the south lawn of the White House. The Miller aggregation was a known, well-recorded top-flight dance band, and two of its members, Miff Mole and Frank Trumbauer, were at the time, widely influential jazz soloists.

So how did an authentic, commercial jazz band end up at the White House in 1924? No such organization had appeared there before, and the idea for the event did not originate inside the residence either, but rather outside, by two ambitious individuals, a politician and a public relations expert.

How it all came about

Rhineland Waldo, the ex-police commissioner of New York City, had his eyes on becoming the governor of either New York State or the Philippine territories (where he had served four years while in the U.S. Army). For that he needed help from people in high places, specifically from President Calvin Coolidge, if only he could get him re-elected; a perceived dim prospect given silent Cal's "weaned on a pickle" image. To promote the president's cause and his own, Colonel Waldo, as he was often called, formed the Coolidge Non-Partisan League, necessary because the Colonel was a Democrat, Coolidge a Republican. Waldo then solicited the help of famed publicist Edward L. Bernays, known today as the father of the public relations industry.ⁱ

After several unsuccessful publicity gambits, Bernays and Waldo decided to "go big," to transform the president's image from a serious-minded introvert into the sort of homespun man people wanted in the White House. As he revealed in his memoir, Bernays reasoned as follows:

I racked my brain for some association that would reverse the impression of coldness. I decided that stage people symbolized warmth, extroversion and Bohemian camaraderie and if they breakfasted at the White House they would dissipate the impression.ⁱⁱ

Bernays did not have to rack his brain too hard, he had only to copy a well-publicized precedent set by Albert Lasker four years earlier for Coolidge's predecessor, Warren Harding, during the latter's presidential campaign.ⁱⁱⁱ Every salient aspect of the campaign rally at Harding's home in Marion, Ohio was copied with slight alteration for the Coolidge affair. This time, a Jolson-led Broadway contingent took an overnight sleeper train to the president's home in the White House, breakfasted, and then entertained the chief executive in his back yard for an hour, including a Jolson penned campaign ditty sung by all, with the whole affair documented by print, still picture and film media. But this time, Jolson brought the jazz band.

On October 7, 1924, Waldo contacted C. Bascomb Slep, Secretary to the President, at the White House and asked if the president would be agreeable to receiving a delegation of actors

led by Jolson on October 17.^{iv} A positive response was immediately forthcoming. Publicity benefits aside, Calvin and especially wife Grace would have been delighted to have the Great White Way descend *en masse* on 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. The two of them regularly attended the theater and movies (screened for them in the mansion or on the presidential yacht) and enjoyed receiving actors at the White House.^v The music Coolidge brought to the White House—and there was ample—had a definite Eurocentric cast. Famous classical harpists, pianists (Rachmaninoff three times), violinists, string quartets, and chambers groups gave homage to the likes of Brahms, Beethoven, Schuman, Litz, Chopin, and Debussy. Glamorous tenors and sopranos paid their respects to the operatic traditions. American music found its way into the mansion occasionally. Universities choirs (Missouri, Wisconsin, Furman, Amherst), the Arion Singing Society, the Bethlehem Bach Choir, and the Vatican Choir all sent their choruses.^{vi} What Coolidge thought when he signed off on the Ray Miller Jazz Band is lost to history, but it can be assumed that a publicity-generating campaign rally on the south lawn would be just fine, unlike for example, a concert inside the White House.

Arrival, Handshakes, Sausages and Table Talk^{vii}

After the curtains fell on Broadway the night of October 16, a



Ray Miller, 1923. Bain Collection, Library of Congress.

troupe of some 40 performers – 27 actors and 15 Miller bandsmen—boarded the midnight train to the nation’s capitol.^{viii} Just after daybreak some seven hours later, the train pulled into Washington’s Union Station, where Cadillacs Bernays had ordered waited to take the sleepy party to the White House. Bernays recounted what happened next in his memoir:^{ix}

At the door of the White House President Coolidge and Mrs. Coolidge awaited us. “I have met you all across the footlights,” Mrs. Coolidge said graciously, “but it’s not the same as meeting you here. Let us go into breakfast.”

[Inside] the threshold I lined up a party for a handshaking ceremony with the president. Although I did not know most of their names ... they had to whisper their names to me as they moved up the line toward the president, and then I relayed the information. I wondered how he would behave. To my surprise, he completely lived up to the mental picture of the country, including myself, had of him. He was practically inarticulate, and no movement of any kind agitated his deadpan face. He shook each hand perfunctorily, said “Good Morning” and then took the next hand extended to him ... His face reflected no inner anything, in strong contrast to the warmth of Mrs. Coolidge.

It was even more surprising to me, therefore, that after the last person on the line had shaken his hand, Coolidge turned to me and asked pleasantly, “Your name please?”

“Oh, Mr. President, that’s not important,” I said. “I’m the

publicity man for the party.”

“Not unimportant either,” the President replied, looking at me searchingly, “The publicity man – your name.”

Apparently, he was fully aware of my function and the political value of the performance he was participating in.

President Coolidge, escorting the tall comedian Charlotte Greenwood, led us into the state dining room for a breakfast of hot, steaming coffee with cream, fruit, toast, hot griddlecakes and Deerfoot sausages. Mrs. Coolidge took the arm of Colonel Waldo and then spied Mr. Jolson. “Let me take your arm, too,” remarked Mrs. Coolidge. “I want two partners for this occasion.”

Mr. Coolidge sat between Waldo and Charlotte Greenwood, the former being anxious to discuss phases of the Non-Partisan campaign work, the latter to inject life into the gathering. The president at first divided his attention equally, apparently trying to keep one side of his face serious and let the other stray off into a smile, but when the hilarity got underway all attempts at seriousness were abandoned. Ms. Greenwood, star of *Linger Longer Letty*, was dieting at the time and looked at the wheat cakes in dismay. But the president urged her to try his favorite Vermont maple syrup. Charlotte promptly challenged him to run around the White House lawn with her for twenty minutes if she took the cake and syrup. Mrs. Coolidge’s merry laughter could be heard across the table at that point.



Ray Miller’s Orchestra accompanying Al Jolson on the South Lawn of the White House, 17th October 1924. To Jolson’s left is President Coolidge, Miller has his back to the camera. Other musicians visible are Dan Yates (vn) head to left of Miller’s, possibly Tom Satterfield (p) to the right of Miller’s head, Frank Di Prima (bj), Ward Archer (dms), Andy Sindelar, Miff Mole, (tb), Roy Johnston, Charles Rocco, (t), Frank Trumbauer (only partly visible), Larry Abbott, Billy Richards, Andy Sannella (saxes). Photo courtesy of Bain Collection, Library of Congress.

Al Jolson seated across the table next to Mrs. Coolidge, and Raymond Hitchcock sitting on the same side, were the life of the occasion with their stories, jokes, and repartee and satire on political speeches. Hitchcock conducted a discussion of economics. The most memorable comments of the breakfast, however, came from the first lady.

"Your dog must like me," Al told her. "He hasn't stopped licking my hands."

"Maybe he wouldn't do it," Mrs. Coolidge said, "If you used a napkin."

The breakfast lasted for more than an hour. As he got up to leave the table Jolson remarked:

"I ate everything but the sausages."

"Does that include the doilies? Mrs. Coolidge asked.

"No, I have them in my pocket," said Jolson.

As they left the mansion Jolson unwisely asked the first lady if he would be able to find his coat. "Yes," said Mrs. Coolidge. "If I can get my doilies."

Photo Op and South Lawn Frivolities

The president and first lady then led their guests onto the White House lawn by way of the Western stairs where they paused and posed for still photographs while, as reported in *Billboard*, "movie camera men reeled off a thousand feet of film with the President surrounded by Broadway visitors."^x

Media in tow, the entourage moved to a flat expanse of grass on the south lawn, where the morning frivolities were about to begin, even though Ray Miller's Jazz Band had not yet made an appearance. The musicians presumably busied themselves with unpacking their instruments and warming up. The ceremony started off on a serious note. The designated MC for the show Al Jolson assured the president of the support of the theatrical profession:

We are all Republicans from now ... Incidentally, I have been a Republican these twenty years. We members of the theatre are perhaps in more intimate touch with the people than any other profession. We came to assure you of our support and offer to work for you and the Republican Party. The theatrical profession is almost 100 percent for you. Those who are not, Mr. President, are those who are not working, and there are very few of us in that category.^{xi}

Switching gears, the MC then warned that all jokes told must be dignified presidential jokes, but perhaps one or two must make the president laugh out loud. Hoping his joke would be the one, Jolson offered a story about two frogs and a turtle.^{xii} Mr. Coolidge participated in the laughter almost as heartily as the rest.

Raymond Hitchcock next made one of those impromptu speeches for which he became famous, and which had the audience laughing from start to finish. It was a faux political address in which he sought to show how much there is in a name, whether a germanium or a special kind of sauce, leading into a discussion of Raymond Hitchcock as a great name for the presidency; comparable only to such names as William Jennings Bryan; Oscar Underwood, Robert M. LaFollette and Al Smith [all non-Republicans]. "Al Smith is a small-town name," said Mr. Hitchcock "Just compare it for appeal to names like Raymond Hitchcock and Calvin Coolidge." One had to be

there to appreciate the humor in his monologue.

At one point during the festivities, not clear when exactly, Jolson made Coolidge laugh by whispering in his ear. "If you don't laugh," he said. "I'll tell you a story that'll *really* make you laugh."

Gerald Griffin next sang *My Irish Rose* [with or without band accompaniment is not known, but probably not] followed by a Scotch joke by Hal Forde. This one made the president laugh out loud, almost complying with Jolson's request. He laughed all right, but not so heartily and long as the first lady. "Don't tell the next one until Mrs. Coolidge is through laughing," the watchful Jolson warned his friend Forde.

With the band in place, and lead sheets distributed round the crowd, it was time for the campaign song penned by Jolson (no doubt with uncredited help from long-term friend and colleague Buddy De Sylva, on hand that morning ready to give voice.) The corps of New York actors, White House staff, actors from local theaters, and some members of the Press, totaling more than a hundred, joined in a lusty chorus of *Keep Coolidge*.

Mrs. Coolidge, who gave the appearance of having the time of her life, joined in the singing and at times her clear soprano tones could be heard above the other voices. She purposely held the last note, which was a high one, and Jolson turned and said so every one could hear him, "Some note. That's so good, let's have it again." The song was sung half a dozen times. And it was sung well even though it was the first time many of those present had seen the words. The Press was silent on whether the Miller band accompanied the singing or even separately performed an instrumental number or two. They did, as will be discussed.

At the conclusion of the visit, and before he joined his Cabinet meeting, the President briefly thanked those who came to support and entertain him and told them the White House would be open to them for a return engagement at any time.

Above-the-fold headlines in the next day newspapers had to surpass what the event's initiators had hoped for, namely: *The New York World* headline: **Actors Lure Real Laugh To Coolidge Face: White House Breakfast Theatre of Funmaking.**

Print Media Asleep at the White House Wheel

The written record of the event—periodicals, memoirs, biographies and presidential archival materials—offers scant information on the band that accompanied Al Jolson that fine October day. Curious indeed, given the amount of detail we have on the handshaking ceremony, breakfast table talk, and south lawn jokes. The record is simply silent on how or why the Ray Miller Band was selected; what administration officials knew about the band in advance. Did the band accompany Jolson on songs other than *Keep Coolidge*? Accompany performers other than Jolson? Play their own tunes? How about the band's performance? And who were its members? Fortunately some of these questions can be deduced from the visual record (photographs and newsreel footage) and other sources. But first: what about this Miller Jazz Band?

Ray Miller^{xiii}

During the 1920s, Ray Miller was a well-known, highly respected bandleader whose orchestra made many recordings and radio broadcasts. His first band, active in the 1917-1922 period played in the style of white New Orleans bands that had migrated north (Original Dixieland Jazz Band for example). In 1923 Miller dropped the old style and by the end of 1923 his band played like the newer, larger New York bands and, according to musicologist Gunther Schuller more spontaneous than most white bands of the era.^{xiv} In the grand scheme of things this was Miller's first unknowing step down the path that led to the White House. He took the second step that November when he signed an exclusive contract with Brunswick, a prestigious recording company with studios in both Chicago and New York. He began recording his orchestra at the latter studio immediately, waxing four sides in December 1923, and more than thirty over the course of the following year. Miller took the third unknowing step in the spring of 1924, when he urged two important soloists to join the band: saxophonist Frank ("Tram") Trumbauer and trombonist Milfred ("Miff") Mole. Fortified with these additions the band played engagements at ballrooms in and around Manhattan.

The Jolson Connection^{xv}

Al Jolson signed an exclusive recording contract with Brunswick at about the same time Ray Miller did, and it took little time for the label to pair the two in the studio. October 2 and 15 were the dates chosen for their musical collaboration. It would make eminent sense that the singer would take his studio band to Washington to back him singing the campaign song he would compose for the occasion. Who knows? The song may have been rehearsed in the studio on October 15. Both Jolson and the Miller band were available and ready to train down to the nation's capitol for a rendezvous with the president on October 17 (the date Waldo suggested to Slemph back on October 7).

Miller's Musicians^{xvi}

But what about the musicians, who were they? The band that recorded with Al Jolson in the Brunswick studios on October 15 only two days before the Coolidge event consisted of: Charles Rocco, Roy Johnston (tpts); Miff Mole, Andy Sindelar (tbs); Frank Trumbauer, Larry Abbott, Andy Sanella, Billy Richards (reeds); Dan Yates (vn); Rube Bloom, Tommy Satterfield (ps); Frank DiPrima (bjo); Louis Chassagne (bb); Ward Archer (dms); Ray Miller (dir). A photo of this Miller Band on the mansion grounds can be seen in the accompanying photo; musicians are identified in the caption. Three were exemplary contributors to the music: pianist Rube Bloom, trombonist Miff Mole, and C-Melody Saxophonist Frank Trumbauer.

Rube^{xvii}

During the 1920s, in addition to the many solos he recorded with the Miller Orchestra, Rube Bloom wrote many novelty piano tunes that are still well regarded today. Through the 1930s and beyond he formed and played in bands that included the jazz lights of the day. But his lasting mark was as a songwriter. Working with prominent lyricists (Johnny Mercer, Ted Koehler, Mitchell Parish) he etched several indelible entries in the Great American Songbook: *Day In–Day Out*, *Fools Rush In (Where Angels Fear To Tread)*, *Don't Worry 'Bout Me*, *Give Me The Simple Life*, and *Dear Hearts and Gentle People*.

Miff^{xviii}

The man Tommy Dorsey later called "the Babe Ruth of the trombone" came to prominence in the Original Memphis Five—the most frequently recorded band of the early jazz period (1918-1923). When he joined Miller in the spring of 1924 no one on trombone could execute solo passages more cleanly, better in tune, with smoother slide work and more incisive attack in all registers. And Miller certainly gave him plenty of chances to shine, as the many recordings left behind certainly attest.

After Miller, who moved to Chicago in 1925, Miff turned down numerous offers to stay around New York City. Miff's solos at this time 1927-1928 with various small bands show how far his concept had evolved. Some trombonists even thought he played valve trombone; no slide work, they insisted, could be *that* clean. Miff tended to play the beat, rather than play with it, in the manner of Louis Armstrong and other black soloists; his chief interests lie, rather, in matters of form and melodic organization. Inevitably such traits conferred a sense of tidiness in his choruses—purposeful with forward motion—yet, even at their best, never quite escaping a sense of having been devised (which many in fact were), rather than rolling out of some inner consciousness (the purported essence of exciting jazz). Rhythmically, too, they evinced a certain constraint, even a stiffness of execution.

By the end of the 1920s, a slew of trombonists (Jack Teagarden, Jimmy Harrison, Joe Nanton, J.C. Higginbotham) many under the spell of Louis Armstrong, who had by then recorded his groundbreaking Hot Fives and Sevens, toppled the once lofty Mole. Though still widely admired, Miff's way was but one of several, and for many, not the one to emulate.



Tram

Even before he joined Miller's outfit in the spring of 1924, Frank Trumbauer had acquired a following among musicians, black and white, on the basis of recordings with the Benson Orchestra in 1923; and the Mound City Blue Blowers in 1924. Saxophonists widely imitated Tram's choruses on Benson's *Never Miss the Sunshine*, and the Blowers *San*. In common with his betwixt and between C-melody saxophone, Tram's playing style was similarly divided. On the one hand, he would roll off rehearsed, technically accomplished licks, and on the other he would plasticize and smooth out a melodic line, lending it a grace and coherence with long held notes, gentle arcs of phrase, and a logic of development rare in hot music of the 1920s. Many of the best Trumbauer solos are minimally altered paraphrases of the parent melodies. Tram "routinized" many of his solos, as did most of the 1920s musicians, still, his well-polished melodic excursions were several notches above the others.

Trumbauer's time with Ray Miller (1924-1925) only enhanced his reputation as an all-rounder, blessed with near-virtuosic technique, equally skilled at reading and playing hot solos. His influence would only continue to grow after he left Miller to pair up with the legendary trumpeter Bix Beiderbecke, in both the Jean Goldkette and Paul Whiteman Orchestras, and his own group. Tram's solo on the latter's *Singin' The Blues*, tricked nearly every saxophonist, black and white. Swing tenor saxophonist Budd Johnson summed it up best:

Of course, Frankie Trumbauer inspired a lot of cats, because he was the baddest cat back in those days, and everybody was trying to play his stuff. He was the boss of the alto like Coleman Hawkins was the boss of the tenor.

The Camera Does Not Lie

While the print media was in the dark as far as the Miller band was concerned, the visual (still and motion picture) media had their lenses wide open and focused.^{xix} The surviving photos allow complete identification of all Millers musicians save for pianists, Tom Satterfield and Rube Bloom. Did they come along for the ride? Are they in the picture? Quite possibly. Take a look at the photo. The candidates are the man at the end of the line holding the lead sheet (given where he is standing he just has to be associated with the band), and the man with glasses whose head is seen atop Miller's right shoulder, and the man whose head appears to rest on the bell of Andy Sindelar's trombone. Most who have seen these pictures agree that the man with the glasses, who would be standing between violinist Yates and tuba player Chassagne is pianist and arranger Satterfield, who by the way went on to arrange for Paul Whiteman's Orchestra and then onto Hollywood to score films. A cautionary note, however, one source says the man wearing glasses is Jolson colleague Irving Caesar,^{xx} the lyricist of *Swanee* and *Tea For Two*. No evidence exists that he made the trip to Washington. As for pianist Rube Bloom, some say it's the man nearest Sinclair's trombone, others say it's the man at the end of line. Take your pick. In either case, it appears the full 15-man entourage, including Miller, made the trek to D.C.

Examination of the 90 second-long Kinogram newsreel held by UCLA (University of California – Los Angeles)^{xxi} confirms that the Miller Band not only backed the singing of *Keep Coolidge*, but also backed Jolson on another tune, as well as performing

an instrumental only number. The three musical numbers on the Kinogram—*Keep Coolidge*, Jolson's solo, and the band's feature—are so short (less than 10 seconds each) that it is impossible to identify the song Jolson sang by himself, and the tune the band played.

Why Not The First?

Why has the Miller Band not been given its props as the first jazz band to play the White House? Was it because print media coverage of the band at the time was almost non-existent? It was "and Miller's band," and that was it. The print media concentrated on Coolidge and the Broadway delegation, and that's the way Waldo, Bernays and Jolson wanted it. Their vested interests lie with themselves. Newsreel coverage served the same purpose, and may, as the instigators (and Coolidge) wanted, humanized the Vermont farmer in the minds of theatergoers, enough for some of them to vote in his favor three weeks after the White House event. Coolidge won, so who knows. With so little screen time and no sound on the Kinogram, the Miller Band probably didn't register.

As far as later coverage, the principals all had passed by the time the Paul Winter Sextet—the first jazz group to play a concert inside the White House—mounted the East Room riser for First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy in 1962, save one, Bernays, who lived to be 101 years, but then the band was never of much interest to him. Waldo died three short years after the Coolidge event, and Jolson expired in 1950. Miller mysteriously disappeared in 1930, and both Tram and Miff faded from the scene early, aviation called the former, and ill health plagued the latter, before they passed in 1956 and 1961, respectively. In effect, there was no one left to pump the 1924 event in press, radio and TV interviews, and in recording liner notes through the 1930s, 40s (except Jolson) and 50s, and no one around to make noise in 1962 when the Press trumpeted the Paul Winter Sextet as a White House first.

Maybe it's none of the above; maybe the Miller Band is simply seen today as a dance band, not a jazz band worthy of the name, even from an early 1920s perspective. But how could that be? The Miller Band of 1924 had two of the most influential jazz players on their respective instruments of the time. True, their playing would remain frozen in a Jazz Age time capsule, never to absorb the newer developments, and would soon be eclipsed by a flock of players that had absorbed the sounds of Louis Armstrong, the *wunderkind* out of New Orleans by way of Chicago. Best to keep in mind, however, as Brach was to Picasso, Tram was to Lester Young, Miff was to Tommy Dorsey. Do we value Brach any less because he chose to continue as he began, while Picasso expanded and elevated his cubism to mass acclaim? We shouldn't.

The Ray Miller band of 1924 was indeed a jazz band worthy of the name. Any fair-minded music fan would come to this conclusion after listening to the *Ray Miller and his Brunswick Orchestra 1924-1929* (Timeless Historical) CD. Perhaps the absence of follow-up by Coolidge and other presidents prior to Kennedy is the reason the Miller band is not credited as a White House first. All we know is, a year and three months after the Paul Winter Sextet performed in the East Room on November 19, 1962, jazz guitarist Charlie Byrd mounted the riser in same said room, and thereafter followed a periodic, if not steady stream of jazz artists to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

End Notes

ⁱ Origins of the Non-Partisan League in *Father of Spin: Edward L. Bernays and the Birth of Public Relations*, Larry Tye, Henry Holt and Company, 1998, pgs. 77-79. Also, Colonel Waldo's background information from wikipedia.

ⁱⁱ Bernays reasoning for a Jolson-led expedition to the White House in *Biography of an Idea: Memoirs of a Public Relations Council*, Edward L. Bernays, Simon and Schuster, 1965, p. 340

ⁱⁱⁱ Details on the first instance of entertainers campaigning for a presidential nominee in *Celebrity-in-Chief: How Show Business Took over the White House*, Alan Schroeder, Westview, 2004, pgs. 115-116 and *Selling The President, 1920: Albert D. Lasker, Advertising and the Election of Warren G. Harding*, John Morello, Praeger, 2001, pgs. 54-58 and *Florence Harding: The First Lady, the Jazz Age, and the Death of America's Most Scandalous President*, Carl Sferrazza, William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1998, pgs. 219-220. Florence Harding's helpful role in the celebrity expedition to Ohio, Lasker, p. 60 and *Florence Harding*, pgs. 219-220

^{iv} Waldo's initial contact with the White House on October 7 recorded in memo to file, C. Bascomb Slemph, Coolidge Library, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Coolidge acceptance in *Presidential Appointment Book for 1924* at the Coolidge Library, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

^v Coolidge's fond of theater/movies in *Music at the White House*, Elise K. Kirk, University of Illinois Press, 1986, p. 203-216 and *Grace Coolidge and her Era: The Story of a President's Wife*, Isabel Ross, Dodd, Mead & Company, 1962 p. 160-168

^{vi} Artists invited/not invited to the mansion by Coolidge in *Music at the White House*, Elise K. Kirk, University of Illinois Press, 1986, pgs. 206-219

^{vii} White House happenings on October 17 – the celebrity arrival, breakfast, and South Lawn frivolities – have been compiled from various (and surprisingly similar) newspaper accounts and memoirs. **Newspapers:** THEATRICAL FOLK COOLIDGE GUESTS, Al Jolson Leads Actor Band in Pledge of Support at Breakfast Party, *The Evening Star*, Washington, D.C., October 18, 1924, p. 4 and ACTORS EAT CAKES WITH the COOLIDGES, Thirty Enjoy Breakfast at the White House and Then Entertain Their Hosts, President Nearly Laughs, Guests Crack 'Dignified Jokes', Song Songs and Pledge Support to Coolidge, *New York Times*, October 18, 1924, p. 1 and 40 STAGE STARS EAT BREAKFAST WITH COOLIDGES, President Receives Republican League, Led by John Drew Al Jolson, Raymond Hitchcock, *The New York Herald Tribune*, October 18, 1924 p.1 and NEW YORK ACTORS LURE REAL LAUGH TO COOLIDGE FACE, President Joins Heartily In Merriment Induced by the Jokes of Stage Celebrities, White House Breakfast Theatre of Funmaking, Only Serious Note Is Al Jolson's Assurance That His Thespian Guests Are For Him, *The World*, New York, October 18, 1924 p. 1 and JOLSON MAKES PRESIDENT LAUGH FOR THE FIRST TIME IN PUBLIC, *New York Review*, October 18, 1924 p.1. **Books:** Accounts in books cited here mirror those in the newspapers.

^{viii} Bernays and/or the White House distributed the Broadway

celebrity list to the press, which they duly printed verbatim in their periodicals, viz: Al Jolson, John Drew, Ed Wynn, Charlotte Greenwood, Francine and Stella Larrimore, Justine Johnstone, Dolly Sisters, Brennan and Rogers, Mile. Herval, Lowell Sherman, McKay Morris, Alexander Leftwich, Buddy De Silva, Lew Schriber, Gerald Griffin, Arnold Daly, Cleo Mayfield, Montague Love, William Griffin and Edward L. Bernays; Frank Cromit, Hal Forde, Leslie Chambers and Jed Prouty (27 list total). The Miller Band without the pianists is 13. Hence, 40 total. But there could have been 4 more: the Dolly Sisters French maid, young English actor Ralph Reader, and Miller's two pianists for "some 40."

^{ix} Bernays verbatim description of the celebrity arrival in Washington, D.C. and the handshaking ceremony at the White House in *Biography of an Idea* p. 340-341

^x Movie cameramen reeled off ... film, October 18 byline, *Billboard Magazine*, October 23, 1924

^{xi} "We're all Republicans now," in *New York Times*, October 18, 1924, p. 2

^{xii} Jolson's frog joke in *The World*, New York, October 18, 1924 p. 2

^{xiii} Miller Band data from the CD liner notes to *Ray Miller and his Brunswick Orchestra 1924-1929* (Timeless Historical – CBC 1-066)

^{xiv} Miller Band more spontaneous than most white bands in *The Swing Era*, Gunther Schuller, Oxford University Press, 1989

^{xv} Jolson's Brunswick discography in *Jolson: The Legend Comes to Life*, Herbert G. Goldman, Oxford University Press, 1988, pgs. 134 and 383-385

^{xvi} Miller band musicians given in *Tram: The Frank Trumbauer Story*, Phillip R. Evans and Larry F. Kiner, The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1994, p. 314

^{xvii} Info on Rube Bloom from wikipedia

^{xviii} Capsule bios on Miff and Tram largely condensed from *Lost Chords: White Musicians and Their Contribution to Jazz 1915-1945*, Richard M. Sudhalter, Oxford University Press, 1999, pgs. 101-129 for Miff, pgs. 448-461 for Tram

^{xix} Photos from (Photo Op) .26338 (South Lawn). The latter is photo 1 in the first photo insert. Other extant photos in *Tram*, and *Jolson*, and CD liner notes to *Ray Miller and his ... Orchestra* and www.redhotjazz.com/millerinfo.html

^{xx} Man wearing glasses is Irving Caesar in *Jolson* (photo caption)

^{xxi} Surviving *Kinogram* newsreel can be viewed at the UCLA Film & Television Archive, Los Angeles, California

Edward Allan Faine is the author of "Bebop Babies" and occasional articles on jazz.