

Stephen Grover Cleveland

by Jean Remy

The race of brave, strong men from whom Stephen Grover Cleveland sprang made their first homes here, in Massachusetts, as far back as 1635. His father had charge of a small church in Caldwell, New Jersey, and here, in a neat white frame house, which you may see for yourselves to-day, was born, on March 18th, 1837, the boy who was to rise, step by step, to the president's seat.

He was three years old when they moved to Fayetteville, New York, and here he first went to school and lived till he was twelve years old. He showed a strong will, and a great love for books, as a small boy; he would have his own way, if he could get it; and this was why he was sent to a high school, when he was not so old by some years, as the rest of the boys there; he gave his father no rest till he sent him; and once there he made up his mind to lead his class.

He was just twelve when his strong will sent him to work in a store near his home, so that he could help care for the big family in the small home. The man who hired him, soon saw that, if he was young, he knew how to work well, and that he could trust him; for two years he worked in the store and then went back to his books.

But, just at this time, his father died; and he then had to find a way to care for those in great need at home. With the same pluck that he had shown in the past, he now went to work in a "Home for the Blind," in New York. In this big city, the bright boy saw and heard much which gave him new thoughts, and put in his heart the wish to make his life a great one. At the end of two years in the "Home," he made up his mind to learn law; and he asked a man whom he knew to lend him twenty-five dollars to start him. The fact that this man did so shows that he had trust in young Grover Cleveland; he could now start his work, and went to Buffalo to do so. Here he lived for eight years; at first he helped his uncle, in the care of a big farm, and the money he so made was sent to his mother. Soon he had the chance to study law; the place where he went was two miles from his uncle's home, but back and forth, rain or shine, he walked each day. There is told a tale that shows how he loved the books of law; for, the first day he went to this place, a book was put in his hands to read; he kept at it for hours, till dark came; then he found the rest of the men had gone home; all the doors were locked; and he must stay there all night.

Such hard work soon made him a man who well knew the law; and folks gave him big cases that brought him much fame. He did not go to the war, when it broke out, for he felt that he could not leave his folks at home with no one to care for them.

He rose fast in his law work; and more than one great case did he win; he cared far more to take the part of the poor than of the rich; and at no time in his life did he look for high place or fame; it came to him though, for he was just the man to fill a high post well. His name was soon known in his state and at Washington; for three years he was Sheriff of Erie County and then he took up his law practice once more; but soon he was put at the head of his city as its Mayor; and then was made the Governor of the great state of New York. Here he did good work; he put down those who had taken bribes, and had not been good, true men, and he tried to see that the laws were well kept; men saw that he was the right man to fill this high place, for he had no fear of what might be thought of him; he just did as he felt right; and so, while he was still governor, he was named for president by a great vote, and was elected. When he took the oath of office in Washington, he did not kiss the Bible

which oth-er pres-i-dents had kissed, but a lit-tle old book, much worn with use, which his moth-er had giv-en to him when he first left home. He was in the chair four years and while here, he took for his wife Miss Fran-ces Fol-som; he was the first pres-i-dent to wed in the White House. Cleve-land was pres-i-dent for four years; at the end of that time, the Re-pub-li-cans placed Ben-ja-min Har-ri-son in the pres-i-dent's chair.

But, at the end of one term, once more the Dem-o-crats won the day; and a-gain, in 1893, we see Gro-ver Cleve-land pres-i-dent.

In May of 1894, the World's Fair was o-pened; and few boys and girls are too young to know some-thing of the beau-ty of the Great White Cit-y built on the shores of Lake Mich-i-gan in Chi-ca-go. In the last years of Cleve-land's term, there was much talk of the state of things in Cu-ba. The men there wished to be free from Spain, who had ruled them, with a hard hand, for hun-dreds of years.

Spain sent down troops of sol-diers; and harsh laws were made to force the Cu-bans to keep the peace. But Cu-ba would not give up; and the U-ni-ted States be-gan to feel pit-y for this brave lit-tle is-land, try-ing to get free.

In the midst of the strife, Cleve-land's term of of-fice came to an end, and he came to New York to live and take up law a-gain. He now has his home in Prince-ton, New Jer-sey, and has a large law prac-tise.

Source:

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