



## Hopalong Cassidy

The character, Hopalong Cassidy, was created by Clarence E. Mulford for the 1904 issue of Pulp Magazines. The original characterization of his character was a hard-drinking, rude, dangerous, rough-talking/living, red-headed wrangler was a wooden leg which caused him to hop (where he got his nickname).

Starting in 1906, Mulford began writing books featuring the character, starting with the novel Bar-20. In total, Mulford wrote 28 Hopalong Cassidy (Hoppy) novels, with not all of them featuring the iconic character, but other ranch hands at the Bar-20 ranch featured as well. Hoppy's horse, Topper, was imperative in the book series. After retiring, Mulford was approached to write new Hoppy books after the popularization of the film and television franchise aired. Not wanting to come out of retirement, he hand-selected his successor—Louis L' Amour.



Mulford was asked his thoughts on the dramatic alterations to his character to make it family friend for the franchise, and all he said on the subject was, "... he in not properly dressed for the part."

**Photo Credit:** Hopalong Takes Command, 1905. Illustration for "The Fight at Buckskin," by Clarence Edward Mulford, in Outing Magazine, December 1905; and also reproduced in Bar-20, by Clarence Edward Mulford (New York: The Outing Publishing Company, 1907) Frank Earle Schoonover (1877–1972) Oil on canvas, 30 x 20 inches. Delaware Art Museum, Bequest of Joseph Bancroft, 1942.

## Who is your childhood hero and why?



### Please Remember

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President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home National Historic Site

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Hopalong Cassidy:  
The 42nd President's  
Childhood Hero



## WILLIAM BOYD



William Boyd (05/5/1895-9/12/1972) was an American actor most famously known for his portrayal of the character Hopalong Cassidy up until his death at the age of 77. During his time as the character, Boyd made 66 films between 1941-1948, and 52 television episodes between 1952-1954. Originally casted as the character, Red Connors, in the first film, he himself asked to be considered for the main role and earned it.

Boyd is known for portraying his iconic character as a man clad in all black who didn't smoke, swear, drink alcohol and always let the bad guy start the fight. On playing the character in the 1940s, Boyd himself estimated that he, "...fired 30,000 rounds and killed at least 100 'varmits', wore out 12 costumes and 60 ten-gallon hats, rode Topper (his horse) 2,000 miles, rode herd on 5,000 head of cattle, and saved many damsels in distress without never being kissed as a reward..."

## CULTURAL IMPACT

The character, as portrayed by Boyd, had a significant cultural impact at the time. The film franchise and the television series, owned by Boyd himself, inspired other popular westerns, such as Tales of the Texas Rangers, Annie Oakley, The Gene Autry Show, and The Roy Rogers Show. The show is still in syndication today.

The popularity of Hopalong Cassidy also deeply impacted merchandising sales for popular cultural items. Some examples includes: boosting sales of the Aladdin Industries Lunchboxes from 50,000 to 600,000 units after being featured, was featured on the covers of Look and Time magazines, was featured in both the original American Pie album by Don McLean and the very popular holiday song, It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas, for which itself helped boost sells of the Hopalong Cassidy cowboy boots with spurs that were sold around the United States, and even a theme park called Hopyland (5/26/1951-1954).

Despite the character made famous by Boyd being so popular, it caused major tension for famous western author, Louis L' Amour. When L' Amour was starting out in writing, he wrote four Hopalong Cassidy books under the pen name, Tex Burns. After writing them, he denied penning them for 38 years because he couldn't write the character the way he wanted; he was forced to write it like the Boyd character because his employers wanted to cash in the on the Hoppy craze.

## WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON



William Jefferson Clinton (08/19/1946--) spent the first seven years of his life in Hope, Arkansas. While in Hope, the first four years (1946-1950) of his life was spent at his maternal grandparent's house. While living at his grandparent house, he started to become familiar with Hopalong Cassidy (Hoppy). Clinton idolized Hoppy so much to the point that a huge quantity of photographs features him with something Hoppy related.

Clinton owned the Hopalong Cassidy boots before he entered kindergarten. According to him and his best friend, Mac McLarty, Clinton was skipping rope one day when the spur of his boot caught on the rope he was jumping and he fell; in the fall, Clinton broke his leg. Revisiting the story many years later, McLarty mentions that the President loves to mention the story of how he broke his leg, but the story might be, "...slightly embellished."

President Clinton would go on to write the preface to the book, Hopalong Cassidy: An American Legend by Grace Bradley Boyd, the widow of William Boyd, and Michael Cochran.