

# Coolidge Rising

by Leo Kottke

12-String from "6 & 12 String Guitar"  
Transcribed by Tom\_Reed@acm.org

Musical notation for measures 1-3. The staff shows a 4/4 time signature. The notes are: Measure 1: C (open), G (2), D# (0), A# (2), F (3), A# (0). Measure 2: C (open), G (2), D# (0), A# (2), F (3), A# (0). Measure 3: C (open), G (2), D# (0), A# (2), F (3), A# (0).

Musical notation for measures 4-6. The notes are: Measure 4: C (open), G (3), D# (2), A# (0), F (3), A# (0). Measure 5: C (open), G (2), D# (0), A# (2), F (3), A# (0). Measure 6: C (open), G (2), D# (0), A# (2), F (3), A# (0).

Any Double Notes can be Brushed

Musical notation for measures 7-9. The notes are: Measure 7: C (open), G (2), D# (3), A# (3), F (2), A# (0). Measure 8: C (open), G (3), D# (2), A# (0), F (3), A# (0). Measure 9: C (open), G (3), D# (2), A# (0), F (3), A# (0).

Musical notation for measures 10-12. The notes are: Measure 10: C (open), G (3), D# (0), A# (2), F (3), A# (0). Measure 11: C (open), G (2), D# (0), A# (2), F (3), A# (0). Measure 12: C (open), G (3), D# (0), A# (2), F (3), A# (0).

Musical notation for measures 13-15. The notes are: Measure 13: C (open), G (3), D# (2), A# (0), F (1), A# (0). Measure 14: C (open), G (3), D# (0), A# (2), F (3), A# (0). Measure 15: C (open), G (3), D# (2), A# (0), F (1), A# (0).

Musical notation for measures 16-18. The notes are: Measure 16: C (open), G (3), D# (0), A# (2), F (3), A# (0). Measure 17: C (open), G (7), D# (3), A# (0), F (5), A# (0). Measure 18: C (open), G (3), D# (0), A# (2), F (3), A# (0).

Coolidge Rising - by Leo Kottke  
Slide not notated in this figure

19

No Pick on 1st

22

Slide optional

25

28

31

34

Coolidge Rising - by Leo Kottke  
No Pick on 1st

37

No Pick on 2nd

Alternate Thumb and finger(s) generally

40

43

47

51

No Pick on 1st

54

57

7 5 7 5 5 5  
5 5 5 5 5 5  
0 0 3 0  
0 0 0 4 0 4

61

0 0 0 3 2  
1 3 4 4  
0 0 0 2 0 4  
0 2 2 0 2 0

65

0 0 0 2 0 4  
5 0 5 5 4 3  
2 0 0 2 0 4

68

3 2 2 2 0 0  
2 0 2 0 4 1/2  
3 5 0 2 0 4 1/2

No Pick on 1st

71

2 0 3 2 0 4  
0 3 2 2 3 4 1/2  
0 2 0 0 4 1/2

No Pick on 1st

74

0 5 0 2 0 4 1/2  
0 2 0 2 3 4 0 3 2 5 5  
4 4 0 0 2 0 4

78

82

85

???

89

92

95

98

2/3  
1/2

2 0 1 0 3 0 2 3 2 0 2 3 2/3 1/2 2 0 1 0

101

3 0 2 3 2 2 3 7 0 3 5 0 3 0 2 2

104

3 7 0 5 3 0 3 0 2 3 2 2 3 7 0 5 3 0

No Pick on 1st

107

3 0 2 3 2 2 2 3 5 2 5 5 0 3 0

110

2/3  
1/2

2 0 1 0 3 0 2 3 2 0 2 3 2/3 1/2 2 0 1 0

113

2/3  
1/2

3 0 2 3 2 3 2/3 1/2 2 0 1 0 3 0 2 3 2 0

116

2/3  
1/2

119

122

No Pick on 1st

125

128

No Pick on 1st      No Pick on 1st

131

No Pick on 1st      No Pick on 3rd

134

???

137

140

No Pick on 1st

143

146

150



153

3 2 0 1 3 2 2 3 3 2 0 1 0  
0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0  
0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

156

3 0 2 3 2 2 3 7 0 5 3 3 0 2 2  
0 0 0 0 0 0 5 5 5 5 0 0 0 0 0  
0 0 0 0 0 0 5 5 5 5 0 0 0 0 0

159

3 7 0 5 3 3 0 2 2 3 7 0 5 3 0  
0 5 5 5 5 0 0 0 0 0 5 5 5 5 0  
0 5 5 5 5 0 0 0 0 0 5 5 5 5 0

162

3 0 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 0 0 0  
5 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0  
2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 0

165

2/3 3 1 0 3 0 2 2 2 2 0 1 0  
1/2 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0  
0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

168

3 0 2 2 2 2 2 1 0 3 0 2 3 2 3  
0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 2  
2/3 0 0 1 0 3 0 3 2 0 1 0 0 2  
1/2 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

No Pick on 1st

- Title: Coolidge Rising
- Original Composer and Performer: Leo Kottke
- From Sound Recording: 6 & 12 String Guitar; Takoma #1024
- Sound Recording Copyright/Publisher: 1969, Overdrive Music (ASCAP)
- Transcriber: Tom Reed; Tom\_Reed@acm.org
- Tuning: Dropped 'D' lowered 2 whole steps, on 12-String

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From the album notes by Leo Kottke:

"COOLIDGE RISING--While rising from the sink, cupboard doors opened and engulfed his head; while turning to the right to avoid the whole incident he walked into a refrigerator--which afforded a good chin rest for staring at some bananas in a basket."

From the notes by Mark Humphrey included with the Rhino CD release of 6 & 12 String Guitar:

"'Coolidge Rising': In the year of Nixon's first inauguration, Leo invoked the spirit of Calvin Coolidge, who haunts us still. His offertory to Silent Cal churns with hot, steaming 'quack,' shades of Dylan's take on Bukka White's 'Fixin' to Die,' and even hints of British folkster Bert Jansch, who shares with Leo an admiration of Jazz reed master Jimmy Giuffre. This impressionistic stew was the sizzling climax for what became one of the most influential solo guitar albums ever waxed. To those of us awestruck and wondering at Leo's source, he supplied this cryptic explanation to Gil Podolinsky: 'Picking up the guitar to me is like chewing your nails, it's a nervous habit. In the process, things pop up.'"

I am one of those who is "awestruck," especially by this song, from wherever it "popped up." Leo's performance is an amazement, and the sounds he gets out of the instrument just cannot be represented.

As for that sound, it's not just an illusion that it is unique. From Acoustic Guitar, Nov./Dec 1992: "It was a vintage Gibson B-45 12-string that brought to life most of Kottke's early classics . . . on 6 & 12 String Guitar, yet as Kottke recalls, the magical guitar proved to be a cruel trick of fate. 'I had the unbelievably bad luck to find a freak. That Gibson. It was literally anomalous. I don't think there have been any others like that. It was stolen in Portland, Oregon, and I went on an endless search, not for a good 12-string, but to get that sound back.'"

This transcription, even without its errors and omissions, is but a pale shadow of Kottke's performance and the sound of that instrument. I

was so curious about how it was played that I persisted until I got it to this point. And I'm still not very sure it's that close, but I can't find anything closer. There are still some weak areas which I may try to improve upon in the future. I welcome your insights!

Thanks to Tab Pig Hank Alinger (hoink@home.com) for suggesting to me that Leo Kottke remembered this as Dropped 'D' tuning. It seems to work pretty well there, although I haven't paid too much attention to playability (yet). Hank provided me with a TablEdit version in Open 'C' by B.R. Smith (brsmith@minn.net) and told me about a version in Open 'D' on the Guitar Pro archives. (These tunings are all lowered from concert pitch, of course.) I did not use any of that material in this transcription though, by necessity, some similarities exist. In my initial attempt to transcribe this song, I followed the information in the tuning database available on John Stropes web site ([www.stropes.com](http://www.stropes.com)), which also indicates it is in Open 'C.' But I kept running into apparent barriers with that approach; in particular the pitches occurring on the open 3rd string in Dropped 'D' have to be on the 4th string, 5th fret in Open 'C.' I gave up until I received Hank's information that Leo remembered it as Dropped 'D.' That made sense to me from my earlier attempt, so I tried it out in Dropped 'D,' with this result. This version sounds a bit closer to the song as I hear it, but there are still many parts which are not too close. The main riffs sound to me sometimes like there is some sliding going on and other times not. Part of that may be because of the phenomenal speed of the performance, faster than the 255 of this transcription. (The TablEdit maximum is 255.) Where adjacent strings are shown picked, any of these are easier and faster if brushed with the finger rather than picking the individual strings. Also, there is the question of some high pitches which are or could be provided by the high octaves of the lower 4 strings. Obviously, when the thumb picks these strings, the high pitch is more distinct than when the other fingers pick upwards. In some cases I have notated some of these pitches on the higher strings just to make the playback sound closer to the recording, but there is no actual picking stroke. In a few cases I have specified a thumb stroke where the high pitch is distinct, especially on the 3rd string.