

## Holland Cooke Show Prep

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*Ask callers: "What would you do if you were President for one day?"*

### **QUICK: Who were the 11th, 12th, and 13th Presidents of the USA?**

Many Americans -- even history buffs -- would answer wrong!

At least Constitutionally...

- #11 was James K. Polk
- #12 was David Rice Atchison
- #13 was Zachary Taylor



#### **David Rice WHO?**

You might not remember him from History class.

Official records show Zachary Taylor as President #12, not 13.

TRUE STORY: David Rice Atchison -- from Frogtown, Kentucky -- was appointed to the United States Senate to replace a Senator who had died. He stayed for 12 years, 1843-1855.

Then it happened:

- President James K. Polk was scheduled to step down from office at noon on Sunday, March 4, 1849.
- But President-elect Zachary Taylor was a religious man and refused to be sworn in on the Sabbath. He insisted on waiting until the following day.
- So WHO would serve as President for 24 hours? Normally, the vice-president would. But VP George M. Dallas' term would have expired along with Polk's...if he hadn't already resigned as President of the Senate on Friday, March 2nd.
- The House of Representatives was dismissed so there was no Speaker. Next in line? Recently re-elected President Pro Tem of the Senate, David Rice Atchison, who technically became President for 24 hours, though he was never sworn in.
- When asked what he did that day, he said "I WENT TO BED. THERE HAD BEEN TWO OR THREE BUSY NIGHTS FINISHING UP THE WORK OF THE SENATE, AND I SLEPT MOST OF THAT SUNDAY."

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