

# CALICO

by ETHEL CALVERT PHILLIPS



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# CALICO

*“He isn’t like other ponies,” explained Roxy, so excited that she couldn’t talk fast enough. “He can dance, and run on three legs, and walk on two feet.”*

*But the pony only nibbled the grass by the roadside and swished his tail. Not in any way did he show Roxy’s father and mother what a wonderful pony he was.*

*“You must be mistaken, Roxy,” said Mrs. Hatfield. “You must have imagined it all.”*

*At this, Roxy shook her head. She knew that it had happened. She knew very well that she had not made a mistake.*

When a friendly, clever pony named Calico arrives at their farm, Roxy and Oliver couldn’t be more delighted. Every day becomes an adventure with their pony, the townsfolk, and the other farm animals. Whether they are wheeling about town in a little green cart, delivering Christmas to home-bound neighbors, or making daring rescues in the midst of dangerous weather, Calico keeps the children entertained with his astonishing stunts. Where did Calico learn his tricks? And how can Roxy and Oliver make sure he will be theirs forever?





Round and round and round he turned in a dance. (page 27)

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## CHAPTER 1

# CALICO

There was a new pony at Rocky Farm.

His name was Calico. This must have been because he was a calico pony, spotted black and white.

He was a pretty pony. His coat was the blackest black and the whitest white that you could hope to see. He had four white stockings and a white star on his forehead too. His ears were perky, his tail was long and thick, and his eyes were brown and bright and full of fun.

Calico had come riding on a train to Rocky Farm. He traveled in a great wooden crate with his head just looking over the edge. He had been sent from a ranch out West that was miles and miles and miles away from Rocky Farm.

Calico had not always lived at the ranch.

Where had he been before that? Well, of course Calico couldn't tell. If he had been able to talk, everyone would have listened with surprise and delight to what he had to say. You may be sure of that.

When he finished, they would have begged him to tell more and more.

At any rate, there he was at the ranch. But he had been there such a short time that the only person he knew was a cowboy named Jim.

Jim took care of Calico. He wore a bright handkerchief knotted around his neck, a pair of high-heeled riding boots, and a large cowboy hat.

There were so many horses and ponies and cowboys on the ranch that Calico could hardly tell one from another. And before he had time to feel at home, off he started on his long journey to Rocky Farm.

Jim told him where he was going.

“You have been sold, Calico,” said Jim, rubbing Calico’s nose with a friendly hand. “A farmer in the East, in the State of Vermont, wants a pony just like you.”

So one morning Calico, in the big wooden crate, found himself on the platform of the railway station. His name, “Calico,” was painted in great black letters on the side of the box.

Calico peered over the edge of his crate. It all seemed very strange to the little pony. He stamped his foot. He opened his mouth to neigh.

But just then there came a rattle and a roar, and around the curve swept the train. Calico was lifted on board. With a puff and a hoot and a whistle the train started. Off rode Calico on what was to be a very long

journey indeed.

The train bumped and swayed and rattled on its way. Up the hills, around the curves, and down into the valleys it sped. It stopped at the stations with a jerk and a shrill whistle. Then with a puff-f-f! and a hoot, toot, toot! it was off again. On and on and on went the train.

At last the journey came to an end. When Calico, in his crate, was lifted out, he was a stiff and tired little pony, as you may guess.

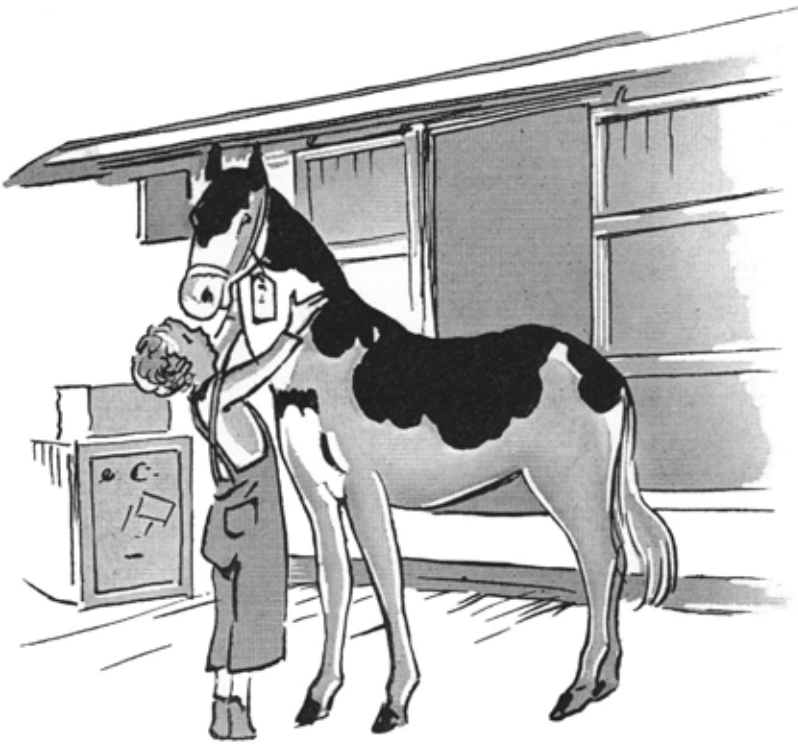
But there at the railroad station, a pleasant man in blue overalls was waiting for him. That was Farmer Drake. A little boy with a freckled nose was hopping up and down at sight of the pony. That was Billy, Farmer Drake's grandson. "Harum-scarum Billy" he was sometimes called. That will tell you what kind of a little boy Billy was. He didn't live at the farm. He came visiting now and then.

"He is my pony! His name is Calico! He is my pony!" called Billy, jumping until the dust flew.

Carefully, Calico was taken from the crate. Then Farmer Drake and Billy led Calico home. Slowly, they climbed the steep mountain roads until at last the big stable at Rocky Farm was reached. Tired Calico was glad of a good supper and a warm bed of soft hay.

A long night's rest was what Calico needed. In the morning he felt like a different pony. He was as lively and frisky as he could be.





How pleasant it was at Rocky Farm! How many, many ponies lived there too! Wherever Calico looked, he saw a pony. They were every color: gray and chestnut, black and sorrel, white and bay.

The pasture meadow was dotted with ponies. Some of them were galloping round and round in a circle, head tossing, tail flying. Others shrilled and whinnied with pleasure as they dashed up the hillside in a frolic. Here was a pony peacefully cropping the sweet green grass. There lay a plump fellow down on his back taking a pony roll. He scrubbed himself to and fro. His tail flopped. His four little legs waved in the air.

There was a good reason for so many ponies. This