popular treatment of him is by John Bainbridge, "May I Just Step Inside?" *New Yorker* 13 Nov. 1948, pp. 36–56. An extensive obituary is in the *New York Times*, 5 Dec. 1973.

WILLIAM O. WAGNON

FULLER, Alvan Tufts (27 Feb. 1878–30 Apr. 1958), automobile dealer, congressman, and governor of Massachusetts, was born in Boston, Massachusetts, the son of Alvan Bond Fuller, a Civil War veteran who worked in the composing room of the *Boston Globe*, and Flora Arabella Tufts. He grew up in an old New England family of modest means in the Boston suburb of Malden, where he attended public schools. A champion bicycle racer, he went to work in the shipping department of the Boston Rubber Shoe Company factory and sold rubber boots evenings and weekends to earn money to build his own bike shop. After Fuller opened the shop in Malden in 1895 his ebullient personality and flair for salesmanship made it an immediate success. A notable Fuller innovation was his Washington's Birthday open house, which gave customers an opportunity to view new models on a winter holiday and to plan their spring purchases. He moved his business to Boston in 1898.

By 1899 Fuller had become convinced that the horseless carriage was the wave of the future in transportation. He subsequently traveled to Europe to investigate the flourishing automobile industry there and returned from France with two de Dion Voiturettes, the first motor vehicles to enter the port of Boston. He convinced the executives of the Packard Motor Car Company of Detroit to make him the exclusive dealer for their product in Boston in 1903, and a year later he also opened a Cadillac agency. In 1908 Fuller purchased a sizable tract of pasture land on the outskirts of Boston, in Brighton, where he constructed the first combination motorcar salesroom and service station in Massachusetts. Though detractors labeled the venture "Fuller's Folly," he was hailed as a visionary when the automobile became popular, his agency prospered, and other dealers followed him out to Brighton. His rivals even adopted his Washington's Birthday open house and helped to make it a Boston and New England tradition. In 1910 he married Viola Theresa Davenport, an operatic singer from Medford, Massachusetts; they had four children.

Having established himself in the automotive business, Fuller turned to politics. Brash, fiercely independent, and contemptuous of professional politicians, he began as an avid supporter of the unsuccessful third-party bid of former president Theodore Roosevelt (1858–1919) in 1912. Under the banner of Roosevelt's Progressive party, Fuller was elected to a state legislative seat from Malden by sixteen votes in 1914. After serving a single one-year term in the Massachusetts House of Representatives he ran in 1916 for the U.S. House as an independent candidate against nine-term Republican incumbent Ernest W. Roberts. He defeated Roberts by 314 votes and was reelected as a Republican by a better than 2 to 1 margin in 1918. A strong advocate of preparedness, Fuller served as a member of the Committee on Military Affairs and voted in favor of American entry into World War I. He also opposed the seating of Victor Berger, an antiwar socialist who had been elected to Congress from Wisconsin in 1918. Fuller shared his hero Theodore Roosevelt's dim view of wartime dissent, believing, he told the House, that the American people had "paid too dearly for their Government to see it thrown to the wolves of anarchy." At the same time, he was outspoken in behalf of efforts to bring about institutional reform in a Congress he characterized as a "kind of political stock exchange, gambling in pork and patronage." In this vein, Fuller eschewed the congressional franking privilege during his four years in the House and never cashed a paycheck in fourteen years of public service. (The checks were left to his sons as a "souvenir.")

Bored with Washington, Fuller returned home to challenge Joseph E. Warner, Speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, in the Republican primary for lieutenant governor in 1920. Fuller won the contest by 854 votes and easily outdistanced a Democratic opponent in the general election. He bested Warner more decisively in a primary rematch in 1922 on his way to a second term. Two years later, Fuller captured the Republican nomination for governor and went on to defeat Democrat James Michael Curley, the mayor of Boston, by more than 160,000 votes after a bitter campaign that featured the Catholic Curley's sensational charge that his candidacy had been actively opposed by the Ku Klux Klan. The effort to link Fuller, a Baptist, even indirectly to the Klan failed because his wife was a devout Catholic and he was well known for his generous donations to Boston archdiocesan charities. In 1926 Fuller waged a populistic campaign against Democrat William A. Gaston, a Boston lawyer closely tied to railway and utility interests, and handily won reelection.

Fuller's governorship was a modest blend of fiscal conservatism and reform. He continued the "pay-as-you-go" budgetary policies instituted by Republican predecessors Samuel Walker McCall, Calvin Coolidge, and Channing H. Cox. In addition to reducing the state debt significantly, Fuller signed legislation requiring compulsory personal liability motor vehicle insurance and authorizing the first state-sponsored cancer hospital in the United States, and he intervened personally with utility companies to keep electricity and telephone rates low for consumers. Fuller also was applauded for high-quality appointments to judgeships and important posts in his administration. In making such appointments he usually ignored the patronage recommendations of the Republican State Committee, which he regarded as a "corrupt outfit" whose members "should be fired bag and baggage and the premises fumigated."

Another keynote of Fuller's gubernatorial administration was a hard line on crime and punishment. In his first term penalties were increased for persons convicted of carrying concealed weapons, prompt trials were required for violent offenders, and nightclubs

and roadhouses were tightly regulated. A believer in the "strict enforcement of the law of capital punishment for those who have taken human life," Fuller refused to commute the death sentences of three young World War I veterans convicted of killing a night watchman at a Boston-area carbarn in 1925 and, far more notably, of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, Italian immigrants and militant anarchists who had been found guilty after a controversial trial of having murdered two men during a payroll robbery at a shoe factory in 1920.

After seven years of appeals and much agitation by the radical left, respectable opinion leaders backed the request of Sacco and Vanzetti for a review of the evidence, which was circumstantial, and of the trial, presided over by Judge Webster Thayer, whom they charged with bias against immigrants and political radicals. Acceding to this request in the spring of 1927, Fuller and his staff set aside much state business to conduct an extensive inquiry into the case before the condemned men were sent to the electric chair. The governor pored over transcripts, interviewed witnesses at his home and office, and even visited Vanzetti at the Charlestown Prison. He also appointed a blue-ribbon panel consisting of A. Lawrence Lowell, the president of Harvard University; Samuel Stratton, the president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; and Robert Grant, a retired probate judge, to study the evidence and the trial proceedings. In August 1927 both Fuller and his advisory committee concluded that the trial had been fair and just. The governor then heard pleas for mercy until an hour before the execution but ultimately refused to intervene. Subsequently, the Sacco-Vanzetti case became America's Dreyfus affair, and Fuller, Lowell, and Thayer were vilified by liberals and radicals at home and abroad as symbols of American provincialism and intolerance in the 1920s.

The case took its toll on Fuller and probably ended his promising political career. After receiving numerous threats prior to his decision in 1927, Fuller's home was placed under police guard for two years and then again for a time after Thayer's home was bombed in 1932. Though he was touted for the Republican national ticket in 1928, Fuller was dropped from consideration for vice president after party leaders expressed concern that his candidacy would be anathema to the burgeoning immigrant vote. At the 1932 convention his name was put in nomination for the vice presidency, but he received only fifty-seven votes (thirty-four from Mass.) and finished far behind incumbent Charles Curtis (634 votes). Fuller was also considered for but did not receive President Herbert Hoover's (1874–1964) appointment as ambassador to France in 1929, apparently because the French government felt unable to protect him adequately in a country that had experienced violent demonstrations following the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti. Even in Massachusetts Fuller abruptly withdrew from primary races for the U.S. Senate (1930) and for governor (1934). His last significant position in government came in 1933 when Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes appointed him chairman of a federal board charged with supervising the distribution of Public Works Administration funds in Massachusetts.

Returning to his automobile business, Fuller divested himself of his Packard agencies and sold only Cadillacs and Oldsmobiles after 1949. He also devoted considerable time and much of his estimated $40-million fortune to philanthropy. Boston-area hospitals, universities, and especially Baptist and Catholic causes benefited from his largesse. In addition, Fuller and his wife were noted art collectors. Works by Thomas Gainsborough, Rembrandt, Joseph Mallord William Turner, and other masters adorned their Renaissance mansion in Boston's Back Bay, and many of them were eventually donated to the Museum of Fine Arts, where Fuller had served as a trustee. He died in Boston.

• Fuller's papers are in private hands. A collection of his speeches and addresses, 1925–1929, is in the Fingold Library in the Massachusetts State House in Boston. *Addresses and Messages to the General Court, Proclamations, Official Addresses, Correspondence and Statements of . . . Governor Alvan T. Fuller* (1928) is the published official record of Fuller's governorship. An important interview with Fuller is Alvan T. Fuller and Schuyler Patterson, "Why I Believe in Capital Punishment," *Success Magazine*, Dec. 1926, pp. 15–16, 94. Fuller's political career is discussed in the *New York Times*, 29 Jan. 1928; the Boston *Post*, 8 Dec. 1930; Michael E. Hennessy, *Four Decades of Massachusetts Politics, 1890–1935* (1935); and J. Joseph Huthmacher, *Massachusetts People and Politics, 1919–1933* (1959). See "Governor Fuller in Berlin," *Living Age*, Nov. 1930, p. 330; G. Louis Joughin and Edmund M. Morgan, *The Legacy of Sacco and Vanzetti* (1948); Francis Russell, *Tragedy in Dedham* (1962); David Felix, *Protest* (1965); and Roberta Strauss Feuerlicht, *Justice Crucified* (1977), concerning Fuller's role in the Sacco-Vanzetti case. Obituaries are in the *Boston Globe* and the *Boston Herald Traveler*, 1 May 1958.

RICHARD H. GENTILE

FULLER, Blind Boy (10 July 1907?–13 Feb. 1941), blues singer and guitarist, was born Fulton Allen in Wadesboro, North Carolina, the son of Calvin Allen and Mary Jane Walker. The exact date of his birth remains debatable because two different years are listed on official documents. Little is known of his early life except that he attended school through the fourth grade in Wadesboro and began learning to play guitar in his teens. After his mother's death in the mid-1920s, he moved with his father and the rest of his family to Rockingham, North Carolina; there he met Cora Mae Martin, whom he married around 1926. They married in Bennettsville, South Carolina, possibly for legal reasons: she was only fourteen, and he was either nineteen or seventeen (depending on his actual birthdate). It is believed that they raised one adopted child.

By this time Allen was developing eye problems and was diagnosed as having ulcers behind his eyes. In 1927 Allen and his wife moved to Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He worked in a coal yard for a short