

0. A SHOOTING IN BUFFALO - Story Preface

1. A POPULAR PRESIDENT

2. A SHOOTING IN BUFFALO

3. TOO LATE

4. IF ONLY...

5. IT IS OVER

6. A PRESIDENTIAL FUNERAL

7. TRIAL AND EXECUTION



The shooting of President McKinley, detail from a drawing by T. Dart Walker, as it appears on the cover of *Leslie's Weekly* (September 21, 1901 issue). Part of the Robert L. Brown History of Medicine Collection, Health Sciences Library, University at Buffalo (SUNY). Online via [U.S. National Library of Medicine](#) at the National Institutes of Health. Click on the image for a better view.

In September, 1901, the President and Mrs. McKinley decided to visit the [Pan-American Exhibition](#) in Buffalo, New York. It would be their last trip together.

Leon Czolgosz, a 28-year-old anarchist follower of [Emma Goldman](#) who believed government (and its leaders) prevented "complete individual liberty," also traveled to Buffalo for the Exhibition. But Czolgosz (pronounced CHOL-gosz) had a different reason for being there.

He planned to kill America's popular President.

McKinley had given a speech at the Expo on September 5. The next day, shortly after 4 p.m., on September 6, he was meeting people at the Temple of Music.

Ostensibly in line to shake McKinley's hand, Czolgosz pulled out a .32 caliber short-barreled Johnson revolver and shot the President twice. One shot caused only a non-penetrating flesh wound. The other ripped through the President's stomach (as depicted in the *Chicago Eagle* on September 14, 1901).

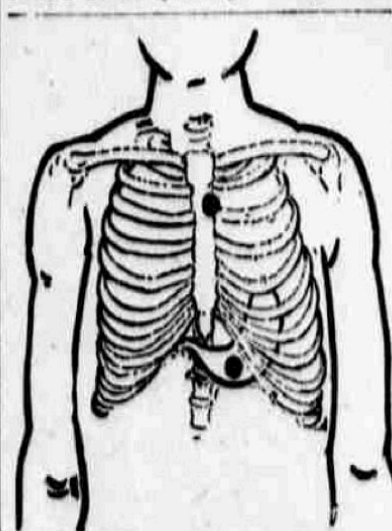
a straight in his chair as the assailant's shots had missed. The calmest and least of the immense gathering. Hilburn and Secretary Corbin almost frantic with alarm, and man continued to assist that his injuries were trifling.

matic scene upon the little as enacted in the midst of tumult, which continued un-ly for many minutes.

secret service men and the first threw themselves at the assassin, and pinned him to the floor. He tried to use the revolver, but more men hurled themselves upon him, and the scrambling quartette succeeded in getting hold of Czolgosz, to render him, to wreak upon him the mad fury which they instantly realized had been done.

ter part of the crowd was an instant by the enormity

of police made way through the crowd, dragging the prisoner between them. They were determined there should be no lynching. Things were



WHERE MCKINLEY WAS SHOT.
Diagram showing points where the bullets entered the body of the President.

bad enough as it was, and a lynching would have been the crowning horror of the day.

struck and pushed and shoved enough so they could reach him, struggling to save Czolgosz. A sudden and frightful deed dragged him out, hustled through the beautiful exposition and threw him behind bars where he was saved for the time with him.

Massing their men where they best handle the excited crowd, police cleared a passageway to the doors for the bearing away of the dead, and on the stretcher of the ambulance which had come through the door he was tenderly carried to the emergency hospital, near the exposition building, within the exposition grounds.

Though this takes long time, probably it was not more than a few minutes from the time the shots were fired until the President was in the hands of the surgeons. They discovered that a bullet had entered the breast directly in the center or on the left side, but whether or not it

A quick-thinking waiter, James Benjamin ("[Big Jim](#)") [Parker](#) who worked at one of the Expo's restaurants, jumped [Czolgosz](#). His heroic actions prevented a third shot.

Freely confessing what he did, the assassin told the police what happened. The local newspaper quotes the District Attorney:

This man has admitted shooting the President. He says he intended to kill; that he has been planning to do it for the last three days since he came here.

He went into the Temple of Music with murder in his heart, intending to shoot to kill. He fixed up his hand by tying a handkerchief around it and waited his turn to get near the President, just as the newspapers have described. When he got directly in front of the President he fired.

He says he had no confederates, that he was entirely alone in the planning and execution of his diabolical act.

Gravely wounded, but ever mindful of his wife, McKinley told his secretary, George B. Cortelyou:

Be careful...how you tell her - oh, be careful.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/A-SHOOTING-IN-BUFFALO-President-McKinley-Assassination>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

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Media Stream

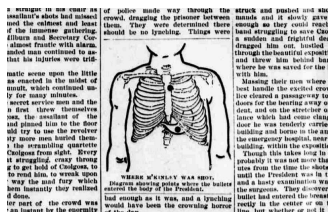


McKinley Giving His Last Speech

Image online, courtesy Library of Congress.

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1901 Chicago Eagle Article

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McKinley Speech Photo at the Buffalo Exposition

Image online, courtesy U.S. National Archives.

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McKinley at the Exposition

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.32 Caliber Short Barreled Johnson Revolver - McKinley Death

Image, U.S. National Archives. PD

Quoted reference, from the PBS film *America 1900*, Part IV - "[Anything Seemed Possible.](#)"

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Leon Czolgosz

Image online, courtesy U.S. National Archives.

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George B. Cortelyou

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A SHOOTING IN BUFFALO

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