AWESOME stories

A SHOOTING IN BUFFALO

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.

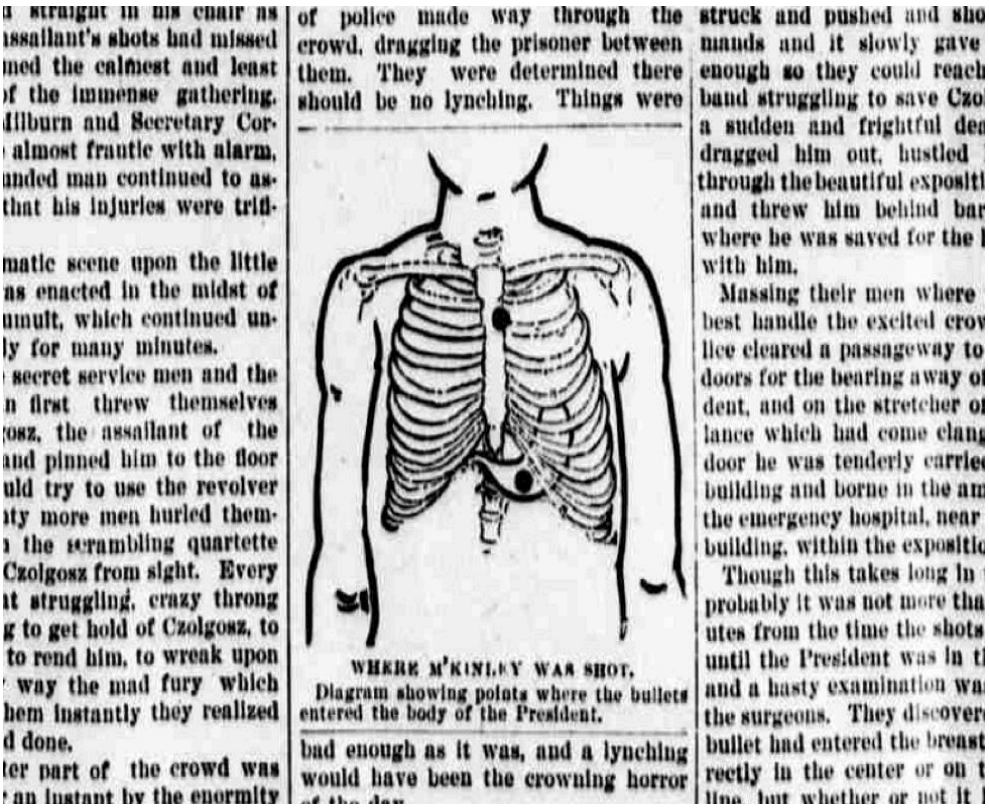
In September, 1901, the President and Mrs. McKinley decided to visit the Pan-American Exhibition in Buffalo, New York. It would be their last trip together.

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-gosh) 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).



straight in his chair as
assailant's shots had missed
med the calmest and least
of the immense gathering.
Hilburn and Secretary Cor-
almost frantic with alarm,
anded man continued to as-
that his injuries were trifl-

matic scene upon the little
as enacted in the midst of
umult, which continued un-
ly for many minutes.
secret service men and the
n first threw themselves
osz, the assailant of the
and pinned him to the floor
uld try to use the revolver
ty more men hurled them-
the scrambling quartette
Czolgosz from sight. Every
t struggling, crazy throng
g to get hold of Czolgosz, to
to rend him, to wreak upon
way the mad fury which
hem instantly they realized
d done.
er 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 M'KINLEY 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

struck and pushed and sho
mands and it slowly gave
enough so they could reach
band struggling to save Czo
a sudden and frightful dea
dragged him out, hustled
through the beautiful expositi
and threw him behind bar
where he was saved for the
with him.
Massing their men where
best handle the excited crov
lice cleared a passageway to
doors for the bearing away o
dent, and on the stretcher o
lance which had come clang
door he was tenderly carrie
building and borne in the am
the emergency hospital, near
building, within the expositio
Though this takes long in
probably it was not more tha
utes from the time the shots
until the President was in t
and a hasty examination wa
the surgeons. They discover
bullet had entered the breast
rectly in the center or on t
line, 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:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/A-SHOOTING-IN-BUFFALO-President-McKinley-Assassination

Media Stream

McKinley Giving His Last Speech
Image online, courtesy Library of Congress.
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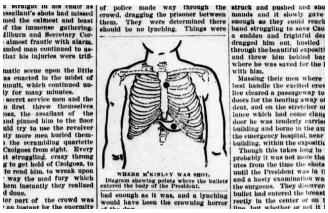

1901 Chicago Eagle Article
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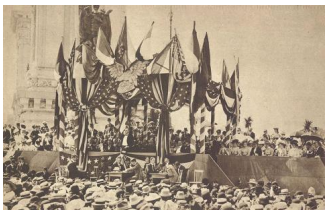

McKinley Speech Photo at the Buffalo Exposition
Image online, courtesy U.S. National Archives.
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McKinley at the Exposition
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.32 Caliber Short Barreled Johnson Revolver - McKinley Death
Image, U.S. National Archives. PD

Quoted reference, from the PBS film *America 1900*, Part IV - "Anything Seemed Possible."
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Leon Czolgosz
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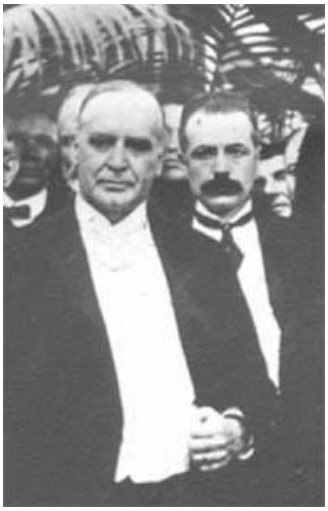

George B. Cortelyou
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