

## Entry into politics:

McKinley's political career began when he was elected prosecuting attorney of Stark County, Ohio in 1869. He was reelected in 1871. After that he moved on to the US House of Representatives where he served seven terms from 1877-1891, except for a brief time between 1884-1885.

In 1890, McKinley passed the McKinley Tariff Act which was meant to protect American made goods by increasing taxes on imports. It became unpopular when it raised consumer prices causing McKinley to lose re-election to Congress.

The next year McKinley was elected Governor of Ohio serving from 1892-1896. As Governor he improved canals, encouraged labor unions, and helped settle labor disputes. Despite his success as Governor, McKinley did not run for reelection, instead he decided to run for President.



*Fun Fact: When McKinley was Governor, he and Ida lived across from the Ohio Statehouse. Every day at three o'clock Ida would wave a handkerchief out the window to say she was well and McKinley would return the signal.*



## McKinley Timeline

**January 29, 1843:** Born in Niles, Ohio

**1852:** Family moved to Poland, Ohio

**1861:** Enlisted in Union Army

**1862:** Fought in the Battle of Antietam

**1866:** Attended Albany New York Law School (did not graduate)

**1867:** Admitted to the Ohio Bar, moved to Canton

**January 25, 1871:** Married Ida Saxton

**1871:** Daughter Katherine born (died 1875)

**1873:** Daughter Ida born, died same year

**1876:** Elected to Congress (1876-1891)

**1891:** Elected Governor of Ohio

**1896:** Elected 25<sup>th</sup> President of the United States

**1900:** Re-elected 2nd term as President (served as President March 4, 1897-September 14, 1901)

**September 6, 1901:** Shot at Pan-American Exposition

**September 14, 1901:** Died from infection

# WILLIAM MCKINLEY

## 25<sup>TH</sup> PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES



**McKinley Birthplace Home**  
**40 S. Main St., Niles, Ohio**  
**330-652-1704**



## Road to Presidency:

McKinley was gaining national popularity after his successes as Governor of Ohio, and his wealthy associates, like Mark Hanna, were making a run for President a real possibility. Personal financial troubles almost ended this presidential momentum, but support of friends, especially Hanna, took care of this issue. McKinley was selected as the Republican candidate at the 1896 Republican convention held in St. Louis, Missouri. Garrett Hobart was selected as the Vice-Presidential candidate.

## Front Porch Campaign:



McKinley campaigned from the front porch of his own home in Canton, Ohio. The voters came directly to him by train two times a day for campaign rallies. This method was in contrast to

McKinley's opponent, William Jennings Bryan's, tactic of giving hundreds of speeches across the country.

## Election of 1896:

The extensive use of campaign items, like buttons, and the large financial contributions made McKinley's campaign a modern political campaign. McKinley defeated Bryan. He was inaugurated as the 25<sup>th</sup> President of the United States on March 4, 1897.



## Spanish-American War:

McKinley's first administration is highlighted by the US becoming an imperial power. In 1895 Cuba began a rebellion against Spain. Public opinion, fueled by newspapers, wanted the US to get involved, but McKinley wanted to remain neutral. In 1898 the battleship U.S.S. Maine exploded, which today is viewed as an accident, but then was viewed as cause for war. After only 113 days of war, the signing of the Treaty of Paris secured Guam, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico as US possessions.

## Election of 1900:

McKinley was nominated for a second term in 1900. Garrett Hobart had died in 1899 of kidney disease so a new Vice-Presidential candidate was needed, and Theodore Roosevelt was selected. Bryan was the Democratic opponent. Americans were pleased with McKinley's first four years, and he won the election. McKinley and Roosevelt were inaugurated on March 4, 1901.

## Second Administration:

During McKinley's second term in office, he changed some of his political views. He planned to reduce tariffs which he had pushed to raise as a Congressman. McKinley also condemned the monopolies created by big business.



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*"That's all a man can hope for during his lifetime — to set an example — and when he is dead, to be an inspiration for history."*

*-William McKinley*

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## President and the Assassin:

The Pan-American Exposition was held in Buffalo, New York to promote the progress of the Western Hemisphere. After giving a speech the previous day, McKinley returned September 6<sup>th</sup>, 1901, for a public reception in the Temple of



Music. Anarchist, Leon Czolgosz approached with his arm wrapped in a sling, concealing a gun, and shot the President. Czolgosz was immediately apprehended, and McKinley was rushed to

the Exposition Emergency Hospital. The bullet in his stomach could not be located and would result in the President's death from infection 8 days later on September 14<sup>th</sup>, 1901.

## State of Ohio symbols:

After his death McKinley was recognized by the State of Ohio through the adoption of two state symbols. The scarlet carnation was declared the state flower in 1904 because wearing one in his lapel was McKinley's good luck charm. Secondly, the pennant shaped Ohio flag is like the one which flew over the Ohio building at the Pan-American Exposition where the President was assassinated.

