

# **“POLITICS DRIVES MEN CRAZY”: HOW THE NATIONALLY UNIFYING ASSASSINATIONS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND JAMES GARFIELD FACILITATED THE PUBLIC SUPPORT OF GROVER CLEVELAND’S INCREASED PRESIDENTIAL SECURITY**

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Salem, Oregon’s *Capital Journal* asked a hard and daunting question in its evening edition on the first day of 1894: “Lincoln and Garfield were assassinated by men crazed with political excitement, and filled with the insane idea of redressing the wrongs of suffering masses. Will Cleveland meet that fate?”<sup>1</sup> Within thirty years, politically motivated gunmen had assassinated two sitting U.S. presidents, and nobody wanted President-elect Grover Cleveland to become the third. Even though no Americans wanted such a disaster to occur again, the government made no changes to the personal protection of the president. Until Cleveland’s second presidency, few security protocols existed to protect the president from would-be threats and assassins, but then-President Grover Cleveland set about correcting that potentially dangerous mistake in order to protect himself and his family.

The United States government and its people initially refused to provide protection for the president because of idealistic and ideological reasons. On the first page of his comprehensive book on the history of presidential assassination attempts, historian Mel Ayton writes, “Americans were proud that their chief executive was not surrounded by an armed guard or the presence of regal trappings. They saw Europe as a place where monarchs and dictators feared their subjects and required armed protection when exiting their palaces.”<sup>2</sup> This sentiment remained deep into the nineteenth century. In fact, after both Abraham Lincoln’s and James Garfield’s assassinations, the government did not institute personal protection for the president because many considered both killings as anomalies that failed to impact America’s stability.<sup>3</sup> If a president needed to be replaced, the public would just vote the man out of office.

During Grover Cleveland’s second term as president, due to the economic downturn within the country, the president faced increased threats to his safety. In his first term, Cleveland received relatively few

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<sup>1</sup> *Capital Journal*, January 01, 1894, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ayton, Mel, *Plotting to Kill the President: Assassination Attempts from Washington to Hoover*, (Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 2017), 1.

<sup>3</sup> *New-York Tribune*, July 03, 1881, 6.

threats from unstable citizens. Grover Cleveland's second, nonconsecutive term, in contrast, faced more threats due to the economic Panic of 1893. The threats mainly came in the form of "cranks." The vast majority of cranks were mentally unstable men who had lost everything because of the economic depression and sought a meeting with their president. Presidents traditionally accepted visitors into the White House, and many of these cranks visited for a variety of reasons. Some wanted economic assistance; some felt entitled to paying positions and appointments and even the Executive Mansion itself; some desired to evangelize the president; some visitors' actions seemed to lack any reasoning at all. While many acted without violence, many also visited with dangerous intentions because these men felt Cleveland had ruined the country and their lives. Regardless of intention or action, the president faced daily potential threats, so Grover Cleveland sought better protection for first his family and then himself.

This paper argues that Grover Cleveland successfully obtained personal presidential protections because of public support. The public did not support such protections after the assassinations of Abraham Lincoln and James Garfield, even though the public met both calamities with universal sadness and outcry. After the multitude of widely publicized instances of threats against President Cleveland's well-being and safety, however, sympathy and the recent memory of both assassinations changed public opinion towards presidential protections in order to prevent a third national tragedy. People sympathized with President Cleveland and his family thanks to widespread press coverage during his second term, so Americans refused to lose a third president to another crazed gunman and supported new executive protections. Thus, President Grover Cleveland successfully augmented his safety through instituting more armed guards and White House protections.

Abraham Lincoln enjoys almost universal approval today, but the thirteenth president enjoyed anything but during his presidency. Obviously, President Lincoln faced angry opposition from southern Confederates because of his efforts to reunite the Union and free the enslaved African-Americans in southern states. Less obvious than the southern opposition, however, Abraham Lincoln also faced resistance from Northerners due to his questionable legal actions during the Civil War. Some Northern Democrats and Republicans opposed the president because of his suspension of Habeas Corpus and other laws. Other Northerners opposed Abraham Lincoln's actions of freeing those in southern bondage through his Emancipation Proclamation. Many Northerners fought and supported the war effort to reunite the country, not to free enslaved African Americans. The president, unfortunately, received flimsy security at best. Even before the war began, Lincoln received little security and even

attended an early battle of the war without protection.<sup>4</sup> The memoir of his bodyguard William H. Crook reveals that, by 1864, four Washington D.C. police officers rotated in protecting the president and only one man guarded Lincoln on the night of Lincoln's death.<sup>5</sup> An ardent southern secessionist, and not a dismayed northern opponent, however led to Lincoln's shooting in 1865.

After the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, approval and sympathy for the country's first killed president skyrocketed. Labeled as a "morbid, revengeful, melodramatic, ambitious, and irregular young man" by a contemporary, John Wilkes Booth shot the sixteenth president in a desperate last move to punish the Union in the name of an independent Confederacy.<sup>6</sup> Booth thought the assassination would save the Confederacy, but only popular backlash against the shooting occurred. Articles released after the reporting of Lincoln's murder directly reflected the shock and horror of the nation. Frantic news reports from across Northern states and territories described the horrific shooting to their concerned readers. Vermont's *Burlington Free Press* declared "frightful news" as it described the "dreadful events" in passionate detail.<sup>7</sup> In the territories, *The Montana Post* warned its readers: "Intelligence the most painful [*sic*] has flashed along the telegraphic wires to us this morning – news that is so fraught with horror that we can scarcely persuade ourselves but that we are the victims of some hideous dream."<sup>8</sup> Perhaps more importantly, border state and Democratic newspapers reflected the shock and horror. Both the *Nashville Daily Union* and *St. Cloud Democrat* decried the assassin's evil action as passionately as the Northern Republican newspapers.<sup>9</sup> This collective public grief demonstrated how the assassination unified huge swaths of the American public, even among Democratic and border state citizens. The populace, unfortunately, still refused to support any presidential protections because many regarded the shooting as a one-time aberration. None of these articles or reactions called

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<sup>4</sup> Crook, William Henry, *Through Five Administrations; Reminiscences of Colonel William H. Crook, Body-Guard to President Lincoln*, (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2004), 3.

<sup>5</sup> Crook, William Henry, *Through Five Administrations; Reminiscences of Colonel William H. Crook, Body-Guard to President Lincoln*, (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2004), 2-4,72.

<sup>6</sup> Alford, Terry, *Fortune's Fool: The Life of John Wilkes Booth*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 340.

<sup>7</sup> *Burlington Free Press*, April 21, 1865, 4.

<sup>8</sup> *The Montana Post*, April 29, 1865, 1.

<sup>9</sup> *The Nashville Daily Union*, April 15, 1865, 1. *St. Cloud Democrat*, April 20, 1865, 2.

for new increased security. Citizens still naively believed that Americans voted out hated officials, and that this assassination proved random, unique, and tragic. Democratic idealism, therefore, prevented action in 1865.

Citizens also expressed grief after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln through religious sermons and poems, many of which newspapers printed for their readers. Religious publications publicized sermons and proceedings from memorial services. *The National Preacher and Village Pulpit*, for example, published a series of sermons by Northern abolitionist preachers,<sup>10</sup> and Boston's *Liberator* and *The Monthly Religious Magazine* similarly printed religious expressions of grief.<sup>11</sup> Poems also became a popular way for writers to express their distraught feelings towards the death of the president. Many modern Americans luckily remain familiar with Walt Whitman's "O Captain! My Captain!" and "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," both of which mourn the loss of Abraham Lincoln.<sup>12</sup> The *Daily National Republican* dedicated its entire second page to a poem mourning the president's death: "So sweetly, sadly, sternly goes/The Fallen to his last repose:/Beneath no mighty dome,/but in his modest Home..."<sup>13</sup> Similar to the widespread news reports and reactions, many of these expressions of grief and hyper-patriotic lamentations found publication in newspapers across the Union, which allowed countless other Americans to access these eulogies and poems and share in the grief of losing President Lincoln.

Like Abraham Lincoln, James Garfield also faced opposition to his presidency from within his own political party. Originally chosen as a compromise candidate between two warring factions within the Republican Party, Garfield's commitment to limiting corruption and patronage resulted in opposition from Stalwart Republicans led by Senator

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<sup>10</sup> Spear, Samuel, "Sermon XVI: Our National Sorrow," *The National Preacher and Village Pulpit (1858-1866)*, May 1865. Beecher, Henry Ward, "Sermon XIV: The National Bereavement," *The National Preacher and Village Pulpit (1858-1866)*, May 1865. Gurley, Rev., "Sermon XIII: In Memoriam of President Lincoln," *The National Preacher and Village Pulpit (1858-1866)*, May 1865.

<sup>11</sup> "Address of Rev. George Putnam, D. D.," *Liberator (1831-1865)*, May 12, 1865. Dall, Caroline, "Private Expressions of Grief," *Liberator (1831-1865)*, May 19, 1865. "Random Readings: Our Great Sorrow," *The Monthly Religious Magazine (1861-1869)*, May 1865.

<sup>12</sup> Whitman, Walt, "When Lilacs Last in the Door-Yard Bloom'd," *Academy of American Poets*. Whitman, Walt, "O Captain! My Captain!" *Academy of American Poets*.

<sup>13</sup> *Daily National Republican*, May 04, 1865, 3.

Roscoe Conkling of New York. After his nomination at the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, many party opponents labeled the Ohio congressman as a "Coward, Bribe-taker, Charlatan, Lobbyist, and Renegade Preacher."<sup>14</sup> In his biography of Garfield, Baptist minister and eventual founder of Temple University Russell Conwell wrote that, even after the convention, "Stories were conceived in the purest malice, and enlarged upon by the campaign orators and writers, would not die with repeated killings [*sic*]...General Garfield was compelled to stand silently and immovably before all detractors, enemies, and scandal-mongers, and receive without retaliation all the poisonous darts they incessantly hurled at him."<sup>15</sup> Clearly, President Garfield did not receive total support from the entirety of the Republican Party until after his martyrdom.

Democrats, who supported General Winfield Scott Hancock for the presidency, frequently demonized Garfield's past apparent connections to congressional corruption. James Garfield, unfortunately, found himself involved in several of the famous political corruption scandals of post-Civil War America. Democratic opponents used these scandals to paint Garfield as a corrupt politician to the electorate, especially in the press.<sup>16</sup> Concerning the DeGloyer Scandal, Garfield found himself exonerated by the chairman of the congressional committee of investigation, Rep. Jeremiah M. Wilson of Indiana decided "There was not in my opinion any evidence that would have warranted any unfavorable criticism upon his conduct."<sup>17</sup> Concerning the Credit Mobilier Scandal, James Garfield quickly denied any wrongdoing and any knowledge of any wrongdoing. The "connection" formed from the fact that the young congressman only briefly argued on behalf of the Credit Mobilier Company in a contract dispute as a favor to a friend because the original lawyer missed the case.

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<sup>14</sup> Conwell, Russell, *The Life, Speeches, and Public Services of James A. Garfield, Twentieth President of the United States: Including an Account of His Assassination, Lingering Pain, Death and Burial*, (Portland, Me.: George Stinson, 1881), 331.

<sup>15</sup> Conwell, Russell, *The Life, Speeches, and Public Services of James A. Garfield, Twentieth President of the United States: Including an Account of His Assassination, Lingering Pain, Death and Burial*, (Portland, Me.: George Stinson, 1881), 331-332.

<sup>16</sup> *The Daily Constitution*, May 12, 1880, 2. *The Daily Constitution*, June 9, 1880, 1. *The Daily Constitution*, June 11, 1880, 3. *The Daily Constitution*, June 18, 1880, 1.

<sup>17</sup> Conwell, Russell, *The Life, Speeches, and Public Services of James A. Garfield, Twentieth President of the United States: Including an Account of His Assassination, Lingering Pain, Death and Burial*, (Portland, Me.: George Stinson, 1881), 247.

Conwell again wrote, "So completely was the scandal silenced, and so straightforward and open was General Garfield's course that the reaction soon came in his favor, and... fell harmless at his feet. His life of truthfulness and unstained reputation for integrity and honor were of great value to him..."<sup>18</sup> After the deeply slandering and polarizing election of 1880, James Garfield won the presidency but did not gain sweeping popularity until after his killing.

James Garfield's assassination, similarly to Abraham Lincoln, resulted in mass public grief and outcry concerning the national tragedy. Gunman Charles Guiteau shot an unprotected Garfield in a train station. In his memoir, William Crook, who still served as a presidential bodyguard but was not with Garfield when Guiteau shot the president, described Guiteau as an "angry man."<sup>19</sup> Through newspapers, one can experience the panicked sorrow of the American people. The *Chicago Daily Tribune's* headline from one article perfectly encapsulate the chaotic and panicked state of the Union: "The People: How the News of Black Saturday Fell upon Them. A Cry of Horror Went Up from Maine to California. Meetings of Grief-Stricken People Throughout the United States. Fourth of July Celebrations Turned to Pageants of Grief and Gloom... Chicago Stricken with Sorrow and Horror to the Heart's Core. The News Received with Every Manifestation of Deep Grief. Thronging Crowds Besieging 'The Tribune' Office Eager for News."<sup>20</sup> The presses glorified Garfield as a perfect martyr for his country, even equaling Lincoln: "President Garfield was a true patriot, a man of commanding ability, and a devout Christian. A nation is in tears. No President save the immortal Lincoln, ever died so deeply, so universally lamented."<sup>21</sup> Papers even published multiple anguished reactions from across the country, from both Republican and Democratic states.<sup>22</sup> Through newspapers, one also notices the lack of advocacy for change. Even with all of this public outrage, none of these articles discussed increasing personal security for the president. The

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<sup>18</sup> Conwell, Russell, *The Life, Speeches, and Public Services of James A. Garfield, Twentieth President of the United States: Including an Account of His Assassination, Lingering Pain, Death and Burial*, (Portland, Me.: George Stinson, 1881), 272.

<sup>19</sup> Crook, William Henry, *Through Five Administrations; Reminiscences of Colonel William H. Crook, Body-Guard to President Lincoln*, (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2004), 267.

<sup>20</sup> *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 3, 1881, 6.

<sup>21</sup> *Western Christian Advocate*, September 21, 1881, 300.

<sup>22</sup> *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 3, 1881, 7. *New York Times*, July 03 1881, 5. *The Daily Constitution*, July 3, 1881, 1. *New York Times*, July 05 1881, 5. *New York Times*, July 05 1881, 6. *The Evening Critic*, July 04, 1881, 1.

newspapers reflected the nation's opinion that elected leaders do not need to fear assassination. All of these articles and others from across the nation mourned and remembered the President in the same exact way they depicted Lincoln: as a national hero who died for his adoring nation.

The public also expressed its collective pain through memorial services and poems. Many of the eulogies and poems found publication in newspapers for consumers. Such widespread publications of grief only intensified the national sorrow, but the national sorrow failed to translate into a call for increased protection for the president. Americans instead expressed their grief and failed to acknowledge the need for real change to prevent future executive tragedies. Periodicals printed countless poems that grieved and glorified the recently slain president.<sup>23</sup> Across the country, churches and civic groups held memorial services in commemoration of President Garfield.<sup>24</sup> Many of the sermons and eulogies reflected the sadness, shock, horror, and grief of the American public and the initial articles printed after Garfield's shooting: "In thousands of families hearts are bleeding and tears are falling, and from thousands of hearthstones prayers are going up for this stricken and affected country."<sup>25</sup> One newspaper even printed images with Garfield and Lincoln together. One by M.J. Scanlon, for example, shows the two men captioned: Our

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<sup>23</sup> *Littell's Living Age*, October 29, 1881, 194. *The Phrenological Journal and Science of Health* November 01 1881, 226. *The Independent ... Devoted to the Consideration of Politics, Social and Economic Tendencies, History, Literature, and the Arts*, September 1, 1881, 3. *Massachusetts Ploughman and New England Journal of Agriculture*, September 17, 1881, 4. *Advocate of Peace*, October 1881, 3. *The Independent ... Devoted to the Consideration of Politics, Social and Economic Tendencies, History, Literature, and the Arts*, October 6, 1881, 26. *The Independent ... Devoted to the Consideration of Politics, Social and Economic Tendencies, History, Literature, and the Arts*, October 6, 1881, 4.

<sup>24</sup> *James Abram Garfield, Twentieth President of the United States, Died September 19th, A. D. 1881. Memorial Services at Evans Hall, Evansville, Indiana, Monday Afternoon September Twenty-Sixth, A. D. 1881*, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/rbpe.0190120a/?sp=3>. *In Memory of the Late President of the United States, James A. Garfield, Saenger Hall, Grand Rapids. Monday Evening, September 26, 1881*, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/rbpe.0840270l/?st=text>. *The New England Farmer, and Horticultural Register*, September 24 1881, 2. *New York Evangelist*, December 22, 1881, 8. *Memorial Services. James Abraham Garfield, Born November 19th, 1831. Died September 19th, 1881 President of the United States*, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/rbpe.1360120a/>.

<sup>25</sup> *New York Times*, July 04 1881, 8.

Martyred Presidents.”<sup>26</sup> These poems, sermons, and images chose to honor the dead men instead of calling on a way to prevent future killings. The City of Boston performed an especially touching memorial service led by some of the city’s most important civil servants, such as Nathaniel P. Banks who eulogized, “Few men in the history of the House of Representatives have acquired a higher reputation, and none will be more kindly and permanently remembered... He fought a good fight; he finished his course; he kept the faith; he paid the penalty; he receives his reward according to the sacred presage and promise of God.”<sup>27</sup> The assassinations of both presidents caused an important unifying backlash from the vast majority of the American populace, but the resulting reactions only mourned the deaths and did not include any calls to prevent future assassinations.

Regardless of political or geographical affiliation, the virtual entirety of the country lamented the deaths of both men as basic attacks against the country. These newspaper articles that glorified these presidents as perfect martyred American citizens came from every state and territory from both Republican and Democratic newspapers. *The Daily Constitution*, for example, deeply mourned the shooting of President Garfield, even though months earlier, the Atlanta Democratic newspaper labeled him “DeGloyer Garfield” and criticized the candidate as “A creature of pity who begs for mercy from his judges.”<sup>28</sup> The assassination of a president, clearly, causes the country to unify around the tragedy, even between passionate supporters and opponents. Neither assassination, however, brought any changes to presidential security because Americans still considered assassinations as unrealistic in a democracy. After both assassinations, citizens held onto the deluded idea that all voters would always choose a new president in the next election to replace an ineffectual one. This idealism lacked a real understanding that Booth and Guiteau failed to conform to this idealism and utilized violent means. The “universal” love of democratic processes that “all” Americans shared did not prove true with the psychopathic and violent fringes of society, which mainstream citizens failed to recognize. Future presidents, consequently, remained exposed to potential unstable assassins.

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<sup>26</sup> Scanlan, M.J., “Our Martyred Presidents,” <https://www.loc.gov/resource/pgs.08247/>.

<sup>27</sup> Boston City Council, *A Memorial of James Abram Garfield: From the City of Boston*, (Boston: Printed by order of the City Council, 1881), 75, accessed from the John. J. Burns Library at Boston College.

<sup>28</sup> *The Daily Constitution*, July 3 1881, 1. *The Daily Constitution*, June 9, 1880, 1. *The Daily Constitution*, June 13 1880, 1.

Throughout Grover Cleveland's two separate terms, the New York president repeatedly faced threats against his life. Even during his tenure as governor of New York, while walking to the state house alone and without any guards, a crazed man tried to bash Cleveland's skull in with a rock.<sup>29</sup> As president, Cleveland experienced fewer attacks and threats against his life during his first term than during his second term. During the first term, many threats came from men who came to the White House looking for President Cleveland. Some men who tried to forcefully enter the White House did so out of religious fervor. One man, for instance, claimed to be the "red-man" from the Book of Revelations who "makes and un-makes the presidents!"<sup>30</sup> In situations that should have reminded Americans of Garfield's assassination, many threats to Cleveland in his first term came in the form of White House visitors who demanded civil service positions.<sup>31</sup> One could argue that these first term interlopers entailed no real danger, but some men truly wanted to harm the president, which contradicted Mel Ayton's earlier assessment that only Europeans killed their leaders. The *New York Times* ran an article about a violent man arrested in Washington D.C. who explicitly "declared his intention of killing Grover Cleveland."<sup>32</sup> All cranks posed potential threats to the safety and well-being of the president and his family within the White House.

During Grover Cleveland second term, however, because of the economic downturn, the amount of threatening cranks increased dramatically. The majority of these mentally unstable men arrived at the White House because of hardship caused by the economic downturn. While many men believed that the president could help fix their economic troubles, many men blamed Grover Cleveland for their hardship and exacted revenge through attempted assault or even murder. Obviously dissatisfied with Cleveland's presidency, one man who demanded the job of president itself told apprehending officers, "...I intend to get it [the presidency] by fair means or foul. Give me a pistol and you'll see how I'll get it quick."<sup>33</sup> The economic downturn especially harmed Westerners who in turn opposed Grover Cleveland and instead supported Populists. While Westerners and Populists supported the implementation of silver coinage to increase inflation, Cleveland and other conservative "Bourbon

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<sup>29</sup> *The Sun*, October 21 1884, 1.

<sup>30</sup> *The New North-West*, June 10, 1887, 1.

<sup>31</sup> *Boston Daily Globe*, May 2, 1889, 7. *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 24, 1886, 12.

<sup>32</sup> *New York Times*. November 14 1889, 1.

<sup>33</sup> *St. Paul Daily Globe*, September 29, 1893, 1.

Democrats” wanted the United States to remain on the deflationary gold standard. Washington police arrested one former miner from Idaho, for example, because of his plan to kill Grover Cleveland for the president’s role in harming mining interests,<sup>34</sup> and an excellent article from Montana’s *Anaconda Standard* criticized the flippant threats uttered against President Cleveland by Westerners because of the threats’ potentially disastrous consequences.<sup>35</sup> The economic downturn, ultimately affected everyone in the nation, and some of those who could not handle the stresses of poverty and its implications turned to Cleveland for either help or vengeance.

In order to solve their economic hardships, many cranks arrived at the Executive Mansion looking for financial assistance or a paying appointment in the government. According to New York’s *The Evening World*, two men forced themselves into the White House demanding the payment of a \$150,000,000,000 debt that the Federal Government apparently owed the men.<sup>36</sup> Although a far more polite and reasonable request, when Sam’l H. Smith asked for \$1.50 from the White House “to get something to eat and go home,” White House staff promptly handed Smith off to the Third Precinct Station-House.<sup>37</sup> Some unstable cranks, many of who probably lacked a home, demanded ownership of the Executive Mansion itself.<sup>38</sup> The *Evening Star* and other papers published articles that included instances of men who forced themselves into the White House with the intention of receiving a government appointment from Cleveland.<sup>39</sup> Thanks to widespread publication by national and local newspapers, citizens frequently learned of the run-ins between cranks and Cleveland. Many of these instances, for example, tended to reflect the assassination of James Garfield by Charles Guiteau; considering that Guiteau’s shooting only occurred about fifteen years earlier, the majority of informed Americans, presumably, understood this parallel. These parallels reminded many of the sorrow the nation endured after the last killed president, which aided in turning public opinion towards supporting more security for the president. One, consequently, can understand why the amount of cranks seeking financial assistance skyrocketed in Cleveland’s economically disastrous second term.

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<sup>34</sup> *The Indianapolis Journal*, November 05, 1893, 1.

<sup>35</sup> *The Anaconda Standard*, October 30, 1893, 4.

<sup>36</sup> *The Evening World*, October 02, 1893, 2.

<sup>37</sup> *The Washington Times*, March 18, 1894, 4.

<sup>38</sup> *Grand Rapids Herald*, September 30, 1893, 1. *The Washington Post*, January 2, 1894, 1.

<sup>39</sup> *Evening Star*, October 14, 1893, 12. *Kansas City Journal*, September 28, 1897, 2.

Finally, and probably the most upsetting, some mentally unstable cranks even came looking for Cleveland's family. Regardless of her innocent role as the First Lady, cranks and threats did come to Mrs. Cleveland. One article from *The Chicago Daily* listed a manhunt by New York police for a "delusional" and "dangerous" Philadelphia crank who believed "...that Mrs. Grover Cleveland has been delegated to care for him for the remainder of his days."<sup>40</sup> Grover Cleveland's wife and children sometimes retreated to a home in Buzzard's Bay in Massachusetts for vacation or to get away from the hustle and bustle of the nation's capital. In *The Plots to Kill Grover Cleveland*, historian Mel Ayton lists a plot in which kidnapers planned to abduct and ransom the president's young children from the Massachusetts's home.<sup>41</sup> Any American parent reading of the event in newspapers, regardless of their political affiliation or economic status, would have sympathized with president and father Grover Cleveland. Therefore, when news surfaced of the increased protections authorized by the president for himself and his family, many American citizens remembered all of these threats against the first family and generally accepted the need for increased security. Americans finally understood that even elected officials need security.

The American press widely exposed these reports of cranks and plots against the president and his family all across the United States. As evidenced by the sources in the last several paragraphs, large and small newspapers in every area of the nation reported on cranks that threatened the safety of the president. Every citizen in the country, therefore, knew of the threats against President Cleveland. Large newspapers in New York and Washington even did large stories on how the White House handled these interlopers security-wise. As one could expect from sensationalist journalism designed to sell more papers, articles dramatized non-dangerous cranks. The harsh reality that Grover Cleveland frequently faced dangerous men who threatened himself him and his family became all too apparent to almost every citizen, and none of these Americans wished for Grover Cleveland to become the country's third killed president.

As evidenced by frequent references to recent presidential assassinations in the articles about President Grover Cleveland, many Americans remembered the devastating expressions of post-assassination national sorrow. One must remember when reading these articles that President Lincoln's death only occurred about thirty years before Cleveland's second term, and President Garfield's assassination only

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<sup>40</sup> *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 1, 1896, 5.

<sup>41</sup> Ayton, Mel, *Plotting to Kill the President: Assassination Attempts from Washington to Hoover*, (Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 2017), 150.

occurred about fifteen years earlier. The memories of national sorrow remained fresh in the memories of millions of United States citizens who experienced at least one if not both assassinations. In an article about a man who stalked President Cleveland, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* wrote that Albany police arrested Nathan Schuler "...for fear that he might be a possible Guiteau..."<sup>42</sup> *The Washington Post* even titled an article about a crank who demanded a political office "Just Like Guiteau."<sup>43</sup> Therefore, articles easily reminded readers of the universal emotional backlash that occurred after Lincoln and Garfield's deaths. Readers remembered the panicked newspaper reports, published poems and eulogies, memorials, and church services for the seemingly perfect morality of both presidential martyrs. This national sorrow caused many American citizens to sympathize with Grover Cleveland and allow the increase in his personal security.

Massive national sympathy facilitated the acceptance of Grover Cleveland's increased personal security. As the second term dragged on and the threats and cranks continued to affect the White House, Grover Cleveland requested and received more personal protections for the presidency. *The Hartford Herald* pointed out that "No other President has ever been so closely guarded from dangerous cranks as is Mr. Cleveland now. The precautions taken for his protection are unprecedented." The article also described the several men, some of them armed, a visitor must first encounter before meeting the president.<sup>44</sup> *The Indianapolis Journal* published an article on both the influx of cranks and the new security to combat the problem. The journalist noted how, when leaving the Executive Mansion, the president no longer ventured about Washington D.C. alone, and how armed guards in a separate carriage followed the president's now-closed carriage: "There never were half so many detectives and policemen and safeguards thrown about the President as now, and that he is shadowed wherever he goes."<sup>45</sup> According to Ayton, many undercover special detectives and policeman protected the president as Secret Service officers.<sup>46</sup> Even the Executive Mansion dramatically increased its security in order to protect the president and his family.<sup>47</sup> Thankfully for the Cleveland family, the people accepted these radical, new security improvements. Some complained of their extremeness, but the majority of

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<sup>42</sup> *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 24, 1886, 12.

<sup>43</sup> *The Washington Post*, November 24, 1886, 1.

<sup>44</sup> *The Hartford Herald*, November 01, 1893, 1.

<sup>45</sup> *The Indianapolis Journal*, November 10, 1893, 5.

<sup>46</sup> Ayton, Mel, *Plotting to Kill the President: Assassination Attempts from Washington to Hoover*, (Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 2017), 1.

<sup>47</sup> *The San Francisco Call*, November 23, 1895, 2.

voters recognized their growing necessity as Americans became more and more cognizant of the security issues that Grover Cleveland faced everyday. One could even speculate how Cleveland's presidency may have transpired, or even ended, without these crucial additions to his security.

Unfortunately for President Cleveland, not all of the presidential protections remained in place. Some Republican opponents criticized Cleveland in newspapers for acting cowardly. These articles, however, failed to sway the nervous conscious of the American public. The pain of losing two earlier great presidents in Abraham Lincoln and James Garfield still freshly lingered in the hearts and minds of millions of Americans.

Many articles that criticized Cleveland's actions even ironically invoked the memories of Lincoln or Garfield, which would no doubt remind readers of their beloved presidents' killings: "No chief executive in our history, not even Lincoln at the wildest period of the war, was ever so surrounded by security guards as is Mr. Cleveland."<sup>48</sup> Ultimately, American citizens understood the petty nature of the political attacks by some Republican operatives and congressmen; American citizens also realized the importance of protecting the president. After the assassination of President William McKinley in 1901 by Leon Czolgosz, Congress failed to pass seventeen bills that aimed to protect the president even further, so the Secretary to the President and the Treasury Department expanded the duties of the Secret Service to protecting the president.<sup>49</sup> Finally, the government, although not Congress, successfully acted to reflect popular opinion, and the United States president enjoyed permanent, comprehensive, and competent personal protection. At the City of Boston's memorial service for James Garfield, the City Council decreed that, "The government of the country is never seriously disturbed by the death of any of it officials."<sup>50</sup> After any presidential assassination, the United States will continue to survive, but, the government must nonetheless protect its president in order to facilitate the country's success, and modern presidents have President Grover Cleveland to thank for their effective protection.

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<sup>48</sup> Ayton, Mel, *Plotting to Kill the President: Assassination Attempts from Washington to Hoover*, (Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 2017), 1.

<sup>49</sup> *Excerpts from the History of the United States Secret Service, 1865-1975*, (Washington: Dept. of the Treasury, 1978) 16.

<sup>50</sup> Boston City Council, *A Memorial of James Abram Garfield: From the City of Boston*, (Boston: Printed by order of the City Council, 1881), 12, accessed from the John. J. Burns Library at Boston College.