Vinton, Frederic (1817-1890), collector.

Collection of newspaper accounts concerning the assassination of President Garfield, and the trial of Charles Guiteau.

(Ex) Oversize 10862.378.37e

A Finding Aid Prepared by Paula B. Entin

Department of Rare Books and Special Collections Princeton University Library 2004
Collection of Garfield and Guiteau.

Introduction

Scrapbook consists of newspaper accounts of President James A. Garfield's assassination, and the subsequent trial of Charles Julius Guiteau.

Range of collection dates: 1881

Size: 1 portfolio (188 pieces)

Language: English

Provenance: Frederic Vinton.

Restrictions: Unknown.

Photocopying, literary rights, and citation: Single photocopies may be made for research purposes. No further photoduplication of copies of material in the collection can be made when Princeton University Library does not own the original. Permission to publish material from the collection must be requested from the Associate University Librarian for Rare Books and Special Collections. The library has no information on the status of literary rights in the collection and researchers are responsible for determining any questions of copyright. Citations should be as follows: Frederic Vinton. Collection of newspaper accounts concerning the assassination of President Garfield, and the trial of Charles Guiteau, no. #, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.
Collection of Garfield and Guiteau.

Scope Note

The single newspaper issues are contemporary accounts that cover the assassination of the president and the resulting political issues. On July 2, 1881, after only four months in office, Garfield was shot in the back at the railroad station in Washington, D.C., by Charles J. Guiteau, a disappointed office seeker who wanted the Stalwart Chester A. Arthur to be president. Because of an ambiguity in the Constitution, opinion was divided as to whether the vice president was empowered by the Constitution to assume the powers and duties of the office of president, or merely serve as acting president until Garfield recovered. Because Congress was not in session, the problem could not be resolved in Congress. On September 2, 1881, the matter came before a cabinet meeting, where it was finally agreed that no action would be taken without first consulting Garfield. But in the opinion of the doctors this was impossible, and no further action was taken before the death of the president, the result of slow blood poisoning, on September 19th. Chester Alan Arthur became the 21st president of the United States.

After Garfield’s funeral, Guiteau's trial began. The trial lasted from 13 November 1881 to 5 January 1882. The bizarre antics of the defendant who sang, raved, and interrupted the proceedings at will, may have been intended to support the defense's contention that Guiteau was insane. However, the jury ruled him guilty after deliberating for only an hour and five minutes. The trial served as a showcase for the infant discipline of psychiatry, and it underlined the deficiencies of the prevailing M’Naghten rule, which held that defendants could be deemed legally insane only if they failed to understand the consequences of their actions. By that standard Guiteau was clearly sane, despite his apparent derangement. He was hanged in Washington, D.C., on 30 June 1882.
Collection of Garfield and Guiteau.

Arrangement

Materials are organized chronologically.

Leaf: Issue:
4. “The President better: No change for the worse up to Midnight.” The Sun, New York (vol. 48, no. 309), July 6, 1881.
10. “Hourly increasing hope: The President’s chance for life said to be much better.” The Sun, New York (vol. 48, no. 317), July 14, 1881.
11. “Another good day: The President free from fever and eating solid food heartily: An authentic account of Guiteau’s proceeding leading up to the crime.” The World, New York (vol. 22, no. 7269), July 15, 1881.
13. “Passing the danger line: Questions as to the actual condition of the President.” The Sun, New York (vol. 48, no. 321), July 18, 1881.
Collection of Garfield and Guiteau.

23. “Still better reports: The President sleeping and eating well and a gradual increase in strength plainly observable.” The World, New York (vol. 22, no. 7286), August 1, 1881.
27. “Steadily improving: The President passes another quiet day on the road to convalescence.” The World, New York (vol. 22, no. 7287), August 2, 1881.
Collection of Garfield and Guiteau.

43. “The President: His condition scarcely changed from that of yesterday: Hoping for the best: The present weakness due to an inability to take food naturally: The physicians reticent: Apprehensions felt all over the country lest the relapse might prove fatal.” The World, New York (vol. 32, no. 7302), August 17, 1881.
52. “A gloomy day: The President extremely weak and gaining no strength from the nourishment.” The New York World, New York (vol. 32, no. 7310), August 26, 1881.
Collection of Garfield and Guiteau.

60. “Yet another day gained: The President no stronger, but holding his own.” The Sun, New York (vol. 48, no 364), August 30, 1881.
63. “Returning confidence: The President begins to gain strength slowly and to take solid food again.” The New York World, New York (vol. 22, no. 7317), September 1, 1881.
64. “The President doing well: A slight gain of strength said to be perceptible.” The Sun, New York (vol. 49, no. 1), September 1, 1881.
69. “Taking the one chance: Completing arrangements for the President’s removal.” The Sun, New York (vol. 49, no. 5), September 5, 1881.
72. “At rest by the sea: The President safely moved in seven hours to Elberon.” The New York Herald, New York (no. 16452), September 7, 1881.
75. “The President very weak: A high fever that fatigue and the heat do not explain.” The Sun, New York (vol. 49, no. 8), September 8, 1881.
Collection of Garfield and Guiteau.

82. “Fearing the worst again: An abscess upon the President’s right lung discovered.” The Sun, New York (vol. 49 no. 12), September 12, 1881.
83. “No better, no worse: Comfortable day passed by the President.” The New York Herald, New York (no. 16460), September 16, 1881.
85. “Another good day: The President eating and sleeping well and his cough gradually leaving him.” The New York World, New York (vol. 22, no. 7332), September 16, 1881.
87. “Surgeon Bliss outvoted: A bulletin that tells the truth about the President.” The Sun, New York (vol. 49 no. 16), September 16, 1881.
Collection of Garfield and Guiteau.

102. “At home: Cleveland honoring the dead President” and “Pulpit wreaths: The great theme upon which ministers discoursed yesterday.” The New York Herald, New York (no. 16471), September 26, 1881.
103. “Ready for the interment.” The Sun, New York (vol. 49 no. 26), September 26, 1881.
107. “New Jersey – The late President’s last view of the ocean from his reclining chair at Elberon.” Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper, New York (vol. 53 no. 1357) October 1, 1881.
110. “Funeral of the martyr-president at Cleveland, Ohio.” Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper, New York (vol. 53 no. 1559), October 15, 1881.
Collection of Garfield and Guiteau.


123. “The Garfield Autopsy: Dr. Lamb relates the manner in which the bullet was found” and “Stories about Guiteau.” The New York Times, New York (vol. 30, no. 9430), November 28, 1881.


Collection of Garfield and Guiteau.

137. “What Dr Spitzka thinks: Satisfying that the Assassin is Insane.” The New York Times, New York (Vol. 31, no. 9443), December 13, 1881, p.2
154.** Can’t find an article in New York Times, New York, (Vol. 31, no. 9460) January 2, 1882
Collection of Garfield and Guiteau.


186. “A Last Plea for Guiteau: Mr. Scoville Presents Points Against the Conviction and Withdraws from the Case.” The New York Times, New York, Monday, (Vol. 31, no. 9556) April 24, 1882


188. “Expiation: Charles Guiteau Hanged for the Murder of the President.” The Washington Post, Washington DC, (No. 1539) Includes portraits of Rev. W.W. Hicks, The Assassin’s Clergyman; Last photograph of Guiteau; President Garfield shortly after the murder; engravings of The Last Prayer in the Cell; Exterior View of the Jail; The Death Watch; The Procession to the Gallows; The Scaffold. June 30, 1882