

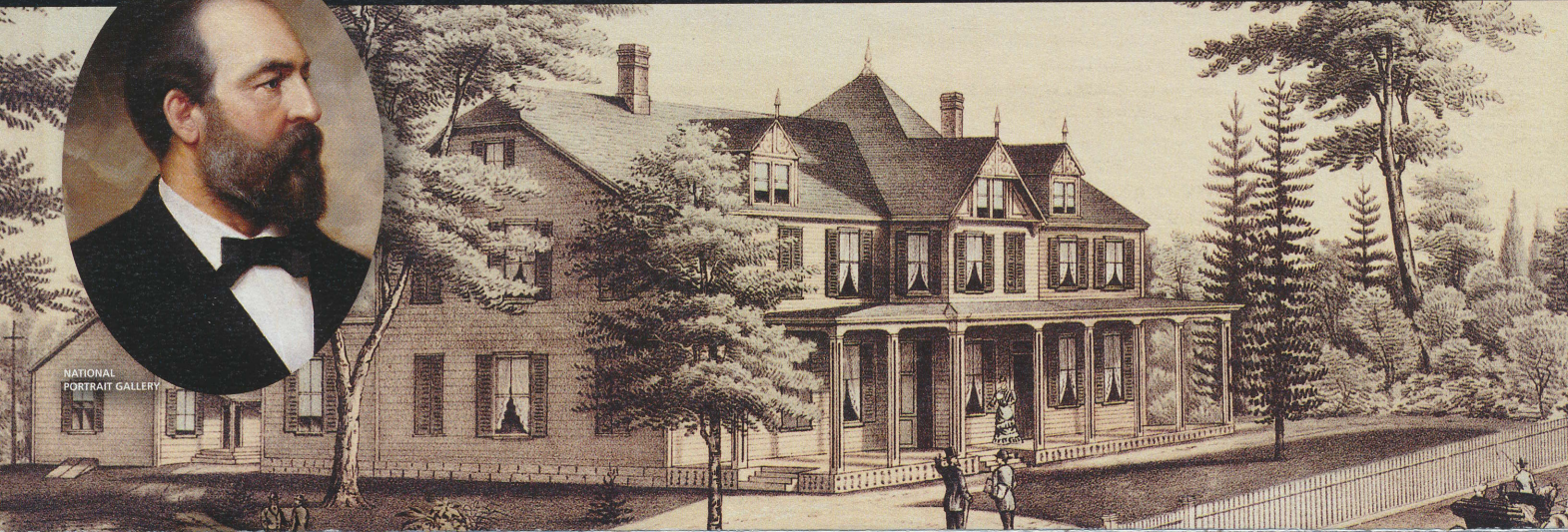
James A. Garfield

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

National Historic Site
Ohio



NATIONAL
PORTRAIT GALLERY



James A. Garfield (*inset*) changed the style of presidential politics with his "front porch" campaign, conducted from his Mentor, Ohio, home, shown here as it appeared in 1880.

WESTERN RESERVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FROM LOG CABIN TO WHITE HOUSE



James A. Garfield and Lucretia Rudolph at the time of their engagement in 1858.

WESTERN RESERVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY



James Garfield purchased the Mentor farm from Harriet Dickey in 1876. In 1880 he enlarged the main house from the modest one-and-a-half story building with nine rooms seen here to the 20-room structure shown on the cover (*above*).

HIRAM COLLEGE



The Garfields about 1880. The president's mother, Eliza Ballou Garfield, to whom he was devoted, is at far right.

LAKE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

By the time of his death at age 49 in 1881, James Abram Garfield had been a teacher, college principal, minister, state legislator, lawyer, Civil War general, congressman, U.S. senator-elect, and president of the United States. Born in Orange Township, Ohio, in November 1831, he was the youngest of four children born to Abram and Eliza Ballou Garfield, who had carved a farm out of the frontier of Ohio's Western Reserve. When James was almost two his father died, leaving the family in poverty. At age 16 James took a job as a canal boat tow boy on the Ohio canals. His canal career ended after six weeks when he contracted malaria and had to return home.

In 1851 James entered the Western Reserve Eclectic Institute (later Hiram College) in Ohio. In 1854 he enrolled at Williams College in Massachusetts, graduating with honors in 1856. Garfield's speaking ability gained him leadership positions, including principal of the Eclectic Institute in 1857. That same year he began preaching in northeast Ohio. In 1858 he married Lucretia Rudolph and was elected to the Ohio Senate on an antislavery platform in 1859.

When the Civil War began in 1861, Garfield became lieutenant colonel of

the 42nd Ohio Volunteer Infantry. Given brigade command in 1862, he won minor victories in Kentucky and was promoted. In the fall of 1862 these and other military accomplishments led to his election to the U.S. House of Representatives. Congress did not meet until December 1863, so he remained with the army as chief of staff to Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans through the Chickamauga campaign in 1863.

Garfield's congressional career began in December 1863 and lasted 17 years. As head of the House Appropriations Committee from 1871–75, he managed the country's finances, reduced government spending, and fought inflation. He pushed for civil service reform to end abuses of the patronage system. He took a moderate stance on protective tariffs, a major issue in the 1880 campaign.

Elected to the U.S. Senate in January 1880, he was asked to nominate John Sherman for president at the Republican National Convention in Chicago. When the convention deadlocked, Garfield became the nominee. He was elected 20th U.S. president in November and inaugurated in March 1881. His term was cut short on July 2 when he was assassinated by Charles Guiteau, a political fanatic. Garfield died September 19.

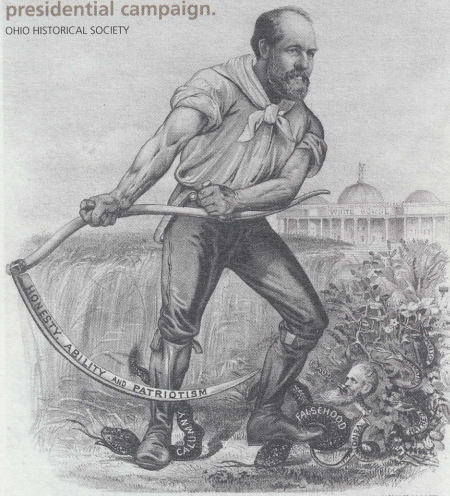
James A. Garfield.

NPS

A CAREER TIMELINE

This Currier & Ives political cartoon portrays candidate Garfield as a farmer cutting away weeds of waste and corruption in his 1880 presidential campaign.

OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY



FARMER GARFIELD

Cutting a Swath to the White House.

1831 Born Nov. 19, the last U.S. president born in a log cabin.

1848 Works as canal boat tow boy on Ohio canals for six weeks.

1849 Enters Geauga Seminary in Chester, Ohio.

1851 Enters Western Reserve Eclectic Institute (now Hiram College) in Hiram, Ohio.

1854–56 Graduates from Eclectic Institute. Enrolls in Williams College, Williamstown, Mass.; graduates in two years.

1857 Becomes principal of Eclectic Institute; becomes a Disciples of Christ minister.

1858 Marries Lucretia Rudolph, Nov. 11.

1859 Elected to Ohio Senate; studies law.

1861 Admitted to bar; Civil War begins; appointed Lt. col., 42nd Ohio Infantry.

1862 Wins battles in Kentucky; is promoted brig. gen. at Battle of Shiloh, Tenn.; elected to U.S. Congress.

1863 Appointed chief of staff to Gen.

William S. Rosecrans; resigns from army to take seat in 38th Congress.

1865 Appointed to Smithsonian Institution Board of Regents.

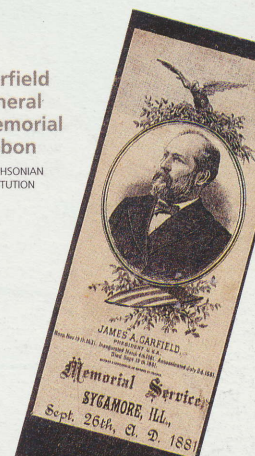
1871–75 Heads House Committee on Appropriations.

1880 Elected to U.S. Senate; nominated for president; begins "front porch" campaign at Lawnfield; elected president.

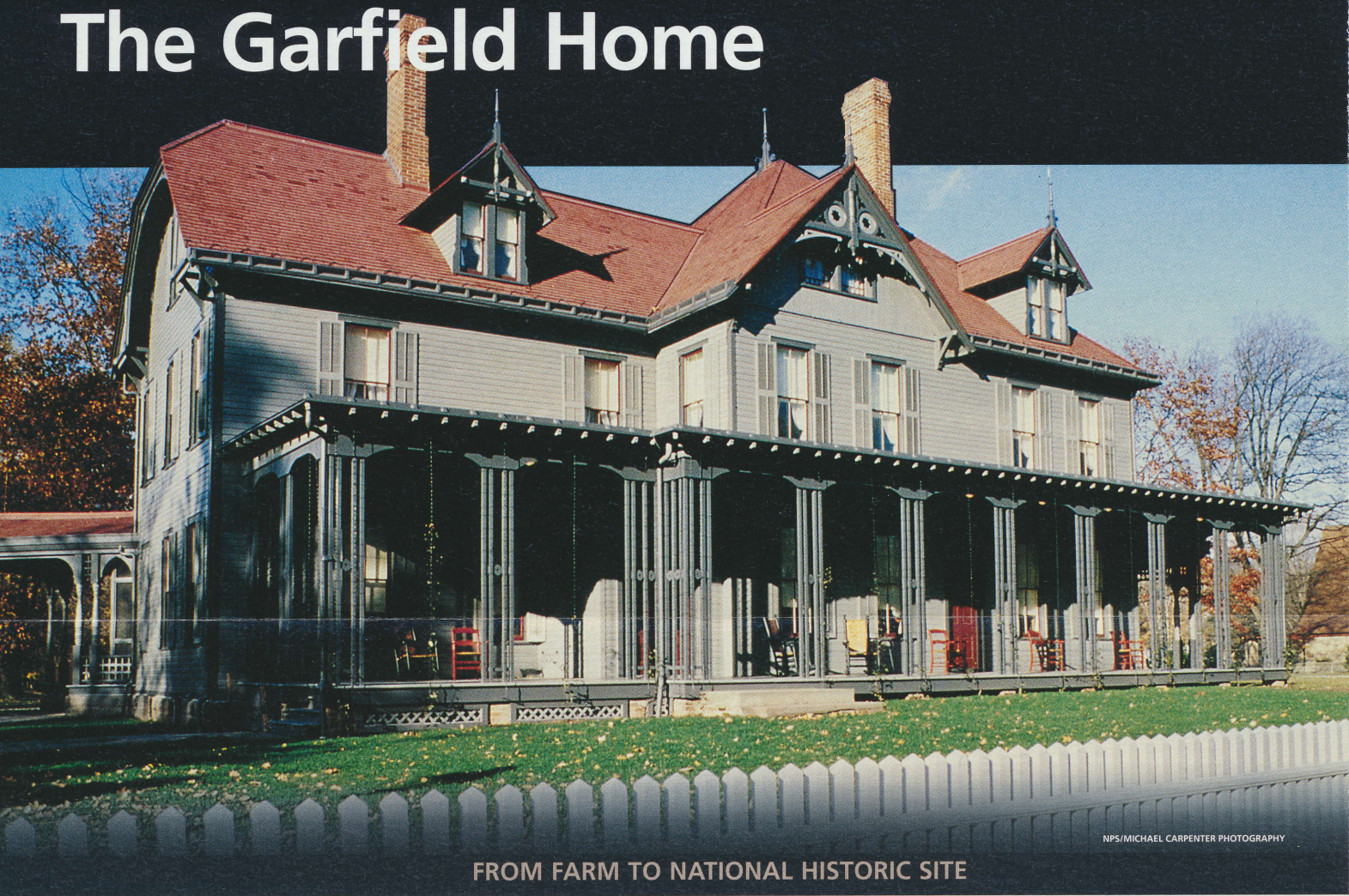
1881 Inaugurated president in March; shot by Charles

Guiteau on July 2; dies in Elberon, N.J. on September 19; buried in Lake View Cemetery, Cleveland, Ohio, Sept. 26.

Garfield funeral memorial ribbon
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION



The Garfield Home



NPS/MICHAEL CARPENTER PHOTOGRAPHY

FROM FARM TO NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE



James Garfield called his wife Lucretia "one of the coolest and best-balanced women I ever saw." After his death, she remained in mourning the rest of her life and actively made Lawnfield the focus of extended family life.

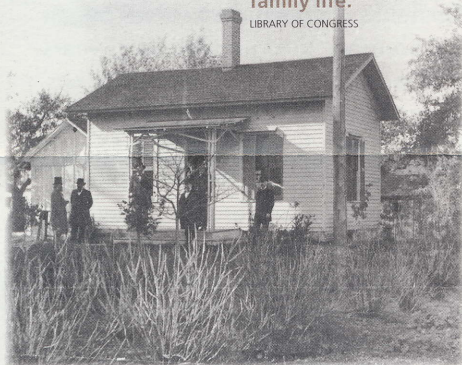
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

When James A. Garfield bought the Dickey farm in November 1876 he hoped it would become a place "where I can put my boys at work, and teach them farming" and "where I can touch the earth and get some strength from it." The property had been neglected and needed repairs. By the spring of 1880, Garfield had improved the landscape and transformed the nine-room, one-and-a-half-story farm house into an impressive 20-room, two-and-a-half-story structure.

In the summer of 1880 the farm—reporters named it Lawnfield—became the backdrop for Garfield's successful presidential bid. He broke from the tradition of previous candidates who remained in the background during the election process and began a precedent-setting "front porch" campaign, paving the way for future candidates to actively seek the presidency. Dignitaries, students, well-wishers, and political supporters came by horse, buggy, and train to hear the Republican Party's candidate talk about patriotism, protective tariffs, labor, and other issues of the day. During the campaign the center of activity was a small library building that Garfield converted into his headquarters, equipping it with a telegraph to send and receive messages (above middle).

Promoting a Legacy After the president's assassination, Lucretia Garfield and her family lived comfortably at Lawnfield and made improvements to the property, thanks to contributions from the American public. In the 1880s she added a wing to the main house to serve as a presidential library, a vault to safeguard her husband's books and papers, and a monument to her martyred husband's memory. She oversaw construction of a farm overseer's residence; a gasholder to provide fuel for cooking, heating, and lighting; a chicken coop; a carriage house; and a windmill to supply water. She also relocated the 1877 horse barn, one of the few structures remaining from Garfield's time, and the granary, which most likely dated to when the Dickeys owned the farm.

Lucretia Garfield died at her winter home in California on March 13, 1918, at age 85. After her death Lawnfield remained in family ownership until 1936 when it was donated to the Western Reserve Historical Society. In 1980 Congress authorized the national historic site; today it is owned and maintained by the National Park Service to preserve the legacy of the 20th president of the United States.



WESTERN RESERVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Garfield once kept books and papers in the small building he used as his 1880 campaign office (above middle). His books are now in the Memorial Library (above) that Lucretia added to the main house in 1885–86.

NPS/MICHAEL CARPENTER PHOTOGRAPHY

PLANNING YOUR VISIT



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James A. Garfield National Historic Site is open daily May through October, and Saturday and Sunday November through April; it is closed Thanksgiving Day, December 25, and January 1.

Visitor Center At the visitor center in the carriage house you will find information, exhibits, a video, restrooms, and a bookstore.

What To See and Do The site includes the main house and memorial library (by guided tour only), the 1880 campaign office, 1893 carriage house, other

outbuildings, and windmill. Most furnishings in the main house are original to the Garfield family.

Guided Tours Tours of the main house are scheduled regularly; space may be limited. Call for details about fees and schedules.

Fees Like many national parks, James A. Garfield National Historic Site collects fees that support programs and preservation projects.

Accessibility The visitor center, restrooms, and first and second floor in the main house are wheelchair accessible.

Nearby Garfield Sites (see map at left)

- James A. Garfield birthplace site. Moreland Hills Historical Society maintains a replica cabin (open weekends in summer). A trail leads to the site of the birthplace cabin. Contact: 440-248-1188.
- James A. Garfield Monument and burial site. Lake View Cemetery. Contact: 216-421-2665; www.lakeviewcemetery.com.

More Information James A. Garfield National Historic Site 8095 Mentor Avenue Mentor, OH 44060 440-255-8722 www.nps.gov/jaga

James A. Garfield National Historic Site is one of over 390 parks in the National Park System. To learn more about national parks and National Park Service programs in America's communities, visit www.nps.gov.



Garfield Monument
LAKE VIEW CEMETERY