

William McKinley

(1843–1901)

A U.S. representative from Ohio and 25th president of the United States, William McKinley was born in Niles, Ohio. After service in the Civil War, he studied law and moved to Canton, Ohio, to set up practice. McKinley was elected to the U.S. Congress as a Republican in 1876 and remained in the House of Representatives, with the exception of one term, until 1891. He lost his congressional reelection bid in 1890, but with the help of businessman Marcus Hanna he was elected governor of Ohio the following year.

With Hanna's continued support, Governor McKinley became the Republican candidate for president in 1896. He campaigned on a platform supporting the gold standard, and defeated free-silver advocate William Jennings Bryan. McKinley's pro-business administration supported the Dingley Tariff, which levied high duties. His term also was marked by an increasingly aggressive foreign policy, which included annexing the Philippines and Puerto Rico and establishing an Open Door policy with China. Reelected in 1900, McKinley was assassinated a year later by a political dissident at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York.



Sculptor Emma Cadwalader Guild had long wished to model her fellow Ohioan, President William McKinley, but his busy schedule had not permitted a sitting. National grief after his death led to popular sentiment favoring an appropriate memorial of the late president in the U.S. Capitol. So the artist, who had abandoned hope for her project upon the president's death, now resolved to create a posthumous bust instead. She collected all available photographic images and began the model. She worked on the McKinley bust in a studio in Athens, Ohio, covering the walls with images of the late president for inspiration. Guild studied each picture carefully and then removed it from the wall. "Finally but two were left, one representing her subject while he was Governor of the commonwealth, making a public address, and the other a picture which was made of him at a little dinner party at Senator Hanna's Cleveland residence. With these two pictures she completed her study."¹

The likeness was then cast in New York, and with the support of the Ohio congressional delegation, the bronze was brought to the Capitol for approval. The Joint Committee on the Library was subsequently authorized to pay the artist \$2,000 and to place the bust in the Senate wing of the Capitol. With the acquisition of the McKinley bust, the artist was "granted the unusual honor of placing it on display in the President's room."²

Emma Cadwalader Guild was born in Zanesville, Ohio, in 1843. Largely self-taught, she spent much of her artistic career in Europe, establishing studios in London, Berlin, and Italy. Early works include a bronze figure of a standing African American man entitled *Free*, a marble bust of British statesman William Gladstone, a bronze of English artist George F. Watts, and a relief of Cardinal Henry Edward Manning. While initially Guild was relatively unknown in the United States, her bust of the late President McKinley, as well as a bust of Abraham Lincoln, brought the artist new recognition in her native country. In 1904 she exhibited at the Louisiana Exposition in St. Louis and won a bronze medal. Other important U.S. projects, including a bust of Andrew Carnegie, were to follow.

The bust of President McKinley as originally displayed in the President's Room in the Capitol, ca. 1910.

(Architect of the Capitol)

William McKinley

Emma Marie Cadwalader Guild (1843-1911)

Bronze, 1901

29½ x 18½ x 14½ inches (74.9 x 47 x 36.8 cm)

Signed and dated (on subject's back between shoulders): Emma / Cadwalader / Guild / Sculpr. / 1901

Inscribed (on back lower left side of base): COPYRIGHTED 1902

Founder's mark (on back lower left side of base): THE HENRY-BONNARD BRONZE Co. / FOUNDERS. N.Y. 1901.

Inscribed (on front of base): MCKINLEY

Purchased by the Joint Committee on the Library, 1903

Cat. no. 24.00004

