Pendleton Act

The death of “To the victor belong the spoils...”
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- Involved patronage and nepotism
- William Marcy, supporter of “OK,” on the topic of giving jobs to friends and supporters, in 1831:

“\textit{They boldly preach what they practice. When they are contending for victory, they avow their intention of enjoying the fruits of it. If they are defeated, they expect to retire from the field. If they are successful, they claim, as a matter of right, the advantages of success. They see nothing wrong in the rule that to the victor belong the spoils of the enemy.”}
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Garfield’s Assassination

• Garfield was the first victim of this policy
• A new president’s first job? Filling 1000’s of federal jobs with people who deserved it.
• Charles Guiteau was rejected for several jobs, and became bitter.
• He shot Garfield on July 2, 1881, and he died months later.
• Guiteau was executed for his crime, although he likely was insane.
Pendleton Act (1883)

Passed to require Civil Service examinations for federal jobs, including postal workers and most federal government employees (90%). Workers must pass a test to be employed, and may not be fired for political reasons. Does not include members of the armed services, FBI, or diplomats. Ended the “spoils system” of government.