Cleveland's Public Square around 1900 at the time of the Grand Army of the Republic Parade.

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The 1900 presidential election pit- ted McKinley against William Jen- nings Bryan, who spoke at a meeting in downtown Cleveland on Oct. 13 of that year. During his speech, Bryan criticized Hanna and complained about a proposal that the United States build a permanent army of at least 10,000 men. Hanna was a supporter of a back during the campaign when he failed to turn over the nomination of Teddy Roosevelt as McKinley's vice presi- dent. The two clashed on several issues, including states' rights. Despite the bad blood between Hanna and Roosevelt, McKinley was re-elected by a comfortable margin.

Jan. 31: The Marquess of Queens- berry, creator of the rules of boxing, most of which are still in use today, dies at the age of 60.

Feb. 8: The United States and Great Britain sign a treaty giving the United States the right to construct a canal across the isthmus of Panama.

March 14: Congress passes the Curtin-Farey Act, which revised the national postal rate standard for all U.S. money. The move dealt a setback to the pre-silver forces, led by William Jennings Bryan.

March 24: Ground is broken for New York City's first subway. The $36 million project will link Manhattan with Brooklyn by tunneling the East River.

June 29: In China, the Imperial government issues a decree that is interpreted as a declaration of war against foreigners, clearing the way for the Boxer Rebellion and the murder of hundreds of foreign missionaries.

Sept. 8: WithBoer resistance col- lapsed, Britain annexes the Republic of South Africa.

Nov. 6: President William McKin- ley is re-elected.

Born in 1900: Oscar Wilde.

Editor's Note: For the next 150 fun- days, beginning today, this page will look back at each year of the 1890s. In chronological order and with an emphasis on Greater Cleveland, our century not only will examine the events that made news, but will attempt to give a sense of what life was like at times long past. Although many sources were drawn upon for the material used in this Column, special note may be made of two important works: "Cleveland: The Making of a City," by William Gawom Rose, and The Rockefeller Encyclopedia of Cleveland History."

At a Glance

Rockefeller's largess helped Cleveland

Oil baron John D. Rockefeller's charitable legacy continued to benefit Cleveland's downtown. On Feb. 29, the Alt House, at the time a nursing home and today an apartment house, was dedicated in the city's Little Italy neighborhood. Alt House, still located at 1235 Mayfield Rd., was named after Rockefeller's daughter, Alt Rockefeller. Rockefeller also donated $30,000 for construction of the arch that spanned the four corners of Superior Ave. in Rockefeller Park.

Lakewood was Cleveland's largest suburb with a population of 3,521.

Deeming's history meets the future

Cleveland today is the nation's 28th-largest city, up from the 57th-largest, and easily surpassed Cincinnati as Ohio's_popu- lation center.

In 1900, Cleveland's population stood at 1,400,000. A decade later, that figure had swollen to 1,582,968. The population of Cuyahoga County was 1,582,968.

Cleveland's population included about 120,000 immigrants, with the largest ethnic group being Germans. There were also large numbers of Poles, Ukrainians and Jews.

Farley was the city's most important industry employers, 700,000 workers. Cleveland also was the nation's largest producer of iron, steel, and coal. Cleveland was a major center of the production of auto parts, pumps, printing presses, steam engines, machines and heavy equipment parts, as well as rubber, glass, soap and cement caps and New York in the manufac- ture of women's and children's clothing.

As Cleveland prospered, the city naturally became a banking center. 15 banks were founded between 1890 and 1900, many of them neighborhood banks.

As it stood today, Public Square was the heart of Cleveland's downtown in 1900. Only a few years earlier, Cleve- landers regularly had burned their money. Clevelanders had burned their money on the Stock Exchange, but the homeless corned was chang- ing that. In fact, after back in 1900, downtown business leaders began complaining the smoke from those contrabands was damaging Public Square's beautiful trees.

Then, like today, progress had its price.

"Honest John" Farley was Cleve- land's mayor in 1900. A former mem- ber of City Council, Farley first was elected mayor in 1895, but after serving one term, he left office to accept an appointment by President Grover Cleveland as collector of internal rev- enues. In 1899, Farley was elected to another two-year term and, late that year, asked the state militia to help Cleveland police maintain order dur- ing a strike against a streetcar company.

Farley was a competent mayor, but his presence was dwarfed by the two most dominant figures in the history of Cleveland politics - Tom J. John- son and Marcus Hanna.

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