

OUR CENTURY

1904

AT A GLANCE

Polls close early, but Republicans still win

Thousands of Clevelanders had to choose between their jobs and their right to vote on Nov. 8. The Republican-controlled state legislature had passed a law closing the polls in Cleveland and Cincinnati at 4 p.m., 1½ hours earlier than the rest of the state.

As a result, there were long lines outside voting booths in the morning, and many men (the only voters in those days) gave up because they had to get to work.

The Republicans needn't have bothered. President Theodore Roosevelt easily carried the state in winning a full term over the lackluster Alton B. Parker. William Jennings Bryan, who had lost the previous two elections to William McKinley, campaigned for Parker across Ohio and drew bigger and more enthusiastic crowds than the candidate.

The man who personified politics in Cleveland, Sen. Mark Hanna, died on Feb. 15.

Hanna controlled the legislature and, as campaign manager, engineered the election of McKinley as president. But in his home city, he was no match for Mayor Tom L. Johnson.

Two straight days of rain caused the Cuyahoga River to flood on Jan. 23. The Nickel Plate Railroad Bridge was carried away and ships were swept into the lake. Total losses: \$500,000.

Cleveland's baseball team — renamed the Naps after its new star, second baseman Napoleon Lajoie — was the preseason favorite to win the 1904 American League pennant. Lajoie lived up to his billing by hitting .381 to lead the league.

But the team had trouble staying above .500. In a game against the New York Highlanders, the Naps made 10 errors. Lajoie was thrown out of a game against the Chicago White Sox when he flung his wad of well-chewed tobacco at the umpire.

The village of Linndale, along Bellaire Rd., was annexed to Cleveland in April — all but a few blocks, which survived as Cuyahoga County's smallest municipality and, later, most notorious speed trap.

Barney Oldfield, in a Winton Bullet, and a rival named Mooers, in a Peerless, competed for the right to represent America in the Bennett Gold Cup Race in Germany by racing up and down the length of Clifton Blvd. on May 5.

Oldfield got the Winton up to 75 mph, but it broke down after 66 miles. The Peerless covered 51 miles before it, too, broke down, forcing an early end to the trial.

The age of the bicycle wasn't over. On May 22, an "old timers' run" down Euclid Ave. brought out 2,000 riders, some on high-wheelers. The Plain Dealer said the apparently unending line of wheelmen made it look "as if bicycles have become a fad again."

William Ganson Rose wrote, "There were gray-haired, bearded riders wearing derbies, and younger men with caps. Some of the mustaches might have served as handlebars. There were long-skirted, shirt-waisted and pompadoured women, and boys in overalls."

The Labor Day Parade on Sept. 6 drew 15,000 marchers. The number of Cleveland unions had swelled to 100: 62 affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, 14 with the Knights of Labor and 24 unaffiliated.



PLAIN DEALER FILE

The original Hermit Club, before it was torn down in 1948.

New this year: The Park Building, the Austin Co., Highland Park Cemetery, the City Infirmary in Warrensville Township, the Hermit Club, the Cleveland High School Athletic Senate and the Western Reserve University School of Library Science (closed in 1986).



WESTERN RESERVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The notorious — and devious — Cassie Chadwick, above, poses in front of her Euclid Ave. home, and below, stands in front of her husband's practice. She convinced nearly everyone that she was the illegitimate daughter of multi-millionaire Andrew Carnegie.



Swindler tricks a city

Forged Carnegie check seals fate for infamous Cassie Chadwick

By Fred McGunagle

Cassie Chadwick's Euclid Ave. home was a showplace, full of fine furniture, fine art and drawers full of jewels. Just what one would expect from one of the wealthiest women in America.

And Cassie was generous. She once bought eight grand pianos as gifts for friends. She took a dozen young society women on a trip to Europe. She put department store clerks to whom she took a liking through college. At Christmas, she bought out toy stores and sent the toys to orphanages.

And then, on Nov. 26, 1904, the Cleveland Press broke the story: Cassie Chadwick was a fraud.

She had been born 47 years earlier in Eastwood, Ontario, where, at age 22, she was charged with forgery. A sympathetic judge found her not guilty by reason of insanity. Moving to Toledo, she became a fortune teller named Lydia De Vere and, in 1890, was sentenced to the Ohio Penitentiary for forgery.

Paroled three years later, Cassie moved to Cleveland as Mrs. C.L. Hoover. In 1897, at the age of 40, to widespread surprise, she married Dr. Leroy S. Chadwick, a widower who was the scion of a prominent Cleveland family.

Over the century, the legend of Cassie Chadwick has been gilded, especially by John S. Crosbie in a 1975 book called "The Incredible Mrs. Chadwick."

Crosbie's inventions routinely have been picked up in newspaper and magazine stories. Yet the truth about how Chadwick amassed her fortune — and a reputation as one of America's greatest swindlers — is fantastic enough to need no embellishment.

She persuaded a lawyer for the Rockefeller family to accompany her on a "delicate personal errand" to New York, where they stopped their carriage in front of the mansion of Andrew Carnegie. She went inside and 20 minutes later emerged with a package under her arm.

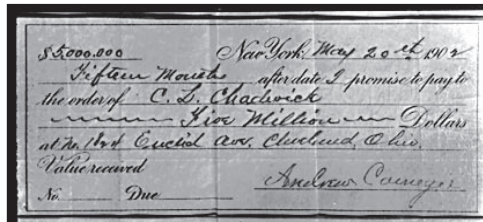
The lawyer coaxed Chadwick into revealing her secret: She was really the illegitimate daughter of America's richest man, and the package contained millions of dollars' worth of securities.

As Chadwick expected, the lawyer did not keep the matter completely confidential, and so, when she showed up at the Rockefeller-owned Wade Park Bank, she was welcomed with open arms. Her package was put in the vault. The bank even gave her a receipt for the securities without opening the package.

The receipt, plus judicious sharing of her "secret," was all Cassie needed to persuade banks around the country to lend her millions. The legend is

that she had hypnotic powers, but it really was just greed; she willingly paid high interest rates and often gave the banker a finder's fee for himself.

In April 1905, newspapers from around the country sent reporters here to cover the "trial of the century." The jury needed only one bal-



WESTERN RESERVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Chadwick enjoyed signing checks with Andrew Carnegie's name. This \$5 million check was written in 1902.

lot to convict Chadwick of forgery. She was sentenced to the Ohio Penitentiary, where she died two years later at the age of 50.

Banks around the country were shaken by their losses, but only one went out of business. The day the first story appeared was the last day of business for the 46-year-old Citizens National Bank of Oberlin: Its president, Charles L. Beckwith, had loaned Chadwick \$240,000 — four times the capital of his own money, virtually his entire fortune.

Beckwith's reputation was that of the quintessential small-town banker, tight-fisted but of unquestioned integrity. He had fallen for Chadwick's story, and when he started to develop doubts about it, was again taken in by the security of a check for \$500,000 made out to "C.L. Chadwick" by "Andrew Carnegie." It was that check, passed from juror to juror, that sent Chadwick to prison.

The day the bank failed to open, a reporter went to Beckwith's modest home, which bore a sign saying "Rooms for Rent Here." He was distraught; when a friend sent him flowers, he burst into tears: "Is it still possible I have one friend left? Is it possible that there is still a single person in the world who has a kindly feeling for me?"

Beckwith insisted that Chadwick would make good her note and depositors would be repaid. When Carnegie repudiated the note, Beckwith nearly collapsed.

"I am a broken, dishonored old man," he sobbed. "It is now too late. All is lost."

His health rapidly declined. He drifted in and out of delirium, once calling out, "If I could relieve the sorrow and suffering that I caused, I could die in peace." Beckwith prayed he could die before his trial for violations of banking laws, which was set for April. On Feb. 5, 1905, two months to the day after his indictment, his prayer was answered.

McGunagle is a Cleveland-area writer.

LOOKING AT A YEAR

Feb. 10: Russia and Japan declare war two days after a successful Japanese attack on Russian warships off Korea. President Theodore Roosevelt says the United States will remain neutral.

June 23: The Republicans nominate Roosevelt to run for a full term in office.

Aug. 17: Vowing to rid their neighborhood of "obnoxious Negroes," an angry mob of white men burns two

black men at the stake in the rural town of Statesborough, Ga.

Aug. 31: At the third modern Olympics in St. Louis, athletes from the United States win 21 of the 22 track events.

Sept. 30: Orville and Wilbur Wright silence their critics with a dazzling exhibition of their flying machines in a field near their hometown of Dayton. But the brothers continue to have difficulty convincing the Army that

their machine has military uses.

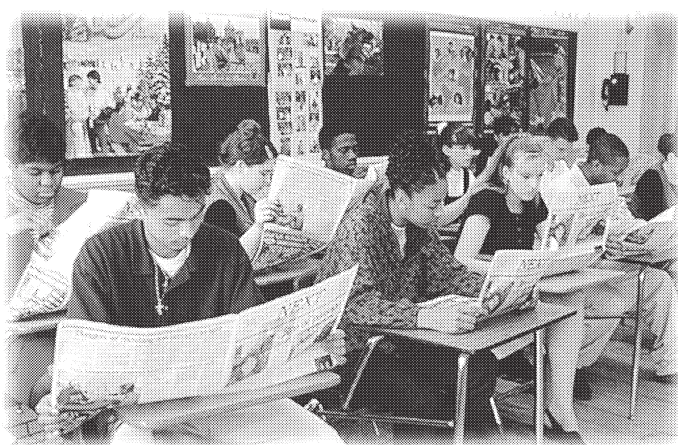
Oct. 27: New York's subway is opened as 15,000 invited guests take advantage of free rides on the nation's first underground railway.

Dec. 10: Russian physiologist Ivan Pavlov wins the Nobel Prize for his use of a dog to study the nature of the digestive process.

Born: Chinese Premier Deng Xiaoping; nuclear scientist J. Robert Oppenheimer; actors Archibald

Leach (Cary Grant) and Bing Crosby; musician Glenn Miller; artist Salvador Dali; Watergate Judge John Sirica.

Died: Confederate Gen. James Longstreet; Zionist movement founder Theodor Herzl; Czech composer Anton Dvorak; African explorer Henry Stanley; French sculptor Frederic-Auguste Bartholdi, designer of the Statue of Liberty; Isabella, former queen of Spain.



Teach history as it happens with the most up-to-date text in the world.

The Plain Dealer's Newspaper In Education (NIE) program is the perfect educational supplement to the learning process. You can use it to teach a variety of subjects at any grade level from kindergarten through adult education. With NIE, copies of The Plain Dealer are delivered to your classroom each morning. Plus all teacher aids are supplied by The Plain Dealer. When added to your students' overall curriculum, The Plain Dealer:

- Deals in reality and gets students interested in reading
- Examines history as it happens
- Provides news stories as models for clear, concise writing
- Helps prepare students for Statewide proficiency exams

For more information about The Plain Dealer's Newspaper In Education program, call (216) 999-4419 or 1-800-NIE-NEWS.

THE PLAIN DEALER
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES