

OUR CENTURY

1920

AT A GLANCE

Industry helps Cleveland grow

Cleveland had become the fifth-largest city in the United States. The 1920 census put population at 796,841, up 236,000 from 1910, but 14,000 below the estimate for 1918, when migrants had flooded into the booming war factories.

Cuyahoga County's population stood at 943,945, up 306,000. The suburbs had added 97,000 people since 1910, even though a number of them had been annexed by Cleveland. Immigration had stopped, but the birth rate was high and the death rate was dropping: Life expectancy was 54 years, up five years since 1900.

The city's 125,000 buildings included 410 churches, 23 banks, 76 hotels — and no saloons. Twelve blast furnaces earned Cleveland the sobriquet "the Sheffield of America." Though Detroit was by then the Motor City, Cleveland's auto industry employment had grown to nearly 19,000, second only to the 33,000 in foundries and machine shops. Half of the 600 ore boats on the Great Lakes were owned or managed in Cleveland. There were 92,000 autos registered in the county.



Allen

Mayor Harry L. Davis resigned in May to campaign for governor, and under the charter, Law Director William S. Fitzgerald succeeded him. In November, Davis defeated Democrat Vic Donahey. In a race that pitted two Ohioans, Warren Harding defeated James Cox for president; Harding was the seventh Ohioan of the last 11 presidents.

Among the other winners: Florence Allen for Common Pleas judge. It was the first election in which women were eligible to vote and hence eligible to run for office.

Law and order seemed to be breaking down in Cleveland; seven policemen were murdered in 1920 and 1921, and robberies were commonplace. In December, Wilfred Sly, president of the W.W. Sly Co., and George Fanner, his superintendent, had picked up the company payroll from a bank as was their custom and were driving back to the factory.

When they turned south on W. 47th St. from Lorain Ave., another car smashed into theirs. As neighbors hurried out of their houses to see what had happened, Sly and Fanner were slain in "a hail of gunfire," and six men sped away with the payroll. Eventually, five were caught and convicted, the last in 1935.

A crime in February was equally shocking: The entire faculty of Parma High School was murdered. The faculty consisted of Louise Wolf and Mabel Foote, who were walking from the school on Ridge Rd. to the State Rd. streetcar line two miles east along a rural dirt road that is now Ridgewood Dr.

The attacker used tree saplings and a fence post to beat them to death. It appeared that either of them might have escaped had she deserted the other, but their bodies were found together. Flesh torn from the murderer was under Louise Wolf's fingernails.

In March, Arthur Ihlenfeld was arrested, convicted on scanty evidence and sent to Lima State Prison for the Criminally Insane. Doubts about his guilt persisted.

A wave of bank mergers culminated in the formation of the Union Trust Co., the fifth-largest bank in the nation. In 1924, Union built a 21-story office building at E. 9th St. and Euclid Ave. with "the most impressive banking lobby in the country" on the main floor. The bank failed during the "bank holiday" of 1933. The building is now the Huntington Bank Building.

Financier Josiah Kirby bought the Rockefeller Building and renamed it the Kirby Building. When his Cleveland Discount Co. collapsed in 1923, he went into bankruptcy and took with him the Cleveland Yacht Club, whose finances were entangled with his. He was sent to prison for mail fraud. Rockefeller bought back the Kirby Building and changed its name back to Rockefeller.

The census showed Cleveland fourth in the nation in home ownership. The Cleveland Public Library circulated more books per capita than any other big-city library system. Cleveland ranked first among the 10 largest cities in the percentage of 7- to 13-year-olds who were in school and second in 13- and 14-year-olds.

All eyes on the Indians

Ray Chapman killed by pitch; team wins the World Series

By Fred McGunagle

It was a year of triumph and tragedy. The tragedy came first.

The Indians had been in a nip-and-tuck battle for first place with the White Sox and the Yankees almost since Opening Day. On Aug. 16, the Tribe was in the Polo Grounds facing the Yankees. The Yankee pitcher was Carl Mays, a "submariner" with a reputation for throwing at batters who crowded the plate.

The Indians' Charley Jamieson led off the fifth with a single to left. That brought up shortstop Ray Chapman, who led the league in sacrifice bunts and who regularly leaned into the strike zone with his bat near his head.

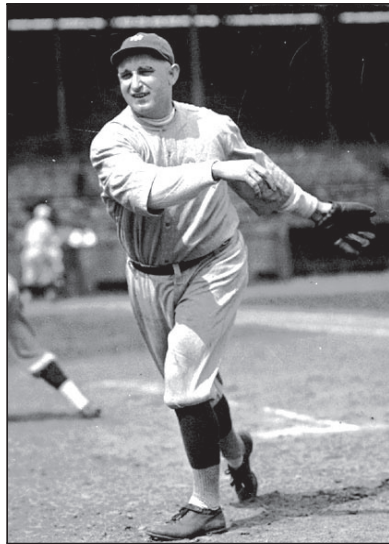
Mays' hand nearly scraped the mound as he sent a fastball heading upward toward the inside corner. Chapman stood as though hypnotized. The ball struck his left temple and, with a dull thud, rolled toward the mound. Mays, thinking it had hit the bat, ran in to field it, but Chapman slowly crumpled to the ground. He was rushed to a nearby hospital for surgery, but sank into a coma.

At 4:40 a.m., Ray Chapman died. Chapman had been the heart of the Indians, often leading them in sing-alongs on train trips. They were devastated. Manager Tris Speaker and Jack Graney, Chapman's roommate, were too upset to attend the funeral four days later. Thousands of Clevelanders, unable to crowd into St. John Cathedral, stood silently in the streets outside.

Speaker could not bring himself to rejoin the team for days. The Indians lost seven of the next nine games. It was as though their will to win had died with Chapman.

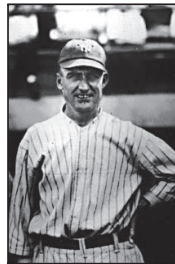
But the White Sox also had gone into a tailspin, and the Indians pitchers kept the team in the race: Jim Bagby was to win 31 games, Stanley Coveleskie 24, and Ray "Slim" Caldwell, 20. Needing a left-hander to go with them, on Aug. 25 the Indians picked up Walter "Duster" Mails from Portland of the Pacific Coast League. Mails proceeded to go 7-0 the rest of the season.

When Chapman's replacement, Harry Lunte, hurt his leg on Labor



PD FILE

The Yankees' Carl Mays.



PD FILE

At right, the Indians' Elmer Smith. At right, Jim Bagby.

Day, the Indians put in a desperation call to New Orleans for 5-foot-6, 155-pound Joe Sewell, who had been playing for the University of Alabama only four months before. With Sewell hitting .329, Cleveland would win 14 of its last 17 games.

On Sept. 12, the Indians led the Yankees by .0003 of a percentage point — .6190 to .6187. But the White Sox went on a tear, sweeping a three-game series from New York and winning two of three in League Park to pass the Yanks and come within a half-game of the Tribe.

Then came the bombshell. On Sept. 28, a grand jury indicted eight White Sox players for taking bribes to throw the 1919 World Series to the Reds. Owner Charles Comiskey immediately suspended them. The Indians swept a four-game series from the St. Louis Browns and split four with the Detroit Tigers to finish two games ahead of the White Sox and three ahead of the Yankees.

That meant they would face the Brooklyn Dodgers in the World Series. In "The Pitch That Killed," Mike Sowell relates that on the train to New York, Doc Johnson, the first baseman, started singing "Dear Old Girl." It had been one of Chapman's favorites. Several other players quickly joined in.

Coach Jack McCallister turned to a reporter. "You know," he said, "this is the first time the boys have done any singing since Chappie died."

With their strong pitching staff and with 10 hitters at .300 or above, topped by Speaker's .388, the Indians were series favorites. Their tragedy made them sentimental favorites.

The nine-game series was to start in Cleveland, but temporary bleachers being added to League Park weren't ready, so the first three games were in Brooklyn's Ebbets Field. Coveleskie threw a five-hitter and Speaker made two sensational catches in a 3-1 Cleveland win. But Burleigh Grimes, who still was allowed to throw a spitball, shut Cleveland out, 3-0, in Game 2, and an error by Sewell in Game 3 led to a 2-1 loss.

The Indians came back to what had been rechristened Dunn Field and, wearing new white uniforms with a black armband for Chapman, beat the Dodgers 5-1 behind another Coveleskie five-hitter. That evened the series and set the stage for what would be called the greatest game in series history to date.

It was a Sunday, and thousands who couldn't get into the park stood on the streets around it, reacting to the cheers of the lucky 26,684 fans in-



PLAIN DEALER FILE

The Brooklyn Dodgers defeated Cleveland in the second game of the World Series at Ebbets Field in 1920. In this photo, a Cleveland baserunner is called out after getting caught off second in the second inning.

side. Downtown, thousands more filled E. 6th St. alongside The Plain Dealer, where a reporter at an upstairs window relayed a play-by-play report as he got the word from the scene.

In the first inning, the Indians loaded the bases and Elmer Smith homered high over the screen in right. The cheer was heard for blocks and, as word spread, echoed all over Cleveland. It was the first grand slam in World Series history. In the fourth, Jim Bagby hit a fly ball that just made it into the temporary bleachers in right center for a 7-0 Indians lead. It was the first World Series homer by a pitcher.

The cheers barely had died down as the fifth inning started and the first two Dodger batters singled. Clarence Mitchell followed with a line drive that looked like another hit. But second baseman Bill Wambsganss — known as "Wamby" — broke to his

right, speared the ball, stepped on second and turned to see the runner from first stopped in amazement a few feet from second. He tagged him for an unassisted triple play. The Indians won, 8-1.

The following day, Mails threw a three-hitter and Speaker scored the only run of the game. Speaker unhesitatingly picked Coveleskie to pitch Game 8 on one day's rest. He pitched his third five-hit victory, 3-0. The fans stormed on to the field to surround their heroes. The Indians had won the World Series, and the thrilling series had won back fans across the country disgusted by the Black Sox.

Bill Wambsganss remains the only player to turn in an unassisted triple play in the World Series. Ray Chapman remains the only player killed in a major league game.

McGunagle is a Cleveland freelance writer.



PD FILE

The plaque honoring Ray Chapman in the old Stadium.

LOOKING AT A YEAR

Jan. 5: The Boston Red Sox sell promising young pitcher George Herman Ruth to the New York Yankees for \$125,000.

Feb. 24: A small group of unhappy German war veterans forms the German Workers Party. Its propaganda chief is Adolf Hitler.

June 13: William "Big Bill" Tilden

becomes the first American man to win the Wimbledon tennis championship.

July 28: In return for a promise that his life will be spared, legendary bandit Pancho Villa surrenders to Mexican authorities.

Aug. 26: Women win the right to

vote with ratification of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution.

Dec. 10: Woodrow Wilson wins the Nobel Peace Prize for his work in restoring war-torn Europe.

Dec. 14: The British House of Lords approves the division of Ireland into two territories.

Dec. 31: Man o' War, winner of 20

of 21 races, is retired to stud.

Born: Pope John Paul II (Karol Wojtyla); Sugar Ray Robinson (Walker Smith); Farouk I, future king of Egypt; Isaac Stern, Mickey Rooney (Joe Yule Jr.).

Died: American explorer Robert Peary, German economist and social scientist Max Weber.

COME SEE NEWS IN THE MAKING

Get a behind the scenes look at The Plain Dealer with our guided tours of the Tiedeman Production and Distribution Center. You will see the latest in state-of-the-art printing and distribution technology, and even learn the history behind Ohio's largest newspaper. Get all the details on the tour that's making headlines.

For Tour Information Call 999-5665

THE PLAIN DEALER

News from around the world and around the corner.

