

OUR CENTURY

1905

AT A GLANCE



PD FILE

Cleveland Press carriers in front of the Barlow Agency on Woodland Ave.

Journalists compete for the big stories

After the clip-clop of horses, the most common sound in downtown Cleveland at the beginning of the century was the shouting of newsboys — in several languages. There were six English-language dailies, and the German *Wächter und Anzeiger* had a comparable staff and circulation; the Hungarian *Szabad-zag* was to go daily the next year.

The age of consolidation began in 1905 when Charles Otis Jr. merged the *Herald*, the *World* and the *Evening Plain Dealer* into the afternoon *News*. At the same time, Otis and Medill McCormick bought the morning *Leader*. With the morning *Plain Dealer* and the afternoon *Press*, Cleveland was down to four English dailies.

The news gatherers were as competitive as the newsmen. When Cassie Chadwick returned from New York to stand trial for swindling, the marshal's carriage left the railroad station surrounded by carriages full of reporters and photographers.

The procession moved off, but when the marshal tried to evade it by heading for the back door of the federal building, his carriage became bogged down amid coal drays and mail wagons. Police had to clear the way while spectators crowded around and boys on rooftops dropped cakes of snow on them.

In March, seven members of an Engineers Battalion of the Ohio National Guard were killed and many injured in a train wreck near Pittsburgh. The veterans of the Spanish-American War were on their way to take part in the inauguration of President Theodore Roosevelt in Washington, D.C.

In June, the Century, the crack express train between New York and Chicago, was speeding west through Mentor when it hit an open switch. The accident killed 21 and injured 17. Relatives crowded into lakefront Union Terminal to meet the train bringing the victims to Cleveland.

When John Hay, who served as secretary of state under Presidents William McKinley and Roosevelt, died in July, the president, vice president and Cabinet members came to Cleveland for his funeral and burial in Lake View Cemetery. It was said that no such tribute ever had been paid a civilian other than a president. Hay also had served as President Abraham Lincoln's personal secretary.

Once more, the Naps were preseason favorites to win the American League pennant, but Napoleon Lajoie, now manager and star second-baseman, was sidelined by a freak accident for two months. He was spiked, and dye from his stockings seeped into the wound, causing an infection. By September, the team was out of contention.

Lajoie's batting average of .329 was the highest in the league, but he played only 65 games, too few to qualify for the title. In what obviously was a pitcher's year, his teammate Elmer Flick was batting champ at .306.

Football is a noble game worthy of any college man's enthusiastic support, Western Reserve University President Charles Franklin Thwing told those attending a dinner at the Hollenden Hotel.

Taking note of criticism of the sport's brutality, Thwing nevertheless declared, "I believe that this historic game is too good to be abolished. In some respects, it may be bad, but the evil should be cast out."

Having sold its original site at Euclid Ave. and Erie St. (E. 9th St.) to the Cleveland Trust Co., the First Methodist Church opened a \$250,000 church with gothic spires and gargoyles at Euclid and Sterling St. (E. 30th St.).

New this year: The Legal Aid Society, the Red Cross (national organization and Cleveland chapter), Hathaway Brown School, Reliance Electric & Engineering Co., the Anti-Tuberculosis Society (now the Northern Ohio Lung Association).



PD FILE

In the teeth of the fight for streetcar business, Mayor Tom L. Johnson would send out work gangs — sometimes in the middle of the night — to rip up streetcar tracks and replace them. At left, workers laid tracks near what is now Public Square. Above, temporary tracks were laid overnight. The poles were wedged in barrels propped between wagon wheels.

Cleveland expands — with drama

Mayor Johnson fights for city-owned utilities, annexation of villages

Two explosive issues of the early 1900s — Cleveland's expansion and Mayor Tom L. Johnson's battle with utilities — met on Dec. 12, 1905. The result was what *The Plain Dealer* called "scenes bordering on the sensational and strenuous."

With "Mayor Tom" out of the city, City Clerk Peter Witt sent his deputy and a policeman to seize the books of the village of South Brooklyn, which was to be annexed to Cleveland two days later. The action was of questionable legality but of such urgency that "the municipal automobile was called into service," a *Plain Dealer* story declared.

The seizure blocked an attempt by the South Brooklyn Village Council to grant a 25-year streetcar franchise to Johnson's bitter rival, the "Con-Con" railway. Of more lasting significance, it gave the city its first municipal light plant, the beginning of what is now Cleveland Public Power.

The story really started two years earlier, when voters in both South Brooklyn and Cleveland approved the merger. But, Johnson wrote in his autobiography, "Privilege was opposed to annexation."

A City Council friendly to the Illuminating Co. voted 17-6 to set up an annexation commission, which tried to thwart the light plant turnover; two Democrats joined the Republican majority. Johnson vetoed the ordinance, charged the Republicans with misfeasance and the two Democrats with bribery, and led a campaign to sweep them from office.

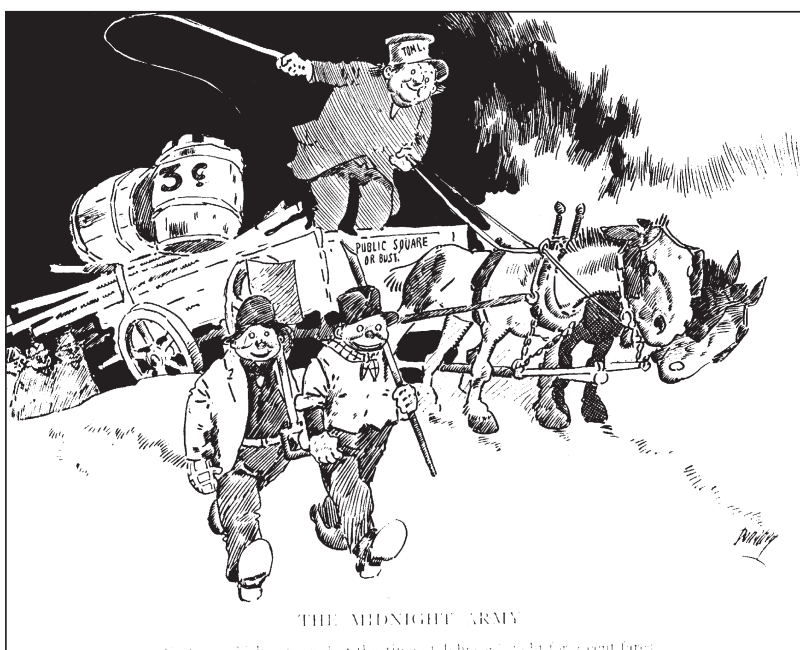
Twenty-five of the city's 26 wards supported Johnson and his council slate in the 1905 election. The *Plain Dealer* editorialized that "the people of Cleveland know a clean, efficient administration when they see it and can be depended upon to retain in office public servants who have been found faithful to their trust."

The new council appointed a different commission and approved its report on Nov. 11. The next day, an alarmed South Brooklyn Mayor Fred Mathews hurried to Cleveland to say that the previous night, the Republican Village Council had approved an ordinance on second reading, one step short of passage.

The ordinance was for a 25-year streetcar franchise for Pearl and Stateview streets (now Pearl and State roads) to the Cleveland Railway Co., which had been formed by the 1904 merger of two consolidated companies called "the Big Con" and "the Little Con."

With Johnson and Law Director Newton D. Baker away, Witt took matters into his own hands. He not only had the books seized, but the three South Brooklyn police were assigned to guard the Village Hall to prevent a council meeting. On Nov. 14, South Brooklyn uneventfully became part of Cleveland.

Two other suburbs joined Cleve-



PLAIN DEALER FILE

During the Con-Con vs. Johnson fight, this cartoon, titled "The Midnight Army," appeared in *The Plain Dealer*.

land in 1905 — the section of the village of Glenville that had not been annexed in 1898, and the city of Newburgh.

The Newburgh annexation wasn't without drama. Just before the annexation took effect, the Con-Con came in with an ordinance to extend the Kinsman Ave. line eastward. Newburgh officials assured Cleveland they would take no action, and Cleveland did not feel it necessary to send the municipal automobile speeding to the scene.

Municipalizing the streetcar system was Johnson's greatest goal, but he failed to achieve it during his lifetime. In 1942, however, the city bought the private Cleveland Railway Co. and turned it into the Cleveland Transit System. In 1975, CTS and the Shaker Heights Rapid Transit be-

came part of the countywide Regional Transit Authority.

Meanwhile, Johnson expanded the tiny light plant he founded in South Brooklyn. In 1908, he added another plant when Collinwood was annexed. He, and then Baker — who was to serve as mayor from 1912 to 1916 — continued to expand the system, but the expansion ground to a halt when Republicans regained control of City Hall.

For 75 years, the system known as Muny Light served only 20 percent of Clevelanders. Then, in 1990, City Council approved an expansion program and voters passed a charter amendment to carry it out.

On May 17, 1993, Mayor Michael R. White and council members held a press conference to announce that Muny's cheaper power would be available to virtually every Clevelanders by 1997.



PD FILE

Newton D. Baker and an unidentified youngster.

LOOKING AT A YEAR

Jan. 7: After three rejections, the Senate finally confirms President Theodore Roosevelt's nomination of a black to a high customs post in South Carolina. Roosevelt's black nominees for important government jobs usually met with defeat in the Senate, but the president persisted in making the nominations, in part, at the urging of Booker T. Washington.

Jan. 22: More than 500 are killed

when troops open fire on 100,000 Russians who marched in St. Petersburg to protest poor working conditions. The "Bloody Sunday" massacre was ordered by Czar Nicholas II.

April 14: A 16-year search for the body of American naval hero John Paul Jones ends when the coffin with his remains is found in a Paris cemetery. Two months later, the body is returned to the United States.

Sept. 5: Japan and Russia sign a treaty ending their war in Korea and Manchuria. Terms of the treaty show that Japan achieved all of its war objectives.

Nov. 8: Political unrest in Russia continues, as 1,000 Jews are killed in Odessa by peasants convinced by army officers that the Jews are behind protests against the government.

Dec. 9: College football changes its rules to permit the forward pass and award a first down after a 10-yard gain.

Born: Dag Hammarskjöld, Greta Garbo, Henry Fonda, Claudette Colbert, Robert Penn Warren, Howard Hughes, Christian Dior.

Died: Jules Verne; Lew Wallace, author of "Ben Hur."

Since 1905, the American

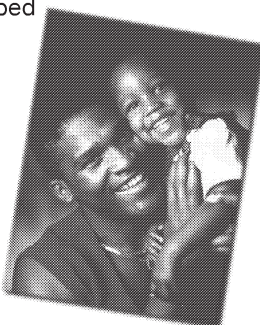
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