

OUR CENTURY

1928

AT A GLANCE

Coolidge gets credit for nation's prosperity

Cleveland had gained nearly 100,000 jobs in the 1920s, from 347,000 in 1920 to 444,000 in 1928. This includes 84,000 held by women. Factory workers, on average, made \$1,516 a year, according to the Central National Bank Review. Clothing and food prices had come down. Times were good.

"Coolidge prosperity" prevailed in the nation, and the president looked like a cinch for re-election. But "Silent Cal" issued an announcement in his usual terse style: "I do not choose to run."

Herbert Hoover, a self-made millionaire and Coolidge's secretary of commerce, was a natural choice for the Republicans. His acceptance speech, carried by WTAM and 106 other radio stations across the nation, pledged strict enforcement of Prohibition laws, relief for farmers and continued economic progress.

The Democrats chose Gov. Alfred Smith of New York, whose raspy New York accent turned off voters, as did his religion: Southern ministers warned that the pope would take over if Smith, a Catholic, were elected. But it was mainly the economy that carried the Republicans to a sweeping victory in November. Voters looked forward to even greater prosperity when President Hoover took over in 1929.



Chesnutt

On July 3, Charles W. Chesnutt was presented with the Springarn medal at the national convention of the NAACP. It was for "his pioneer work as a literary artist depicting the life and struggles of Americans of Negro descent and for his long and useful career as a scholar, worker and freeman of one of America's greatest cities."

Chesnutt had come to Cleveland from North Carolina in 1883. In 1887, he was admitted to the Ohio Bar, but he had to work as a court reporter to support his family and his writing. The Atlantic Monthly published his first short story, "The Gophered Grapevine," the same year. His stories and novels dealt with the everyday life of blacks, including such taboo subjects as intermarriage.

Alva Bradley and his friends had paid \$1 million to buy the Indians. They discovered they didn't have much to show for it. The 1928 Indians — all of them — hit 27 home runs, exactly half as many as Babe Ruth. The team finished seventh, 37 games behind the Yankees.

But things started to look up in the off-season. Ever since he became city manager in 1923, William Hopkins had been pushing for a stadium on the lakefront — one that would accommodate all kinds of athletic events, along with civic gatherings, pageants, business expositions and musical and dramatic shows.

A committee came up with a plan befitting Cleveland's stature: It called for a stadium seating more than 78,000 people — the largest outdoor arena in the world. In November, voters passed by a nearly 60 percent margin a \$2.5 million bond issue to build it.

Six beacons now shone from the 49th floor of the Terminal Tower as a navigational aid for planes and ships on the lake. Tenants were moving into Cleveland's new symbol; more than 4,000 visitors turned out for the opening of the Chamber of Commerce headquarters in June.

In November, Charles Brush, whose lighting of Public Square in 1879 was the first public demonstration of the arc lamp, was recruited for a civic ceremony. The 79-year-old inventor threw a switch and 85 new 415,000-candlepower lights flooded the square.

The Plain Dealer was running 12 pages of Sunday funnies in color, including Elmer, Boob McNutt, Toonerville Folks, Mutt and Jeff and Little Orphan Annie.

Princess Anastasia of Greece died in September. Clevelanders remembered her as Nonnie May Stewart of Prospect Ave.

One in every garage

Burgeoning auto industry keeps Cleveland on wheels

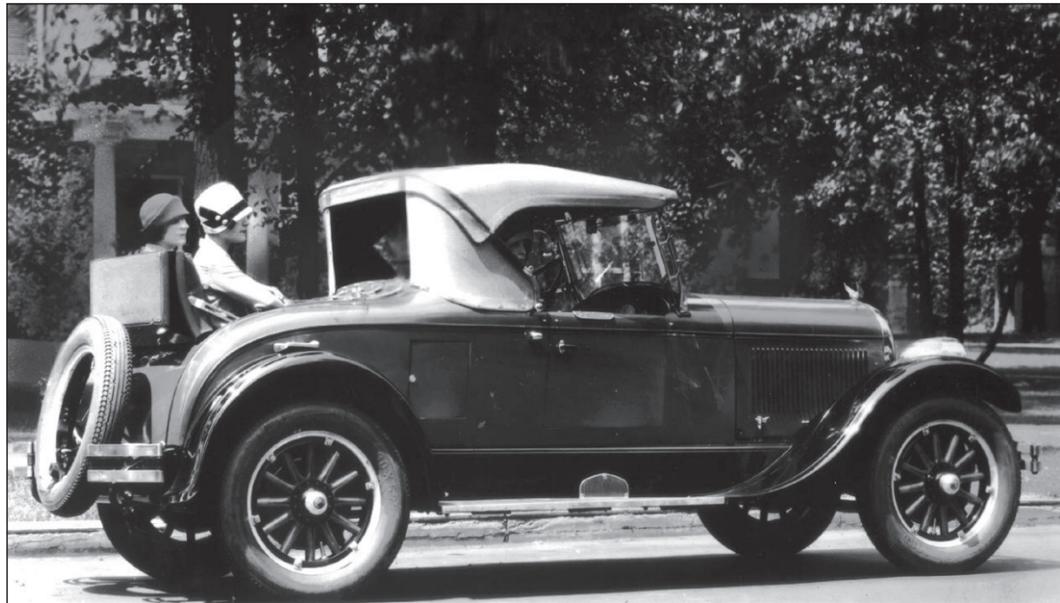
By Fred McGunagle

America and its families were on a roll — on four wheels — and as far as the thousands of car-crazed Clevelanders who thronged to Public Hall in January for the annual auto show could see, there were no detour signs ahead.

A new survey showed that 55 percent of American families now owned autos and 18 percent had more than one. The 45 percent who were carless were very close to the 42 percent the government put below the "comfort level" income of \$1,500 a year.

Auto executives bragged that their industry was the engine of national prosperity and that autos were "bringing town and county together." In Cleveland, the record throngs — 27,000 on Sunday alone — dreamed of owning one of the 215 models displayed by 42 manufacturers.

They especially crowded around the brand-new Model A Ford. After 20 years, Henry Ford had abandoned



PLAIN DEALER FILE

Cars ruled in the era of flappers and Prohibition, too: 55 percent of American families owned autos and 18 percent had more than one. And Cleveland was one of the top manufacturing cities. Above, some women take a spin in a Chrysler, probably a 1928 Model 72 sport roadster. At left, more cars meant the need for more fuel. Pictured is an early Shell Oil Co. station in Akron.



the "T" and shut down his assembly line to design a more modern car, one that came in colors other than black. To build interest, he had shrouded its design in mystery until its unveiling. At a price of \$565 (bumpers and a

spare tire were extra) it quickly regained the sales lead from Chevrolet.

The new models all competed for the fanciest hood ornaments, which supposedly influenced women. ("Oh, daddy," a Plain Dealer story imagined one saying, "buy me that one!") A story about women drivers asked, "How else may one get to the golf course and tennis courts, to the markets, to the downtown stores for necessary shopping, to the dressmaker's and a thousand other places that command one's attention?"

The auto brought new mobility, but it also brought problems. Families could pack a picnic hamper and take a Sunday drive into the country, but they cursed the "road hogs" and "rattletaps" that kept them moving at a snail's pace. They also had to be prepared for trouble; The Plain Dealer offered advice on how to adjust brakes at roadside.

On vacations, they could see the U.S.A. (and Burma Shave signs) in their Chevrolet, but it meant stopping at traffic lights in town after town and at city block after city block.

In the crowded city, where houses were too close for driveways, parked cars jammed streets and thieves sped off with them in the middle of the night. Traffic crawled along behind streetcars, waiting while they stopped at safety zones to unload passengers. Safety Director Edwin Barry's "rotary turns" made drivers who wanted to turn left pull off to the right, then complete the left turn when the light changed. The accident rate was horrendous, despite the efforts of 34 motorcycle police in the Traffic Bureau's "manslaughter squad."

To take traffic off Euclid Ave., Chester Ave. was being widened to its east end at E. 40th St. Carnegie Ave. was being extended from its west end at E. 22nd St. It would connect with a planned "superbridge" across the river to Lorain Ave., easing jams on the high-level bridge (Detroit-Superior). The notorious White Horse railroad crossing on Broadway in Garfield Heights, where 80 people had been killed, was bridged.

Lake Shore Blvd. in Euclid was to be widened to six lanes by laying bricks in its median strip. Dirt roads

like Center Ridge in Dover (Westlake) and Kinsman (Chagrin) in Beachwood were to be paved, if village councils agreed; outlying areas were starting to object to the assessments and the increased traffic.

The pace wasn't fast enough for motorists or for the American Road Builders Association. Meeting in Cleveland, its director declared, "Despite the tremendous increase in improved highways, there are whole districts which remain to be lifted out of the mud."

Clevelanders were using their new cars on the new roads to reach their new homes outside the city. The president of the Builders Exchange predicted another great year in 1928. He noted in passing that construction had declined in Cleveland, but pointed out it had boomed in Shaker Heights, Rocky River, Parma and Garfield Heights.

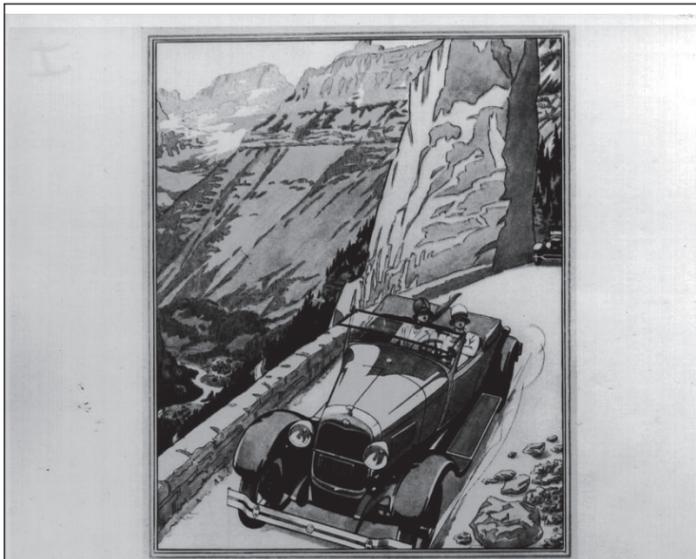
Those left behind noticed changes for the worse. A Plain Dealer survey showed that streetcar service had deteriorated since 1920, the peak year for passengers. Although fares had risen from 5 to 7 cents, fewer cars were scheduled and passengers often had little room to stand, let alone sit down. Interurban lines were going out of business.

Still, the love affair with the automobile remained passionate. The announcement of the new models in August brought another surge of interest. The Olds had six wire wheels (the two spares were attached to the sides). The \$1,695 Studebaker President Straight Eight boasted 109-horsepower and a top speed of 80 mph. Hupmobile models ranged from a seven-passenger phaeton to a two-passenger cabriolet with a rumble seat in place of a trunk.

Those for whom the new cars were out of reach could buy one of the many used cars advertised in The Plain Dealer. The Euclid Ave. Buick Co. (motto: "Sold in Good Faith") offered a 1926 Cleveland sedan for \$600. The F.J. Arnstine Co. had a 1925 Ford roadster in good condition for only \$95.

Clevelanders prepared to motor into another prosperous year.

McGunagle is a Cleveland freelance writer.



Smooth riding ease and restful comfort make the new Ford an especially good car for women to drive

When you see the new Ford, you are impressed instantly by its low, trim, graceful lines and the beauty of its two-tone color harmonies. As you watch it in traffic and on the open road you can see how quickly it accelerates and get some idea, too, of the speed and power of its 4-horse-power engine. But only by driving the new Ford yourself can you fully appreciate the easy-riding comfort that is such an outstanding feature of this great new car. The reason, of course, is the use of Houdaille hydraulic shock absorbers, formerly used on only the most expensive automobiles. Yet even Houdaille shock absorbers of themselves do not account for the complete riding comfort of the new Ford. Equally important are the design and construction of the new transverse springs, the life-giving of the new steering, and what engineers speak of as the low ratio of unsprung weight to the sprung weight of the car. All of these factors combine to soften or eliminate the force of road shocks and to make the new Ford an exceptionally comfortable and easy-riding car at all speeds. Even rough roads may be taken at a fast pace without hard jolts or bumps or the exaggerated bouncing rebound which is the cause of most motoring fatigue. You have a feeling of mental comfort, too, in driving the new Ford because of its reliability and the safety afforded by its steel body, four-wheel brakes and Triplex shatter-proof glass windshield. This freedom from mechanical trouble — this security — means a great deal to every woman who drives a car. Prove this for yourself by telephoning the nearest Ford dealer and asking him to bring the new Ford to your home for a demonstration. Check up on comfort, on speed, on power, on acceleration, on hill climbing, on gasoline economy, on safety, on low up-keep cost, and you will know that there is nothing quite like it anywhere in design, quality and price. The new Ford Roadster sells for \$395; the Phaeton for \$495; the Tudor Sedan for \$495; the Coupe for \$495; the Business Coupe for \$495; the Sport Coupe, with rumble seat, for \$595; and the Fordor Sedan for \$695. (F.O.B. Detroit.) These prices include Houdaille hydraulic shock absorbers, four-wheel brakes, Triplex shatter-proof glass windshield, gasoline gauge on instrument panel, windshield wiper, dash light, mirror, combination stop and tail light, theft-proof accidental ignition lock, and high pressure grease gun lubrication.

PLAIN DEALER FILE

Ford played to female sensibilities in this 1931 ad for its Roadster (\$385), the Phaeton (\$395) and other models. Touting its steel body and shatter-proof windshield, the ad says, "This freedom from mechanical trouble — this security — means a great deal to every woman who drives a car."

LOOKING AT A YEAR

Jan. 10: Soviet leader Josef Stalin banishes all dissidents; Leon Trotsky is exiled to Kazakhstan.

May 28: The largest automobile merger in history is announced, with Dodge Brothers Inc., joining forces with the Chrysler Corp.

June 18: Amelia Earhart becomes

the first woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean.

Aug. 11: Herbert Hoover accepts the Republican presidential nomination, promising, "A chicken in every pot, a car in every garage."

Oct. 6: After a string of military

victories against the Communists, Chiang Kai-shek takes control of China's government.

Nov. 10: Hirohito becomes emperor of Japan.

Nov. 7: Hoover wins a landslide victory over Democrat Al Smith. Franklin D. Roosevelt is elected gov-

ernor of New York.

Born: Che Guevara, Hafez al-Assad, Pol Pot, Walter Mondale, Ariel Sharon.

Died: English novelist Thomas Hardy, American aviator Floyd Bennett, auto pioneer James Packard, English actress Ellen Terry.

SHOWCASE OF APARTMENT LIVING

A new pull-out guide in Friday! Entertainment magazine featuring some of the area's finest properties.

LOOK FOR YOUR NEXT "SHOWCASE" ON FRIDAY, AUGUST 21ST



NOW ALSO AVAILABLE AT DAIRY MART STORES AND OTHER FINE LOCATIONS!

THE PLAIN DEALER