



Willow House Times



Issue 33

Cuyahoga Heights Historical Committee

June 2015



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Cuyahoga Heights Historical Archives

Kennedy House
4651 E 71st Street
Home of
Historical Committee
&
Boy Scouts



WWI Soldiers



Stanley B. Czechowski - Chase

Stanislaw Bruno Czechowski - Stanley Bruno Chase

The 1973 Fire, National Personnel Records Center

On July 12, 1973, a fire at the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) destroyed approximately 16-18 million Official Military Personnel Files. The records affected Army Personal discharges 11/1/1912 thru 1/1/1960 losses 80%; Air Force Personal discharged 9/25/1947 thru 1/1/1964 losses 75%. No duplicate copies of these records were ever maintained, nor were microfilm copies produced. Neither were any indexes created prior to the fire. In addition, millions of documents had been lent to the Department of Veterans Affairs before the fire occurred. Therefore, a complete listing of the records that were lost is not available. However, in the years following the fire, the NPRC collected numerous series of records (know as Auxiliary Records) that are used to reconstruct basic service information. Shortly after midnight, on July 12, 1973, a fire was reported at the NPRC's military personnel records building at 9700 Page Boulevard in St. Louis, MO. Firefighters arrived on the scene only 4 minutes and 20 seconds after the first alarm sounded and entered the building. While they were able to reach the burning sixth floor, the heat and the smoke forced the firefighters to withdraw at 3:15am. In order to combat and contain the flames, firefighters were forced to pour great quantities of water onto the exterior of the building and inside through broken windows. The fire burned out of control for 22 hours; it took two days before firefighters were able to re-enter the building. It was not until July 16, nearly four and a half days after the first reports, that the local fire department called the fire officially out. During the long ordeal, firefighters faced severe problems due to insufficient water pressure & one of the department's pumper trucks broke down after 40 hours of continuous operation. Numerous times, the fire threatened to spread down to the other floors; but firefighters were successful in halting its advance. In all, it took the participation of 42 fire districts to combat the disastrous blaze. Due to the extensive damages, investigators were never able to determine the source of the fire. The National Archives focused its immediate attention on salvaging as much as possible and quickly resuming operations at the Page facility. Even before the final flames were out, staff at the NPRC had begun work towards these efforts. All requests and records shipments from other government agencies were halted, and certain vital records were removed from the burning building for safekeeping. These included the NPRC's operating records, a computer index for a major portion of the NPRC's holdings, and more than 100,000 reels of morning reports for the Army (1912-1959) and Air Force (1947-1959). The latter proved especially important in the days following, as NPRC's officials determined that the fire damage had been worst among the Army and Air Force records for this same time period. As such, on July 23, 1973, the Government issued a Federal Property Management Regulations Bulletin (FPMR B-39) halting Federal agencies from disposing of records that might be useful in documenting military service. Such records have proved vital in efforts to reconstruct basic service information for requestors. On July 23, the NPRC awarded a construction contract to clear and remove the remains from the ruined sixth floor. That same day, employees, previously on administrative leave, returned to work to assist in recovery efforts and resume reference services. The removal and salvage of water and fire damaged records from the building was the most important priority, and such efforts were overseen by a specially appointed project manager. Their work led to the recovery of approximately 6.5 million burned and water damaged records. *Source: www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/fire*

Stanley Chase never talked about his service & we could find only two records on the Internet. We sent a request to the National Archives in St. Louis for his military records. They replied that they had no records on Stanley & all his records had been lost in the 1973 fire at the National Archives in St. Louis. Stanley Czechowski entered the service in Cleveland on August 26, 1918. He served in the 159th Depot Brigade for four months & was honorable discharged December 10, 1918. *Source: U.S. Adjutant General Military Records, 1631-1976.*

It would appear that Stanley worked at the Cleveland Grays Armory or Camp Sherman processing soldiers. The Grays Armory was built in 1893. The Cleveland Grays is a social organization devoted to the promotion of patriotism and the preservation of the military heritage of Greater Cleveland. It was founded as a volunteer private military company at a time when the common or constitutional militia languished due to disinterest and neglect by state politicians. The unit's original purpose was twofold: to provide assistance and support to the local law enforcement authorities of the time as well as to provide a first line of defense for the city if the fighting in Canada's Rebellions of 1837 spilled over the border resulting in a third war with England in less than a century. The Grays saw military service as a unit in the Civil War and the Spanish-American War. Reforms of the country's militia system which began in 1903 when private military companies' official participation in national military affairs come to an end. The Grays, were able to enlist in the Ohio National Guard for duty during the Mexican Punitive Expedition, they essentially did so as a group of private citizens enlisting *en masse* and not as a private military company. Their participation in World War I, which began immediately upon their Ohio National Guard unit's release from duty on the Mexican border, was the last conflict in which the Grays saw active service even as a group of enlistees.

Source: Wikipedia.org/wiki/Grays_Armory

When the United States entered the First World War in April 1917, the nation was not fully prepared for the war effort. As a result, the government scrambled to create a system for training troops. Sherman, located near Chillicothe, Ohio, was one of the new training camps which became the third largest camp in the nation during the war.

The camp was named after famous Ohioan and Civil War general William Tecumseh Sherman. Construction began in July 1917, and the first recruits arrived in September. Before World War I ended, more than forty thousand soldiers had received training at Camp Sherman. The camp was organized like a small city. In addition to barracks and offices used by the soldiers, there were theaters, a hospital, a library, a farm, and a German Prisoner of War camp. German POWs remained at Camp Sherman until September 1919. Source: www.ohiohistorycentral.org/w/Camp_Sherman

Stanislaw Bruno Czechowwski was born August 23, 1896 in Cleveland the son of John and Rozalia Badzmiera Czechowski. His father came to America from Poland with his 1st wife Mary and 3 children in 1883. Stanley had 8 half sibling and 6 siblings. One of his half brothers, Frank Edward Czechowski- Chase, fought in the Spanish American War in Company L, 7th Ohio Infantry. Stanley married Helen Ann Wawrzyniak September 30, 1919 in Cleveland. They had 3 children, Esther, Robert & Norbert. Some time in the 1940s they Americanized their surname to Chase. Stanley worked as a machinist, caretaker at Saint Mary's Cemetery & custodian at the Cuyahoga Heights Village Hall. Both sons served during WWII. Robert was a village policeman and Norbert was a clerk at U.S. Cuyahoga Works. He was also the village clerk for many years. Stanley died October 23, 1985 and Helen March 4, 1990. They are buried in Saint Mary's Cemetery in our village.



Top row:
Cleveland's
Grays Armory;
Camp Sherman;
Helen & Stanley



Middle row:
Stanley & Helen's
wedding 9/30/1919;

Helen & Stanley
with there children
Robert, Norbert &
Esther Chase;

Stanley & Helen
with Robert's
daughter Gloria

Bottom row:
Stanley & Helen
Larry Keyes,
Marilyn Chase,
Jeff Chase,
Tommy Chase,
Lorraine Chase;



Police Captain
Robert Chase's
Retirement
Party 5/17/1983,

Gloria Pallini &
Norbert Chase's
50th Wedding
Anniversary

*Family Pictures from
Norbert & Mark
Chase*

*Cuyahoga Heights
Historical Committee*

Barb Bartczak

Mark Chase

Laura Hine

Irma Schab

Sandy Waldemarson

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2015 Meetings

10 AM - Noon

April 4th

May 2nd

May Memorial Day

Open House 9 AM –1PM

August 1st

October 3rd

at

Kennedy House

4561 E. 71st Street

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Willow Times News

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Website

sites.google.com/site/cuyahogahtshistorical

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www.facebook.com/groups/132447953512779/

Do You Know?



Top picture: shows food shortages in 1918 in war torn Europe
 Bottom picture: Propaganda poster asking children & adults to eat less so we could send food to children starving in Europe a year before the war ended November 11, 1919
 Source: *Food Saving and Sharing; Doubleday, Page & Company for the United States Food Administration ; 1918*

Committee News

The Historical Committee’s next meeting will be August 1st from 10 AM till 12 noon. Our meeting dates for this year are listed to the left. Everyone is welcome to attend the meetings, or look at the displays at the Kennedy House. You can also schedule a time to visit by contacting any committee member or calling the village hall. We will e-mail or call you to set up a time.