

Chapter 14

The Roaring Twenties and the Great Depression

Chapter Preview

TERMS

inflation, martial law, Ku Klux Klan, petrochemicals, barnstormer, partisan, indict, Great Depression, credit, stock market, New Deal, subsidy, collective bargaining, Dust Bowl, shelterbelt

PEOPLE

Duncan McIntyre, Paul Braniff, Wiley Post, Will Rogers, Mary Alice Robertson, John C. Walton, William H. Murray, Woody Guthrie, E. W. Marland, Leon Phillips

PLACES

Burbank, Tallant



Perhaps the most famous image of the Oklahoma dust bowl, this photograph of a Cimarron County farmer and his two sons running to take shelter from a dust storm was taken by Arthur Rothstein in 1936.

The “war to end all wars” was over, and the men came home to enthusiastic parades and parties. Families were reunited. The roar of the military machine changed to the “Roaring Twenties.” Euphoric relief came with the end of the war, the influenza epidemic, wartime shortages, and rationing.

The new decade ushered in great changes. The boys who went overseas to fight came back as men who had seen a very different world. The battle-weary soldiers witnessed many technological advances in warfare: the machine gun, tank, submarine, airplane, and poison gas. The women who had shouldered the emotional and financial burdens of families at home had a new experience too—that of independence.

So many decades can be summed up by the famous quote from Charles Dickens’s *A Tale of Two Cities*, “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.” The decade of the 1930s, sometimes called the “Dirty Thirties” because of unrelenting economic depression, drought, and blowing dirt, tested the strength of our state and nation. Although the Great Depression and drought took years to overcome, the resilience of the people once again rose above the circumstances.



Signs of the Times

HOW PEOPLE LIVED

Men's clothes included wide-legged trousers, knickers, slouch felt hats, and raccoon coats. A wool suit cost \$15.85. Women's skirts became shorter in the mid-1920s and ready-to-wear clothes were "in." The cosmetics industry took off during the decade.

LITERATURE

Literary works that defined the time were *The Waste Land* by T. S. Eliot, *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, *Strange Interlude* by Eugene O'Neill, *The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway, and *The Sound and the Fury* by William Faulkner. W. E. B. Du Bois and Alain Locke were among the influential and lasting black authors, artists, and musicians who were part of the 1920s Harlem Renaissance.

EDUCATION

The National Spelling Bee began in 1925, sponsored by the Louisville *Courier-Journal*. At the height of the depression in 1933, some 2,000 rural schools closed, 200,000 teachers were out of work, and about 2.3 million children were out of school.

MUSIC

The music of the 1920s featured jazz, the blues, and sentimental ballads. The 1930s was the big band era of Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, and Count Basie.

INVENTIONS

The 1920s saw the invention of insulin, 3-D movies, the traffic signal, frozen food, PEZ candy, penicillin, bubble gum, and the car radio. Scotch tape, the jet engine, drive-in movie theaters, nylon, ballpoint pens, and the electron microscope were developed in the 1930s.

SPORTS

Babe Ruth set the home run record in 1927 when he hit sixty for the season. In 1930, golfer Bobby Jones was the first person to complete the "grand slam" (winning the four most important golf tournaments in a single season).

Figure 15 Timeline: 1920–1940



1920

Mary Alice Robertson elected to Congress

1928

Oil discovered under Oklahoma City; Tulsa Airport opened

1921

Tulsa Race Riot

1934

Dust Bowl hit

1923

Governor Walton impeached and removed

1930

Wild Mary Sudikwell; William Murray elected governor

1935

Will Rogers and Wiley Post died in plane crash

1920

1925

1930

1935

1940

1921

First Miss America pageant held in Atlantic City

1924

Crossword puzzles first appeared
Indian Citizenship Act

1929

Stock market crash

1927

Charles A. Lindbergh made first trans-Atlantic flight; First full-length sound motion picture released

1939

Grapes of Wrath published

1935

Social Security Act became law

1932

Franklin D. Roosevelt elected president

CINEMA

Silent film stars included Rudolph Valentino, Douglas Fairbanks Sr., Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, and Clara Bow. The first feature-length "talkie," *The Jazz Singer*, was released in 1927.

Section 1

The Roaring Twenties

As you read, look for

- the unrest that followed World War I,
- the Tulsa Race Riot,
- the ups and downs of Oklahoma's economy, and
- vocabulary terms **inflation**, **martial law**, **Ku Klux Klan**, **petrochemicals**, **barnstormer**, **partisan**, and **indict**.

This photograph shows Oklahoma City in the 1920s. Compare this picture to the photographs on pages 279 and 305.

A wide range of events unfolded in Oklahoma in the 1920s. The mineral industries grew. There were technological advancements in automobiles, aviation, communication, and household items. The older generation questioned the new values of the younger generation. Lawlessness and disorder were common in most of the country, and Oklahoma had its own share of labor fights, racial clashes, bank and train robberies, and mob whippings.



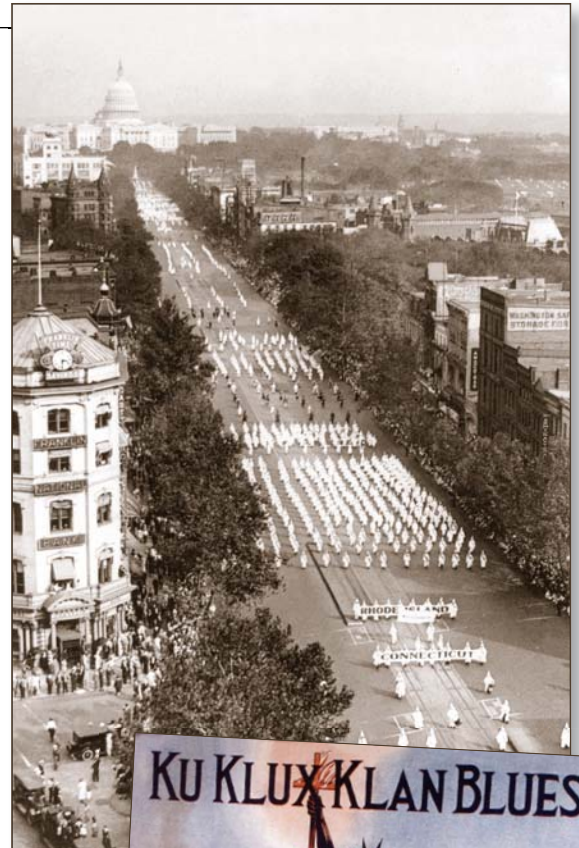
Oklahoma's population in 1920 was 2,028,283, an increase from the 1910 count of 1,657,155. After World War I, the population began a trend of shifting from rural to urban areas, primarily as people searched for jobs. In 1910, 19 percent of the state's population was classified as urban, but by 1920, the number had climbed to 27 percent.

Social Unrest

The returning soldiers quickly turned their attention toward finding jobs and homes, both of which were in short supply. Oklahoma's agriculture and mineral industries, which had prospered during World War I, experienced downturns. Companies that had expanded to meet wartime contract orders had to cut back or shut down. Home construction that had been slowed by the war led to a housing shortage nationwide. A high demand for a short supply of consumer goods caused a period of **inflation** (an increase in the prices of goods and services, while purchasing power decreases). Many laborers demanded higher wages, and labor unions called for strikes.

Streetcar workers in Chickasha and Sapulpa; telephone operators in Drumright, Shawnee, and Muskogee; boilermakers in Tulsa; and newspaper printers in Oklahoma City and Okmulgee used strikes to argue for better pay. Coal miners who had earned \$6 a day during the war watched their paychecks get smaller as wartime contracts ended. About 9,000 Oklahoma coal miners joined 450,000 miners nationwide in a strike November 1, 1919, when an agreement couldn't be reached for better hours and pay. Authorities declared **martial law** (a temporary use of military rule when civilian authority breaks down) in the area of trouble in eastern Oklahoma. The mining strike was settled in December, and martial law was lifted.

The "red scare," or fear of communist takeover, that swept the country after the war caused many people to take quick action against anything that appeared to be anti-American. The unsettled times also led to the rebirth of the **Ku Klux Klan**, reorganized in 1915 with a white, native-born, Protestant supremacy agenda. Its members were anti-Catholic, anti-Jewish, anti-African American and opposed to immigration and labor unions. Klan membership began to grow in 1920; by 1921, its membership in Oklahoma was estimated to be 100,000. The Klan added to the general unrest of the time by enforcing its concept of morality with warnings, whippings, burning crosses, lynchings, and other acts of violence. Martial law was declared after one such beating of a man in Okmulgee and after mob violence in Tulsa. A sixty-year-old German farmer near Broken Arrow was one target of the KKK's ethnic hatred. Two men were convicted for whipping the farmer who was declared innocent of any offense "against the peace and dignity of Tulsa County."



Top: In 1926, at the peak of its influence, the Ku Klux Klan held a massive march in Washington, D.C. **Above:** The cover of the sheet music "Ku Klux Klan Blues," published in Muskogee.

The Tulsa Race Riot

One of the more prosperous African American communities in the United States at this time was Greenwood, just north of downtown Tulsa. About fifteen thousand people lived in the thriving area known as the “Black Wall Street of America.” Two- and three-story brick buildings housed grocery stores, clothing and dry goods stores, billiard halls, beauty parlors, barber shops, a jewelry store, a photography studio, restaurants, and the second-largest theater in Tulsa.

No one knows exactly what happened on May 30, 1921, in Tulsa that led to one of the worst race riots in America. Dick Rowland, a nineteen-year-old African American bootblack (shoeshine man) stepped into an

elevator in a downtown Tulsa office building to go to a “colored” washroom. The white elevator operator was seventeen-year-old Sarah Page. Possibly Rowland tripped as he stepped into the elevator and grabbed Page’s arm to steady himself, or he may have stumbled into her as the elevator lurched. Startled, Page screamed, and the frightened Rowland ran away. Rowland was arrested the next morning and taken to the Tulsa County Courthouse. The afternoon edition of the *Tulsa Tribune* carried news of the incident and talked of lynching the teenager, whom they suspected



Billowing clouds of smoke from the Tulsa Race Riot in May 1921. The white mob drove the blacks toward Greenwood, setting fire to black homes and businesses as they went.

of assaulting the elevator operator. By 4:00 that afternoon, angry whites began gathering at the courthouse; by 7:30 p.m., several hundred had congregated. Many of them had guns. Willard McCullough, the Tulsa sheriff, tried unsuccessfully to calm the crowd.

Several blacks gathered on Greenwood Avenue to discuss the situation, and some, armed with guns, went to the courthouse to support the sheriff. Rumors were flying. By 10 p.m., the first shot was fired, possibly by accident, but it triggered a quick response by the crowd. The white mob shot into the smaller group of blacks, who returned fire. The white mob, numbering almost two thousand, chased the African Americans toward Greenwood. The local National Guard began rounding up blacks and taking them to the armory. Panic erupted throughout the black community as those not fighting attempted to flee the city. By early morning on June 2, some whites began setting fires to businesses in Greenwood. When firemen arrived to put out the flames, they were kept away at gunpoint. By 5 a.m., there were about five thousand rioters, and they launched an all-out attack of shooting



and looting. Some white Tulsans supported the blacks, but they were largely outnumbered.

The Oklahoma National Guard troops from Oklahoma City finally arrived by train on June 2, and martial law was declared. Most surviving blacks had already fled the city or were in detention centers. The official count of the dead was twenty-six blacks and thirteen whites, but other estimates placed the number of dead closer to one hundred or three hundred. Some people reported bodies were dumped in the Arkansas River or buried in mass graves. Hundreds of people were injured. Thirty-five square blocks of Greenwood were destroyed. No arrests were made for the loss of life and property, and Sarah Page refused to file charges against Dick Rowland. Many African Americans moved from Tulsa; thousands who stayed lived in tents. The Greenwood community was eventually rebuilt, but it never achieved the status it held before the riot.

Growth of the Oil Industry

Oklahoma's oil reserves had just begun to be tapped prior to the 1920s. After the war, the price of oil had dropped from \$3.50 to 25 cents a barrel, but that had little effect on opening new fields. The tent town of Shidler was established after the development of the Burbank field by Cosden, Phillips, Marland, Sinclair, and others.

By the early 1920s, Oklahoma had become the leading oil producer in the nation. The Tonkawa and Three Sands oil fields were discovered in 1921, and the Greater Seminole field further expanded the boom in the mid-1920s. The rich Seminole pools caused a glut on the market,

After two days and nights of fighting, martial law was declared. Blacks were rounded up and taken to the Tulsa Fairgrounds, where they were treated as prisoners.

Something Extra!

People from around the world attended the annual International Petroleum Exposition founded in Tulsa in 1923.



The Capitol P & R Jones No. 1 well blew in on December 11, 1930, and once again Oklahoma City was showered with oil. The oil showers had become a common event in 1930 as well after well blew in.

oil field became one of the ten richest in the country.

The first **petrochemicals** (chemicals derived from petroleum or natural gas) plant in the Southwest was established at Tallant in Osage County in 1926. Formaldehyde preservative and alcohols were the first chemicals processed at the plant. Later, petrochemicals were used in solvents, photographic chemicals, medical products, refrigerants, safety glass, adhesives, and disinfectants. During World War II, the plant focused on uses for petrochemicals for the war effort.

A darker side of the oil boom resulted in the Osage Reign of Terror in the 1920s. At least twenty Osage Indians were murdered, including ten members of the family of Lizzie Q. Kyle, as non-Indians schemed to inherit their riches. The FBI worked several years developing the case. The newly created Oklahoma Bureau of Investigation sent one of its three agents, Luther Bishop, to help investigate. Bishop was found murdered in his home the next year.

and producers voluntarily slowed production. Some twenty thousand workers flooded the Seminole area, and the railroad depot saw unprecedented traffic. Fields discovered in the Texas Panhandle and southwestern Kansas in the early 1920s led to a huge tri-state field that included the Oklahoma Panhandle. Output from the tri-state field slowed until a pipeline was completed to Chicago in 1931.

“City Well Hurls ‘Liquid Gold’ High Over Oil Derrick” was the headline in the *Oklahoma City Times* on December 4, 1928, when Discovery Well No. 1 was drilled by the Indian Territory Illuminating Oil Company (later Cities Service and CITGO). That first well in the rich field in southeastern Oklahoma City alone produced more than a million barrels of oil. In March 1930, the Wild Mary Sudik well roared into production spewing oil 175 feet high, showering the area in oil. A crew of one hundred men finally capped the well. A forest of derricks dotted the Oklahoma City landscape, with some even located on the State Capitol grounds. The

Other Industries

Coal production reached its peak in Oklahoma in 1920, yielding almost five million tons. Mining of coal declined until after World War II, when it began to regain a share of the market. The zinc and lead mines of northeastern Oklahoma employed over eleven thousand men during their peak production years of the mid-1920s. In 1927, 248 zinc and lead mines were operating in the state.

During World War I, farmers were encouraged to plant more crops and raise more cattle and hogs for the war effort. With increased crop prices during the war, they were able to buy more land. By 1922, cotton was the most valuable cash crop in Oklahoma, and the state ranked fourth in the United States in cotton production. The supply was soon more than the demand, and farm prices started to tumble. Cotton fell from 34.6 cents a pound in 1920 to 7.2 cents a pound a year later. Wheat dropped from \$1.42 to 85 cents a bushel. While other industries prospered in the 1920s, agriculture suffered. Some farmers went broke or lost their land. Several groups such as the Farmers Union and the Farmer-Labor Reconstruction League campaigned for programs to help farmers.

Mechanized farm equipment was slow to move into Oklahoma. Money was always an issue, and the size of the fields did not make the new tractors and equipment cost effective. In addition, there was usually a good supply of migrant farm workers. In 1920, about 3 percent of Oklahoma farmers had tractors, but the number rose quickly by the end of the 1930s. The number of tractors reported statewide in 1928 was 18,260; in 1939, the number had jumped to 46,800, by which time the equipment had become essential to success.

Aviation Takes Off

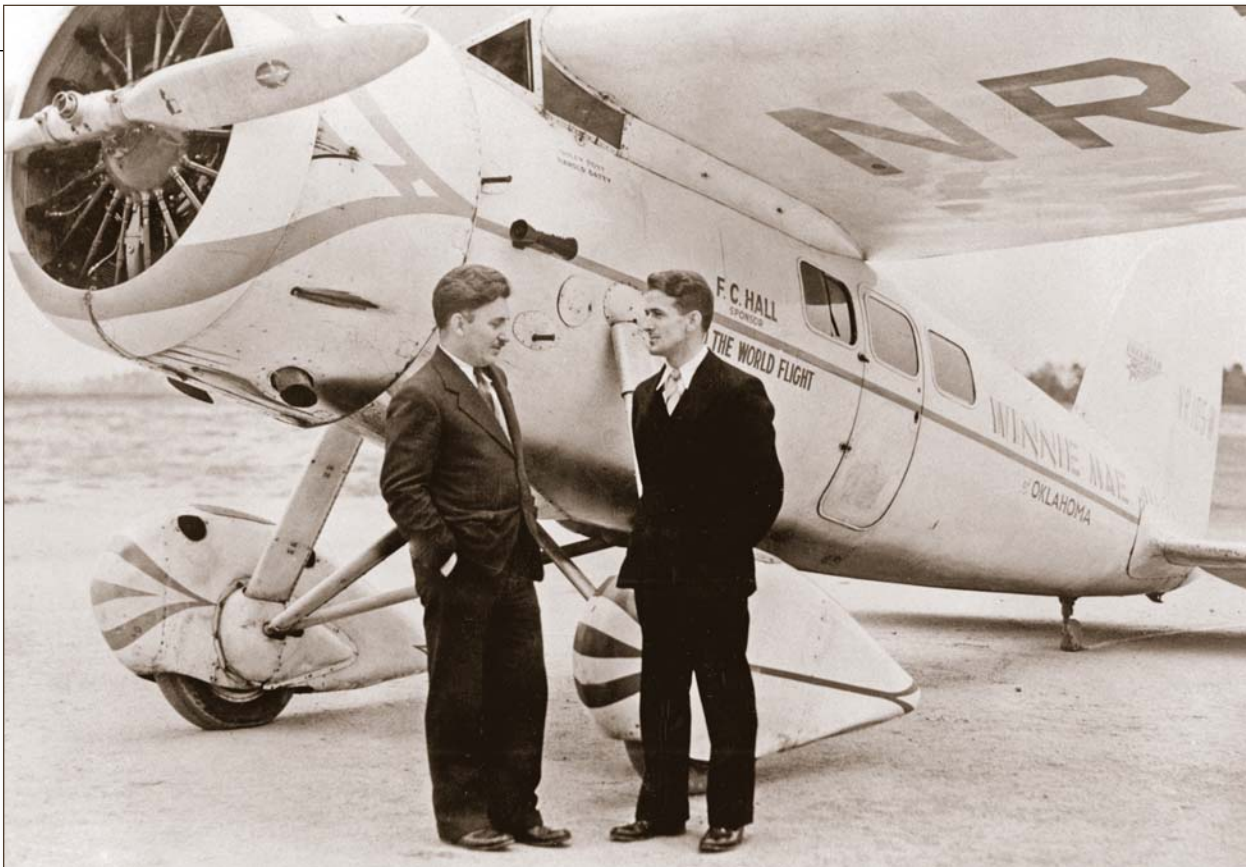
Interest in flying came early to Oklahoma. The first "airport" was built on flat farmland in Oklahoma City in 1910. The Henry Post Army Airfield was established at Fort Sill prior to World War I. Runways were flat grasslands, and sometimes "buffalo wallows were filled in to make a useable landing ground." Many pilots returning from the war became **barnstormers**, pilots who gave airplane rides and flying and stunt exhibitions. In 1919, barnstormer Duncan A. McIntyre established the McIntyre Airport in Tulsa; in 1920, he created the Curtiss-Southwest Airplane Company. Tulsa's Municipal Airport and Spartan School of Aeronautics were opened in 1928. By 1930, over 70,000 passengers used the Tulsa airport, making it one of the busiest in the world.

Something Extra!

Groups of barnstorming pilots often performed as a "flying circus." The planes would fly over a town, attracting the attention of the residents. Then they would land at a nearby farm (hence the name *barnstorming*) and offer rides and a show.



The aviation industry started to boom after World War I when young men returned from the war. Daredevil pilots like Andy Payne stormed the skies in pursuit of fame and fortune.



In June 1931, pilot Wiley Post (left) and navigator Harold Gatty (right) set a record for an around-the-world flight in this plane, the *Winnie Mae*. Post set records again in 1933.

Another barnstormer was Paul Braniff. In 1928, Braniff and his brother Tom bought a plane for \$11,000 and established the Paul R. Braniff, Inc., Airline with flights between Oklahoma City and Tulsa. Tickets were \$12.50 one-way or \$20 roundtrip. In addition to transporting people, Braniff also carried mail and delivered newspapers. Originally headquartered at the Curtiss-Wright Field in Oklahoma City, all of the Braniff operations were eventually moved to Dallas.

Another world famous aviator, Wiley Post, also used the Curtiss-Wright Field as his base and for his aircraft projects. Post grew up in southwestern Oklahoma, where at age fifteen he saw his first airplane at a county fair. Post worked as a skydiver for a couple of years, then he took a job in the oil fields so he could earn enough money to buy an airplane. An accident in the oil fields left him with one eye and trouble with depth perception, a handicap he learned to overcome. With a \$1,800 worker's compensation check, Post bought his first airplane. He made his living by giving flying lessons and exhibitions. In 1931, Post and navigator Harold Gatty set a new record in a plane called the *Winnie Mae* when they flew around the world in 8 days, 15 hours, and 51 minutes. Two years later, Post beat his own record by 21 hours when he flew solo around the world. Believing that flying in high altitude would improve airspeed, Post invented a pressure suit that allowed him to breathe and survive the higher flight. To prove his theory, Post flew 340 miles per hour in 1934, one-third faster than the normal maximum airspeed of the day.

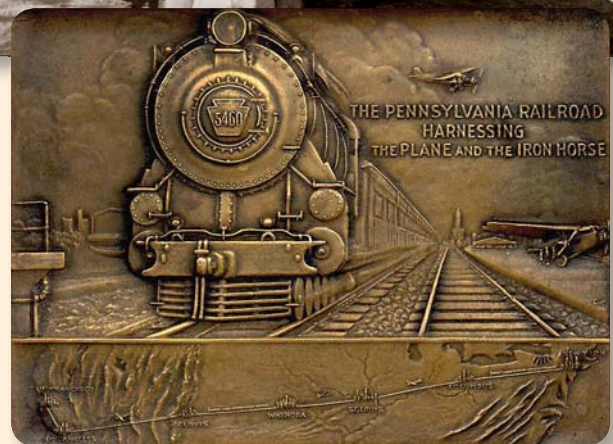
Spotlight

First Transcontinental Air Passenger Service

Harvey Houses were built to provide food service to Santa Fe Railroad passengers across the country. A Harvey House was built in Waynoka in 1910, to serve passengers on the line that ran from Chicago to Los Angeles.

In 1929, aviator Charles Lindbergh was hired to establish an air-rail Transcontinental Air Transport, which would cut travel time between New York and Los Angeles in half. On August 7, 1929, at 6:05 p.m., the Pennsylvania Railroad began its journey from New York in the first leg of the air-rail trip. Twenty passengers traveled by train to Columbus, Ohio, where they boarded a Ford Tri-Motor airplane for a flight to Oklahoma. En route, they were served a breakfast of strawberry shortcake and tea. The party arrived at Waynoka at 6:24 p.m., August 8, and were taken to the Harvey House for the evening meal. At Waynoka's Santa Fe Depot, they boarded the overnight train to Clovis, New Mexico, where they connected with another Tri-Motor plane that flew them to Los Angeles. They arrived at their destination on August 9 at 5:52 p.m., 48 hours after they had left New York.

For the short time it was on the air-rail route, the Waynoka Harvey House served such celebrities as Lionel Barrymore, Will Rogers, Ernie Pyle, Charles and Anne Lindbergh, and Amelia Earhart. The air-rail route through Waynoka was discontinued in October 1930 when the TAT Company and Western Air Express joined to form TWA (Trans World Airlines).



Top: Charles Lindbergh had an office aboard the TAT airplane "City of Columbus." **Above:** A 1929 Pennsylvania Railroad paperweight commemorates its role in Transcontinental Air Transport. The whole route is shown across the bottom.



The age of the car had arrived by 1920. More people wanted to own cars than wanted to own homes. This late 1920s car is being glamorized by a “flapper.” Find what a flapper was. Why do you think this model was used to promote the car?

Airports were built at Guthrie, Chickasha, Ponca City, Bartlesville, Muskogee, and Waynoka as communities sought to keep pace with the changing world.

“Motoring”

The automobile and the moving assembly line had a tremendous impact on the American economy and lifestyle in the 1920s. Car sales went through the roof, and auto-touring became popular as campsites and gasoline stations were built. By 1929, some 23 million cars were registered in America.

Tulsa booster Cyrus Avery was elected president of the Associated Highways of America in 1921. In 1924, he was named to the Oklahoma Highway Commission and in 1925 to the U.S. Agriculture Department’s Bureau of Public Roads. Congress wanted a road from Virginia to California across the middle of the country. Avery suggested that, to avoid the high peaks of the Rocky Mountains, the road should turn southwest through Tulsa and Oklahoma City and then head west. After much discussion, the route was agreed upon and the road was designated U.S. 66 on November 11, 1926. The road ran from Chicago to Los Angeles, and connected in Springfield, Missouri, with Route 60 from Virginia Beach. Avery nicknamed U.S. 66, “The Main Street of America.”

To bring attention to “Route 66,” a 3,422-mile transcontinental footrace, the Bunion Derby, was held. On March 4, 1928, 275 runners

left the starting line at Los Angeles, hoping to win the \$25,000 prize. Andy Payne of Foyil, Oklahoma, was one of the few who survived the grueling race. Payne, part-Cherokee Indian, was the first to cross the New York finish line on May 26, winning the longest race in America. He used the prize money to pay off the mortgage on his family's farm.

Life Was Good

Life was good for most Americans. Dance marathons featured the Charleston, the shimmy, and fox trot. Fashions included loose-cut, shorter dresses and raccoon coats. The favorite silent movie was *The Sheik*, starring Rudolph Valentino, and in 1927 the first feature-length talking motion picture, *The Jazz Singer*, was made. Trumpeter Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong launched the jazz age. Roller skating, cross-country races, Mah-Jongg, and crossword puzzles were popular, and flag pole sitting was the fad of the day. Household appliances were appearing to make life easier.

Towns of all sizes had vaudeville and movie theaters or opera houses; many were very ornate. Mining magnate George Coleman spent \$600,000 in 1929 to build the Coleman Theatre in Miami. The Okmulgee Hippodrome Theatre and Opera House, which opened in 1921, had a swimming pool in the basement and a ballroom on the second floor. George Pollard converted what was a dry goods store in Guthrie into a vaudeville house in 1919, calling it the Pollard Theatre. The Pollard was remodeled later for silent films and then "talkies." The art deco/art nouveau style Liberty Theatre, opened in 1915 in Carnegie, is the oldest continually running theatre in Oklahoma.

Something Extra!

Jazz originated in America in the early 1920s. Jazz combines American folk music, ragtime, West African music, and European marches for a unique blend that is often improvised. Jazz is sometimes called "America's classical music."

Radio had as much impact on America as did the automobile. The listeners were few when the first radio broadcast was made from Pittsburgh in 1920, but, by 1923, 556 stations were transmitting across the country. Earl Hull of Oklahoma City received a federal license in 1921 and station WKY began broadcasting in 1922, the first station west of the Mississippi River and the third in the United States. Radio stations soon followed in Tulsa, Yale, Okemah, Ardmore, Norman, Chickasha, Bristow, Muskogee, and Fort Sill.

By 1923, some four hundred thousand radios had been sold



Will Rogers, Oklahoma's favorite son, moved from roping in wild west shows to vaudeville, and then to writing in national newspapers, radio, and movies. His homespun philosophy poked fun at the pompous and prosperous—and they loved it.



Above: Portrait of Mary Alice Robertson from the State Capitol. **Right:** Mary Alice Robertson (right), daughter of Oklahoma missionaries, was the first woman from Oklahoma and only the second nationwide elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

across America. People could hear news instantly, rather than reading about it days later. Entertainment was brought into the home with such radio programs as “Fibber McGee and Molly.” Ideas, information, propaganda, and political and religious messages were broadcast to thousands. Oklahoma’s own Will Rogers was a natural for radio. His down-home charm, wit, and insight endeared him to the nation. The entertainer and homespun philosopher moved from rope tricks in the wild west shows to vaudeville, and then to writing for newspapers. Radio provided Rogers an even better way to humorously comment on the issues of the day and on prominent people.

Politics

Mary Alice Robertson, the daughter of missionaries, became the first woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Oklahoma. On June 20, 1921, she presided over the House for thirty minutes, the first woman in the country to do so. Robertson, a Republican from Muskogee, served one term, losing the election in 1922.

Politics were turbulent in the 1920s in Oklahoma. Democrats won the majority of seats in both houses of the Legislature, and John C.



Walton was elected governor by a wide margin. Walton's term began with a huge barbecue for the "common man," but it ended ten months later with impeachment. Walton clashed with conservatives as well as some prominent liberals and radicals on a number of issues. He attempted to build **partisan** (strong, biased political backing) support by appointing new members to several boards, but that angered many people. Newspapers criticized his use of martial law and his leniency for prisoners; they called for his impeachment. Walton was impeached on twenty-two counts and convicted of eleven; he was ousted in November 1923.



One law passed during Walton's term provided free textbooks to public schools. That law excluded textbooks that taught Darwin's theory of evolution over the Biblical theory. Oklahoma became the first state to essentially prohibit teaching evolution in public schools. Other states soon followed with similar laws. When Tennessee's law passed in 1925, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) offered to defend any teacher willing to test the case. John T. Scopes, a Tennessee biology teacher, was **indicted** (charged with a crime) and brought to trial. This national media event featured two of the greatest orators of the time—past presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan for the prosecution and Clarence Darrow for the defense. After eight days of testimony, the jurors ruled that Scopes had taught evolution in a Tennessee classroom. The judge had refused to hear testimony on whether Scopes had a *right* to teach evolution. Scopes was fined \$100, but that decision was later overturned by the Tennessee supreme court.



John C. Walton (above) was elected governor in 1922. True to his promises, he gave a barbecue (top) instead of an inaugural ball. Walton was impeached and removed from office after only ten months.

It's Your Turn

1. What incident apparently started the Tulsa Race Riot?
2. Where were Oklahoma's first airports?
3. What was the significance of Route 66?

Section 2

The Great Depression



A nervous crowd mills around outside the New York Stock Exchange on “Black Tuesday,” October 29, 1929.

As you read, look for

- the events that led to the Great Depression,
- actions taken by the federal government to ease the depression, and
- vocabulary terms **Great Depression, credit, stock market, New Deal, subsidy, collective bargaining, Dust Bowl, and shelterbelt.**

The confident optimism of the 1920s gave way to despair in the 1930s as the United States and much of the world settled into what came to be called the **Great Depression**. The depression that farmers in Oklahoma and across the country had experienced for most of the 1920s gripped the other parts of the country in the 1930s.

The 1930 U.S. census numbers in Oklahoma didn’t tell the story that was beginning to unfold. Oklahoma’s 1930 population of 2,396,040 was an increase of over 300,000 from the 1920 census figure. The urbanization trend from the previous decade continued; 34 percent of the state’s people lived in urban areas.

Trouble Brews

A number of factors combined to cause the Great Depression—an overproduction of goods, high tariffs on international trade, extensive use of credit, and stock market speculation.

The overproduction of farm products was apparent in the early 1920s, causing many farmers to slow their spending. Many other people, though, rushed to buy the latest household items, radios, and automobiles, often on **credit**, a “buy now, pay later” option. International trade declined because of high tariffs (taxes) imposed by the United States and other countries. After World War I, some banks in America and in other nations made unwise loans in international markets, which caused an unstable international banking structure.

The growing prosperity of the wealthiest Americans led to a rapid growth in the **stock market** (the place where shares of ownership—stock—in corporations are bought and sold) in the late 1920s. People and banks bought stock at high prices, believing the value of the stock



would continue to rise. Stock prices in many companies increased rapidly, which fueled more investments. In the fall of 1929, however, investors began to lose confidence in the market and began selling their stock. Investors began to panic as the value of the stocks dropped dramatically. On Thursday, October 24, investors tried to sell their stocks at any price. A small rebound occurred Friday, before the market was closed for the weekend. Panic set in on Monday as trading got underway, and the fear continued the next day. On Tuesday, October 29, 1929, known as “Black Tuesday,” the stock market “crashed” and stock prices plunged. By the end of the day, thousands of Americans had lost everything. Many people were so far in debt, they had no hope of recovery, and there were no programs to bail them out.

Consumer demand for products dropped, which caused factories to close. Thousands of Americans were out of work. People withdrew their savings from banks, but sometimes the banks didn’t have the money to give them. By March 1933, more than five thousand banks across the country had collapsed.

Oklahoma’s Plight

Oklahoma’s economy centered around agriculture and oil. Already low prices for crops fell as much as 50 percent more in the early 1930s. By 1931, the price for cotton was down to 5 cents a pound, which didn’t cover the cost of growing it. The price of oil dropped to a low of 15 cents a barrel.

A sharecropper and his family make their way on foot from Idabel to Krebs after losing their farm.

The depression affected everyone. People cut back spending on clothing and furniture. Cloth feed sacks were used to make clothing and quilts as people learned to “make do, make over, or do without.” Unemployment rose to an all-time high. The American Red Cross handed out emergency food supplies, and churches set up soup kitchens in the larger cities. A strong, but controversial, leader emerged to take Oklahoma through some of its darkest days.



William H. Murray was elected governor in 1930, twenty-four years after serving as president of the state's constitutional convention.

“Alfalfa Bill”

Democrat William H. “Alfalfa Bill” Murray won the election for governor in 1930 and assured voters he would equalize the tax burden and cut government costs. The Legislature appropriated money to help provide for the basic needs of the people – emergency food rations and free seed. Murray led efforts to develop a national program for emergency relief. When Murray took office, the state was \$5 million in debt. Efforts to reduce the debt included forming the Oklahoma Tax Commission, adjusting property taxes, and reducing funds for public institutions.

Murray often used National Guard troops and martial law to protect the state's interests, such as when he ordered all petroleum producers to shut down. Oklahoma and Texas wells had flooded the market, causing the price of oil to drop drastically. The governor placed Oklahoma's 3,106 wells under martial law, until quotas could be developed for each well. He also met with Kansas and Texas officials to control production so prices would rise.

The governor defied a federal court order that called for closing a free bridge over the Red River in favor of toll bridges. Murray argued that the court order hurt the public, while toll-bridge operators were protected. He ordered the National Guard to open both ends of the free bridge; however, the Texas governor ordered Rangers to enforce the court order. Newspapers labeled the area a “war zone.” The standoff halted traffic on the bridge for several days until the Texas legislature and the bridge company dissolved the court injunction.

In 1932, the colorful Murray was nominated at the Democratic National Convention as a presidential candidate, but Franklin D. Roosevelt of New York won the nomination and the presidential election. Murray continued to lead the state through the end of his term in 1934.

The New Deal

Franklin Roosevelt had campaigned for a “new deal for the American people,” and he and his wife, Eleanor, were committed to easing the burden of the depression. The day after Roosevelt was inaugurated in



1933, he ordered all banks to close until they could be certified stable by federal reviewers. Roosevelt assembled a group of advisers from all over the country, known as the “brain trust,” to develop plans and programs to create jobs, strengthen the economy, and improve society. The series of laws passed by Congress came to be known as the **New Deal**. Most of the New Deal programs were known by their initials and were sometimes collectively called “Alphabet Soup.”

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was established during Roosevelt’s first month in office. CCC camps were set up around the country, and 250,000 unemployed young men quickly enrolled. The men were paid \$30 a month and were required to send home \$25. The CCC worked on conservation projects; constructed buildings and trails in state and national parks; installed telephone and power lines; built roads, fences, and furniture; planted trees; excavated archaeological sites; and fought wildfires.

The Public Works Administration (PWA) built roads, buildings, and other public works projects. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) provided federal funds for state and community relief efforts. The Federal Deposit Insurance Cor-

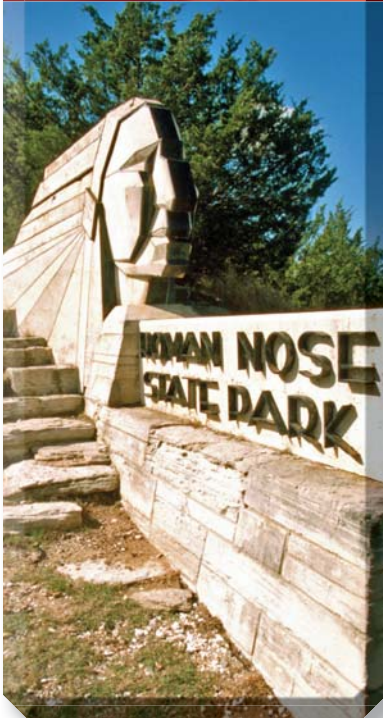
As Franklin D. Roosevelt campaigned for president in 1932, he spread a feeling of optimism that times would get better.

Something Extra!

President Franklin D. Roosevelt spoke to America by radio in his “fireside chats.”

Something Extra!

Oklahoma's first state park at Lake Murray was completed in 1937, and CCC work areas of Roman Nose, Beavers Bend, Robbers Cave, Boiling Springs, Osage Hills, and Quartz Mountain were transferred to the state the same year.



poration (FDIC) insured individual accounts so people did not lose their money if a bank failed.

Roosevelt directed several programs toward farmers, believing that a strong farming industry was vital to a prosperous nation. The Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) was intended to limit crop production and pay landowners **subsidies** for leaving some of their land idle. Although the intent of the AAA was to help farmers, it actually hurt the tenant farmers because the landowners were paid *not* to farm. Many tenant farmers then lost their jobs. Other farm-related programs were the Resettlement Administration (RA), the Farm Security Administration (FSA), the Farm Credit Administration (FCA), and the Rural Electrification Administration (REA).

Few rural areas had electricity because it was too expensive to build and maintain power lines to a spread-out, rural population. The REA program allowed people to form cooperatives to share the cost of bringing power lines to remote areas. The number of homes with electricity increased from 10 percent in 1930 to 25 percent by 1939. The *Southwest Rural Electric Association* at Tipton reported in 1939,

Soon community homes will be flooded with bright electric lights. . . . The school house will be a much brighter place at night, making it possible for the audience to see the characters of the plays better, and more pleasant for other activities of the year. The basketball players will not have to squint their eyes to be able to see the ball. There will be no bang, bang of the Delco (generator) or the whiz of the wind chargers. There will be no worry about your radio battery. You may just sit back and watch your brightness burn, listen to your radio—and pay your bill every month."

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) was created in 1934 to regulate stocks and the stock market. The SEC watches for and punishes abuses involving stocks such as *insider trading* (using information gained as an employee of a corporation to make a profit from stock trading), providing false information, and using borrowed money to buy stock. The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) was begun in the same year to provide home loans for low-income families. The Indian Reorganization Act, or the Indian New Deal, reversed the Dawes Act's mandate of dividing common tribal land and returned tribal self-government rights to Indians.

The Second New Deal

Efforts for relief, recovery, and reform were continued in 1935 with additional federal programs. Labor unions were strengthened with the National Labor Relations Act, which protected **collective bargaining** (negotiations between a labor union and an employer over wages, benefits, and working conditions). The Social Security Act, one of the most significant long-term programs of the New Deal, provided retire-

ment and old-age benefits financed by payroll taxes. It also provided financial aid to children, the blind, and widows with small children, and it established state-based unemployment assistance.

Additional unemployment relief was provided through the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the National Youth Administration (NYA). The largest New Deal program, WPA built 650,000 miles of roads, 78,000 bridges, 125,000 buildings, and 700 miles of airport runways. Almost 90,000 Oklahomans worked on 1,300 WPA projects, which also included art and writing efforts.

Sometimes mistaken for WPA art, post office murals were created by artists working for the Section of Fine Arts in 1934. Public buildings, especially post offices, were chosen for the art since they were accessible to everyone. Some 14,000 artists produced murals, paintings, sculptures, and graphic arts around the country. The 32 murals in Oklahoma communities depicted the state's Indian and pioneer history. Stephen Mopope painted scenes of Indian life in Anadarko, Frank Long created *Oklahoma Land Rush* in Drumright, Solomon McCombs's mural in Marietta was *Chickasaw Indian Family Making Pah Sho Fah*, and cotton was featured in Joan Cunningham's work in Poteau.



Something Extra!

A group of young Kiowa Indian artists became renowned for their paintings of Indian life. The Kiowa Five (actually six) included Jack Hokeah, Stephen Mopope, Monroe Tsatoke, James Auchiah, Spencer Asah, and Lois Smokey. Mentored by Oscar Jacobson of the University of Oklahoma, some of the artists were commissioned by the federal government to paint murals.

Monroe Tsatoke painted this mural depicting the Kiowa tribe, on display in the Oklahoma Judicial Center, in 1934.



The Dust Bowl

Oklahoma's weather runs in cycles, from periods of wet years to periods of dry years. In the early 1930s, the southeastern part of the country experienced a drought; by 1932, it had moved west to the Great Plains. Although three-fourths of the United States suffered from the drought, the hardest hit region included the western half of Kansas, southeastern Colorado, the Oklahoma Panhandle, the northern two-thirds of the Texas Panhandle, and northeastern New Mexico. This area was called the **Dust Bowl**.

The erratic weather of the Plains made farming a challenge, but farmers adapted. Eventually, farmers removed the native grasses and their tangled roots in about a third of the Plains by plowing; in their place, they planted seasonal crops. Farmers were encouraged to plant "fence to fence" during the war years. The drought, combined with thousands of hungry grasshoppers and rabbits, destroyed crops. Unrelenting strong winds blew away the fragile topsoil creating massive dust storms. The ominous clouds of dust covered everything and found a way through the tiniest crack in a house. Sand drifts could hide a car or a fence. Health problems developed from breathing the dust. Much of the state was covered by darkening dust on April 10-11, 1935. On April 14, 1935, known as Black Sunday, the worst dust storm in northwestern Oklahoma occurred. The dark clouds of dust swirled along the ground and combined with atmospheric electricity from a cold air mass to lift the soil as much as 8,000 feet high.

Accustomed to hard work and tough times, most of the farmers in the Plains states stayed with their land. Some tenant farmers, some

Map 36 The Dust Bowl

Map Skill: On the map, which city is closest to the Dust Bowl area?

Something Extra!

The term *Dust Bowl* was first used by Robert Geiger, an Associated Press reporter, who wrote in 1935, "Three little words achingly familiar on a Western farmer's tongue, rule life in the dust bowl of the continent— if it rains."





whose farms were heavily mortgaged, and some who grew tired of the relentless weather left their homes in search of better conditions. Many from urban areas also packed up and left. In 1940, the United Provident Association reported a variety of people had left the state including barbers, bookkeepers, cab drivers, carpenters, mechanics, miners, musicians, salesmen, teachers, waitresses, and many others primarily from Oklahoma, Caddo, Muskogee, and Tulsa counties. Between 1936 and 1940, over 309,000 people left Oklahoma. Word of work available in California traveled fast, and many of the people leaving headed west on Route 66.

Two men recorded the conditions of the displaced people. Author John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, the tragic drama of one Oklahoma family, caused the word *Okie* to be used disrespectfully for all migrant agricultural workers. The novel was strongly resented by most Oklahomans, who felt it painted a derogatory picture of them. Woody Guthrie, born in the oil-boom town of Okemah in 1912, was a keen observer of the world around him. Guthrie left Okemah in the early 1930s after the oil boom. He went to Texas but soon followed many others to California in 1937. Guthrie wrote passionately of his many life experiences in songs and poetry. One of the folksinger's most popular songs, "This Land is Your Land," was written on one of his many cross-country trips.



Top: A massive dust storm threatens Hooker, Oklahoma, in 1937. **Above:** Woody Guthrie captured the plight of the migrant families in his songs. This portrait of him hangs in the State Capitol. **Opposite page:** Two men struggle to free their car from the sand near an abandoned Dust Bowl farm in Cimarron County.



Life Goes On

While everyone was greatly affected by the Great Depression, life in the 1930s did go on. Oilman E. W. Marland, whose business headquarters and mansion were in Ponca City, was elected governor in 1934. Marland argued for conservation and aid programs, but the Legislature opposed them. Marland did succeed in establishing the Oklahoma Highway Patrol, the Oklahoma Planning and Resources Board, and the Interstate Oil Compact. He also increased the state sales tax to 2 percent.

Marland was succeeded in 1938 by Leon Phillips, whose primary agenda was to get the state out of debt. Phillips successfully pushed for a balanced budget amendment and another amendment that allowed women to run for any state office. Phillips spent the last part of his term mobilizing Oklahoma for World War II.

In the middle of the depression, Oklahoma lost two of its most beloved favorite sons, and the entire country was stunned. In August 1935, Will Rogers and Wiley Post were on an ill-fated aerial tour flying from Fairbanks to Barrow, Alaska, when they ran into fog and had to land. After getting directions to Barrow from Alaska natives, the pair had barely become airborne again when the motor failed, and the aircraft crashed near Point Barrow, killing both Rogers and Post. The Associated Press wrote, "The lives of both the gentle master of the wise-crack and the champion aerial globe trotter were crushed out instantly as the impact drove the heavy motor back through the fuselage." Both houses of Congress suspended deliberations upon learning of Rogers's and Post's deaths, and a period of national mourning followed.

By the late 1930s, farmers were using more land conservation techniques, taking into account how a field was plowed and terraced and which lands should be left in grass. **Shelterbelts** are rows of trees planted to anchor the soil and buffer the wind. The nation's first shelterbelt was planted in March 1939 by WPA and CCC workers north of Mangum. Over 40 million trees were planted in 25,000 miles of shelterbelts. Plans were put in place for dams and reservoirs to tame the swings between drought and flood. The Denison Dam across the Red River was designed for hydroelectric generation and flood control,



Top: *The Last Farewell of Will Rogers and Wiley Post*, by Mike Wimmer, depicts Rogers (left) and Post at their last stop before their plane crashed in Alaska.

Above: Governor and oilman E. W. Marland has been honored with a statue in Ponca City.

and it created Lake Texoma. Construction was also begun on the Grand River Dam and the Altus-Lugert Irrigation Project.

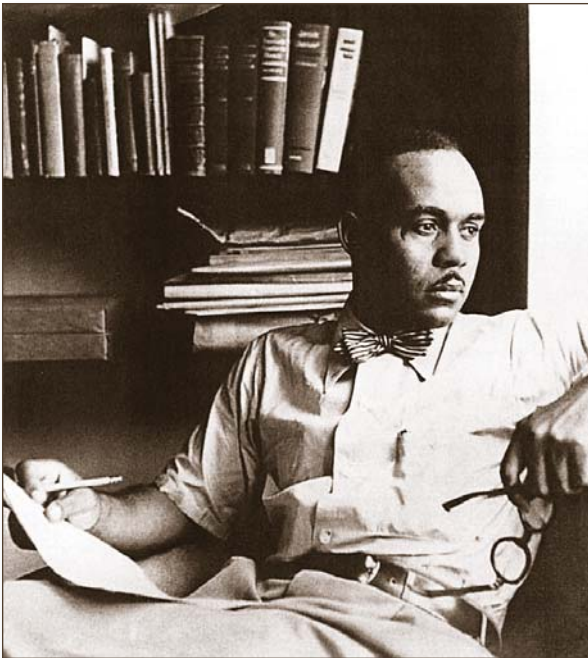
The attitude of several Oklahomans in the 1930s was not only “can do,” but “can do better.” George Failing invented a portable rotary drilling rig and over three hundred tools for use in the petroleum industry. Some consider Bob Dunn, a musician from Beggs, as the father of the electric steel guitar. Sylvan Goldman developed the first shopping cart for his Piggly Wiggly supermarket in Oklahoma City. To help ease traffic congestion in downtown Oklahoma City, Carl Magee came up with the idea for a parking meter. Oklahoma City’s First National Center, at thirty-three stories, was the tallest building west of the Mississippi when it was built in 1931. Businesses that got their start in the 1930s included Tener’s Western Wear, John A. Brown, Warehouse Market, Cusack Meats, Lee Way Motor Freight, TG&Y stores, Balliet’s, and MG Novelty.

Poverty, uncertainty, and unemployment contributed to a crime wave that spread across the country, and Oklahoma was right in the middle of it. Charles “Pretty Boy” Floyd and his partner George Birdwell committed a string of robberies before Floyd was gunned down in 1934. Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow often rode through the back roads of Oklahoma as they tried to escape the law. The Bloody Barkers—Ma Barker and her sons Herman, Lloyd, Arthur (Doc), and Fred—were one of the more dreaded gangs. George “Machine Gun” Kelly’s life of crime brought him to Oklahoma City where he married Kathryn Thorne. In 1933, Kelly and Albert Bates kidnapped wealthy Charles Urschel from his home at gunpoint. Urschel was released after his family paid a \$200,000 ransom, and he provided clues to help the FBI find the kidnapers. Federal Bureau of Investigation Director J. Edgar Hoover took special interest in the case and assigned his top agents to the kidnapping. The case evoked the new Lindbergh kidnapping federal laws (enacted after the famous Lindbergh baby kidnapping), and it was one of the first trials to be filmed. Newsreel cameras recorded the trial in the packed courtroom. Kelly was convicted.

Jazz wasn’t born in Oklahoma, but our musicians helped it grow. The Blue Devils of Oklahoma City evolved into the Count Basie Orchestra. Other jazz artists included Jimmy Rushing of Oklahoma City, Howard McGhee of Tulsa, and Jay McShann of Muskogee. Douglas High School graduate Charlie Christian used a single-string technique of playing the guitar. His style propelled the guitar from



Top: Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker. Above: Oklahoma City’s Jimmy Rushing was a vocalist in the Count Basie Orchestra.



The writer Ralph Ellison, best known for his novel *Invisible Man*, was born in the Deep Deuce neighborhood of Oklahoma City.

the rhythm section to being a lead instrument. Christian was a pioneer in the modern electric guitar sound, and he is credited with being one of the developers of bebop. Musician and songwriter Bob Wills relocated his western swing band, the Texas Playboys, from Waco, Texas, to bigger markets in Oklahoma, finally settling in Tulsa in 1934. Western swing combined the sounds of big band, jazz, pop, blues, and southern country music.

The bustling, vibrant area from which so much creative talent in Oklahoma City emerged was known as Deep Deuce or Deep Second. The African American community began north of the North Canadian (now Oklahoma) River as Sandtown when the area was opened to settlement. The growing community eventually moved north of the warehouse district of the city. Deep Deuce was the cultural and commercial hub for the African American community. During the day, activity centered around

the shops, restaurants, schools, theater, and law and medical offices. Music and jam sessions by Rushing, Christian, and many others filled the night air. That energy and atmosphere provided the backdrop for the early years of Ralph Waldo Ellison. Born in 1913 in Deep Deuce, Ellison wrote the best-selling *Invisible Man*, a novel about a young black man's journey. Ellison's love of the Deep Deuce jazz and music he grew up with inspired him to write several essays on musical topics.

It was a time of extremes. Oklahoma weather in the 1930s ranged from a January 18, 1930, record low at Watts of -27°F to the wettest February in 1938. Twenty-three people at Bethany were killed by an F4 tornado on November 19, 1930, and five Oklahoma City people died when the North Canadian River flooded in June 1932. Another devastating flood occurred in Roger Mills County in April 1934, when fourteen inches of rain fell in six hours.

The ups and downs of the 1920s and 1930s served as a prelude to the 1940s and yet another global war. The events that were unfolding put to rest the idea that World War I was the "war to end all wars."

It's Your Turn

1. What happened to the U.S. economy on "Black Tuesday" in October 1929?
2. Identify four programs designed to put people back to work during the Great Depression.
3. Name two men who publicized the plight of Oklahomans.

Oklahoma Profiles



Five Ballerinas

Five young Oklahoma Native Americans were inspired by dance companies that toured the Midwest during the 1930s. Each of the girls—Yvonne Chouteau, Rosella Hightower, Moscelyne Larkin, Maria Tallchief, and Marjorie Tallchief—flourished in the demanding world of professional ballet and rose to the top as ballerinas.

Maria and Marjorie Tallchief were sisters born in Fairfax to an Osage father and Scottish-Irish mother. Both girls started taking dance lessons when they were three years old; in 1933, they began studying in California. Maria joined the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, while Marjorie joined the American Ballet Theatre. They both performed internationally. Marjorie taught at the Dallas Civic Ballet Academy. Both Maria and Marjorie helped found the Chicago City Ballet.

Rosella Hightower, a Choctaw Indian from Ardmore, studied ballet in Kansas City. Rosella's talent eventually took her to Europe, and she opened a dance school in 1961 in the French Mediterranean city of Cannes.

Born in Vinita, Yvonne Chouteau also began her ballet career in Kansas City at age fourteen. She became the youngest American ever to be a member of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and was awarded a lifetime scholarship at the School of American Ballet. A Cherokee Indian, Yvonne helped develop Ballet Oklahoma and the University of Oklahoma's dance program.

Moscelyne Larkin also spent much of her career with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. The Miami native was of Shawnee-Peoria Indian and Russian descent. She learned ballet from her mother and then went on to study in New York. After touring worldwide, Moscelyne returned to Oklahoma. She and her husband, Roman Jasinski, founded the Tulsa Ballet in 1956.

Artist Mike Larsen's mural, "Flight of Spirit," in the State Capitol (pictured above) depicts the five American Indian ballerinas from Oklahoma. Life-sized bronze sculptures of the five are displayed at the Tulsa Historical Society.

Chapter Review

Chapter Summary

- The 1920s brought great economic, social, and cultural changes to both the United States and Oklahoma.
- Postwar demand for Oklahoma's natural resources—oil, gas, lead, zinc, and agricultural products—dropped sharply.
- A “red scare” swept the country and led to the reemergence of the Ku Klux Klan.
- The Tulsa Race Riot of 1921 destroyed the prosperous black community of Greenwood, in Tulsa, once known as the “Black Wall Street of America.”
- The 1920s saw a reoccurrence of the oil boom in several areas of the state, while other industries and agriculture declined.
- The aviation industry and an interest in flying expanded after World War I.
- The growing automobile industry led to changes in the American economy and lifestyle.
- Oklahoma politics were turbulent in the 1920s.
- The Great Depression of the 1930s devastated the United States and Oklahoma. Governor William H. “Alfalfa Bill” Murray led Oklahomans through the depression.
- President Franklin D. Roosevelt was committed to easing the burden of the depression with his “New Deal” for the American people. The Social Security Act was one of the most significant and long-term programs of the New Deal.
- In the 1930s, the Great Plains experienced a devastating drought that led to the area being called the Dust Bowl. Between 1936 and 1940, thousands of Oklahomans, hoping for a better life, left for California, traveling west on Route 66.

- Two Oklahoma heroes of the 1930s—Will Rogers and Wiley Post—were killed in a plane crash in Alaska in 1935.
- The attitude of Oklahomans that they could do better was evident through inventions, new businesses, and new kinds of popular music.

Vocabulary

Write a definition for each of the following words.

1. art deco
2. barnstormers
3. cash crop
4. collective bargaining
5. drought
6. Dust Bowl
7. euphoric
8. Great Depression
9. inflation
10. insider trading
11. martial law
12. migrant
13. New Deal
14. partisan
15. petrochemicals
16. rationing
17. red scare
18. Roaring Twenties
19. shelterbelts
20. transmitted

Understanding the Facts

1. Give three examples of social unrest in Oklahoma following WWI.

2. What nickname was given to the black business area of Greenwood in Tulsa?
3. Name three new oil pools opened in Oklahoma in the 1920s.
4. What was the most valuable cash crop in Oklahoma in the 1920s?
5. What were the call letters of the first radio station west of the Mississippi River, and where was it located?
6. Who was the first Oklahoma woman to serve in the United States House of Representatives?
7. Where did many Oklahomans go during the Dust Bowl years?

Developing Critical Thinking

1. Why did the end of World War I bring new problems to the economy and create social change in Oklahoma?
2. Explain how Oklahoma was a good example of the “Dirty Thirties.”
3. In our economy, how does overproduction of a crop or product usually affect its price?

4. Why was Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath* controversial when it was first published? Is it still controversial in Oklahoma?

Applying Your Skills

1. On a map of Oklahoma draw Route 66, labeling the towns along its route across the state.
2. Assume you are a newspaper reporter in Oklahoma in the mid-1930s assigned to cover the Dust Bowl. Write a story for your newspaper and include a headline for your story.

Exploring Technology

1. Research the Internet for the term “red scare,” which swept the country after World War I. Write a report telling where the term “red scare” originated and why it was feared in America.
2. Prepare a PowerPoint presentation on the life of Woody Guthrie. Include some of his songs and the impact they had on people during the depression and Dust Bowl era. Also, tell why many Oklahomans disliked Woody.

Building Skills

Using Road Maps

We are a mobile society. Most families own a motor vehicle of some sort, and many own more than one. We think nothing of getting in the car and going—to school or work, shopping, visiting, on vacation. We can probably navigate around our neighborhood or local area because we are so familiar with it. But if we are going to a new destination or just driving in unfamiliar territory, we might need some help.

Road maps provide information about the distances between locations, types of highways, and connections to other roads.

Using an Oklahoma highway map, plan a trip from your town or city to any one of the following destinations: Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Ardmore, Eufaula, or Ada. Choose a destination that is at least 100 miles away. Then answer the following questions.

1. Which highways make up the shortest route to your destination?
2. Are any of the highways a toll road or an interstate highway? If so, list them.
3. What is the distance in highway miles to your destination?
4. Assume that you travel to your destination at an average speed of 50 miles an hour. How long will the trip take if you do not make any stops?
5. If the trip requires more than six hours, where would you most likely spend the night after about six hours of driving time?
6. If your car averages twenty miles per gallon of gasoline, how many gallons will the trip require? Using the current price of gasoline in your area, what will be the cost of the gasoline for your trip?