

Flappers, Depression, and Global War



Chapter Preview

This chapter covers only a twenty-five-year period, but this was one of Georgia's and America's most eventful times. "Calamity Jane," a huge heavy artillery gun on wheels, fired the final shots of World War I at 10:59 a.m. on November 11, 1918. The "war to end all wars" was over. President Wilson wrote, "Everything for which America has fought has been accomplished. It will now be our fortunate duty to assist by example, by sober, friendly counsel, and by material aid, in the establishment of just democracy throughout the world." America was at peace, and the party was about to begin.

Georgia character word:

Respect for the Creator

Terms: jazz, the blues, boll weevil, Great Migration, stock market, Great Depression, laissez-faire, relief, New Deal, minimum wage, collective bargaining, rural electrification, subsidy, integrate, isolationism, dictator, appeasement, World War II, Holocaust, ration, G. I. Bill

People:

Bessie Kempton Crowell, Viola Ross Napier, Ma Rainey, Charles Lindbergh, Bobby Jones, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Richard B. Russell Jr., Eugene Talmadge, Eurith Rivers, Ellis Arnall

Places: Blue Ridge Lake, Lake Chatuge, Lake Nottley, Pearl Harbor

Section 1 The Roaring Twenties

Section 2 The Great Depression

Section 3 The New Deal

Section 4 World War II

Left: Democratic presidential candidate Franklin Delano Roosevelt campaigns in Atlanta in 1932. His wife Eleanor is sitting on the right side of the car.



Signs of the Times

1920-1945

Population: 131.6 million in 1940

Life Expectancy: In 1920, Male 53.6 and Female 54.6; in 1940, Male 60.8 and Female 68.2

Costs of Living: During the Depression, milk was \$0.14 a quart, bread was \$0.09 a loaf, flour was \$0.39 a pound, coffee was \$0.46 a pound, eggs were \$0.15 a dozen, and 10 pounds of sugar cost \$0.43. A new house cost \$7,146. A new car cost \$610, and gas was \$0.10 a gallon.

Wages: The average annual salary in 1920 was \$2,160 but only \$1,973 in 1930. In 1920, a teacher's salary was \$970; in 1940, it was \$1,441. The minimum wage in the 1940s was \$0.43 an hour.

Art/Architecture: Important artists of the period included Willem de Kooning, Georgia O'Keeffe, Thomas Hart Benton, Edward Hopper, Grant Wood, N. C. Wyeth, Jackson Pollock, Piet Mondrian, and Andrew Wyeth. Skyscrapers erected during this period included the Woolworth Building and the Empire State Building in New York and the Wrigley Building in Chicago. U.S. Army Engineers completed the five-sided Pentagon Building.

Music: The music of the 1920s featured jazz, the blues, and sentimental ballads. The 1930s was the big band era. Big bands gave way to rhythm and blues. Hit songs included "I'm Just Wild About Harry," "California Here I Come," and "Second Hand Rose." Hit singers included Frank Sinatra, Dinah Shore, Kate Smith, Bing Crosby, Perry Como, Billie Holiday, and Ella Fitzgerald.

Literature: Books published during the period included Dr. Benjamin Spock's *Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care*, Dashiell Hammett's *The Maltese Falcon*, Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth*, John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings's *The Yearling*, Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind*, Richard Wright's *Native Son*, and E. B. White's *Stuart Little*. Leading poets of the era included e. e. cummings, Carl Sandburg, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Langston Hughes, and Robert Frost.

Fads/Fashions: Popularity of radio boomed, and television began to expand late in the era. Dance marathons were popular; popular dances were the Charleston, black bottom, shimmy, and jitterbug. The board game "Monopoly" was invented. Women began wearing knee-length skirts. Ready-to-wear fashions became popular. Zippers became common in clothes. Hats were mandatory for men. Women's nylon stockings were first marketed in 1939.

Religion: The American Lutheran Church formed in 1930 in Toledo, Ohio. The International Bible Students Association became Jehovah's Witnesses in 1931. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1943 that schoolchildren could not be required to salute the flag in school if their religion prohibited it.

Science: The bulldozer was invented in 1923. RCA licensed NBC as the first nationwide entertainment network in 1926; CBS was organized in 1927. The nation's first planetarium opened in Chicago in 1930. DuPont marketed the first nylon product—a toothbrush. Aerosol spray cans were introduced. Computers were developed in 1945; the digital computer named ENIAC weighed 30 tons and stood two stories high.

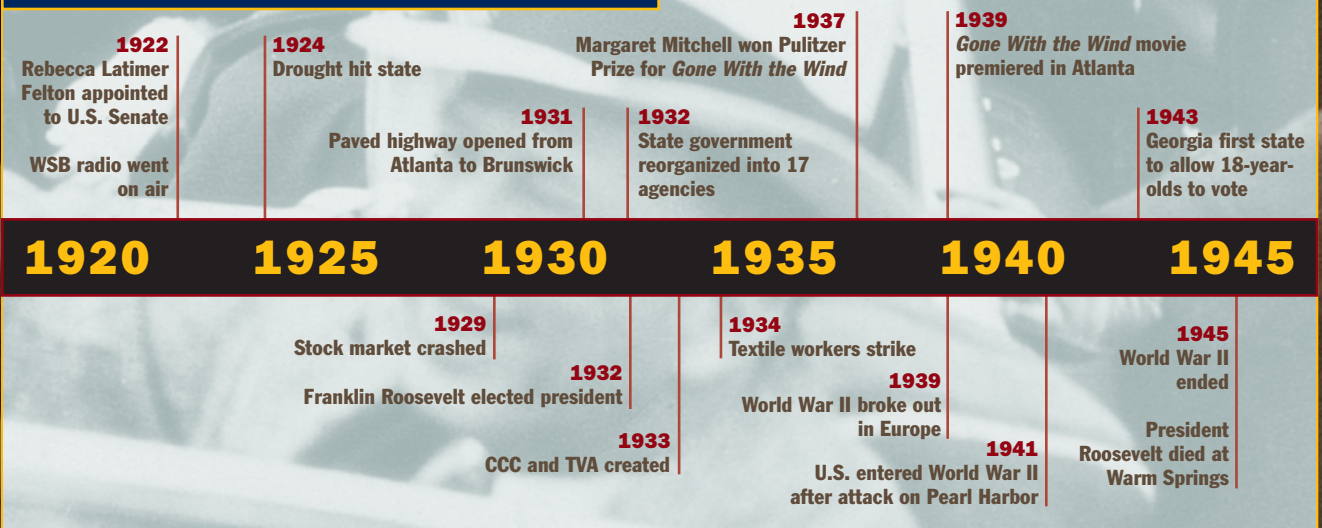
Education: At the height of the depression in 1933, some 2,000 rural schools closed, 200,000 teachers were out of work, and about 2.3 million children were out of school. The concept of junior high schools spread across the nation in the 1920s. National Spelling Bee began in 1925, sponsored by the Louisville *Courier-Journal*.

Transportation: The first coast-to-coast bus line, Yelloway Bus Line, offered service from New York to Los Angeles, a 5-day, 14-hour trip. Charles Lindbergh made the first nonstop transatlantic airplane flight. Amelia Earhart became the first woman to fly alone across the Atlantic in 1932. She disappeared on a flight across the Pacific in 1937. The *Queen Mary* arrived in New York on its maiden voyage. Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco opened.

Leisure Time: The movie *Gone With the Wind* premiered in Atlanta, and Margaret Mitchell won a Pulitzer Prize for her novel. Eight Chicago White Sox players were accused of “fixing” the World Series; they were found not guilty but banned from baseball. Baseball Hall of Fame established in Cooperstown, New York. The first Winter Olympic Games were held in U.S. in Lake Placid, New York in 1932. Bobby Jones developed the Augusta National Golf Club, which opened for play in 1933.



Figure 38 Timeline: 1920–1945



Section Preview

As you read, look for:

- Georgia's first two female legislators,
- new forms of music,
- problems in agriculture, and
- **vocabulary terms:** jazz, the blues, boll weevil, and Great Migration.

The Roaring Twenties

When the peace treaty ending World War I was signed, people throughout the nation were ready to celebrate the end of rationing, the end of worry about loved ones overseas, the end of sadness associated with a deadly worldwide flu epidemic, and the end of hard times associated with the war. In his presidential campaign, President Warren Harding had promised to return the country to normalcy, and that is exactly what he tried to do. But the normalcy of the past was going to take a big left turn.

The New Woman

On August 26, 1920, the Nineteenth Amendment was ratified, giving women the right to vote. Suddenly, women felt a new sense of equality and a new freedom of expression. Many who had stepped into the labor force during the war years wanted to continue working.

The idea of femininity changed drastically. Out were tight corsets and long petticoats. In were knee-length, free-moving dresses that exposed women's legs and arms. Out was the long hair put up in buns or braids; in was a short, bobbed, boyish hair style. Out was the natural look; in was make-up such as lipstick and rouge. Out was the demure, modest, and well-behaved matron. In was the young woman who drank, smoked, and danced all night without a chaperone. And times would never again be the same. Many of the females of the 1920s proudly took on the label *flappers*. The term was first used in Great Britain after World War I to describe young girls between childhood and adulthood. But writer and publisher H. L. Mencken described the flapper as "a somewhat foolish girl, full of wild surmises and inclined to revolt against the precepts and admonitions of her elders."

The Nineteenth Amendment also opened the doors for women to run for political office. In 1922, two women became the first female legislators in the Georgia house of representatives—Bessie Kempton Crowell from Fulton County and Viola Ross Napier from Bibb County.



The Art of Politics

In that same year, Rebecca Latimer Felton was honored when Governor Thomas Hardwick appointed her to fill the U.S. Senate seat of Tom Watson, who had died in office. Felton's appointment was an acknowledgment of her outstanding reform work and efforts supporting the suffrage movement. Since the Senate was not in session at the time of her appointment, Felton was not officially sworn in to her new office. Nor did she really serve time in Congress; Walter F. George was elected to the Senate seat in a special election. But when the Senate reconvened, the 87-year-old Felton was sworn in for a day, making her the first woman to serve in the U.S. Senate.

Music

Thousands of clubs called *speakeasies* opened across the country, and most were well stocked with illegal liquor. Often, the music that was played in those clubs was a unique African American contribution known as **jazz**. Jazz was different from traditional music styles because it relied on improvisation. That is, jazz was “on the spur of the moment”; it did not follow written notes. Although jazz had been around for a long time, it burst onto the national stage during the 1920s. Musicians such as Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong played at jazz clubs, which opened up around the country. The most famous club was the Cotton Club in Harlem, which was packed each night with black and white audiences.

The blues was another popular music of the period. Blues music was based on black folk music. Georgia's own Ma Rainey became known as the “Mother of the Blues,” and she recorded about one hundred songs between 1923 and 1928. Her songs usually spoke of lost love, loneliness, poverty, and jealousy. Another popular blues singer of the period was Bessie Smith.

An African American musical, “Runnin' Wild,” featured a dance that swept the nation and became synonymous with the period—the Charleston.



Rebecca Latimer Felton was the first woman to serve in the U.S. Senate. Mrs. Felton was also the senator who, having served one day, served the shortest term and was the oldest senator, at age 87, at the time of her swearing-in.

Did You Know?

The music of the era also led to a new craze—**dance marathons**. One marathon held at **Madison Square Garden** in 1928 lasted **481 hours**. **Ninety-one** couples took part.



Above: The bob hairstyle was popular in the 1920s. **Opposite page:** Women's fashions of the 1920s reflected social changes.



Crime

There was a dark note to the Roaring Twenties, as the period was called. The prohibition of the 1920s gave rise to organized gangs in large cities such as Chicago and New York. These gangsters made millions by supplying illegal liquor to speakeasies and other private clubs. The public followed the misdeeds of such mobsters as Scarface Al Capone, “Bugs” Moran, Baby Face Nelson, and Frank Nitty.

Capone, dubbed Chicago’s “Public Enemy No. 1,” was finally arrested and convicted of tax evasion. Capone spent one year in the Atlanta federal penitentiary before he was transferred to Alcatraz.



Life in the Roaring Twenties

After the war years, life was good. A trip to the doctor’s office was only \$5, and for an extra dollar or two the doctor would come to your home. Many things came right to the front door—milk, butter and cream, ice, and even fresh vegetables. Vegetable deliveries were short lived, however. In 1926, a man named Clarence Birdseye perfected a method for freezing and packaging foods. His process freed women from the chore of buying fresh foods every day and from having to cook everything from scratch.

Little by little, life was becoming more convenient. Electricity became more widely available, and electric appliances

became more common. For example, in 1927, the first pop-up toaster was introduced. Gas ranges replaced wood and coal stoves. Convenience foods began to appear. Quick-cooking rolled oats, pancake mix, and canned goods (everything from tuna to pineapple) were available. By the end of the decade, families could buy presliced bread. Gerber’s baby foods first went on the market in 1928.

In November 1920, radio station KDKA started broadcasting in Pittsburgh, and it changed America forever. One year later, Americans spent \$10 million on radio sets and parts. Families gathered around the radio to listen to baseball games, news reports, and favored programs such as “The Grand Ole Opry.” In 1922, WSB radio in Atlanta joined the ever growing number of stations throughout the country. Those tuned in heard a jazz rendition of the “Light Cavalry Overture.” The station became known as the “Voice of the South.” In 1923, WRAB radio was licensed in Savannah, and in 1924 radio station WDBA was li-



Top : This is an early washing machine. **Center:** These flappers of the 1920s are dancing the Charleston. **Bottom:** The two items in the background are early radios. The disks in the foreground are 78rpm records.

Did You Know?

The call letters for radio station **WSB in Atlanta** reportedly stood for “**Welcome South Brother.**”

censed in Columbus. The radio stations linked Americans to each other and to the world more than ever before.

Movies were a favorite pastime. In 1927, the first talking motion picture, *The Jazz Singer* with Al Jolson, hit theaters. Children and adults were enthralled just a year later when Walt Disney's first talking cartoon, "Steamboat Willie," appeared. It introduced a new American movie hero—Mickey Mouse.

The Destruction of King Cotton

For many Georgians, the twenties were not a time of abundance. A small, grayish, long-snouted beetle, the **boll weevil**, was destroying the primary source of income for many Georgia farmers: cotton. The boll weevil had come from Mexico, moved through Texas, and into the southern states in the 1890s. The beetles hatch in the yellow flower of the cotton plant. As the flower becomes a boll (the place where the fibers are formed), the larvae feeds on the growing white, fluffy cotton, making it useless.

The boll weevil appeared in southwest Georgia in 1915 and quickly spread across the state, destroying thousands of acres of Georgia's major agricultural crop. By 1923, cotton production had dropped to 600,000 bales from a high of 2.8 million bales in 1914. The post-war price was only fifteen to seventeen cents a pound.

In 1924, Georgia farmers were hit with another natural disaster—a major drought. The sun-baked fields slowed down the destruction of the boll weevil, but the drought ruined most of Georgia's other crops. Over 375,000 farm workers left Georgia between 1920 and 1925. The number of working farms fell from 310,132 to 249,095.

When farms failed, banks that had loaned the farmers money took huge losses. Many farm-related businesses closed. Georgia was in a deep depression.



Above: These young African American men from the South moved north and found work in shipyards, meat-packing plants and steel mills.

The Great Migration

While parts of the nation were living it up during the Roaring Twenties, an agricultural depression led many tenant farmers to leave the South and migrate north looking for work. Black farmers, in particular, moved to northern industrial cities such as Chicago and Detroit, hoping to find work in factories and assembly plants. This movement of southern blacks, which lasted until the 1960s, was called the **Great Migration**.

In the South, most well-paying jobs went to whites. Better jobs and higher pay were available in the North. In fact, many northern companies actively recruited African Americans for jobs.

There were other reasons for the migration. Southern states restricted voting rights, while the North offered the hope of full citizenship rights. Public

schools for African Americans in much of the South were poor, and the North offered more educational opportunities. Health care was better in the North. In addition, segregation in the South kept African Americans from hotels, restaurants, and recreation areas, while the North offered open access to these facilities.

Because they did not have enough money to move everyone at once, African American and poor white families first sent their young men to get jobs. Most were unskilled and found work in the meat-packing plants, shipyards, and steel mills. When they had saved enough money, they sent for the rest of their families. The African Americans generally improved their lives by moving north. But they were also crowded into segregated housing in overpopulated cities and faced a different type of prejudice than they had known in the South.

The Klan Strengthens

In Chapter 10, you learned that the Ku Klux Klan was reborn in Atlanta in 1915. The Klan's targets included not only African Americans but also Jews, Catholics, and immigrants. Talk of "returning America to traditional values and morals" and a "patriotism of traditional America" gained the group new members. Not only did membership increase in numbers, it also increased in stature as doctors, lawyers, judges, businessmen, and even ministers joined.

During the 1920s, the Klan gained a foothold in the Midwest and the Southwest. By 1922, the Klan had branches in all forty-eight states. In 1925, forty thousand costumed and hooded Klansmen marched past the White

Below: The Ku Klux Klan was not just a force in the South. This march took place in Washington, D.C., in 1926.



By the Side of the Road



GEORGIA'S PIONEER AVIATOR BEN T. EPPS —1888-1937—

Ben T. Epps - Georgia's First in Flight - designed, built and in 1907 flew the first airplane in the State of Georgia. He was born in Oconee County, educated in Clarke County, and attended Georgia Tech. A self-taught aviator, aircraft designer, and builder, Epps built the 1907 Monoplane in his shop on Washington Street in Athens and designed and flew new airplanes in 1909, 1911, 1916, 1924, and 1930. The 1924 Epps Monoplane weighed only 350 pounds, had a wingspan of 25 feet, and was powered by a two-cylinder motorcycle engine. Designed for the average man, easy to fly, and inexpensive to operate, it would get 25 miles per gallon at 60 miles per hour. Epps began operation of an airport at this location in 1917, and operated a flying service for the next 20 years. In 1937, he died of injuries incurred here after engine failure and the crash of his light biplane on take-off.

029-10

GEORGIA HISTORIC MARKER

1987



A native of Oconee County, Ben Epps is known as the “father of aviation in Georgia.” The first Georgian to build and fly an airplane. Epps

was fascinated by the stories of the Wright brothers’ experiments. One of the models he designed was a light monoplane (a plane with one wing) that he hoped would make flying economically available to the average person. You can learn about Ben Epps when you visit his home in Athens and see the historical marker beside the Athens-Clarke County Airport.

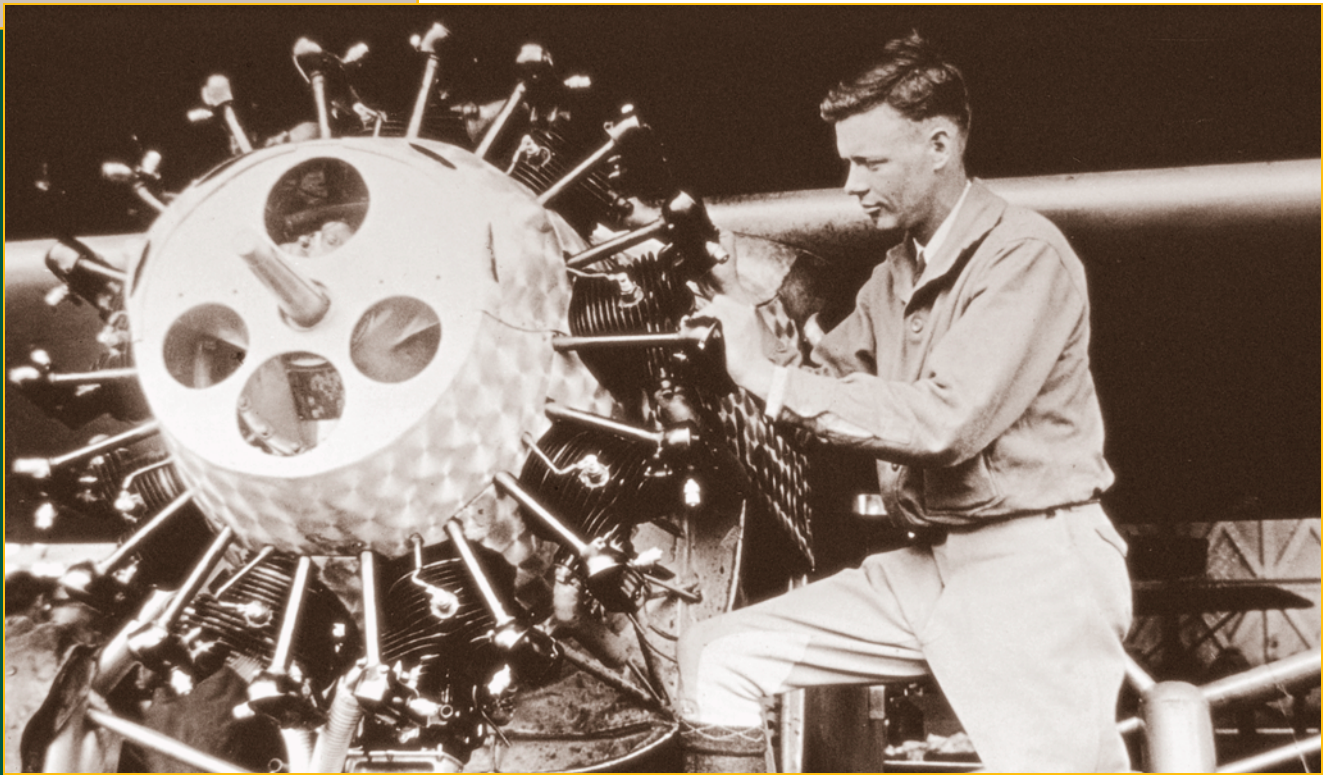
House. Only rain prevented them from burning a cross beside the Washington Monument. The Klan also gained political influence, and five U.S. Senators elected in the 1920s were open members of the Klan. One member, who later recanted his membership, became a Supreme Court justice.

Race riots broke out in many parts of the country in the early and mid-1920s. In some places, the Klan even became an organized part of local law enforcement.

Scandals within the Klan leadership in the late 1920s led to a decline in membership throughout the country. People began to see the relationship between the Klan and racial terrorism. By the time the Depression hit, the Klan had lost most of its national power.

A Special Day

In 1919, a wealthy hotel businessman announced a prize of \$25,000 to the first person who flew nonstop from New York to Paris, France, or from Paris to New York. In May 1927, three pilots in the United States were poised to make the attempt. One was a tall, lean, quiet, boyish pilot who had flown mail out of St. Louis. In fact, he named his plane the “Spirit of St. Louis.” He was 25-year-old Charles Lindbergh, and he tackled the 3,600-mile transatlantic trip alone.



Above: Charles Lindbergh checks the engine of his plane, the “Spirit of St. Louis,” before his record-breaking flight to France. Because he was a lone pilot in a single-engine plane, he was nicknamed the “Lone Eagle.”

Lindbergh flew without the help of navigational or weather instruments, using only landmarks to guide him. He took with him a bag of sandwiches and a quart of water, along with a rubber raft in case he had to ditch in the ocean. Lindbergh took off on a misty Friday morning, May 20, 1927, at 8:00 a.m., from Long Island, New York. The public followed his progress, staying glued to their radio sets.

The trip took 33½ hours. Upon his arrival in France, Lindbergh became an instant hero. Songs were written about him, including one called “Lucky Lindy.” Wherever he went, crowds of people gathered to see him. In October 1927, six months after his historic flight, Lindbergh flew into Atlanta, where he was welcomed by over 20,000 admirers. Soon afterward, a street in the city was named Lindbergh Drive in honor of the “Lone Eagle.”

Did You Know?

In 1927, Charles Lindbergh was the first person honored as *Time* magazine’s “Man of the Year.”

It's Your Turn

1. Who were the first female members of the Georgia General Assembly?
2. Who was the “Mother of Blues”?
3. What two factors led to Georgia’s agricultural problems during the Roaring Twenties?
4. How does the Great Migration pattern of sending young men to find work and then moving families to join them repeat itself today with immigration patterns in the United States?

The Great Depression

Buck Rogers first appeared in comic strips and wax milk cartons were used for the first time. It was the year Wyatt Earp died, but it was also the year Martin Luther King, Jr., was born. Georgian Bobby Jones won the U.S. Open Golf Championship, and Royston resident Ty Cobb continued to display unparalleled baseball talents. Despite these highlights, 1929 is most remembered as the “boom that went bust!”

The Bottom Drops Out

People thought that the good times of the Roaring Twenties would last forever. Few realized its end would be so drastic. In March 1929, right after President Herbert Hoover was inaugurated, the Federal Reserve Board began meeting daily. In March, a series of “mini-crashes” had occurred in the **stock market**, the place where shares of ownership in corporations (stock) are bought and sold. Each time, the economy recovered. Summer seemed to bring back the good times—until the day after Labor Day. Then, the roller coaster started.

It was Thursday morning, October 24, 1929. With the opening bell of the stock exchange, the ticker tape machines began running. Investors tried to sell their stocks at any price. Screams of “Sell, Sell, Sell” could be heard all over New York’s Wall Street. By noon, police were called in to handle the growing crowd. The lunch break seemed to slow things down a bit, and there

Section Preview

As you read, look for:

- causes of the Great Depression,
- effects of the depression on Georgians,
- efforts by federal, state, and local governments to help, and
- **vocabulary terms:** stock market, Great Depression, laissez-faire, and relief.

Below: Mounted police had to be called in to control the crowd on Wall Street on “Black Tuesday.”



Did You Know?

In 1929, less than 1 percent of the American people owned stock. Today, 50 percent of all households own stock.



Above: This is a caricature (an exaggerated drawing) of President Herbert Hoover. The president tried but was unable to stimulate the American economy.

was even a small rebound that carried over into Friday. Everyone was relieved when the weekend arrived and the market closed.

On Monday, it became clear that things were not getting better. Panic set in as people all over the country began trading anew. Unlike the previous week, this trading was not a recovery. On Tuesday, October 29, 1929, a day known as “Black Tuesday,” the stock market “crashed.” By the end of that day, millions of Americans had lost everything they had.

With each day that passed, the country went deeper and deeper into an economic downturn, which today we call the **Great Depression**. By the end of the year, the value of stocks on the stock market had fallen \$40 billion. A share of U.S. Steel that had been selling for \$262 had dropped to \$22, a 92 percent decrease. Montgomery Ward stock prices sank from \$138 to \$4 a share, a 97 percent decrease. Many stocks dropped to a penny or less a share.

Causes of the Depression

What caused the Great Depression? One cause was that the people of the United States had borrowed more money than they could afford to repay. This hurt the banks that had loaned the money and the businesses waiting for their payments. Businesses that did not get paid had to lay off workers.

Many factories had produced more goods than they could sell. When the demand for the goods fell, the businesses had to slow production until the surpluses were gone. Farmers were also guilty of overproduction. For several seasons, the farmers had produced surplus crops, causing prices to decline steadily. After World War I, European farmers began raising crops again; that added to the worldwide overproduction. The decline in farm income meant farmers could not repay their debts or buy goods from suppliers.

After World War I, Americans wanted to trade with other nations. But the United States and other nations had enacted tariffs. The high tariffs made it difficult for other countries to sell their goods in the United States to get money with which to repay wartime loans and buy American products.

Speculation in the stock market also helped cause the Great Depression. During the 1920s, most people bought stock and paid only a portion of the cost of the stock at the time of the purchase. Even though the stock was not completely paid for, the investor had the right to sell it. If the stock price had gone up, the investor sold the stock and made enough to finish paying for the stock. This practice forced the price of stocks up, making them higher than what they were really worth.

Many banks had purchased large amounts of stock. When the market crashed, the banks lost a lot of money. When depositors learned this, there were runs on the banks. When too many people withdraw their money from a bank, the bank collapses; everyone loses.

One final cause was the **laissez-faire** attitude of the American people and of American government and business leaders. Almost every government official believed the economy itself, not the government, would work out any problems. President Hoover did what any other politician of the time would have done—nothing. Hoover kept telling the American people that “prosperity is just around the corner.” But prosperity was *not* just around the corner.

Living Through the Depression

By 1932, unemployment in the nation had reached 13 million; 1 out of 4 Americans was unemployed. Men who had once managed large corporations were walking the streets looking for any type of work or were standing on street corners selling apples.

Over 9,000 banks closed their doors. Millions lost their savings and their cash. In 1931 alone, 31 banks failed in Georgia.

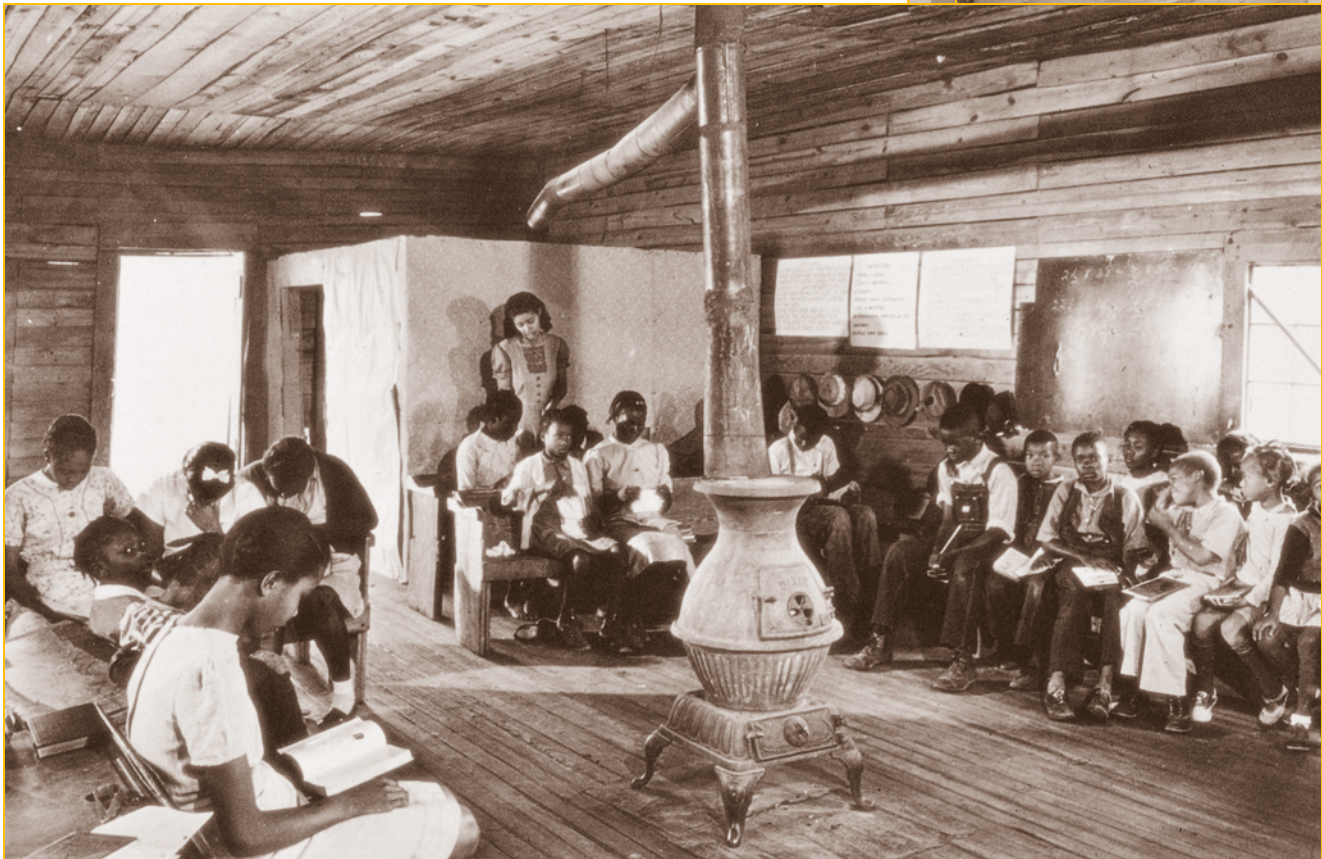
People were forced out of their homes, and many lived in shacks made of collected junk. Such “neighborhoods” were called “Hoovervilles” for the president who was powerless to help. Many people were literally starving and were saved only by soup kitchens set up by the government or charities. Barter became a common practice, particularly in the South.

Education suffered tremendously during the depression. With little cash and few taxes, many schools were forced to close or to shorten schedules. Salaries were cut, and teachers making \$40-\$50 a month considered themselves lucky.

Because Georgia was already in an economic depression when the stock market crashed, Georgians did not immediately feel the impact of “Black Tuesday.” However, between 1929 and 1932, an average farmer’s income dropped from \$206 a year to \$83; cotton prices fell to \$0.05 a pound.

During the depression, most Georgians were challenged simply by trying to meet their everyday needs. Many workers in the state lost their jobs, resulting in great suffering and despair. Children of the unemployed often did

Below: Collie Smith of Carroll County reads the *Progressive Farmer*. **Bottom:** This is a one-room, one-teacher school for African American children in Veazy.



not go to school because they had no shoes or proper clothes. Families went hungry, with many living for weeks on a single food like cornmeal or rice.

State services suffered. Many rural children did not get an education. There was no money for health care and highway construction. The economic advances of the previous several decades were stopped dead in their tracks.

But there were some bright spots. In 1930, plane service from Atlanta to New York was introduced and strengthened business ties between the “Empire State of the South” and the nation’s center of commerce. Another major transportation feat of the period was the completion of the highway from

Atlanta to Brunswick. Finally, Georgians could travel to most of the state’s cities on paved roads. One of those roads led to Augusta.

In 1931, world class amateur golfer Bobby Jones, a native of Atlanta, announced his intentions to build a golf course in Augusta. That golf club, Augusta National, opened in 1933. Today, it is home to one of the world’s four major golf tournaments—the Masters.



Above: Bobby Jones, born in Atlanta, is considered the greatest golfer in the history of the game.

Easing the Burden

President Herbert Hoover was the first president to use the power of the federal government to help the economy recover. In one program designed to help farmers, the government bought large amounts of cotton, wheat, and other commodities (crops). This, it was believed, would cause farm prices to rise. The government would then sell its commodities on the market later, after the prices had risen. However, the government bought too little of the commodities, and the plan did not work. Hoover did use the government’s stored wheat and cotton to provide flour and cloth for the needy.

President Hoover approved a program that loaned federal money to needy businesses. He also supported public works projects, such as the building of post offices, parks, courthouses, and roads. These projects put many unemployed men back to work. With Hoover’s urging, the government loaned money to the states for their own public works projects. Hoover’s programs helped, but they did not end the depression or provide enough help for the poor.

Besides the federal and state governments, many local agencies also helped. The most effective were the Red Cross and the Salvation Army. Hospitals provided free lunches for the needy. Local governments provided free lunches for needy children and paid men low wages to sweep streets, plant trees, drain swamps, cut firewood, and plant gardens. Still, public and private efforts to provide relief (money and goods given to people in special need) were not enough. What was needed was a program that coordinated efforts at all levels.

It's Your Turn

1. What happened on “Black Tuesday”?
2. Explain the laissez-faire attitude of the American government toward the economy.
3. Do you think President Hoover should have done more to end the Great Depression? Why or why not?