

# Louisiana's Politics, Economy, and Culture in an Era of Change

## Chapter Preview

### People

Homer Plessy, John Ferguson, E. A. Burke, S. L. James, Josephine Decuir, Murphy J. Foster, Seaman A. Knapp, John N. Pharr, Jean Gordon, Kate Gordon, William Heard, Newton Blanchard, Jared Sanders, George L'Hote, Henry Ford

### Places

Cloutierville, Vinton

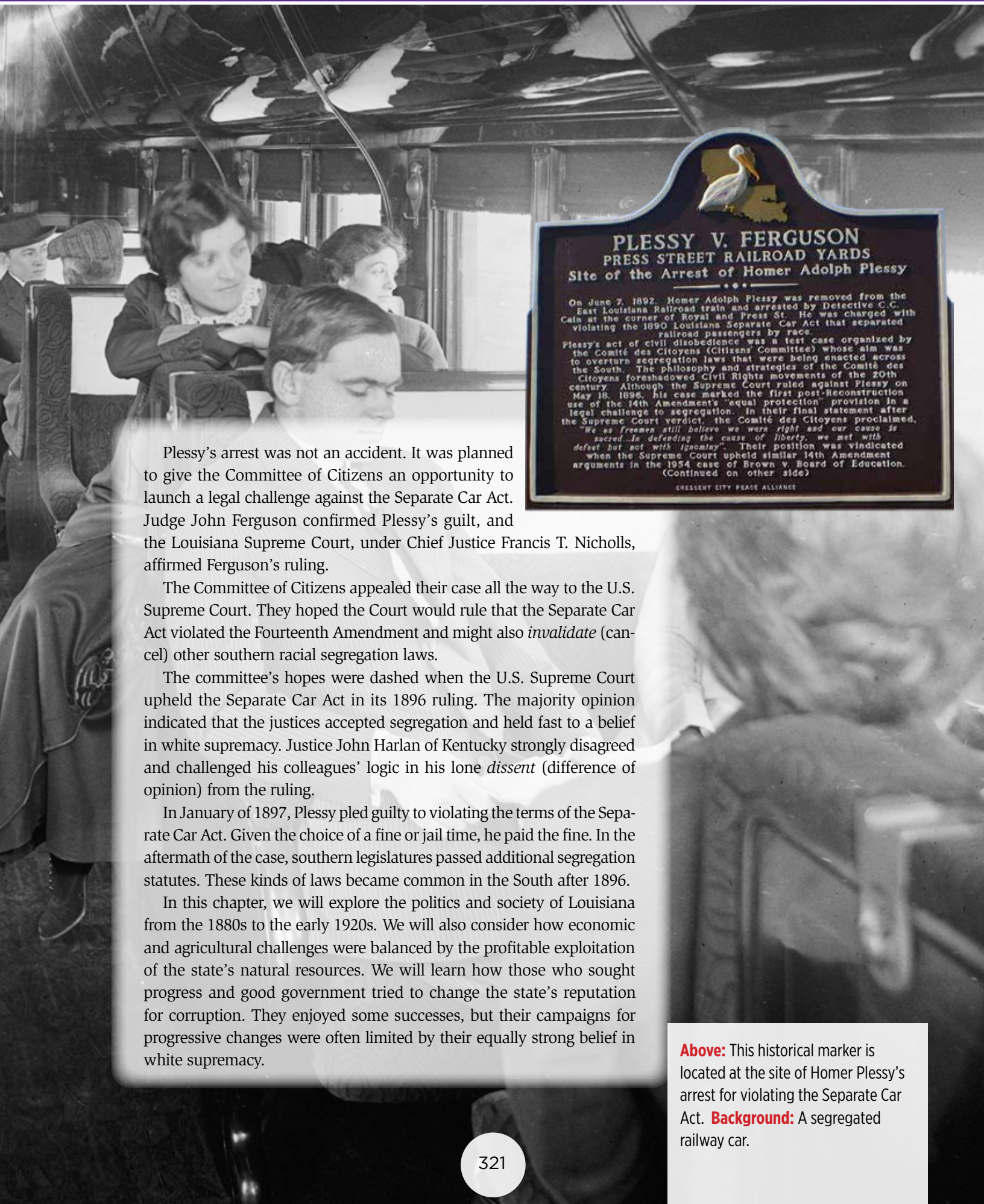
### Terms

Bourbon Democrat, patronage, convict lease system, Jim Crow laws, poll tax, grandfather clause, sharecropping, debt peonage, grinding season, Farmers' Alliances, populism, progressive movement, suffrage, scrip

In June of 1892, a twenty-nine-year-old shoemaker from New Orleans named Homer Plessy bought a first-class ticket for a train ride he knew he would not complete. Plessy was the grandson of a Louisiana-born free woman of color and a Frenchman who had come to New Orleans from Saint-Domingue in the early 1800s. Like both of his parents, Plessy, who was born in 1863, was a free person of color. Although he was never a slave, as he grew into manhood, Plessy, like all people of color, began to be the focus of restrictive laws.

Many New Orleanians who shared Plessy's background lived in the same neighborhoods, spoke French, and belonged to the same civic groups. Plessy's brief train ride in 1892 resulted from his association with a civic group called the Committee of Citizens, which had been formed to overturn the 1890 Separate Car Act. That Louisiana law required railroad companies to provide racially separated rail cars. Many people of color objected to the law that made them not just second-class passengers but also second-class citizens. As part of the committee's legal strategy, Plessy bought a first-class ticket on the East Louisiana Railroad and boarded the whites-only car on June 7, 1892.

When he came to collect Plessy's ticket, the conductor asked if he was a colored man. Plessy, who had very light skin, answered "Yes." The conductor ordered Plessy to move to the car for colored passengers. When Plessy refused, the conductor stopped the train and called for a private detective, who arrested Plessy and removed him from the train. At a nearby police station, Plessy was charged with violating the Separate Car Act. The next morning, the Recorder found Plessy guilty of that charge.



Plessy's arrest was not an accident. It was planned to give the Committee of Citizens an opportunity to launch a legal challenge against the Separate Car Act. Judge John Ferguson confirmed Plessy's guilt, and the Louisiana Supreme Court, under Chief Justice Francis T. Nicholls, affirmed Ferguson's ruling.

The Committee of Citizens appealed their case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. They hoped the Court would rule that the Separate Car Act violated the Fourteenth Amendment and might also *invalidate* (cancel) other southern racial segregation laws.

The committee's hopes were dashed when the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Separate Car Act in its 1896 ruling. The majority opinion indicated that the justices accepted segregation and held fast to a belief in white supremacy. Justice John Harlan of Kentucky strongly disagreed and challenged his colleagues' logic in his lone *dissent* (difference of opinion) from the ruling.

In January of 1897, Plessy pled guilty to violating the terms of the Separate Car Act. Given the choice of a fine or jail time, he paid the fine. In the aftermath of the case, southern legislatures passed additional segregation statutes. These kinds of laws became common in the South after 1896.

In this chapter, we will explore the politics and society of Louisiana from the 1880s to the early 1920s. We will also consider how economic and agricultural challenges were balanced by the profitable exploitation of the state's natural resources. We will learn how those who sought progress and good government tried to change the state's reputation for corruption. They enjoyed some successes, but their campaigns for progressive changes were often limited by their equally strong belief in white supremacy.

### PLESSY V. FERGUSON PRESS STREET RAILROAD YARDS Site of the Arrest of Homer Adolph Plessy

On June 7, 1892, Homer Adolph Plessy was removed from the East Louisiana Railroad train and arrested by Detective C.C. Cain at the corner of Royal and Press St. He was charged with violating the 1890 Louisiana Separate Car Act that separated railroad passengers by race.

Plessy's act of civil disobedience was a test case organized by the Comité des Citoyens (Citizens Committee) whose aim was to overturn segregation laws that were being enacted across the South. The philosophy and strategies of the Comité des Citoyens foreshadowed Civil Rights movements of the 20th century. Although the Supreme Court ruled against Plessy on May 18, 1896, his case marked the first post-Reconstruction use of the 14th Amendment's "equal protection" provision in a legal challenge to segregation. In their final statement after the Supreme Court verdict, the Comité des Citoyens proclaimed, "We as freemen still believe we were right and our cause is sacred. In defending the cause of liberty, we met with defeat but not with ignominy". Their position was vindicated when the Supreme Court upheld similar 14th Amendment arguments in the 1954 case of Brown v. Board of Education. (Continued on other side)

CRESCENT CITY PEACE ALLIANCE

**Above:** This historical marker is located at the site of Homer Plessy's arrest for violating the Separate Car Act. **Background:** A segregated railway car.

# Signs of the Times



## U.S. Expansion

Between 1889 and 1912, North and South Dakota, Montana, Washington, Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona were added to the Union. Our nation held at 48 states until 1959. The Hawaiian Islands were annexed to the U.S. by a joint resolution of Congress in 1898 but remained a territory until 1959.

## Exploration

In 1909, Americans Robert Peary and Matthew Henson and their Inuit crew became the first people known to reach the North Pole. In 1911, Roald Amundsen and four fellow Norwegians were the first to reach the South Pole.

## Art and Architecture

A new type of tall building—the skyscraper—was born in American cities in the 1880s and 1890s. The Statue of Liberty, built in France, was installed on Bedloe's (now Liberty) Island in New York harbor and dedicated in 1886. The Eiffel Tower in Paris became the tallest man-made structure in the world when it was built in 1889.

## Food

In 1886, Atlanta, Georgia, pharmacist John Pemberton mixed the flavorful syrup he had created with soda water to produce Coca-Cola.

## Literature

Mark Twain published *The Prince and the Pauper* and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* in the 1880s. Kate Chopin, who had lived in New Orleans and Cloutierville before the death of her husband,

wrote two published novels and about a hundred short stories in the 1890s, most of them set in Louisiana. Popular books of the 1890s included Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's first Sherlock Holmes story, Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, and Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book*. In 1900, L. Frank Baum published *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.

## Sports

Professor James Naismith invented basketball in 1891. Bicycling became important as a sport and means of transportation during this time. In 1896, the first Olympic Games of the modern era were held in Athens, Greece.

## Transportation

The first automobile, the Benz Patent Motorwagen, was introduced in 1885. American Henry Ford incorporated the Ford Motor Company in 1903. Also in 1903, the Wright Brothers made their first flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. Ocean liners were popular for transoceanic travel, but the *Titanic* sank in 1912.

## War

The U.S. declared war on Spain in 1898 after the American battleship *Maine* blew up in the harbor of Havana, Cuba. The Americans quickly won the Spanish-American War and gained the territories of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines, and received permanent use of a naval base at Guantanamo, Cuba.

In 1914, Great Britain, France, and Russia (Allied Powers) went to war against Germany, Austria, and other countries (Central Powers). The U.S. joined the war on the Allied side in 1917. This "Great War," which is now known as World War I, ended in 1918.



The first basketball court, Springfield College.



**1884** - Cotton Centennial Exposition

**1887** - Sugar workers' strike ended in violence  
Crowley founded as a hub for rice shipments

**1890** - Separate Car Act

**1891** - Lynching of 11 Italians in New Orleans

**1892** - Homer Plessy's train ride

**1893** - Louisiana Lottery charter expired

**1897** - Homer Plessy paid \$25 fine

**1898** - Constitution of 1898

**1901** - Oil discovered near Jennings

**1906** - 1st child labor law passed in state



1880

## Timeline

1880-1920

Washington Monument dedicated - **1885**

1890

Sears-Roebuck opened mail-order business - **1895**

U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Plessy v. Ferguson* - **1896**

Spanish-American War - **1898**

1900



NAACP founded - **1909**

1910

16th (income tax) and 17th (direct election of senators) Amendments ratified - **1913**

Panama Canal completed - **1914**

**1915** - Drivers' licenses required for first time

**1916** - Natural gas discovered near Monroe

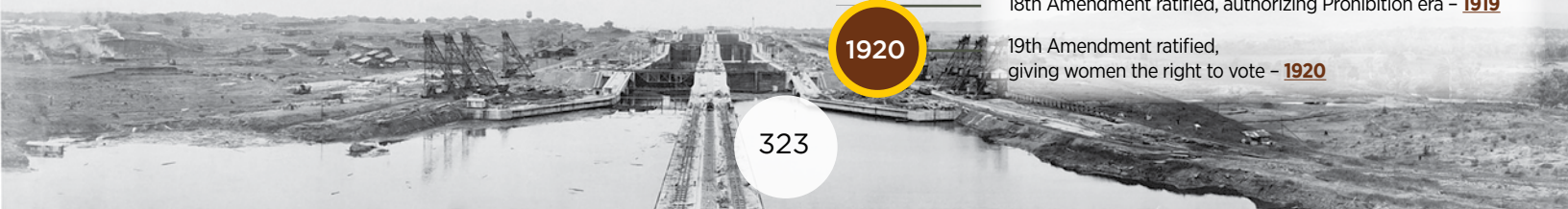
U.S. entered World War I - **1917**

End of World War I - **1918**

18th Amendment ratified, authorizing Prohibition era - **1919**

19th Amendment ratified, giving women the right to vote - **1920**

1920



**Below:** In this *Harper's Weekly* cartoon from 1879 criticizing the use of literacy tests for African Americans, a poorly educated white man is writing on the wall: "Eddikashun qualifukashun. The Black man orter be eddikated afore he kin vote with us Wites, signed Mr. Solid South."

## Section 1

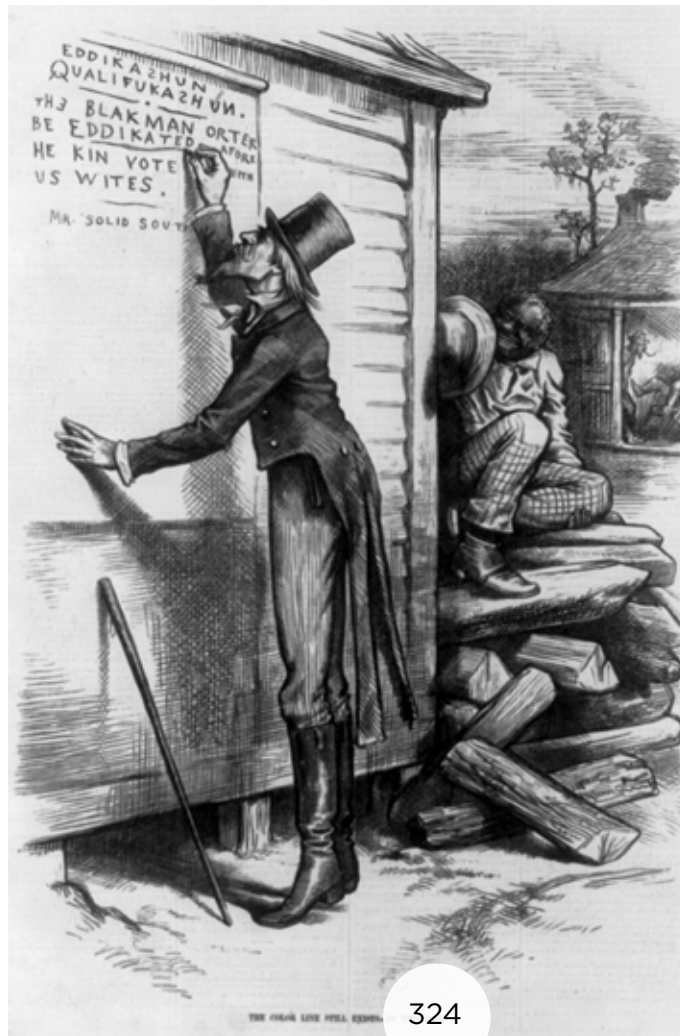
# The Democrats Take Control

### As you read, look for

- ▶ how the Bourbon Democrats shaped the Constitution of 1879 to support their priorities of white supremacy and limited government;
- ▶ the powerful and corrupting influence of the Lottery Company and the New Orleans Ring;
- ▶ how the convict lease system harmed convicts while benefiting the state and private businesses;
- ▶ terms: **Bourbon Democrat, patronage, convict lease system.**

After Reconstruction ended in 1877, Democrats established a firm hold on Louisiana's government and politics. Although many Re-

publicans remained on the voter rolls until the early twentieth century, Republican candidates rarely won elective office. The Democratic Party's members sometimes disagreed about matters of policy, but they shared a set of central beliefs that kept them united. First and foremost, they were committed to white supremacy and the social segregation of whites and people of color. Second, they believed that government should be limited in scope, and that its main function should be to protect the rights of private property owners.



## Bourbon Democrats

*Bourbon* is a term that some journalists and politicians used to describe what they considered the backward-looking nature of many Southern Democrats. They borrowed the term from the Bourbon kings of France who regained control of the country in the period between 1814 and 1830. While these Bourbon kings ruled, they tried to reverse many of the democratic rights common people gained after the French Revolution. Thus, calling someone a **Bourbon Democrat** suggested that the person had not accepted the changes brought about by the Civil War, particularly the end of slavery. Even though slavery had ended, Bourbon Democrats tried to re-create some of the same unequal conditions that had shaped society in Louisiana before the Civil War.

The Bourbons constructed the Louisiana Constitution of 1879 to support their priorities. Because they wanted to limit government expenditures, any major projects—like building roads, levees, or railroads—could only be approved through a constitutional amendment. The Bourbons also reversed any progress the state had made in providing education. Although Bourbon governors sought to bring new businesses and industry to the state, they achieved little success in these efforts. One business, however, received widespread support.

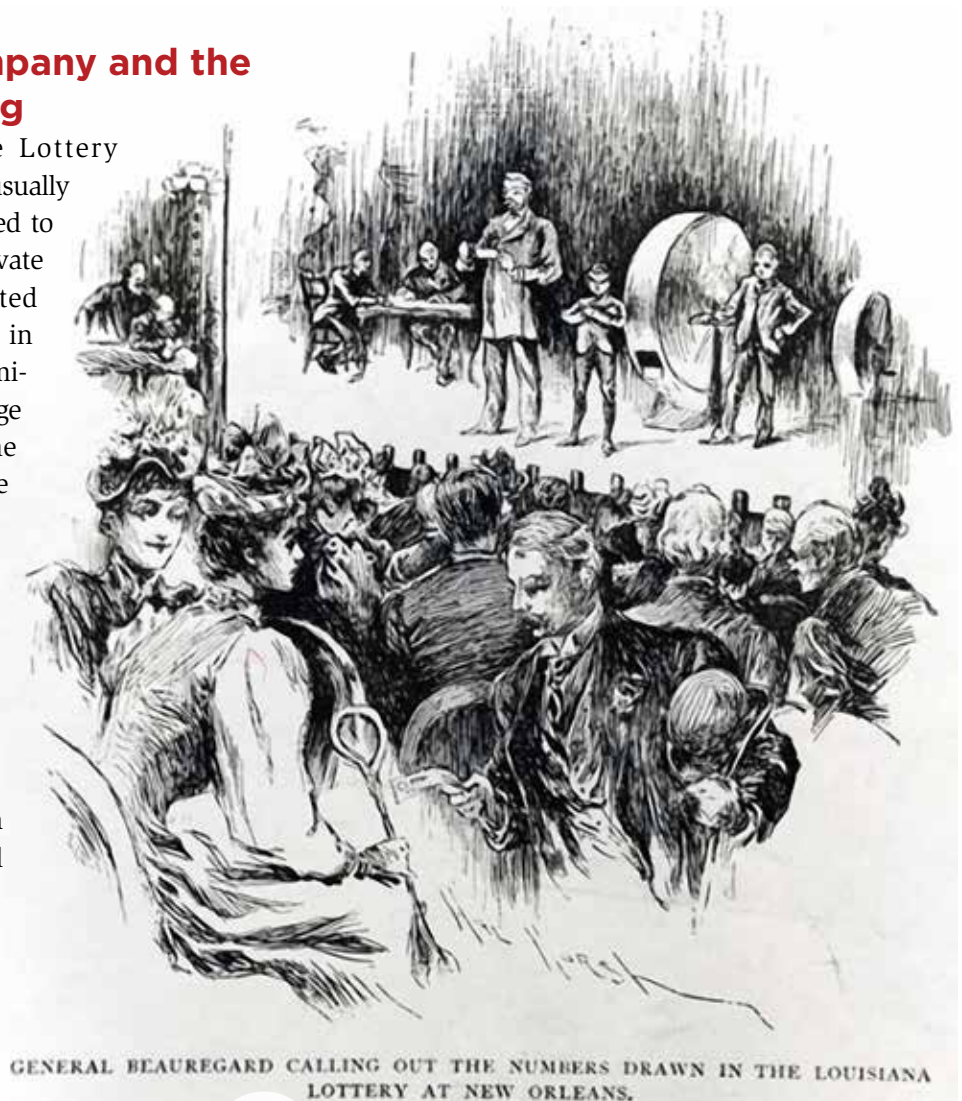
## The Lottery Company and the New Orleans Ring

The Louisiana State Lottery Company occupied an unusually powerful position compared to state government. The private company had been granted a twenty-five-year charter in 1868 by a Republican-dominated legislature. In exchange for official recognition, the company agreed to pay the state \$40,000 each year. This was a very good deal for the Lottery, which sold tickets through the mail all across the country, made huge profits each year, and paid no additional taxes. Historians estimate that, in the 1880s, the Lottery took in \$20-30 million annually, and paid out less than half that sum in prizes. It was a bad deal for state government and the citizens of Louisiana.

## Lagniappe

Lottery drawings were conducted with great fanfare. Confederate generals P. G. T. Beauregard and Jubal Early supervised the drawings.

They sat on a stage with a large cylinder containing the numbers. Two young African Americans chose numbers, the generals checked them, and young ladies dressed in hoop skirts posted the numbers on a board for the audience to see.



GENERAL BEAUREGARD CALLING OUT THE NUMBERS DRAWN IN THE LOUISIANA LOTTERY AT NEW ORLEANS.

## Lagniappe

In 1890, the year the Lottery Company offered to pay \$31 million for a renewal of its charter, one newspaper described the Lottery's influence noting that Louisiana was "ceded to Spain in 1762, ceded back to France in 1803, sold to the U.S. the same year, admitted to the Union in 1812, and purchased by the Louisiana Lottery Company in 1890."

The Lottery's political power grew even stronger when its charter was written into the Constitution of 1879, ensuring its existence until its original charter expired in 1893. The Lottery Company was very generous to its supporters, and its payments to cooperative politicians were widely acknowledged.

The Lottery Company was particularly influential in its headquarters city of New Orleans. In this era, the Crescent City Democratic Organization, known commonly as the New Orleans Ring, controlled city government. They were able to maintain that control through ward leaders, who were able to guarantee that large numbers of voters would show up at the polls and cast their ballots for Ring candidates. Voters participated enthusiastically, thanks to small cash payments or the hope of receiving one of the many patronage jobs made available to loyal Ring supporters.

**Patronage** is the power of public officials to give jobs or provide other help to people as a reward for their support.

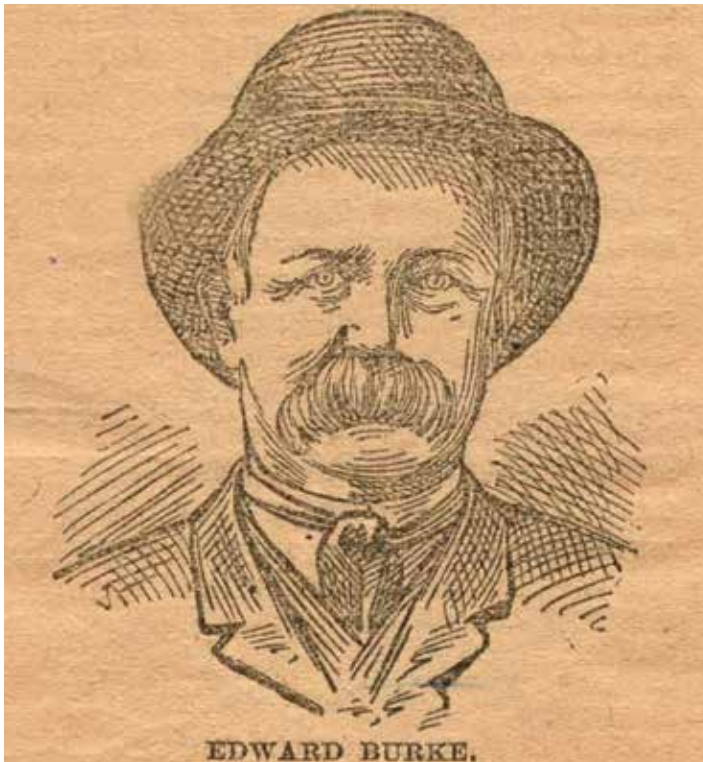
The New Orleans Ring and Lottery Company combination proved a powerful force in the state's politics. It was made even stronger from the support it received from many cotton planters located in the northern half of the state. Despite planter support, many people who lived in the more rural areas of the state disapproved of gambling and the corruption practiced by the Lottery. A Lafayette newspaper described the company as having been "born in iniquity" and "fostered in corruption." In New Orleans, however, the Lottery received generally positive treatment in the press because the company spent large amounts of money on advertising and to have the newspapers print the results of their prize drawings.

**Below:** Edward A. Burke.

### Beneficiaries of Corruption

E. A. Burke was an influential Democratic politician and strong supporter of the Lottery. Burke, who was born in Kentucky, arrived in New Orleans after the Civil War. His involvement in the White League led to his rise in the state's Democratic Party leadership. Burke was appointed the state's treasurer in 1878 and held that job for the next decade. In the early 1880s, as Burke's influence and personal wealth grew, he gained control of two New Orleans newspapers and combined them to form the New Orleans *Times-Democrat*.

In 1884, Burke was named a commissioner of the 1884 Cotton Centennial Exposition. Burke resigned from that role just as the exposition's disappointing attendance and financial losses became public knowledge. Shortly after he left the treasurer's office in 1888, an audit discovered that Burke had engaged in widespread theft from the state. Burke and his family fled to Honduras. He never faced charges, and the state's stolen funds were never recovered.



# Special Feature

## The World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition of 1884-1885

With the United States still recovering from the Civil War, the National Cotton Planters Association proposed a cotton *exposition* (public show or exhibition). This “expo” would mark the centennial, or one hundredth anniversary, of the cotton industry in the United States. New Orleans was chosen to host the exposition because almost one-third of all the cotton produced in the United States passed through its port. State treasurer E. A. Burke organized the exposition and was heavily involved with raising funds for it. The United States Congress loaned New Orleans \$1 million and gave the city \$300,000 for certain buildings. The city of New Orleans gave \$100,000 toward the \$2.7 million needed for the exposition.

The expo opened on December 16, 1884, even though not all of the exhibits were finished. The buildings were covered with over 5,000 electric lights. This was very impressive in 1884! The main building spread out over 33 acres and was the largest building in the United States in 1884. Horticultural Hall was the largest greenhouse in the world and would be the last remaining building still in use after the exposition. Art galleries, industrial displays, restaurants, and railroads were all part of the show, which had over 1 million visitors in the six months it was open.

When the exposition closed at the end of May 1885, it was considered a financial failure, having lost over \$500,000. A large part of the failure was caused by Burke's fraud. Most of the fairgrounds eventually became Audubon Park, while some of the land became part of Tulane University and Loyola University. Horticultural Hall, the last building standing, was destroyed by a hurricane in 1915. The only remaining sign that the exposition happened is a large boulder on the Audubon Park Golf Course. While the boulder looks like a meteorite, it is actually a large iron ore sample from Alabama! Would you consider that the exposition was a success or a failure?





**Above:** Convicts working on the levee.

### The Convict Lease System

The kinds of corruption exercised by Burke and the Lottery Company were repeated in the state's extremely profitable but deadly convict lease system. Under the **convict lease system**, the state would lease (give control of in exchange for money) prisoners to private businesses in an effort to save money. S. L. James gained control of the state's prisoners in 1870 and leased them to planters and other private business concerns. James succeeded much the same way the Lottery did. He paid friendly politicians and agreed to a small annual payment to the state. In return, he had his charter guaranteed by the state for twenty-one years. Much is unclear about how the lease system worked because James's company published very few reports and simply refused to answer the questions raised by a few politicians.

What is certain is that the convicts James leased suffered as a result. The James Gang, as his organization was commonly known, worked prisoners long hours and fed them very little. The combination of physical abuse, neglect, and hard labor resulted in most prisoners dying within six years. Many prisoners were literally worked to death. James and his associates, on the other hand, made large profits. James died a multimillionaire in 1894. The state did not regain full control of its prisoners until 1901.

## Reviewing the Section

1. Define in sentence form: Bourbon Democrat, patronage, convict lease system.
2. How did the Louisiana State Lottery become such a profitable business?
3. What was the New Orleans Ring?

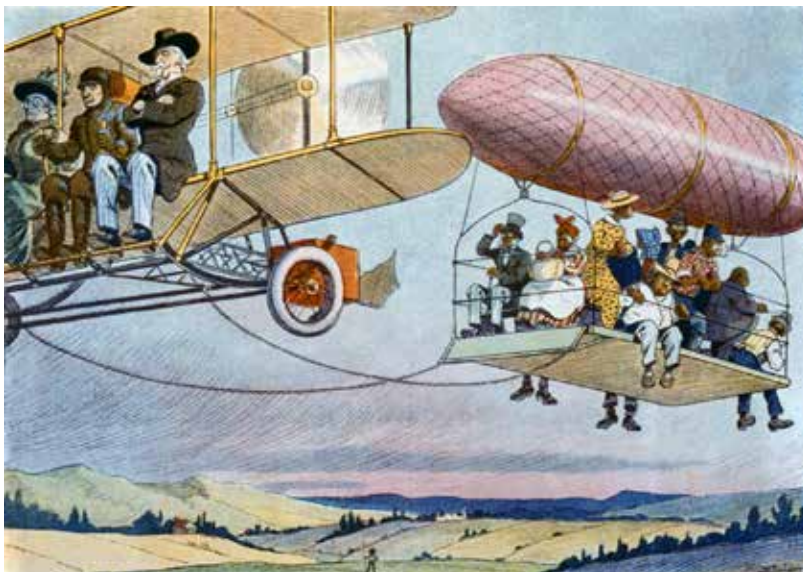
## Section 2

# The Rise of Jim Crow

### As you read, look for

- ▶ the key role that transportation played in attempts to segregate the races;
- ▶ how prejudice against Italian immigrants led to mob violence in New Orleans;
- ▶ provisions of the Constitution of 1898 that disfranchised many poor and landless voters;
- ▶ agricultural innovations like sharecropping, expansion of rice production, and Farmers' Alliances;
- ▶ terms: **Jim Crow laws, poll tax, grandfather clause, sharecropping, debt peonage, grinding season, Farmers' Alliances, populism.**

Besides its emphasis on limiting the size of government, the other Bourbon priority was maintaining white supremacy. To achieve this goal, southern legislatures adopted a group of laws known as **Jim Crow laws**. These were laws that restricted the freedom of African Americans and required separate-but-equal public facilities for whites and for blacks. The name Jim Crow came from a character created by an actor named T. D. Rice. While playing Jim Crow, Rice wore blackface makeup and performed comical songs and dances that made fun of African American *folkways* (customs).



**Left:** This cartoon titled “For the Sunny South: Airship with a ‘Jim Crow’ Trailer” ridicules the segregated public transportation in the South. The private plane has a separate “trailer” to transport the black passengers, presumably the servants of the rich-looking couple sitting with the pilot.

## A Focus on Transportation

Disputes related to separating the races often came to a head over how to regulate interracial contacts on means of transportation. As the New Orleans *Times-Democrat* explained, this was because one “is thrown in much closer communication in the car with one’s traveling companions than in the theatre or restaurant.”

People of color had protested attempts to segregate them from whites as early as Reconstruction. In May 1867, African Americans in New Orleans gathered in the streets to protest their recent segregation into streetcars marked with a large yellow star. Freedmen and former free people of color alike objected to the so-called Star Car requirement. Their protests were large and effective enough that the city’s mayor was forced to reverse the Star Car policy. The city’s streetcars retained integrated seating until the early twentieth century.

The state’s 1868 constitution actually prohibited racial segregation. Article 13 of that constitution’s bill of rights read, in part, all “persons shall enjoy equal rights and privileges upon any conveyance of a public character.” Despite this constitutional guarantee of equal access, segregation was becoming the norm.

In part, this was because most former slaves were poor, and could rarely afford tickets—much less first-class tickets—on steamboats or trains. Former free people of color, however, often could and did exercise their constitutional rights. Josephine Decuir was a former free woman of color who could afford first-class travel. In 1872, she was denied entry to the first-class stateroom on a Mississippi River steamboat, even though she had been sold a first-class ticket. Decuir and her husband had been prosperous slave owners before the Civil War. She *bristled* (became angry)

at being segregated to inferior parts of the ship set aside for “colored people,” so she sued the steamboat company. The Louisiana Supreme Court ruled in her favor based on the equal access guarantees of the 1868 Louisiana Constitution. However, when the U.S. Supreme Court heard her case in 1878, they reversed the state ruling. The Court based its decision on the fact that the steamboat company engaged in commerce across state lines and was, therefore, not subject to Louisiana law. Their ruling also narrowed the equal access guarantees of the Fourteenth Amendment. The following year, the state adopted a new constitution that had no equal access guarantee.

**Below:** An African American girl waits for the train at the segregated West End stop by the lakefront just outside New Orleans.



## Segregation Statutes

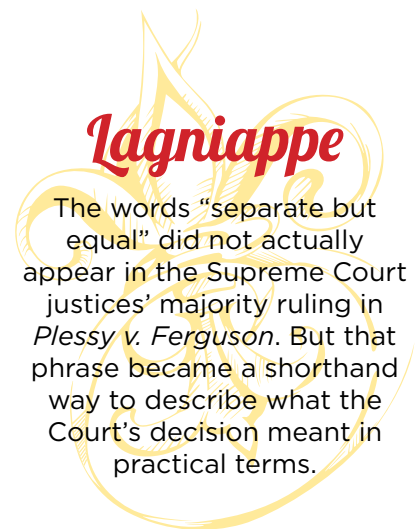
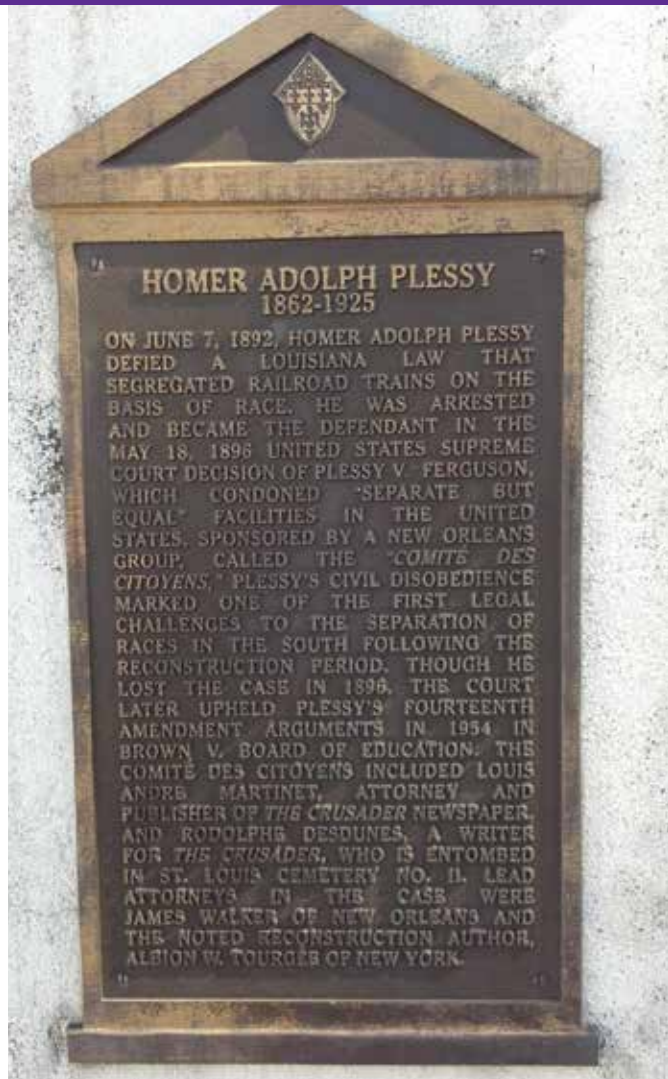
By the late 1880s, Bourbon-dominated southern legislatures had begun to pass Jim Crow laws that required racial segregation in virtually all public places. It was in this context that the Louisiana legislature passed the 1890 Separate Car Act that required “separate-but-equal” railroad cars for whites and people of color. Despite the determined opposition of the Committee of Citizens and Homer Plessy, the 1896 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson* was extremely influential.

After 1896, laws were passed that segregated nearly every aspect of life. There were statutes that required separate schools; separate train cars; and separate entrances, bathrooms, and seating in virtually all public places. Even the state’s blood supply had to be segregated by the race of the blood donor. Over time, almost everything became separate, but few of those facilities were of equal quality.

## Prejudice against Italian Immigrants

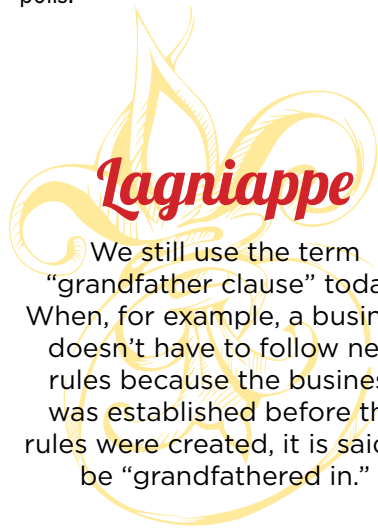
African Americans were not the only group to suffer from prejudice in the era of white supremacy. The state’s large population of Italian immigrants also endured suspicion and a second-class status in many areas of life. Many newspapers gave voice to fears about Italian *clannishness* (the tendency to associate only with people like oneself) and criminality. The stories focused on the existence of secretive criminal gangs known as the Mafia.

New Orleans Police Chief David Hennessy was shot in 1890. Just before he died, he allegedly described his attackers with an insulting term used to portray Italians. In the investigation that followed, police arrested nineteen suspects, all of whom were Italian. The first trial of nine defendants ended in either not guilty verdicts or a deadlocked jury. A mob, led by a group calling themselves the Committee of Fifty, gathered in the streets. The enraged citizens included common laborers but also men who were prominent in both politics and business. Under this elite leadership, the group stormed the parish prison where thirteen of the Italians were still being held. The mob, which met very little resistance from the police guards, shot nine of the men inside the prison. Two more were dragged from the prison into the streets and hanged from lampposts. Those who took part in the 1891 murders defended their actions on the basis of maintaining social order and white supremacy. No one was ever charged in the killings.

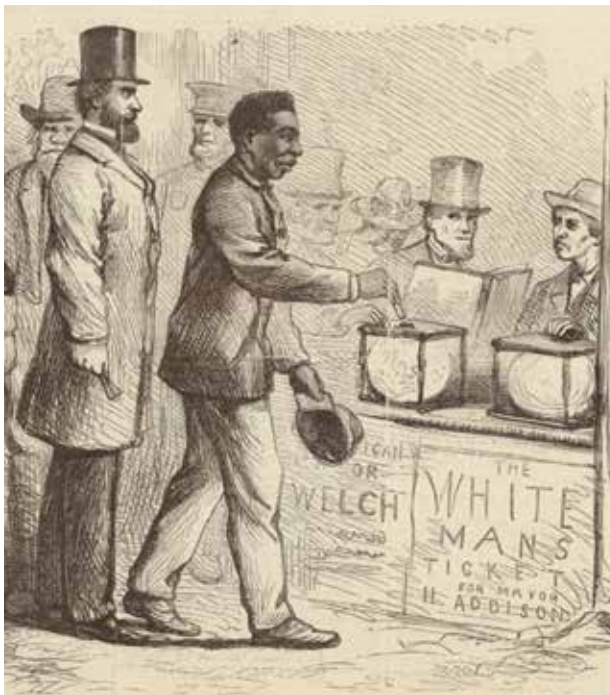


**Above:** Bronze plaque on the side of the Plessy tomb in New Orleans, Louisiana.

**Top Right:** This 1891 illustration titled “An Episode of the Lynching of the Italians in New Orleans” shows citizens breaking down the door of the parish prison with a beam brought there the night before for that purpose. **Bottom Left:** By 1900, only a small number of African Americans remained on the voting rolls in Louisiana. Those who tried to exercise their right to vote faced threats and even violence at the polls.



We still use the term “grandfather clause” today. When, for example, a business doesn't have to follow new rules because the business was established before the rules were created, it is said to be “grandfathered in.”



The *lynching* (putting to death by mob action without legal sanction) of eleven Italians was notable for the number of victims killed at one time. But lynching was an ugly part of political disagreement and white supremacy during this era. Historians have confirmed that at least 391 people were victims of mob violence in the state in the 70 years between 1882 and 1952. Most of these acts took place before 1900, reaching a peak in a period of extreme political disagreement in the 1890s. The reasons given for committing these murders varied, but they were generally connected to ensuring white political or economic control. The groups who committed these acts were rarely punished for their actions.



## The 1898 Constitution

By the time a new state constitution was adopted in 1898, white supremacy was the norm socially and politically. In the new constitution, several tactics were used to ensure that African American voters, along with many poor whites, were removed from the voting rolls. Because Louisiana had very high rates of illiteracy, the requirement that voters had to know how to read and write ruled out many. There were also requirements that voters be property owners and that they pay a yearly **poll tax** (a tax that had to be paid before a person could vote). All this placed additional obstacles in the way of the landless and poor.

In order to provide an exception for some white voters, the state adopted a **grandfather clause** (a law that gave a person the right to vote if he could demonstrate that his father or grandfather had been a voter before 1867). This grandfather clause effectively ruled out all former slaves and their descendants. The new requirements succeeded in disfranchising the vast majority of African American voters.

In 1897, the numbers of registered white voters exceeded the numbers of registered blacks only slightly. By 1900, black registration had *plummeted* (fallen sharply). In that year, approximately 125,000 whites were registered, but only 5,320 African Americans had managed to keep the right to vote.

## Anti-Lottery Bourbon Governors

While virtually all late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century governors were white supremacists, they also acted in ways that qualified them as reformers. Francis T. Nicholls was elected to his second term as governor in 1888 largely because he was thought to be honest. There was also widespread discontent with the corrupt activities of the Louisiana Lottery. Both Nicholls and the next governor, Murphy J. Foster, fought hard to end the Lottery's influence on politics. By the end of 1893, Foster had succeeded in driving the Lottery from the state. He was helped in this effort when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the company could no longer conduct business across state lines. Foster also oversaw the adoption of the Constitution of 1898. But even with these political successes to his credit, the state and its people still had many problems. The vast majority of Louisiana's people were poor, landless, and faced with ongoing economic challenges.

## Economic Challenges

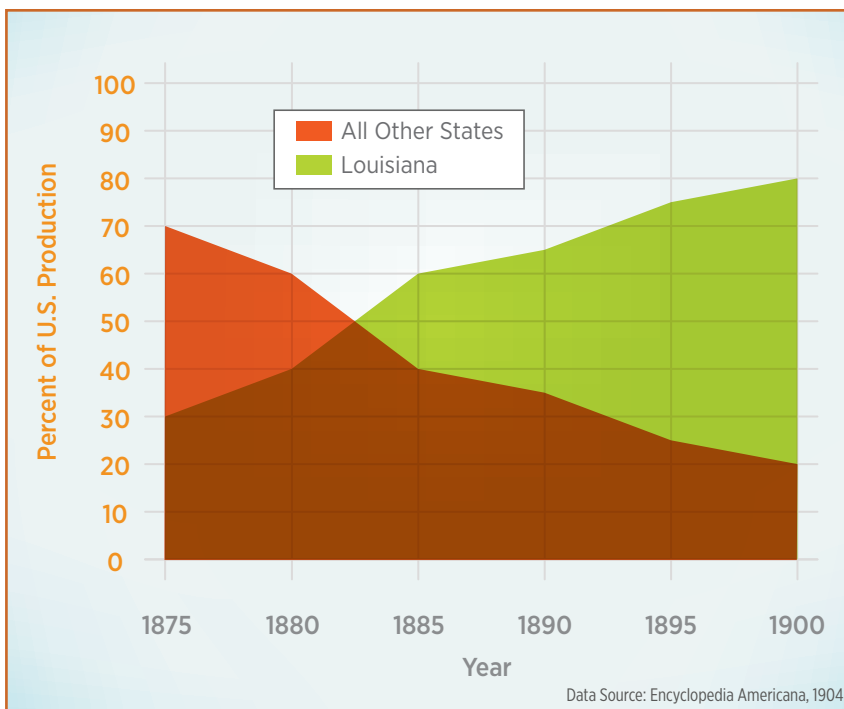
While corruption made some people rich, others managed to maintain their wealth through plantation agriculture. But without slave labor, it became more difficult for even large planters to make a profit. Small farmers struggled just to make ends meet.

## Sharecropping and Debt Peonage

Without a slave labor force, planters with a lot of land began a system of hiring workers called **sharecropping**. In this system, a planter would rent a portion of his land to a farmer who agreed to raise a cash crop, usually cotton. In return for the land and access to a small house, the farmer promised the landowner an agreed-upon portion, or share, of the crop he and his family raised.



Democratic Governor Foster's grandson, who was also named Murphy J. Foster but was called "Mike," served as a Republican governor of Louisiana from 1996 to 2004.



**Figure 12.1**

### Louisiana's Contribution to U.S. Rice Production (1875-1900)

In what year did Louisiana's rice production equal production in the rest of the country?

**Below:** This photograph shows women cutting cane in a Baton Rouge field between 1880 and 1897.

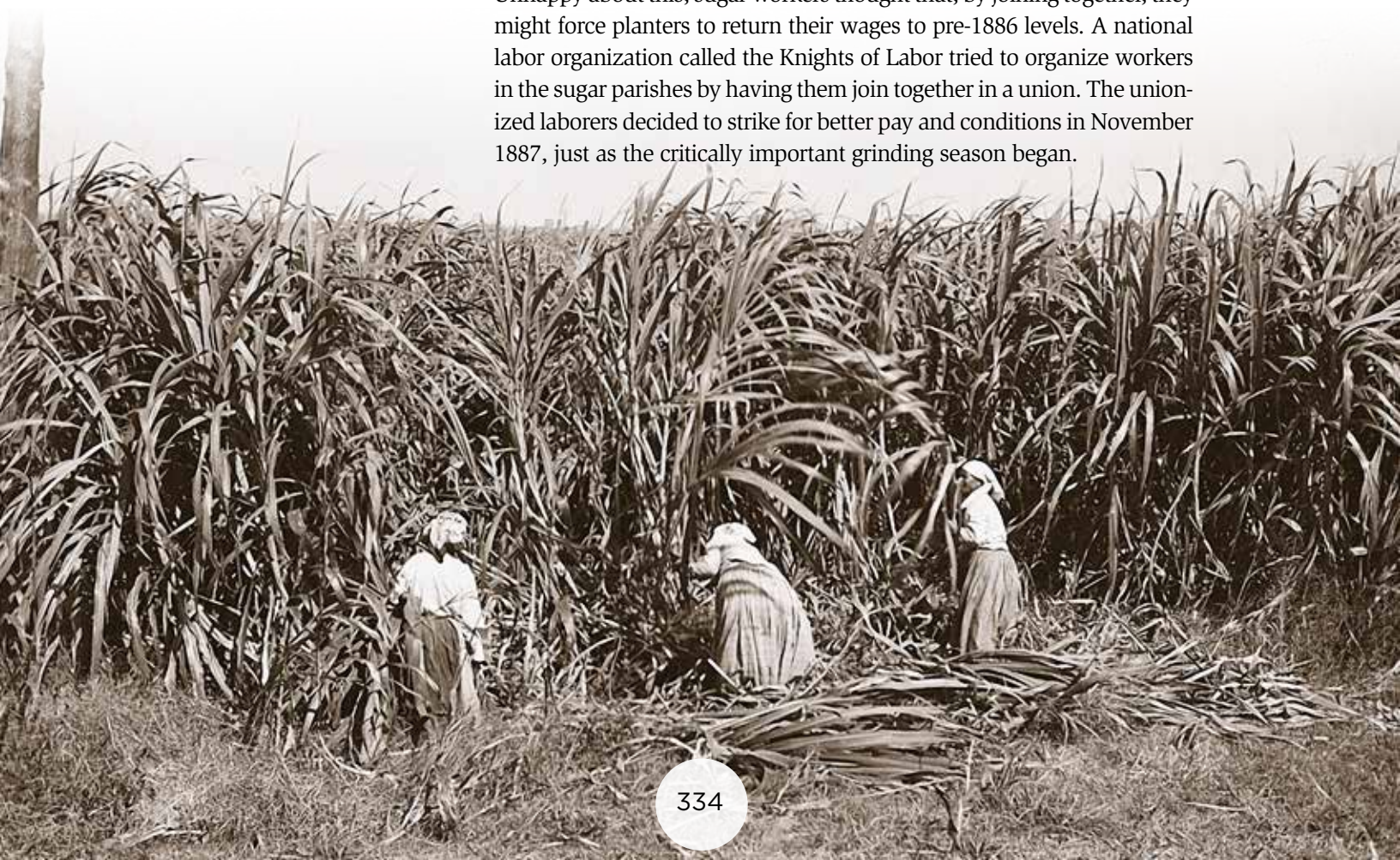
How much of the crop a farmer agreed to “share” varied, but giving the owner at least half of the crop was common. This arrangement often became less favorable because the sharecroppers also needed other supplies during the year. Most of them had little money and depended on receiving goods on credit at local stores. Some of those stores were also owned by the planter.

In rural areas where there was little competition, the store usually charged very high prices for food, clothing, and other basic necessities purchased on credit. Under these circumstances, a sharecropper might owe far more than half of his crop to the planter in order to settle his account. In many cases, sharecroppers actually went into debt, especially in years when the harvest was poor. This created a cycle of poverty known as **debt peonage**. Once in debt, it became more and more difficult for a sharecropper or even a landowning small farmer to escape the cycle of credit, debt, and increasing poverty.

### Sugar Workers Organize

Because of the way sugar was raised, harvested and processed, sharecropping was not widely adopted in the southern part of the state. A sugar planter's need for labor varied during the year. The demand for workers was particularly high in late autumn during harvest time—called **grinding season**. Planters had a limited amount of time in which to harvest their crops and process the cane into molasses and granulated sugar.

The sugar crop of 1886 was very poor. As a result, planters tried to *mitigate* (lessen, diminish) their losses by lowering their workers' pay. Unhappy about this, sugar workers thought that, by joining together, they might force planters to return their wages to pre-1886 levels. A national labor organization called the Knights of Labor tried to organize workers in the sugar parishes by having them join together in a union. The unionized laborers decided to strike for better pay and conditions in November 1887, just as the critically important grinding season began.





The strike angered many planters, who ordered the workers off their lands. Many of the union members went to the nearby city of Thibodaux to regroup and decide what to do next. The planters hired gunmen to protect their lands and interests. The two groups clashed in Thibodaux on November 22, 1887. At least thirty African American sugar workers were killed and one hundred more were injured by the better-armed forces working on behalf of the planters. The violent response by the planters ended the strike and kept sugar workers from taking part in any further attempts to unionize until well into the twentieth century.

**Above:** These sugarcane workers' houses are preserved at Laurel Valley Village Plantation near Thibodaux.

## Agricultural Innovation

Most farmers and planters continued the antebellum practice of raising a single cash crop. Despite the difficulties of farming without slave labor, the state's planters and small farmers continued to focus on the cultivation of cotton and sugar. There were small areas of innovation however. Some farmers tried new crops, hoping for better returns. Men who took a scientific approach to crop diversification often led the way.

## Expansion of Rice Cultivation

The most successful development came in the expansion of rice cultivation in southwest Louisiana. The turn toward rice was encouraged by the efforts of a man named Seaman A. Knapp. In the late 1880s, Knapp came to Louisiana and shared his methods for successful rice farming with local farmers. He also encouraged farmers from his home state of Iowa to migrate to Louisiana. Many did and they, along with Knapp, established several southwest Louisiana towns, including Vinton, named after Knapp's Iowa birthplace. Locals also established towns, like Crowley in 1887, which became a hub for shipping Louisiana rice to other parts of the nation via railroad.



Today, Crowley calls itself the "Rice Capital of America." Its city motto is "Where life is rice and easy."





**Above:** Loading sugarcane in Louisiana.

### Farmers' Alliances and Fusion Politics

Aware of the challenges they faced, some farmers came together in organizations called **Farmers' Alliances**. These Alliances were similar to unions in that they attempted to use the power of group organizing to achieve better conditions for those who labored on the land.

In the early 1890s, these farmers joined together to stage a serious but ultimately unsuccessful challenge to the Bourbons. In hotly contested elections in both 1892 and 1896, an unlikely coalition of poor farmers—both black and white—and sugar planters joined forces. The sugar planters, many of whom were Republicans, resented the current Democratic president's refusal to support a sugar tariff. Therefore, they were willing to join with the farmers to challenge the Bourbon Democrats. The *fusion* (joining together) of wealthy sugar planters and mostly poor farmers has led this to be called the fusion movement. The party the farmers supported was called the People's Party, and the political movement that grew out of their actions has come to be known as **populism** (belief in the rights, wisdom, or virtues of the common people).

If votes had been counted fairly in the 1896 election, Murphy Foster's challenger, a wealthy sugar planter named John N. Pharr, would have taken the governor's office. Instead, suspiciously lopsided vote totals from parishes controlled by the Democrats gave Foster the victory. After the 1896 elections, the Bourbons decided to take actions that would prevent future challenges and take the vote away from as many of their political opponents as possible. The challenge posed by the fusion movement, though ultimately unsuccessful, helps to explain why poor whites, as well as blacks, were the targets of disfranchisement strategies in the 1898 Constitution.

## Reviewing the Section

1. Define in sentence form: poll tax, grinding season, populism.
2. How did the system of sharecropping work?
3. Who was Seaman A. Knapp, and how did he boost Louisiana's economy?

## Section 3

# Louisiana Enters the Twentieth Century

### As you read, look for

- ▶ how reformers in the progressive movement attempted to improve life in Louisiana;
- ▶ the economic benefits of lumber and oil;
- ▶ new forms of pleasure that arrived with the new century;
- ▶ the contributions of Louisiana's jazz musicians to the nation and the world;
- ▶ terms: **progressive movement, suffrage, scrip.**

As Louisiana entered the twentieth century, the state and its people faced many challenges. Most people still lived in rural areas where modern conveniences were unknown and decent roads were thirty years in the future. New Orleans was by far the state's largest city. While rural areas remained remote and life went on much as it had throughout the nineteenth century, some small areas of progress were made.

Issues like lack of passable roads, poor drainage, and primitive water supplies often went unchallenged in rural areas. In a city the size of New Orleans, where more than 200,000 people lived close together, issues like these were not only a nuisance but actually dangerous. In order to meet these challenges, some citizens adopted a set of reforming ideas that went under the description of progressivism.



**Left:** Canal Street, New Orleans, in 1902.



## Lagniappe

The Nineteenth Amendment was ratified in 1920, when Tennessee became the thirty-sixth state to approve it. (Three-fourths of the states must ratify an amendment for it to become part of the U.S. Constitution.) Louisiana did not ratify the Nineteenth Amendment until 1970.

## Progressive Reformers

The **progressive movement** had many facets, but in general terms, progressives believed government could and should be used to help address social problems like poverty, illiteracy, and improving the conditions for all workers.

Progressives opposed the kind of politics practiced by the New Orleans Ring, which was dominated by ward bosses who had little or no education, but who controlled votes with promises of jobs. Progressive reformers argued that those elected to office should have specialized qualifications like degrees in law, accounting, or engineering.

Sisters Jean and Kate Gordon were prominent Louisiana progressives. Jean devoted much of her energy to convincing the state legislature to provide protections for child laborers. Her efforts led to the state's first child labor law, which was passed in 1906 and strengthened two years later. She even served, without pay, as a factory inspector to make sure the laws were enforced. She was also committed to solving the social problems she believed contributed to the delinquency of young women.

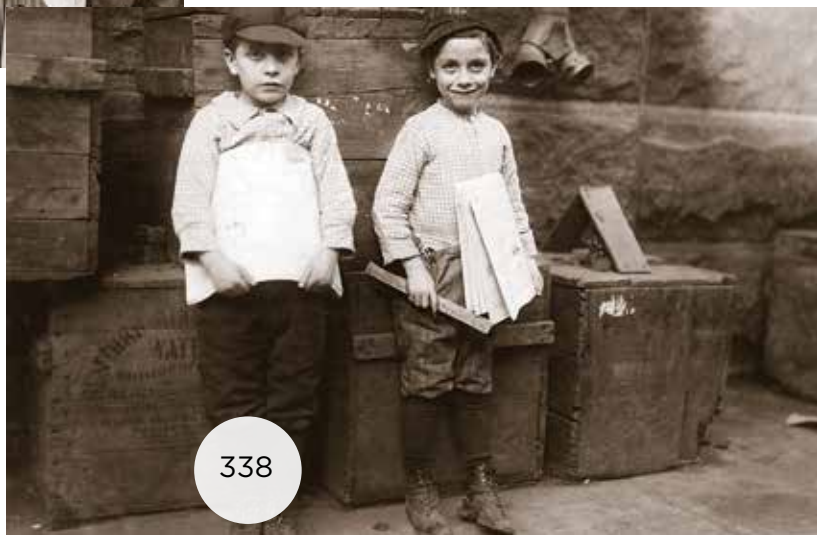
Jean's sister Kate devoted much of her energy to the campaign to secure voting rights for women. The state's 1898 constitution provided a small measure of **suffrage** (the right to vote) for property-owning women who paid taxes to the state. Using this stipulation, Kate led a drive to get a series of improvements to the New Orleans sewerage and drainage systems on the ballot. As a progressive, she believed these improvements would reduce flooding and slow down the spread of disease. She led a successful public campaign for the measures, and newspapers actually gave the Gordon sisters and other members of the Women's League for Sewerage and Drainage credit for the victory.

Kate devoted the next twenty years to expanding and guaranteeing women the right to vote. Kate was a progressive, but like many southern progressives, she was also a white supremacist. As such, she believed women's suffrage should be guaranteed by state rather than federal legislation. Thus, she opposed the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which gave all adult women the right to vote, in part because she feared African American women would insist on their right to vote as well.



**Top:** Miss Jean Gordon is 4th from left in this picture of factory inspectors.

**Bottom Left:** Johnnie, on the left, was a nine-year-old oyster shucker at a cannery. Using a knife to pry apart the halves of an oyster shell was very dangerous work. **Bottom Right:** These newsboys are seven and nine years old.



## Progressive Governors

Early-twentieth-century governors also agreed with some of the progressives' ideas about the use of government to better society, to ensure more humane treatment for the most vulnerable, and to increase government efficiency. Like Nicholls and Foster in the 1890s, the governors in the first two decades of the new century believed in white supremacy but also sought to improve the quality of life and the state's reputation. Governor William Heard was trained as an accountant and worked to improve the state's financial reporting systems. He also sought to expand educational opportunities.

The next two governors, Newton Blanchard and Jared Sanders, were both trained as lawyers. Blanchard sought to improve conditions for the state's prisoners and was the first to create a juvenile justice system designed to separate child and adult prisoners. Sanders was the first governor to impose a small tax charged to companies that profited from extracting the state's timber and petroleum resources.

## Lagniappe

The heartwood of the cypress tree is resistant to rot and termites, making it an ideal building material for the damp southern climate. It is also used for making furniture because it is lightweight and durable. In 1963, the bald cypress was named the Louisiana state tree.



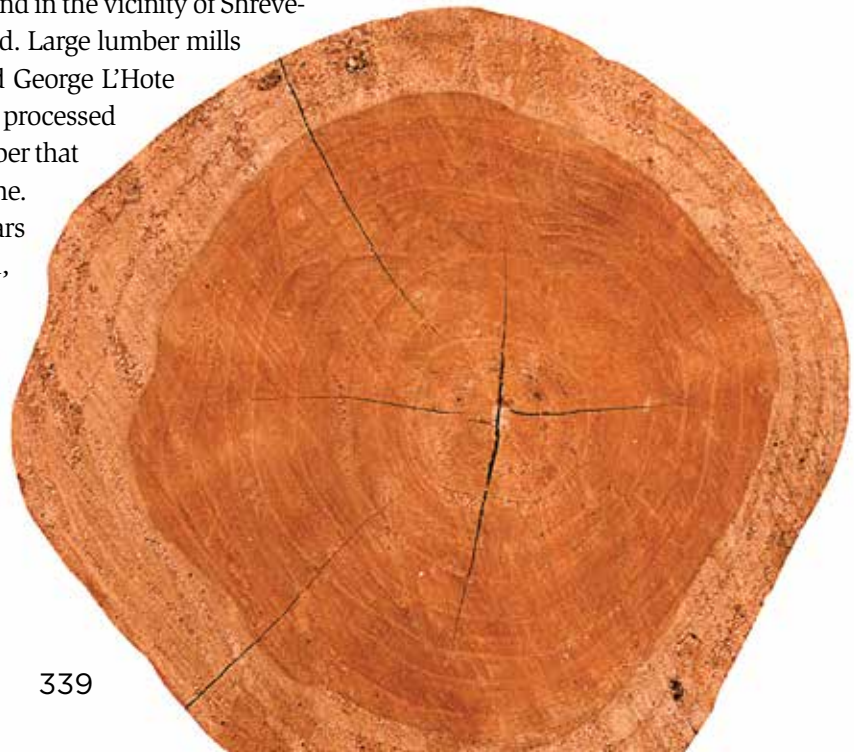
## Lumber and Oil

The extraction and processing of the state's timber became a big business in the post-Civil War era. Lumber mills in southern Louisiana processed the huge cypress trees that skilled lumbermen harvested from the swamps in the southern part of the state.

In the forests north of Lake Pontchartrain and in the vicinity of Shreveport, pine was the main kind of tree harvested. Large lumber mills were spread around the state. A man named George L'Hote had a lumber company in New Orleans that processed timber, but also sold the plans and pre-cut lumber that a purchaser could use to quickly build a home.

Lumbering jobs were plentiful in the years between 1880 and 1920. The pay was good, but the jobs were dangerous. Because lumber workers often lived in company-run camps in rural areas, they too were often forced to buy high-priced goods on credit from company stores. In fact, some lumber companies paid their workers in **scrip** (a kind of currency that could only be used in stores run by the lumber companies themselves).

**Above:** These floating logs were made into lumber and other wood products at the Otis Manufacturing Company plant in New Orleans. **Below:** A crosscut of the cypress tree.





## Lagniappe

Oil was first discovered in Louisiana in a rice field near Jennings. The landowner had noticed bubbles rising from a spot in one of his flooded fields. He placed an old stovepipe over the bubbles and threw a lit match into the pipe. Gas from the bubbles caught fire. Word spread to Jennings, where several businessmen quietly leased 2,000 acres near the bubbling oil and formed an oil exploration company.

New opportunities were created after the state's first oil field came in near Jennings in 1901. For the first time, many people who had only done agricultural labor had the chance to try something new. Like lumbering, working in the oil fields could be dangerous and sometimes deadly work. The pay made these risks worth it for many. Men traveled to and lived in camps or tent settlements around oil wells.

These rough camps quickly gave way to industrial development. Corporations like Standard Oil came to the state and built plants to refine the oil. They also built pipelines to transport the refined oil to other parts of the state and nation. Standard Oil built a pipeline that carried the state's crude oil from its northwest corner over to Baton Rouge, where their refinery was processing more than 7,000 barrels of oil a day by 1911.

In the course of oil exploration, many wells also produced natural gas. The gas was considered worthless at first, and many companies allowed it to burn off. Over time, the value of natural gas also became clear and it, too, was piped to other parts of the state and country. A major natural gas field was discovered near Monroe in 1916.

## The Pursuit of Pleasure

As the 1920s approached, the state was impacted by widespread changes in American culture. People in Louisiana, and especially New Orleans, had long had a reputation for knowing how to enjoy life. But the idea of having specific leisure time in the evenings and on weekends was just entering the mainstream. In part this was because progressive reformers had worked to make shorter workdays and free weekends the norm for many workers.

**Top:** This oil well is in the Homer Pool. Oil was discovered in Homer and Haynesville (Claiborne Parish) in 1919. **Right:** Combining business with pleasure, the New Orleans Board of Trade celebrated with its second-annual banquet in 1904.



### New Ways to Shop

The idea of enjoying yourself by buying consumer goods was also entering the mainstream. Even in the state's most rural communities, the arrival by mail of a catalog from Montgomery Ward or Sears, Roebuck and Co. allowed rural people to buy—or at least dream about buying—fashionable clothes and modern tools and farming equipment.

In New Orleans, Canal Street became a destination for shoppers from other parts of the state who came by train to shop in the city's sprawling new department stores. Electric lights also began to appear in stores and restaurants and on major thoroughfares, expanding shopping and leisure hours into the evening.

### The Rise of the Automobile

Although the roads in Louisiana remained *abysmal* (extremely poor) until the early 1930s, automobiles became a more common sight, particularly on city streets. In response, the state began to regulate automobiles and, by 1915, required drivers to have licenses. Even people with modest incomes began to purchase cars when inventor Henry Ford introduced his Model T automobile in 1908. Ford used innovative assembly lines that brought down the time and cost it took to build a car. Americans could also purchase Ford's cars on a credit plan, making it easier to pay for the automobile over time.

### Trains and Streetcars

Most people, however, still relied on trains for travel between cities. Although Louisiana's railroads developed later than some other states, by the early twentieth century, approximately 5,000 miles of track connected all parts of the state. In Shreveport and New Orleans, horse-drawn carriages and streetcars were replaced by electric-powered ones in 1893 and 1898, respectively.



## Lagniappe

The Sears catalog even sold houses—in pieces! Between 1908 and 1940, Sears sold more than 100,000 house kits. A few weeks after a buyer placed an order, two boxcars would arrive at the train station. The cars would contain an instruction book and 30,000 pieces—including precut lumber, staircases, nails, and paint. Many of these houses still exist today. Perhaps there is one in your hometown.

## Lagniappe

The St. Charles streetcar line in New Orleans was one of the first passenger railroads in the country, and is today the world's oldest continuously operating street railway. Because it is listed on the National Register of Historic Landmarks, all of its distinctive green cars must keep the same appearance and be maintained and operated as they were in 1920.

**Left:** St. Charles Avenue Streetcar.

# Special FEATURE

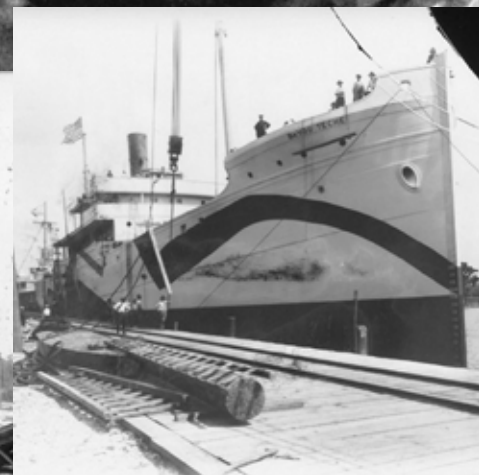
## Louisiana in World War I

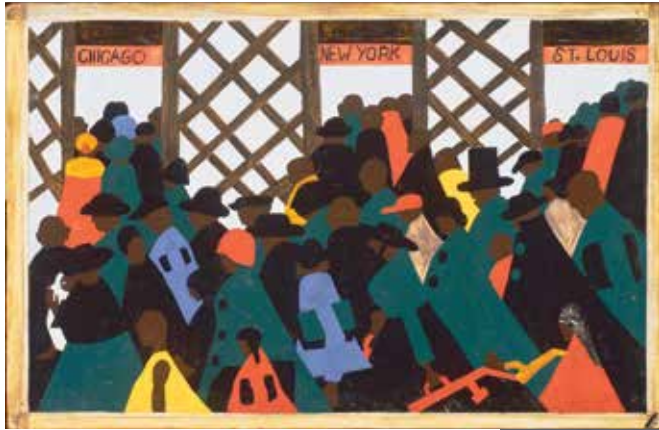
Working on farms and factories, in shops or at trades, or even home from college, most of Louisiana's young men would not have understood how events of June 28, 1914, would affect their lives. On that day, more than 5,500 miles away, Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary and his wife were assassinated while visiting Sarajevo, capital city of the Austro-Hungarian province of Bosnia. The brutal killing outraged many in Europe. Tensions grew throughout the summer, and by August, Louisiana's newspapers began to warn that war threatened to engulf Europe, and it did! Country after country chose sides, and what became known as the Great War swept across Europe. France, the United Kingdom, and Russia led the Allied Powers, while Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire led the Central Powers.

Louisiana enjoyed an economic boom throughout the war years, supplying the warring countries with goods. Cotton tripled in price, and sugar's price doubled! The timber and petroleum industries experienced great gains. The average worker's pay increased to between \$1.50 and \$2.00 a day.

On April 6, 1917, the United States officially joined the Allied Powers. Louisiana, like the rest of the United States, supported the war effort by sending troops and raising money through campaigns. Louisiana sent over 71,000 officers and enlisted men to the war. Eleven major military installations in Louisiana were either constructed or expanded. The largest of these was Camp Beauregard, located north of Alexandria. The federal government also invested in the infrastructure of New Orleans with the construction of three new shipyards, a multimillion-dollar repair yard, and a massive warehousing terminal.

**Right:** The Jahncke Shipyard in Madisonville and the wooden ship *Bayou Teche* ready for use in World War I. **Background:** Americans at the Piave Front in 1918.





The war led to changes within Louisiana on the home front. With so many of the nation's young men enlisting in the armed forces, factories in Detroit, St. Louis, Chicago, and other northern cities faced a shortage of workers. Factories began to attract African American workers from Louisiana with the promise of higher wages, signing bonuses, and the lack of Jim Crow laws. This led to the "Great Migration" of African Americans from Louisiana to northern cities.

The war ended on November 11, 1918. More than 116,000 American soldiers gave their lives; 1,447 of those soldiers were from Louisiana. Throughout Louisiana today you can find memorials to the fallen. The citizens of the Ninth Ward in New Orleans erected the Victory Arch at Macarty Square in 1919 to honor those who served and died. The Memorial Tower at LSU (also known as the Campanile) was built in 1923 by the American Legion as a memorial to all Louisianians who gave their lives in what was later known as World War I. To learn more about World War I, you can visit the Louisiana State Museum. What do you think was the greatest impact of World War I on Louisiana?



**Top Left:** Renowned African American artist Jacob Lawrence painted a *Migration Series* to illustrate the Great Migration. **Right:** Victory Arch at Macarty Square in New Orleans.



## MAP 12.1

## Railroads in Turn-of-the-Century Louisiana

**Map Skill:** How far was it by railroad from Shreveport to Monroe? In which direction would you be traveling?



## Lagniappe

The American Dialect Society each year designates a “Word of the Year.” Recent winners have been words like *tweet*, *app*, and *hashtag*. The Society chose *jazz* as the “Word of the 20th Century.”

### The Birth of Jazz

A new and original American musical form was born in Louisiana during this period. Played mostly in disreputable New Orleans bars and honky-tonks at first, these loud, lively, and unusual sounds came to define a form of music known as jazz. By the 1920s, jazz had entered the mainstream, and people listened and danced to jazz bands at private dances and on riverboats that traveled up and down the Mississippi River.

As some early jazz musicians, many of whom were African American, left the state to seek better opportunities and a life free of Jim Crow laws, they took jazz with them and spread it to the rest of the nation and the world. One of the most famous was Louis Armstrong. After learning to play the *cornet* (an instrument similar to a trumpet) in a juvenile detention facility, Armstrong became one of the pioneers of American jazz. By the time of his death, Armstrong had become a world ambassador for the music he and common people like himself had helped to create in Louisiana in the first two decades of the twentieth century.

**Right:** Jazz musicians often provided the entertainment on riverboats. The band’s singer used a megaphone to project his voice.



# Special Feature

## Louis Armstrong and Jazz

Louis Armstrong was one of the creators of jazz music and one of the most famous people to call New Orleans home. Armstrong was born on August 4, 1901, in New Orleans. Growing up, Armstrong heard many different types of music such as blues, ragtime, military parade music, and spirituals. He would eventually blend these together to produce jazz music.

Armstrong began working at age eleven doing odd jobs like selling newspapers or cleaning graves. He also began singing on the street for tips around this time. About a year later, Armstrong was arrested for firing a pistol into the air. He was sent to the Colored Waifs Home for Boys, where he would live for a year and a half. During this time, he was taught to play the cornet and to read music. This set the stage for his rise to prominence in the jazz music world. After leaving the home, Armstrong began playing in small clubs, at funerals, and on riverboats.

In 1922, Joseph "King" Oliver invited Armstrong, just twenty-one years old, to join his band in Chicago. Armstrong would record his first song with Oliver's band in 1923. Between 1925 and 1928, Armstrong recorded songs with two different bands, the Hot Fives and the Hot Sevens. These were the defining recordings for New Orleans Jazz. One of Armstrong's most famous recordings, "Ain't Misbehavin,'" made in 1929, launched jazz music into the world's spotlight.

Throughout the rest of his life, Armstrong would perform, make recordings, and even appear in movies. He died on July 6, 1971. Though Armstrong's childhood home no longer exists, Louis Armstrong Park, near the French Quarter in New Orleans, was founded in 1980 to honor the musician.

If you are interested in learning more about Louis Armstrong, you should plan a visit to the Old U.S. Mint in New Orleans, which is one of the sites of the Louisiana State Museum. Their collection includes hundreds of Armstrong's letters and recordings, his first cornet, and even the famous handkerchief that he used for wiping sweat off his forehead when performing! Do you think New Orleans Jazz would have developed if Louis Armstrong had never been taught how to play the cornet?



**Below:** Bales of Louisiana cotton are loaded onto railroad cars.

As Louisiana entered the 1920s, the state's inhabitants remained concentrated in rural areas. While cities were modernizing, development of roads and public facilities lagged behind other places in the nation. Louisiana was entering a new era, but the state had not yet entered the modern age. In this time of great changes, the state's people and leaders faced both challenges and opportunities. One man in particular would meet those challenges head on. It is to his life and the ways in which he changed Louisiana that we now turn.

## Reviewing the Section

1. Define in sentence form: progressive movement, suffrage, scrip.
2. How did people in rural communities buy—or at least dream about buying—fashionable clothes and modern tools and farm equipment?
3. How did jazz, which was born in Louisiana, spread throughout the nation and the world?





Scenes from the years around 1910.  
**Top Left:** Motor cars crossing the Bogue Falaya River. **Top Right:** Canal Street, New Orleans. **Bottom:** St. Charles Avenue, New Orleans.

# Chapter Review

## Chapter Summary

### Section 1: The Democrats Take Control

- Following Reconstruction, Democrats who believed in white supremacy, social segregation of the races, and limited government rose to power in Louisiana.
- In the South, Democrats who tried to re-create unequal pre-Civil War conditions were known as Bourbon Democrats. This group constructed the Louisiana Constitution of 1879 to support their views.
- Corrupt organizations gained political influence during this time. The Louisiana Lottery Company was able to do this by making payments to influential politicians. The New Orleans Ring, which controlled the city government, did so through small payments to supporters as well as patronage.
- The convict lease system, controlled by S. L. James, leased the state's prisoners to private businesses in order to save money. Prisoners were forced to work long hours while being fed very little. This made huge profits for James and his associates but led to the death of many of the prisoners.

### Section 2: The Rise of Jim Crow

- To provide legal backing for segregation, white supremacists in power in southern legislatures adopted Jim Crow laws.
- The state's 1868 constitution prohibited segregation; despite this protection, the practice of segregation was widespread. Segregation disputes often focused on modes of transportation. Ultimately, in the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the U.S. Supreme Court sanctioned segregation (Jim Crow laws).
- Italian immigrants in Louisiana were also discriminated against. A group of Italian prisoners, who were jailed under suspicion of shooting the New Orleans police chief, became the victims of a lynch mob.
- The 1898 constitution disfranchised many African Americans and poor whites by requiring that voters know how to read and write, own property, and pay an annual poll tax. An exception, known as the grandfather clause, allowed some white voters the franchise if their father or grandfather voted prior to 1867.

- As a replacement for slave labor, many planters implemented a system known as sharecropping. The planter would rent out land to a farmer in exchange for a portion or share (50 percent was common) of his crop. This system was less favorable for the sharecropper, and many went into debt.
- Following a poor crop in 1886, sugar planters lowered the wage they paid their workers. In 1887, the workers, who had organized into a union, decided to go on strike just before grinding season. The planters hired gunmen who clashed with the workers, killing and injuring many and thereby ending the strike.
- An agricultural innovation of this period was the expansion of rice cultivation in southwest Louisiana.
- In the 1890s, in what became known as the fusion movement, poor farmers and sugar planters joined together to challenge the Bourbon Democrats. They supported the People's Party and populism. If votes had been counted fairly, the fusion candidate would likely have won the Louisiana governor's race in 1896; however, Murphy Foster, a Democrat, was declared victorious.

### Section 3: Louisiana Enters the Twentieth Century

- Progressive reformers believed government should address social problems like poverty, illiteracy, and improving working conditions. Jean Gordon convinced the state legislature to protect child laborers. Her sister, Kate Gordon, was instrumental in improving New Orleans sewerage and drainage systems.
- Progressive Louisiana governors like William Heard and Newton Blanchard reformed the state's financial reporting system and created a juvenile justice system for the state.
- The lumbering and oil industries in Louisiana flourished during this period. Lumber mills in southern Louisiana processed cypress trees. In the northern part of the state, pine was harvested and milled. The state's first oil field was discovered near Jennings in 1901. Standard Oil built a refinery in Baton Rouge. Workers in both industries were well paid, but the work was often dangerous.
- The idea of enjoying yourself by buying consumer goods was entering the mainstream. The five-day workweek became the norm for many workers. For some, there was time to read the latest mail order catalogs or visit New Orleans to shop at the

city's new department stores. Another consumer good that became more affordable was the automobile when Henry Ford produced the Model T.

- Jazz was born in Louisiana during this period. Many early jazz musicians were African American. When they left the state to seek better opportunities and a life free of Jim Crow laws, they spread jazz to the rest of the nation. One of the most famous of these musicians was New Orleans native Louis Armstrong.

## Activities for Learning

### Understanding the Facts

1. Which political party seized control of Louisiana politics at the end of Reconstruction?
2. At this time, what were the central beliefs of the Democratic Party?
3. How was the Lottery Company able to influence Louisiana politics?
4. Describe the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition of 1884-1885.
5. How long did the convict lease system last in Louisiana?
6. What was the name given to the set of laws intended to restrict the freedoms of African Americans?
7. How did African Americans respond to the "Star Car" requirement? What was the outcome of this incident?
8. List the Louisiana public facilities that were segregated by Jim Crow laws.
9. What did the landowner and the sharecropper receive in the typical sharecropping agreement?
10. Whose efforts led to the expansion of rice cultivation in southwest Louisiana?
11. What was the population of New Orleans at the beginning of the twentieth century?
12. Which institution did progressives look to for solving social problems like poverty and illiteracy?
13. Which company built an oil refinery in Baton Rouge in 1911?
14. Which two Louisiana cities had electric-powered streetcars by the 1890s?
15. Where did Louis Armstrong learn to play the cornet?

### Developing Critical Thinking

1. Why did E. A. Burke suddenly flee New Orleans?
2. How did the 1898 constitution ensure African Americans and poor whites were removed from the voting polls?

### Exploring Louisiana on the Internet

1. Go to [www.historyplace.com/unitedstates/childlabor/hine-dunbar.htm](http://www.historyplace.com/unitedstates/childlabor/hine-dunbar.htm). Examine this photograph of children working in a seafood-canning factory. What caption would you write for this picture?
2. Go to [www.crt.state.la.us/Assets/OCD/hp/nationalregister/historic\\_contexts/The\\_Louisiana\\_Lumber\\_Boom\\_c1880-1925.pdf](http://www.crt.state.la.us/Assets/OCD/hp/nationalregister/historic_contexts/The_Louisiana_Lumber_Boom_c1880-1925.pdf). Examine the photographs of lumber mills and machinery of this period. List five dangers of lumbering jobs from your review of these photographs.

### Building 21st-Century Skills: Creating a Bar Graph

A bar graph is a diagram where numerical values are presented by the height or length of lines. The purpose of a bar graph is to present and compare factual information in a visual format. To create this graph you will need colored pencils, graph paper, and a ruler.

The first step in designing a bar graph is to create a title for your graph based on the data (or facts) you are comparing. You are going to use voter registration data that your teacher will provide from the Teacher's Edition, page T332. The figures will be similar to those found at the bottom of page 332, so select a title with this in mind. The second step is to create an X (vertical line) and Y (horizontal line) axis for your graph. In this graph, the X-axis will show a number range and the Y-axis will list the years. Suggestion: List the years in chronological order. The third step is to label the X-axis ("Registered Voters") and Y-axis ("Year"). The next step is to place a zero at the bottom of the X-axis and a slightly larger number (130,000) than the largest number (127,923) found in your data. Divide the space between 0 and 130,000 into even increments (e.g., 10,000, 20,000, 30,000, etc.). The final step is to enter the data for each year onto your graph, and create your bars representing the number of black registered voters and the number of white registered voters.