

# The Great Depression and the Big War

## Chapter Preview

### Terms:

assembly line, moonshine, evolution, stretch-out, secret ballot, depression, stock market, relief, Live at Home Program, New Deal, Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), tobacco allotment, parity, tobacco price support, minimum wage, collective bargaining, Social Security Act, rationing

### People:

Arthel Lane “Doc” Watson, Osmond Barringer, Harriet Morehead Berry, Cameron Morrison, Ella May Wiggins, O. Max Gardner, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Clyde Hoey, Charles M. McCorkle, Harland Bowles

### Places:

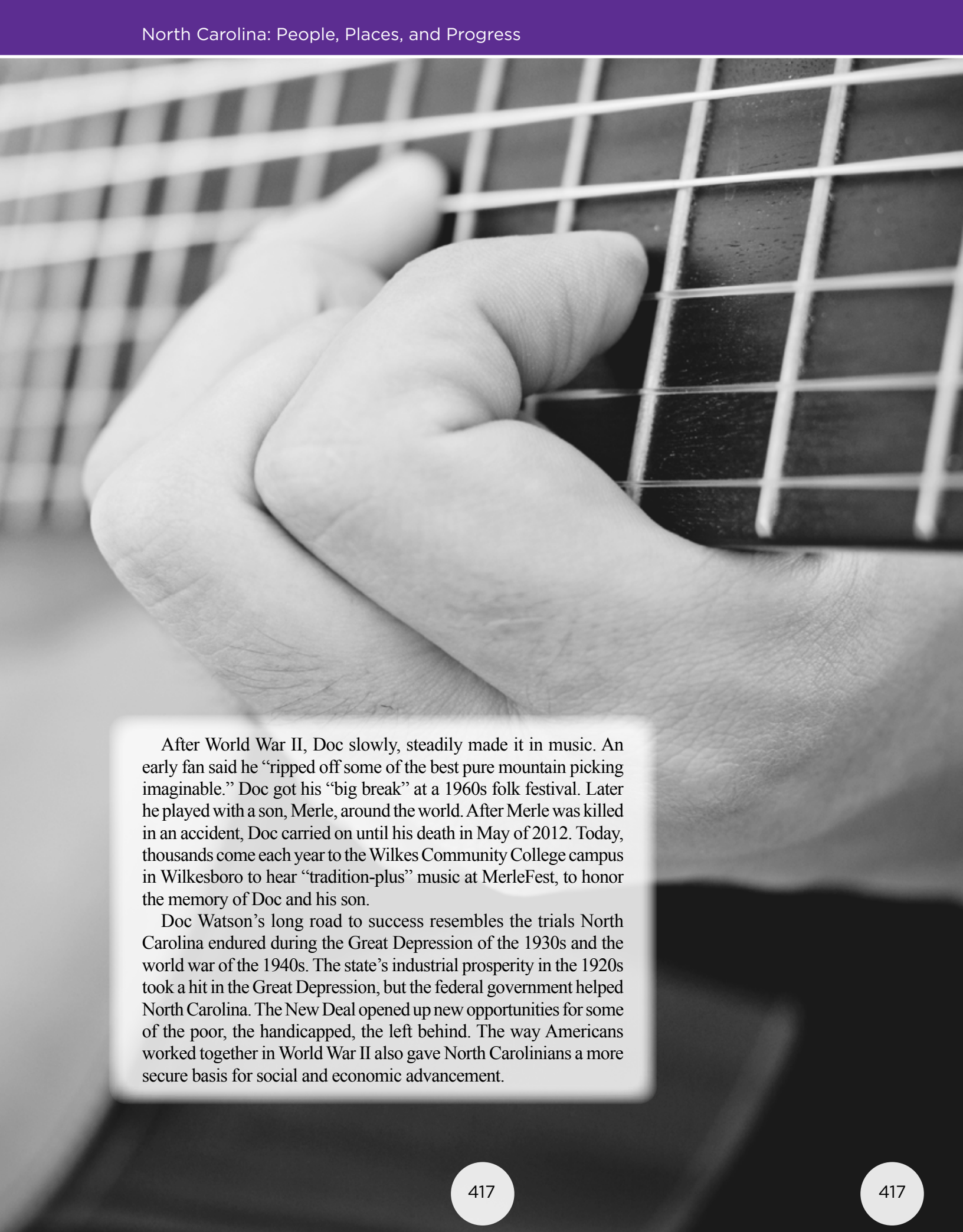
Shelby, Fontana Dam, Camp Mackall, Camp Lejeune, Cherry Point, Camp Butner

His parents named him Arthel Lane Watson, but he eventually gained the nickname “Doc.” Blind since birth, Doc Watson grew up in a shack at Deep Gap, near Boone. After weathering hardships during the Great Depression and World War II, Doc went on to become the most famous North Carolina musician of the twentieth century. His soft voice and skilled picking brought the traditional sounds of the mountains to people everywhere. After years playing for anyone anywhere, for just about anything, he began to record music in the 1950s.

Doc Watson has said that, if he had not been blind, he would have turned out to be a normal person—“an electrician, carpenter, or maybe a mechanic.” Instead, his handicap helped him focus. Both of his parents sang hymns at home and in church. His parents were too poor to buy him a good instrument, but his father carved him a banjo when Doc was eleven. Later, his parents spent twelve hard-earned dollars on a guitar, and Doc mastered it. After attending the Governor Morehead School for the Blind in Raleigh, Doc sawed wood and tuned pianos to make a living.



Doc Watson at his last performance on April 29, 2012.



After World War II, Doc slowly, steadily made it in music. An early fan said he “ripped off some of the best pure mountain picking imaginable.” Doc got his “big break” at a 1960s folk festival. Later he played with a son, Merle, around the world. After Merle was killed in an accident, Doc carried on until his death in May of 2012. Today, thousands come each year to the Wilkes Community College campus in Wilkesboro to hear “tradition-plus” music at MerleFest, to honor the memory of Doc and his son.

Doc Watson’s long road to success resembles the trials North Carolina endured during the Great Depression of the 1930s and the world war of the 1940s. The state’s industrial prosperity in the 1920s took a hit in the Great Depression, but the federal government helped North Carolina. The New Deal opened up new opportunities for some of the poor, the handicapped, the left behind. The way Americans worked together in World War II also gave North Carolinians a more secure basis for social and economic advancement.

# Signs of the Times



## Population

By the end of World War II, there were 3.2 million North Carolinians. Charlotte became the first city to exceed 100,000 in population. Even at that number, it was still not one of the fifty largest cities in the nation.

## Education

One of the most unusual schools in the country was Black Mountain College, which opened in 1933. The school had no grades and no degrees. It was organized around the idea that the arts were central to all learning. Some of its professors were refugees from Nazi Germany. Its advisers included the famous scientist Albert Einstein and the great psychologist Carl Jung.

## Technology

The M1 carbine rifle, the principal weapon used by the U.S. Army in World War II, was designed by North Carolinian David M. Williams while he was in prison in Halifax County in 1926. After his release from prison in 1929, he worked as a consultant for the Army and for firearms manufacturers. World War II General Douglas MacArthur called the carbine “one of the strongest contributing factors to our victory in the Pacific.”

## Food

Krispy Kreme opened its doors in 1937 in Old Salem. Vernon Rudolph used a recipe he bought from a New Orleans chef for his glazed doughnuts, which originally cost a quarter for a dozen. Today, Krispy Kreme’s national headquarters remains in Winston-Salem.

## Music

North Carolina mountain music became known as “hillbilly music” after a North Carolinian first used that word on the air in New York City. In the 1930s, the most famous performers were the Monroe Brothers, who recorded a dozen records in Charlotte. Their fast-paced banjo picking was soon called “bluegrass.”

## Fads

Stressed urban residents flocked to the miniature golf courses across the nation by the 1930s. Some small-scale greens were even located on the roofs of New York skyscrapers. Miniature golf was first played in Pinehurst in the 1920s.

## Sports

College football grew rapidly in popularity during the period. North Carolina’s big game was the UNC-Virginia contest, always played on Thanksgiving Day.

## Theater

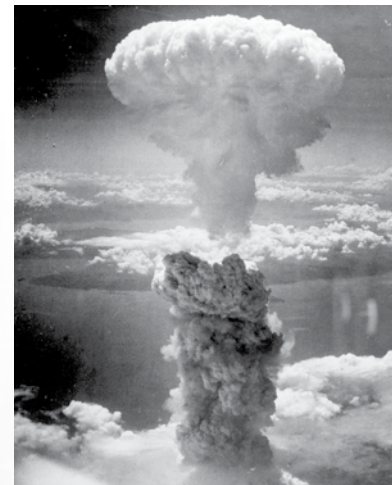
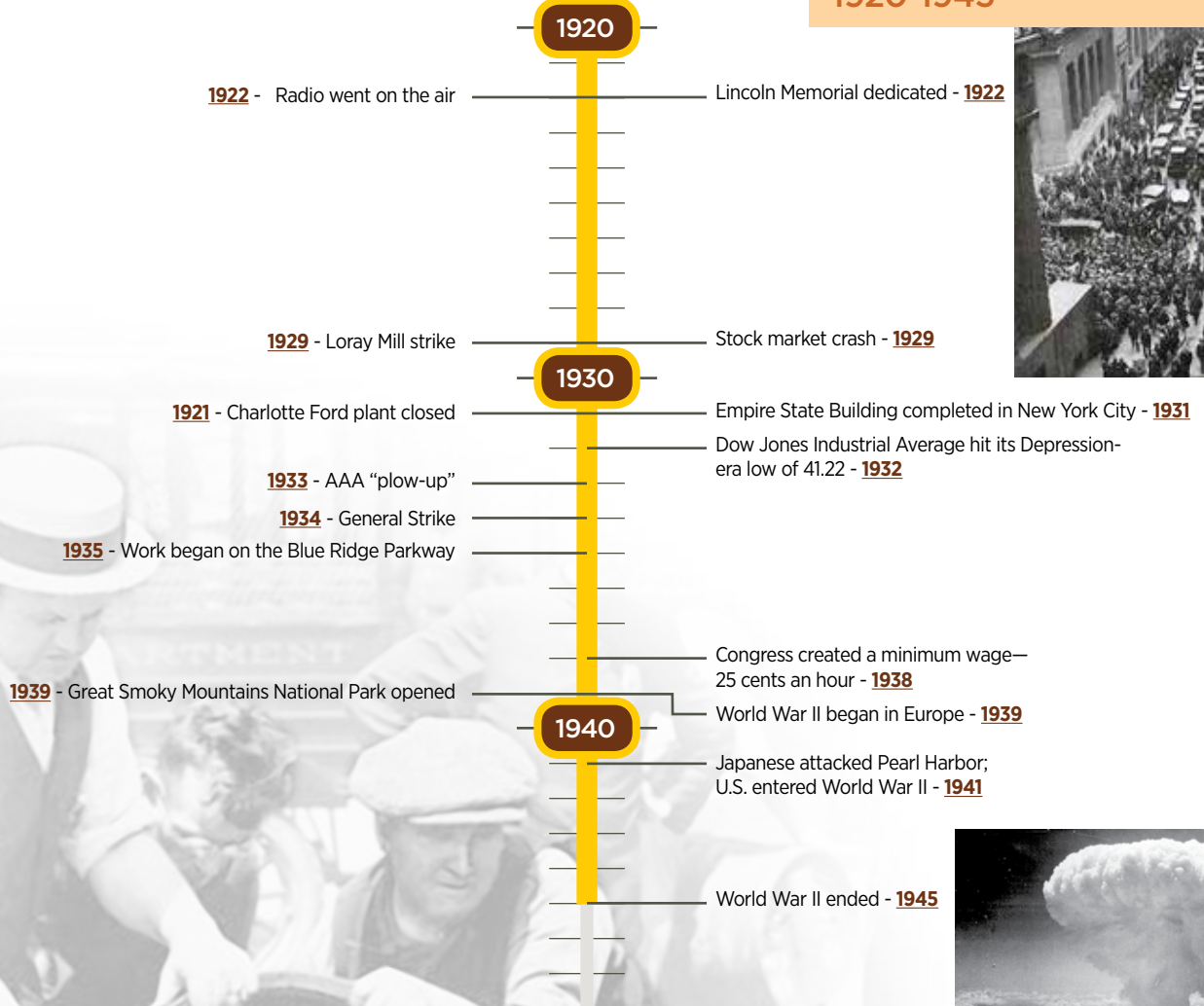
North Carolina became famous for its folk dramas, one-act plays that told the history of the people in the state. Paul Green of Harnett County developed them into “outdoor dramas,” the first one being *The Lost Colony*, performed at Manteo in 1937.

## Invention

Because bronchial problems often resulted from work in poorly ventilated factories, Greensboro druggist Lunsford Richardson developed a menthol-based salve to put directly on a congested chest. Within a decade, Vicks VapoRub was sold worldwide.

Figure 12.1

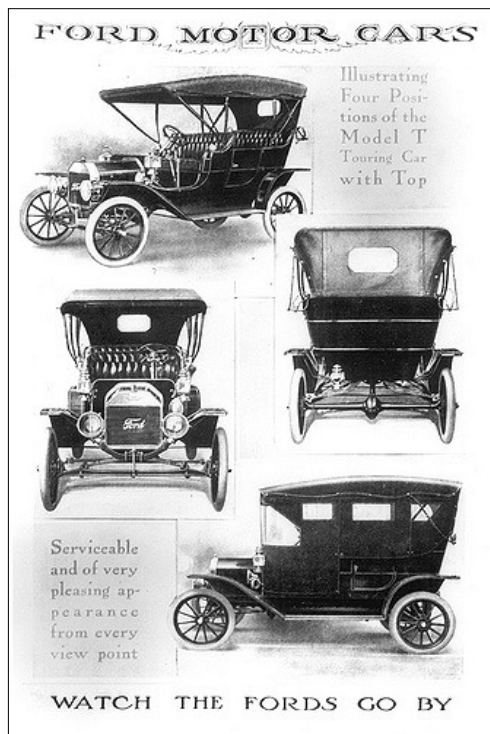
Timeline  
1920-1945



**Top:** The Great Depression began with the crash of the New York Stock Market in 1929. **Above:** World War II ended after atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan.

## Section 1

# North Carolina Roars through the Twenties



## As you read, look for

Setting a Purpose

- ▶ the impact of the automobile and improved roads on North Carolina;
- ▶ positive and negative effects of manufacturing efficiency;
- ▶ contrasts between urban prosperity and rural poverty;
- ▶ terms: **assembly line, moonshine, evolution, stretch-out.**

After World War I ended, North Carolinians took the ride of their lives. Never before had some North Carolinians been so rich. Never before had most state residents been so poor. For rich and poor alike, life had never been so fast in its pace or power. Never before had North Carolinians been closer to the average American in lifestyle, if not attitude. Folks called the 1920s the “Jazz Age” for the music it introduced. The word *roaring* was often attached to the times. Some industrialists even built a mountain hotel at Roaring Gap in Alleghany County.



**Above:** This advertisement from 1908 introduced the Ford Model T.

**Right:** This unusual Shell Oil station in eastern Winston-Salem dates to the 1920s. It no longer pumps gas but has a new life as the regional office and information center for Preservation North Carolina.

## The Automobile Becomes Affordable

North Carolinians had known about cars since about 1905, when wealthy industrialists and physicians brought them home to every town in the state. By 1912, townspeople used them on a daily basis. After World War I, they became important in the countryside. Charlottean Osmond Barringer drove one up the winding sides of the Blue Ridge into Blowing Rock, a feat most folks thought impossible. He was one of the first auto dealers in the state, and he opened the first Charlotte Motor Speedway, located at Pineville.

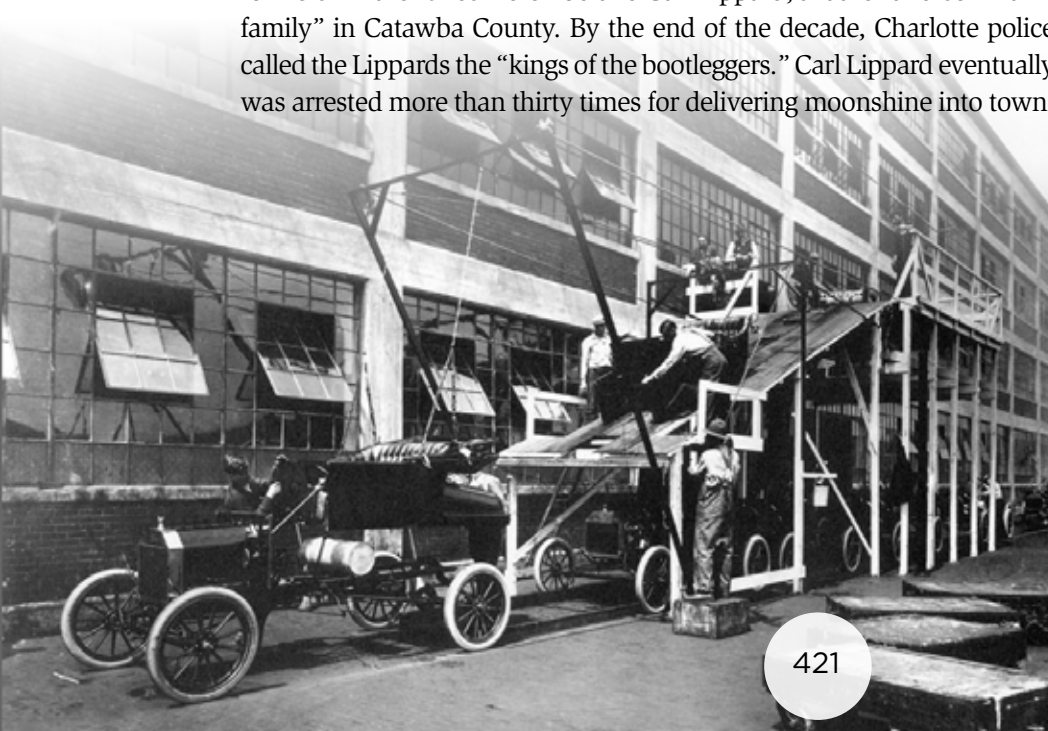
Henry Ford made it possible for many North Carolinians to imitate Barringer. The war put more money into people's pockets. Ford gave them the chance to spend money on an automobile. His company perfected a reliable assembly line process that lowered the cost of his basic car, which he called the Model T. An **assembly line** is an arrangement of workers, machines, and equipment in which the product passes from operation to operation until completed. Ford made cars affordable in the 1910s, even in the impoverished South. His company grew so fast that he set up a factory in Charlotte. The Charlotte Model T plant at its peak could turn out three hundred black Model Ts a day.

North Carolinians everywhere drove them. After the war, about one in ten of the state's families had a car. In the cities, however, the ratio was about one in four, and cars crowded the downtown streets. Trolleys began to give way to buses. In Winston-Salem, for example, a black-owned bus company took blacks to work in the R. J. Reynolds tobacco factories. In the countryside, farmers used Model Ts to deliver their produce to town markets.

The availability of automobiles helped all types of businesses grow, even illegal ones. Although the United States officially banned the consumption of alcohol with Prohibition, mountain distillers continued to make **moonshine**, so called because they made it at night to hide the smoke. Autos made delivery easier, and alcohol-related problems increased in the Piedmont's mill villages. The best known of the "rum runners" in the 1920s were Bud and Carl Lippard, a father-and-son "farm family" in Catawba County. By the end of the decade, Charlotte police called the Lippards the "kings of the bootleggers." Carl Lippard eventually was arrested more than thirty times for delivering moonshine into town.



Henry Ford supposedly said, "Any customer can have a car painted any color that he wants so long as it is black."



**Above:** Henry Ford once went camping in the North Carolina mountains with his friend Thomas A. Edison. **Left:** A photograph from 1913 shows workers experimenting with mounting the body on a Model T chassis. Ford tested various assembly methods to improve the procedures before permanently installing the equipment. The actual assembly line used an overhead crane to mount the body.

## Map 12.1

## Early North Carolina Roads

**Map Skill:** How would you define an “unimproved road”?



## DID YOU KNOW...

After 1926, the state printed official highway maps to guide motorists.

Cameron Morrison, whose huge farm south of Charlotte would eventually be turned into SouthPark Mall, became governor in 1920. He pushed for as many roads as possible to be better graded and packed with firmer dirt. He also led the legislature in creating a highway network designed to go from the coast all the way into the deep mountains. The idea was to connect as many county seats as possible. Highway 10, the first great artery across the state, was built by the end of the 1920s. North Carolina had the best highways of the day in the South.

**Right:** Today, SouthPark Mall in Charlotte occupies land where Cameron Morrison had a huge farm.



## A State on the Move

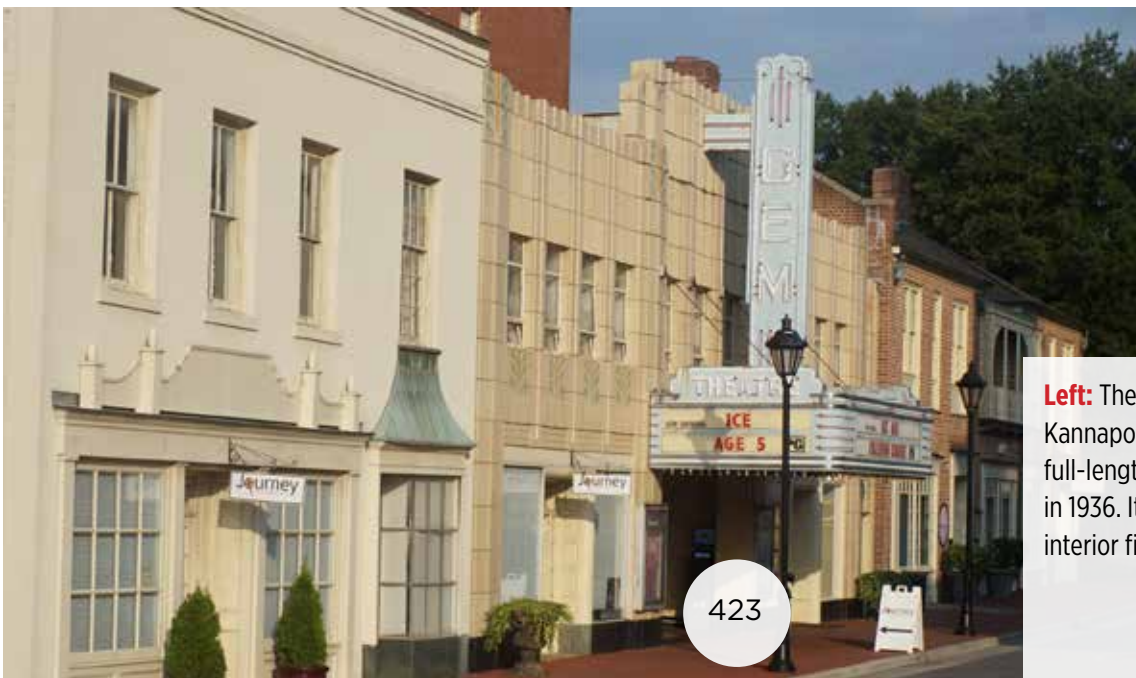
During the five years after the end of World War I, more than 100,000 people moved to towns and cities in North Carolina. That was more people than had ever lived in all the towns before 1900. Both large and small towns grew. Burlington, Henderson, and Lexington doubled in size. A third of the migrants into the cities went to either Charlotte or Winston-Salem. Because the Hanes and R. J. Reynolds companies were growing so fast, Winston-Salem continued to be the largest city in the state. In fact, during the 1920s, Winston-Salem alone produced one-fifth of all North Carolina's manufactured wealth. It made more consumer goods than Atlanta or Los Angeles. Winston-Salem showed off its wealth with two new public facilities that were better than similar ones across the state—Baptist Hospital and Reynolds High School.

Year	Rural	Urban	Percent Urban
1900	1,707,020	186,790	9.9
1910	1,887,813	318,474	14.4
1920	2,068,753	490,370	19.2
1930	2,360,429	809,847	25.5

With railroads and highways providing easy links to the world, North Carolina manufacturers became household names. Charles Cannon of Kannapolis reorganized his family's mills to cut costs for his towels and sheets. Cannon successfully marketed sheets and towels with a cannon on the label. The largest aluminum-making factory in the world was located at Badin, on the Yadkin River near Albemarle. The Cone family in Greensboro made more denim for blue jeans than any other American firm. The Hanes underwear plant in Winston-Salem was the world's largest. J. Spencer Love, from a Gaston cotton mill family, moved to Alamance County, partnered with the Holt family, and started making rayon, a synthetic fiber, in Burlington Mills. Rayon was being used to make the latest in fashion, ladies' hosiery.

**Figure 12.2**

North Carolina  
Population, 1900-1930



**Left:** The Gem Theatre in downtown Kannapolis has been showing full-length movies since it opened in 1936. It still has both its original interior fixtures and its art deco sign.



North Carolina also grew upward. Charlotte's Independence Trust building, Winston-Salem's R. J. Reynolds headquarters, High Point's Furniture Exposition building, and the Jefferson Standard Life Insurance building in downtown Greensboro were called "skyscrapers." That claim scraped at the truth a bit, but the Reynolds tower was



soon made the model for the tallest building of the day, the Empire State Building in New York City, completed in 1931.

North Carolina could also beam outward with the new technology of radio. The first commercial radio station was started in 1921 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In 1922, Charlotte's WBT Radio went on the

air. Folks up and down the east coast of the United States could hear live shows. By the 1930s, some of the most famous entertainers were Charlotte's Grady Cole and the Briar Hoppers, who played "hillbilly music," and Charlie Poole of Spray, whose North Carolina Ramblers sang about mill village life.

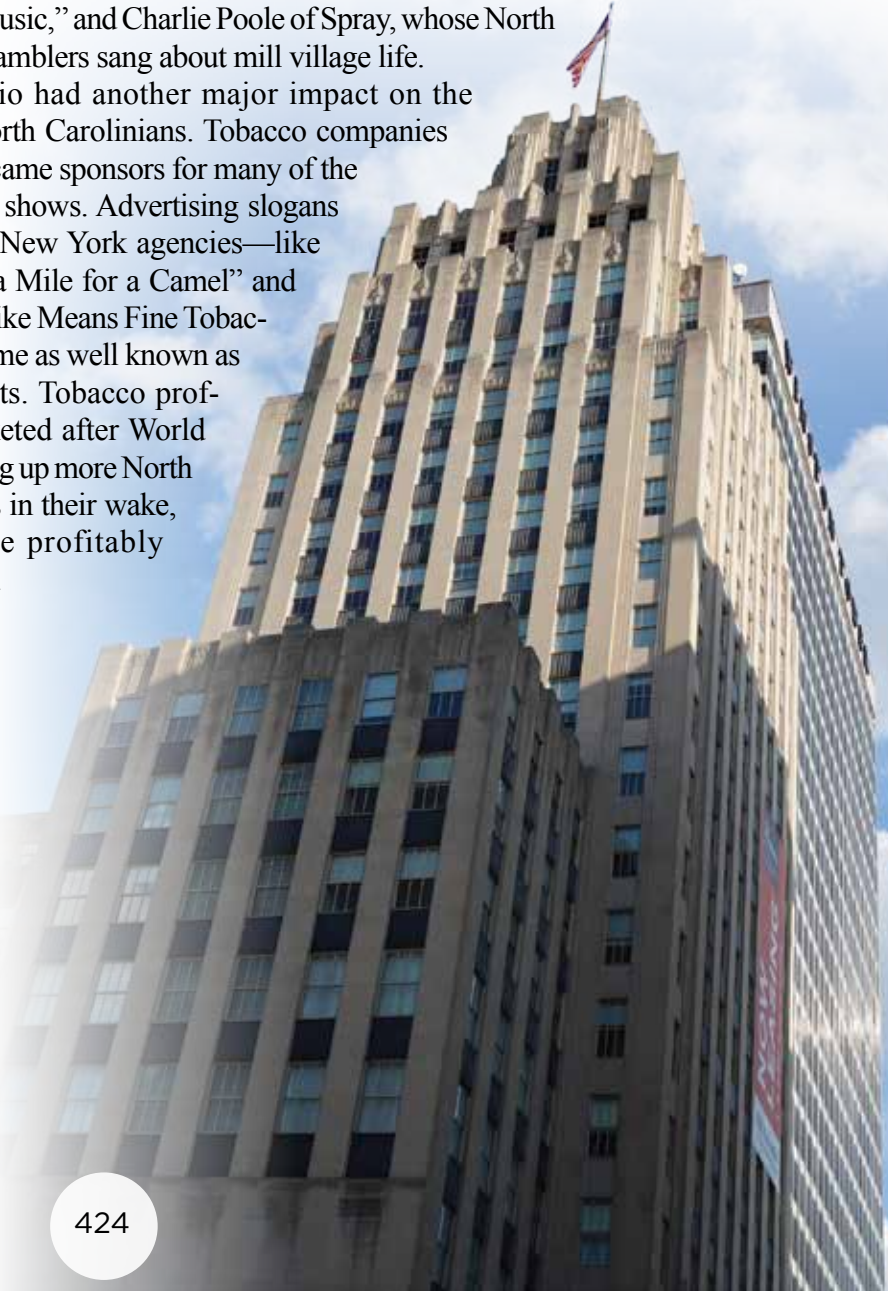
The radio had another major impact on the lives of North Carolinians. Tobacco companies quickly became sponsors for many of the new music shows. Advertising slogans written by New York agencies—like "I'd Walk a Mile for a Camel" and "Lucky Strike Means Fine Tobacco"—became as well known as the products. Tobacco profits skyrocketed after World War I, taking up more North Carolinians in their wake, some more profitably than others.

DID YOU  
KNOW...



WBT was the first commercial radio station in the Southeast.

**Top:** Charlie Poole, leader of the North Carolina Ramblers, played the banjo and sang about mill village life. **Right:** The headquarters for the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company was built in 1928. Its design helped inspire the construction of the Empire State Building in New York City in 1931.



## The Paradoxes of Progress

While folks flocking to the cities told new tales, it was the same old story out in the rural parts of the state. There the “roaring” sounded more like a barn mouse than a Buick. Where dairy farmers near Hickory were doing well, five out of every six farmers in Scotland County were still sharecroppers. Across the state, 137,000 country families did not own the land they labored on each summer. Hardly any owned a car. Quite a few had problems feeding their mules, let alone their children. For some North Carolinians during the 1920s, their best effort went wanting. A pest killed the strawberry plants near Wilmington. The boll weevil greatly damaged the cotton crop in the 1920s until farmers learned to poison it. Some farmers in the Sandhills tried very hard after the war to grow peaches, but folks in Georgia grew them better and took most of the money. Prices of farm products went steadily down throughout the decade.

Paradoxes were to be found everywhere. Most families supported the building of high schools in every county, but they did not like their children learning about **evolution** (the theory that man developed from earlier, simpler life forms) in biology class. In 1925, the state legislature came within one vote of banning the teaching of Charles Darwin’s theories in the public schools. Paved roads connected most of the towns, but rural people still drove in the mud to get to those roads. The Duke Power Company built ten dams on the Catawba River to generate the nation’s greatest supply of hydroelectricity, but most farmers twenty miles away did not receive any.

The textile mills may have been the most paradoxical places of all. Because of electricity, cotton mills were more efficient than ever. Yet, cheap power meant too many mills were built, and the competition drove down profits. Wages went down as well. Despite the low rent for their houses, workers had a tough time making ends meet. Plus, the new electrified mills ran much faster, and the owners made workers tend more machines than they could properly handle. Workers called this a **stretch-out** because they often literally had to stretch to reach everything. “It used to be,” said one, “that you could get five or ten minutes rest now and then, so’s you could bear the mill.” No longer. If a worker complained, poor mountain people were ready to take his or her place.



**Above:** In 1929, the Carolina Power and Light Company completed the Waterville Dam on the Pigeon River in Haywood County. **Left:** Dr. Harry Chase was president of the University of North Carolina during the evolution controversy of the 1920s.

## DID YOU KNOW...



Ella May Wiggins was a union organizer and balladeer. Her most famous ballad was called "A Mill Mother's Lament."

The stretch-out angered Gastonia workers in particular. More than five thousand families lived in mill villages there. In 1929, workers at the Loray Mill, the biggest in town, walked off the job and began to demonstrate for better pay and work conditions. The owners, an out-of-state company that used the mill to make fabric for automobile tires, threw strikers out of their mill houses. Workers then camped outside the factory. When local police raided the tent city, the sheriff was killed, and the labor organizers were arrested. At a trial, North Carolinians learned that the labor union leader had ties to the Communist Party. When this was discovered, he fled to Russia. Over time, the strikers lost heart, especially after Ella May Wiggins, one of the protestors, was murdered on the way to a worker rally at another mill.

The Loray Mill strike became one of the *notorious* (widely and unfavorably known) incidents in state history. The violence of the strike, plus the leader's ties to communism, created a distrust of labor unions in the state. The failure of the strike taught mill owners that if they waited for the workers to tire and run out of money, they could continue to control their factories and pay low wages. Despite North Carolina's industrial gains during the 1920s, it and South Carolina had fewer unionized workers than any other state in the nation.

**Below:** Strikers at the Loray Mill established their own armed patrol to guard the National Textile Workers Union headquarters. The earlier headquarters had been wrecked by a masked mob. The patrol also guarded the tent city, providing shelter for strike leaders and their families who had been evicted from company housing.

## It's Your Turn

1. How did Governor Cameron Morrison help make North Carolina a "Good Roads State"?
2. Name three North Carolina manufacturers and their products that became household names.
3. What negative incidents caused strikers at the Loray Mill to lose heart? How did this contribute to continued low wages in North Carolina's mills?



## Section 2

# The Great Depression Levels North Carolina

### As you read, look for

- ▶ causes of the Great Depression;
- ▶ how the Great Depression affected North Carolina;
- ▶ attempts by government and businesses to give relief to North Carolinians;
- ▶ terms: **secret ballot, depression, stock market, relief, Live at Home Program.**



O. Max Gardner, who was born in Shelby, the county seat of Cleveland County, became governor in early 1929 after a long career of public service to the state. Gardner, a former college football star, had been the youngest man ever to be elected lieutenant governor. Gardner wanted the state to be more progressive toward all of its citizens. For example, he championed the **secret ballot**, where a voter made a decision in a private voting booth. Before 1930, North Carolinians voted in public, where all could see their choices. That kind of public voting meant that a sharecropper who voted against the wishes of his landlord might lose his farm.

**Below:** Governor O. Max Gardner faced the worst problems of the depression in North Carolina from 1929 to 1933.



## DID YOU KNOW...



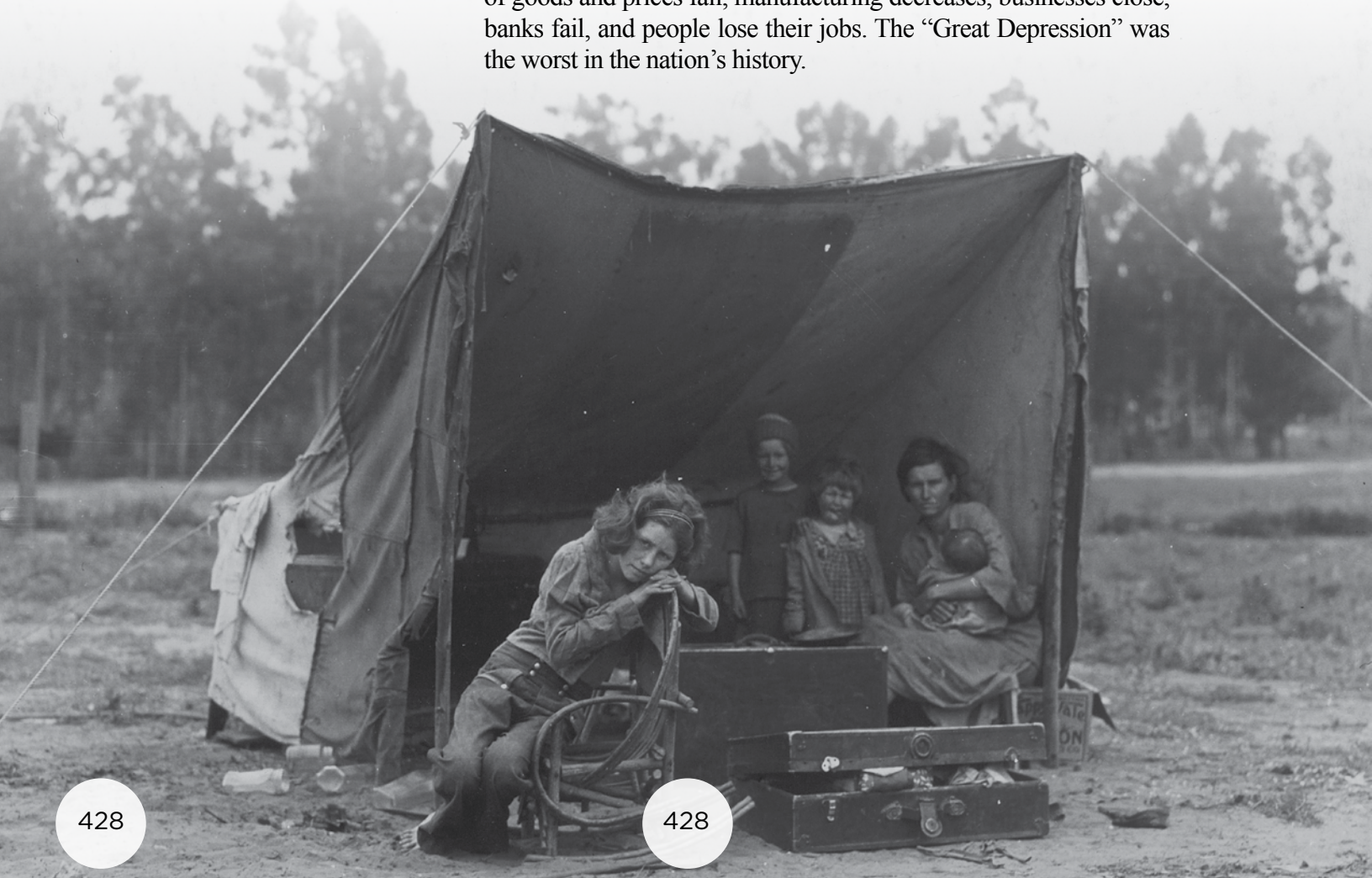
O. Max Gardner is the only North Carolinian ever to be captain of football teams at both NC State and UNC.

**Below:** During the Great Depression, homeless people in many parts of the country—like this California family—lived in shacks and makeshift tents.

Although Gardner believed in segregation, he thought black students deserved more respect. It was customary for the governor to have his picture made with high school award winners. When the two winners of a contest showed up at the capital, one for the white schools and the other for the black, Gardner had his picture made with both of them together. When violence was about to break out during a labor strike in High Point, the governor went to visit both the owners and the workers to settle the dispute. No governor had ever done such a thing.

Gardner also reorganized the state government. He tried to save tax money by reducing the number of government offices. He convinced the legislature to expand the powers of the new highway commission to supervise all the roads. Gardner believed that one state highway department was more efficient than one hundred county units. The University at Chapel Hill, State College in Raleigh, and Woman's College in Greensboro were placed under one president, creating the Consolidated University that has served the state to the present day. Gardner so effectively reordered the state that his allies would control the Democratic Party, and the state, through World War II. These leaders became known as the Shelby Dynasty because of their association with the town. The Dynasty included Gardner's brother-in-law, Clyde R. Hoey, also a Shelby resident, who became governor in 1937.

Coping with the Great Depression dominated Gardner's years as governor. A **depression** is a downturn in economic activity. Sales of goods and prices fall, manufacturing decreases, businesses close, banks fail, and people lose their jobs. The "Great Depression" was the worst in the nation's history.



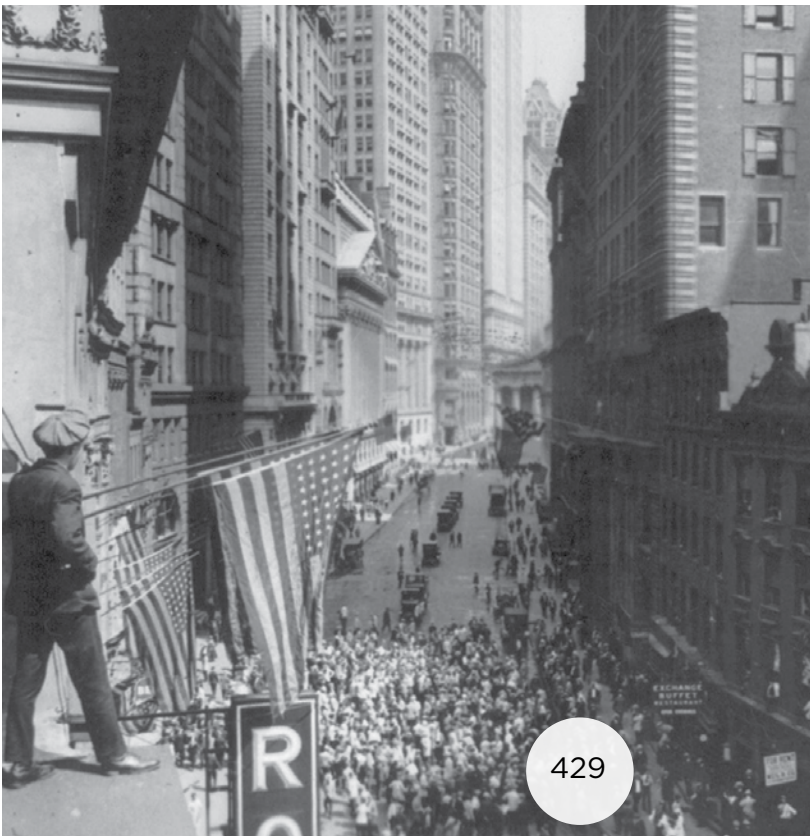
North Carolinians had believed that the new prosperity of the 1920s would last a long time, and they needed to be at the center of it. So they issued bonds and obtained credit to build new high schools and highways and make other public improvements. In 1929, the state, the counties, and the towns of North Carolina owed thirteen times the debt they owed in 1921. Paying off those debts almost devastated North Carolina.

The Great Depression of the early 1930s was worldwide in its scope. It was the worldwide problem that hurt North Carolinians the most. Much of the state's prosperity was based on the sale of tobacco overseas. When those markets dried up, the whole state suffered.

### The Causes of the Great Depression

Most Americans remember that the depression started with the famous stock market crash of 1929. A **stock market** is a place where the stock of corporations is bought and sold. The market did crash, and stocks lost value, ruining many companies and individuals. However, other problems also led to the Great Depression.

America had made a lot of money selling arms and other materials to the European countries during the war. The Europeans paid in gold, and this made a lot of money available for industry. The factories grew so fast that their ability to make goods outpaced the ability of enough people to consume them. By the late 1920s, the factories simply had too many products and too few customers. Cannon Mills, for example, was only operating two days a week even before the stock market crash. The same problem existed on the farms. Farmers had been growing as much as they could, which produced more than the market needed. The lack of consumers to buy up goods in a timely manner was the real cause of the Great Depression.



**Above:** Throughout the nation, unemployed men marched for government assistance. **Left:** This large crowd is gathered at the New York Stock Exchange.

## DID YOU KNOW...



In 1929, more than 40,000 vehicles were assembled at the Charlotte Ford plant. It closed in 1932.



**Above:** Many banks closed during the Great Depression. These people are making a “run” to withdraw their money before their bank closed. Most of the bank runs took place in northern cities. **Right:** Food preserved by the canning process could last a year on the shelf.

This situation directly impacted North Carolina. The Ford factory in Charlotte made Model Ts very efficiently, but eventually every North Carolinian who could afford a car had bought one. Because textile wages and farm prices were declining because of overproduction, people bought less. Businesses like the Ford plant in Charlotte had to close. When businesses closed down, unemployed people could not pay their bills, and more businesses had to close. This was the case with the banks. People made “runs” on the bank to get their money out before it closed. The demands of depositors, therefore, forced the bank to close. If a depositor waited too long, there might be no money.

More than three hundred North Carolina banks closed during the Great Depression. Governor Gardner himself almost lost his savings when a Shelby bank nearly closed. In Charlotte, an irate man came to the locked door of the First National Bank with a shotgun in his hands. In late 1931, Branch Banking and Trust (BB&T) in Wilson wisely handled the rush of customers. The cashiers, knowing a truck full of cash was on the way from Raleigh, counted out every dollar as slowly as they could, one customer at a time. Many of the customers went to the post office down the street to invest in the postal savings bank, where deposits were guaranteed by the government. The bank convinced the postmaster to deposit the cash back into BB&T. Thus, the bank recycled cash all day until the truck arrived.

### The Live at Home Program

The people who suffered first in North Carolina were the sharecroppers and mill village hands. They had little or nothing to fall back on. By 1931, matters got worse, and they had little or no work. Even though he had nowhere to sell his towels, Charles Cannon in Kannapolis kept his work force together by having each person work every other day. He bought thousands of brooms, and the workers swept the floors all day. Workers without jobs turned to the county governments for help. It was called **relief** in that day because the community was to relieve as much suffering as it could. Usually, families on relief had to work for the town or county. Catawba County put its folks on relief to work growing a garden to help feed the unemployed. In some counties, like Anson, as many as half the families were on relief at one time or another.



Governor Gardner worked very hard to keep as many banks open as possible. He continued to spend money on highways because building roads put men to work. He urged farm families to participate in a **Live at Home Program**, where they used seeds bought by local governments to grow more food and raise the necessities they usually bought at the store. Gardner convinced the legislature not to pass a sales tax. The sales tax would have been collected on necessities like food and fuel, which would hurt the poor. Instead, the state increased taxes on manufacturing profits. Some businesses, particularly the tobacco industry, continued to do well in the bad times. In fact, in 1931, the directors of the R. J. Reynolds Company learned they had made record profits.

## It's Your Turn

1. How did Governor O. Max Gardner reorganize the state government?
2. How did post-World War I prosperity lead to the Great Depression?
3. What was the Live at Home Program?



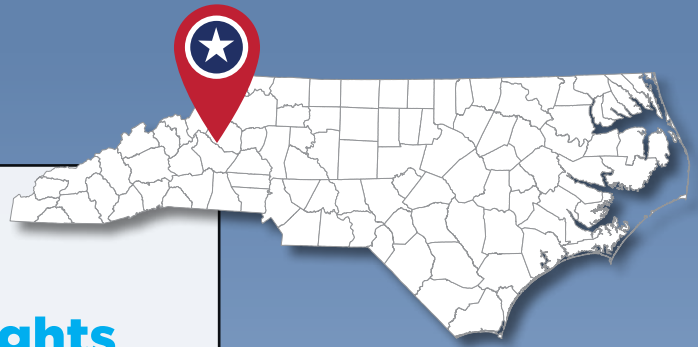
As part of his Live at Home Program, Governor Gardner sent home extension agents to teach farm women how to can food.



**Left:** The Live at Home Program encouraged families to grow more food and raise the necessities they usually purchased in stores. Canning food and processing their own tobacco helped farm families make ends meet.



# special Feature



## Carolina Places

### The Brown Mountain Lights

One mountain just east of the Blue Ridge is one of the most famous spots in North Carolina. It may be the eeriest place in the state because it emits mysterious lights that go and come like ghosts in the night. So famous are the Brown Mountain Lights that the state highway department has a turnoff for visitors on Highway 181 north of Morganton. The place is so well known that the popular 1990s television show *The X-Files* even had an episode suggesting the lights were extraterrestrial in origin.

The lights truly fascinate North Carolinians. From a distance they pop up like balloons in the night air, flutter around, then disappear like fireflies. They have been described as having all the basic colors, although shades of white and red are most often seen. Because it is so hard to get to the slopes of Brown Mountain, most people only see them from a distance.

People lucky enough to get close have said the lights are globs about the size of basketballs, so bright and colorful that they are opaque. The globs seem to rise up from the ground. They sometimes split apart, making smaller globs, and at least one visitor reported that the globs spin around each other. They last at best a minute, then fade away. More than one person has noted that, if you get close to the globs, they will move away from you; if you back away, they will follow you.

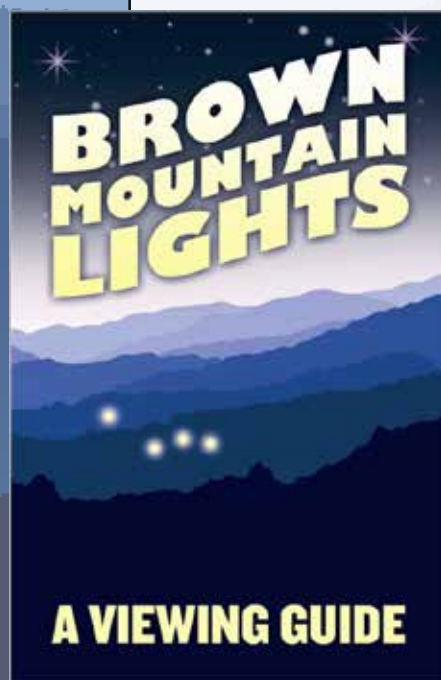


What are the Brown Mountain Lights? In the 1920s, one researcher claimed they were the reflections of car headlights on nearby roads. But highways were miles away, and the Cherokee had seen the same thing hundreds of years before automobiles even existed. Old timers had two different explanations. First, Cherokee ghosts were looking for the bodies of braves lost in battle. Second, a faithful slave was carrying a lantern looking for his missing master. Neither made any sense. Later, in the 1900s, some visitors called the globs “swamp gas,” a methane mixture that supposedly rose out of cracks in the rocks when the air cooled at night. Nobody, however, could find the cracks.

Recent investigations have advanced our understanding of the lights. One researcher actually touched one of the globs. He received an electrical shock, and some scientists now suspect that the lights are really “spheres of illumination” caused by highly ionized plasma. Ionization means that the electrons in the air are so energized that they spin fast enough to charge the nearby air. The air eventually glows like it is on fire, but the cooler surrounding air discharges the ions within a minute. That is why they spin and die out so soon.

The ionization theory could explain why the lights behave as they do. Ionization is related to magnetism, which would account

for the globs being attracted or repelled by people. One researcher has suggested that Brown Mountain is like a battery. It may have layers of quartz and magnetite that form positive and negative layers and “store” a charge. When conditions are right in the air above, a form of “light”-ning goes up toward the sky. The globs are simply the hot centers of charged air. Regardless, when the air is right, the Brown Mountain Lights put on one of North Carolina’s best shows.



## Section 3

DID YOU  
KNOW... 

Franklin Roosevelt first used the term “New Deal” when he was nominated for the presidency at the 1932 Democratic Party convention. In his acceptance speech, he said: “I pledge you, I pledge myself, to a new deal for the American people.”



**Above:** This 1936 picture, “Migrant Mother” by photographer Dorothea Lange, became one of the iconic images of the Great Depression.

**Right:** This man’s sign indicates that he wants a job, not charity.

# The New Deal Plows through North Carolina

## As you read, look for

- ▶ New Deal relief and recovery programs and their effect on North Carolina;
- ▶ the General Strike of 1934;
- ▶ successes and failures in New Deal reform measures;
- ▶ terms: **New Deal, Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), tobacco allotment, parity, tobacco price support, minimum wage, collective bargaining, Social Security Act.**

It was one of the most startling moments in North Carolina history. In the summer of 1933, farm agents in every county went to farms and plowed up crops in the fields. A third of the cotton, tobacco, and peanuts planted that spring were ruined. For an agrarian people who lived close to the land, to ruin a crop deliberately was unheard of. Yet, North Carolinians were ready for the “new deal” promised them by their nation’s leaders. They would be startled more than once.

When Franklin D. Roosevelt became president in 1933, the federal government immediately began to fight the effects of the Great Depression. First, Roosevelt closed all the banks temporarily and sent trusted bookkeepers to check the accounts. If a bank was *solvent* (sound), then it could reopen, and its account holders could know their money was safe. Second, Roosevelt used federal money to spread more relief for people in every state. All types of people were given temporary work to provide them with some money. Third, Roosevelt and Congress helped the national economy recover by regulating how much factories and farms could operate and how much they could make. All of these **New Deal** measures had one thing in common: putting money into the hands of citizens so they could spend more and revive the economy. The New Deal programs were divided into three different initiatives: relief, recovery, and reform.



**Figure 12.3****New Deal Programs and Legislation**

Program/Legislation	Date	Purpose
Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA)	1933	Reduced production of crops to raise farm prices. Declared unconstitutional in 1936.
National Recovery Administration (NRA)	1933	Reduced destructive competition and helped workers by setting minimum wages and maximum weekly hours. Declared unconstitutional in 1935.
Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)	1933	Built dams on the Tennessee River to control flooding and generate electricity.
Public Works Administration (PWA)	1933	Put people to work building roads, buildings, and other public works projects.
Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)	1933	Insured individual savings accounts so that people did not lose their money if banks failed or closed their doors.
Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA)	1933	Provided federal funds for state and community relief efforts.
Civil Works Administration (CWA)	1933	Provided temporary federal jobs for the unemployed.
Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)	1933	Provided jobs for young single men building forest trails and roads, planting trees to reforest the land and control flooding, and building parks.
Federal Housing Administration (FHA)	1934	Insured home loans for low-income families.
Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)	1934	Regulated stocks and gave stock information.
Social Security Administration (SSA)	1935	Created a system for retirement and unemployment insurance.
Works Progress Administration (WPA)	1935	Employed out-of-work Americans to repair roads, build or repair bridges, paint murals, write guidebooks, put on plays and musical performances, and create statues in parks.
National Labor Relations Act	1935	Guaranteed the right of employees to organize and to bargain collectively with their employers. Created the National Labor Relations Board to hear unfair labor practices.
National Youth Administration (NYA)	1935	Provided job training and part-time work for college students.
Fair Labor Standards Act	1938	Established a maximum work week and minimum wage, prohibited child labor in certain industries, and set a minimum age for child workers.

# special Feature

## Carolina Places Blue Ridge Parkway

North Carolina and Virginia share more than just a border and a tobacco heritage. They also share one of the world's most famous roads: the Blue Ridge Parkway. The parkway is very long. It stretches almost 469 from the mountain gap where it starts near Charlottesville, Virginia, to its end at the Cherokee Reservation, in the shadow of the Great Smoky Mountains. The North Carolina portion is about 252 miles long.

The idea for the parkway is almost as old as the automobile itself. In the early 1900s, Mountain residents dreamed of "a crest road" that would take them along the top of the Blue Ridge. Traditionally, roads did not go to the top of the mountains; rather, they snaked around the sides and went through gaps in the slopes. The gasoline engine changed all that. World War I, however, put an end to the idea. During the 1920s, North Carolina put its money into the "Good Roads" movement to build an east-west highway and connect all the counties with a paved network of roads.

The New Deal made the Blue Ridge Parkway possible. The federal government used its money to put people back to work. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, a polio victim who loved to drive his specially built car, supported the idea of a scenic road that would bring more people to the mountains. He also knew that the massive task of carving out a road would employ thousands of mountain residents. He also argued that a return to prosperity would help "the devastated landscape."





The work on the parkway began in 1935, but the going was slow. The first 10 miles of roadbed were graded near the Virginia-North Carolina border in Alleghany County. The workmen used up 35,000 drill bits in those 10 miles. Eventually, millions of trees were planted and millions of tons of rock were moved along the route. The work was slowed by World War II. But by 1967, crews had carved out 26 tunnels and paved all but 7 miles of the 469-mile route.

It took another 20 years to finish those 7 miles. The unfinished part was to cross Grandfather Mountain, but Grandfather's owner, Hugh Morton, argued that grading on his mountain would ruin some of the fragile natural environment. Morton wanted the Blue Ridge Parkway to come by his mountain but not damage it. After years of arguments about the best plan, engineers came up with one of the most ingenious structures ever built in the state. They built "a bridge over land" made out of concrete piers and slabs. So sensitive was the project that the builders were not allowed to build an access road along the way. They had to place the pieces of the bridge, one by one, by standing on the piece they had just installed. It was, as one engineer sighed, "the most complicated concrete bridge ever built" in the world. Since its completion in 1987, the Linn Cove Viaduct is one of the most visited stretches of the parkway.

## DID YOU KNOW...



At 480 feet, Fontana Dam is the highest dam east of the Rockies. It was completed in 1945.

## DID YOU KNOW...



With over nine million tourists annually, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park is the most visited national park in the United States.

**Right:** Over 3 million unemployed young men were taken out of cities and placed into over 2,600 work camps managed by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

## Relief with Temporary Jobs

Relief programs had both a short-term and a long-term impact on North Carolina. In the short term, people received money to pay off their debts and go on living. In the long term, the state was improved by structures that made everyone's life better. Some towns obtained federal money to lay water and sewer pipes into mill villages. Some of those lines were used for decades. Other communities built new post offices that lasted half a century.

The impoverished Mountains region was particularly helped. A federal construction agency (the Public Works Administration) hired thousands of Mountains residents to clear, grade, and pave the route of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The idea was to open the Mountains region for visitors to see its wonders and to trade with its residents. Another agency, the Tennessee Valley Authority, began to build hydroelectric dams on all the streams that fed into the Tennessee River. The idea was to give Mountains residents a source of power and stop the erosion of their bottomlands. The Fontana Dam in western North Carolina created one of the largest lakes in the state.

Across the state, thousands of young men enlisted in the **Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)**. They lived in CCC Camps, where they were fed and housed and given money to share with their families back home. They worked on stopping the effects of erosion caused by overfarming and overtimbering. Their biggest accomplishment was helping in the development of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, which was opened in 1939. Perhaps their worst action was planting millions of kudzu plants in an attempt to hold soil in place. This Japanese vine quickly grew in gullies and fields across the state and took over fields, forests, and abandoned buildings.



## Recovery Attempts

The major problem attacked by the New Deal was overproduction. The theory was this: If the amount of goods made in the fields and the factories could be reduced—while as many people as possible were still working—then the price of the goods would go up, but people would have the money to buy them.

In 1933, the federal government set up two programs to do this. The first one was the Agricultural Adjustment Administration for farms, known as the AAA. The second, the National Recovery Administration, commonly called the NRA, aimed to help factories.

### The AAA Down East

It was the AAA that ordered the “plow-up” in 1933. The idea was that, by reducing the acreage of crops, farmers would make more money by growing less. It worked. By 1934, most cotton and tobacco farmers saw their incomes go up by a third. A few even doubled their incomes. Because people were continuing to smoke, tobacco farmers on the Coastal Plain particularly made more money, some even tripling the cash in their pockets after going to the tobacco auction. North Carolina farmers became very enthusiastic about the New Deal. Even after the Supreme Court outlawed the AAA (because it argued that Congress had gone too far in managing the marketplace), North Carolinians welcomed a second version of it in 1938.

The farm program did have problems, especially down east. The AAA payments were made to the landowners. Sharecroppers, particularly African Americans, did not always see the rise in income. Some landowners simply kept the extra money. And the program had to have a majority of farmers approve it each year, which meant that black farmers could vote for the federal program but could not vote for the congressmen who set it up. White leaders thought this would damage the tight grip they had over blacks with segregation.



**Above:** There were thousands of country stores during the 1930s that served farmers, including this one in Person County.



## DID YOU KNOW...



Market prices for tobacco rose from 11.6 cents a pound in 1932 to 15.3 cents a pound in 1933.

### Tobacco Price Supports

Still, the farm program became a long-lasting part of life on the Coastal Plain. This was particularly the case for tobacco farmers. They devised a cooperative system where each grower got a share of the tobacco market. Each grower held a **tobacco allotment**, that is, a specific amount of land on which to grow the crop. If a grower violated the size of the field, he or she paid a penalty. In return, the cooperative worked with the federal government to ensure that every farmer received enough cash to live on. This was called **parity**, the amount of money needed to make a minimum profit. If a farmer did not get a parity price at the auction, he or she stored the crop in an approved warehouse. The farmer then got a parity loan from the cooperative. When the market price went up, the farmer sold the crop at a profit and paid back the loan. North Carolina quickly became known for the success of these **tobacco price supports**.

The tobacco price support system had several effects. First, it allowed thousands of farm families to stay on the land and not move to the towns where jobs were scarce. Because price supports lasted for years, these families could better their lot and still live like their ancestors had. Second, it meant that voters in the east continued to be closely tied to the Democratic Party, which devised the plan. Third, it provided merchants, bankers, and warehousemen in the towns on Tobacco Road with guaranteed business. Towns like Greenville and Kinston continued to set their school terms and schedule their store sales by the phase of the tobacco season. Tobacco Road had been a dirt path for many, but the New Deal turned it into a paved highway.

**Below:** These farmers are picking up their money after a tobacco auction in 1938. Federal controls on the production of tobacco made tobacco farming more profitable.



### The National Recovery Administration and Labor

The industrial component of the New Deal had its biggest impact on the industrial cities in the Piedmont. National Recovery Administration (NRA) officials in Washington, DC, required each segment of business to devise a “code of conduct,” a list of rules and procedures that would allow the maximum number of people to be employed for a specific number of hours. Wages and prices were to be in the code. Everyone came under some code. Even barbers had to meet and come up with hours and prices. The NRA essentially allowed manufacturers to regulate themselves by cutting production.

In North Carolina, the NRA quickly stabilized the textile industry, in the sense that most of the mills could reopen and hire many of their workers back. It also finally, effectively, eliminated child labor. The textile code limited the work week to forty hours, instead of the average of sixty, and provided a minimum wage that, although low, helped everyone. A **minimum wage** is the least amount an employer can pay a worker for a certain number of hours. The NRA also had a provision that allowed labor unions to serve as a genuine voice for workers.



In 1935, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the numerous codes established by the NRA were unconstitutional.

### The Art of Politics

In this political cartoon, the artist is making fun of the “alphabet soup” federal agencies during the New Deal. President Roosevelt is portrayed as a professor explaining that it is “evolution, not revolution.”



### The General Strike of 1934

The right to **collective bargaining**, where a union spoke for all the workers in negotiations with employers, encouraged northern labor unions to try once more to organize the textile workers. Thousands of textile workers walked out of their mills on Labor Day 1934.

The General Strike, as it was called, spread from Danville, Virginia, across the two Carolinas into Georgia. It was the most aggressive strike

by workers in the history of the state. Union members in places like Gastonia went from town to town to close other mills. Their “flying squadrons” (a name borrowed from the airplane units of World War I) arrived at factory gates and tried to block the entrances.

The reaction was mixed. At some mills, workers walked out and stayed out. At others, mill hands who said they would take any work fought with the strikers. The National Guard was called out in some towns.

Eventually, as in the past, the workers began to drift back into the mills when their money ran out. Once again, in hard times, the owners had more cash and could wait longer, especially since they

had few customers for their goods. Many workers who were not rehired blamed their plight on the union. As one worker noted, “Folks can talk all they want about the right to join a union, but right don’t count much when the money is against you.”



**Above:** More than 10,000 textile workers took part in this Labor Day parade in Gastonia after all of the Gaston County mills closed because of the General Strike of 1934.

### Reform Efforts of the New Deal

The New Deal meant for its relief and recovery efforts to be temporary. They were to end once the national economy was back on its feet and people were working and buying again. Some features, however, lasted for the lifetime of the people affected by them.

In addition to the tobacco price support system, the **Social Security Act** gave some industrial workers their first retirement pension and helped them when they were laid off from work. Less successful was the federal law passed that further strengthened the hand of labor unions to bargain collectively for workers. Although there was success in the North, many North Carolinians were too embittered by the failure of the General Strike. Along the same line, many farm owners in the east resented New Deal attempts to buy worn-out land and sell it at low cost to sharecroppers. As a result, only about one in fifteen poor families escaped sharecropping. White elites particularly did not like losing their monopoly over the labor of poor black men, especially those who could not vote on the tobacco program. With the election of Clyde Hoey, a more conservative member of the Shelby Dynasty than Governor Gardner, the state did very little.

Despite misgivings about the long-term effects of the New Deal, every North Carolinian knew that it changed the life of the state. By 1939, every town had some street or building constructed with federal dollars. Airports too were built with federal assistance. Because of the rural electric cooperatives set up by the New Deal, more farmers had lights. More people were smoking than ever, and Tobacco Road profited. People knew they had more money in their pockets, and, except for the poorest of families on the Coastal Plain and in the Mountains, they were spending more of it.

As the 1930s came to an end, North Carolinians were caught up in the next phase of the New Deal, President Roosevelt's program to make the United States "the arsenal of democracy." World War II had started in China in 1937 and in Poland in 1939. All Americans, North Carolinians among them, were becoming involved.

## DID YOU KNOW...

By 1940, the unemployment rate in North Carolina had dropped to 8.8 percent, the best in the nation.

### It's Your Turn

1. What was the Civilian Conservation Corps?
2. What was the purpose of the "plow up" in 1933? Was it successful?
3. What was the result of the General Strike of 1934 in North Carolina?

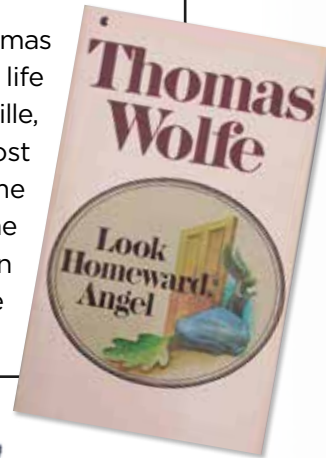
**Below:** President Franklin Roosevelt campaigned in Charlotte during his 1936 reelection bid. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt (seated behind the driver) joined him on the campaign trail.



# special Feature

## History by the Highway Thomas Wolfe

The most famous author in state history was Thomas Wolfe. His series of novels, based loosely upon his life growing up in his mother's boarding house in Asheville, became worldwide bestsellers in the 1930s. His most famous book, *Look Homeward, Angel*, took its name from an angel sold by his father in the family tombstone shop. The state has made his house a historic site in downtown Asheville, and the angel still graces a grave in Hendersonville.



P 17  
**THOMAS WOLFE**  
Author of "Look Homeward Angel" (1929), "Of Time and the River", and other works. Home stands 200 yards N., birthplace 500 yds. N.E.

Thomas Wolfe  
Memorial



**Background:** Thomas Wolfe's father was a stone carver who ran a gravestone business in Asheville. He ordered this statue from Italy, but as no customers purchased the angel, it remained at the Wolfe home for years. Thomas immortalized the statue in his novel, *Look Homeward, Angel*. Today Wolfe's angel can be viewed at a cemetery in Hendersonville.

P 65

**WOLFE'S ANGEL**  
Marble statue from the Asheville shop of W. O. Wolfe. Inspired title of son Thomas Wolfe's *Look Homeward Angel*. Stands 150 feet south.

DIVISION OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY 1987

## Section 4

# North Carolina Again Helps Win the World War


 Setting a Purpose

## As you read, look for

- ▶ reasons for our nation's entry into World War II;
- ▶ the contributions North Carolina made toward the war effort;
- ▶ the impact of World War II on North Carolina;
- ▶ term: **rationing**.

In 1940, a whole generation of North Carolinians had made industry, segregation, graded schools, and automobiles part of their normal lives. Hundreds of women, for example, took jobs in downtown stores and kept them for decades. Miss Julia Wheeler had been working for a bank in Hickory for fifty years. In her spare time, “she had taught Hickory to type,” said her boss. College graduates often held the same office job for all of their work lives. Life seemed more stable. For example, while a flood had devastated the Catawba River valley in 1916, a similar flood was kept in check by the chain of Duke Power dams. Where towns were flooded, city governments responded quickly. Tax money seemed more

wisely spent, once the Great Depression had lifted. That made state residents more in tune with international events. When their industrially based way of life was threatened, these North Carolinians were quick to do their patriotic duty: to sacrifice and fight for what they had.



**Above:** German Panzer I tanks near the city of Bydgoszcz during the invasion of Poland in September 1939. **Right:** World War II started in Europe when Germany, led by its dictator Adolf Hitler, invaded Poland in 1939.



## Going to War, Again

World War II in some ways continued the issues of the First World War. The main contenders were still the European countries—Great Britain and Germany. France and Russia were still involved. Russia, now known as the Soviet Union, switched sides during the war.

What was new was the bigger role played by Japan, which wanted more influence over the countries of Asia and their natural resources. What was also new was the determination of President Roosevelt and his allies to have the United States play a more decisive role in the outcome of the war. Roosevelt particularly used federal money to produce industrial goods needed by the British and their French allies in fighting the Germans.

Once the war started, Congress also took two actions that immediately impacted North Carolinians. First, it started another military draft, which put more of the state's young men in the armed services. Second, Congress extended the income tax to most Americans in order to pay for increased federal spending. In 1940, for the first time, most North Carolinians had to pay income taxes.

## North Carolina's Mobilization

World War II officially began in Europe in September 1939 when Germany invaded Poland. President Roosevelt declared that the United States would remain neutral, but he looked for ways to help the Allies. Meanwhile, relations between the United States and Japan worsened. After Japan invaded French Indochina (today's Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia) in 1941, President Roosevelt seized all Japanese property in the United States.

North Carolinians were as shocked as anyone in America when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941. Hundreds of North Carolinians were on the ships that were sunk. On December 8, the United States declared war on Japan and entered the conflict. A few days later, Germany and Italy declared war on the United States.

**Below:** All eight battleships of the U.S. Pacific Fleet were sunk or badly damaged in the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.





## DID YOU KNOW...

So many ships were sunk off Cape Hatteras that it was called “Torpedo Junction.”

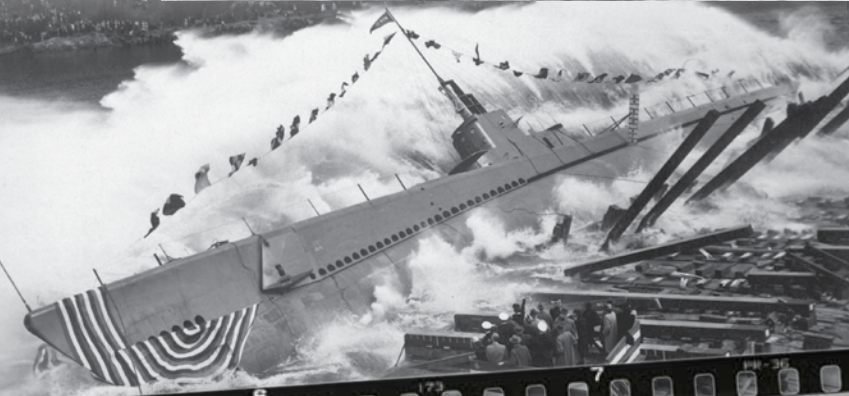
**Below, Clockwise:** A woman war worker checks thousand-pound bomb cases loaded with explosives. These B-24 Liberator bombers are nearing completion on the assembly line in Texas. The launching of the submarine, the USS *Robalo*. Three U.S. Navy Dauntless dive bombers on a fighting mission in the Pacific. **Film Strip:** Images from Fort Bragg.

The United States armed itself and fought a war in both Europe and Asia. North Carolinians quickly felt the brunt of the war. German submarines ambushed hundreds of ships off Cape Hatteras. Thousands of sailors joined the long tradition of being shipwrecked on the Outer Banks. The injured were treated at hospitals in Morehead City and New Bern.

More than 300,000 North Carolinians—whites and blacks, men and women—served in the armed services during World War II. Unlike the Civil War, where neighborhoods sent companies to war, individual North Carolinians were put into military units with people from around the country. Thus, North Carolinians ended up fighting in every place the war was fought, from the Burma Road that crossed the Asian mountains to the Normandy invasion of the coast of France.

Some Tar Heels, like Colonel Charles M. McCorkle, whose ancestors had fought at Kings Mountain, became heroes. McCorkle, an Army Air Force flyer, shot down five enemy planes in a week. The Newton native chased a German plane forty miles behind enemy lines because it had acquired valuable intelligence. McCorkle shot it down and made it back to his base, despite having the cooling system shot out of his engine.

Just over 7,000 North Carolinians died while serving, about one in forty. This was much lower than the one-in-three ratio of deaths from the Civil War. Thousands more were wounded. The deaths and wounds touched every place in the state. As one state official noted, “No North Carolina city, no town, no rural area escaped.”





Views of the USS *North Carolina*, the most highly decorated United States battleship in World War II. In 1962, she was dedicated at Wilmington as a memorial to North Carolinians of all services killed in World War II.



North Carolina became an important military training center during the war. The size of Fort Bragg swelled from 5,000 to 100,000. The artillery training ground was expanded for miles into the Sandhills and became the most comprehensive training ground in the country. A new type of fighter, the soldier who arrived by parachute, was trained at nearby Camp Mackall in Scotland County. The 82nd Airborne, which after the war moved to Fort Bragg, first jumped there. To train

Marines on the ground, the federal government opened Camp Lejeune in Onslow County in 1942; to prepare Marine airmen, it established Cherry Point near New Bern. Camp Butner, north of Durham, became a large infantry training ground.

North Carolinians also had a key role in producing the materials used to fight the war. In particular, the textile mills made most of the fabric used by the armed services, from sheets and blankets to parachutes and tire cords. A plant at Kure Beach, just south of Wilmington, made the lead ingredient needed for gasoline for army trucks. The mica mines near Spruce Pine supplied thin sheets of the mineral needed for electrical wires. A shipbuilding company in Wilmington made almost four hundred ships for the war effort. Trees across the state were cut down to be used in the war. North Carolina cigarettes by the millions were put into ration kits for soldiers at the battlefield.

**DID YOU KNOW...** 

Eventually, North Carolinians used local lumber to build more than 3,000 buildings at Fort Bragg.

**DID YOU KNOW...** 

North Carolina mica mines supplied one-half of the nation's mica.



**Above:** “We Can Do It!” is an American wartime propaganda poster produced in 1943 for Westinghouse Electric. Its inspirational message was meant to boost worker morale. **Right:** African American soldiers in Burma stopped work briefly to read President Harry Truman’s Proclamation of Victory in Europe, May 9, 1945.

### Women and the War

More than in previous conflicts, World War II took North Carolina women out of the home and put them in the middle of the war mobilization effort. Female students at Lenoir-Rhyne College skipped class to pick cotton when there were labor shortages during harvest. Betty Baker, a student at Woman’s College, quit school to become one of thousands of North Carolinians who found wartime work at the Glenn L. Martin Aircraft Factory in Baltimore, Maryland. After she “saved enough money,” she came back and graduated from college. She then joined the Women’s Army Corps and served for the duration of the war. More than seven thousand women from the state served in the military. Mary Webb Nicholson of Greensboro became one of twenty-seven female pilots in the British Royal Air Force. She was shot down and died in 1943. Even women who stayed home faced new circumstances. Peggy Egerton’s family in Goldsboro took in boarders who had moved to town to build the new Seymour Johnson Field. Some of the boarders were recent immigrants to the United States who did not speak English, let alone understand North Carolina accents. It was a time of adjustment for all concerned.

### Minorities and the War

Black North Carolinians served in the same manner as whites in the war, although the draft boards in some counties often shipped off soldiers in segregated buses. One black draftee in Hickory waved farewell and shouted out the bus window that he was “going off to fight for you white folks.” Black men who did not go into the military found jobs in Wilmington and in Norfolk, Virginia, at the shipyards. Black women moved from the rural neighborhoods to the towns by the thousands, for they could obtain work in the local factories. One, Theodosia Simpson, helped lead a strike for better conditions at the R. J. Reynolds cigarette factory in Winston-Salem.



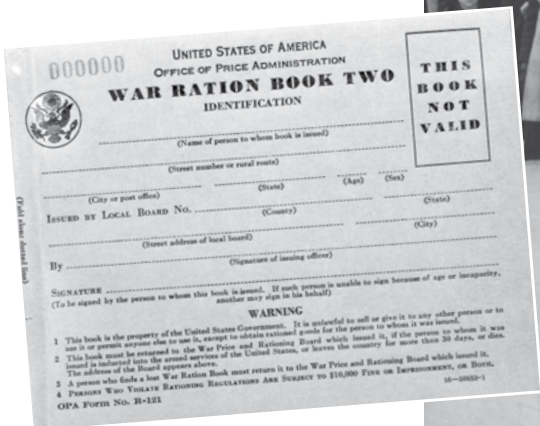
The constant coming and going of people throughout the war changed normal behavior in North Carolina. For example, members of the Lumbee community in Robeson County had stuck mostly to themselves. During the war, Lumbee often met and married people from elsewhere who had come to train or serve at Fort Bragg. Ressie Sampson, for example, married Wisconsin native Charles Larson in 1944.

### Sacrifices on the Home Front

Large numbers of North Carolinians left home during World War II. In addition to the members of the armed services, thousands went out of state to find jobs in cities like Norfolk and Baltimore. Others found work in the state's busy factories, which for the first time in ten years were operating at full capacity. The members of paratrooper Terry Sanford's family moved from Laurinburg to work in the shipyards at Wilmington.

To make use of every resource possible, the federal government imposed strict regulations about the purchase and consumption of goods. In each county, local citizens were put in charge of regulating the market. A parent could not even buy a bicycle for a child without permission because metal frames and rubber tires were made of scarce commodities. Most groceries were controlled by **rationing**; that is, individual families could buy only so much of any item each month. Families were issued ration books and could only use the coupons inside for buying certain amounts. Prices were controlled by the coupons, and if a family ran out of coupons before the end of the month, they had to make do with what they had. Since gasoline was needed for the war effort, it was strictly limited. People drove only when it was necessary. One North Carolinian coped by building an electric car to get to work. Its "two V-8 Ford starter motors" were powered by two car batteries. He steered with a lever and sat in a plywood box. Families again were encouraged to plant "victory gardens" to raise more of their own food.

**Below:** U.S. families were issued ration books to control the supply of items needed for the war effort. Lines to receive rationed sugar were often long.



## HAVE YOU VISITED...

the USS *North Carolina* Battleship Memorial State Historic Site? Located across the river from downtown Wilmington, the Battleship *North Carolina* welcomes visitors to envision daily life aboard ship and learn about the fierce combat her crew faced in the Pacific Ocean during World War II.

The strain of war got worse in western North Carolina in 1944. The crippling disease polio struck hundreds of children in many communities, in Hickory more than any other place. Hickory officials quickly converted an old Boy Scout camp into a hospital for both white and black patients. Doctors and nurses came from all over the nation to perform “the miracle of Hickory,” providing new drugs and physical therapy that saved dozens of lives. One of the children treated at Hickory was Harland Bowles, who would grow up to be state treasurer.

### The Celebration at the End

North Carolinians welcomed the end of the war in 1945. When first the Germans surrendered (in May), and then the Japanese (in August), state residents celebrated wherever they happened to be. Traffic clogged the downtowns of every city and town.

Betty Ross Austin of Peachland in Union County went with her new boyfriend, Dominick Bruno of New York City, to the victory celebration in the square in Charlotte. They had met briefly while Bruno had trained near Monroe. He wrote Betty Ross from all over Europe and got back in time for the celebration. When he swept Betty Ross off her feet and kissed her for the first time, in public, a photographer captured the moment for North Carolinians. In 2010, Betty and Dominick celebrated their sixty-fifth wedding anniversary.

When the war finally ended, many changes faced North Carolina and the nation. The war particularly changed the role of women and helped attack prejudice and discrimination.

**Below:** All over the country, citizens celebrated the end of World War II.



In 1943, Congress imposed a withholding system on taxpayers. Federal income tax was withheld from workers' pay and sent directly to the U.S. Treasury. The number of taxpayers jumped from 4 million in 1939 to 42.7 million in 1945.

In 1944, Congress passed the Servicemen's Readjustment Act. The GI Bill, as it was called, made low-cost loans to veterans who wanted to buy homes or start businesses.

The GI Bill also gave all returning soldiers an opportunity for a college education, which, in turn, changed job availability and heralded a new working middle class.

Racial segregation was no longer acceptable to returning African American soldiers.

Women who had experienced a new sense of freedom and independence were not ready to leave the workplace and return to the homemaker roles that had been their only option before the war. And new inventions were releasing women from many of the time-consuming "homemaking" responsibilities.

### It's Your Turn

1. How many North Carolinians served in the armed forces in World War II? How many died in the war?
2. Where in North Carolina were Americans trained to fight in World War II?
3. What effect did World War II have on North Carolina's women?
4. How did rationing work? Name two items that were rationed.

**Figure 12.4**

**Social Effects of World War II**

**Below:** American military personnel who were still in France after the war ended in Europe gathered in Paris to celebrate the Japanese surrender in September 1945. **Inset:** U.S. Navy photojournalist Victor Jorgensen captured this view of a sailor kissing a nurse in Times Square, New York City, on V-J (Victory over Japan) Day. Jorgensen called the picture "Kissing the War Goodbye."



# special Feature



## Carolina People Billy Graham

One thing is very clear about Billy Graham. During the second half of the twentieth century, he traveled to more places in the world and met more people than any other North Carolinian in history. With each person, Graham witnessed the Christian gospel. He did it before leaders of nations, to both the wealthy and the poor, and for people of every ethnic background. More than a million people made a religious decision about their lives because of him. He is the most famous preacher the world has known in the last thousand years.

At the same time, Reverend Graham is the typical North Carolinian. The Mecklenburg County native carried with him the traditional values of trust, kindness, and sincerity wherever he went. Like many North Carolinians, he kept coming home, choosing to live in the North Carolina mountains almost all his adult life. He has lived with his family in Montreat, at the foot of the Black Mountains, for more than fifty years.

While Billy was growing up in the 1920s, the Graham family ran a dairy farm just south of Charlotte. In 1934, at the age of sixteen, Billy and a friend went to a tent revival, a popular form of public preaching. These revivals were intended to make everyone decide to lead a better Christian life. The climax of the service was the “altar call,” when members of the audience were asked to come forward to commit to a more religious outlook. That night, Billy came forward. He dedicated himself to doing the same thing: preaching and changing lives. Soon, he was seen preaching on the street corners of downtown Charlotte.





**Above:** Billy Graham with his son Franklin at a Cleveland, Ohio, stadium in 1994. Billy Graham with Presidents Ronald Reagan and Barack Obama. **Below:** The Billy Graham Library located in Charlotte.

After graduating from Wheaton College in Illinois, Billy married Ruth and began preaching around the country. His 1949 message electrified the city of Los Angeles. Originally scheduled for three weeks, Graham preached every day for eight straight weeks. The publicity from the huge revival rocketed Graham into national celebrity. Much of the fame stemmed from Graham's warm personality and his earnest attempts to have people change their minds and their habits. As even one skeptical American observed, Graham was "as good a man, basically," as he had ever "been in the presence of."

During the 1950s and 1960s, Graham drew thousands of people a night to religious services held in football stadiums, indoor arenas, and concert halls. Just as had been the custom in North Carolina, the service began with prayer and singing, then a sermon. Unlike other revivalists, Graham spoke softly and he courteously asked people to make a commitment.

Because of his national reputation as a religious leader, Graham was often asked to meet with presidents and other political leaders. He became particularly close to President Richard Nixon, who had graduated from Duke University Law School. He was embarrassed when Nixon was forced to resign in the 1970s because of the Watergate scandal. Graham was also a religious adviser to George W. Bush when the Texan was having problems in his younger years. Graham's counsel helped the son of a president change his habits and move forward to become president himself.

When he returned to Charlotte to a homecoming service in 1996, he told North Carolinians then, just like he always told everyone at the end of thousands of sermons, "You come now, it is important that you come." Toward the latter years of his ministry, Graham worked hard to remind the world that everyone had to be part of the process of peace. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Graham was part of the service held at the National Cathedral in Washington, DC.





# Chapter Review

## Chapter Summary

### Section 1: North Carolina Roars through the Twenties

- After World War I, life in the United States became fast paced. Henry Ford made cars more affordable, and the availability of automobiles helped all types of North Carolina businesses grow.
- In the five years after the end of World War I, many people moved to North Carolina towns and cities.
- The Loray Mill strike ultimately created a distrust of labor unions in North Carolina.

### Section 2: The Great Depression Levels North Carolina

- Governor O. Max Gardner so effectively reorganized state government that his allies controlled the Democratic Party and the state through World War II.
- The Great Depression began in 1929 with the crash of the stock market.
- To help North Carolinians hit hardest by the Great Depression, Governor Gardner urged families to become more self-sufficient through a Live at Home Program.

### Section 3: The New Deal Plows through North Carolina

- When Franklin D. Roosevelt became president in 1933, the federal government began to fight the effects of the Great Depression through New Deal programs that provided relief, recovery, and reform.
- The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) put thousands of young North Carolina men to work on projects in places like the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
- The tobacco price support program was a boost to thousands of farm families during the depression.

### Section 4: North Carolina Again Helps Win the World War

- During World War II, North Carolina became an important military training center.
- North Carolinians produced many key materials used to fight the war such as sheets, blankets, and parachutes.
- Due to the rationing of wartime goods, North Carolinians often went without some necessities or restricted their consumption of products such as gasoline.

## Activities for Learning

### Reviewing People, Places, and Things



Match the following with the correct description that follows.

- |                             |                              |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>assembly line</b>        | <b>collective bargaining</b> |
| <b>Live at Home Program</b> | <b>rationing</b>             |
| <b>stretch-out</b>          | <b>Cameron Morrison</b>      |
| <b>O. Max Gardner</b>       | <b>Fontana Dam</b>           |
| <b>parity</b>               | <b>Camp Butner</b>           |
1. governor associated with improving roads in North Carolina
  2. an arrangement of workers, machines, and equipment in which the product passes from operation to operation until complete
  3. situation where textile mill workers were expected to tend to more machines
  4. governor of North Carolina during the Great Depression
  5. one of many depression-era programs that sought to make North Carolinians more self-sufficient
  6. the control of goods during war by the use of coupons to buy groceries and necessities
  7. one of many army training facilities in North Carolina

8. the amount of money needed to make a minimum profit
9. where a union speaks on behalf of workers in negotiations with employers
10. a structure built during the Great Depression that created one of the largest lakes in the state

### Understanding the Facts



1. What did state leaders decide to build in order to make automobiles a better part of industrial “progress”?
2. Why were the textile mills among the most paradoxical places in North Carolina?
3. What was one result of the Loray Mill strike?
4. What problems led to the stock market crash of 1929 and the Great Depression?
5. Which institutions closed in large numbers during the Great Depression, causing many people to lose all their money? Which industry continued to make huge profits during that time?
6. What did all New Deal measures have in common?
7. What was one of the biggest ideas that the New Deal implemented in North Carolina?
8. Which New Deal idea helped support workers when they were laid off from work?
9. What two actions did Congress undertake at the beginning of World War II that immediately impacted North Carolinians?
10. During World War II, how was the sale of most goods and products controlled?

### Developing Critical Thinking



1. How do you think the Loray Mill strike affected the ability of North Carolina mill workers to receive fair pay and safe working conditions?
2. What factors do you believe caused some people to gain wealth and power quickly in North Carolina in the 1920s, while others sank deeper and deeper into poverty and insignificance?

3. Describe the benefits and drawbacks of Congress extending the income tax to most Americans, including North Carolinians, at the start of World War II.

### Applying Your Skills

1. If the Charlotte Ford plant turned out 300 Model Ts a day during the year 1914, and one-fourth of the households in Charlotte bought a Model T from the plant, and Charlotte had approximately 8,500 households, how many Model Ts were sold outside of the city of Charlotte that year?
2. Illustrate the cycle of depression in North Carolina using the facts given in the chapter.
3. Draw a graph comparing the numbers of North Carolina soldiers who lost their lives during the Civil War, World War I, and World War II.

### Writing across the Curriculum



1. Write a radio commercial for one of the big North Carolina tobacco companies in 1922 to be aired on WBT Radio in Charlotte.
2. Write a letter from a North Carolina woman during World War II to her mother living in Massachusetts, describing the sacrifices she has made because of the war.

### Exploring Diversity



The New Deal’s AAA farm program did not help some black farmers because many of them were sharecroppers. Do you believe that there are social reform programs today that are helpful to some ethnic groups but are not helpful to others? Give an example.