

Chapter 9

Conflict and Change, 1932-1960

Chapter Preview

PEOPLE

Martin S. Conner, William H. Mason, L. O. Crosby Sr., Hugh L. White, Thomas L. Bailey, Nellah Massey Bailey, Harry S. Truman, Fielding L. Wright, Emmett Till, T. R. M. Howard, Aaron Henry, James P. Coleman

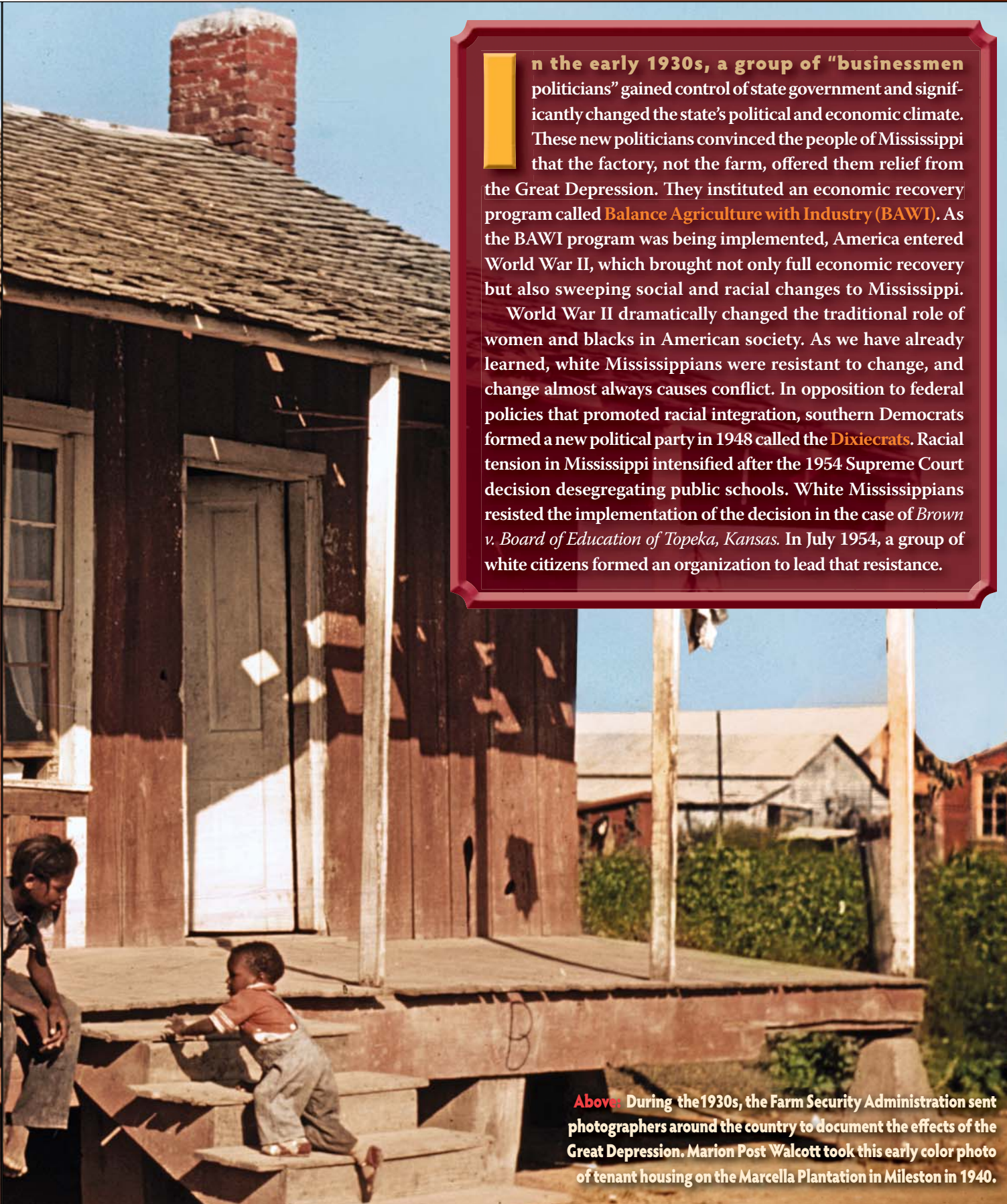
PLACES

Wiggins, Pascagoula, Moss Point, Laurel, Picayune, Columbia, Clarksdale, Meridian, Grenada, Indianola, Ackerman

TERMS

Balance Agriculture with Industry (BAWI), Dixiecrats, Panic of 1929, Great Depression, lint, ginning, boll weevil, condensary, fiberboard, creosote, turpentine, sales tax, farm-to-market roads, urbanization, civil rights movement, Citizens' Council, double jeopardy clause, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Resolution of Interposition, State Sovereignty Commission





In the early 1930s, a group of “businessmen politicians” gained control of state government and significantly changed the state’s political and economic climate. These new politicians convinced the people of Mississippi that the factory, not the farm, offered them relief from the Great Depression. They instituted an economic recovery program called **Balance Agriculture with Industry (BAWI)**. As the BAWI program was being implemented, America entered World War II, which brought not only full economic recovery but also sweeping social and racial changes to Mississippi.

World War II dramatically changed the traditional role of women and blacks in American society. As we have already learned, white Mississippians were resistant to change, and change almost always causes conflict. In opposition to federal policies that promoted racial integration, southern Democrats formed a new political party in 1948 called the **Dixiecrats**. Racial tension in Mississippi intensified after the 1954 Supreme Court decision desegregating public schools. White Mississippians resisted the implementation of the decision in the case of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*. In July 1954, a group of white citizens formed an organization to lead that resistance.

Above: During the 1930s, the Farm Security Administration sent photographers around the country to document the effects of the Great Depression. Marion Post Walcott took this early color photo of tenant housing on the Marcella Plantation in Mileston in 1940.

Signs of the Times

EXPANSION

In 1959, Alaska and Hawaii became our 49th and 50th states. In 1940, the population of Mississippi was 2,183,798. The U.S. population was 132,164,569. By 1950, the population of Mississippi had declined to 2,178,914. The U.S. population had grown to 151,325,798.

FOOD

Ray Kroc opened his first McDonald's restaurant in Des Plaines, Illinois, in 1955, ushering in the age of fast food. That original hamburger cost fifteen cents.

LITERATURE

Among the best-selling books of the 1930s were Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind* and Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings's *The Yearling*. William Faulkner won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1950.

ENTERTAINMENT

American Bandstand began broadcasting on TV nationally in 1957. Teenagers tuned in to hear the hits and see the latest dances.

EXPLORATION

The era of space exploration began in 1957 when the USSR launched Sputnik 1, the first satellite to go into orbit around Earth. In 1958, the U.S. launched Explorer 1.

MUSIC

The 1930s and 1940s were an era of "big band music," with bandleaders like Duke Ellington and Benny Goodman. The 1950s saw the arrival of rock and roll. Elvis Presley, who was born in Tupelo, had his first #1 hit in 1956 with "Heartbreak Hotel."

SCIENCE & INVENTIONS

The first digital computer in the United States, named ENIAC, was completed in 1946. It weighed 30 tons, and required 200 kilowatts of power. In 1955, Dr. Jonas Salk's polio vaccine was licensed in the U.S. Incidence of the disease fell from 35,000 cases in 1953 to only 161 in 1961.

TRANSPORTATION

The Federal Highway Act of 1956 initiated the interstate highway system.

Figure 22 Timeline: 1932-1960



<p>1932 Martin S. Conner began term as a "businessman" governor</p> <p>1934 Theodore G. Bilbo elected to U.S. Senate for first of three terms</p> <p>1936 Hugh L. White began first term as governor</p>	<p>1940 Paul B. Johnson Sr. began term as governor</p>	<p>1943 Dennis Murphree began term as governor</p> <p>1944 Thomas L. Bailey began term as governor</p> <p>1946 Fielding L. Wright began term as governor</p> <p>1952 Hugh L. White began second term as governor</p>	<p>1954 Citizens' Council founded</p> <p>1955 Emmett Till murdered</p> <p>1956 Legislature passed Resolution of Interposition State Sovereignty Commission established</p>
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<p>1932 Franklin D. Roosevelt elected president for first of four terms</p> <p>1942 Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) founded</p> <p>1945 Franklin D. Roosevelt died; Harry S. Truman became president</p>	<p>1939 World War II began in Europe</p> <p>1941 U.S. entered World War II after Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor</p> <p>1944 World War II ended</p>	<p>1948 President Truman ordered desegregation of armed forces Dixiecrat Party founded</p>	<p>1950 Korean War began</p> <p>1953 Korean War ended with armistice</p>	<p>1954 <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> decision</p> <p>1955 Actions by Rosa Parks led to Montgomery Bus Boycott</p> <p>1957 Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SNCC) founded</p>
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EDUCATION

Veterans returning from World War II attended college on the "GI Bill." In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled, in *Brown v. Board of Education*, that separate schools for whites and blacks are unconstitutional.

ARCHITECTURE

Rockefeller Center in New York City, one of the great building projects of the Depression, employed over 40,000 people. The Center opened in 1933, but the last of its 14 buildings wasn't completed until the 1940s.

Section 1

The Great Depression

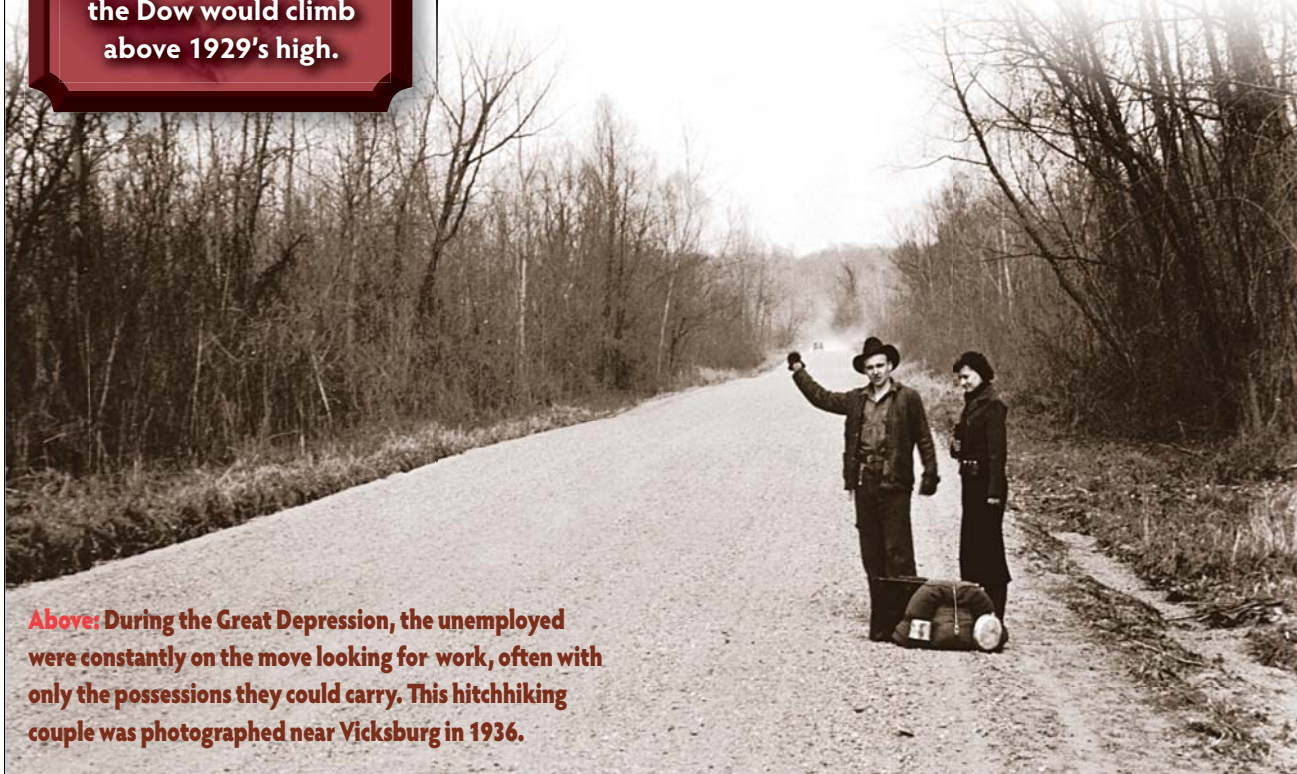
Something Extra!

After the October 1929 crash, the stock market continued to decline until July 1932, when the Dow Jones Average dropped to 41 from 1929's high of 381, a decline of nearly 90 percent! The market started to rise in 1932, but it would take another 22 years before the Dow would climb above 1929's high.

As you read, look for

- how the boll weevil, wet weather, and the 1927 flood devastated Mississippi's cotton economy;
- the classifications of farmers in the state;
- attempts at diversification in agriculture and industry;
- accomplishments of Governor Martin S. Conner;
- terms: **Panic of 1929, Great Depression, lint, ginning, boll weevil, condensary, fiberboard, creosote, turpentine, sales tax.**

In October 1929, the New York Stock Exchange experienced a drastic and rapid fall in stock prices. This collapse is known as the **Panic of 1929**. Within weeks after this panic, many large corporations began laying off workers in anticipation of a decline in sales. By the early 1930s,



Above: During the Great Depression, the unemployed were constantly on the move looking for work, often with only the possessions they could carry. This hitchhiking couple was photographed near Vicksburg in 1936.

the country was in the worst depression in the nation's history, which has come to be known as the **Great Depression**. In the 1931 governor's race, Mississippi elected Martin S. Conner, who called himself a "businessman politician." Governor Conner installed a rigid economic recovery program that abolished several state agencies and consolidated others. Some state workers were laid off, and the salaries of others were lowered. Governor Conner also raised taxes.

Perhaps nowhere in the country was the depression more severe than it was in Mississippi. It was not as sudden in Mississippi as it was in other parts of the country because the state's economy had been in a downward cycle throughout the 1920s. This decline was especially evident among white small farmers and blacks.

Boom, Bust, and Boll Weevils

At the end of World War I, Mississippi farmers were prosperous and flourishing. The wartime demand for raw materials had driven up the price of cotton. In 1919, there was some expectation that cotton might reach \$1.00 a pound. But the end of the war brought a sharp decline in both the demand for and the price of cotton. From a high of 38.5 cents a pound in April of 1920, cotton prices fell steadily to 9.8 cents a pound in April of 1921. By 1931, the price had fallen to 6.16 cents. The wartime boom was over and the decline in cotton prices forced many farmers to sell their land to pay off their debts.

Mississippi farmers faced more problems than just low prices in the 1920s. The cotton crop was also short; that is, the total amount of cotton produced was less than it had been. In 1920, only 895,000 bales were harvested. This was the first time in many years that production had not exceeded 1 million bales. The average yield of **lint** (the white fiber in the cotton boll) also dropped—to 148 pounds per acre in 1920. By 1923, the yield per acre averaged only 97 pounds. The total yield in 1923 dropped to only 604,000 bales.

Under normal circumstances, a man and his wife with a team of mules and additional labor at the chopping and harvesting season could cultivate about 10 acres of cotton. In 1923, which was one of the good years during the 1920s, a 10-acre crop produced 970 pounds of lint. The seasonal average price for cotton in that year was 31.12 cents a pound. From a 10-acre crop, the farm family made \$302 in 1923. The cost of seed, fertilizer, **ginning** (separating fiber from seed in a cotton gin), and the extra help was paid from the \$302. Farmers simply could not maintain a decent standard of living on that income. The situation became even worse in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

The Boll Weevil

There were two basic reasons for the decline of total cotton production in Mississippi during the 1920s. The most serious problem was caused by the **boll weevil**, a small pest that migrated from Mexico, through Texas, Louisiana, and finally into Mississippi in 1907. The boll weevil lays its eggs in the young cotton boll, which is consumed when the weevils hatch. By the 1920s, the boll weevil had spread throughout Mississippi and destroyed thousands of acres of cotton.



Something Extra!

The boll weevil has become a popular figure in southern culture. Many blues songs have been written about the insect (including Charley Patton's "Mississippi Boll Weevil"). In Enterprise, Alabama, you can find a statue that honors the boll weevil; in Georgia, you can eat at a café named after the pest.

Below: A tent camp for refugees of the 1927 flood was established at Vicksburg. More than 41,000 homes were flooded. Bottom: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 covered 27,000 square miles and affected ten states, causing \$400 million in damages.

Wet Weather

You will remember that, at the beginning of this book, U. B. Phillips was quoted as saying, "Let us begin by discussing the weather." Well, in discussing the various problems Mississippi cotton farmers experienced in the 1920s, we must talk about the weather. In 1919, the rainfall in Mississippi exceeded the annual *mean* (average) by sixteen inches. In 1920, the rainfall was ten inches above normal. During those wet years, the boll weevil multiplied rapidly. The measures that had been developed to control the weevil worked well in dry seasons but not in wet years. For four years in succession, Mississippi farmers produced less than a million bales of cotton.

The 1927 Flood

The wettest year on record, though not from rainfall, was 1927, the year of the Great Flood on the Mississippi River. As we saw in Chapter 1, that disaster cost the state an entire crop. In the 1920s, Mississippi farmers were battling great odds over which they had very little control.





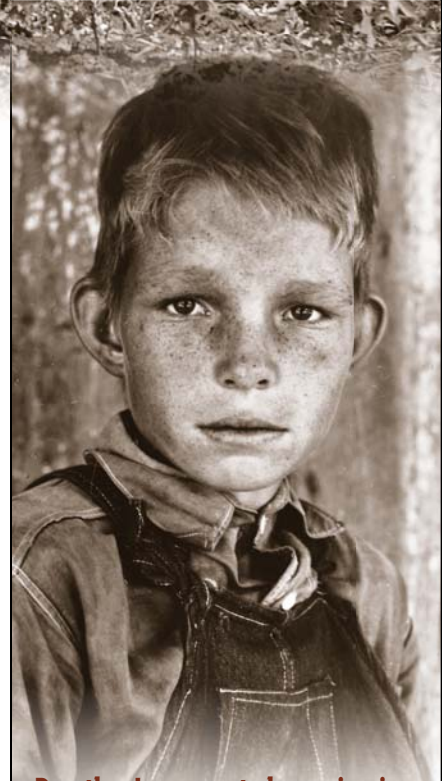
Tenants and Sharecroppers

Successive crop failures and falling prices forced many farmers to sell their land. Most of those farmers became tenants. Mississippi farmers in the 1920s are classified in these four categories: landowners, renters, tenants, and sharecroppers.

Landowners, who comprised about 35 percent of Mississippi farmers, were at the top of the agricultural system. Renters, who comprised about 5 percent, were farm families who rented a certain number of acres at a fixed price from the landowner. Renters were free to plant whatever crops they thought would make them the most money. They were entitled to keep the entire crop.

Farm tenants provided their own tools, seeds, animals, and fertilizer. They worked the land for a certain share of the crop. The remainder of the crop went to the landowner. The sharecropper, who provided nothing but his labor, also worked the land on shares but for a much smaller share than the tenant. The last two categories comprised about 60 percent of Mississippi farmers in the 1920s.

In addition to these four categories of farmers, a fifth group of Mississippians also made their living from farming, although they were not classified as farmers. These workers, who included about 21 percent of the white population and 37 percent of the black population, were classified as day laborers. They were hired by landowners or renters during the chopping and picking seasons when additional temporary labor was needed.



Dorothea Lange created many iconic images of the Great Depression, like this photograph of Mississippi day laborers hoeing cotton for \$1 a day (top), and a portrait of a cotton sharecropper's 12-year-old son (above).

Something Extra!

The Borden Company's "spokes-cow" Elsie is one of the most recognizable advertising symbols of all time. Elsie's husband is the bull Elmer, whose picture appears on every Elmer's Glue product.

Livestock and Dairying

As the price of cotton steadily declined in the 1920s, some small farmers turned to livestock and dairying as a means of livelihood. Livestock, especially before the Civil War, had been important to the economy of south Mississippi. But its recovery had been very slow during the late nineteenth century and was hampered by the spread of cattle ticks in the early twentieth century. After the eradication of the ticks, livestock and dairy cattle were again providing income to a substantial number of Mississippi farmers. This increase in dairy farming led to the establishment of several creameries and cheese plants. A **condensary**, a plant for canning milk, was built at Starkville in 1926 by the Borden Company.

Canning Industry

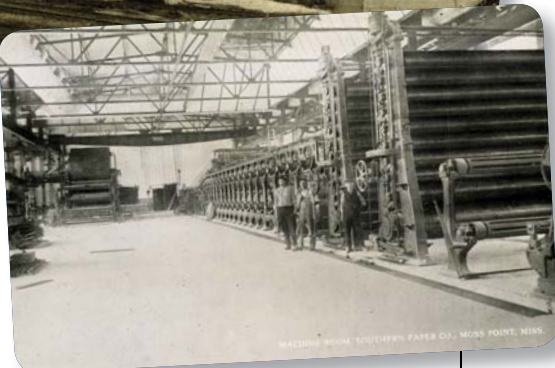
Since the 1870s, vegetable farming had provided a profitable alternative to cotton production in south Mississippi. Most of those products were shipped by rail to large cities in the North. In the 1920s, an effort was made to develop a canning or processing industry that would provide additional jobs to Mississippians. But the growth of this industry was slow. By 1930, there were only seven canning plants in south Mississippi. The largest of these was a pickle factory located at Wiggins. This pickle factory, which at one time was the largest in the country, is no longer in operation.

Lumber Products

By the 1920s, Mississippi's large forest reserves were exhausted, and about 40,000 lumbermen were seeking employment in other industries. Both Governor Vardaman and Governor Bilbo had warned that lumber companies were cutting Mississippi's timber stands too fast and were not restoring this natural resource. Their warnings went unheeded and this natural resource was depleted.

Some lumber companies did realize the danger of exhausting Mississippi's hardwood timber reserves, so they developed allied industries that could utilize the faster-growing pine trees. The Dantzer Company, a family-owned lumber corporation located at Pascagoula, established a paper mill at Moss Point in 1912. At Laurel, William H. Mason developed a process to make **fiberboard** (a building material made of compressed wood fibers) or wood paneling. In 1926, he opened a processing plant and later established the famous Masonite Corporation.

L. O. Crosby Sr. of Picayune also found a profitable use for the pine stumps left behind after the lumber boom had passed. He built an establishment to extract resin from the stumps and later expanded his operation to include a creosote plant and a furniture factory. **Creosote** is a product made from tree resin that is used as a wood coating and preservative. The DuPont Company also established a plant at Hattiesburg to extract oil, resin, and turpentine from pine stumps. **Turpentine** is a liquid distilled from tree resin that is used as a paint thinner, for making varnish, and in the chemical



Top: Some Mississippi farmers switched to livestock as cotton prices fell. This postcard shows a dairy farm near Macon. **Middle:** A postcard of the Mason Fibre Company in Laurel. **Bottom:** The Southern Paper Company was established by the Dantzer Company.

industry. All of these operations provided employment opportunities in south Mississippi. Unfortunately, these plants were adversely affected by the depression of the early 1930s and had to lay off many workers.

Manufacturing

As we learned in Chapter 8, following the election of James K. Vardaman in 1903, manufacturing in Mississippi entered a period of decline. Neither Vardaman nor Theodore G. Bilbo promoted industrial development. Governor Henry L. Whitfield did make an attempt to expand manufacturing during his administration of 1924-1927, but his efforts were not successful. By 1930, there were actually fewer manufacturing jobs in Mississippi than there had been in 1920.

Economic Reform and Recovery

The condition of the state's economy was the most pressing issue during the governor's election in 1931. In January 1931, the Mississippi treasury showed a cash balance of only \$10,000 and a large deficit. The anticipated revenue for 1931 was less than half of the expenditures that had already been appropriated. Governor Bilbo's attempts to issue revenue bonds were unsuccessful, and the state debt mounted. Martin S. Conner, pledging a program of rigid economy, a balanced budget, and industrial development, was elected governor in 1931.

Administration of Martin S. Conner, 1932-1936

Fred Sullens, editor of the *Jackson Daily News*, hailed the election of Martin S. Conner as the beginning of a new era in Mississippi politics. Governor Conner was one of the state's new businessmen politicians who were determined to improve Mississippi's national image and to develop a more balanced economy. Conner admitted that people in other parts of the country pictured Mississippi as one big swamp inhabited by alligators and mosquitoes, where malaria stalked and racial disorder ruled. During his 1931 campaign, Conner told the people that the only way for Mississippi to change its image and improve its economic conditions was to elect men who would conduct the affairs of state in an honest and businesslike manner. He further pointed out that poverty could be overcome only by the new jobs that industry could provide to the thousands of unemployed Mississippians.

"Mike" Conner, a graduate of Yale University's law school, had been elected to the state legislature in 1915. He served as speaker of the House for eight years and was the youngest speaker in Mississippi history. In 1923 and 1927, he was defeated in his first two campaigns for governor. In his third try for the governorship, Conner convinced Mississippi voters that new and expanded industries were the only hope for the state's economic recovery.



Above: Mike Conner wanted to change Mississippi's image by bringing a businesslike approach to government. He inherited a \$12 million deficit and ended his term with a surplus.



Above: One of Mike Conner's most controversial proposals was the enactment of a two-percent sales tax.

Something Extra!

Today, Mississippi's sales tax rate is seven percent. Five states—Delaware, Alaska, New Hampshire, Montana, and Oregon—have no state sales tax.

Reviewing the Section

1. Define in sentence form: boll weevil, creosote, sales tax.
2. What were the four classifications of farmers in Mississippi in the 1920s?
3. Why was it thought that the election of Governor Conner would bring a new era in Mississippi?

Governor Conner inherited a \$12 million deficit, a legacy of Governor Bilbo's depression-ridden second term. Conner immediately implemented the rigid economic measures he promised during the campaign. Hundreds of public employees were dismissed, and the salaries of many others were reduced. Conner also promoted the reorganization of county governments to reduce expenditures, and he discontinued the highway program started by Bilbo.

Sales Tax

Mississippi still needed additional revenue even after cutting expenses everywhere possible. Governor Conner proposed the enactment of a sales tax to bring in more revenue. Only a few states had adopted a direct **sales tax** (a tax on food, clothing, and other items purchased in the open market). Merchants, who would be responsible for collecting the tax, opposed the measure because it would reduce their sales. Private citizens also protested the tax, which placed the same burden on the poor as it did on the rich.

It was not fair, many argued, for a family with an annual income of \$500 to pay the same tax on bread as a family with an income of \$5,000.

Nevertheless, there was also strong support for the sales tax. State Superintendent of Education Willard F. Bond endorsed the sales tax, as did most public schoolteachers. Their support was based on the belief that only the sales tax with its revenue potential could save the public school system. For months, many teachers had either received no pay at all or had received state checks that could be cashed only at a reduced value. After a long and bitter controversy, a sales tax of two cents on a dollar was finally enacted by the legislature, and Mississippi became one of the few states to employ this form of direct tax. The income derived from the sales tax and the other cost-cutting measures taken by Governor Conner enabled the state to balance its budget.

Governor Conner's Accomplishments

By the time Mike Conner left office in 1936, he had paid off the state's deficit of \$12,000,000 and had accumulated a \$3,243,661 surplus in the state treasury. This was proof, he claimed, of what could be accomplished by a businesslike administration. He also pointed to the large increase in the number of jobs that had been created

by industrial development during his four years in office. Governor Conner convinced small farmers and laborers that the factory, not the farm, offered them relief from their depressed condition. After Governor Conner left office, he was appointed the first commissioner of the Southeastern Conference in 1940, a position he held until his death on September 16, 1950.

Section 2

BAWI and the War That Changed Everything

As you read, look for

- the importance of Governor Hugh L. White's Balance Agriculture with Industry (BAWI) program;
- the positive influence of World War II on Mississippi's economy;
- how the move toward cities after World War II altered the social customs of Mississippi;
- why President Harry S. Truman's civil rights agenda led to the formation of the Dixiecrat Party;
- terms: **farm-to-market roads, urbanization, civil rights movement.**

It would be difficult to overstate the impact of the Balance Agriculture with Industry (BAWI) program and World War II on Mississippi and its people. As a result of the new industrial jobs, the personal income of Mississippians doubled, and thousands of our citizens moved to town. During the war, more than 237,000 of Mississippi's young men and women served in the armed forces. For most of them, it was the first time they were ever out of the state. When they came home after the war, most of them settled in towns and cities. They had seen the world and did not want to go back to the farm.

Blacks and women who returned to Mississippi after the war were not willing to resume a status of second-class citizenship. Both women and blacks claimed the full rights of citizenship. In the years immediately following the war, they pressed their demands for equal opportunity and social justice.

Below: Young Marine enlistees in the Magnolia Battalion line up at the Illinois Central Railroad depot in Jackson, Mississippi, for the train that will take them to boot camp to train for duty in World War II.





Above: Hugh L. White campaigned for governor on a platform of bringing industrial development to Mississippi.

Something Extra!

The term “whipping boy” means a scapegoat—someone or something that has to take the blame for others. A whipping boy was originally a boy educated with a prince, who had to take the blame for wrongs the young prince had done.

Hugh L. White's First Administration, 1936-1940

The saying that “advertising pays” is a tradition among American businessmen. Mississippi’s businessmen politicians successfully applied that technique to state politics. In 1935, a wealthy industrialist, Hugh L. White, campaigned for governor on the promise that he would continue to promote industrial development in Mississippi. White admitted proudly that he was not a professional politician. As mayor of Columbia, the county seat of Marion County, White had saved his city from economic collapse by implementing a businessman’s administration of rigid economy and industrial expansion. On that record, he campaigned and was elected governor in 1935.

Balance Agriculture with Industry (BAWI)

During the Vardaman-Bilbo era, big business had been the “whipping boy” of politicians, and the people in Mississippi were generally suspicious of large corporations. However, the Great Depression had convinced Mississippi

voters that industrial development was their only means of economic recovery. In 1935, they gave Hugh L. White a *mandate* (authorization to act) to inaugurate a Balance Agriculture with Industry program. In 1936, the legislature passed the Industrial Act, which established the goal of a balanced economy as official state policy. Two new agencies, the Industrial Commission and the Advertising Commission, were created to implement the law.

Under the BAWI program, corporations that established factories in Mississippi were granted tax exemptions. As an additional incentive for corporations to move to Mississippi, factory buildings financed and built through local bond issues were made available to new industries. The abundance of raw materials and the availability of low-wage labor, in addition to tax exemptions, made Mississippi attractive to northern industries seeking new locations for additional plants.

Ingalls Shipbuilding

The most important industry attracted to Mississippi under the BAWI program was Ingalls Shipbuilding located at Pascagoula. Other than Ingalls, which is considered a heavy industry, most of the plants that located in the state were light industry, which pays lower wages than heavy industry. Nevertheless, many small towns continue to benefit from the new industrial plants attracted to Mississippi under the BAWI program.

World War II

It would be hard to exaggerate the sweeping changes that World War II brought to Mississippi, or the conflict those changes caused. The economic boom generated by the war ended the depression in Mississippi and restored full prosperity to both the state and the nation.

Camp Shelby and Keesler Army Airfield

Mississippi's mild climate made the state an ideal location for military installations, especially airfields and training camps. Two of the nation's largest military bases, Camp Shelby and Keesler Army Airfield (now Keesler Air Force Base), were located in Mississippi. Camp Shelby was located in Hattiesburg, and Keesler Army Airfield was in Biloxi.

Nisei Troops at Camp Shelby

During World War II, many Japanese Americans volunteered for service in the United States military forces. Several hundred Japanese troops, known as the Nisei troops, were stationed at Camp Shelby for combat training. Among those troops at Camp Shelby was Daniel K. Inouye, a young Japanese American from Hawaii. During combat in the Italian campaign, Inouye received a battlefield commission and was later severely wounded and lost his right arm.

Below: This team of welders at Ingalls Shipyard illustrates a significant change brought about by World War II—women doing jobs previously reserved for men.



Something Extra!

Keesler Army Airfield was named for 2nd Lieutenant Samuel Reeves Keesler Jr. of Greenwood, who died of wounds during World War I while serving in France as an aerial observer.





Top: The band from Keesler Army Airfield marches through the streets of Biloxi in a celebration of Army Day. **Above:** Two Nisei of the 100th Infantry Battalion at Camp Shelby perform maintenance on an Army jeep. **Right:** Fresh recruits recently arrived at Camp Shelby have a little fun giving each other their new Army haircuts.



He received a Congressional Medal of Honor for his bravery in combat. Daniel Inouye was elected to the United States Senate from Hawaii in 1962 and is now the Senate's senior member.

Other Military Installations

Smaller bases were established at Columbus, Greenville, Clarksdale, Meridian, Laurel, Grenada, and other towns. In addition to these bases, a flight training school for Dutch pilots was established at Jackson, and several prisoner-of-war camps were maintained in various cities in Mississippi. Camp Shelby and the air bases at Columbus and Biloxi were maintained after the war and continued to promote the state's economic growth long after World War II was over.

Administration of Thomas L. Bailey, 1944-1946

Governor Thomas L. Bailey, a former schoolteacher and lawyer from Webster County, took full advantage of the wartime boom to attract industry into Mississippi. During Governor Bailey's term, the Agricultural and Industrial (A&I) Board was established to promote and coordinate industrial development. The Mississippi Marketing Commission, an advisory agency to the A&I Board, was also established to assist Mississippi farmers in selling their products. Governor Bailey also promoted a system of **farm-to-market roads** that would make it easier for farmers to get their products to market.

Urbanization

The growth of Mississippi's towns and cities was accelerated by the wartime demand for manufactured products. Ingalls Shipbuilding became the major industrial employer in the state, and Pascagoula's population increased rapidly. Many other defense plants were built in Mississippi to produce the material necessary to support America's war effort. The new industrial jobs drew thousands of people into towns and cities from the surrounding rural areas. When the war was over, many of the 237,000 men and women who had served in the armed forces settled in towns and cities rather than returning to the farms. The trend toward **urbanization** (movement toward cities) improved economic conditions and altered the social customs of Mississippi.

Nellah Massey Bailey

Two years after the war, Nellah Massey Bailey became the first woman ever elected to a statewide office in Mississippi. After her husband, Governor Thomas L. Bailey, died in 1946, she was appointed state tax collector. In 1947, she ran for the office and received 60.4 percent of the popular vote. She was reelected in 1951 and 1955.

The Dixiecrats

After World War II, President Harry S. Truman gave a new *impetus* (encouragement, incentive) to the **civil rights movement** (the social movement to secure equal treatment under the laws for blacks). President Truman supported a Fair Employment Practices law that prohibited racial discrimination in hiring practices. In 1948, President Truman ordered the desegregation of the armed forces, and urged Congress to pass a comprehensive civil rights law.



THE WHOLE TRUTH
TO REMOVE THE CLOUDS OF FALSE ISSUES

THE TRUTH: MRS. THOMAS L. BAILEY 1. State Tax Collector for 8 years.	QUALIFIED  ENERGETIC LOYAL HONEST	THE TRUTH: MR. HOWARD LITTLE 1. A Public Service Commissioner for the past 8 years and not a new man seeking public office.
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THE PUBLIC RECORD:

- Under the law the Tax Collector selects the method and procedure in collecting taxes. Mrs. Thomas L. Bailey's method was approved by the Ways and Means Committee of our Legislature. This method resulted in doubling the amount of Whiskey Tax collected under previous methods. At the same time lacking confiscation power the State Tax Commission has.
- Has collected more liquor taxes due under the law for calendar year 1954 than was collected in same period by State Tax Commission for Sales Taxes.
- Net Income after salaries to deputies, auditors, attorneys, and others is less than her opponent's net income. Yet he wants to change public office. Why?
- Mrs. Thomas L. Bailey has honestly executed the laws governing the State Tax Collector's office; never compromising with anyone. All taxes collected have been accounted for as required by law.

THE PUBLIC RECORD:

- Telephone rates nearly double as of eight years ago. Carrier rates on Food and Feed Stuff have steadily increased in past eight years. Several passenger services have been discontinued without a hearing as required under the law.
- Public Service Commissioner's salary of \$5,500.00 plus a \$4,100.00 expense account per year. Free Railroad and Bus Transportation. Free Telephone and Telegraph service.
- As Public Service Commissioner, sat by and allowed Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company to continue to operate outside the supervision of our State laws.
- Knowing this record would defeat him for re-election, he chooses to fight a widow with mis-leading and untrue charges supported by Tax Dodging Bootleggers.

PRINTING PAID FOR BY FRIENDS OF THE LATE GOVERNOR AND MRS. THOMAS L. BAILEY
Submitted to and Approved by Mrs. Thomas L. Bailey

ELECT A WOMAN WHO HAS MADE GOOD

Top: Governor Thomas L. Bailey died of a stroke almost three years into his term. **Above:** Governor Bailey's widow, Nellah Massey Bailey, was the first woman elected to statewide office in Mississippi, as state tax collector.



The southern reaction to President Truman's racial policies and the increase in civil rights activity culminated in the Dixiecrat movement in 1948. Southern Democrats *bolted* (left suddenly) the national Democratic Party in 1948 and formed the States' Rights Democratic Party, usually called the Dixiecrat Party. They held a convention and nominated J. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina for president and Fielding L. Wright of Mississippi for vice president on the Dixiecrat ticket. Although the Dixiecrat Party carried only South Carolina, Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi, the movement was an indication that the South would oppose any significant change in the region's racial traditions.

Top: This picture shows the moment at which 35 southern delegates walked out of the 1948 Democratic National Convention following an attempt to add a civil rights plank to the party's platform. **Above:** Fielding Wright was in his first full term as Mississippi's governor when the Dixiecrat Party nominated him for vice president in the 1948 presidential election.

Reviewing the Section

1. Define in sentence form: farm-to-market roads, urbanization, civil rights movement.
2. Why was World War II an economic boom for Mississippi?
3. Who were the Dixiecrats?

Of Special Interest

The Chinese Flagship Program at The University of Mississippi

William Faulkner, Mississippi's Nobel Laureate (winner of the Nobel Prize), said, "Nothing ever happens once, and it's over." What Faulkner was saying is that the repercussions of major historical events, the full force and sweep of history, may not be seen and felt until long after those events occurred.

World War II is an example of Faulkner's premise. One of the most significant changes brought about by the war that changed everything was the eventual emergence of modern China as one of the world's great economic and military powers. In 2010, China surpassed Japan as the world's second-largest economy, a culmination of China's rise from cultural isolation prior to World War II to a current world superpower.

China has a population of 1.3 billion people. Mandarin Chinese is the language of the world's largest nation. Chinese high school students take several years of English before they graduate, but few Americans can read or speak Chinese. And even fewer Americans understand the international dynamics created by the rise of China. As globalization continues to expand in scale and scope, American citizens must develop a higher level of cultural awareness and international affairs.

To promote the study of international relations and foreign languages, and to prepare Americans to live in a global village, Congress passed the National

Security Education Program (NSEP) in 1991. In support of such programs, Secretary of State Colin Powell said, "To solve most of the major problems facing our country today . . . will require every young person to

learn more about other regions, cultures, and languages."

In 2003, the Chinese Language Flagship Program was established at The University of Mississippi under a grant from the NSEP. The five-year undergraduate program is designed

for highly motivated and diligent students who want to acquire superior-level proficiency in Mandarin Chinese while pursuing academic degrees in their chosen major. Students in the Flagship Program

take an intensive preenrollment course in the summer before entering college and spend two nine-week summer sessions and a capstone year in China.

The goal of the Chinese Language Flagship Program is to produce American global professionals with proficiency in Mandarin Chinese and with cultural understanding of China and its people. These are both necessary elements for anyone who hopes to succeed in working in China and with Chinese in America and around the world.



Section 3

Reaction to the *Brown* Decision

Below: In 1951, Mary D. Cain became the first woman to run for governor of Mississippi. The editor of a Pike County newspaper, her passionate support of segregation, and opposition to the federal government, earned her the nickname "Hacksaw Mary." She ran for governor again in 1955.

As you read, look for

- the accomplishments and setbacks of Governor Hugh L. White's second administration;
- how the U.S. Supreme Court's 1954 *Brown* decision led to the organization of the Citizens' Council and to other states' rights initiatives;
- the far-reaching consequences of the murder of Emmett Till;
- terms: **Citizens' Council, double jeopardy clause, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Resolution of Interposition, State Sovereignty Commission.**



During the Great Depression and World War II, race had not been a significant political issue. Mississippi's businessmen politicians believed that economic development could occur only under peaceful social conditions. Postwar conditions, however, revived the race issue. As southern blacks increasingly demanded the political and educational benefits of full citizenship, a corresponding resistance among southern whites revived the old racial *animosities* (ill will, hostilities) and rhetoric. Mississippi's political leaders were aware of the growing unrest among blacks, and, after the *Brown* decision in 1954, they instituted a statewide hurry-up program to upgrade black schools. But they were too late.

Hugh L. White's Second Administration, 1952-1956

In the governor's campaign of 1951, Hugh L. White was elected for a second term over a field of eight candidates, including Ross R. Barnett, who was making his first of four gubernatorial campaigns. We will study the politi-

cal career of Ross Barnett in detail in the next chapter. Other gubernatorial candidates in 1951 included Mary D. Cain, the fiery lady editor of the *Summit Sun*, who received 24,756 votes. Mary D. Cain was the first woman to run for governor in Mississippi.

Governor White continued to emphasize the industrial development that he had initiated during his first administration. Because of the success of his industrial program, Mississippi experienced a decade of significant economic growth. During the 1950s, the state's total personal income rose 59 percent from \$1,583,000,000 to \$2,595,000,000. Retail sales increased from \$1,008,300,000 to \$1,482,000,000. Bank deposits rose from \$816,900,000 to \$1,361,300,000, and expenditures for new manufacturing plants and equipment rose from \$27,700,000 to \$57,700,000. Throughout the decade, however, Mississippi's per capita income remained the lowest in the nation.

School Consolidation

During his second term, Governor White initiated a massive but unpopular school consolidation program. In some small communities, citizens resorted to violence in an effort to prevent the closing of local schools. Many parents objected to the busing of their children over long distances that sometimes amounted to twenty miles or more.

In 1952, the state superintendent of education reported that busing had increased significantly in the last 8 years. In 1944, only 20 percent of the children were bused to school; by 1950, over 80 percent were bused. The number of school buses had increased from 637 in 1944 to 2,944 in 1950.

Attempt to Create Equal Facilities

In an effort to forestall federal court intervention in state schools, Governor White pushed for an extensive program of equalization of black and white schools. Trying to upgrade black schools during a major consolidation program further destabilized the state's school system. It was physically impossible to build new black schools or repair existing schools quickly enough to establish "separate-but-equal" facilities in Mississippi. Comparative statistics indicate the large gap in the appropriation of funds for black and white schools for the 1952-1953 school year.



Figure 23
School Appropriations, 1952-1953

Category	White	Black
School enrollment	272,549	271,856
Transportation	\$4,476,753	\$1,179,826
Instruction	\$23,536,002	\$8,816,670
Average Teacher Salaries	\$2,109	\$1,153

Above: Christian Union Colored School taught grades 1 through 8.

Something Extra!

The term "separate-but-equal" comes from the *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court ruling in 1896. It had established the principle that "separate-but-equal" facilities (schools and other public places) did not violate the U.S. Constitution.

Something Extra!

The term “Black Monday”—referring to the Monday, May 17, 1954, *Brown* decision—was coined by Mississippi Congressman John Bell Williams in a dramatic speech on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives in which he criticized the court’s ruling.

BLACK MONDAY

SEGREGATION OR AMALGAMATION
... AMERICA HAS ITS CHOICE

By TOM P. BRADY

The Brown Decision of 1954

On Monday, May 17, 1954, the United States Supreme Court ruled unanimously in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, that the “separate-but-equal” principle in American public schools violated the Constitution. One year later, in the second *Brown* decision, the court declared that desegregation of public schools should occur with “all deliberate speed.” The original desegregation ruling was issued in a school case originating in Topeka, Kansas. White Mississippians were “shocked and stunned” by the *Brown* decision. Governor White and other state officials were determined to prevent its implementation in Mississippi by every legal and constitutional means possible.

The Citizens’ Council

In July 1954, a group of white citizens at Indianola organized the first **Citizens’ Council** in Mississippi. The purpose of the Citizens’ Council was to assist state officials in preventing the implementation of the *Brown* decision. The Council quickly spread to other parts of the state and the South. Robert B. Patterson of Greenwood became the executive secretary of the Mississippi Association of Citizens’ Councils, which claimed a membership of 80,000 by 1956.

Black Monday

Soon after the *Brown* decision, Tom P. Brady, a justice of the Mississippi State Supreme Court, wrote a book titled *Black Monday*, which was published by the Citizens’ Council. Judge Brady declared in his book that the *Brown* decision rendered by the U.S. Supreme Court was neither valid nor binding. He recommended that state authorities take whatever steps necessary to prevent its implementation in Mississippi. In December 1954, Mississippi voters approved a constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to abolish the public school system if necessary to prevent its desegregation.

The Murder of Emmett Till

Some historians consider the brutal murder of fourteen-year-old Emmett Till the crime that launched the civil rights movement. Emmett Till, who was from Chicago, came to Mississippi in the summer of 1955 to visit relatives. When he and his cousins went to a local grocery store, he whistled at the white lady who owned the store. A few days later, Till was kidnapped, beaten, and thrown into the Tallahatchie River. Roy Bryant, the husband of the lady that Till had whistled at, and J. W. Milam were charged with the murder of Emmett Till, but an all-white jury acquitted both men. In a January 1956 interview published in *Look* magazine, both men admitted that they murdered Emmett Till. But they could not be tried again because of the



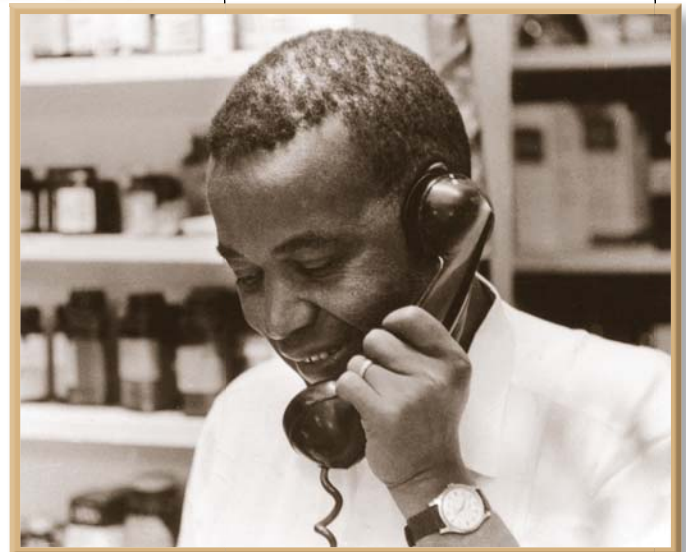


Opposite page, below: Fourteen-year-old Emmett Till, seen here with his mother, was visiting his cousins in Mississippi from Chicago, when he was brutally murdered. The murder became a national sensation when his mother insisted on an open-casket funeral and black newspapers published photographs of his disfigured face. **Left:** J. W. Milam (left) and his half-brother, Roy Bryant (right), were acquitted of Emmett Till's murder. They later admitted to the killing in an interview in *Look* magazine, for which they were paid \$4,000.

double jeopardy clause in the U.S. Constitution that prevents a person from being tried twice for the same crime. In 2004, the United States Justice Department reopened the investigation but found no evidence that could indict anyone else for the murder of Emmett Till.

Dr. T. R. M. Howard (1908-1976)

In 1942, Dr. T. R. M. Howard became the first surgeon to practice medicine in Mound Bayou. He was also a founding member of the Regional Council of Negro Leadership. After the murder of Emmett Till, Dr. Howard conducted an extensive campaign to gather any information that might be used to bring the murderers to justice. His home became a “black command center.” After the acquittal of Roy Bryant and J. W. Milam, Dr. Howard gave speeches all over the country about the Till murder and racial violence in Mississippi. A year after the Till murder, Dr. Howard and his family left Mississippi and moved to Chicago.



Above: After serving in the U.S. Army, Aaron Henry attended college on the GI Bill, graduating with a degree in pharmacy. After opening a drugstore in Clarksdale, he became involved in civil rights as a founding member of the Regional Council of Negro Leadership with Dr. T. R. M. Howard.

Aaron Henry (1922-1997)

The Emmett Till murder also *catapulted* (launched) Aaron Henry into prominence and leadership among African Americans in Mississippi. He was a founding member of the Regional Council of Negro Leadership, and joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1954. The **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)** is an interracial organization founded in 1909 to work for the abolition of segregation and discrimination, to oppose racism, and to ensure African Americans their constitutional rights. After Aaron Henry became president of the Mississippi Chapter of the NAACP in 1959, he was active in the formation of several civil rights organizations in Mississippi, including the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party and the Council of Federated



Above: James P. Coleman is the only Mississippi politician to have served in all three branches of state government: on the state Supreme Court, then as governor, and finally, in the Mississippi House of Representatives.

Something Extra!

Mississippi's compulsory school attendance law was reinstated in 1972.

The current law requires that all children between ages six and seventeen be enrolled in a public, private, or home-school education program.

Organizations. Aaron Henry reaped the benefits of his many years of effort to bring equality of opportunity to Mississippi's black people when he was elected to the state legislature in 1979, a position he held until 1996.

Election of James P. Coleman, 1955

There were several important issues raised during the campaign of 1955, including school consolidation, a new state constitution, economic development, and race relations. Although race was the dominant issue, James P. Coleman, a "racial moderate" from Ackerman, was elected governor. His victory was even more unusual because he was making his first bid for the governorship in a state that normally expects at least two or three campaigns before a candidate is considered a "serious" contender. Coleman defeated Paul B. Johnson Jr., Ross R. Barnett, Mary D. Cain, and former governor Fielding L. Wright. Johnson was making his third campaign and Barnett his second.

Administration of James P. Coleman, 1956-1960

Governor Coleman had campaigned in support of a new constitution. He also had pledged to continue school consolidation and to maintain school segregation. Because political and social conditions were already unstable, he was unable to generate much support for a constitutional convention. Many Mississippians feared that a convention might open the door to additional disunity and disharmony among whites. The race issue had revived the ironclad law of white solidarity.

The Resolution of Interposition

In 1956, the state legislature passed a **Resolution of Interposition**. This resolution interposed the state sovereignty of Mississippi between the Supreme Court's ruling on school desegregation and the implementation of that ruling in our state. Governor Coleman called the law of interposition "legal poppycock." Additional legislation directed all public officials in Mississippi to "prohibit, by any lawful, peaceful, and constitutional means, the implementation of or the compliance with the integration decisions of the United States Supreme Court." The legislature also repealed Mississippi's compulsory education statute that required all school-age children to be enrolled and attend school.

State Sovereignty Commission

In 1956, the legislature also established a **State Sovereignty Commission** "to prevent encroachment upon the rights of this and other states by the Federal Government . . . and to resist usurpation of the rights and powers reserved to this state." The State Sovereignty Commission members included the governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, and speaker of the House. Additional members, usually prominent leaders in the Citizens'

Council, were appointed to the commission. Some of the funds appropriated to the State Sovereignty Commission were secretly channeled to the Citizens' Council.

A Yankee General in the State Capitol

During Governor Coleman's administration, one of Mississippi's most infamous former governors again became the focus of controversy. A Jackson newspaper printed a feature article on Governor Adelbert Ames, whose portrait hung in the Hall of Governors in the state capitol building. After seeing the article, a "76-year-old unreconstructed Rebel" wrote a blistering letter to the secretary of state. The old Rebel was "shocked beyond words" that the general's portrait decked in Union blue and adorned with medals "earned by the blood of Confederate soldier boys" was on public display. He demanded its removal.

When Governor Coleman was asked about the controversy, he replied that there might be a number of people in Mississippi who would like to see the portraits of Governors Vardaman and Bilbo removed. Governor Coleman explained further that the Hall of Governors should not be confused with the Hall of Fame, which was located in the Department of Archives and History. The Hall of Fame included the portraits of outstanding Mississippians who had made contributions to the state and nation. The Hall of Governors included only the pictures of the state's chief executives who had served in that capacity since 1817.

Although this incident seems trivial and almost comical on the surface, the "unreconstructed Rebel's" response at seeing a Yankee general's picture in the state capitol was an indication of the reaction many Mississippians would have to the sweeping social and racial changes of the 1960s. As Governor Coleman's term neared its end, plans were underway to commemorate the centennial of the Civil War. Old battlefields such as Corinth and Champion Hill would be revisited in the early 1960s. And there would be new battlefields in Mississippi, like Oxford and Philadelphia. When Governor Ross R. Barnett took office in 1960, few people were aware that the Civil War centennial and the civil rights movement were on a collision course. We will study Governor Barnett's administration and the civil rights movement in the next chapter.



Above: This portrait of Reconstruction governor Adelbert Ames in his Union army uniform still hangs in the Hall of Governors in the Mississippi New Capitol, despite a protest from an "unreconstructed Rebel" in the 1950s.

Reviewing the Section

1. Define in sentence form: Citizens' Council, double jeopardy clause, State Sovereignty Commission.
2. Who was the first woman to run for governor of Mississippi?
3. What is considered by some historians to be the crime that launched the civil rights movement?

Something Extra!

The Mississippi Hall of Fame was established in 1902. Any Mississippian—native or adopted—who has been dead at least five years can be nominated for it. Consideration for induction takes place only once every five years, and no more than five people may be admitted each time.

Chapter Review

Chapter Summary

Section 1 The Great Depression

- Falling stock prices in the Panic of 1929 led into the Great Depression.
- In the 1920s, farmers suffered with decreased cotton production and lower cotton prices.
- The boll weevil reached Mississippi in 1907 and devastated cotton crops. It multiplied rapidly in the wet years of the 1920s. The 1927 Flood ruined the entire cotton crop.
- Farm tenants, providing their own seeds and supplies, worked for a share of the crop; sharecroppers, providing only labor, worked for a smaller share.
- Livestock and dairy cattle made a comeback in Mississippi after cattle ticks were eradicated. This led to the establishment of creameries, cheese plants, and a condensary.
- In the 1920s, a food canning or processing industry was developed, but growth was slow.
- By the 1920s, the state's forest reserves were exhausted. Some lumber companies used pine trees to make paper and fiberboard, and resin from stumps to make creosote and turpentine.
- A "businessman politician," Martin S. Conner, was elected governor in 1932.
- To alleviate debt, Conner took rigid economic measures and proposed a sales tax.

Section 2 BAWI and the War That Changed Everything

- Under Governor Hugh L. White's Balance Agriculture with Industry (BAWI) program, corporations coming into the state got a tax exemption and locally financed factory buildings.
- The most important BAWI-sponsored industry was Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula.
- Mississippi's mild climate was ideal for military

installations, including Camp Shelby and Keesler Army Airfield.

- Governor Thomas L. Bailey attracted industry during World War II boom times.
- Wartime industrial jobs encouraged urbanization, which improved economic conditions and altered social customs.
- Nellah Massey Bailey became the first female Mississippian elected to statewide office.
- Southern reaction to President Harry S. Truman's antidiscrimination policies led to the Dixiecrat movement in 1948.

Section 3 Reaction to the Brown Decision

- In his second term, Governor Hugh L. White continued emphasizing industrial development, and Mississippi had a decade of economic growth.
- White initiated a school consolidation program and pushed unsuccessfully for equalization of black and white schools.
- On May 17, 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that "separate-but-equal" public schools violated the Constitution. A year later, it called for desegregation with "all deliberate speed."
- The Citizens' Council, created in 1954 to help state officials block desegregation, quickly grew in membership.
- Emmett Till, visiting Mississippi from Chicago in 1955, was kidnapped, beaten, and thrown in the Tallahatchie River. An all-white jury acquitted both suspects, who later admitted the murder but couldn't be tried again.
- Dr. T. R. M. Howard worked to gather information on the Till murder.
- Aaron Henry formed several civil rights organizations and later served in the state legislature.
- In 1956, the state legislature passed a Resolution of Interposition and established a State Sovereignty Commission.

Activities for Learning

Understanding the Facts

1. List two reasons for cotton production decline in the 1920s.
2. When were farmers often in need of temporary laborers?
3. How did Governor Mike Conner raise more revenue for the state government?
4. What was the goal of the Legislative Act of 1936? What two agencies were created through this legislation?
5. List the Mississippi cities where military bases were located during World War II.
6. What major industrial employer was established in Pascagoula?
7. Summarize Mississippi school reforms prior to the *Brown* decision.
8. In what sense was James P. Coleman's 1955 election as governor "unusual"?
9. What steps did the Mississippi legislature take to prevent desegregation?

Developing Critical Thinking

1. How did Governor Hugh L. White's views of big business contrast with his predecessors?
2. Why did the experiences of blacks and women during World War II lead to demands for equal rights and equal opportunity?
3. How did the confessed murderers of Emmett Till avoid imprisonment?

Writing across the Curriculum

At http://mdah.state.ms.us/arrec/digital_archives/cooper/index.php?itemno=4545, look at the aerial view of the Ingalls Shipyard. Using the photograph and information from this chapter, write a paragraph about the shipyard that would fit on the back of this postcard.

Exploring Mississippi on the Internet

1. At www.loc.gov/pictures/search/?q=dorothea+lange+mississippi&sp=1&st=gallery, view the photographs by Dorothea Lange. What did you learn about rural Mississippi and the Great Depression?
2. At <http://mshistory.k12.ms.us/articles/265/governors-of-mississippi-from-1817-to-present>, select one of the Mississippi governors from this chapter. Read his biography and list five facts you learned about this governor.

Building 21st-Century Skills: Distinguishing Fact from Opinion

A *fact* is an objectively verifiable truth. A fact statement can be proven through evidence gathered from eyewitness testimony, investigation, observation, research, or written records. An *opinion* is a subjective statement of belief, feeling, or judgment. An opinion statement reflects an individual's attitudes, biases, and preferences. If you encounter a statement that can be proven, it is a fact. Conversely, if a statement includes a word or phrase such as, "good," "better," "best," "worst," "should," "I believe," or "I feel," it is probably an opinion.

Read a description of the judge at Emmett Till's murder trial from a 1985 *The Clarion-Ledger* article and identify two facts and two opinions:

Curtis M. Swango, then 47, presided over the trial. He had earned a reputation as one of the state's finest trial judges since his appointment to the Circuit Court bench in 1950 by then Gov. Fielding Wright. "You could search all of Mississippi and couldn't put a better balanced Circuit judge to try this case," said defense attorney John Whitten. "He was absolutely honest, incorruptible, and my idea of a Southern gentleman."