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WEEK 28

Vol. 21 Issue 4
Fourth Quarter

Texas Studies Weekly

The Early 1900s

Main Idea Timeline

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Texas in the Early 20th Century

1901

1917

1929

1941-1945

- Oil discovered at Spindletop
- Texans fight in World War I
- Stock Market crash and Great Depression begins
- Texans fight in WWII

1919-1929

1933

1945

- Business and industry boom
- New Deal program
- World War II ends

Great Depression begins

Stock Market crash

World War I

Roosevelt’s plan to help the country

an exciting time of change

the most decorated WWII soldier

a new manufacturing idea in the early 1900s

division of

opened a motor company

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Connections

A Census Full of Treasure

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A Changing Texas, A Changing World

Trouble Brews in Europe

The 20th century began with a bang when we discovered oil in Texas in 1901. There were plenty of jobs for everyone. But soon enough, Texans were living through very difficult times. It all started across the ocean in Europe.

In 1914, war broke out. Great Britain, France, Italy and Russia were known as the Allied Powers. They joined together against the Central Powers. This included Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. In 1917, the United States joined the Allied Powers. About 250,000 Texans became soldiers during World War I.

New Jobs for Texans

There were many new jobs for Texans during the war. Airplane pilots trained at Texas Air Force bases. Women, who had not worked before, took over the factory jobs that were left when the men went to war. The war was being fought in Europe, but back in Texas, everyone was working to help the Allied Powers win. In 1918, the Allied Powers won, and the war was over. Life would change in Europe now. It had already begun to change in Texas.

The Roaring Twenties

The 1920s were an exciting time of change for Texas and the world. This is when women won the right to vote. In 1924, a woman was elected to be the Texas governor. Mattie "Ma" Ferguson’s husband was the governor of Texas. But he was accused of breaking the law and was removed from office. The people voted to have Mrs. Ferguson take his place. It was exciting that a woman was given the position. There were other exciting changes too.

At the end of World War I, factories were no longer needed to make supplies for the war. Now they could make products people wanted and needed to buy. Factories hired new workers. The 1920s were "roaring" with business. People felt good about things. Industries were at a peak. People had good jobs. They had extra money to spend. Many people spent their extra money on a new exciting invention — the automobile.

Incredible Automobiles

Henry Ford opened the Ford Motor Company in Michigan in 1903. His company used a new manufacturing idea called the assembly line. This helped his company be able to make a new car in only 93 minutes. This was good news.

By 1928, more than 250,000 cars and trucks were on the road in Texas. Cars needed gas to run. Texas had lots of oil. Gasoline companies built refineries in Texas to manufacture, or make, the gasoline. Once again, there were lots of available jobs in Texas. This gave the oil industry another boost.

Cars also needed good roads to travel on. Companies started building roads and highways to link Texas cities together. People started moving more to the cities. Many new jobs were created when factories opened to make supplies for the war in Europe and the Pacific. Once again, many people came to Texas to work. Women and people from Mexico made up a large part of the work force.

Building a Workforce of Women

When the United States entered World War II, changes had to be made fast. The country needed the factories to help produce goods for the war. Automobile and appliance factories were quickly turned into airplane and weapon factories. New factories were even built to produce more materials. There was a major problem, though. The men all went off to war. Suddenly there were no workers to run the factories.

Across Texas and the nation, women worked in factories to make equipment, weapons and supplies for the soldiers. After the war, the men came home. Most of the women stayed back to work in the factories. They spent their days taking care of their homes and children. But that was about to change.

Suddenly, housewives and young women were needed in the factories. In Texas and the rest of the United States, the government was calling on women to become “Rosie the Riveter.” This image of a woman rolling up her sleeves and working in a factory was everywhere. “Rosie” was a strong woman. She was capable of doing anything she set her mind to. Advertisements to convince women to work were on billboards and in magazines. And they succeeded. The government changed the opinions of most people. Women came to believe that taking a job was not a choice. It was their duty as U.S. citizens.

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The Great Depression is Over

When the war ended in 1945, the United States was in good shape again. The Great Depression was over. People had jobs and money to spend. Life was easier for people. Refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, radios and an early television were all created during this time. Factories used new technologies to improve mass production. Workers used new machines to make products quickly. They each had a different job to do instead of making one product all alone. This was called division of labor. This process improved speed and performance of workers.

Texas Heroes of World War II

1. Cleto Rodriguez
   - Cleto Rodriguez was one of only 14 men from Texas to earn the Medal of Honor. The Medal of Honor is given to members of the Armed Forces who risk their lives above and beyond the call of duty while fighting U.S. enemies. Cleto, 244 men earned the Medal of Honor during World War II.
   - Cleto was born in San Marcos, Texas, in 1923. His parents died when he was nine years old, and he went to live with relatives in San Antonio. There he worked hard at a hotel and as a streetcar wears’ gang to school. Rodriguez entered the Army in 1944. During World War II, he led the Philippine Islands in the Pacific Ocean. One day, Cleto and his partner fought off 82 enemy soldiers all by themselves. This made it possible for four U.S. soldiers to defeat the Japanese army in the Philippines. Cleto spent most of his life as a soldier. He is remembered as a brave Texan and soldier.

2. Audie Murphy
   - Audie Murphy was born in 1925. He joined the Army when he was just 18 years old. By the time he was 20, he was the most decorated soldier in World War II. This meant he earned more awards than any other soldier. Among his 33 awards, Audie received the Medal of Honor, our nation’s highest military award. Even France and Belgium gave him awards for his bravery. During the war, he was wounded three times. He fought in nine major battles and came home a hero.
   - Audie was born in 1924 to a very poor Texas family. They made their living sharecropping near Dallas.
   - After his career in the military, Audie Murphy became a movie star in Hollywood.

A New Deal to End the Depression

In 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt created a program to help the United States get out of the Great Depression. He called the plan the New Deal. The government gave many people jobs. Workers built dams and repaired roads and bridges. Some workers improved parks and government buildings. Businesses took money from the government so they could open again. Not everyone thought the New Deal was good. Some people did not like the power it gave the government. But people were feeling better. Unfortunately, it took a terrible crisis to get the United States into a good shape again.

World War II

On Dec. 7, 1941, the United States entered World War II. Japan dropped bombs on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Many Texans signed up to serve in the military. Suddenly, Texas industry was busier than ever. Texas provided most of the gasoline needed for ships, tanks and planes during the war. Many new jobs were created when factories opened to make supplies for the war in Europe and the Pacific. Once again, many people came to Texas to work. Women and people from Mexico made up a large part of the work force.

Biography

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Name _______________________

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