

# The Roaring Twenties



**1920s US Population: 105,273,049  
(at beginning of decade)**

**By the end of the decade: 122,288,177**

**As of September 2004:  
294,564,504**

Unemployment 1920s: **2,132,000**  
**5.2%**

Unemployment  
1990s: 5.7%



Unemployment 2003: 6%

Unemployment as of September 2004:  
5.4%

1920s life expectancy:

**Males: 53.6 years   Females: 54.6 years**

For those born in 2000 (of all races):

**Males: 74.3 years   Females: 79.7  
years**

**1920s number of people in the military:**

**343.000 (down from 1,172,601 in 1919)**



**Currently: 1.4 million in active Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines**

**1.1 million in Reserves, Army and Air Force National Guard**

Average Annual Salary: \$1236

Equivalent today to: \$12,741.38

**Prior to 1920s:**

**World War I**

**US Economy goes**

**Global**

**Technology takes off**

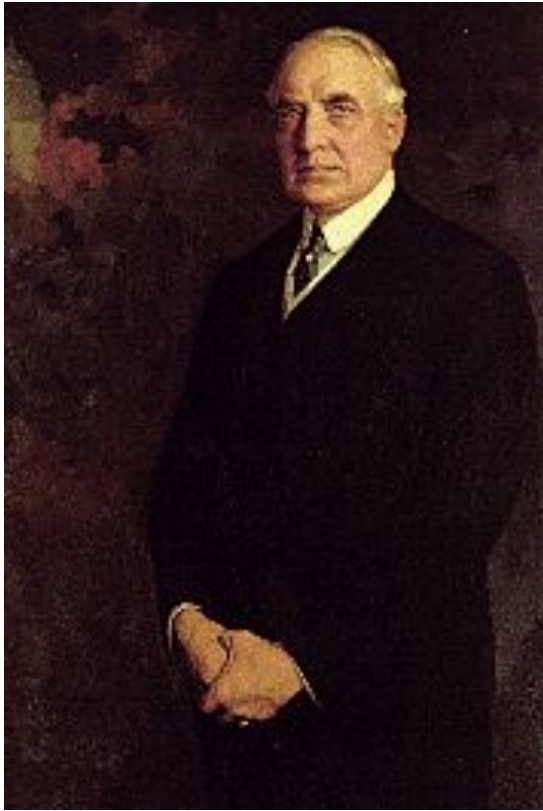
**Immigration Act of 1917**

**Red Scare**

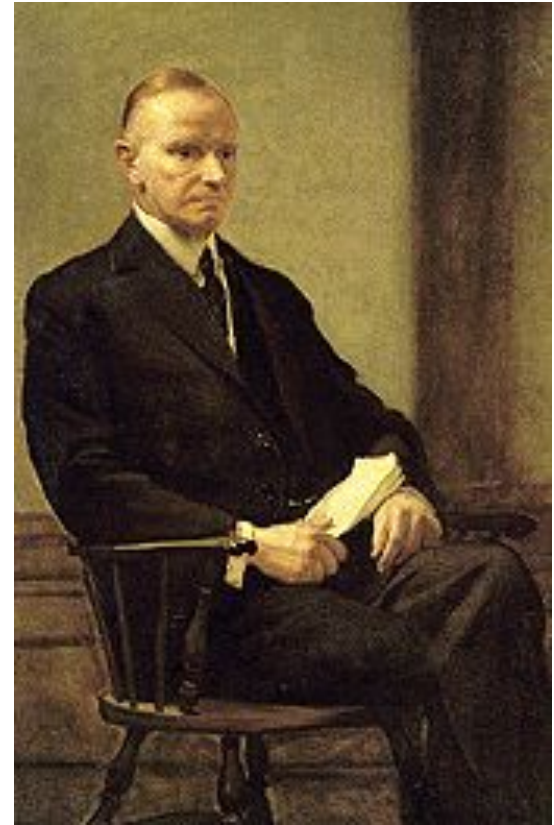


## Presidents:

Warren G. Harding (1921-1923)



Calvin Coolidge (1923-1928)





# 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment-Ratified on January 16, 1919

This made illegal: the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes.



**The Volstead Act of 1919 defined alcohol as any drink having an alcoholic content above 0.5 percent.**

**This led to the era known as Prohibition.**

**Its goal, in theory, was to reduce crime, poverty, the prison systems, death and disease rate, corruption, and other social problems.**

**Many historians believe it was a WASP backlash to exert superiority over minorities, a reaction to the overwhelming immigration of the first part of the century.**

# Problems:

- Very hard to enforce
  - **People continued to drink.**
  - **People continued to find ways to profit from alcohol.**
- Led to development of organized crime

*By 1925, there were an estimated 100,000  
Speakeasies in New York City.*



*Underpaid police officers were easily bribed into  
warning these Speakeasies about raids and feigning  
oblivion about the mob.*

Speakeasies united citizens of various ethnic backgrounds when nothing else could.





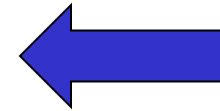
**In Chicago, clubs called “Black and Tans” were run by the mob and served alcohol while jazz bands played. This was one of the only instances of racial tolerance in an otherwise divided city.**



While people listened to the premiere jazz musicians of the day, they danced all kinds of new dances, including the Charleston.



**Liquor was smuggled in from Canada, stolen from government warehouses, or manufactured at home.**

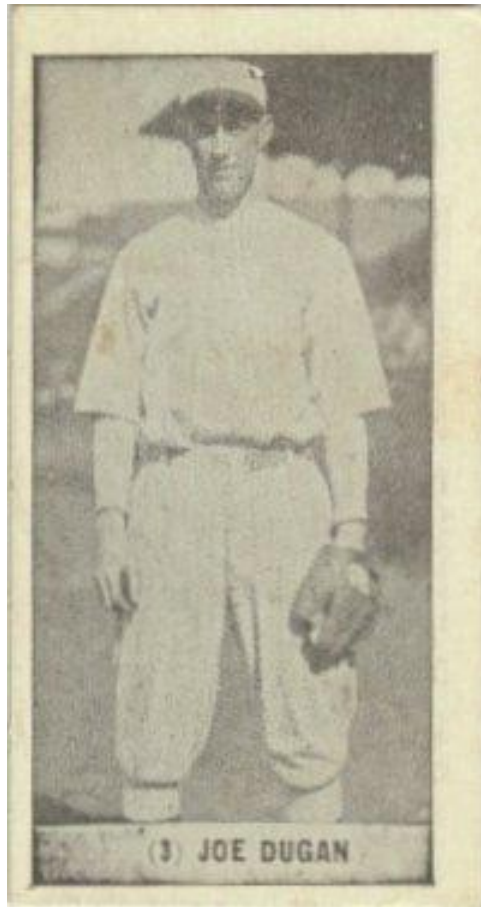


A  
distilling  
unit.

**People hid it in flasks shaped like ordinary objects, such as books or canes.**



**Yuengling opened a dairy across the street from the brewery in 1920. They also switched to manufacturing near beer.**



**SAVE THESE PICTURES**  
One ice cream novelty will be given free  
for each picture of Babe Ruth

**ALSO**  
One gallon of Yuengling's ice cream will be  
delivered free to the holder of a complete  
set of sixty different Baseball Stars, upon  
surrender of same to any Yuengling dealer.  
Babe Ruth may be saved for quarts of ice  
cream or a \$5.00 skooter.

**Gangsters ran bootlegging industries and turned a huge profit.**



*Photo courtesy of J. Maycroft/Mario Gomes*

**ST. VALENTINE'S MASSACRE: 7 DEAD**

**Unfortunately, they became rivals with other gangs, especially in big cities, leading to more violent crime.**

The most famous of the gangsters of the 1920s  
was Al Capone.





# *19<sup>th</sup> Amendment-Ratified in August of 1920*



**Ensures no US citizen will be denied the right to vote based on gender.**



**New found freedom led to the rise of the so-called “flapper”:**



1923-24



1925



1926



**Hair gradually became shorter over the course of the decade.**

**Picture from a  
fashion magazine  
circa 1923.**





**DANCING FLAPPER**

*Ursinus Glee Club, 1925*









**The current generation did not invent baggy pants.**



**M. BORN & COMPANY**

*Founders of the First Nation-Wide Tailoring Service*

Wells & Harrison Streets

CHICAGO

This is the cover of  
a 1925 clothing  
company featuring  
the latest in men's  
suits.

This issue of *Life* has a flapper on the cover. By 1925, when this magazine was originally published, organized sports were very popular. College football was really a big deal, as was golf and baseball, but professional football was taking off as well.



# United States emerges from WWI as the dominant figure in World Trade



Much money to be made in investments: rich get richer.



Rural America is left behind.

Four million farmers quit in the 1920s to move to urban areas



For the first time in American History, more people lived in urban areas than in rural.

Technology brings electricity, gas, and running water to the cities.



**FIRST RADIO BROADCAST**



**However-**

**Number of American  
farms with electricity  
by the end of the  
decade was:**

**10%**



**Number of farms with running water by the end  
of the decade was:**

**33%**

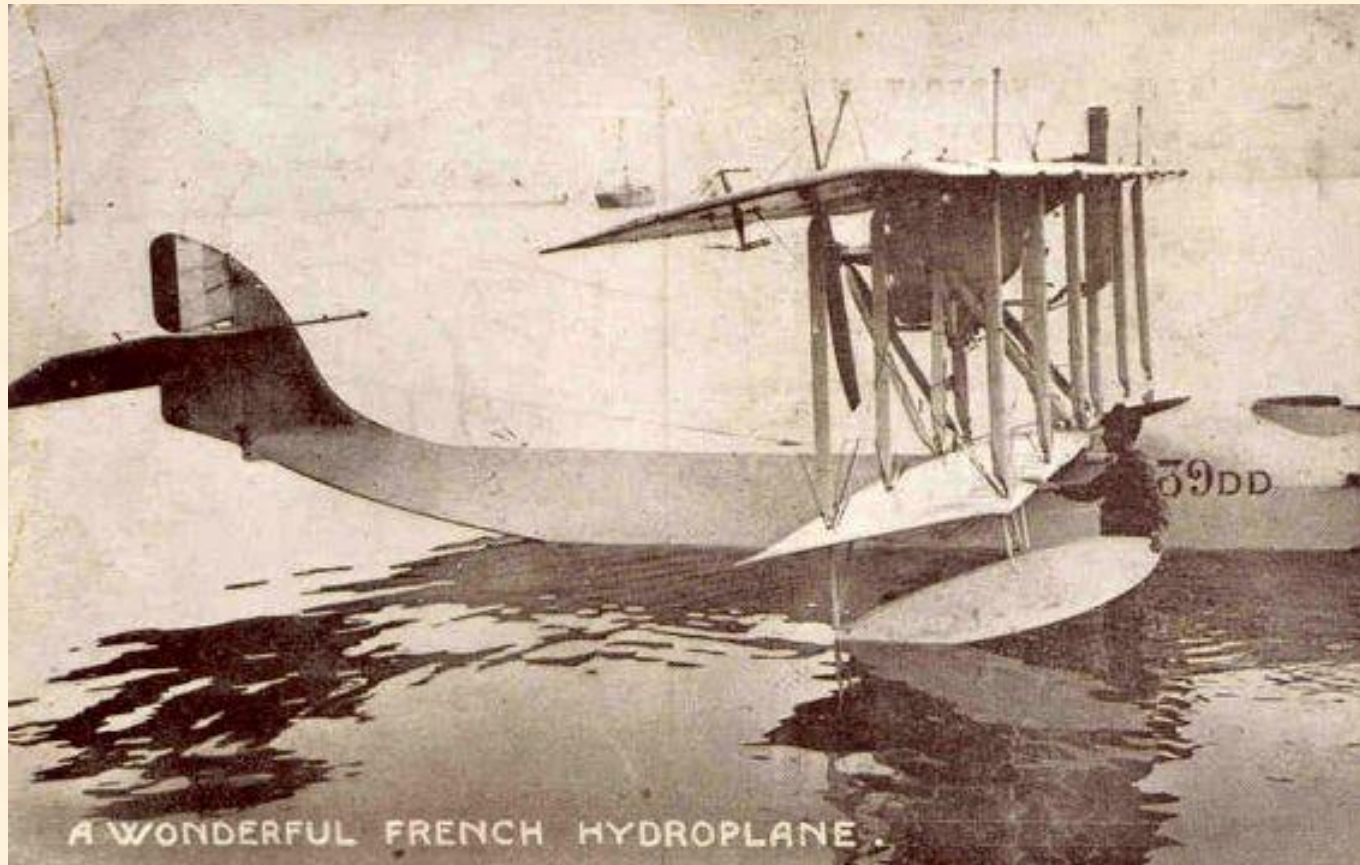
Roads that had been paved for motor cars between cities left small towns isolated from the rest of the country.



Rural people were also cut off from colleges, which were becoming more and more necessary as new skills were required for industry.



**Aviation is huge, due to the war and later, Charles Lindbergh.**



## What else took off in the twenties?

Department stores

Wonder bread

Band-Aids

Velveeta

Advertising billboards and commercials

Kleenex

Wheaties

Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade

La-Z-Boy Loungers

Gerber Baby Food

Fast Food



So we beat on, boats  
against the current, borne  
ceaselessly into the past.



The End