

THE ROARING 20s

Headlines and Culture of the 1920s

TOP HEADLINES

AMERICAN JUSTICE HAS BEEN BUSY

From giving the death sentence to accused murderers and anarchists, to convicting a Biology teacher of teaching evolutionary theory, the American courts have been busy. See how the trials of Sacco & Vanzetti and the Scopes "Monkey Trial" have been making headlines.

Continued on Pages 2&3

SO THIS GUY WALKS INTO A BAR...

...Or at least he'd like to! Is Prohibition a MUST, or is it a BUST? You decide.

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"TIN LIZZIE" PRODUCTION CAN'T BE STOPPED!

Henry Ford's Model T "Tin Lizzie" remains the fastest-produced, most affordable automobile in the world, and the mass production and mass consumption show no signs of stopping.

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IS THE WRITING ON THE WALL STREET?

Despite booming American industry, heavy consumer spending, easy access to credit, and strong investment in the Stock Market, economists are worried that the boom will turn into an economic bust. Could America be headed for a Great Depression?

Coming in Next Month's Edition

Quotes of the Week

President Calvin Coolidge: "The man who builds a factory builds a temple. And the man who works there worships there."

Al Capone: "They say I violate the prohibition law. Who doesn't?"



Bartolomeo Vanzetti & Nicola Sacco before their execution in the electric chair



Lucky Lindy and his Spirit of St. Louis



Klan Politics



Sacco & Vanzetti Trial Concludes -- Nativists Thrilled with the Verdict

On 15th April, 1920, Frederick Parmenter and Alessandro Berardelli, in South Braintree, were shot dead while carrying two boxes containing the payroll of a shoe factory. After the two robbers took the \$15,000 they got into a car containing several other men and were driven away.

Several eyewitnesses claimed that the robbers looked Italian. A large number of Italian immigrants were questioned but eventually the authorities decided to charge **Bartolomeo Vanzetti** and **Nicola Sacco** with the murders. Although the two men did not have criminal records, it was argued that they had committed the robbery to acquire funds for their anarchist political campaign.

The trial started on 21st May, 1921. The main evidence against the men was that they were both carrying a gun when arrested. Some people who saw the crime taking place identified Bartolomeo Vanzetti and Nicola Sacco as the robbers. Others disagreed and both men had good alibis. Vanzetti was selling fish in Plymouth while Sacco was in Boston with his wife having his photograph taken. The prosecution made a great deal of the fact that all those called to provide evidence to support these alibis were also Italian immigrants.

Vanzetti and Sacco were disadvantaged by not having a full grasp of the English language. Webster Thayer, the judge, was clearly prejudiced against anarchists. The previous year, he rebuked a jury for acquitting anarchist Sergie Zuboff of violating the criminal anarchy statute, and at one point in the trial, Thayer referred to Sacco and Vanzetti as "those anarchist bastards." It was clear from some of the answers Vanzetti and Sacco gave in court that they had misunderstood the question. During the trial the prosecution emphasized the men's radical political beliefs. Vanzetti and Sacco were also accused of unpatriotic behavior by fleeing to Mexico during the Great War.

In court Sacco claimed: "I know the sentence will be between two classes, the oppressed class and the rich class, and there will be always collision between one and the other. We fraternize the people with the books, with the literature. You persecute the people, tyrannize them and kill them. We try the education of people always. You try to put a path between us and some other nationality that hates each other. That is why I am here today on this bench, for having been of the oppressed class. Well, you are the oppressor." The trial lasted seven weeks and on 14th July, 1921, both men were



found guilty of first degree murder and sentenced to death. Journalists reported that when Judge Thayer passed sentence upon Sacco and Vanzetti, a woman in the courtroom said with terror: "It is death condemning life!"

Bartolomeo Vanzetti commented in court after the sentence was announced: "The jury were hating us because we were against the war, and the jury don't know that it makes any difference between a man that is against the war because he believes that the war is unjust, because he hate no country, because he is a cosmopolitan, and a man that is against the war because he is in favor of the other country that fights against the country in which he is, and therefore a spy, an enemy, and he commits any crime in the country in which he is in behalf of the other country in order to serve the other country. We are not men of that kind. Nobody can say that we are German spies or spies of any kind... I never committed a crime in my life - I have never stolen and I have never killed and I have never spilt blood, and I have fought against crime, and I have fought and I have sacrificed myself even to eliminate the crimes that the law and the church legitimate and sanctify."

Many observers believe that their conviction resulted from prejudice against them as Italian immigrants and because they held radical political beliefs. The case resulted in anti-US demonstrations in several European countries and at one of these in Paris, a bomb exploded killing twenty people. Sacco and Vanzetti are scheduled to be executed via the electric chair on August 23, 1927.

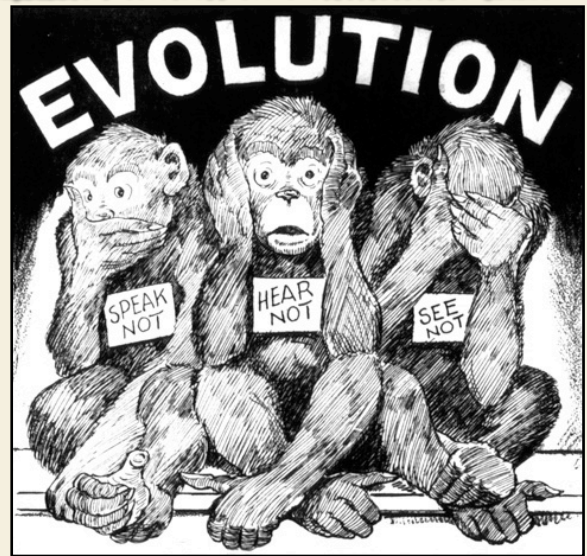
Fundamentalism Goes Militant Against the Teaching of Evolution

In a world threatened by broadminded beliefs, cosmopolitan culture, bootlegging, immoral movies and music, shorter skirt lengths, and modern science, many adherents of old-time religion see threats from modernism in their churches today. Known as **Militant Christian Fundamentalists**, these ultra-conservative Christians fear the new ideas that the Bible should be studied in the light of modern scholarship (or a “higher criticism” of Biblical content), and fear that teachers are trying to reconcile biological theories of evolution and **Darwinism** with Biblical teaching.

The fundamentalists are distinguished less by their belief in a faith that many others share than by their posture of hostility toward any other belief. Among fundamentalist leaders, only the three **Willing Jennings Bryan** has the following, prestige, and eloquence to make the movement a popular crusade. In 1921 Bryan sparked a drive for laws to prohibit the teaching of evolution in the public schools. He denounced Darwin with a zealous enthusiasm. Thanks to his efforts, anti-evolution bills have sprung up all over the United States, including in Texas, where Governor Miriam “Ma” Ferguson declared, “I am a Christian mother, and I am not going to let that kind of rot go into Texas schoolbooks.” More recently, the Tennessee state legislature also passed an anti-evolution bill, one which many hoped would never have to be tested.

The people of **Dayton, TN**, however, knew that to challenge the ruling could get their small town put on the map. They convinced a young biology teacher named **John T. Scopes** to accept an offer from the **American Civil Liberties Union** to challenge the ruling by teaching evolutionary theory in his classroom. They succeeded beyond their wildest hopes: the publicity from the “**monkey trial**” has been worldwide and enduring. Before the first day of the “monkey trial” on July 13, 1925, the streets of Dayton swarmed with publicity hounds, curiosity seekers, evangelists and atheists, a blind mountaineer who proclaimed himself to be the world’s greatest authority on the Bible, hot-dog and soda-pop hucksters, and a miscellany of reporters.

The two stars of the show were William Jennings Bryan, who offered his services to the prosecution, and



Clarence Darrow, the renowned trial lawyer of Chicago and a confessed agnostic. Darrow called Bryan to the stand as an expert witness on biblical interpretation. In his dialogue with Darrow, he repeatedly entrapped himself in literal-minded interpretations and exposed his ignorance of biblical history and scholarship, such as when he insisted that the world was created in 4004 B.C. At one point the two men, their patience exhausted in the broiling summer heat, lunged at each other, shaking their fists, prompting the judge to adjourn the court.

The next day testimony ended. The only issue before the court, the judge ruled, was whether Scopes had taught evolution, and no one denied that he had. He was found guilty, and was charged \$100, which he did not have to pay since the Tennessee Supreme Court has since overruled the fine on a legal technicality.

With more foresight than he knew, Bryan had described the trial as a “duel to the death.” A few days after it closed, he died suddenly of a heart condition aggravated by the heat and fatigue brought on by the monkey trial.



Clarence Darrow (pictured left) seated next to William Jennings Bryan (right) during the “Monkey Trial” in Dayton, TN.



Prohibition Already Causing Problems for an American Public that Wants their Drinks

America has always had a love affair with simple solutions to complex problems. Indians on good land? Move 'em out. You want Texas? Start a war with Mexico. Crime problem? Bring back the death penalty. It always seems so simple when politicians proclaim them, masses take up the cry and laws are passed with an outpouring of irresistible popular support. The problem is that these broad solutions rarely work the way they are supposed to. Prohibition was supposed to be America's greatest attempt at a simple solution, but is turning out to be its biggest failure.

Proposed by Congress during the Great War, the **Eighteenth Amendment** to the Constitution prohibited "the manufacture sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors" within the United States. It also cut off the import and export of beer, wine, and hard liquor. In January 1919 the amendment became part of the Constitution when every state but Rhode Island and Connecticut ratified the amendment, and Congress passed the **Volstead Act** to enforce the law.

To President Herbert Hoover, Prohibition has been "a great social and economic experiment, noble in motive and far-reaching in purpose." To Mark Twain, Prohibition drove "drunkenness behind doors and into dark places, and [will] not cure it or even diminish it."

Prohibition didn't just spring up as some wartime cure-all for the nation's social ills. The Prohibition spirit had been alive in America since colonial times, but was greatly revived in the nineteenth century, especially in the West, where drunkenness and immorality became inseparably linked. As the primary victims of social and economic ills spawned by alcoholism, women held prayer vigils in the streets outside the many saloons across the nation, and then moved to grassroots organizing. In 1874 the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) came together to fight alcohol, becoming the first broad-based national women's organization in America.

By the turn of the century, the temperance gang lost its temper, led by the militancy of Carrie Nation. Striding into the saloons of Kansas with an ax and shouting, "Smash, women, smash!" Nation and her followers reduced bars, bottles, glasses, mirrors, tables and everything else in their path to splinters and shards of glass.

Today in the 1920s, the sense of dislocation left after the war, the desire for "normalcy," the fear that emerged in Red Scares and Ku Klux Klan revivals have all helped pave the way for the Eighteenth Amendment. Now that Prohibition is in place, it has proven virtually unenforceable. "Bootlegger," "rum runner," and "moonshine" have become part of everyday language. For the rich, there are "speakeasies," the ostensibly private clubs, requiring codeword entry, that often operate under the watchful eye of the corner cop. For the poor, there is bathtub gin. Pharmacists write prescriptions for "medicinal" doses of alcohol, and more Catholics must be going to mass, because production of legal sacramental wine has increased by hundreds of thousands of gallons.

Today, some claim that Prohibition has some beneficial effects, such as the decrease in alcoholism and the drop in alcohol related deaths, and now most people do not spend as much of their wages on alcohol. However, these people overlook the increased fatalities from the deadly use of rubbing alcohol in "bathtub gin." They also ignore the death toll and cost of the rise of organized crime, which may have existed before Prohibition, but has gained its stranglehold by controlling most of the smuggling and distribution of illicit liquor -- not to mention the reports of gangland murders, prostitution and gambling rings, and millions of dollars made through bootlegging by crime leaders such as **Al Capone** in Chicago.

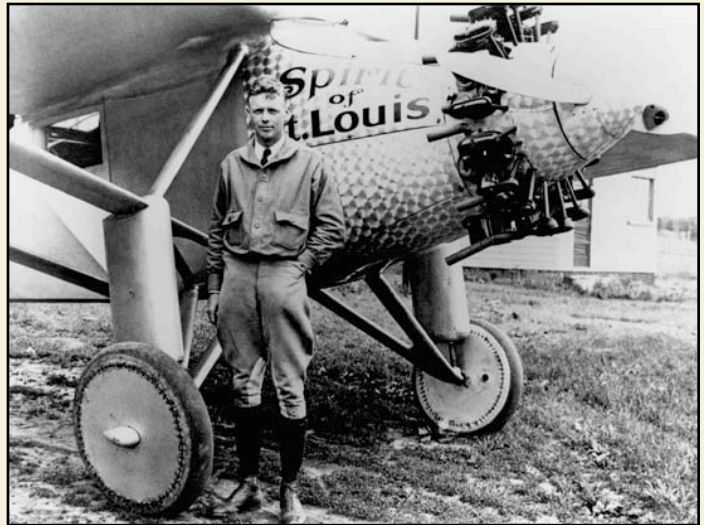
This country needs an amendment to repeal the Eighteenth Amendment, and it needs it soon.

“Lucky Lindy’s” Luck Runs Out as the Lindbergh Baby Kidnapping Case Comes to a Close

Since the Wright brothers had begun their famous experiments in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, in 1903, the race for the air has been underway. Pilots around the world have been competing for ways to impress the world with their flying abilities and make the airplane the new method of transportation and war potential. None have been able to match the accomplishment of **Charles Lindbergh**.

Lindbergh’s design of his aircraft, which he called *The Spirit of St. Louis*, allowed him to become the first man to fly solo across the Atlantic. It was an act of enormous daring, skill, and flying ability. The 3,600-mile flight began on Long Island on May 20, 1927. Lindbergh, attempting to win a \$25,000 purse promised to the first pilot to go from New York to Paris, carried only a few sandwiches, a quart of water, and letters of introduction. He wouldn’t need those. When he landed in Paris thirty-three hours later, Lindbergh was smothered in the adulation of France and the rest of Europe. His hero’s welcome would be repeated around the world as he became, like Ford, the symbol of do-anything American inventiveness and daring. A reclusive personality, Lindbergh became best known by his newspaper nickname, “Lucky Lindy,” and he was the world’s most familiar celebrity.


That celebrity led to the tragedy of his life. After his marriage to Anne Spencer Morrow, daughter of a U.S. senator and later a renowned writer, he lived in the glare of international publicity. In May 1932, their son, nineteen-month-old Charles Jr., was kidnapped and a \$50,000 dollar ransom demand was met. After several years of searching, the child’s remains have been discovered just a few miles away from the



Lindbergh house, murdered by a blow to the head. So far, few leads have been found to provide conclusive evidence of the killers’ identities, but a German immigrant named Bruno Hauptmann has been tied to the murder as a possible recipient of the ransom money. Hauptmann has been brought in for questioning and awaits trial.

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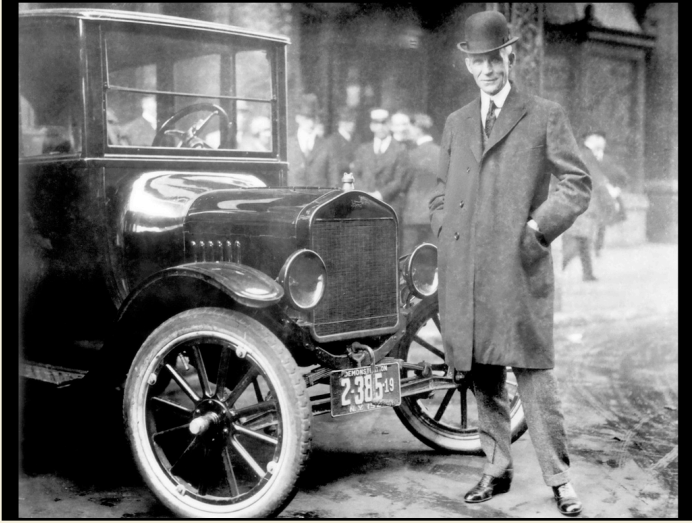
CHAS. A. LINDBERGH, JR.

OF HOPEWELL, N. J.

SON OF COL. CHAS. A. LINDBERGH

World-Famous Aviator

This child was kidnaped from his home
in Hopewell, N. J., between 8 and 10 p. m.
on Tuesday, March 1, 1932.



He May Not Have Invented It, but He's Perfected It: Henry Ford's Unstoppable Model T

Henry Ford did not invent the automobile or the assembly line. But his perfected versions of them have made him one of the richest and most powerful men in modern America.

The son of an Irish immigrant farmer, Ford had a mechanical inclination. In 1890 he went to work for the Edison company in Detroit and built his first gasoline-driven car there. Europeans had taken the lead in the development of the automobile, and the Duryea brothers of Massachusetts were the American pioneers. Ford borrowed from their ideas, envisioning the auto as a cheap box on wheels with a simple engine, and brought out his first **Model T** in 1909. In a year he sold almost 11,000 of them.

But Ford envisioned a car for the masses. When Ford and his engineers introduced the moving assembly line, an idea proposed in a 1911 book by Frederick W. Taylor, the mass-produced Model T revolutionized the auto industry. The efficiency of the assembly line cut the price tag on the Model T from \$950 in 1908 to under \$300. By 1914, Ford Motors turned out 248,000 Model T's,

almost half of all autos produced, at the rate of one every 24 seconds.

Now that Ford Motors have been realizing enormous profits, Ford has been making headlines by paying his workers five dollars per day, almost double the going rate. He wouldn't be able to do it if he couldn't afford it; at the same time, Ford himself is clearing up to \$25,000 per day. Paying his workers more money is Ford's only way to keep them from quitting the monotonous, dehumanizing assembly line. He has also realized that it is one way to enable his workers to buy Fords.



For Americans, it has been love at first sight with the automobile. It is fair to say that Ford's Model T "**Tim Lizzie**" has revolutionized American life. The new, auto-induced freedom, and the economic prosperity being created by the automobile and related industries, has helped to open up American society in the 1920s.

D.W. Griffith's Birth of a Nation Remains a Box-Office Sensation!

Klansmen Promote its Messages through Political Strength

The resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan as both a fraternal and political organization has found a new popular appeal for their beliefs, and it has come on the silver screen.

A controversial, explicitly racist, but landmark American film masterpiece - these all describe ground-breaking producer/director D. W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation* (1915). The domestic melodrama/epic originally premiered with the title *The Clansman* in February, 1915 in Los Angeles, California, but three months later was retitled with the present title at its world premiere in New York, to emphasize the birthing process of the US. The film was based on former North Carolina Baptist minister Rev. Thomas Dixon Jr.'s anti-black, 1905 bigoted melodramatic staged play, *The Clansman*.

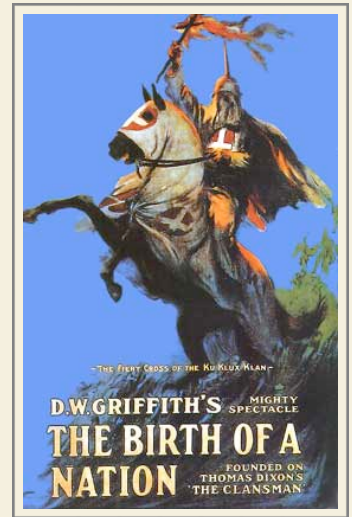
The subject matter of the film caused immediate criticism by the newly-created National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) for its racist and "vicious" portrayal of blacks, its proclamation of miscegenation, its pro-Klan stance, and its endorsement of slavery. As a result, two scenes were cut (a love scene between Reconstructionist Senator and his mulatto mistress, and a fight scene). But the film continues to be denounced as "the meanest vilification of the Negro race." Riots have broken out in major cities (Boston, Philadelphia, among others), and it was denied release in many other places (Chicago, Ohio, Denver, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, and Minneapolis, eight states in total). Subsequent lawsuits and picketing tailed the film since it has been re-released in 1924.

The resulting controversy has only helped to fuel the film's box-office appeal, and it has become a major hit. Even President Woodrow Wilson during a private screening at the White House is reported to have enthusiastically exclaimed: "It's like writing history with lightning. And my only regret is that it is all terribly true."

In its explicitly caricaturist presentation of the KKK as heroes and Southern blacks as villains and violent rapists and threats to the social order, it appeals to white Americans who subscribed to the mythic, romantic view of the Old Plantation South. Many viewers have been thrilled by the love affair between Northern and Southern characters and the climactic rescue scene. The film also thematically explored

two great American issues: inter-racial sex and marriage, and the empowerment of blacks. Ironically, although the film has been advertised as authentic and accurate, the film's major black roles in the film -- including the Senator's mulatto mistress, the mulatto politician brought to power in the South, and faithful freed slaves -- were stereotypically played and filled by white actors - in blackface.

Its climactic finale, the suppression of the black threat to white society by the glorious Ku Klux Klan, has helped to assuage some of America's sexual fears about the rise of defiant, strong (and sexual) black men and the repeal of laws forbidding intermarriage.



For the resurgent Ku Klux Klan, this film possesses great propagandistic appeal for the strength of the KKK as a political movement. With its membership at approximately 8 million members, the new KKK has created a mass movement in conservative defense of native white morality in their campaign for "100 percent Americanism." Their campaign has effected not only grassroots, everyday Americans, but even major political figures have expressed their support for the new KKK. Giffeth's film promises to hold even more potential for the popular appeal of the Klan.