

Lesson 1: What is an Alabama Veteran?

Part 1: World War One and Alabama's Role

Part D: Changes after the War

Vocabulary Words: industrial leader, profits, Suffrage, amendment, Paree, migration, tenant

World War One changed the lives of men and women in Alabama, in the United States, and in Europe.

In Europe

The economy of Europe was greatly damaged by the War. Men and women lost their jobs because the bombing destroyed so many factories and businesses. Many buildings where people lived and worked were destroyed. Everyone had to work together to clear away the damage and rebuild the cities.



Homes in Europe damaged by the bombs: picture courtesy of Library of Congress



A printing business in Paris destroyed by bombs: Picture courtesy of Library of Congress



Church damaged by bombs or airplanes: Picture courtesy of Library of Congress

In the United States

The economy of the United States improved after the War. The U.S. became the military and **industrial leader** of the world because none of the factories or businesses in the U.S. were destroyed by the War. The U.S. made steel and electricity. It continued to make guns and other military equipment. It made many products for everyday use, such as cars, clothes, and appliances. The factories and businesses made a lot of money and their **profits** grew.

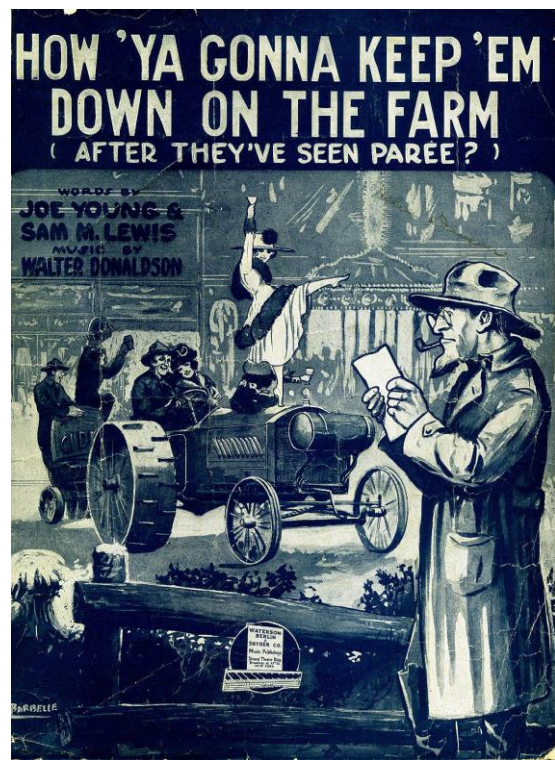
The lives of the people in the U.S. changed in both positive and negative ways. One positive way was that the War expanded both women's and men's views of jobs. The women very successfully took over the men's jobs when the men went to Europe to fight the War. The women learned they could do these jobs as well as the men. However, when the men returned, the women gave back the jobs to the men. Many people thought this was the right thing to do.

Women, though, were unhappy about losing the jobs they were successful at during the War. They decided to fight for the right to vote so that they had more power to work outside the home if they wanted to. The Women's **Suffrage** Movement grew stronger and in 1920 enough women convinced Congress to pass the 19th **Amendment** to the Constitution of the United States.



Women marching in Washington, DC to support Women's Suffrage: Picture courtesy of the Library of Congress

The men changed their view about jobs, too. After being in England and France, they were not satisfied to return to the old way of life. They wanted something different. As a result, a great migration from the rural farms to the cities took place all across the United States. A popular song, "How 'Ya Gonna Keep 'Em down on the Farm, After They've Seen **Paree**?" reflected the men's new way of thinking. The cover of the sheet music to this song is shown at the right.



In Alabama

Men returning to Alabama from the War moved to cities like Mobile, Montgomery, and Birmingham. Even though there were more jobs available in the cities, the companies and businesses that hired people wanted to keep their **profits** high, so they paid the workers as little as possible.

African-American men returning to Alabama from the War had additional problems. During the war, in Europe, African-American men lived under the same conditions as White men. When they went home, they returned to Jim Crow laws that forced strict segregation. They often lived in fear of their lives. And they were paid even less than White men.

Some men returning from the War stayed on the farms. There were many, many small farms throughout rural Alabama. But modern equipment like the tractor and combine harvester made it possible for wealthier farmers to buy several small farms to create a large one. Large farms made more money. There were many small farm owners or renters who could not afford to buy more property so they made less money and often lived a life of struggle and poverty.

The **Great Migration** of thousands of people, mostly African-Americans, from the South to the North was a result of families looking for a better life. They wanted to escape poverty and discrimination. They settled in cities like Chicago and Detroit. At first, the cities could not handle the numbers of new people moving in. There were not enough houses or apartments. There wasn't enough space in the schools. There wasn't a good transportation system. People crowded together in small rooms and apartments, which led to unsanitary conditions and disease. However, there were enough jobs so the people stayed. Gradually, over many years, the cities found solutions for the problems and the lives of the people improved.



“TCI's Fairfield Steel Works located in Fairfield, Alabama, completed in 1917, rolled steel ingots for [Mobile's](#) shipbuilding industry during [World War I](#). One response to the steel factory was the construction of multifamily housing in the area to accommodate the influx of workers.” Picture courtesy of the **Encyclopedia of Alabama**

“Fairfield expanded further in the 1920s. TCI constructed a sheet-metal mill and added new blast furnaces. Jemison built additional housing for the new black and white workers. Fairfield High School and Fairfield Industrial High School were established for whites and blacks, respectively. Fairfield Industrial High graduates include Major League star [Willie Mays](#) and Birmingham's Mayor [Richard Arrington Jr.](#) (his father worked for TCI). Angelina Rice, the mother of [Condoleezza Rice](#), was a science teacher at Fairfield Industrial High School.” The above copied from the **Encyclopedia of Alabama**.



A small farm and farmer's home in Coffee County, Alabama in the early 1920's



Tenant farmer Charlie McGuire plows his field with a team of mules on his Pike County, Alabama farm in this photograph by Marion Wolcott courtesy of the Library of Congress and **Encyclopedia of Alabama**



Large Farm equipment in Baldwin County, Alabama: Picture courtesy of **Encyclopedia of Alabama**

World War One: Part D: Vocabulary Words

1. **Industrial leader:** the best at making products
In the Story: after the war, the United States was the best at making products (manufacturing) and could make more than other countries.
2. **Profits:** the difference in the amount of money that a business earned and the amount of money they spent in making the product. For example, if you buy wood to make a box for \$5.00 and the cost to make it is \$2.00 you would have spent \$7.00 to produce the box. If you sold the box for \$10, your profit would be \$3.00.
In The Story: businesses often would pay their workers very low wages so that when the businesses sold the products they would make much more profit on the sale.
3. **Suffrage:** the right to vote in political elections
In the Story: the women's Suffrage Movement grew stronger; this means that many people were trying to help women get the right to vote in elections.
4. **Amendment:** a change to the US Constitution (laws that govern us) by adding a new rule
In the Story: the 19th Amendment was written and the Congress passed it. This amendment said that women could now vote in political elections.
5. **Paree:** a nickname for Paris which is the capital city of France. Paris was a large city and much more modern than the rural South.
In the Story: After they've seen Paree means after the soldiers visited the city of Paris while they were in France during the war and saw all the activities there, they might not be happy back in Alabama on a farm.
6. **Migration:** the movement from one place to another place
In The Story: the Great Migration means a very large number of people moved from one place to another place.
7. **Tenant:** a farmer who rents rather than owns the land that he uses to grow crops.
In the Story: many farmers did not have the money to buy land. They would rent land from the landowner and pay the rent from the crops they grew.