

# Resources

## 1920's Timeline

Note: This party doesn't involve a history quiz, so you shouldn't feel the need to memorize names and dates in detail. However, if you want to give your character a little more authenticity, here are some of the things that were happening at the time.

1840

- Portland, Maine becomes first "dry" city.

1851

- Maine makes the sale of liquor illegal.

1893

- Anti-Saloon League founded.

1917

- February - First jazz record ever made, "Livery Stable Blues," by Original Dixieland Jazz Band.
- April 6 - America enters the Great War (World War I).
- Late - 18th Amendment passed by Congress.

1918

- November 7 - False armistice reports ignite celebration.
- November 11 - The Armistice signed by Woodrow Wilson and war with Germany ends -- huge ticker-tape celebration follows.

1919

- Al Capone arrives in Chicago to manage the 4 Deuces Club.
- January 16 - Necessary 36 (2/3 majority) states ratify 18th Amendment.
- October 10 - Volstead Act adopted.

1920

- Mail-bombs explode in officials', capitalists' hands, associated with Bolshevism.
- Anti-Semitism, race riots.
- Sub-machine gun invented.
- The first broadcasting stations are opened.
- First cross-country airmail flight in the U.S.
- Sound recording is done electrically.
- Post Office accepts the postage meter.
- KDKA in Pittsburgh broadcasts first scheduled programs.
- January 16 - Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer declares that a "Red Menace" exists, and authorities begin to raid private homes and labor headquarters.
- January 17 - The 18th Amendment (Prohibition Amendment) goes into effect at midnight. Although the law is challenged in some states (New Jersey), the Supreme Court later declares the law valid.
- February 11 - League of Nations holds first meeting in London.
- May 5 - Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti are arrested on charges of murder and robbery.
- May - Germany reinstates censorship of films.
- Summer - Huge race riots in Chicago, ". . . civil war" with Negroes.

- June - Versailles Treaty finished.
- June 26 - tabloid New York Daily News premieres at newsstands.
- July 1 - war-time prohibition takes effect.
- August 26 - 19th Amendment in effect, giving women the right to vote.
- September 9 - Boston police strike, Gov. Calvin Coolidge stops strike and becomes overnight hero.
- October 19 - Membership in the Communist Party ruled grounds for deportation by New York judge.
- November - estimated 1 million people on official strikes in U.S.
- November 16 - White Russians defeated in final battle of Russian Civil War.
- November 21 - "Bloody Sunday" in Ireland: 12 Irish, 14 British murdered.
- Popular songs: Look for the Silver Lining (from Sally by Jerome Kern); Wild Rose (from Sally by Jerome Kern); Rose of Washington Square (from the Ziegfeld Follies of 1920); Second-Hand Rose; When My Baby Smiles at Me; I'll Be With You in Apple Blossom Time

## 1921

- Quartz crystals keep radio signals from wandering.
- The word "robot" enters the language.
- KKK begins rise.
- Western Union begins wirephoto service.
- Coue: "Every day in every way I am getting better and better," called "auto-suggestion," becomes fad in the next few years.
- ". . . bill pending in Utah providing fine and imprisonment for those who wore on the streets 'skirts higher than three inches above the ankle'", reported New York American. Virginia legislatures debated bill forbidding woman from wearing shirt waists or evening gowns showing "more than 3 inches of her throat", Ohio similar bill, but 2 inches, and limiting sale of any "garment which unduly displays or accentuates the lines of the female figure," and prohibiting any "female over fourteen years of age" from wearing "a skirt which does not reach to that part of the foot known as the instep."
- George Washington Carver of the Tuskegee Institution presents his innovative ideas on agriculture to the U. S. House of Representatives.
- Former president William Howard Taft is appointed to the Supreme Court.
- December. By order of President Harding, Eugene Debs is freed from prison.
- American Birth Control League is formed.
- Edith Wharton wins the Pulitzer Prize for literature for *The Age of Innocence*. Although some of the judges wished to award the prize to Sinclair Lewis's *Main Street*, others believe Lewis's book to be too negative in its representation of small-town America.
- James Joyce's *Ulysses* is published in Paris; 500 copies imported to America are seized by the U. S. Post Office as obscene material and burned.
- March 4 - Woodrow Wilson leaves White House for his home on S street.
- April - Height of Big Red Scare.
- April 2 - Albert Einstein lectures in New York about his theory of relativity.
- April 10 - Sun Yat-sen elected President of China.
- Summer - Harding conducts front porch campaign, Wilson counters with exhaustive railroad campaign.
- June - Elwell Case.
- June 22 - Outbreak of civil war in China, related to Sun Yat-sen election.
- June 30 - Chinese Communist Party is formed.
- July - Hem 9" above ground.
- July - Jack Dempsey-Georges Carpentier fight in Jersey City, broadcast to 80 points in country.
- July 14 - Sacco and Vanzetti found guilty of murder.

- July 29 - Adolf Hitler elected President of National Socialist German Workers' Party.
- July-September. Wage cuts and massive unemployment cause unrest and an increase in violence. The newly formed Hoover Commission suggests price cuts and shorter hours rather than an increase in wages; the average working day is 12-14 hours.
- September 16 - Stock Exchange, Wall Street, J.P. Morgan building (nearby) bombed by wagon-bomb, 30 dead and hundreds injured. Communist interest suspected.
- November 2 - KDKA, East Pittsburgh, first broadcasting station opened by Westinghouse to carry Harding-Cox election returns.
- November 7 - Benito Mussolini declares himself leader of National Fascist party in Italy.
- November 11 - The Unknown Soldier buried.
- Popular songs: The Sheik of Araby; I'm Just Wild About Harry (from Shuffle Along); My Man (from the Ziegfeld Follies of 1921); Love Will Find a Way (from Shuffle Along); All By Myself (by Irving Berlin); Ma--He's Making Eyes at Me; There'll Be Some Changes Made

## 1922

- The World War Foreign Debt commission tries to sort out the issue of war debts owed to the United States, which insists on full payment and thereby causes ill will among European nations.
- Mah Jong fad.
- George "Bugs" Moran arrives in Chicago to join the North Side Gang.
- The Supreme Court declares the 19th Amendment (votes for women) to be constitutional.
- The Capper-Volstead Act permits farmers to form cooperatives for buying and selling goods without being prosecuted for anti-trust violations.
- F. Scott Fitzgerald publishes *The Beautiful and Damned*.
- T. S. Eliot publishes *The Waste Land*.
- Sinclair Lewis publishes *Babbitt*.
- Estimated 5,000 speakeasies New York City alone.
- Lenin decides, for the "education" of Russia, "Of all the arts, for us cinema is the most important."
- A commercial is broadcast, \$100 for ten minutes.
- Technicolor introduces two-color process for movies.
- Germany's UFA produces a film with an optical sound track.
- First 3-D movie, requires spectacles with one red and one green lens.
- Singers desert phonograph horn mouths for acoustic studios.
- *Nanook of the North*, the first documentary.
- C.B.C. founded, name changed to Columbia Pictures in 1924.
- February 2 - Director William Desmond Taylor murdered. Case is never solved.
- March 18 - Following non-violent protests against British rule in India, Mahatma Gandhi imprisoned for six years on charges of sedition.
- May - Rin Tin Tin makes his debut in *The Man from Hell's River*.
- September 16 - Reverend Edward Wheeler Hall, Mrs. James Mills shot in Jersey ("Murder of the Century").
- September 17 - First anaglyphic 3-D feature film, *The Power of Love*.
- October 3 - Mrs. Rebecca Fenton first woman appointed to U.S. Senate.
- October 18 - British Broadcasting Company (BBC) established.
- Popular songs: I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate; My Rambler Rose; Toot, Toot, Tootsie! (Goodbye); Chicago (That Toddlin' Town); Three O'Clock in the Morning; 'Way Down Yonder in New Orleans; Kiss in the Dark

## 1923

- The Teapot Dome scandal erupts as the deal between Harry F. Sinclair of Mammoth Oil and Secretary of the Interior Albert B. Fall is revealed. Fall had illegally leased federal lands to

Sinclair's company without calling for competitive bids; after the investigation, Fall is the first cabinet member in U. S. history to go to jail.

- U. S. Steel implements the 8-hour day, a victory for labor.
- Willa Cather publishes *A Lost Lady*.
- People on one ship can talk to people on another.
- A picture, broken into dots, is sent by wire.
- 16 mm nonflammable film makes its debut.
- Kodak introduces home movie equipment.
- Neon advertising signs.
- Electric razor patented by Schick.
- Time magazine founded.
- The Majestic Theater created -- "Atmospheric" cinema architecture.
- Hollywoodland sign erected as real-estate advertisement. Later changed to Hollywood.
- March 9 - Lenin resigns as leader of Communist Party following a massive stroke.
- August 2 - Harding dies of "stroke of apoplexy." Coolidge is sworn in on August 3.
- September 1 - Earthquake devastates Tokyo and Yokohama.
- Dec. - Jess Smith commits suicide.
- Dec. - Average person reported to attend movies a little better than once a week.
- Popular songs: Yes! We Have No Bananas; Who's Sorry Now; That Old Gang of Mine; Downhearted Blues (sung by Bessie Smith); I Cried for You; I Won't Say I Will, But I Won't Say I Won't

1924

- Crossword puzzle book fad.
- 43% of cars produced in US are "closed."
- Low tech achievement: notebooks get spiral bindings.
- The Eveready Hour is the first sponsored radio program.
- Daily coast-to-coast air mail service.
- Pictures are transmitted over telephone lines.
- Two and a half million radio sets in the U.S.
- Widespread movement to make Henry Ford president.
- Department of Commerce estimates value of illegal liquor at \$40,000,000.
- New York State openly secedes from prohibition.
- Democratic Convention held at Madison Square Garden.
- J. Edgar Hoover becomes head of Bureau of Investigation (changed to Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1935).
- First talking newsreel produced by Phonofilm, featuring Calvin Coolidge.
- Congress passes a new and more restrictive immigration law; quotas are now set at only 2 percent of existing nationalities in the U.S. in 1920, and Japanese immigration is suspended.
- Calvin Coolidge is elected by a large margin over the Democratic candidate, John W. Davis, and the Progressive candidate, Robert La Follette.
- Nellie Ross of Wyoming and Miriam Ferguson of Texas are elected governors of their states.
- Eugene O'Neill publishes *Desire under the Elms*.
- H. L. Mencken and George Jean Nathan found The American Mercury.
- January - Remus and others begin prison term on "Millionaire's Row."
- May 17 - Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer created.
- July 5 - Olympic Games begin in Paris.
- November - Bill McCoy surrenders his sloop Arethusa to Coast Guard.
- November 14 - Le Vieux-Colombier, first avant-garde film theater opened in Paris.
- Popular songs: Deep in My Heart; All Alone (by Irving Berlin); What'll I Do? (by Irving Berlin); Fascinating Rhythm (by George and Ira Gershwin); The Man I Love (by George and Ira

Gershwin); Lady, Be Good (by George and Ira Gershwin); It Had to Be You; Tea for Two; I'll See You in My Dreams; Indian Love Call (from Rose Marie)

1925

- Norphelt, Arkansas passes law making it unlawful for sex before marriage.
- Estimated 5% of liquor smuggled, intercepted.
- SS is formed in Germany.
- Commercial picture facsimile radio service across the U.S.
- All-electric phonograph is built.
- A moving image, the blades of a model windmill, is telecast.
- From France, a wide-screen film.
- F. Scott Fitzgerald publishes *The Great Gatsby*.
- Ernest Hemingway publishes *In Our Time*.
- Theodore Dreiser publishes *An American Tragedy*.
- Gertrude Stein publishes *The Making of Americans*.
- Alain Locke publishes *The New Negro*.
- John Dos Passos publishes *Manhattan Transfer*.
- Edna Ferber's *So Big* wins the Pulitzer Prize.
- *The New Yorker* founded by Harold Ross. Its unofficial motto: "Not for the little old lady from Dubuque."
- January 5 - Nellie Taylor Ross elected in Wyoming as first woman Governor.
- January 20 - Miriam "Ma" Ferguson elected in Texas -- second woman Governor.
- February - A diphtheria epidemic in Alaska captures the country's attention as dog teams drive through the winter weather to deliver antidiphtheria serum to Nome.
- July 24 - Scopes fined for teaching theory of evolution -- trial to follow.
- July - John Thomas Scopes "Monkey Trial," Dayton Tennessee: William Jennings Bryan for prosecution, Clarence Darrow, Dudley Field Malone, Arthur Garfield Hays from Civil Liberties Union in NYC for defense.
- August 8 - First KKK national congress Washington DC.
- Late - Shenandoah, Dirigible wrecks.
- Late - Florida Real Estate boom climax.
- Popular songs: I'm Sitting on Top of the World; If You Knew Susie, Like I Know Susie (by Buddy de Sylva); Manhattan; Yes Sir, That's My Baby; Sweet Georgia Brown; Alabama Bound; Show Me the Way to Go Home; Always (by Irving Berlin)

1926

- 750 deaths in New York due to bad booze.
- Contract Bridge fad.
- Beginning of suburban boom (Queens blossoms).
- Safeway Supermarkets founded.
- Baird demonstrates an electro-mechanical TV system.
- Some radios get automatic volume control, a mixed blessing.
- A land boom in Florida comes to a halt as a massive tornado causes enormous damage.
- The Book-of-the-Month Club.
- In U.S., first 16mm movie is shot.
- Goddard launches liquid-fuel rocket.
- Permanent radio network, NBC, is formed.
- Bell Telephone Labs transmit film by television.
- The Air Commerce Act regulates civil aviation; the Army Air Corps is established. This occurs just one year after Col. William "Billy" Mitchell had been suspended from the Army for 5 years without pay for insisting on the importance of air power in the national defense.
- Gertrude Ederle swims the English channel in 14 hours, 31 minutes.

- Ernest Hemingway publishes *The Sun Also Rises*.
- Hart Crane publishes *The Bridge*.
- Langston Hughes publishes *The Weary Blues*.
- U. S. Marines land in Nicaragua to suppress a revolt and will stay until 1933.
- Richard Byrd makes the first flight over the North Pole.
- August - *Die Abenteuer des Prinzen Achmed*, first feature-length animation, by Lotte Reiniger.
- August 6 - *Don Juan* released in "Refrigerated Warner Theater" -- first Vitaphone release including sound-on-disk sound synchronization.
- August 23 - Death of Rudolph Valentino, age 31.
- September 1 - Dempsey-Tunney fight, Philadelphia.
- September 8 - Germany joins League of Nations, Spain resigns membership
- November 15 - National Broadcasting Company (NBC) founded in New York
- Popular songs: Someone to Watch Over Me (by George and Ira Gershwin); Blue Skies (by Irving Berlin); Bye, Bye Blackbird; The Birth of the Blues; Are You Lonesome Tonight; When the Red, Red Robin Comes Bob, Bob, Bobbin' Along; Tip Toe Through the Tulips