

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF MICHIGAN

## *Michigan Before the Europeans*

When French explorers first visited Michigan in the early seventeenth century, there were approximately 100,000 Native Americans living in the Great Lakes region. Of these, the estimated population of what is now Michigan was approximately 15,000. Several tribes made the forests and river valleys here their home. The main groups, sometimes referred to as “The Three Fires,” were the **Chippewa (Ojibway)**, who lived mainly in the Upper Peninsula and the eastern part of the Lower Peninsula; the **Ottawa**, who resided along the western part of the Lower Peninsula; and the **Potawatomi**, who occupied part of southwestern Michigan after migrating from what is now eastern Wisconsin. Other significant tribes in this region included the **Huron** (sometimes known as the Wyandotte), who came to the southeastern area of Michigan from the Ontario side of Lake Huron; the **Sauk**, who resided in the Saginaw River valley; the **Miami**, who lived along the St. Joseph River before migrating to western Ohio; and the **Menominee**, who lived in northern Wisconsin and parts of the Upper Peninsula.

Most Native American settlements in the Great Lakes region were along river valleys or near the shoreline of the Great Lakes, and, much like today, most of the population located in the southern half of the Lower Peninsula. Tribal settlements were not permanent, with groups moving to new locations every few years. Although agriculture was limited by soil conditions and dense forest, the Native Americans of this region did cultivate crops. Corn, beans, and squash were grown and wild apples, berries, nuts, game, fish, honey, and wild rice provided other sources of food. Maple sugar was produced from the sap of maple trees and birch trees were used for housing materials and canoes.

The original inhabitants of this region were mobile people. They utilized the rivers and lakes for their transportation. Their trails, paths, and portages were later traversed by the *coureurs de bois*, English and French fur traders, and New England settlers. Several state and federal highways, including much of the interstate system, now follow pathways first traveled by these Native Americans.

The Native Americans of the pre-European era in Michigan left behind more than 1,000 **burial mounds** similar to those found in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri. Many mounds were discovered in the lower Grand River and Muskegon River valleys of west-central Michigan. The most puzzling prehistoric remnants, however, were the carefully designed and arranged ridges of earth described as “garden beds.” These detailed geometric creations, long since destroyed by pioneers’ plows, consisted of ridges of soil about eighteen inches high and covered many acres. Outside of a few found in Indiana and Wisconsin, the “garden beds” have been found only in Michigan. Their function remains a mystery.

Another question that has plagued historians and archaeologists for generations involves the copper fields of the western Upper Peninsula near Lake Superior. Prehistoric miners worked these fields along the Keweenaw Peninsula and on Isle Royale at least 4,000 years ago. Archaeological evidence indicates that **copper** was quarried from veins in open pits for hundreds of years by an unknown tribe or tribes. Nuggets of nearly pure native copper were hammered and annealed into the shape of tools, which were valued items of trade. Michigan copper was found among Native Americans as far south as the Gulf of Mexico and from the Rockies to the Alleghenies. Curiously, however, the use and mining of copper were unknown to the tribes in this region when the Europeans came to the Great Lakes in the seventeenth century.

## The French Era

The first whites to see Michigan were French explorers. The earliest encounters between Europeans and Native Americans in this region were strongly influenced by a man who probably never visited Michigan, **Samuel de Champlain**. The founder of Quebec in 1608, Champlain is thought to have visited the eastern shores of Georgian Bay by 1612. He sent a young man named **Etienne Brulé** and a companion named Grenoble to travel west, seeking the fabled “northwest passage” to the Orient. It is believed that Brulé reached the Sault Ste. Marie area in 1618 and returned to Michigan in 1621, traveling as far west as the Keweenaw Peninsula, where he picked up samples of copper. Jean Nicolet, another Champlain protégé who was seeking access to the Orient, came through the Straits of Mackinac in 1634 before coming ashore along Green Bay dressed in garb designed to impress the Chinese he hoped to find.

Samuel de Champlain, in addition to advancing exploration of the Great Lakes, forged alliances and fostered conflict among various tribes that influenced Michigan’s settlement for 200 years. In 1609, Champlain’s use of his musket while assisting the Hurons in a battle with a small group of Mohawks, part of the Iroquois Nation, near Lake Champlain in New York made an enemy of what was probably the strongest group in the entire region. The incident also limited French access to the lower Great Lakes. As a result, the route taken by French explorers, traders, and missionaries followed the Ottawa River and Lake Nipissing instead of Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, and the Detroit River. Consequently, settlements in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan were established much earlier than in the southern portion of the state.

The earliest French explorers in the region were soon followed by **French missionaries**. These courageous and dedicated men endured unspeakable hardships in their attempt to convert the Native Americans to Christianity. They established missions and settlements throughout the lakes and the Mississippi River valley. Many Michigan landmarks memorialize their influence.

In 1641, Father Charles Raymbault and Father Isaac Jogues preached at Sault Ste. Marie. Father René Mesnard established the first regular mission at Keweenaw Bay in 1660. Beginning in 1665, Father Claude Allouez spent twenty-five years working among the people in the Keweenaw region, Green Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Illinois, and southwestern Michigan, where he devoted most of his efforts. Father Jacques Marquette founded the first permanent settlement in Michigan at Sault Ste. Marie in 1668 and, in 1671, founded St. Ignace. That same year, a military post was established at St. Ignace and named Fort de Buade. This fort was later abandoned, and **Fort Michilimackinac** was built on the southern shore of the Straits. In 1679, René Robert Cavalier de La Salle established **Fort Miami** at the mouth of the St. Joseph River, and by 1690, Father Claude Aveneau established a mission at the site of present-day Niles, where Fort St. Joseph was soon built.



*The Delisle Map. This 1703 map is thought to be the first to include Detroit.*

French **coureurs de bois**, a loosely defined term for unlicensed traders, were a sharp contrast to the priests and nobility who established forts and missions. They were rugged individuals who lived among the Native Americans, respected their customs, and hunted and trapped the region's rich game.

Much of Michigan's early history was shaped by the long-standing conflicts between England and France. The military forts built in Michigan and elsewhere in the Great Lakes region were a response to a growing British interest in this area. In 1694, **Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac**, the commandant of the Michilimackinac post, saw the threat posed by the British, who were forming alliances with the Native Americans. Cadillac sought and received permission to establish a fortified settlement at "place du detroit." On July 24, 1701, Cadillac and a party of 100 established **Fort Pontchartrain**, which soon became a major trading post and a strategic location for the eventual settlement of the region. Within a short time, several thousand Native Americans settled near the area, and some French families moved in and established narrow "ribbon farms" along the Detroit River. Soon after the founding of Fort Pontchartrain, the area became the site of British-inspired raids by various Indians. At the same time, the fur trade was becoming more lucrative, and the intensity of British and French animosities resulted in the **French and Indian War**, the third Anglo-French war fought during the eighteenth century. Although no major battles of this war were fought in Michigan, the war ended the French era and began the British era following the British victory on the Plains of Abraham at Quebec in 1759. On November 19, 1760, the French formally surrendered Detroit to British Major Robert Rogers, thus ending almost a century and a half of French rule in Michigan.

## ***The British Era***

The British era of Michigan history was marked by great contentiousness, military activity, and armed hostilities. Michigan was both the site of many conflicts and the base from which attacks on other areas of the region were launched, such as the settlements in Ohio and Kentucky.

The arrival of the British in Michigan brought about great changes in the interactions between the Europeans and the Native Americans. The French treated the Native Americans with a certain measure of respect and a laissez-faire attitude. Many voyageurs took wives and lived among tribes. The French missionaries sought to "save" the Native American. French officials regularly gave gifts (including copious amounts of liquor) to the tribes. Traders were thought by Indians to be fair in their dealings.

The British, meanwhile, allied themselves with tribes that were traditional enemies of the tribes in Michigan in the 1600s. The English style of imposing law was in strong contrast to the more relaxed French approach. The British were intent upon developing the rich **fur trade**. They actively discouraged settlement of the interior region of Michigan in an effort to safeguard the fur empire. In spite of efforts to discourage development, settlers began making their way across the mountains and established settlements in Kentucky and along the Ohio River.

A combination of policy changes by the British and awareness of the threat presented by encroaching settlers led to **Pontiac's Rebellion**. Pontiac was a brilliant and forceful Ottawa leader. Encouraged by the French who remained in the region, Pontiac and leaders of other tribes across the interior devised a plan to oust the British. Pontiac was the architect of the plan in Michigan. Through a series of locally orchestrated attacks, all of the British forts, except for Detroit, Pitt, and Niagara, fell in 1763. In Detroit, Pontiac's plan was frustrated by an advance warning to Major Henry Gladwin, who learned of the plan and surprise attack. Instead, Pontiac laid siege to Detroit beginning in May, 1763, and continuing until November of that year, when the overall failure of the plan led to its abandonment and the siege of Detroit was lifted. Elsewhere, Fort Michilimackinac fell to the Chippewas on June 2, 1763, the British were defeated at Sault Ste. Marie, and Fort St. Joseph near Niles was abandoned.

The American Revolution, although it certainly changed Michigan's fortunes forever, had little immediate impact on this part of the country. Michigan was firmly controlled by the British. It was sparsely populated and remote from military engagements on the East Coast. In addition, its largely French and British residents did not feel a strong allegiance to the American cause.

Most of the military activity of the region consisted of British-supplied **tribal raids on American settlements** in Kentucky and southern Ohio. Governor Henry Hamilton paid for scalps brought to Detroit and earned himself the nickname "hair-buyer."

The famous 1778 capture of the British forts on the Wabash River in Indiana by **George Rogers Clark** prompted the British to build a new fort on Mackinac Island. The fort at Detroit was also rebuilt.

The 1783 **Treaty of Paris** signified the end of the American Revolution and stipulated an international boundary for the United States that included Michigan. However, it would be thirteen years before the British would relinquish their control of the area. The British ignored the treaty for several reasons. The British wished to keep peace and maintain their friendship with the Indians. They also felt the Americans failed to pay pre-war debts or compensate loyalists for losses during the war. The British coveted the lucrative fur trade of the Great Lakes and valued Michigan's strategic location. Finally, the British believed that another conflict between England and this upstart nation was imminent. Attempts made by George Washington to use diplomatic means to take Fort Detroit and Michigan into American possession were thwarted. Because of this situation, Michigan was included in Kent County of what was called the Province of Upper Canada. The **first elections held in Michigan** were to choose area representatives to the Upper Canadian Assembly in 1792.

After the American Revolution ended, the British in Detroit continued to orchestrate Indian raids on settlers in the Ohio River valley. The raids led to several major confrontations, including the loss in 1791 of hundreds of men under the command of **Arthur St. Clair**, the first governor of the Northwest Territory. President Washington then turned to Revolutionary War hero "**Mad Anthony**" **Wayne**, who defeated the British-backed Indians at the **Battle of Fallen Timbers** near Toledo in 1794. Shortly after this major victory and the signing of **Jay's Treaty** in 1794, British control of Michigan ended. On July 11, 1796, the American flag finally flew over Detroit.

### ***Michigan as a Territory***

Michigan's status changed many times even after it came under the control of the United States in 1796. Wayne County, part of the Northwest Territory under the **Ordinance of 1787**, included most of Wisconsin, all of Michigan, and the northern portions of Indiana and Ohio and sent delegates to the General Assembly of the Northwest Territory. In 1800, the western half of Michigan's Lower Peninsula and most of the Upper Peninsula became part of the **Indiana Territory**. Michigan's boundaries changed in response to the establishment of states from the Northwest Territory. For a brief period beginning in 1834, the Michigan Territory included Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and part of the Dakotas.

With the signature of President Thomas Jefferson on January 11, 1805, **Michigan became a separate territory**. Detroit, where most of the people lived, was designated the capital. The structure of government was determined by the Northwest Ordinance. This landmark document's basic provisions constituted a governmental blueprint that was followed by most of the states of our nation. According to the Northwest Ordinance, the first government that was uniquely Michigan's consisted of an assembly that, in effect, combined the executive, legislative, and judicial powers of government in one unit. The initial government was appointed entirely by President Jefferson and included William Hull from Massachusetts as the governor; Stanley Griswold from New Hampshire as the secretary; and Samuel Huntington from Ohio, Augustus Woodward from Washington, D.C., and Frederick Bates from Detroit as the judges. The governor and the judges constituted the lawmaking body, while the judges presided as the judicial equivalent of today's supreme court. Laws were to incorporate provisions already in effect in one or more of the states.

The first days of Michigan's new status as a territory were beset by hardship. On the very day the federal law was to take effect, July 1, 1805, Detroit was little more than ashes, the charred remains of a fire that had swept through the entire settlement. One of the first actions of the new government was to arrange for rebuilding the town.

At that time, Detroit was truly a frontier town, with pelts accepted as a medium of exchange. The English agents and fur traders who worked with Native Americans were headquartered at Fort Malden on the Canadian side of the Detroit River. In Detroit, French influence remained strong. French was probably spoken as much as English in most areas. **Father Gabriel Richard**, a French priest, brought one of the first printing presses to this side of the Alleghenies, published the first newspaper, and, together with the Reverend John Monteith and Judge Augustus Woodward, organized the **University of Michigan**. In 1823, Father Richard was Michigan's delegate to Congress, the only Catholic priest to sit in the United States House of Representatives until 1971.

Michigan's growth and development slowed at this time for a variety of reasons. Although a treaty was negotiated in 1807 with Native Americans involving the southeastern portion of the state, there were constant threats from British-incited Native Americans. Many of the same forces that inspired Pontiac in 1763 led Shawnee **Tecumseh** to attempt to unite western tribes to repel the region's settlers. Although Tecumseh's plan suffered a serious setback to future President William

Henry Harrison in 1811 at the Tippecanoe River in Indiana, the issue of British meddling in the west combined with concern over freedom of the seas on the East Coast to bring about the **War of 1812**.



Lewis Cass

Michigan soon found itself returned to British control. On the night of July 16, 1812, the British, who learned of the declaration of war before the Americans in Michigan, landed on the northern shore of Mackinac Island, forcing the surrender of the fort without a shot being fired. On August 16, 1812, after a few weeks of uncertain maneuvers in Canada, **Governor Hull**, fearing a massacre at the hands of Tecumseh's warriors and the British soldiers, turned Detroit over to the British. This surrender — the only time an American city has been surrendered to a foreign power — led to Governor Hull's court martial and sentence to be shot. Although spared from execution because of his heroism during the Revolution, Governor Hull was replaced by General **Lewis Cass**.

The War of 1812 resulted in many Michigan tragedies, most notably the defeat and slaughter of Americans at Frenchtown (Monroe) at the River Raisin in January 1813. However, with the dramatic victory of **Oliver Hazard Perry** over the British on Lake Erie and the triumph of William Henry Harrison over the British and Tecumseh at the Thames River in Canada, the British abandoned Detroit for the final time in September 1813. Britain, weary from war after fighting Napoleon and then the United States, ended the war with the **Treaty of Ghent** in 1814. In July 1815, the British returned Mackinac Island to the Americans and withdrew to Fort Collier on Drummond Island, which was then believed to be British territory.

After the war, federal surveyors commissioned to **survey the interior of Michigan** and secure lands to compensate those who had fought in the war effectively dismissed Michigan as uninhabitable because of swamplands. Much of the work of Governor Cass, including an expedition through the interior of the territory in 1820, aimed to promote **internal improvements** to disprove these claims and encourage the settlement needed for statehood.

As a result of the government surveyors' report that Michigan was unfit for cultivation, land in Illinois and Missouri instead was procured for veterans of the War of 1812. Although this decision delayed Michigan's inevitable growth, the most significant barrier to development was a lack of legally titled land. It was not until tribes relinquished their respective property rights that the pioneer era could begin. Governor Cass, who made many efforts to promote statehood, secured treaties with the Indians in 1819, 1820, and 1821 that provided the groundwork for a tremendous surge in population in Michigan in the 1820s and 1830s. Roads were soon built into the interior and, in 1818, the first public land sales were held along the southern tiers of counties. Settlement was aided by the **Territorial Road** and the Chicago Road, along which communities were

### ***The Man With the Window to His Stomach***

In 1822, an accident occurred on Mackinac Island that made possible important advances in medical science, specifically, the study of the process of digestion. The case involved a 19-year-old French-Canadian trapper and an Army surgeon.

On June 6, 1822, Alexis St. Martin suffered a severe gunshot wound at close range to his chest and abdomen. In spite of the seriousness of the wound, **Dr. William Beaumont**, an Army surgeon stationed at Fort Mackinac, was able to save the young man's life. The nature of the injury, however, was unique, for the damage of the blast and the subsequent healing left the stomach near the exterior of the abdomen, with an "opening" to the external wound. The result was a "window" to the stomach that remained after St. Martin returned to overall good health. In 1825, after Dr. Beaumont took St. Martin into his own family and supported him, the physician began a **series of physiological studies** using the French-Canadian's stomach. Dr. Beaumont carried out a variety of experiments with different foods to test his hypothesis that the process of digestion was essentially a chemical process. In addition to being able to observe the stomach, Dr. Beaumont could also extract some of its contents, thereby studying the stages of digestion. In 1833, Dr. Beaumont published *Experiments and Observations on the Gastric Juice and the Physiology of Digestion*. This work was an important contribution to medical knowledge.

Ironically, Alexis St. Martin outlived Dr. Beaumont by nearly thirty years. St. Martin died in 1880 after having lived a robust enough life to have fathered twenty children.



*A twenty-six-star flag, reflecting Michigan's admission to the Union.*

established. The onset of steam transportation to Michigan and the completion of the **Erie Canal** in New York in 1825 opened the floodgates as farmers and families from New England and New York joined the westward migration. By the 1830s, the rush to Michigan — “**Michigan Fever**” — was in full gear, and the territory grew faster than any other part of the country. In 1820, according to the census, Michigan had 8,896 people, excluding Indians. By 1830, the population had jumped to nearly 32,000, and in 1840, there were 212,267 inhabitants.

### ***Statehood***

By 1833, the Michigan Territory had more than the 60,000 inhabitants required by the Northwest Ordinance to form a state government and formally seek admission to the Union. By 1835, Michigan had **drafted a constitution** believed to be acceptable to the Congress. This constitution, which was to guide our state's development, was adopted by voters in October 1835 by a vote of 6,299 to 1,359. At this point, Michigan's admission into the Union may have proceeded smoothly but for one problem — a boundary dispute with the state of Ohio. While the dispute between Michigan and Ohio in 1835 has taken on a legendary quality over the years, it was never the full-fledged “**Toledo War**” as is sometimes claimed.

At stake was a 468-square-mile strip of land acknowledged to be Michigan's. People living in the area voted in Michigan elections and were governed by Michigan laws. The admission of Ohio as a state in 1803 enabled Ohio to exercise authority over the disputed territory and have a stronger voice through the Ohio congressional delegation. In 1835, a territorial militia was mobilized as volunteers organized to deal with the so-called “trespassers” from Ohio. In taking up arms, the “Boy Governor,” Stevens T. Mason (1835-1840), enraged **President Andrew Jackson**, who removed him from office. Eventually, Congress proposed the compromise that gave the “Toledo Strip” to Ohio and the western four-fifths of the Upper Peninsula to Michigan. Michigan citizens did not accept this compromise immediately. At the first Convention of Assent in Ann Arbor in September 1836, delegates refused to accept this condition of statehood. However, in December, at the “Frostbitten Convention” in Ann Arbor, it was accepted. On January 26, 1837, Michigan became the twenty-sixth state.

With statehood achieved, an ambitious internal improvements program was begun. The new government embarked upon a plan to borrow five million dollars to finance a variety of projects. These included the construction of three railroads across the state, a network of roads, and a system of canals to facilitate river transportation. Although several elements of the plan were eventually completed, many of the projects, including the canal building, were never finished. Instead, because of the **Panic of 1837**, the internal improvements venture nearly crippled the state's finances.

The Panic of 1837 was a serious blow to the new state. It stemmed from lax banking practices due, in part, to President Jackson's attitude toward bankers, whom he considered to be "soulless monopolists." This attitude led to laws across the country, including Michigan, permitting virtually anyone to open a bank. As a result, a great amount of paper money was printed. This led to wild speculation, especially in places like Michigan where land sales were exploding. Rampant inflation followed, causing President Jackson to issue a directive (the Specie Circular) that government land could only be bought with gold or silver coin. Banks failed everywhere,

## *The Toledo War*

One of the legendary events in Michigan history was the Toledo War. Although referred to as a "war," this conflict was more of a legal skirmish involving the Michigan Territory, the state of Ohio, and the U.S. Congress. This serious matter, which delayed Michigan's entry into the Union, also had its humorous side. The Toledo War made several contributions to Michigan folklore.

The Toledo War was the result of conflicting identification of the **boundaries separating Michigan and Ohio**. In 1787, as part of the establishment of the Northwest Territory, the state boundaries were to include a border running due east from the southernmost tip of Lake Michigan. This dividing line would have given Michigan a 468-square-mile strip of Ohio that includes Toledo. In 1803, Ohio was admitted to the Union with a boundary line that extended several miles to the north, enabling Ohio to include the mouth of the Maumee River, at Lake Erie. In 1805, Congress ignored the boundary set by Ohio and returned to the 1787 boundary line when it created the Michigan Territory, including the Toledo strip. People on this land considered themselves to be residents of Michigan. They voted in Michigan and were served by Michigan courts and county officials in Monroe.

As Michigan prepared for statehood, Acting Governor **Stevens T. Mason**, who was appointed to this post at the age of nineteen by President Andrew Jackson, led the effort to assert Michigan's dominion over this area. In April 1835, Governor Mason called for volunteers and mobilized troops to go to the Toledo strip to enforce laws passed by Michigan that imposed a fine or imprisonment on anyone who contested Michigan's authority on this land. Led by Mason, who was nicknamed "the Boy Governor," the Michigan militia arrested several surveyors who were representing Ohio's interests. The actions of Governor Mason incensed President Andrew Jackson, who removed Mason from office on August 29, 1835.



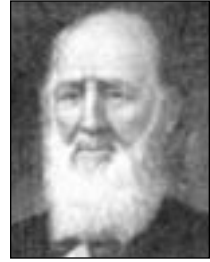
*Stevens T. Mason*

At the same time, the Buckeye State, under Governor Robert Lucas, had no interest in relinquishing land that was, according to its state constitution, clearly Ohio's. Ohio had a stronger voice in Congress because it was already a state, but Michigan had a strong legal case, based on several surveys. After nearly a two-year delay, Congress fashioned a **compromise** that was approved, on its second try, by the people of Michigan. The compromise granted Michigan more than 9,000 square miles of the Upper Peninsula.

In addition to Michigan's vast land acquisition, the Toledo War resulted in Michigan's nickname as the "**Wolverine State**." It is thought that this term originated as a derisive name given to the Michigan residents by the people of Ohio. The Ohioans were fond of comparing Michigan residents to an animal considered to be among the greediest, ugliest creatures.

especially in Michigan. This financial crisis, in addition to hampering the development of several visionary plans, left a lasting impression on the state's involvement in major projects.

Michigan's early development as a state included a strong **focus on education**. The Constitution of 1835 is notable in our nation's history for providing for the appointment of a permanent Superintendent of Public Instruction and for its promotion of "Intellectual, Scientifical, and Agricultural improvement." Following the leadership of Superintendent John D. Pierce and Isaac Crary, two prominent New England immigrants, a system of district libraries, township boards of school inspectors, and a primary school fund based upon money raised through the sale of lands was established. The University of Michigan, established in 1817, was now formally organized as a state institution at Ann Arbor.



*John D. Pierce*

In addition to establishing institutions throughout the state, including the State Prison at Jackson and the teachers' college at Ypsilanti in 1849, Michigan took steps to provide a **permanent seat of government** for the state. Although Detroit had been the center of most activity in the region and along the Great Lakes for many years, the founders of the state were aware of the need to locate the state capital in a more centralized place. As a state bordering a foreign country, one which the United States had engaged in war only a generation earlier, Michigan needed to establish a more secure location for its seat of government. There was also a strong sentiment that big cities, like Detroit, had a corrupting influence not appropriate for a state capital. Recognizing these concerns, the delegates who drafted the Constitution of 1835 provided that Detroit would serve as the state capital until 1847, when it was to be permanently located by the Legislature. In 1847, following intense debate over various locations, **Lansing Township** was selected. The area had few inhabitants and even fewer improvements. Nonetheless, the town, originally named "Michigan" and soon renamed Lansing, became the seat of government.

## ***Reform Politics and the Civil War***

Before the Civil War, Michigan's development, like much of the country's, was affected by the "second great awakening." This was an explosion of **religious fervor** that appears to have originated in New York State. Rooted in religious faith, this movement embraced the belief that each person had a duty to improve the world. In Michigan, this zeal led to sweeping social reforms in areas such as education, women's suffrage, slavery, prisons, and establishing institutions for the blind, deaf, and feebleminded.

The **state penitentiary** established at Jackson in 1838 replaced whipping posts and other severe forms of punishment with a system of prison discipline that was humane. This reflected what was, for the time, the enlightened idea that prisoners could be rehabilitated. In 1846, **capital punishment** was abolished in the wake of a highly publicized hanging in neighboring Ontario in which, it was later proved, an innocent man had been executed. Michigan became the first English-speaking jurisdiction to outlaw capital punishment.

Efforts on behalf of those with special needs included the establishment of the Kalamazoo Asylum for the Insane (1859), a state institution for the deaf and blind in Flint, and the facility for the blind in Lansing in 1879.

In Battle Creek, Seventh Day Adventists built the **Western Health Reform Institute in 1866**. The first of a worldwide system of sanatoria, hospitals, and medical dispensaries, the institute became the Battle Creek Sanitarium in 1876. Work in the fields of health and nutrition aided the development of the cereal industry in the late nineteenth century.

During the antebellum period, several colleges with affiliations to various religious denominations were established. These included Kalamazoo College, Hillsdale College, Albion College, and Olivet College. Although it would be several generations before questions involving women's rights were addressed in earnest, Michigan was the scene of considerable activity related to women's suffrage. As early as 1846, people like Austin Blair, who later became Michigan's Civil War governor, and, a bit later, Kent County pioneer Rix Robinson promoted women's right to vote. In 1874, in a highly emotional campaign that attracted such leaders as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and **Susan B. Anthony**, the issue of **voting rights for women** was placed on the ballot in a statewide election. In 1867, limited voting rights were extended to women who owned property and wished to vote on school matters. Despite this early step, unabridged voting rights were not realized in Michigan until 1918 — only two years before the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.



Closely linked to women's rights was the issue of temperance. In pioneer America, the presence of hard liquor was a fact of life. Liquor — especially whiskey — exerted a tremendous impact on daily life, and it was a significant factor in many of the dealings between Native Americans and settlers. **Temperance groups** were established throughout Michigan following the 1833 establishment of the Michigan Temperance Society. Although abstinence from alcohol did not become part of American life (at least according to the law) until the Prohibition of the 1920s, there were efforts at the state and local levels to curb the making and selling of liquor in the 1850s.



*Sojourner Truth*

The most dramatic social reform in Michigan was the **antislavery movement**. The large number of small, proudly independent farmers that comprised the state's population contributed to the hatred of slavery. In 1850, according to the census, 35.4% of Michigan residents were born in Michigan; 33.6% were born in New York State; 7.8% were born in New England; and less than 1% were born in slave states. Antislavery societies flourished in Michigan. They were led by such prominent Quakers as Laura Haviland and Elizabeth Chandler. The popular sentiment of the people and Michigan's proximity to Canada made the state a hotbed of controversy concerning runaway slaves. The **Underground Railroad**, which included such remarkable individuals as **Sojourner Truth**, conducted a great deal of business in Michigan. Many courageous Michigan citizens were involved in this informal, loosely structured activity as "conductors" along the two main lines of the underground railway.

There were several notable confrontations between Michigan citizens and agents of slaveholders who journeyed north in an effort to recover slaves. One of the most famous incidents took place near Marshall, a major center of abolitionist strength. **Adam Crosswhite** and his family, fleeing Kentucky in 1844 by way of the Underground Railroad, lived in Marshall. In January of 1847, a group of Kentuckians came to Michigan to retrieve Crosswhite and his family. In a dramatic response, citizens of the town stood up to the Kentuckians and had them arrested and jailed while the Crosswhite family safely fled to Canada. The outcry from the southern states was deafening, with Henry Clay calling Michigan "a hotbed of radicals and renegades." The sentiment reflected in this incident and others like it elsewhere in the country led to the enactment by Congress of the controversial **Fugitive Slave Act of 1850**, which further divided the North and South.

An important outgrowth of the slavery question was the development of the **Republican Party**. This new element on the American political scene was founded in Michigan at the famed meeting "under the oaks" at Jackson in 1854. The new party, the dominant force in Michigan politics for many decades, resulted from the unification of former Whigs, some disenchanted Democrats, and several smaller parties and activist individuals rallying under the banner of antislavery and specific economic issues.

Michigan was loyal to the Union and to **Abraham Lincoln's** pledge to preserve it, and, when war broke out with the bombardment of Fort Sumter in South Carolina in April 1861, Michigan's citizens responded militarily and at home through agriculture and mining.

On May 16, 1861, the First Michigan Infantry arrived in Washington — the first regiment from the western states to heed President Lincoln's call for troops. A tearful Lincoln was reported to have exclaimed upon the arrival of the Michigan troops, "Thank God for Michigan." Michigan men fought in virtually all of the major campaigns and battles of the **Civil War**. In the face of war weariness, draft riots, which quickly became a race riot, occurred in Detroit in 1863. However, Michigan's response was overwhelmingly loyal. It is estimated that 23% of the male population of the state served in the Union armed forces. This percentage included some Indians and more than 1,600 black soldiers, an impressive total that included men who returned to Michigan from Canada to enlist. With the final victory in sight, the Union soldiers from Michigan were recognized by a grateful state "... for their unfaltering faith in the justice of our cause, their self-sacrificing patriotism, their patient endurance, their heroic fortitude, their unsurpassed valor, and their glorious victories."



*Third Michigan Infantry. Between 1861 and 1865, 90,000 Michigan soldiers served in the Civil War.*

## ***Building Michigan's Economy***

Known today as one of the world's greatest manufacturing centers and as a giant of the twentieth century industrial world, Michigan derived almost all of its economic strength in its earlier years from its natural resources, which propelled Michigan to the lead among the states in several key enterprises, including mining, lumbering, and agriculture.

Michigan's first enterprise was the **fur trade**. This activity was important to the development of the interior of the entire continent. Fur trading was a factor behind the hostilities that took place in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For many years, Mackinac Island was the regional center for the fur trade. Michigan furs helped German immigrant John Jacob Astor become America's first millionaire.

From the days when unknown Native American tribes mined it and when the first European explored the region, copper seemed a readily available resource awaiting development. Both the British and the French expressed interest in reports of copper. The British made some attempts to mine it, but, due to the remoteness of the region and greater interest in furs, never successfully pursued mining. **Dr. Douglass Houghton**, Michigan's first state geologist, noted the availability of this mineral in his 1841 report on the state's resources. Stories of the Ontonagon Boulder, a huge chunk of pure copper four feet long, three and one-half feet wide, and one and one-half feet thick, and the publicity created by reports of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft and others led to renewed interest in **copper mining**. By the mid-1840s, a copper boom was in the making, creating the country's first mineral rush. Many companies were established, and some mines yielded remarkable wealth. For forty years, until 1887, Michigan led the nation in the production of copper, and in many of those years produced more than one-half of the nation's supply.

About the same time, in 1844, rich **iron ore deposits** were discovered by surveyor William A. Burt in the Negaunee and Ishpeming area. From the 1850s until the turn of the century, Michigan was the nation's leader in iron ore production.

So important were the mineral riches of the Upper Peninsula that, in 1855, a remarkable engineering feat was completed, the construction of a **canal and locks along the St. Mary's River** at Sault Ste. Marie. The canal, operated by the state until it was turned over to the federal government in 1881, was financed by the sale of public land. The locks fostered growth in mining operations and facilitated the movement of essential minerals during the Civil War.

Michigan's most important economic activity was **agriculture**. The early dire warnings that Michigan soil could not support crops proved unfounded. Except for the farming activities of the Indians and the small "ribbon farms" of the French around the Detroit area, virtually the entire state remained uncultivated until the massive influx of New York and New England farmers in the 1820s and 1830s. As they penetrated the forest and cleared the land, the fertile quality of the southern Lower Peninsula became well known. Like most of the nation, Michigan's population was comprised of farmers.

The most important crop was wheat, and until the Great Plains gave way to the plow, Michigan was a national leader in this key crop. Michigan's unique combination of climate and soils was quickly noted by pioneer farmers, who began fruit production, especially apples and peaches, along Lake Michigan. Sugar beets and mint were also soon developed by the Michigan farmer.

Two areas of special interest in Michigan's agricultural development in the nineteenth century were the production of celery and the importance of cereals. In the Kalamazoo region, enterprising Dutch immigrants capitalized on the area's marshes and swamps to grow celery. Touting the healthful benefits of this crop put Kalamazoo celery on the nation's tables. In Battle Creek, noted health advocates **Dr. John Harvey Kellogg** and **C. W. Post** promoted the development of cereal products that eventually earned Battle Creek the nickname "Cereal City."

In 1855, the Legislature established the **Agricultural College of the State of Michigan**, the nation's pioneer land grant college. This college, now known as Michigan State University, required students to work on the school's farms as part of the curriculum and became an important contributor to farming and agricultural research.

One of the most famous and colorful activities of the nineteenth century was lumbering. The dense forests and ample river transportation provided a perfect combination for this enterprise. Lumbering became a large-scale industry after the Civil War and continued until approximately 1900. The harvest of Michigan's woodlands led the nation for many years and had a lasting influence on many communities, especially those affiliated with **furniture manufacturing** (Grand Rapids) or **papermaking** (Kalamazoo). Stories from the lumber camps constitute some of Michigan's richest folklore. Lumbering in Michigan had a strong national impact. For example, Michigan lumber largely rebuilt Chicago following its famous fire. Homes, barns, and fences throughout the Midwest were built with Michigan lumber. During peak years, Michigan produced one-fourth of the nation's lumber — almost equal to the production of the next three states combined. The total worth of Michigan's forests far exceeded the value derived from the famed gold rush of California.

During **Michigan's lumbering boom**, enormous capital was accumulated. Much of the capital later helped Michigan become a center for the automobile industry. However, the lumbering era also left its mark in less favorable ways. Fires occurred regularly, and in 1871 and 1881 Michigan was the site of some of the most severe and costly fires ever to ravage the country. The first disaster relief effort of the American Red Cross came in response to the 1881 fires.

A vital link in Michigan's economy was the availability of **reliable transportation**. During the nineteenth century, the stagecoach and canoe were supplanted by the railroad. Michigan embraced this new technology early. The first railroad chartered in the Northwest Territory was the Pontiac and Detroit Railway Company (1830). The first track laid in the old Northwest Territory (between Adrian and Toledo) was the Erie and Kalamazoo, the most successful early railroad. However, not everyone was thrilled with the arrival of the "iron horse." Farmers were greatly concerned for their livestock, which were often killed. This led to incidents in Jackson county that became known as the **"Great Railroad Conspiracy" of 1849-1851**. At that time, farmers stopped and derailed trains. One incident resulted in a highly publicized trial that brought **Senator William H. Seward** of New York as an attorney for the defense. (Seward later gained fame as U.S. Secretary of State by purchasing Alaska). Later in the nineteenth century, conflict between railroad interests and agriculture was the focus of fierce battles in the Legislature. Since railroads were the way farmers transported their goods to market, there was considerable interest in how rates were determined. The regulation and taxation of railroads were major programs of **Governor Hazen S. Pingree** (1897-1900).

*Good Intent Line opens stagecoach service to west Michigan.*



*Hermansville, Michigan, in the Upper Peninsula in 1892. This photo shows the aftermath of the clear-cut logging practices of the logging boom.*

### ***Conservation of Game and Resources***

When first settled, Michigan was a pristine wilderness with abundant game, forests, and fish; however, it was not long before these resources were threatened by the onslaught of civilization. The saga of the passenger pigeon, a bird hunted to extinction in America during the nineteenth century, epitomized the potential consequences of uncontrolled hunting or fishing. It was reported that one million passenger pigeons were killed in a three-month period in 1878 near Petoskey. In addition, the effects of clear-cutting forestry practices demonstrated that even the most abundant resources were vulnerable. For many years, commercialized fishing and hunting operated freely. Deer were harvested in enormous quantities and fishing practices were so aggressive that they included using dynamite to take certain fish from streams.

Several efforts were made to deal with the rapidly disappearing game and fish. Hunting seasons were established, and other regulating measures attempted to protect certain animals, including swans, grayling, trout, and beaver. Enforcement of these restrictions, unfortunately, was difficult. In 1873, the **Board of Fish Commissioners** was established with an eye toward increasing the fish population through the use of hatcheries.

Michigan tried to cope with the problem of large-scale commercial hunting by prohibiting the taking of deer for consumption outside the state. In 1887, Michigan became a pioneer among the states in establishing the position of **Game Warden**. One of the early Game Wardens, Chase S. Osborn of Sault Ste. Marie, who served from 1895-1899, later served as governor (1911-1912).

### ***Immigration and Human Resources***

While much of Michigan's development and growth is associated with its natural resources, the key to this growth was the human resources that were needed to develop the mining, logging, agricultural, and industrial elements of the state's economy. Between 1860 and 1900, more than 700,000 immigrants came to Michigan, and nearly 400,000 of these new arrivals were born in foreign countries. In fact, the state began encouraging **immigrants** to settle in Michigan as early as 1845, when an Office of Foreign Emigration was established in New York. In early years, the Germans and Dutch were the most sought-after groups due to their strong religious beliefs, industriousness, and education. To increase immigration, the state's New York agent published a small pamphlet glorifying the virtues of the state. This type of promotion was to be repeated several times in Michigan and eventually in other states.

Following the success of this one-time venture, another agent was appointed to the post to continue the effort to attract Dutch and German settlers. He prepared a larger booklet which was also printed in German (*The Emigrants Guide to the State of Michigan or Des Auswanderers Wegweiser nach dem Staate Michigan*). This publication included more information about the state, including data on transportation, climate, agricultural and business opportunities, and matters of education, which were known to be important attractions for immigrants from Germany and the Netherlands. Thousands of these booklets were printed and the program proved to be a success.

The Civil War interrupted efforts to recruit new settlers, but in 1869, the governor appointed a commissioner of emigration to reside in Germany “. . . for the purpose of encouraging immigration to Michigan from German States and other countries of Europe.” The agent, Max H. Allardt, lived in Germany from 1870-1875 where he published a periodical and a pamphlet extolling the wonders of Michigan. In 1881, successor commissioner Colonel Frederick Morley of Detroit distributed more than 40,000 copies of a lengthy publication in German, Dutch, French, and Swedish. The success of this program ultimately led to its own demise, for **Governor Josiah W. Begole** abolished the position of commissioner in 1885 as a result of the concern that immigrants were taking too many jobs. Programs to promote immigration to the state were abandoned until 1913, when another act was passed providing for a commissioner in an effort to attract people not only from Europe and Canada, but also from other states.

Poor harvests and the failed revolution of 1848 were responsible for the exodus of more than 3 million Germans from Europe to the United States. The thousands who came to Michigan played a significant role in the development of the state, particularly in education, agriculture, lumbering, and mining. Much of the state's Germanic heritage, which included a conscious effort to preserve the language and traditions of the homeland, was erased with the outbreak and outcome of World War I. In Michigan, German-Americans were urged to anglicize their names and forbidden to speak or teach the German language.

Other ethnic groups that contributed to Michigan's development were the Canadians, both English-speaking and French-speaking, who were quickly assimilated into American society; the Irish, who settled statewide and became an important political force in the city of Detroit; and the Dutch, who settled between the Grand and Kalamazoo rivers and were instrumental in establishing the furniture industry of Grand Rapids and the fruit and celery-growing industries of southwestern Michigan. In the Upper Peninsula, Cornish miners and a steady stream of Finns, Swedes, Norwegians, and Italians, who came after the Civil War, provided the human labor necessary to support the area's mining and lumbering enterprises.

By the turn of the century, a new wave of immigrants was pouring into the country and state. Unlike their predecessors, these immigrants were from southern and eastern Europe, particularly Poland, Austria-Hungary, Italy, and the Balkan States. These people were eager to reap the benefits of the American dream. The announcement by **Henry Ford** on January 5, 1914, that the Ford Motor Company would pay \$5 for a day's work attracted many immigrants to Michigan and enticed residents of rural Michigan to migrate to urban areas to take advantage of job opportunities.

Between 1910 and 1930, Michigan was one of the fastest-growing states in the nation. This growth, which occurred mostly in southern Michigan, especially in the auto boom counties of Wayne, Oakland, and Genesee, expedited the state's transformation from rural-agrarian to urban-industrial. When the **influx of immigrants was restricted by Congress in 1924**, the state's industrial base began attracting workers from the South. While all major industrial centers continued to experience population growth, the city of Detroit was the chief destination for migrating southerners.

## ***The Progressive Era***

At the turn of the century, the forces of industrialization and dramatic population growth, together with urbanization and immigration, were forging a much different socioeconomic climate in Michigan. The lands of the northern Lower Peninsula and eastern Upper Peninsula had been stripped of pine and many lumber boomtowns had died out. The **state's economy underwent a transformation** from an extractive or resource-exploiting economy to a processing or industrial economy.

Between 1850 and 1900, the state population increased by over 600%, from 396,654 to 2,410,982. In addition, by 1900, nearly 40% of the state's population lived in urban areas. With increasing urbanization and industrialization came urban concerns, such as police and fire protection, water supply and sewage disposal, public health, and transportation.

This era gave rise to the **Progressive movement**, a national campaign for extensive economic, political, and social reforms manifested in different ways throughout the state and nation. Among the governmental reforms that characterized this movement were women's suffrage, primary elections, local home rule, the direct election of United States senators, and the initiative and referendum. Progressives also advocated measures, such as antitrust laws and railroad rate controls, that were designed to curb what they perceived to be big business's disregard for the public welfare. The agenda for social reform included labor safety and child labor laws, workers' disability compensation, and prohibition.

Virtually all of these reforms were considered and adopted in some form in Michigan. Hazen S. Pingree, a successful businessman who became mayor of Detroit and then governor of Michigan from 1897 to 1900, advocated many of these reforms, but was not successful in securing their adoption. Several of his gubernatorial successors, including Fred M. Warner (1905-1910), Chase S. Osborn (1911-1912), and Woodbridge N. Ferris (1913-1916), were responsible for achieving that success. During this period, Michigan revised its constitution. Though the **Constitution of 1908** was largely a reorganization of its 1850 predecessor, it did offer substantive changes that altered the relationship between state and local government. It had been the responsibility of the Legislature to both provide and amend the charters of local units with local legislation. The new constitution required the Legislature to enact statutes affording local units home rule powers and curbed the use of local legislation. Advocates of direct democracy, the initiative and the referendum, were initially disappointed by the limited form adopted in the new constitution. However, they were successful in expanding that power through an amendment adopted in 1913. Other reforms, such as the direct primary and workers' disability compensation, were also eventually adopted.

While the temperance movement in Michigan first surfaced in the mid-nineteenth century, support waned until the early twentieth century. In 1916, spurred by the efforts of such organizations as the Anti-Saloon League, the electorate approved a **prohibition amendment** to the state constitution by a substantial margin. Michigan thereby became officially "dry" more than a year before the controversial prohibition amendment to the U.S. Constitution was adopted. This prohibition experiment proved as unpopular in Michigan as it was elsewhere. With the escalating crime rates associated with the smuggling of liquor (Michigan's border with Canada was the entryway for much of the country's illicit spirits) and the financial crisis brought about by the Great Depression, support for legalizing liquor grew steadily. In 1932, Michigan voters repealed the state prohibition amendment, and on April 10, 1933, a state convention ratified the Twenty-First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, ultimately ending prohibition on the national level.

Women's rights advocates had lobbied for women's suffrage in Michigan for many years. By 1867, taxpaying women were permitted to vote in school elections. The issue of women's suffrage was debated extensively during the Constitutional Convention of 1907-1908, and the Constitution of 1908 granted taxpaying women the right to vote on questions involving the expenditure of



*Women's suffrage movement in Michigan.*

public money. In 1912, a proposed constitutional amendment extending full voting rights to women was defeated by a narrow margin. The next year, another women's suffrage amendment was submitted to the voters, who once again rejected the proposal, this time by a substantial margin. The voters approved an amendment to the state constitution in 1918 **granting women voting rights in all Michigan elections**. When the Legislature ratified the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution on June 10, 1919, women were accorded full voting rights in all elections.

By the 1920s, Michigan's state governmental structure had evolved into a loose conglomeration of agencies, boards, and commissions, many of which were created to address the various problems associated with an emerging urban/industrial society and were independent of gubernatorial control. Elected in 1920 and returned to office for two additional terms, Governor Alex J. Groesbeck (1921-1926) successfully **streamlined and consolidated the executive branch of government**. At his urging, the Legislature enacted a statute creating the State Administrative Board to set administrative policy. Among the important administrative reforms implemented was the merging of thirty-three boards and agencies into five new departments — Agriculture, Conservation, Labor, Public Safety, and Welfare.



*The Olds Motor Works in Lansing.*

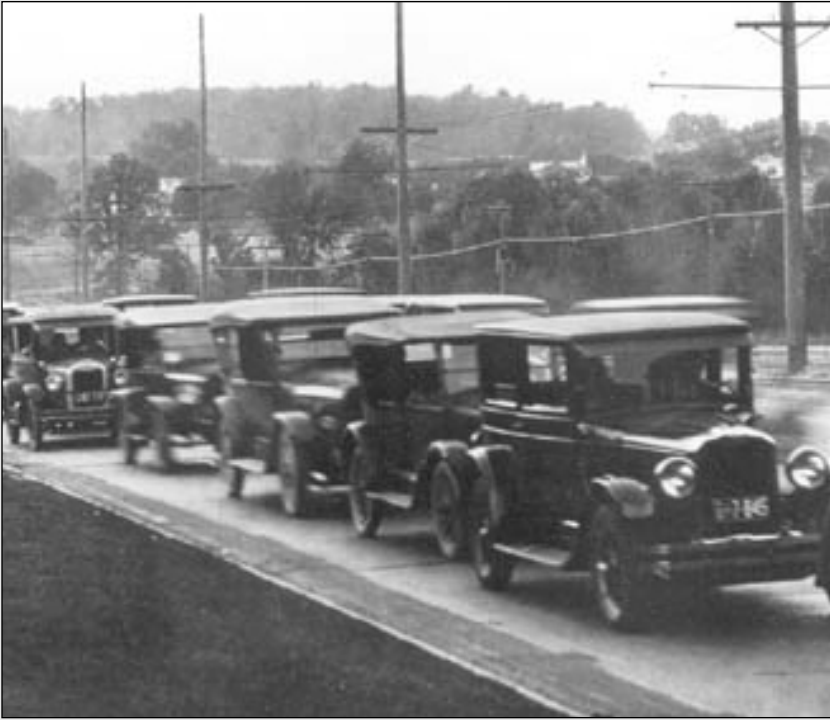
## ***The Automobile***

Although Michigan was not the birthplace of the automobile, no other state is more renowned for having put the nation, and indeed the world, on wheels. The automobile revolutionized American culture and society, affecting mobility, housing, clothing, morals, and leisure habits, and also had a **dramatic impact on the economic growth of the state** of Michigan. Automobile manufacturing in Michigan did not occur by accident. Between 1850 and 1900, the state's manufacturing capacity had grown considerably. The availability of raw materials and affordable transportation were also crucial factors. Enormous wealth had been generated by the lumber barons of the late nineteenth century and a host of enterprises related to timber resources sprang up, including a carriage and wagon industry. These factors, together with the presence of some of the most gifted and innovative technical minds in the world, combined to make Michigan the auto capital. By 1940, 60% of the world's automobiles were assembled in Michigan and nearly all passenger car manufacturers had plants within 250 miles of Detroit.

**Ransom E. Olds** of Lansing was one of the early automakers instrumental in popularizing this "newfangled machine." His success in the marketplace at the turn of the century inspired thousands of eager entrepreneurs to enter the auto industry. The most successful of these was undoubtedly **Henry Ford**. By concentrating on mass production techniques and reducing costs to produce an affordable, dependable, and durable auto, Ford became the industry's first true giant. In 1908, after years of experimenting with varying models, Ford introduced what would become America's most famous automobile — the **Model T** or "Tin Lizzie." The instant popularity of this vehicle and Ford's ability to mass produce it while passing on savings in production to the consumer through reduced prices helped propel the company to the top. By the 1920s, Ford had secured over half of the entire sales market.

Another of the great entrepreneurs of this era, **William Crapo Durant**, was the grandson of former Governor Henry Crapo (1865-1868), one of Michigan's most successful lumber dealers. A successful carriage maker, Durant assumed management of the struggling Buick Motor Company in 1904 and quickly transformed it into one of the nation's leading automakers. More importantly, he foresaw the potentially enormous public demand for automobiles and was determined to expand production capacity and introduce a wider variety of models. In 1908, he established the General Motors Company, a holding company that purchased and consolidated smaller auto firms and other auto-related businesses. Although General Motors experienced mixed fortunes in its early years and Durant was ultimately to lose control of the company not once, but twice, it was his vision and marketing ability that laid the foundation for the company's future success.

In 1922, a former General Motors executive, **Walter Chrysler**, took over the Maxwell-Briscoe Company. He reorganized the company as the Chrysler Corporation and, in addition to competing with Ford and General Motors in the mass market, targeted the luxury market, a move that would serve to insulate the company somewhat from the impact of the Great Depression.



*Woodward Avenue, north of Detroit, not far from the site of the world's first mile of concrete rural highway.*

### ***Paving the Way***

Michigan's first roads were constructed after the War of 1812 when Michigan was still a territory. Throughout the nineteenth century, **road construction** was a township responsibility. Due to the influence of railroads and interurban systems, the early roads were primarily "wagon roads" or "farm-to-market" routes. The growing popularity of the bicycle in the late nineteenth century generated enthusiasm for better roads, and groups such as the League of American Wheelmen began advocating road improvements. The approval by the electorate of a constitutional amendment permitting state spending on roads in 1905 marked the beginning of a new era with regard to "internal improvements."

In April 1909, the Wayne County Road Commission undertook the construction of the first mile of rural concrete highway in the country. Extending from the northerly line (Six Mile Road) of the village of Highland Park to Seven Mile Road, **Woodward Avenue** was paved with a strip of concrete eighteen feet wide and six and one-half inches thick at a cost of \$13,537.59. Completed and opened for traffic in June 1909 amidst some skepticism, the Woodward Avenue project attracted road builders and engineers from across the country, who were greatly impressed with the results.

Good roads associations soon sprang up nationwide. The drive to promote better roads for auto travel was under way. By 1933, the United States boasted over 77,000 miles of rural concrete highway and nearly 25,000 miles of concrete city streets. The road-building boom reached its apex in 1956, when Congress authorized and initiated the most massive public works project in American history — the construction of the **federal interstate highway system**. The pioneering Wayne County Road Commission would go on to record a number of other "firsts," including the use of scrapers on trucks to remove snow (1915), the planting of trees to beautify highways (1918), and the painting of centerlines on highways (1920s).



## ***The Working Class Hero***

Among the reasons for the success of the Ford Motor Company was the favorable public image of founder **Henry Ford**. In today's world of hourly wages, benefit packages, and paid vacations, Ford's announcement on January 5, 1914, that he would pay his workers \$5.00 for one day's work may not seem very significant, but it solidified his image as a true friend of the working class. A landmark in the history of industry, the five-dollar-day milestone represented more than a doubling of the customary autoworker wage of \$2.30 per day. In less than a year, the other automakers were compelled to follow his lead.

While many have questioned Ford's true motives for making such a move, his statements that the people who assembled cars should be able to afford them elicited an enormously favorable public response. Despite the fact that many workers did not automatically qualify for the new wage and workers also had to adhere to Ford's strict moral code as enforced by the company's "sociological department," thousands flocked to the gates of the Ford plant to take advantage of the opportunity. Indeed, four days after the announcement, an angry throng of over 10,000 disappointed job seekers had to be dispersed with fire hoses when told that no more openings existed.

The **five-dollar-day rate** not only attracted more and more laborers, increasing the flow of immigrants to Michigan, it also afforded these workers with a small measure of wealth that, among other things, could be used to purchase a Ford automobile. Regardless of his motives, this historic wage helped earn Ford a reputation as an enlightened automaker.

Among other cars being manufactured in Michigan were the Columbia, Downing, Liberty, Ross, and Scripps-Booth of Detroit; the Dort and Paterson of Flint; the Briscoe, Hollier, and Handley of Jackson; and the Austin of Grand Rapids. The Michigan-based "Big Three" were supplying 75% of the nation's autos by the end of the 1920s, while a number of smaller Michigan firms continued to thrive.

The popularity of the motor car had a profound impact on virtually every aspect of the state's social and economic fabric. The meteoric **rise of the auto industry** led to the state's phenomenal population growth and accompanying social ills. Not only did Detroit swell from a population of 285,704 in 1910 to nearly 1.6 million in 1930, but other cities showed similar gains. Between 1900 and 1930, Flint's population jumped from 13,000 to more than 156,000. Dearborn's population grew from 1,000 to 50,000 during the same period, and small towns like Highland Park and Hamtramck became urban areas in less than a decade. Much of this growth resulted from the arrival of a new wave of immigrants, particularly from southern and eastern Europe.

Another offshoot of the burgeoning auto industry was the ultimate success of the "good roads movement," an initiative originally promoted by bicycle enthusiasts at the end of the nineteenth century. Under the leadership of such people as Horatio S. Earle, who became the state's first highway commissioner, the "**good roads movement**" gathered momentum. With the rapid acceptance of the automobile as the preferred mode of travel, the road-building boom began in earnest after World War I. Auto registrations in Michigan grew from 326,000 in 1919 to 1.4 million in 1929, and these motorists were able to take advantage of a growing network of roads and highways traversing the state.

## ***The Great Depression and World War II***

The unbridled optimism and progress of the 1920s died with the stock market crash of October 1929 and the ensuing Great Depression. The 1930s signaled the beginning of the "**age of isolationism**," a period during which the mood of the nation reflected a general disdain for "internationalism" and a determination to resist involvement in the community of nations. The impact of the Great Depression was particularly acute in Michigan. The Lower Peninsula's industrial sector, the Upper Peninsula's mining industry, and agriculture were especially hard hit. Indeed, economic conditions in Michigan were such that the people suffered sooner and more severely than the rest of the nation. Unemployment figures alone provide a stark picture of the situation. By 1933, nearly 50% of the state's nonagricultural work force was unemployed, which was almost twice as high as the national rate.

Meanwhile, due in large part to the demands of an increasingly urban society, state and local expenditures grew considerably during the first part of the twentieth century. While public funds

were needed for health and sanitation, highway construction, conservation, and education, the Great Depression jeopardized progress in many of these areas. Local **relief programs** did not have the resources to respond to the crisis, and many private charitable organizations were bankrupt by 1932. Eventually, state and federal government resources were devoted to providing relief to those in need and to recovering from the economic malaise. By 1934, 800,000 of the state's 5 million residents were receiving some form of public relief. In 1932, the bonding limit of cities was raised so they could borrow money to provide more assistance. That same year, automobile weight tax funds were allocated directly to the counties. By 1933, Michigan had borrowed \$21 million from the federal government through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation created under the Hoover Administration. These efforts, however, proved inadequate.

The burdens of the Depression were too much for a state tax system dependent on the property tax for revenue. Between 1914 and 1930, property taxes in Michigan had increased by 500%. Not surprisingly, by 1933, Michigan had the **highest property tax delinquency rate** in the nation. In November of 1932, voters approved an amendment to the Michigan constitution limiting property taxes to 1% of assessed valuation, further straining available state revenues. Compelled to seek new sources of revenue, the Legislature enacted a 3% retail sales tax and forfeited the state's share of future property taxes. With the repeal of prohibition in 1933 and adoption of a state constitutional amendment authorizing the establishment of a Liquor Control Commission, a tax on the manufacture and sale of beer and wine was also enacted.

Among other measures adopted was a 1933 law providing old age assistance. And on February 14, 1933, Governor William A. Comstock (1933-1934) ordered most of the state's banks to close in an effort to save them from failure, thereby preceding the famed "**bank holiday**" declared by President Franklin Roosevelt at the national level on March 5, 1933. With many homeowners facing the possibility of losing their homes because of their failure to make mortgage payments or because of delinquent property taxes, **mortgage and land contract moratorium acts** were enacted. This legislation cancelled penalties and interest on delinquent property taxes, and provided for extensions on future property taxes. A state employment service was created to, among other things, administer the payment of unemployment insurance benefits under the Social Security Act passed by the U.S. Congress in 1935. By the end of the decade, direct relief financed by state and county funds was available. Yet, it would not be until World War II that the economy of the state and nation would recover enough to alleviate the effects of the Depression.

During this period, a sense of optimism and hope seemed to return, and by 1936 the auto industry appeared to be on the rebound. In addition, the misery and despair of the Depression were tempered somewhat by successes in the world of sports. The **Detroit Tigers** won the American League pennant in 1934 and 1935 and the World Series in 1935. Capping a truly banner year, the **Detroit Lions** won the National Football League title that same year and the **Detroit Red Wings** won their first of two consecutive Stanley Cups during the 1935-1936 season. In 1937, Detroit's own **Joe Louis** began his long reign as the heavyweight boxing champion of the world. Yet the problems of the Depression and the notion that the United States could "go it alone" in a hostile world were soon to be forgotten.

As the "Arsenal of Democracy," Michigan played an unparalleled role in fighting tyranny abroad during **World War II**. Even before the nation had been drawn into the global conflict, steps had been taken to prepare the vast industrial resources of the state for conversion to war production. The state's enormous industrial capacity, bolstered by mass production techniques, was ideally suited for the industrial and technological needs of modern warfare. The auto industry, which ceased civilian automotive production altogether in February 1942, quickly converted to the production of aircraft, tanks, guns, and other materials. By the end of the war, Michigan had contributed more than 4,000,000 engines, 25,000 tanks, and 8,500 B-24 Liberator bombers to the war effort. In terms of human resources for the armed forces, more than 600,000 Michigan men and women answered their nation's call to arms. As a result, thousands of people from other states, particularly the South, and from rural Michigan flocked to the cities to meet the demand for both skilled and nonskilled labor.



*WPA projects employed thousands of displaced autoworkers.*



*The war effort at home. Many observers trace the origins of the modern women's movement and the growth of women in the work force to their heroic contributions as civilians during World War II.*

### ***Rosie the Riveter***

Although the impact of World War II on the homefront was not nearly as traumatic for Americans as it was for people whose homelands became the world's battlefields, this global conflict had many profound influences on American society. The nature of the labor force was one of the areas that underwent dramatic change. In addition to bringing job seekers from other states to Michigan, **wartime labor shortages attracted increasing numbers of women to the war production effort.**

In 1940, there were 391,600 employed women in Michigan. By 1943, this number had more than doubled to 799,100, with women constituting nearly 35% of the nonagricultural work force. Many of those new to the labor force were older and married. What had been the domain of young, single, and relatively poor females was opened up to increasing numbers of middle-aged, middle-class mothers.

While women, particularly in the manufacturing sector, were not always welcomed with enthusiasm by their male co-workers, they became the subject of the country's publicity campaign to foster unity and patriotism for the war effort. The image of "Rosie the Riveter," the title of a popular patriotic song of the era, came to symbolize the contributions of women to the Arsenal of Democracy. Those women who had the added burden of being the head of a household were forced to endure other hardships such as meals lacking in nutrition, ration stamps for meats, sugar, butter, and coffee, and constant pleas from government to donate both certain important household commodities and time.

## ***Organized Labor***

Labor unions have existed in Michigan since statehood. The **Knights of Labor** proclaimed itself a union organized for all workers, skilled or unskilled, and succeeded in electing members to the Legislature during the 1880s. This led to the enactment of a variety of labor-oriented legislation, such as the establishment of a Michigan bureau of labor, a compulsory school education law, a ten-hour-day law, a child labor law, occupational safety laws, and a mine inspection law. But these successes were short-lived, and the Knights of Labor virtually disappeared by 1892. During the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, the **American Federation of Labor** unsuccessfully attempted to unionize workers in the lumber, mining, and furniture industries. A bitter and sometimes violent strike of Upper Peninsula copper miners in 1913 ended with some concessions from management, but without union recognition.

A number of factors combined to encourage the growth of labor unions during the 1930s. Automation in the auto industry steadily reduced the proportion of skilled laborers needed to produce automobiles. In addition, the uncertainties of the Great Depression and the pro-labor New Deal environment revived the dormant labor movement. At this time, the **United Automobile Workers**, which had affiliated with the **Committee for Industrial Organization** and sought to organize the industry's growing unskilled labor force, began to assert itself. In 1936, the union targeted the General Motors Corporation, initiating a series of "sit-down" strikes throughout the country.

On December 30, 1936, the most famous of these confrontations, the **Flint sit-down strike**, began. As the strike dragged on, violence erupted between strikers and police. Governor Frank Murphy (1937-1938), who had just taken office, sent the National Guard to restore order, but refused to direct them to break the strike. Following intense negotiations between management and labor initiated by Governor Murphy, General Motors acquiesced and accepted the UAW as the sole bargaining agent for the workers. Before it ended, this strike and others throughout the country had idled 150,000 workers and closed more than sixty plants in fourteen states. While Chrysler and other smaller auto companies quickly recognized the UAW after brief work stoppages, the Ford Motor Company resisted the closed shop until 1941. The triumph of organized labor signaled a new era not only in American industry, but also in the politics of the Great Lake State.

## ***Postwar Politics***

One of the major developments of the post-World War II years in Michigan was the emergence of a competitive **two-party political arena**. Beginning with the Depression, the Democratic Party made inroads into what had been a Republican-dominated state since the 1850s. Democrats captured both houses of the Legislature in the 1932 election, lost both in the following election, and regained both in 1936, only to lose both once again in 1938. Labor union leadership, particularly the UAW, became much more active in politics in the postwar era, reflecting that union's interest in social issues beyond the workplace. After a disastrous 1946 election for the Democratic Party in Michigan, a new liberal-labor coalition emerged within the party and eventually wrested control. In 1948, **G. Mennen Williams** won the first of what would be six terms as Michigan's governor. That same year, a 95-5 Republican majority in the House was reduced to 61-39, while in the Senate, the Democrats gained an additional five seats, going from 28-4 to a 23-9 margin. The electoral support of blacks, whose population had more than doubled between 1940 and 1950, was another crucial factor in the resurgence of the Democratic Party. Beginning in the 1950s through the present day, Michigan politics reflect the characteristics of a highly competitive two-party state.

In national politics, Republican **U.S. Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg** emerged as one of the nation's foremost spokespersons in the area of foreign policy. During a distinguished career in the U.S. Senate, which began with his appointment in 1928 to fill a vacancy, Vandenberg made a significant and lasting contribution to the quickly evolving role of the United States in world affairs. Originally a staunch isolationist, he became the chief architect of the bipartisan postwar foreign policy that recognized the country's international responsibilities and resulted in such initiatives as the United Nations Charter, the Marshall Plan, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

## ***The 1950s***

The 1950s marked an era of remarkable growth and prosperity in Michigan. Only Florida and California exceeded Michigan's population growth during the 1950s. The state's school-age population increased by over 50% between 1950 and 1958, straining the state's school system. Public demand led to a great **expansion of the state's educational system**, including more classrooms and teachers, the establishment of seven new community colleges, and important additions to a variety of higher education facilities.

As a state of both vast and unique dimensions, Michigan historically encountered problems of a geographic nature. Calls for the building of a bridge traversing the Straits of Mackinac and linking the two peninsulas began as early as 1884. The rapid growth of the automobile industry and the construction of Michigan's highway system generated further interest in such a project. In 1923, a state ferry service was established to facilitate traffic between the peninsulas. A report prepared by the State Highway Department in 1928 indicated that a bridge was feasible, but the onset of the Great Depression temporarily quelled enthusiasm for a bridge. Responding to the possible availability of federal public works funds, the Legislature created a Mackinac Straits Bridge Authority in 1934. However, its proposals were rejected by the federal government and the outbreak of World War II once again stalled bridge proponents.

The state's active promotion of overall economic development and the tourist industry also contributed to support for a bridge. An Economic Development Department was created in 1947 to coordinate efforts to strengthen and diversify the state's economy. The Michigan Tourist Council, established in 1945, promoted the state as a desirable destination for vacationers. Businesses related to the tourist industry prospered and efforts to capitalize on the growth continued. In 1950, the Mackinac Bridge Authority was reconstituted and, after the marketing of bonds to finance the project, work on the bridge began in 1954. The **Mackinac Bridge** officially opened on November 1, 1957, and Michigan's ultimate "internal improvement" was complete.



*When the Mackinac Bridge opened in 1957, it represented an engineering marvel as well as the fulfillment of the dream of connecting Michigan's two great peninsulas.*

## **Civil Rights**

The struggle for social justice and equality epitomized by the **civil rights movement** characterized the decade of the 1960s. Racial tensions had erupted into violence on a number of occasions throughout Michigan's history. Indeed, the abolition movement of the antebellum and Civil War era flourished despite the widely held discriminatory attitudes toward blacks. In 1863, following the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation and the initiation of a national draft, riots broke out in a number of cities in the North, including Detroit. As the city's black population increased dramatically in the twentieth century there were other incidents of racial unrest. Housing shortages, prejudice, and segregationist sentiments were instrumental in an outbreak of violence in 1925, when a black physician, Dr. Ossian Sweet, moved into a predominantly white neighborhood. Sweet's family was met by an angry mob of whites gathered outside their home. Shots were fired, resulting in the death of a bystander, and Dr. Sweet and his family were arrested and charged with murder. Although the persuasive arguments of the legendary **Clarence Darrow** led to the doctor's acquittal, racial tensions remained unchanged. In June 1943, a number of race riots broke out in several cities in the North and West, but the worst was in Detroit. After only one day of sustained violence, thirty-four people had died, hundreds were injured, and property loss was substantial.

There had been progress in Michigan over the years to preserve and protect civil rights. Throughout the state's history, laws were enacted to prohibit racial segregation in public education, to safeguard the demand of equal public accommodations, and to outlaw discrimination in the selection and qualification of jurors. In 1955, a Fair Employment Practices Commission was established to provide remedies for discrimination in employment opportunities. The 1963 Constitution contains strong provisions protecting civil rights, including the creation of a bipartisan **Civil Rights Commission** to investigate alleged discriminatory activities.

These initiatives, however, were not enough. On July 23, 1967, police raided an illegal drinking establishment in Detroit. Bystanders protested the arrests, and soon the nation's worst civil disturbance was under way as an astonished public followed the spectacle via national television newscasts. Before state and federal troops restored a semblance of order, forty-three people were killed, over 1,000 injured, more than 7,000 arrested, and property damage exceeding \$50 million was incurred. This tragedy, one of several urban riots throughout the country, represented just one of a number of violent episodes that characterized the 1960s.

From the ashes of the riot emerged such positives as the **New Detroit Committee**, established to provide a forum for the city's community leaders to discuss the city's problems, and legislation designed to prohibit discrimination in the sale or rental of residential property.

## **Con-Con**

The 1960s also marked a milestone in the development of state government. Michigan's evolution from rural-agrarian to urban-industrial was nearly complete as evidenced by the fact that over half of the state's population resided in southeastern Michigan. The politics of the 1950s had been marked by stalemate and, in part, represented the ongoing conflict between a dwindling rural minority that enjoyed certain political advantages and a growing and restless urban and suburban majority determined to gain a stronger voice. Moreover, a **general dissatisfaction with the governmental structure** of the state led to a consensus among a host of civic organizations that the 1908 constitution was outmoded and the root cause of the state's political immobilization.

A coalition of concerned citizens and reform groups sharing a desire to modernize Michigan's governmental structure succeeded in winning public approval for a revision of the state constitution. On April 3, 1961, voters approved a referendum to call a **constitutional convention**. The margin of victory in this referendum was achieved through majority votes in only Macomb, Oakland, Washtenaw, and Wayne Counties; the state's other seventy-nine counties opposed the proposal.

Legislative apportionment was one of the most intensely debated issues addressed by the delegates to the constitutional convention. However, decisions issued by the United States Supreme Court, both during and after the Constitutional Convention of 1961-1962, ultimately took precedence over Michigan's constitutional apportionment provisions. These decisions established the **"one person, one vote" principle** for state legislatures and had a dramatic impact in Michigan and across the country. Michigan voters adopted the new constitution on April 1, 1963. Among other things, the new constitution strengthened the governor's powers, particularly over the executive branch. In fiscal matters, the new document required balanced budgets and public approval of borrowing while prohibiting the adoption of a graduated income tax.

The decade of the 1960s began with promise, optimism, and great expectations. By its end, a host of social problems such as pollution, drug abuse, crime, poverty, and discrimination, many of which reflected the consequences of rapid growth and urbanization, posed major obstacles to continued progress and prosperity.

## ***Environmental Concerns***

If there is one recurring theme that has transcended all of Michigan's historical eras, it is the importance of natural resources to the growth and development of the state. Whether it was the early fur trade, the discovery of mineral deposits, the development of agriculture, the harvesting of the state's forests, or the growth of manufacturing, Michigan's resources have always played an integral role in the state's economy. Of course, the state's most visible and abundant resource is water. The Great Lakes are the largest single reservoir of fresh water in the world, and Michigan's geographic location within their watershed makes its stake in their protection and preservation especially high. In the wake of each wave of Michigan's economic development, there have been important lessons to be learned about the finite nature of the state's unique resources. While **environmental protection** and quality became major policy issues during the 1960s and 1970s, Michigan's involvement with environmental quality and the law can be traced back many years. With the creation of the Department of Conservation (forerunner to the Department of Natural Resources) in 1921, the Legislature recognized the state's responsibility to "protect and conserve the natural resources of the State of Michigan." Michigan's uniqueness has made it a focal point for the consideration of environmental issues. At the same time, the state's economy continues to depend on heavy manufacturing, farming, and tourism. The process of balancing the state's economic interests with this commitment to protect natural resources is an arduous one, but the people of Michigan have taken these lessons to heart.

The drafters of the Constitution of 1963 considered environmental protection important enough to include a mandate in the constitution directing the Legislature to protect the air, water, and other natural resources of the state from pollution, impairment, and destruction. Beginning in 1968 and repeatedly thereafter, the people of Michigan have demonstrated this commitment at the polls. That year, voters approved measures authorizing the issuance of \$335 million in full faith and credit bonds for the prevention and abatement of water pollution and \$100 million in full faith and credit bonds for funding public recreational facilities and programs. Concerns over litter led to the overwhelming approval of a citizen initiative in 1976 to enact a state law to prohibit the use of nonreturnable beverage containers. Michigan became one of the first states in the nation to require deposits for returnable containers. In 1984, the electorate approved an amendment to the state constitution establishing a **Natural Resources Trust Fund** to be used for, among other things, the acquisition of land for recreational uses or protection of the land because of its environmental importance or its scenic beauty. A \$660 million environmental bond issue approved by voters in 1988 established a fund to clean up pollution sites and to provide money for solid waste management, wastewater treatment, and Great Lakes protection. An additional \$140 million recreational bond issue was approved at the same time to finance state and local public recreation projects. In 1994, the public approved a state parks measure to provide a more permanent funding source for the maintenance and operation of Michigan's ninety-six state parks. Again in 1998, Michigan voters expressed their appreciation for our natural resources by authorizing a major bond program called the **Clean Michigan Initiative**.

## ***Restructuring and Global Competition***

As noted earlier, Michigan's economy has weathered many boom and bust cycles. Early fortunes were made and lost in fur trading, mining, and lumbering, but the state always rebounded. The 1970s presented another difficult challenge to the state when the **OPEC oil embargo** led to a sharp 23 percent drop in domestic auto sales in 1974 and sent the state into a deep recession. Intense competition from overseas automakers, who produced more fuel-efficient cars, cut further into Michigan's share of the market. These developments made clear to leaders in both the public and private sectors that it was necessary to further diversify Michigan's economy to reduce its dependency on the fortunes of the auto industry. Accordingly, the state has undergone a slow, but steady, economic restructuring since the mid-1970s. During the **1979-1982 recession**, the state lost over 300,000 of its manufacturing jobs. In contrast, service sector employment more than doubled between 1970 and 1990, generating over 530,000 new jobs. To establish and maintain a competitive position in a global economy, the state will likely continue this transition from a manufacturing to a service-oriented economy. With the changing nature of the technology and global strategies, even as the manufacturing sector recovers, there will likely be fewer of these types of jobs in the future. While many see this transition as necessary, it will not come without obstacles and challenges. Questions regarding life-styles, wages, and benefits will need to be addressed. However, Michigan's track record of adapting to change certainly bodes well for the future.

## ***School Finance Reform and Education***

Property taxes have served as a major source of revenue for governments since the colonial days. Michigan's first comprehensive property tax law was enacted by the Territorial Legislature in 1817 and a property tax was imposed in 1835 to finance the state's first constitutional convention. Over time, property taxes became the principal source for funding the public schools. As the property tax burden grew heavier, citizens expressed a desire to address the problem. In 1978, voters approved a **tax limitation amendment** to the state constitution that restricted the growth of tax revenues, but this measure did not address education finance.

For years, Michigan's heavy reliance on local property taxes to fund education and inequities in spending among school districts generated attempts to reform the education finance system. From 1970 to 1994, voters rejected a dozen ballot proposals concerning money for education and/or property taxes! Countless legislative plans and proposals of citizens and groups on this issue were thwarted even before reaching the ballot. The issue received national media attention when a small rural school district in the northern part of the state closed its schools in March 1993, three months before the end of the usual school year, because it had exhausted its revenues. In 1993, when the Legislature enacted legislation **eliminating local property taxes as a source of K-12 funding**, it became necessary to adopt a new system to fund schools. This time, the electorate was presented with two options — either approve a plan increasing the state sales tax to make up the lost funding or allow a statutory plan relying on an increased state income tax to take effect. The option chosen by voters in every previous ballot question — maintaining the status quo — was not available. On March 15, 1994, voters overwhelmingly approved the sales tax plan.

Coinciding with the call for education finance reform was a demand for **educational reform**. Such movements have sprung up periodically in history. The latter part of the 19th century witnessed a drive to improve curricula and instructional methods that were judged to be inferior to methods used in Europe. A strong "back-to-basics" movement arose in the early 1950s and the enactment of the National Defense Education Act of 1958, a direct response to the Soviet Union's launching of Sputnik, signaled a change to a new curriculum that emphasized science and mathematics. When the National Commission on Excellence in Education issued *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform* in 1983, another educational reform movement was initiated, and Michigan has responded accordingly.

School reform legislation enacted during the 1990s has defined more specific objectives for Michigan's education system. A model core curriculum, implementation of school improvement plans, addressing the problems of "at risk" children, experimentation with schools of choice and charter schools, and new strategies to address troubled districts are among the reforms that have been encouraged. With the enactment at the federal level of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the entire nation has become committed to better preparing our rising generations for the challenges of global competition.

## ***The New Millennium***

At the dawn of the Twenty-First Century and the start of the new millennium, Michigan is a far different state than the one that greeted 1900. At that time, the work of several visionary mechanics was touching off the age of the auto for our country and the world. Led by this revolutionary device, the state was transformed from a farming and natural resource economy into a giant of heavy industry. For the first two-thirds of the century, Michigan's population skyrocketed.

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, zooming fuel costs and other factors brought the painful realities of global competition and recession. Michigan lost population, as the number of manufacturing jobs both dropped dramatically and shifted to increased use of technology. Renewed efforts to diversify the economy and accentuate service sectors took root. By the year 2000, Michigan's solid recovery and low jobless rates reflect the resiliency that has marked the state's history. While the auto industry is still a key to our economic strength, aging plants are being replaced by a new generation of facilities. Workers are reaching new levels of training to use machines and materials Henry Ford could never have imagined.

Along with the reinvigoration of the Michigan economy, the population is rebounding. Major changes are taking place in how we work, what we do, and where the customers for our goods and services live. Our agriculture faces serious threats, and our ever-mobile society is making land use a key public policy concern for many. To deal with these challenges and to maintain the gains of recent years, the state is committed to strengthening our human resources. In the information age, just as in the ages of furs, mining, and manufacturing, it is these resources — nearly 10 million strong — that will shape Michigan's destiny.