RURAL AMERICA IN THE 1920’S

The prosperity of the 1920s brought into existence a large and growing middle class. But not all Americans benefited from the good times. As these photos suggest, the developing consumer society of the 1920s often passed rural Americans by.

American farmers had experienced good times during World War I. Demand for their crops were high, and competition from European farmers was low due to the war. After the war, however, demand for American crops slowed. European farmers returned to their fields and there were no longer massive armies to feed. U.S. farm prices plunged, and American farmers entered a decade of extreme hardship. More farms began to fail. Farmers made less money and their farms declined in value.

The urban and suburban middle class enjoyed the good times that a booming economy brought. But this often only added to the isolation felt by poorer farmers and others in the nation’s rural areas.

*IN YOUR “ROARING TWENTIES” PACKET, ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. What group missed out on the booming economy of the 1920’s?

2. Why did American agriculture suffer after World War I?

3. Overall, did you think Rural America was a positive or negative aspect of the 1920’s? Why?