

What political changes took place in the early 20th century?

#27 in composition book

I. Post Reconstruction

- Bourbon Triumvirate ran GA politics post Civil War until 1890s.
- Independent Democrats, led by the Feltons, grew in opposition to BT
- Other groups grew adding to the political diversity of the early 20th century

II. Populist Party (Populism)

- Populism – political doctrine that supports rights and powers of common people against the privileged elite
- Populist party formed in 1891, hoping to run a presidential candidate in 1892
- Populist party wanted “futuristic” changes
 - 8 hour workday, graduated income tax, Australian ballot

III. Tom Watson – GA's best known Populist

- Born in Thomson and attended Mercer University
- Taught school and studied law until he passed the bar exam in 1877
- 1882 – Elected to GA General Assembly
 - Concerned for Ga's poor farmers, including African-American farmers

- 1890 – elected to US Congress
 - Introduced Rural Free Delivery (RFD) bill that required the postal service to deliver mail to rural citizens
- Watson never held political office again even though he ran for numerous offices in different political parties for the next 20 years

- <http://bcove.me/j806q9de>

IV. County Unit System

- Established in 1917 when Democratic party was the only party in GA
- Counties were given “unit” vote based on its population
- Elections were elected by unit vote totals not popular votes
- Rural areas could decide state elections

- PRO: - Less populated areas could still have influence and power in state elections

CON: - Candidates could be elected without a majority of popular votes

- Outlawed in 1962

<http://bcove.me/vgq39spw>