

en D'Iberville Bridge of 1901. The length of the \$350,000 bridge was published at 3,400 feet. [Traffic had begun moving over the bridge in late November 1926.]

April 1, 1927. *Daily Herald.* The State of Mississippi registered 205,200 automobiles in 1926. The United States registered 22,001,393 autos in 1926.

May 17, 1927. *Daily Herald.* The paved 22-foot-wide highway from Gulfport to Biloxi was to be completed in four days and formally opened. [Paving had gone on for years on various sections.]

July 19, 1927. *Daily Herald.* In two days grading was to begin at the foot of 15th Street in Gulfport to the foot of 25th Avenue. [25th Avenue is the present route of U. S. Highway 49 through Gulfport to the beach. The new section of road from 15th Street provided an alternate route for motorists wishing to avoid the traffic-choked Highway 90 stairsteps from 15th down to 14th down to 13th in the business district of Gulfport. The new route connected U. S. Highway 90 with U. S. Highway 49 at the beach. But at that point a driver went up Highway 49 for one block and turned left on 13th Street where he followed the original Highway 90 route to 30th Avenue and thence south to the beach. Apparently even a decade after his death, the highway still did not cross the lawn of Captain Joseph T. Jones's Great Southern Hotel. The U. S. 90 signs remained as they originally had been posted. The new alternate route was not the official highway.]

January 31, 1928. *Daily Herald.* On January 30, 1928, the first automobile passed over the four-lane Watson-Williams Bridge crossing the five-mile long neck of Lake Pontchartrain south of Slidell. This \$5,500,000 privately-built draw-span bridge, billed as the longest continuous concrete bridge in the world, connected with the Chef Menteur-Gentilly Road leading into New Orleans. [This bridge, together with the roads it connected, provided a ferryless automobile route for the Old Spanish Trail from Bay St. Louis to New Orleans. Though the roadbed along the route alternated among shell, gravel, and dirt, all the swamp and water barriers between the Mississippi Gulf Coast and the Crescent City had been breached for the first time in history. The ferries on the road to New Orleans leading south of Slidell still operated across the Rigolets and Chef Menteur. The toll on the Watson-Williams Bridge was \$1.35 for a car and driver plus ten cents for each passenger. The combined charge of the Rigolets and Chef Menteur ferries was \$1.25, but shortly after the Watson-Williams Bridge opened, those ferries became free ferries. Also, the Louisiana state government announced that it would build free bridges over both the Rigolets and Chef Menteur in competition with the Watson-Williams Bridge. The Watson-Williams Bridge owners had incurred the wrath of Governor Huey P. Long.]