

AL CAPONE



### *Al Capone*

Al Capone is America's best known gangster and the single greatest symbol of the collapse of law and order in the United States during the 1920s Prohibition era. Capone had a leading role in the illegal activities that lent Chicago its reputation as a lawless city.



*Al Capone's mug shot, 1931. (CHS DN-91508)*

Capone was born on January 17, 1899, in Brooklyn, New York. Baptized "Alphonsus Capone," he grew up in a rough neighborhood and was a member of two "kid gangs," the Brooklyn Rippers and the Forty Thieves Juniors. Although he was bright, Capone quit school in the sixth grade at age fourteen. Between scams he was a clerk in a candy store, a pinboy in a bowling alley, and a cutter in a book bindery. He became part of the notorious Five Points gang in Manhattan and worked in gangster Frankie Yale's Brooklyn dive, the Harvard Inn, as a bouncer and bartender. While working at the Inn, Capone received his infamous facial scars and the resulting nickname "Scarface" when he insulted a patron and was attacked by her brother.

In 1918, Capone met an Irish girl named Mary "Mae" Coughlin at a dance. On December 4, 1918, Mae gave birth to their son, Albert "Sonny" Francis. Capone and Mae married that year on December 30.