

## St. Louis World's Fair 1904

- Sedalia, Missouri, is considered to be the birthplace of ragtime. But St. Louis introduced ragtime to the entire nation and the world
- Big showcase was the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair
- almost 20 million visitors (U.S. pop: 82 million; Canada pop: 5 million)
- Ragtime music was heard by millions of fairgoers and it was a major factor in the tremendous popularity of ragtime in the early 1900s
- ragtime piano was featured at the booths of music publishers. One Chicago publisher specializing in ragtime had booths in ten different exhibit halls
- ragtime piano could also be heard at the bars and cafes outside the fair grounds

## Missouri

- Another major centre for ragtime was Kansas City, meaning the twin cities that straddle the Kansas–Missouri border
- “Chas” Johnson was born in Kansas City, Kansas, and died in Kansas City, Missouri – lived his entire life in those two cities
- He composed "*Dill Pickles*" (published in 1906)
- The first rag to sell a million copies was Scott Joplin's "*Maple Leaf Rag*" (published in Sedalia in 1899); the second was *Dill Pickles*



## Charles L. Johnson (1876 -1950)

- ❖ very musical at an early age and played piano, guitar, violin, banjo, and mandolin
- ❖ late 1890s, he was playing piano and plugging songs for a local publisher
- ❖ By 1907, formed his own publishing company and would compose more than 300 songs, including some 40 rags
- ❖ He used pseudonyms – “Raymond Birch” is listed as the composer of "*Powder Rag*" (1908)

