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# 14

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## Forging the National Economy, 1790–1860

### PART I: Reviewing the Chapter

#### A. Checklist of Learning Objectives

After mastering this chapter, you should be able to

1. describe the movement and growth of America's population in the early nineteenth century.
2. describe the effects of Irish and German immigration on American society.
3. explain why America was relatively slow to embrace the industrial revolution and the factory.
4. describe the early development of the factory system and Eli Whitney's system of interchangeable parts.
5. indicate the nature of early industrial labor and explain its effects on workers, including women and children.
6. describe the impact of new technology and transportation systems on American business and agriculture.
7. describe the sequence of major transportation and communication systems that developed from 1790 to 1860 and indicate their economic consequences.
8. describe the effects of the market revolution on the American economy, including the new disparities between rich and poor.

#### B. Glossary

To build your social science vocabulary, familiarize yourself with the following terms.

1. **caste** An exclusive or rigid social distinction based on birth, wealth, occupation, and so forth. "There was freedom from aristocratic caste and state church. . . ." (p. 292)
2. **nativist** One who advocates favoring native-born citizens over aliens or immigrants. "The invasion of this so-called immigrant 'rabble' . . . inflamed the prejudices of American 'nativists.'" (p. 296)
3. **factory** An establishment for the manufacturing of goods, including buildings and substantial machinery. "The factory system gradually spread from England—"the world's workshop"—to other lands." (p. 300)
4. **trademark** A distinguishing symbol or word used by a manufacturer on its goods, usually registered by law to protect against imitators. ". . . unscrupulous Yankee manufacturers . . . learned to stamp their own products with faked English trademarks." (p. 300)
5. **patent** The legal certification of an original invention, product, or process, guaranteeing its holder sole rights to profits from its use or reproduction for a specified period of time. "For the decade ending in 1800, only 306 patents were registered in Washington. . . ." (p. 304)
6. **liability** Legal responsibility for loss or damage. "The principle of limited liability aided the concentration of capital. . . ." (p. 304)

7. **incorporation** The formation of individuals into an organized entity with legally defined privileges and responsibilities. "Laws of 'free incorporation' were first passed in New York in 1848. . . ." (p. 304)
8. **labor union** An organization of workers—usually wage-earning workers—to promote the interests and welfare of its members, often by collective bargaining with employers. "They were forbidden by law to form labor unions. . . ." (p. 304)
9. **strike** An organized work stoppage by employees in order to obtain better wages, working conditions, and so on. "Not surprisingly, only twenty-four recorded strikes occurred before 1835." (p. 304)
10. **capitalist** An individual or group who uses accumulated funds or private property to produce goods for profit in a market. "It made ambitious capitalists out of humble plowmen. . . ." (p. 309)
11. **turnpike** A toll road. "The turnpikes beckoned to the canvas-covered Conestoga wagons. . . ." (p. 310)
12. **posterity** Later descendants or subsequent generations. "He installed a powerful steam engine in a vessel that posterity came to know as the *Clermont*. . . ." (p. 310)
13. **productivity** In economics, the relative capacity to produce goods and services, measured in terms of the number of workers and machines needed to create goods in a certain length of time. "The principle of division of labor . . . spelled productivity and profits. . . ." (p. 317)
14. **barter** The direct exchange of goods and services for one another, without the use of cash or any medium of exchange. "Most families . . . bartered with their neighbors for the few necessities they could not make themselves." (p. 317)

## PART II: Checking Your Progress

### A. True-False

Where the statement is true, mark T. Where it is false, mark F, and correct it in the space immediately below.

- \_\_\_ 1. American frontier life was often plagued by poverty and illness.
- \_\_\_ 2. The influx of Irish immigrants contributed to America's tolerance of ethnic and religious pluralism.
- \_\_\_ 3. Most early American manufacturing was concentrated in the South.
- \_\_\_ 4. The principle of "general incorporation" permitted individual businesspeople to apply for limited-liability corporate charters from the state legislatures.
- \_\_\_ 5. The early industrial revolution greatly benefited workers by opening up well-paying factory jobs.
- \_\_\_ 6. Early labor unions made very slow progress, partly because the strike weapon was illegal and ineffective.
- \_\_\_ 7. The steel plow and mechanical reaper helped turn American farmers from subsistence farming to commercial, market-oriented agriculture.
- \_\_\_ 8. By 1840, overland highways had proved a more effective form of transportation than canals.

- \_\_\_ 9. The Erie Canal's greatest economic effect was to create strong east-west commercial and industrial links between the Northeast and the West (Midwest).
- \_\_\_ 10. The railroad gained quick acceptance as a more efficient and flexible alternative to waterbound transportation.
- \_\_\_ 11. In the sectional division of labor that developed before the Civil War, the South generally provided raw materials to the Northeast in exchange for manufactured goods, transportation, and commercial services.
- \_\_\_ 12. The growth of a market economy drew most American women off the farms and out of the home into the new factories and mills.
- \_\_\_ 13. By 1850, permanent telegraph lines had been stretched across both the Atlantic Ocean and the North American continent.
- \_\_\_ 14. The advances in manufacturing and transportation decreased the gap between rich and poor in America.
- \_\_\_ 15. The continental American economy provided more opportunity to ordinary workers than existed in the contemporary societies of Europe.

### B. Multiple Choice

Select the best answer and write the proper letter in the space provided.

- \_\_\_ 1. The experience of frontier life was especially difficult for
- women.
  - young people.
  - foreign immigrants.
  - Roman Catholics.
- \_\_\_ 2. As late as 1850, over one-half of the American population was
- foreign-born.
  - living west of the Mississippi River.
  - under the age of thirty.
  - living in cities of over 100,000 people.
- \_\_\_ 3. The primary economic activity in the Rocky Mountain West before the Civil War was
- agriculture.
  - fur-trapping.
  - mining.
  - small business trading.
- \_\_\_ 4. Americans came to look on their spectacular western wilderness areas especially as
- one of the things that defined and distinguished America as a new nation.
  - a source of economic exploitation.
  - a potential attraction for tourists from abroad.
  - the sacred home of American Indian tribes.

- \_\_\_ 5. The American painter who developed the idea for a national park system was
- Samuel F. B. Morse.
  - Caleb Bingham.
  - John James Audubon.
  - George Catlin.
- \_\_\_ 6. The two major sources of European immigration to America in the 1840s and 1850s were
- France and Italy.
  - Germany and France.
  - Germany and Ireland.
  - Ireland and Norway.
- \_\_\_ 7. One consequence of the influx of new immigrants was
- a decline in the birthrate of native-born Americans.
  - an upsurge of anti-Catholicism.
  - a virtual end to westward migration.
  - a national decline in wage rates.
- \_\_\_ 8. Industrialization was at first slow to arrive in America because
- there was a shortage of labor, capital, and consumers.
  - low tariff rates invited foreign imports.
  - the country lacked the educational system necessary to develop technology.
  - the country lacked a patent system to guarantee investors the profits from new machines.
- \_\_\_ 9. The first industry to be shaped by the new factory system of manufacturing was
- textiles.
  - the telegraph.
  - agriculture.
  - iron-making.
- \_\_\_ 10. Wages for most American workers rose in the early nineteenth century, except for the most exploited workers like
- immigrants and westerners.
  - textile and transportation workers.
  - single men and women.
  - women and children.
- \_\_\_ 11. A major change affecting the American family in the early nineteenth century was
- the rise of an organized feminist movement.
  - the movement of most women into the work force.
  - increased conflict between parents and children over moral questions.
  - a decline in the average number of children per household.
- \_\_\_ 12. The first major improvement in the American transportation system came from
- canals and railroads.
  - railroads and clipper ships.
  - steamboats and highways.
  - keelboats and Conestoga wagons.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. The new regional "division of labor" created by improved transportation meant that
- the South specialized in cotton, the West in grain and livestock, and the East in manufacturing.
  - the South specialized in manufacturing, the West in transportation, and the East in grain and livestock.
  - the South specialized in cotton, the West in manufacturing, and the East in finance.
  - the South specialized in grain and livestock, the West in cotton, and the East in transportation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. The most effective long-term solution to trans-oceanic shipping and travel proved to be
- the submarine.
  - the transatlantic cable.
  - the clipper ship.
  - the steamship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. One major effect of industrialization was
- an increasing economic equality among all citizens.
  - a strengthening of the family as an economic unit.
  - an increasingly stable labor force.
  - a rise in the gap between rich and poor.

### C. Identification

Supply the correct identification for each numbered description.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Nation where a potato famine in the 1840s led to a great migration of its people to America
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Semisecret Irish organization that became a benevolent society aiding Irish immigrants in America
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Liberal German refugees who fled failed democratic revolutions and came to America
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Americans who protested and sometimes rioted against Roman Catholic immigrants
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The transformation of manufacturing that began in Britain about 1750
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Whitney's invention that enhanced cotton production and gave new life to black slavery
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Principle that permitted individual investors to risk no more capital in a business venture than their own share of a corporation's stock
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Morse's invention that provided instant communication across distance
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Common source of early factory labor, often underpaid, whipped, and brutally beaten
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Working people's organizations, often considered illegal under early American law
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. McCormick's invention that vastly increased the productivity of the American grain farmer
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. The only major highway constructed by the federal government before the Civil War
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Fulton's invention that made river transportation a two-way affair

- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. "Clinton's Big Ditch" that transformed transportation and economic life across the Great Lakes region from Buffalo to Chicago
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Beautiful but short-lived American ships, replaced by "tramp steamers"

#### D. Matching People, Places, and Events

Match the person, place, or event in the left column with the proper description in the right column by inserting the correct letter on the blank line.

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|--------------------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. Samuel Slater               | A. Inventor of the mechanical reaper that transformed grain growing into a business                              |
| _____ 2. Eli Whitney                 | B. New York governor who built the Erie Canal  |
| _____ 3. Elias Howe                  | C. Inventor of a machine that revolutionized the ready-made clothing industry                                    |
| _____ 4. Samuel F.B. Morse           | D. Agitators against immigrants and Roman Catholics  |
| _____ 5. Know-Nothings               | E. Wealthy New York manufacturer who laid the first temporary transatlantic cable in 1858                        |
| _____ 6. <i>Commonwealth v. Hunt</i> | F. Immigrant mechanic who initiated American industrialization by setting up his cotton-spinning factory in 1791 |
| _____ 7. Cyrus McCormick             | G. Painter turned inventor who developed the first reliable system for instant communication across distance     |
| _____ 8. Robert Fulton               | H. Developer of a "folly" that made rivers two-way streams of transportation                                     |
| _____ 9. Cyrus Field                 | I. Radical, secret Irish labor union of the 1860s and 1870s  |
| _____ 10. Molly Maguires             | J. Yankee mechanical genius who revolutionized cotton production and created the system of interchangeable parts |
| _____ 11. DeWitt Clinton             | K. Pioneering Massachusetts Supreme Court decision that declared labor unions legal                              |

#### E. Putting Things in Order

Put the following events in correct order by numbering them from 1 to 5.

- \_\_\_\_\_ First telegraph message—"What hath God wrought?"—is sent from Baltimore to Washington.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Industrial revolution begins in Britain.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Telegraph lines are stretched across Atlantic Ocean and North American continent.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Major water transportation route connects New York City to Lake Erie and points west.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Invention of cotton gin and system of interchangeable parts revolutionized southern agriculture and northern industry.

**F. Matching Cause and Effect**

Match the historical cause in the left column with the proper effect in the right column by writing the correct letter on the blank line.

Cause	Effect
___ 1. The open, rough-and-tumble society of the American West	A. Made the fast-growing United States the fourth most populous nation in the Western world
___ 2. Natural population growth and increasing immigration from Ireland and Germany	B. Opened the Great Lakes states to rapid economic growth and spurred the development of major cities
___ 3. The poverty and Roman Catholic faith of most Irish immigrants	C. Encouraged western farmers to specialize in cash-crop agricultural production for eastern and European markets
___ 4. Eli Whitney's invention of the cotton gin	D. Made Americans strongly individualistic and self-reliant
___ 5. The passage of general incorporation and limited-liability laws	E. Aroused nativist hostility and occasional riots
___ 6. The early efforts of labor unions to organize and strike	F. Bound the two northern sections together across the mountains and tended to isolate the South
___ 7. Improved western transportation and the new McCormick reaper	G. Aroused fierce opposition from businesspeople and guardians of law
___ 8. The completion of the Erie Canal in 1825	H. Enabled businesspeople to create more powerful and effective joint-stock capital ventures
___ 9. The development of a strong east-west rail network	I. Transformed southern agriculture and gave new life to slavery
___ 10. The replacement of household production by factory-made, store-bought goods	J. Weakened many women's economic status and pushed them into a separate "sphere" of home and family

**G. Developing Historical Skills****Reading a Chart and Bar Graph**

Examine the bar graph on p.290 to learn more about the character of the American population from 1790 to 1860.

Answer the following questions.

- Which decade showed the largest absolute increase in total population?
- During which decade did the nonwhite population begin to *decrease* as a percentage of the total population?

3. In which census year did the nonwhite population surpass the white population of 1790?
4. Using the bar graph, indicate about how many times larger the total population was in 1860 than it had been in 1820.

## H. Map Mastery

### Map Discrimination

Using the maps and charts in Chapter 14, answer the following questions.

1. *Cumberland (National) Road and Main Connections*: How many states did the Cumberland Road pass through? (Do not count Missouri.)
2. *Industry and Agriculture, 1860*: Which industry developed near Philadelphia?
3. *Industry and Agriculture, 1860*: If you were a tobacco farmer, in which state would you most likely live?
4. *Principal Canals in 1840*: If you had traveled from Albany, New York, to Evansville, Indiana, which *two* canals and *one* lake would you have traversed?
5. *Principal Canals in 1840*: If you had traveled from Columbia, Pennsylvania, to Cleveland, Ohio, which *two* canals and *one* river would you have traversed?
6. *The Railroad Revolution*: In 1860, how many direct rail lines linked the North and the South west of the Appalachians?
7. *The Railroad Revolution*: Which three Midwestern states had the greatest number of rail lines in 1860?
8. *Main Routes West Before the Civil War*: If you had traveled from Independence, Missouri, to Los Angeles, California, before the Civil War, which major trails would you have traversed?

### Map Challenge

Using the maps on pp. 311, 312, and 313, write a brief essay explaining the *economic* importance of the Erie Canal and other canals and railroads for trade between the Northeast and the Northwest.



### PART III: Applying What You Have Learned

1. How did changes in the size and character of the population affect American social and economic life from 1790 to 1860?
2. How did the existence of a vast western frontier shape Americans' values and society in the period 1790–1860?
3. What were the effects of the new factory and corporate systems of production on early industrial workers, and how did they respond to these conditions?
4. How did the new transportation systems create a commercially linked national economy and a specialized sectional division of labor?
5. What was the impact of the new economic developments on the role of women in society?
6. In America, early industrialization, westward expansion, and growing sectional tension all occurred at the same time. How was the development of the economy before the Civil War related to both the westward movement and increasing sectional conflict?