The transition from an agricultural to an industrial economy took more than a century in the United States, but that long development entered its first phase from the 1790s through the 1830s. The Industrial Revolution had begun in Britain during the mid-18th century, but the American colonies lagged far behind the mother country in part because the abundance of land and scarcity of labor in the New World reduced interest in expensive investments in machine production. Nevertheless, with the shift from hand-made to machine-made products a new era of human experience began where increased productivity created a much higher standard of living than had ever been known in the pre-industrial world.

The start of the American Industrial Revolution is often attributed to Samuel Slater who opened the first industrial mill in the United States in 1790 with a design that borrowed heavily from a British model. Slater's pirated technology greatly increased the speed with which cotton thread could be spun into yarn. While he introduced a vital new technology to the United States, the economic takeoff of the Industrial Revolution required several other elements before it would transform American life.

The chief organizational breakthrough of the Industrial Revolution was the "factory system" where work was performed on a large scale in a single centralized location. Among the early innovators of this approach were a group of businessmen known as the Boston Associates who recruited thousands of New England farm girls to operate the machines in their new factories.

The most famous of their tightly controlled mill towns was Lowell, Massachusetts, which opened in 1823. The use of female factory workers brought advantages to both employer and employee. The Boston Associates preferred female labor because they paid the young girls less than men. These female workers, often called "Lowell girls," were chaperoned by matrons and were held to a strict curfew and moral code. Although the work was tedious (12 hours per day, 6 days per week), many women benefited by experiencing a new kind of independence outside the traditional male-dominated family farm. The rise of wage labor at the heart of the Industrial Revolution also exploited working people in new ways. The first strike among textile workers protesting wage and factory conditions occurred in 1824 and even the model mills of Lowell faced large strikes in the 1830s.

Dramatically increased production, like that in the New England's textile mills, were key parts of the Industrial Revolution, but required at least two more elements for widespread impact. First, an expanded system of credit was necessary to help entrepreneurs secure the capital needed for large-scale and risky new ventures. Second, an improved transportation system was crucial for raw materials to reach the factories and manufactured goods to reach consumers. State governments played a key role encouraging both new banking institutions and a vastly increased transportation network. This latter development is often termed the Market Revolution because of the central importance of creating more efficient ways to transport people, raw materials, and finished goods.

The most famous state-led creation of the Market Revolution was undoubtedly New York's Erie Canal. Begun in 1817, the 364-mile man-made waterway flowed between Albany on the Hudson River and Buffalo on Lake Erie. The canal connected the eastern seaboard and the Old Northwest. The great success of the Erie Canal set off a canal frenzy that, along with the development of the steamboat, created a new and complete national water transportation network by 1840.

However, all of these changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution would not have been possible without one further ingredient — people. Canals and railways needed thousands of people to build them. Business schemes required people to execute them. The number of projects and businesses under development was enormous. The demand for labor was satisfied, in part, by millions of **immigrants** from Ireland, Germany, and elsewhere as well as the migration of rural folks to the cities where factories were located. This movement was well underway by the Civil War. During the 1840s, the population of the country as a whole increased by 36%. The population of towns and cities of 8,000 or more increased by 90%. Ultimately the growing market and the increase in a diverse population led to major political and economic changes in America.

The American South, however, did not industrialize. Industrialization occurred mainly in cities with ports, harbors, and rivers to help run the mills. The South, however, did not have many major cities because of their plantation based economy. Southerners had long imported manufactured items from other countries. However, there was always a high tax placed on imported items from other countries. Now, with the North industrializing, the South would need the North more than ever. Northern factories would produce goods that the South needed, and the South would produce raw materials that the North needed to make finished goods. For example, Southerners would grow cotton, and Northerners would turn that cotton into clothes, linens, etc., and ship those items back down to the South.

Even though the North and South needed each other more than ever, they disliked each other more than ever as well. The two areas of the country were now completely different. Northerners supported industry and the commercial economy, and looked at the South as backwards and as an area of the country that held up American financial and economic progress. Southerners knew how Northerners felt and now distrusted Northerners. Southerners became extremely defensive of their institution of slavery and clung to it as their only methods of survival. Politics would bare this out over the next few decades as North and South maneuvered to be stronger than the other section of the country.

Where did industrialization take place? Where did it not take place? Why?

Because of industrialization, what happened to the amount of goods produced? Why?

What happened to prices because of industrialization? Why?

Why were the North and South now very different?

**What was the Economic and Political Impact of the Industrial Revolution?**

**Economic Impacts-**look at the article and look for anything that impacted jobs, business, money, workers, employers, production, etc. Put any economic impacts on the chart below

**Political Impact-**look for disagreements, laws, government actions, wars, fighting, dependence and independence,Put any political impacts on the chart below

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| --- | --- |
| **Economic Impacts of the Industrial Revolution** | **Political Impacts of the Industrial Revolution** |
|  |  |