



Industry in the North

As You Read

Explore These Questions

- How did new inventions change manufacturing and farming in the North?
- How did new means of communication and transportation benefit business?
- How did steam power help industry grow?

Define

- telegraph
- locomotive
- clipper ship

Identify

- Elias Howe
- John Deere
- Cyrus McCormick
- Samuel F. B. Morse
- John Griffiths



Elias Howe sewing machine

SETTING the Scene

In 1834, a young French engineer, Michel Chevalier, toured the North. He was most impressed by the burst of industry there—the textile factories, shipyards, and iron mills. He wrote:

“Everywhere is heard the noise of hammers, of spindles, of bells calling the hands to their work, or dismissing them from their tasks. . . . It is the peaceful hum of an industrious population, whose movements are regulated like clockwork.”

Northern industry grew steadily in the mid-1800s. Most northerners still lived on farms. However, more and more of the northern economy centered on manufacturing and trade.

New Machines

The 1800s brought a flood of new inventions in the North. “In Massachusetts and Connecticut,” a European visitor exclaimed, “there is not a laborer who has not invented a machine or a tool.”

In 1846, **Elias Howe** patented a sewing machine. A few years later, Isaac Singer improved on Howe’s machine. Soon, clothing makers bought hundreds of the new sewing machines. Workers could now make dozens of

shirts in the time it took a tailor to sew one by hand.

Some new inventions made work easier for farmers.

John Deere invented a lightweight steel plow. Earlier plows made of heavy iron or wood had to be pulled by slow-moving oxen. A horse could pull a steel plow through a field more quickly.

In 1847, **Cyrus McCormick** opened a factory in Chicago that produced mechanical reapers. The reaper was a horse-drawn machine that mowed wheat and other grains. McCormick’s reaper could do the work of five people using hand tools.

The reaper and the steel plow helped farmers raise more grain with fewer hands. As a result, thousands of farm workers left the countryside. Some went west to start farms of their own. Others found jobs in new factories in northern cities.

Connections With Economics

Cyrus McCormick used a new business practice to help struggling farmers buy a reaper. He let farmers put some money down and pay the rest in installments. This practice is known as the installment plan or buying on credit.

The Telegraph

In 1844, **Samuel F. B. Morse** received a patent for a “talking wire,” or telegraph. The **telegraph** was a device that sent electrical signals along a wire. The signals were based on a code of dots, dashes, and spaces. Later, this system of dots and dashes became known as the Morse code.

Congress gave Morse funds to run wire from Washington, D.C., to Baltimore. On May 24, 1844, Morse set up his telegraph in the Supreme Court chamber in Washington. As a crowd of onlookers watched, Morse tapped out a short message: “What hath God wrought!” A few seconds later, the operator in

Baltimore tapped back the same message. The telegraph worked!

Morse’s invention was an instant success. Telegraph companies sprang up everywhere. Thousands of miles of wire soon stretched across the country. As a result of the telegraph, news could now travel long distances in a matter of minutes.

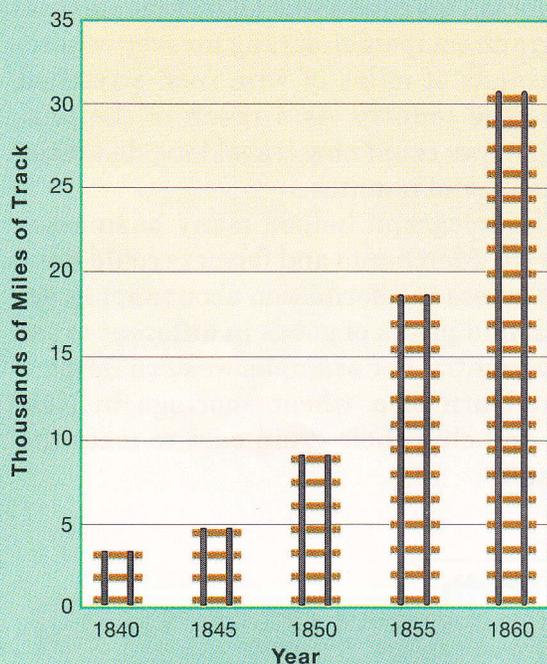
The telegraph helped many businesses to thrive. Merchants and farmers could have quick access to information about supply, demand, and prices of goods in different areas of the country. For example, western farmers might learn of a wheat shortage in New York and ship their grain east to meet the demand.



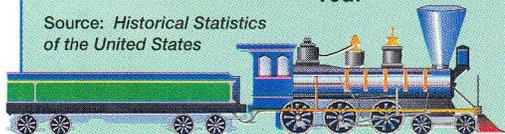
Farming remained vital to the northern economy, but industry was rapidly expanding.

- 1. Location** On the map, locate: (a) Connecticut, (b) Ohio, (c) Illinois.
- 2. Place** What products did Michigan produce?
- 3. Critical Thinking** How do you think industrial development affected the natural environment?

Growth of Railroads



Source: *Historical Statistics of the United States*



Graph Skills

Between 1840 and 1860, railroad construction increased greatly. More railroad lines were built in the North than in the South.

- 1. Comprehension** Approximately how many miles of track were laid between 1855 and 1860?
- 2. Critical Thinking** What raw materials were needed to build and run the railroads?

Economics



The First Railroads

Improved transportation also boosted the economy. Americans continued to build new roads and canals. The greatest change, however, came with the railroads.

The first railroads were built in the early 1800s. Horses or mules pulled cars along wooden rails covered with strips of iron. Then, in 1829, an English family developed a steam-powered **locomotive** engine to pull rail cars. The engine, called the *Rocket*, barreled along at 30 miles (48 km) per hour.

Early difficulties

In the United States, there was some initial opposition to railroads. Farmers did not want railroads running through their fields. Teamsters who moved freight on horse-drawn wagons feared that they would lose their jobs. Likewise, people who invested in canals worried that competition from the railroads might cause them to lose their investments. Some states protected the canals by placing limits on railroads. One such limit was that railroads could carry freight only when canals were frozen.

Another problem for the railroads was concern over reliability and safety. Early steam locomotives often broke down. Soft roadbeds and weak bridges contributed to accidents. Locomotives were extremely noisy and belched thick black smoke from their smokestacks. Hot embers from smokestacks sometimes burned holes in passengers' clothing or set nearby buildings on fire.

A railroad boom

Despite these problems, promoters believed in the future of train travel. One boasted that the railroads were “unrivaled for speed, cleanliness, civility of officers and servants, and admirable accommodations of every kind.”

Gradually, railroad builders overcame problems and removed obstacles. Engineers learned to build sturdier bridges and solid roadbeds. They replaced wooden rails with iron rails. Such improvements made railroad travel safer and faster. Meanwhile, legal restrictions on railroad building were removed.

By the 1850s, railroads crisscrossed the nation. The major lines were concentrated in the North and West. New York, Chicago, and Cincinnati became major rail centers. The South had much less track than the North.

Yankee Clippers

Railroads increased commerce within the United States. At the same time, trade also increased between the United States and other nations. At seaports in the Northeast, captains loaded their ships with cotton, fur, wheat, lumber, and tobacco. Then they sailed to the four corners of the world.

Speed was the key to successful trade at sea. In 1845, an American named **John Griffiths** launched the *Rainbow*, the first of the **clipper ships**. These sleek vessels had tall masts and huge sails that caught every gust of wind. Their narrow hulls clipped swiftly through the water.

In the 1840s, American clipper ships broke every speed record. One clipper sped from New York to Hong Kong in 81 days, flying past older ships that took five months to reach China. The speed of the clippers helped the United States win a large share of the world's sea trade in the 1840s and 1850s.

The golden age of the clipper ship was brief. In the 1850s, Britain launched the first oceangoing iron steamships. These sturdy vessels carried more cargo and traveled even faster than clippers.

The Northern Economy Expands

By the 1830s, factories began to use steam power instead of water power. Machines that were driven by steam were powerful and cheap to run. Also, factories that

used steam power could be built almost anywhere, not just along the banks of swift-flowing rivers. As a result, American industry expanded rapidly.

At the same time, new machines made it possible to produce more goods at a lower cost. These more affordable goods attracted eager buyers. Families no longer had to make clothing and other goods in their homes. Instead, they could buy factory-made products.

Railroads allowed factory owners to transport large amounts of raw materials and finished goods cheaply and quickly. Also, as railroads stretched across the nation, they linked distant towns with cities and factories. These towns became new markets for factory goods.

The growth of railroads also affected northern farming. Railroads brought cheap grain and other foods from the West to New England. New England farmers could not compete with this new source of cheap foods. Many left their farms to find new jobs as factory workers, store clerks, and sailors. More and more, New Englanders turned to manufacturing and trade.

★ Section 1 Review ★

Recall

1. **Identify** (a) Elias Howe, (b) John Deere, (c) Cyrus McCormick, (d) Samuel F. B. Morse, (e) John Griffiths.
2. **Define** (a) telegraph, (b) locomotive, (c) clipper ship.

Comprehension

3. What new inventions made work easier for farmers?
4. Explain how each of the following helped industry grow: (a) telegraph, (b) railroads, (c) clipper ships.

5. How did steam power and new machines change northern industry?

Critical Thinking and Writing

6. **Linking Past and Present** What technology of today helps businesses in the same way that the telegraph helped businesses in the 1800s?
7. **Understanding Causes and Effects** How did the building of railroads cause many New Englanders to abandon farming?



Activity Creating an Advertisement It is the mid-1800s and you are working at an advertising agency. Create an advertisement poster urging people to buy or use one of the new inventions of the period. Use both words and pictures to make your advertisement persuasive.



Life in the North



Explore These Questions

- What conditions caused northern workers to organize?
- Why did many Europeans move to the United States in the mid-1800s?
- What was life like for African Americans in the North?

Define

- artisan
- trade union
- strike
- famine
- nativist
- discrimination

Identify

- Sarah Bagley
- Know-Nothing party
- Henry Boyd
- Macon Allen
- John Russsworm

SETTING the Scene

Alzina Parsons never forgot her thirteenth birthday. The day began as usual, with work in the local spinning mill. Suddenly, Alzina cried out. She had caught her hand in the spinning machine, badly mangling her fingers. The foreman summoned the factory doctor. He cut off one of the injured fingers and sent the girl back to work.

In the early 1800s, such an incident probably would not have happened. Factory work was hard, but mill owners treated workers like human beings. By the 1840s, however, there was an oversupply of workers. Many factory owners now treated workers like machines.

Factory Conditions Worsen

Factories of the 1840s and 1850s were very different from the mills of the early 1800s. The factories were larger, and they used steam-powered machines. More laborers worked longer hours for lower wages. Workers lived in dark, dingy houses in the shadow of the factory.

Families in factories

As the need for workers increased, entire families labored in factories. In some cases, a family agreed to work for one year. If even one family member broke the contract, the entire family might be fired.

The factory day began when a whistle sounded at 4 A.M. Father, mother, and children dressed in the dark and headed off to work. At 7:30 A.M. and at noon, the whistle sounded again to announce breakfast and lunch breaks. The workday did not end until 7:30 P.M., when a final whistle sent the workers home.

Hazards at work

During their long day, factory workers faced discomfort and danger. Few factories had windows or heating systems. In summer, the heat and humidity inside the factory were stifling. In winter, the extreme cold chilled workers' bones and contributed to frequent sickness.

Factory machines had no safety devices, and accidents were common. Owners ignored the hazards. There were no laws regulating factory conditions. Injured workers often lost their jobs.

In 1855, a visitor to a textile mill in Fall River, Massachusetts, asked the manager of the mill how he treated his workers. In his reply, the manager was harsh but honest. He described his feelings about the workers.

“ I regard people just as I regard my machinery. So long as they can do my work for what I choose to pay them, I keep them, getting out of them all I can. ”

Workers Join Together

Poor working conditions and low wages led workers to organize. The first to do so were **artisans**. Artisans are workers who have learned a trade, such as carpentry or shoemaking.

Trade unions and strikes

In the 1820s and 1830s, artisans in each trade united to form **trade unions**. The unions called for a shorter workday, higher wages, and better working conditions. Sometimes, unions went on strike to gain their demands. In a **strike**, union workers refuse to do their jobs.

At the time, strikes were illegal in many parts of the United States. Strikers faced fines or jail sentences. Employers often fired strike leaders.

Progress for artisans

Slowly, however, workers made progress. In 1840, President Van Buren approved a 10-hour workday for government employees. Other workers pressed their demands until they won the same hours as government

workers. Workers celebrated another victory in 1842 when a Massachusetts court declared that they had the right to strike.

Artisans won better pay because factory owners needed their skills. Unskilled workers, however, were unable to bargain for better wages. Unskilled workers held jobs that required little or no training. Because these workers were easy to replace, employers did not listen to their demands.

Women Workers Organize

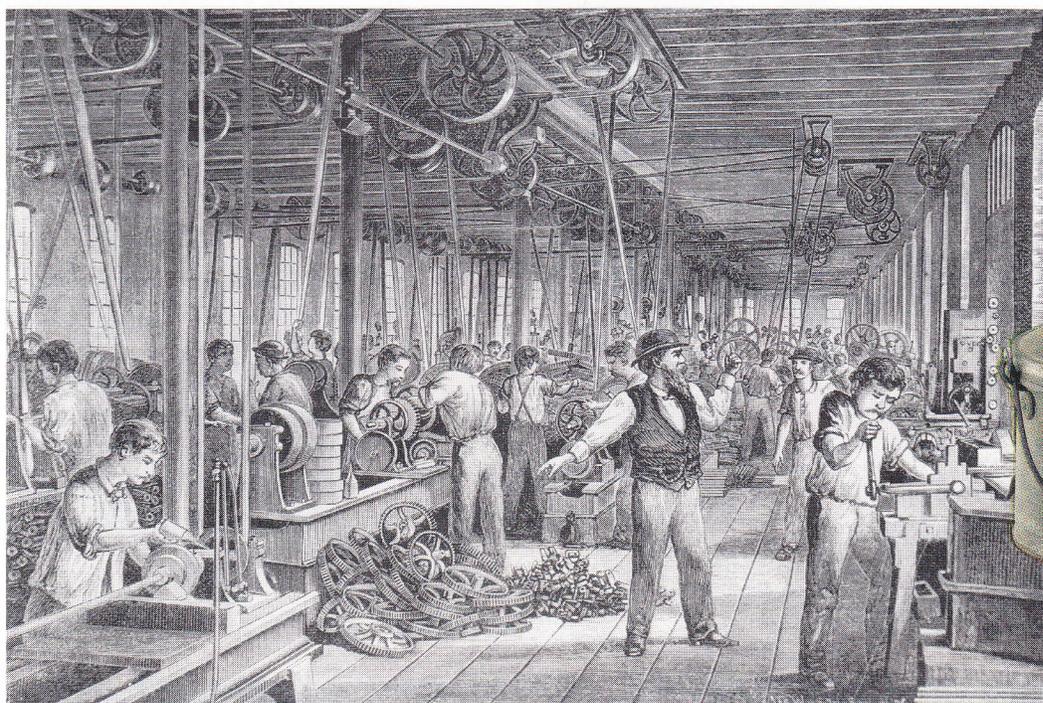
The success of trade unions encouraged other workers to organize. Workers in New England textile mills especially were eager to protest cuts in wages and unfair work rules. Many of these workers were women.

Women workers faced special problems. First, they had always earned less money than men did. Second, most union leaders did not want women in their ranks. Like many people at the time, they believed that women should not work outside the home. In fact, the goal of many unions was to raise men's wages so that their wives could leave their factory jobs.



Working in a Factory

Factory employees faced crowded and dangerous working conditions. Many were injured on the job. The workers in this scene are making McCormick reapers. ★ What kinds of accidents could occur in a factory such as this?



▼ A worker's lunch pail



Despite these problems, women workers organized. They staged several strikes at Lowell, Massachusetts, in the 1830s. In the 1840s, **Sarah Bagley** organized the Lowell Female Labor Reform Association. The group petitioned the state legislature for a 10-hour workday.

Millions of New Americans

By the late 1840s, many factory workers in the North were immigrants. An immigrant is a person who enters a new country in order to settle there. In the 1840s and 1850s, about 4 million immigrants arrived in the United States.

From Ireland and Germany

In the 1840s, a disease destroyed the potato crop across Europe. The loss of the crop caused a **famine**, or severe food shortage, especially in Ireland. Between 1845 and 1860, over 1.5 million Irish fled to the United States.

Most Irish immigrants were too poor to buy farmland. They settled in the cities where their ships landed. In New York and Boston, thousands of Irish crowded into poor neighborhoods.

In the 1850s, nearly one million German immigrants arrived in the United States. In 1848, revolutions had broken out in several parts of Germany. The rebels fought for democratic reforms. When the revolts failed, thousands had to flee.

Many other German immigrants came to the United States simply to make a better life for themselves.

Enriching the nation

Immigrants supplied much of the labor that helped the nation's economy to grow. Many Irish immigrants worked in northern factories because they did not have enough money to buy farmland. Other Irish workers helped build the canals and railroads that were crisscrossing the nation.

Immigrants from Germany often had enough money to move west and buy good farmland. Many of them were artisans and merchants. Towns of the Midwest often had German grocers, butchers, and bakers.

A Reaction Against Immigrants

Not everyone welcomed the flood of immigrants. One group of Americans, called **nativists**, wanted to preserve the country for native-born, white citizens. Using the slogan "Americans must rule America," they called for laws to limit immigration. They also wanted to keep immigrants from voting until they had lived in the United States for 21 years. At the time, newcomers could vote after only 5 years in the country.

Some nativists protested that newcomers "stole" jobs from native-born Americans by working for lower pay. Others blamed immigrants for crime in the growing cities. Still others mistrusted Irish and German newcomers because many of them were Catholics. Until the 1840s, the majority of immigrants from Europe were Protestants.

In the 1850s, nativists formed a new political party. It was known as the **Know-Nothing party** because members answered, "I know nothing," when asked about the party. Many meetings and rituals of the party were kept secret. In 1856, the Know-Nothing candidate for President won 21 percent of the popular vote, as well as some state governorships, including California. Although the party soon died out, many Americans still blamed problems on immigrants.

African Americans in the North

During the nation's early years, slavery was legal in the North. By the early 1800s, however, all the northern states had outlawed slavery. As a result, thousands of free African Americans lived in the North.

Denied equal rights

Free African Americans in the North faced discrimination. **Discrimination** is a policy or an attitude that denies equal rights to certain groups of people. As one writer pointed out, African Americans were denied "the ballot-box, the jury box, the halls of the legislature, the army, the public lands, the school, and the church."

As
You
ReadExplore
These Questions

- Why did cotton planters begin to move westward?
- How did the cotton gin affect slavery in the South?
- Why did the South have less industry than the North?

Identify

- Eli Whitney
- Cotton Kingdom
- William Gregg

SETTING
the Scene

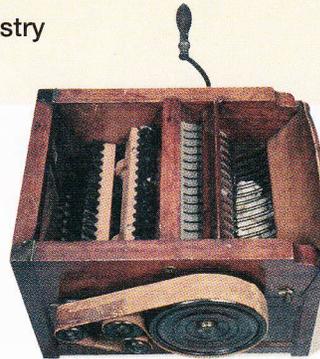
In 1827, an Englishman, Basil Hall, traveled through much of the South aboard a riverboat. He complained that the southerners he met were interested in only one thing—cotton:

“All day and almost all night long, the captain, pilot, crew and passengers were talking of nothing else; and sometimes our ears were so wearied with the sound of cotton! cotton! cotton! that we gladly hailed fresh . . . company in hopes of some change—but alas! . . . ‘What’s cotton at?’ was the first eager inquiry.”

Cotton became even more important to the South in the years after Hall’s visit. Even though southerners grew other crops, cotton was the region’s leading export. Cotton plantations—and the slave system on which they depended—shaped the way of life in the South.

Cotton Gin, Cotton Boom

The Industrial Revolution greatly increased the demand for southern cotton. Textile mills in the North and in Britain needed more and more cotton to make cloth. At first, southern planters could not meet the demand. They could grow plenty of cotton because the South’s soil and climate were ideal. However, removing the seeds from the cotton by hand was a slow process. Planters needed a better way to clean cotton.



Cotton gin

Eli Whitney’s invention

In 1793, **Eli Whitney**, a young Connecticut schoolteacher, was traveling to Georgia. He was going to be a tutor on a plantation. When Whitney learned of the planters’ problem, he decided to build a machine to clean cotton.

In only 10 days, Whitney came up with a model. His cotton engine, or gin, had two rollers with thin wire teeth. When cotton was swept between the rollers, the teeth separated the seeds from the fibers. (See Linking History and Technology on page 312.)

The cotton gin was simple, but its effects were enormous. A worker using a gin could do the work of 50 people cleaning cotton by hand. Because of the gin, planters could now grow cotton at a huge profit.



Connections With Science

Technology thieves stole Eli Whitney’s first cotton gin. Before Whitney could build another, someone filed a patent for a machine that copied his invention. To receive the profits that were due to him, Whitney went to court. He filed more than 50 lawsuits.

Linking History and Technology



① Cotton bolls, made up of fiber and seeds, are fed into the cotton gin. The red arrows show the path of the cotton through the gin.

② As the handle is turned, the cylinder and brushes rotate.

③ Wire teeth catch the cotton bolls and pull them through narrow wire slots.

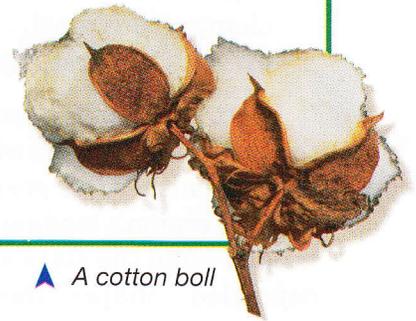
④ The seeds are too large to pass through the slots. They fall to the bottom of the gin.

⑤ Rotating brushes pull cleaned cotton fiber from the wire teeth and sweep it out of the gin.

The Cotton Gin

The cotton gin separated unwanted seeds from cotton fiber. With the help of a gin, a worker was able to process as much as 50 pounds of cotton in a single day. As a result, cotton production became a very profitable business.

★ How did the gin separate the seeds from the fiber?



▲ A cotton boll

Cotton Kingdom and slavery

The cotton gin led to a boom in cotton production. In 1792, planters grew only 6,000 bales of cotton a year. By 1850, the figure was over 2 million bales.

Planters soon learned that soil wore out if planted with cotton year after year. They needed new land to cultivate. After the War of 1812, cotton planters began to move west.

By the 1850s, there were cotton plantations extending in a wide band from South

Carolina through Alabama and Mississippi to Texas. (See the map on page 314.) This area of the South became known as the **Cotton Kingdom**.

Tragically, as the Cotton Kingdom spread, so did slavery. Even though cotton could now be cleaned by machine, it still had to be planted and picked by hand. The result was a cruel cycle. The work of slaves brought profits to planters. Planters used the profits to buy more land and more slaves.

An Agricultural Economy

Cotton was the South's most profitable cash crop. However, the best conditions for growing cotton could be found mostly in the southernmost portion of the South. In other areas of the South, rice, sugar cane, and tobacco were major crops. In addition, Southerners raised much of the nation's livestock.

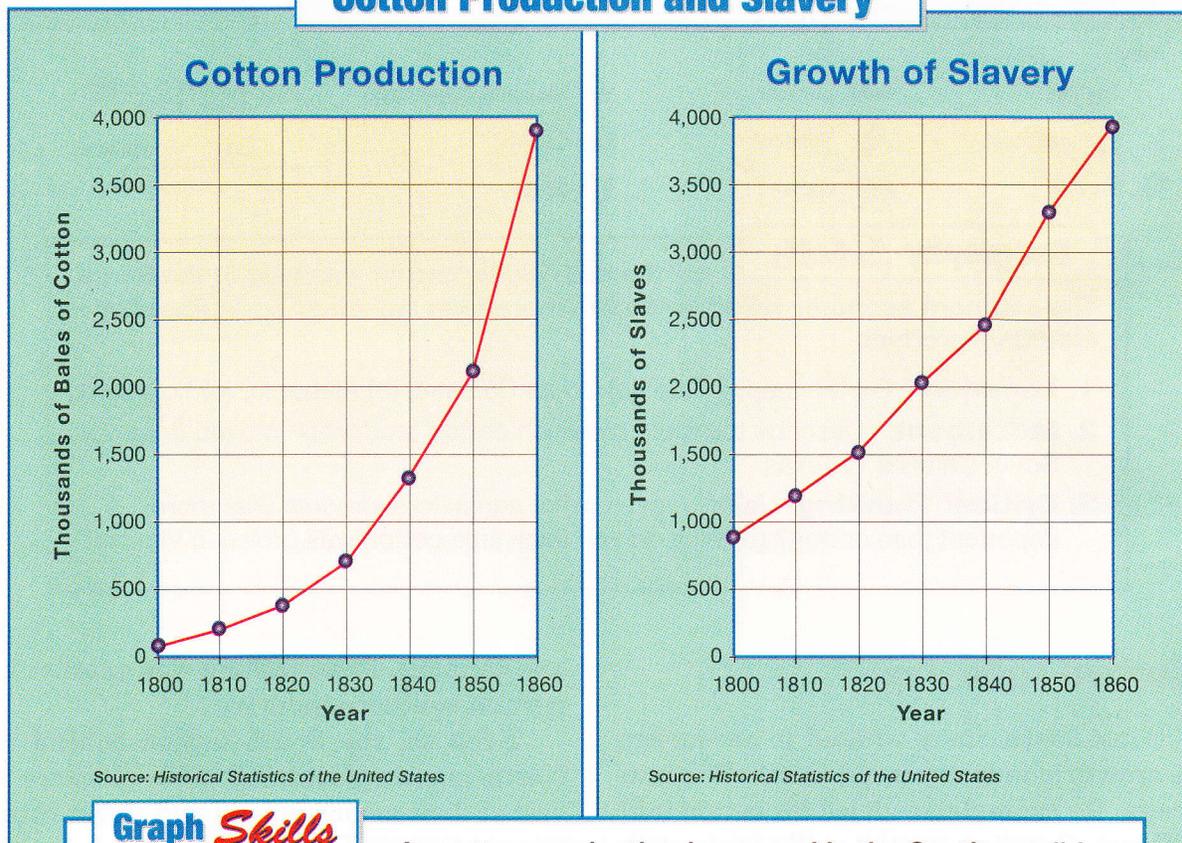
Rice was an important crop along the coasts of South Carolina and Georgia. Sugar cane was important in Louisiana and Texas. Growing rice and sugar cane required expensive irrigation and drainage systems. Cane growers also needed costly machinery to grind their harvest. Small-scale farmers could not afford such expensive equipment, however. As a result, the plantation system

dominated areas of sugar and rice production just as it did areas of cotton production.

Tobacco had been an export of the South since 1619, and it continued to be planted in Virginia, North Carolina, and Kentucky. However, in the early 1800s, the large tobacco plantations of colonial days had given way to small tobacco farms. On these farms, a few field hands tended five or six acres of tobacco.

In addition to the major cash crops of cotton, rice, sugar, and tobacco, the South also led the nation in livestock production. Southern livestock owners profited from hogs, oxen, horses, mules, and beef cattle. Much of this livestock was raised in areas that were unsuitable for growing crops, such as the pine woods of North Carolina.

Cotton Production and Slavery



Graph Skills

As cotton production increased in the South, so did the number of enslaved African Americans.

- 1. Comprehension** (a) How many more bales of cotton were produced in 1850 than in 1820? (b) In what decade did the number of slaves increase the most?
- 2. Critical Thinking** Predict how the end of slavery would affect the southern economy.



Products of the South



Key

Textiles	Lumber	Rice and sugar cane	Spread of cotton 1840–1860
Iron and steel	Tobacco	Cotton	
Mining	Cattle	Grain	

0 150 300 Miles
0 150 300 Kilometers

Geography Skills

By the mid-1800s, cotton was king in the South.

The southern economy relied on cotton more than any other agricultural or industrial product.

- 1. Location** On the map, locate: (a) South Carolina, (b) Alabama, (c) Louisiana.
- 2. Movement** Describe the route by which cotton production moved from South Carolina to Texas.
- 3. Critical Thinking** (a) In Virginia, what agricultural product was more important than cotton? (b) Why do you think little cotton was grown in Virginia?

Limited Industry

Some southerners wanted to encourage the growth of industry in the South. **William Gregg**, for example, modeled his cotton mill in South Carolina on the mills in Lowell, Massachusetts. Gregg built houses and gardens for his workers and schools for their children.

The South also developed a few other successful industries. In Richmond, Virginia, for example, the Tredegar Iron Works turned out railroad equipment, machinery, tools,

and cannons. Flour milling was another important southern industry.

Even so, the South lagged behind the North in manufacturing. Rich planters invested their money in land and slaves rather than in factories.

Also, slavery reduced the need for southern industry. In the North, most people had enough money to buy factory goods. In the South, however, millions of slaves could not buy anything. As a result, the demand for goods in the South was not as great as in the North. This hurt southern industry.

Economically Dependent

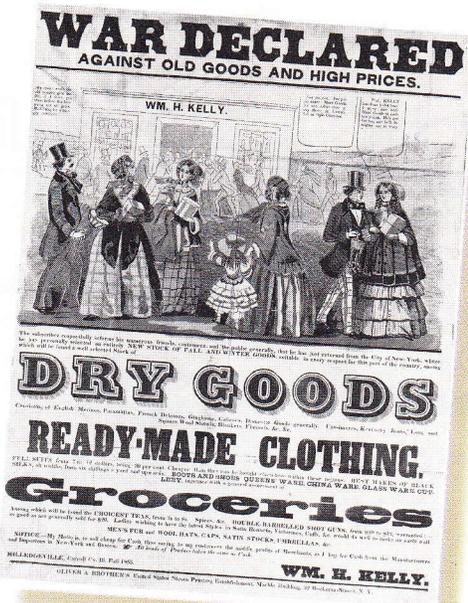
Many southerners ordered goods from northern and European manufacturers. This advertisement appeared in the mail-order catalog of a store located in Milledgeville, Illinois. ★ **Why were there so few factories in the South?**

Economically Dependent

With little industry of its own, the South came to depend more and more on the North and on Europe. Southern planters often borrowed money from northern banks in order to expand their plantations. They also purchased much of their furniture, farm tools, and machines from northern or European factories.

Many southerners resented this situation. One southerner described a burial to show how the South depended on the North for many goods in the 1850s:

“The grave was dug through solid marble, but the marble headstone came from Vermont. It was in a pine wilderness but the pine coffin came from Cincinnati. An iron mountain overshadowed it but the coffin nails and the screws and the shovel came



from Pittsburgh. . . A hickory grove grew nearby, but the pick and shovel handles came from New York. . . That country, so rich in underdeveloped resources, furnished nothing for the funeral except the corpse and the hole in the ground.”

Still, most southerners were proud of the booming cotton industry in their region. As long as cotton remained king, southerners believed, they could look to the future with confidence.

★ **Section 3 Review** ★

Recall

- Locate** (a) South Carolina, (b) Alabama, (c) Mississippi, (d) Texas.
- Identify** (a) Eli Whitney, (b) Cotton Kingdom, (c) William Gregg.

Comprehension

- Why did the Cotton Kingdom spread westward?
- How did the cotton gin cause slavery to expand in the South?

- Why did the South not develop as much industry as the North?

Critical Thinking and Writing

- Predicting Consequences** How might the southern economy have developed differently if the cotton gin had never been invented?
- Analyzing Primary Sources** Review the quotation that appears at the end of the section. Is the southerner praising or criticizing the economy of the South? Explain.



Activity Linking Past and Present The cotton gin had a major impact on the South's way of life. In a chart, list some modern inventions, describe what they do, and explain how they are changing the way you live today.



Life in the South



Explore These Questions

- What five groups made up society in the South?
- How did African Americans suffer under slavery?
- How did African Americans struggle against slavery?

Define

- slave code
- extended family

Identify

- “cottonocracy”
- Norbert Rillieux
- Henry Blair
- Denmark Vesey
- Nat Turner



“ I was born in 1844. . . . First [thing] I remember was my ma and us [children] being sold off the [auction] block to Mistress Payne. When I was . . . too little to work in the field, I stayed at the big house most of the time and helped Mistress Payne feed the chickens, make scarecrows to keep the hawks away and put wood on the fires. After I got big enough to hoe, I went to the field same as the other[s]. ”

In this excerpt, Jack Payne recalls his life as an enslaved person in Texas. Payne was only one of millions of African Americans throughout the South who suffered the anguish of slavery. Toiling from dawn till dusk, they had neither freedom nor rights.

White Southerners

The Old South is often pictured as a land of vast plantations worked by hundreds of slaves. Such grand estates did exist in the South. However, most white southerners were not rich planters. In fact, most whites owned no slaves at all.

The “cottonocracy”

A planter was someone who owned at least 20 slaves. In 1860, only one white southerner in 30 belonged to a planter family. An even smaller number—less than 1 percent—

owned 50 or more slaves. These wealthy families were called the “**cottonocracy**” because they made huge amounts of money from cotton. Though few in number, their views and way of life dominated the South.

The richest planters built elegant homes and filled them with expensive furniture from Europe. They entertained lavishly. They tried to dress and behave like European nobility.

Planters had responsibilities, too. Because of their wealth and influence, many planters became political leaders. They devoted many hours to local, state, and national politics. Planters hired overseers to run day-to-day affairs on their plantations and to manage the work of slaves.

Small farmers

About 75 percent of southern whites were small farmers. These “plain folk” owned the



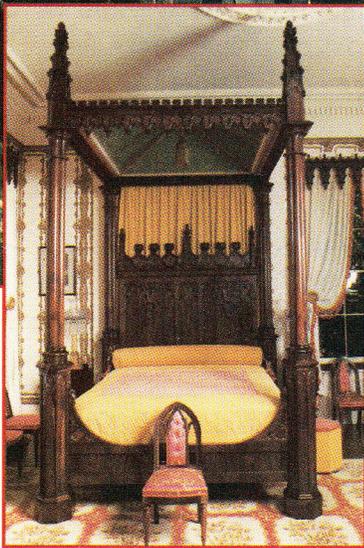
Connections With Arts

In later years, both literature and film gave a false view of plantation life. Writers and film producers focused on the “gentility” of the planters and largely ignored the injustices of slavery. The most successful of these fictional works is the 1939 film *Gone With the Wind*. Based on Margaret Mitchell’s novel, the film won 10 Academy Awards, including Best Picture.

Rosedown Plantation

Rosedown Plantation, built in 1835, is located in St. Francisville, Louisiana. It was owned by the wealthy cotton planter, Daniel Turnbull, and his wife Martha. The Turnbolls filled their mansion with beautiful furniture and art from Europe. They surrounded their home with avenues of trees and formal gardens. Today, visitors can tour Rosedown, its gardens, and its many outbuildings. You can even stay overnight and recall the luxurious lifestyle of the southern aristocracy.

★ *To learn more about this historic site, write: Rosedown Plantation, 12501 Highway 10, St. Francisville, LA 70775.*



Original bedroom furniture at Rosedown

land they farmed. They might also own one or two slaves. Unlike planters, plain folk worked with their slaves in the fields.

Among small farmers, helping each other was an important duty. "People who lived miles apart counted themselves as neighbors," wrote a farmer in Mississippi. "And in case of sorrow or sickness, there was no limit to the service neighbors provided."

Poor whites

Lower on the social ladder was a small group of poor whites. They did not own the land they farmed. Instead, they rented it, often paying the owner with part of their crop. Many barely made a living.

Poor whites often lived in the hilly, wooded areas of the South. They planted crops such as corn, potatoes, and other vegetables. They also herded cattle and pigs. Poor whites had hard lives, but they enjoyed rights denied to all African Americans, enslaved or free.

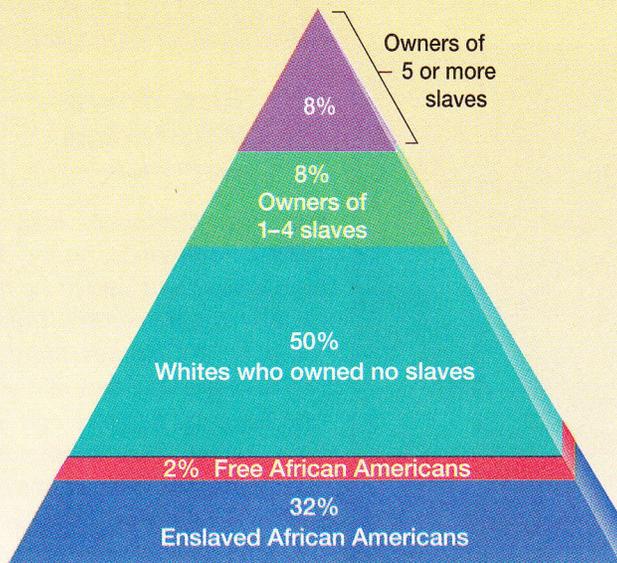
African American Southerners

Both free and enslaved African Americans lived in the South. Although free under the law, free African Americans faced harsh discrimination. Enslaved African Americans had no rights at all.

Free African Americans

Most free African Americans were descendants of slaves freed during and after the American Revolution. Others had bought their freedom. In 1860, over 200,000 free blacks lived in the South. Most lived in Maryland and Delaware, where slavery was

Southern Society in 1860



Source: *Historical Statistics of the United States*

Graphic Organizer *Skills*

This social pyramid represents the structure of southern society in 1860. At the top were wealthy and powerful planters. At the bottom were millions of enslaved African Americans.

- 1. Comprehension** Which group in southern society was most numerous?
- 2. Critical Thinking** Many white southerners owned no slaves but still supported the institution of slavery. Why do you think they did so?

in decline. Others lived in cities such as New Orleans, Richmond, and Charleston.

Slave owners did not like free African Americans living in the South. They feared that free African Americans set a bad example, encouraging slaves to rebel. Also, slave owners justified slavery by claiming that African Americans could not take care of themselves. Free African American workers proved this idea wrong.

To discourage free African Americans, southern states passed laws that made life even harder for them. Free African Americans were not allowed to vote or travel. In some southern states, they either had to move out of the state or allow themselves to be enslaved.

Despite these limits, free African Americans made valuable contributions to southern life. For example, **Norbert Rillieux** (RIHL yoo) invented a machine that revolutionized the way sugar was made. Another inventor, **Henry Blair**, patented a seed planter.

Enslaved African Americans

By 1860, enslaved African Americans made up one third of the South's population. Most worked as field hands on cotton plantations. Both men and women cleared new land and planted and harvested crops. Children helped by pulling weeds, collecting wood, and carrying water to the field hands. By the time they were teenagers, they too worked between 12 and 14 hours a day.

On large plantations, some African Americans became skilled workers, such as carpenters and blacksmiths. A few worked in cities and lived almost as if they were free. Their earnings, however, belonged to their owners.

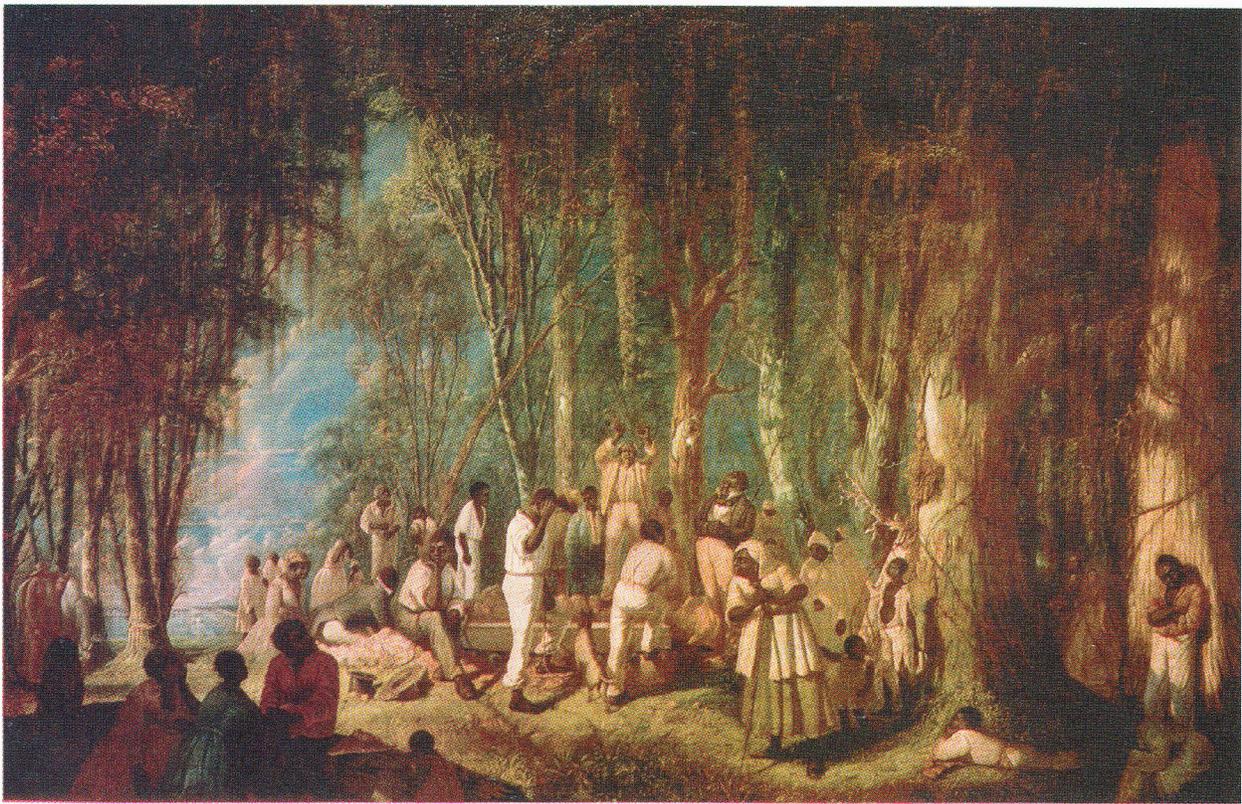
Life Without Freedom

The life of enslaved African Americans was determined by strict laws and the practices of individual slave owners. Conditions varied from plantation to plantation. Some owners made sure their slaves had clean cabins, decent food, and warm clothes. Other planters spent as little as possible on their slaves.

Slave codes

Southern states passed laws known as **slave codes** to keep slaves from either running away or rebelling. Under the codes, enslaved African Americans were forbidden to gather in groups of more than three. They could not leave their owner's land without a written pass. They were not allowed to own guns.

Slave codes also made it a crime for slaves to learn how to read and write. Owners hoped that this law would make it hard for African Americans to escape slavery. They reasoned that uneducated runaway slaves would not be able to use maps or read train schedules. They would not be able to find their way north.



Viewing HISTORY

African American Community

The painting *Plantation Burial* by John Antrobus is unusual for providing a realistic portrait of life on a southern plantation. The central figures are African Americans. To the left, a white couple keeps a respectful distance from the religious ceremony. ★ **What role did religion play in the life of enslaved African Americans?**

Some laws were meant to protect slaves, but only from the worst forms of abuse. However, enslaved African Americans did not have the right to testify in court. As a result, they were not able to bring charges against owners who abused them.

Enslaved African Americans had only one real protection against mistreatment. Owners looked on their slaves as valuable property. Most slave owners wanted to keep this human property healthy and productive.

Hard work

Even the kindest owners insisted that their slaves work long, hard days. Slaves worked from “can see to can’t see,” or from dawn to dusk, up to 16 hours a day. Frederick Douglass, who escaped slavery, recalled his life under one harsh master:

“We were worked in all weathers. It was never too hot or too cold; it

could never rain, blow, hail, or snow too hard for us to work in the field. Work, work, work. . . The longest days were too short for him and the shortest nights too long for him.”

Some owners and overseers whipped slaves to get a full day’s work. However, the worst part of slavery was not the beatings. It was the complete loss of freedom.

Family life

It was hard for enslaved African Americans to keep their families together. Southern laws did not recognize slave marriages or slave families. As a result, owners could sell a husband and wife to different buyers. Children were often taken from their parents and sold.

On large plantations, many enslaved families did manage to stay together. For those African Americans, the family was a

source of strength, pride, and love. Grandparents, parents, children, aunts, uncles, and cousins formed a close-knit group. This idea of an **extended family** had its roots in Africa.

Enslaved African Americans preserved other traditions as well. Parents taught their children traditional African stories and songs. They used folk tales to pass on African history and moral beliefs.

Religion offers hope

By the 1800s, many enslaved African Americans were devout Christians. Planters often allowed white ministers to preach to their slaves. African Americans also had their own preachers and beliefs.

Religion helped African Americans cope with the harshness of slave life. Bible stories about how the ancient Hebrews had escaped from slavery inspired many spiritual songs. As they worked in the fields, slaves sang about a coming day of freedom. One spiritual, "Go Down, Moses," includes these lines:

“ We need not always weep and
moan,
Let my people go.
And wear these slavery chains
forlorn,
Let my people go. ”

Resistance Against Slavery

Enslaved African Americans struck back against the system that denied them both freedom and wages. Some broke tools, destroyed crops, and stole food.

Many enslaved African Americans tried to escape to the North. Because the journey was long and dangerous, very few made it to freedom. Every county had slave patrols and sheriffs ready to question an unknown black person.

A few African Americans used violence to resist the brutal slave system. **Denmark Vesey**, a free African American, planned a revolt in 1822. Vesey was betrayed before the revolt began. He and 35 other people were executed.

In 1831, an African American preacher named **Nat Turner** led a major revolt. Turner led his followers through Virginia, killing more than 57 whites. Terrified whites hunted the countryside for Turner. They killed many innocent African Americans before catching and hanging him.

Nat Turner's revolt increased southern fears of an uprising of enslaved African Americans. Revolts were rare, however. Since whites were cautious and well armed, a revolt by African Americans had almost no chance of success.

★ Section 4 Review ★

Recall

1. **Identify** (a) "cottonocracy," (b) Norbert Rillieux, (c) Henry Blair, (d) Denmark Vesey, (e) Nat Turner.
2. **Define** (a) slave code, (b) extended family.

Comprehension

3. How did the "cottonocracy" dominate economics and politics in the South?
4. Describe three ways that African Americans suffered under slavery.

5. How did African Americans struggle against the slave system?

Critical Thinking and Writing

6. **Applying Information** How were successful free African Americans a threat to the slave system?
7. **Making Decisions** If you had been an enslaved African American, would you have decided to live under slavery, to try to escape, or to rebel? Explain the reasons for your decision.



Activity Writing a Speech You are an enslaved African American living in the South in the 1850s. Write a speech encouraging people to resist slavery and explaining ways in which they can do it.