Chapter 14 Forging the national economy 1790-1860

1. The Westward Movement
2. The west, with its raw frontier was the most American part of America.

* The wild west was very alluring, and young people moved out to settle

1. Pioneers led grim, hard lived.

* Poorly fed, they were victims of diseases, depression and premature death.

1. Shaping the Western Landscape
2. The pioneers changed the western landscape- they exhausted the soil with tobacco, burnt lands to make pastures and killed many animals almost to the point of extinction.

* American fur trappers worked with Indians and traded manufactured goods for beaver pelts, bison robes and sea-otter pelts.

1. Yet Americans revered nature and admired its beauty.

* It’s pure, wild lands were the nation’s defining attributes
* George Catlin was one of the first to advocate preservation of nature and the idea of national parks.

1. The March of the Millions
2. In the mid 18 hundreds the population doubled every 25 years.

* By 1860 there were 33 states and America was the fourth most populated nation in the world.

1. Urban growth brought diseases and bad living standards.

* In 1840’s -1850’ the immigration rate rose greatly because it seemed that Europe was running out space.

1. America beaconed strongly to struggling people because it was the land of freedom and opportunity.
2. Steamships made it faster and cheaper to reach America.
3. The Emerald Isle Moves West
4. The “Black Forties” was a terrible famine time where the potatoes the Irish depended on rotted. Consequently the Irish moved to American cities.

* They were disliked in America and forced to live in squalor because they were poor. They were also discriminated against and not often given work.
* There were race riots because the Irish and Blacks hated each other.

1. Eventually some became property owners and the Irish influential in politics.
2. The German Forty-eighters
3. There was a huge influx of German between 1830-1860 because of crop failures and other hardships.

* Unlike the Irish the German weren’t as poor coming into America, but similarly they were an influential political group.

1. The German were well-educated and brought in lots of ideas- they supported public schools and were opposed to slavery.

* Slightly distrusted because they strived to keep their language and customs by keeping to themselves mostly.

1. Flare-ups of Antiforeignism
2. The massive immigration made American “nativists” feel threatened.

* Americans felt that the foreign people would outbreed, outvote and overwhelm the native people.
* Not only did the new comers take away native’s jobs but they brought in new religions.

1. The nativisits wanted restrictions on immigration and naturalization. They would make up shocking stories about the immigrants.

* The occasional mass violence between them would kill and injure people and sometimes even burn churches.

1. Immigrants were making the US one of the most ethnically and racially varied in the world.

* Immigrants were actually helpful and necessary for shaping and helping the US economy.

1. Creeping mechanization
2. Americans were slow to embrace machinery over agriculture.

* Europe had already started up their industrial revolution and put up laws to protect themselves and passed laws that wouldn’t let machines or mechanics who knew how to make them leave the country.
* Labor was hard to find until immigrants came, land was cheap in America and no one wanted to be stuck in a factory.

1. Not until past mid 19 century was the factory more profitable than the farm.
2. Whitney Ends the Fiber Famine
3. Samuel Slater is known as the father of the factory system in America. He escaped Britain with the plans for a machine memorized.
4. Eli Whitney built the cotton gin in 1793

* It was 50 times more effective at picking out cotton it affected America and the rest of the world.
* Increased the demand for cotton and consequently the demand for slaves.

1. New England favored industry because it didn’t have good soil for agriculture it had a dense population for working along with fast rivers to power factories and it was close to seaports.
2. Marvels in Manufacturing
3. The was or 1812 and the embargo caused factories to boom

* Patriotism arose and “Buy American” “wear American” became popular slogans.

1. The treaty of Ghent almost let British with their cheap goods ruin American industry but the protective tariff of 1816 helped to stop it.
2. Eli Whitney once again helped to make another machine to help the firearm industry.

* He introduced the concept of interchangeable parts it caught on in 1850 and became the basis for mass-production.

1. The sewing machine was invented by Elias Howe in 1846 and it was perfected by Issac Singer.

* The sewing machine became the foundation of the ready-made clothing industry.

1. Limited liability helped investors risk no more than their own share of the corporation’s stock.

* Laws of “free incorporation” meant that businessmen could create corporations without applying for individual charters from the legislature.

1. Samuel Morse invented the telegraph- it was a huge hit; it brought fame and fortune to Morse.

* It put distantly separated people in almost instant communication.

1. Workers and “Wage Slaves”
2. With factories gone were the friendly relationships that were once held between close workers.
3. Factory workers didn’t have many rights and were forbidden by law to form labor unions to raise wages.
4. Children were used to toil in the factories most were under 12 years old.
5. Adult wage workers voted for the Jacksonian democracy to lighten their burdens.

* Van Buren established the 10 hour work day in 1840

1. Laborers leaned that they had the power when they rebelled.

* A Supreme Court case – common wealth vs. Hunt deemed labor unions not illegal as long as they were honorable and peaceful.

1. Women and The Economy
2. In the preindustrial world, farm women and girls had an important place spinning yarn, weaving cloth, making soap, butter, cheese and candles.
3. Factories cranked these goods faster but gave jobs to those women they were displacing.

* Factory jobs promoted women’s independence. “Factory girls “worked 6 days a week earning very little for their long hours.
* However factory jobs were unusual for women.

1. 10% of white women were working mostly in feminine jobs like teaching, nursing and domestic service. Most of them were single.
2. The cult of domesticity glorified women’s home duties and made them more important as the family’s moral teacher.

* During the industrial revolution family sizes dropped making them more affectionate and child centered, provided a special place for women.

1. Western Farmers reap a Revolution in the Fields
2. The trans-Allegheny was becoming the nation’s bread basket.

* Corn was versatile and important too. It could be changed into liquor or given to hogs to eat. Those became the western farmer’s staple market items.

1. Farmers were expanding west and wanting to plant more.

* John Deere invented a steel plow then Cyrus McCormick invented a mechanical reaper that let one man do the work of five.
* Planters were now striving for ways to increase their money and acres of land.

1. Highways and Steamboats
2. There were primitive unsafe ways of sending things.

* The Lanchester turnpike was highly successful. It was made in 1790’s and had a hard pavement highway of 62 miles.

1. Then started the steamboat craze- people could now defy wind, wave, tide and downstream currents.

* They played a vital role in opening the west and south.

1. “Clinton’s Big Ditch” in New York
2. Next was a canal cutting craze to parallel the others.

* New York under the leadership of Governor Dewitt Clinton dug the Erie canal aka- “Clinton’s Big Ditch”
* This decreased the cost of shipping along with shipping time. It opened more land for settlement.

1. The Iron Horse
2. Appearing in 1828, the most significant transportation yet was the railroad.

* Railroad fast, reliable, cheaper to construct compared to canals and it wasn’t frozen in winters.
* It was opposed at first because it had safety flaws by canal backers.

1. Cables, Clippers and Pony Riders
2. A cable (telegraph) was strung from the US to Europe.
3. In the 1840’s and 185o’s clipper ships arose they were long, narrow and majestic. They glided across the sea.

* Sacrificed cargo space for speed.
* Faded away after more reliable, bigger steamboats were made profitable.

1. The Pony express was established in 1860 to carry mail; the service was stopped after 18 months because of Samuel Morse’s invention.
2. The Transport Web Binds The Union.
3. The desire to expand westward sparked the transportation revolution.
4. Each region was separated- the south made cotton, the West was in charge of grain and livestock, the East made machines for the south and the west.
5. The Market Revolution
6. The Market Revolution transformed a sustenance economy into a national network of industry and commerce.

* Greater mechanization raised legal questions