

## Northern Transformations, 1790–1850

In 1790, American society approximated Jefferson's ideal: the United States was a nation of farmers who provided for themselves and sent surpluses overseas to be traded for manufactured goods. To put it in a less bucolic way, Americans remained on the colonial periphery of North Atlantic capitalism. They sent timber, cured fish, wheat, tobacco, rice, and money to Europe (primarily Great Britain), and Europe (again, Britain was the big player) sent manufactured goods—along with bills for shipping, insurance, banking, and tariff duties—back to America. In the 25 years following adoption of the Constitution, this old relationship fed significant economic growth in the United States, as European wars increased the demand for American produce and American shipping. Americans sent growing mountains of food and raw materials overseas, and they decorated their homes with comforts and small luxuries produced in British factories.

Beginning in the 1790s and accelerating dramatically with the peace of 1815, northern farmers changed that relationship: by 1830, the primary engine of northern economic development was no longer the North Atlantic trade; it was the self-sustained internal development of the northern United States. Northeastern businessmen noted that rural markets were expanding, that imports were unreliable, and that a crowded countryside produced people eager to work for wages. They began to invest in factories. New factory towns, together with the old seaports and new inland towns that served a commercializing agriculture, provided the country's first significant domestic market for food. Governments of the northern states built roads and canals that linked farmers to distant markets, and farmers turned to cash-crop agriculture and bought necessary goods (and paid mortgages and crop loans) with the money they made. By 1830, a large and growing portion of New England, the mid-Atlantic, and the Northwest had transcended colonial economics to become an interdependent, self-sustaining market society.

The pioneering sociologist Max Weber made a distinction between capitalism and the *spirit* of capitalism. Economic exchange and the desire for profit, Weber noted, have existed in all societies. Only a few, however, have organized capitalism into an everyday culture. Historians have coined the term “market revolution” to describe the transformation of the North from a society with markets to a market society—a society in which the market was implicated in the ways in which northerners saw the world and dealt with it. This chapter describes that revolution in the North up to 1830. The succeeding chapter describes the very different patterns of change in the South in the same years.

## C H R O N O L O G Y

|      |                                                                                   |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1789 | National government under the Constitution begins                                 |
| 1790 | Samuel Slater builds his first Arkwright spinning mill at Pawtucket, Rhode Island |
| 1791 | Vermont enters the union as the 14th state                                        |
| 1793 | Beginning of Anglo-French War • Ohio enters the union as the 17th state           |
| 1807 | Robert Fulton launches first steamboat                                            |
| 1812 | Second war with Britain begins                                                    |
| 1813 | Boston Associates erect their first textile mill at Waltham, Massachusetts        |
| 1815 | War of 1812 ends                                                                  |
| 1818 | National Road completed to Ohio River at Wheeling, Virginia                       |
| 1822 | President Monroe vetoes National Road reparations bill                            |
| 1825 | New York completes the Erie Canal between Buffalo and Albany                      |
| 1828 | Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (America's first) completed                           |
| 1835 | Main Line Canal connects Philadelphia and Pittsburgh                              |

## Postcolonial Society, 1790–1815

**Focus Question**

What was the nature of the northern agricultural economy and of agricultural society in the years 1790–1820?

**Farms**

In 1782, J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, a French soldier who had settled in rural New York, explained America's agrarian republic through the words of a fictionalized farmer. First of all, he said, the American farmer owns his own land and bases his claim to dignity and citizenship on that fact. He spoke of "the bright idea of property," and went on: "This formerly rude soil has been converted by my father into a pleasant farm, and in return, it has established all our rights; on it is founded our rank, our freedom, our power as citizens, our importance as inhabitants of [a rural neighborhood]. . . ." Second, he said, farm ownership endows the American farmer with the powers and responsibilities of fatherhood. "Often when I plant my low ground," he said, "I place my little boy on a chair which screws to the beam of the plough—its motion and that of the horses please him; he is perfectly happy and begins to chat. As I lean over the handle, various are the thoughts which

crowd into my mind. I am now doing for him, I say, what my father did for me; may God enable him to live that he may perform the same operations for the same purposes when I am worn out and old!"

Crèvecoeur's farmer, musing on liberty and property, working the ancestral fields with his male heir strapped to the plough, was concerned with proprietorship and fatherhood, not with making money. He shared those concerns with most northern farmers. Their first concern was to provide food and common comforts for their households. Their second was to achieve long-term security and the ability to pass their farms on to their sons. The goal was to create what rural folks called a "**competence**": the ability to live up to neighborhood standards of material decency while protecting the long-term independence of the household. Farmers thought of themselves first as fathers, neighbors, and stewards of family resources, and they avoided financial risk. Weather, bad crop years, pests, and unexpected injuries or deaths provided enough of that without adding the uncertainties of cash-crop agriculture and international commodity prices. In this situation, most farmers practiced what scholars call "safety-first," "**subsistence-plus**," or simply "**mixed**" **agriculture**. They raised a variety of animals and plants, and did not concentrate on a single cash crop. Most farms in New England and the middle states were divided into corn and grain fields, pasturage for animals, woodlands for fuel, a vegetable garden, and perhaps a dairy cow. These complicated farms were a hedge against the uncertainties of rural life. Farm families ate most of what they grew, bartered much of the rest within their neighborhoods, and gambled surpluses on long-distance trade.

West Indian and European markets for American meat, grain, and corn had been growing since the mid-18th century. They **expanded dramatically between 1793 and 1815**, when **war disrupted farming in Europe**. Many northern farmers, although they seldom abandoned mixed agriculture, expanded production to take advantage of these overseas markets. The prosperity and aspirations of hundreds of thousands of farmers rose, and their houses were sprinkled with tokens of comfort and gentility. The same markets, however, sustained traditions of household independence and neighborly cooperation. Farmers continued to provide for their families from their own farms and neighborhoods, and they risked little by increasing their surpluses and sending them overseas. They profited from world markets without becoming dependent on them.

Production for overseas markets after 1790 did, however, alter relationships within farm families—usually in ways that reinforced the independence of the household and the power of its male head. Farm labor in post-revolutionary America was carefully divided by sex. Men worked in the fields, and production for markets both intensified that labor and made it more exclusively male. In the grain fields of the middle states, for instance, the long-handled scythe was replacing the sickle as the principal harvest tool. Women could use the sickle efficiently, but the long, heavy scythe was designed to be wielded by men. At the same time, farmers completed the substitution of ploughs for hoes as the principal cultivating tools—not only because ploughs worked better, but also because rural Americans had developed a prejudice against women working in the fields, and ploughs were male

tools. By the early 19th century, visitors to the long-settled farming areas (with the exception of some mid-Atlantic German communities) seldom saw women in the fields. In his travels throughout France, Thomas Jefferson spoke harshly of peasant communities where he saw women doing field labor.

At the same time, household responsibilities multiplied and fell more exclusively to women. Farm women's labor and ingenuity helped create a more varied and nutritious rural diet in these years. Bread and salted meat were still the staples. The bread was the old mix of Indian corn and coarse wheat ("rye and Injun," the farmers called it), with crust so thick that it was used as a scoop for soups and stews. Though improved brines and pickling techniques augmented the supply of salt meat that could be laid by, farmers' palates doubtless told them that it was the same old salt meat. A variety of other foods were now available, however.

By the 1790s, improved winter feeding for cattle and better techniques for making and storing butter and cheese kept dairy products on the tables of the more prosperous farm families throughout the year. Chickens became more common, and farm women began to fence and manure their kitchen gardens, planting them with potatoes, turnips, cabbages, squashes, beans, and other vegetables that could be stored in the root cellars that were becoming standard features of farmhouses. By the 1830s, a resident of Weymouth, Massachusetts, claimed that "a man who did not have a large garden of potatoes, crooked-necked squashes, and other vegetables . . . was regarded [as] improvident." He might have added poultry and dairy cattle to the list, and he might have noted—as he did not—that all were more likely to result from the labor of women than from the labor of men.

Lewis Miller (1796–1882). The Historical Society of York County, The York County Heritage Trust, PA.



**Old Mrs. Hansman Killing a Hog** This Pennsylvania farm wife seldom if ever worked in the fields, but her daily round of work was no dainty business. Along with other arduous and dirty labors, she killed and butchered hogs not only for her family but for some of her neighbors as well.

### *Neighborhoods*

Rural communities were far more than accumulations of independent farm-owning households. The struggle to maintain household independence involved most farm families in elaborate networks of neighborly cooperation, and long-term, give-and-take relationships with neighbors were essential economic and social assets. Few farmers possessed the tools, the labor, and the food they would have needed to be truly self-sufficient. They regularly worked for one another, borrowed oxen and plows, and swapped one kind of food crop for another. Women traded ashes, herbs, butter and eggs, vegetables, seedlings, baby chicks, goose feathers, and the products of their spinning wheels and looms. The regular exchange of such goods and services was crucial to the workings of rural neighborhoods. Some undertakings—house and barn raisings and husking bees, for example—brought the whole neighborhood together, transforming a necessary chore into a pleasant social event. The gossip, drinking, and dancing that took place on such occasions were fun. They were also—like the exchanges of goods and labor—social rituals that strengthened the neighborly relations within which farmers created a livelihood and passed it on to their sons.

Few of these neighborhood transactions involved money. In 1790, no paper money had yet been issued by the states or the federal government, and the widespread use of Spanish, English, and French coins testified to the shortage of specie. In New England, farmers kept careful accounts of neighborhood debts. In the South and West, farmers used a “changing system” in which they simply remembered what they owed; they regarded the New England practice as a sign of Yankee greed and lack of character. Yet farmers everywhere relied more on barter than on cash. “Instead of money going incessantly backwards and forwards into the same hands,” observed a French traveler in Massachusetts in 1790, Americans “supply their needs in the countryside by direct reciprocal exchanges. The tailor and the bootmaker go and do their work at the home of the farmer . . . who most frequently provides the raw material for it and pays for the work in goods. They write down what they give and receive on both sides, and at the end of the year they settle a large variety of exchanges with a very small quantity of coin.”

George Holcomb, a farmer in New York’s Hudson Valley, left a record of his neighborly transactions over a few days in 1812: “Today Wm. Dixon paid me eight dollars and I lent the same to Samuel Holcomb and today I wanted about two thirds of it for Wm. Dixon and he paid me in three trees of timber that I went and chopped and got home at night . . . this evening I went to Mr. Zach Chapman to a party, Mr. Foley came and dressed flax for half a cord of wood I drew him last winter to the school house.” In a short time, George Holcomb dealt with neighbors and relatives, with cash and bartering, and with a local economy that mixed cut wood, schoolhouse provisions, dressed flax, and a party. He conducted his economic life within an elaborate network of neighborly and family obligations, and not by buying, selling, and calculating.

Country storekeepers and village merchants handled relationships between farmers and long-distance markets, and they were as much a part of their neighborhoods as of the wider world. In most areas, farmers brought produce—often a mixed batch of grain, vegetables,

ashes, goose down, and so on—to the storekeeper, who arranged its shipment to a seaport town. Some paid cash for produce, but most simply credited the farmer's account. Farmers also bought store goods on credit, and when bad crop years or bad luck made them unable to pay, storekeepers tended to wait for payment without charging interest. In many instances, the store was incorporated into the relations of local exchange. Hudson River merchants paid the same prices for local goods that were to be sold locally over long periods of time—a price that reflected their relative value within the local barter economy. When sent to New York City, the prices of the same goods floated up and down with their value on international markets. Storekeepers also played a role in local networks of debt, for it was common for farmers to bring their grain, ashes, butter, and eggs to the store, and to have them credited to the accounts of neighbors to whom they were in debt, thus turning the storekeeper into a broker within the complicated web of neighborhood obligations.

### ***Standards of Living***

In 1790, most farmhouses in the older rural areas were small, one-story structures, and few farmers bothered to keep their surroundings clean or attractive. They repaired their fences only when they became too dilapidated to function. They rarely planted trees or shrubs, and housewives threw out garbage for chickens and pigs that foraged near the house.

Inside, there were few rooms and many people. Beds stood in every room, and few family members slept alone. Growing up in Bethel, Connecticut, the future show-business entrepreneur P. T. Barnum shared a bed with his brother and an Irish servant. Guests shared beds in New England taverns until the 1820s. The hearth remained the source of heat and light in most farmhouses. Between 1790 and 1810, over half the households in central Massachusetts, an old and relatively prosperous area, owned only one or two candlesticks, suggesting that one of the great disparities between wealthy families and their less affluent neighbors was that the wealthy could light their houses at night. Another disparity was in the outward appearance of houses. The better-off families painted their houses white as a token of pristine republicanism, but their bright houses stood apart from the weathered grey-brown clapboard siding of their neighbors in stark and unrepublican contrast.

Increased income from foreign markets did result in improvement. Farmers bought traditional necessities such as salt and pepper, gunpowder, tools, and coffee and tea, but these were now supplemented with an increasingly alluring array of little luxuries such as crockery, flatware, finished cloth, mirrors, clocks and watches, wallpaper, and the occasional book. At mealtimes, only the poorest families continued to eat with their fingers or with spoons from a common bowl. By 1800, individual place settings with knives and forks and china plates, along with individual chairs instead of benches, had become common in rural America.

### ***Inheritance***

Northern farmers between 1790 and 1815 were remarkably like Jefferson's yeoman-citizen ideal: prosperous, independent, living in rough equality with neighbors who shared the same status. Yet even as rural Americans acted out that vision, its social base

was disintegrating. Overcrowding and the growth of markets caused the price of good farmland to rise sharply throughout the older settlements. Most young men could expect to inherit only a few acres of exhausted land, or to move to wilderness land in the **back-country**. Failing those, they could expect to quit farming altogether. Crèvecoeur's baby boy—who in fact ended up living in Boston—was in a more precarious position than his seat on his father's plough might have indicated.

In Revolutionary America, fathers had been judged by their ability to support and govern their households, to serve as good neighbors, and to pass land on to their sons. After the war, fewer farm fathers were able to do that. Those in the old settlements had small farms and large families, which made it impossible for them to provide a competence for all of their offspring. Fathers felt that they had failed as fathers, and their sons, with no prospect of an adequate inheritance, were obliged to leave home. Most fathers tried to provide for all of their heirs (generally by leaving land to their sons and personal property to their daughters.) Few left all of their land to one son, and many stated in their wills that the sons to whom they left the land must share barns and cider mills—even houses—on farms that could be subdivided no further. Such provisions fitted a social system that guaranteed the independence of the household head through complex relations with kin and neighbors, but they were also an indication that that system had reached the end of the line.

Outside New England, farm **tenancy** was on the increase. In parts of Pennsylvania and in other areas as well, farmers often bought farms when they became available in the neighborhood, rented them to tenants to augment the household income, and gave them to their sons when they reached adulthood. The sons of poorer farmers often rented a farm in the hope of saving enough money to buy it. Some fathers bought tracts of unimproved land in the backcountry—sometimes on speculation, more often to provide their sons with land they could make into a farm. Others paid to have their sons educated, or arranged an apprenticeship to provide them with an avenue of escape from a crowded countryside. As a result, more and more young men left home. The populations of the old farming communities grew older and more female, while the populations of the rising frontier settlements and seaport cities became younger and more male. The young men who stayed home often had nothing to look forward to but a lifetime as tenants or hired hands.

### *The Seaport Cities*

When the first federal census takers made their rounds in 1790, they found 94 percent of Americans living on farms and in rural villages. The remaining 6 percent lived in 24 towns with a population of more than 2,500 (a census definition of “urban” that included many communities that were, by modern standards, very small). Only five places had populations over 10,000: Boston (18,038), New York (33,131), Philadelphia (42,444), Baltimore (13,503), and Charleston (16,359). All five were seaports, which is testimony to the key role of international commerce in the economy of the early republic.

The little streams of produce that left farm neighborhoods joined with others on the rivers and the coastal shipping lanes, and they piled up as a significant national surplus on the docks of the seaport towns. When war broke out between Britain and France in 1793, the overseas demand for American foodstuffs, and thus the production of American farms, increased. The warring European powers also needed shipping to carry products from the Caribbean islands to Europe. America's saltwater merchants, free from the old colonial restrictions, responded by building one of the great merchant fleets in the world, and American overseas trade entered a period of unprecedented growth. Ocean trade during these years was risky and uneven, subject to the tides of war and the strategies of the belligerents. French seizures of American shipping and the resulting undeclared war of 1798–1800, the British ban on America's re-export trade in 1805, Jefferson's nonimportation of 1806 and his embargo of 1807, and America's entry into the war in 1812 all disrupted the maritime economy and threw the seaports into periods of economic collapse. But by 1815, wartime commerce had transformed the seaports and the institutions of American business. New York City had become the nation's largest city, with a population that grew from 33,131 in 1790 to 96,373 in 1810. Philadelphia's population had risen to 53,722 by 1810; Boston's to 34,322; and Baltimore's to 46,555. Economic growth in the years 1790 to 1815 was most palpably concentrated in these cities.

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, *Procession of the Victuallers*, by John Lewis Krimmel (Bc85 K98)



**Procession of Victuallers, 1815** The frequent and festive parades in the seaport cities included militia companies, political officials, clergymen, and artisans organized by trade. In this Philadelphia parade celebrating the end of the War of 1812, the victuallers, preceded by militia cavalymen, carry a penned steer and a craft flag high atop a wagon, while butchers in top hats and clean aprons ride below. Behind them, shipbuilders drag a ship through the streets. Such parades were vivid displays of the system of interlocking labors that made up the city and of the value of artisans within that system.

Seaport merchants in these years amassed the private fortunes and built the financial infrastructure that would soon take up the task of commercializing and industrializing the northern United States. Old merchants like the Brown brothers of Providence and Elias Hasket Darby of Salem grew richer, and newcomers like the immigrant John Jacob Astor of New York City built huge personal fortunes. To manage those fortunes, new institutions emerged. Docking and warehousing facilities improved dramatically. Bookkeepers were replaced by accountants who were familiar with the new double-entry system of accounting, and insurance and banking companies were formed to handle the risks and rewards of wartime commerce.

The cities prospered in these years. The main thoroughfares and a few of the side streets were paved with cobblestones and lined with fine shops and townhouses. But in other parts of the cities, visitors learned that the boom was creating poverty as well as wealth. There had been poor people and depressed neighborhoods in the 18th-century seaports, but not on the scale that prevailed between 1790 and 1820. A few steps off the handsome avenues were narrow streets crowded with ragged children, browsing dogs and pigs, with garbage and waste filling the open sewers. Epidemics became more frequent and deadly. New York City, for example, experienced six severe bouts of yellow fever between 1791 and 1822. Each time, the disease entered through the seaport and settled in the slums. Life expectancy in Boston, reputedly the healthiest city in America, was three to five years lower than in the surrounding countryside.

The slums were evidence that money created by commerce was being distributed in undemocratic ways. Per capita wealth in New York rose 60 percent between 1790 and 1825, but the wealthiest 4 percent of the population owned over half of that wealth. The wages of skilled and unskilled labor rose in these years, but the increase in seasonal and temporary employment, together with the recurring interruptions of foreign commerce, cut deeply into the security and prosperity of ordinary women and men. Added to the old insecurities of sickness, fire, accident, aging, and any number of personal misfortunes, these ate up the gains made by laborers, sailors, and most artisans and their families.

Meanwhile, the status of artisans in the big cities was undergoing change. In 1790, artisans were the self-proclaimed “middling classes” of the towns. They demanded and usually received the respect of their fellow citizens. When a clerk in Boston refused to attend dancing classes that one of the town’s master saddlers had joined, a newspaper scolded him (a mere “stockjobber’s lackey”) for considering himself the social superior of the saddler and other “reputable mechanics.” Skilled manual workers constituted about half the male workforce of the seaport cities, and their respectability and usefulness, together with the role they had played in the Revolution, had earned them an honorable status.

That status rested in large part on their independence. In 1790, most artisan workshops were household operations with at most one or two apprentices and hired journeymen—wage earners who looked forward to owning their own shops one day. Timothy Dwight,

the conservative president of Yale College, observed that there were few of those “amphibious beings” in America who remained journeymen (wage earners) for life. Most master craftsmen lived modestly (on the borderline of poverty in many cases) and aspired only to support their household in security and decency, and to do so by performing useful work. They identified their way of life with republican virtue. Jefferson proclaimed them “the yeomen of the cities.”

The patriarchal base of that republicanism, however, was eroding. With the growth of the maritime economy, the nature of construction work, shipbuilding, the clothing trades, and other specialized crafts changed. Artisans were being replaced by cheaper labor and undercut by subcontracted “slop work” performed by semiskilled rural outworkers. Perhaps one in five master craftsmen entered the newly emerging business class. The others took work as laborers or wage-earning craftsmen. By 1815, most young craftsmen in the seaports could not hope to own their own shops. About half of New York City’s journeymen that year were over 30 years old; nearly a quarter were over 40. Most were married, and half headed a household that included four or more dependents. In short, they had become wage earners for life. In the seaports between 1790 and 1815, the world of artisans like Paul Revere, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Paine was passing out of existence. Wage labor was taking its place.

The loss of independence undermined artisan husbands and fathers. Few wage earners could support a family without the earnings of a wife and children. Working-class women took in boarders and did laundry and found work as domestic servants or as peddlers of fruit, candy, vegetables, cakes, or hot corn. They sent their children out to scavenge in the streets. The descent into wage labor and the reliance on the earnings of women and children were at variance with the republican, patriarchal assumptions of fathers.

## From Backcountry to Frontier: The Northwest

The United States was a huge country in 1790, at least on paper. In the treaty that ended the War of Independence in 1783, the British ignored Indian claims and ceded all of the land from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River to the new republic, with the exceptions of Spanish Florida and New Orleans. The states then surrendered their individual claims to the federal government, and in 1790, George Washington became president of a nation that stretched nearly 1,500 miles inland. Still, most white Americans lived on thin strips of settlement on the Atlantic coast and along the few navigable rivers that emptied into the Atlantic. Some were pushing their way into the wilds of Maine and northern Vermont, and in New York others set up communities as far west as the Mohawk Valley. Pittsburgh was a struggling new settlement, and two outposts had been established on the Ohio River: at Marietta and at what would become Cincinnati.

### **The Backcountry, 1790–1815**

To easterners, the backcountry whites who were displacing the Indians seemed no different from the defeated aborigines. In fact, in accommodating themselves to a borderless forest

used by both Indians and whites, many settlers—like many Indians—had melded Indian and white ways. To clear the land, backcountry farmers simply girdled the trees and left them to die and fall down by themselves. They plowed the land by navigating between the stumps. **To easterners' minds, the worst offense was that women often worked the fields,** particularly while their men, as did Indians, spent long periods away on hunting trips for food game and animal skins for trade. The arch-pioneer Daniel Boone, for instance, braided his hair, dressed himself in Indian leggings, and, with only his dogs for company, disappeared for months at a time on “long hunts.” When easterners began to “civilize” his neighborhood, Boone moved farther west.

Eastern visitors were appalled not only by the poverty, lice, and filth of frontier life but also by the drunkenness and violence of the frontiersmen. Americans everywhere drank heavily in the early years of the 19th century, but everyone agreed that westerners drank more and were more violent when drunk than men anywhere else. Travelers told of no-holds-barred fights in which men gouged the eyes and bit off the noses and ears of their opponents. No account was complete without a reckoning of the number of one-eyed, one-eared men the traveler had met on the frontier. Stories arose of half-legendary heroes such as Davy Crockett of Tennessee, who wrestled bears and alligators and had a recipe for Indian stew, and Mike Fink, a Pennsylvania boatman who brawled and drank his way along the rivers of the interior until he was shot and killed in a drunken episode that none of the participants could clearly remember. Samuel Holden Parsons, a New Englander serving as a judge in the Northwest Territory, called the frontiersmen “our white savages.” Massachusetts conservative Timothy Pickering branded them “the least worthy subjects of the United States. They are little less savage than the Indians.”

### **Settlement**

After 1789, settlers of the backcountry made two demands of the new national government: protection from the Indians and a guarantee of the right to navigate the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. The Indians were pushed back in the 1790s and finished off in the War of 1812, and in 1803, Jefferson's Louisiana Purchase ended the European presence on the rivers and at the crucial chokepoint at New Orleans. Over these years, the pace of settlement quickened. In 1790, only 10,000 settlers lived west of the Appalachians—about 1 American in 40. By 1800, the number of settlers had risen to nearly 1 million. By 1820, 2 million Americans were westerners—one in five. **(See Map 8.1, Population Density, 1790–1820, in the color insert following page 384.)**

The new settlers bought land from speculators who had acquired tracts under the Northwest Ordinance in the Northwest; from English, Dutch, and American land companies in western New York; and from land dealers in the Southwest and in northern New England. They built frame houses surrounded by cleared fields, planted marketable crops, and settled into the struggle to make farms out of the wilderness and to meet mortgage payments along the way. Ohio entered the union in 1803, followed by Indiana (1816) and Illinois (1818). As time passed, the term *backcountry*, which easterners had used to refer

to the wilderness and the dangerous misfits who lived in it, fell into disuse. By 1820, the term *frontier* had replaced it. The new settlements no longer represented the backwash of American civilization. They were its cutting edge.

### The Decline of Patriarchy

In the 50 years following the Declaration of Independence, the patriarchal republic created by the Founding Fathers became a democracy. The decline of authority and deference and the rise of individualistic, democratic social and political forms had many roots—most obviously in rural overcrowding, the movement of young people west and into the towns, and, more happily, in the increasingly democratic implications of American Revolutionary ideology. Most Americans witnessed the initial stirrings of change as a withering of paternal authority in their own households. Some—slaves and many women in particular—welcomed the decline of **patriarchy**. Others (the fathers, disinherited sons, and women who looked to the security of old ways) considered it a disaster of unmeasured proportions. Whether they experienced the transformation as a personal rise or fall, **northerners had entered a world where received authority and past experience had lost their power**. A new democratic faith emerged, grounded in the experience, intellect, and intuition of ordinary people.

### Paternal Power in Decline

The philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson, who reached adulthood in the 1830s, mused that he had had the misfortune to be young when age was respected and to have grown old when youth counted for everything. Arriving in America at about the time Emerson came of age, the French visitor Alexis de Tocqueville observed that paternal power was largely absent in American families. “All that remains of it,” he said, “are a few vestiges in the first years of childhood. . . . But as soon as the young American approaches manhood, the ties of filial obedience are relaxed day by day; master of his thoughts, he is soon master of his conduct. . . . At the close of boyhood the man appears and begins to trace out his own path.”

From the mid-18th century onward, and especially after the Revolution, **many young people grew up knowing that their fathers would be unable to help them** and that they would have to make their own way in the world. The consequent decline of parental power became evident in many ways, perhaps most poignantly in changing patterns of courtship and marriage. In the countryside, young men knew that they would not inherit the family farm, and young women knew that their father would be able to provide only a small dowry. As a result, fathers exerted less control over marriage choices than when marriage entailed a significant transfer of property. Young people now courted away from parental scrutiny and made choices based on affection and personal attraction more than on property or parental pressure. In 18th-century America, rural marriages had united families; now they united individuals. One sign of youthful independence (and of young people’s lack of faith in their future) was the high number of pregnancies outside of marriage. Such incidents had been few in the 17th-century

North, but in the second half of the 18th century and in the first decades of the 19th, the number of first births that occurred within eight months of marriage averaged between 25 percent and 30 percent, with the rates running much higher among poor couples. Apparently, fathers who could not provide for their children could not control them either.

### ***The Alcoholic Republic***

The erosion of the old family economy was paralleled by a dramatic rise in alcohol consumption. Americans had been drinking alcohol since the time of the first settlements. (The Puritan flagship *Arabella* had carried three times as much beer as water.) But drinking, like all other “normal” behaviors, took place within a structure of paternal authority. Americans tiptoed every day in the course of their ordinary activities: at family meals and around the fireside, at work, and at barn-raising, militia musters, dances, court days (even judges and juries passed the bottle), weddings, funerals, corn-huskings—even at the ordination of ministers. Under such circumstances, drinking—even drunkenness—seldom posed a threat to authority or to the social order.

That old pattern of communal drinking persisted into the 19th century, but during the 50 years following the Revolution, it gradually gave way to a new pattern. Farmers, particularly those in newly settled areas, regularly produced a surplus of grain that they turned into whiskey. In Washington County in western Pennsylvania, for example, 1 family in 10 operated a distillery in the 1790s. Whiskey was safer than water and milk, which were often tainted, and it was cheaper than coffee or tea. It was also cheaper than imported rum, so Americans embraced whiskey as their national drink and consumed extraordinary quantities of it. Per capita consumption of pure alcohol in all its forms increased by three to four gallons annually between 1790 and 1830. Most of the increase was in consumption of cheap and potent whiskey. By 1830, per capita consumption of distilled spirits was more than five gallons per year—the highest it has ever been, and three times what it is in the United States today. The United States had become, as one historian has said, an “**alcoholic republic.**”

The nation’s growing thirst was driven not by conviviality or neighborliness but by a desire to get drunk. Most Americans drank regularly, although with wide variations. Men drank far more than women, the poor and the rich drank more than the emerging middle class, city dwellers drank more than farmers, westerners drank more than easterners, and southerners drank a bit more than northerners. Throughout the nation, the heaviest drinking took place among the increasing numbers of young men who lived away from their families and outside the old social controls: soldiers and sailors, boatmen and other transport workers, lumberjacks, schoolmasters, **journeyman** craftsmen, college students. Among such men, the controlled tipping of the 18th century gave way to the binge and to solitary drinking. By the 1820s, American physicians were learning to diagnose delirium tremens—the trembling and the paranoid delusions brought on by withdrawal from physical addiction to alcohol. By that decade, social reformers branded

alcohol as a threat to individual well-being, domestic peace, public order, and the republic itself. (See chapter 12.)

## Transportation Revolution, 1815–1860

### **Focus Question**

How did improvements in transportation actually channel commerce within and between sections?

After 1815, dramatic improvements in transportation—more and better roads, steamboats, canals, and railroads—tied old communities together and penetrated previously isolated neighborhoods and transformed them. Most of these improvements were the work of state governments. They made the transition to a market society physically possible.

### **Transportation in 1815**

In 1815, the United States was a rural nation stretching from the old settlements on the Atlantic coast to the trans-Appalachian west, with transportation facilities that ranged from primitive to nonexistent. Americans despaired of communicating, to say nothing of doing business on a national scale. In 1816, a Senate committee reported that **\$9 would move a ton of goods across the 3,000-mile expanse of the North Atlantic. The same \$9 would move the same ton of goods only 30 miles inland.** A year later, the cost of transporting wheat from the new settlement of Buffalo to New York City was three times greater than the selling price of wheat in New York. Farming for profit made sense only for farmers near urban markets or with easy river access to the coast.

West of the Appalachians, transportation was almost entirely undeveloped. Until the 1820s, most northwesterners were southern yeomen who settled near tributaries of the Ohio–Mississippi River Valley, which reached the sea at New Orleans. Farmers floated their produce downriver on jerry-built flatboats. Boatmen making the trip from Louisville to New Orleans spent a full month navigating dangerous rivers through unsettled territory. At New Orleans, northwestern produce was trans-shipped to New York and other eastern ports. Most boatmen knocked down their flatboats, sold the lumber, then walked home to Kentucky or Ohio over the difficult and dangerous Natchez Trace.

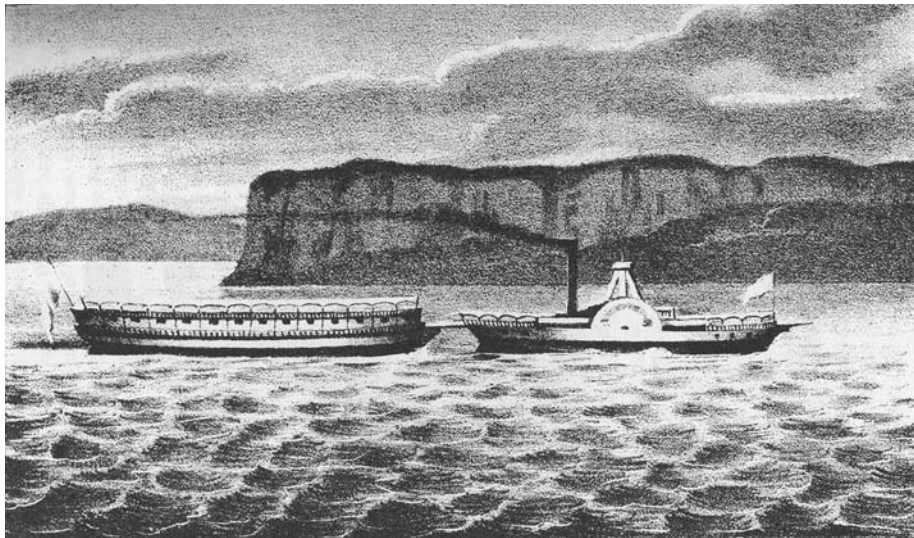
Transporting goods *into* the western settlements was even more difficult. Keel boatmen like the legendary Mike Fink could navigate upstream—using eddies and back currents, sailing when the wind was right, but usually poling their boats against the current. Skilled crews averaged only 15 miles a day, and the trip from New Orleans to Louisville took three to four months. Looking for better routes, some merchants dragged finished goods across Pennsylvania and into the West at Pittsburgh, but transport costs made these goods prohibitively expensive. Consequently, the trans-Appalachian settlements—home to one in

five Americans by 1820—remained marginal to the market economy. By 1815, New Orleans was shipping about \$5 million of western produce annually—an average of only \$15 per farm family in the interior.

### Improvements

In 1816, Congress resumed construction of the **National Road** (first authorized in 1802) that linked the Potomac River with the Ohio River at Wheeling, Virginia—an attempt to link west and east through the Chesapeake. The smooth, crushed-rock thoroughfare reached Wheeling in 1818. At about the same time, Pennsylvania extended the Lancaster Turnpike to make it run from Philadelphia to the Ohio River at Pittsburgh. These ambitious roads into the West, however, had limited effects. The National Road made it easier for settlers and a few merchants' wagons to reach the West, but the cost of moving bulky farm produce over the road remained high. Eastbound traffic on the National Road consisted largely of cattle and pigs, which carried themselves to market. Farmers continued to float their corn, **cotton**, wheat, salt pork, and whiskey south by riverboat and thence to eastern markets.

It was the steamboat that first made commercial agriculture feasible in the Northwest. Tinkerers and mechanics had been experimenting with steam-powered boats for a generation or more when an entrepreneur named **Robert Fulton** launched the *Clermont* on an upriver trip from New York City to Albany in 1807. Over the next few years, Americans



Thomas L. McKenney, *Sketches of a Tour to the Lakes* (1827)

**A River Steamboat in 1826** By the mid-1820s, steamboats regularly plied the river systems of the United States. Businessmen and elite travelers rented nicely appointed cabins on the steamer and viewed the scenery as they strolled the comfortable (and usually uncrowded) passenger deck. Poorer passengers bought passage on the “Safety Barge” that was dragged behind the steamer.

developed flat-bottomed steamboats that could navigate rivers even at low water. The first steamboat reached Louisville from New Orleans in 1815. Two years later, with 17 steamboats already working western rivers, the *Washington* made the New Orleans–Louisville run in 25 days, a feat that convinced westerners that two-way river trade was possible. By 1820, 69 steamboats were operating on western rivers. The 60,000 tons of produce that farmers and planters had shipped out of the interior in 1810 grew to 500,000 tons in 1840. The steamboat had transformed the interior from an isolated frontier into a busy commercial region that traded farm and plantation products for manufactured goods.

In the East, state governments created rivers where nature had made none. In 1817, Governor DeWitt Clinton, after failing to get federal support, talked the New York legislature into building a canal linking the Hudson River with Lake Erie, thus opening a continuous water route between the Northwest and New York City. The **Erie Canal** was a near-visionary feat of engineering. Designed by self-taught engineers and built by gangs of Irish immigrants, local farm boys, and convict laborers, it stretched 364 miles from Albany to Buffalo. Although “Clinton’s Ditch” passed through carefully chosen level ground, it required a complex system of 83 locks, and it passed over 18 rivers on stone aqueducts. Construction began in 1819, and the canal reached Buffalo in 1825. It was clear even before then that the canal would repay New York state’s investment of \$7.5 million many times over, and that it would transform the territory that it served. **(See Map 8.2, Rivers, Roads, and Canals, 1825–1860, in the color insert following page 384.)**

The Erie Canal would direct the trade of the whole Great Lakes watershed into New York City, but its first and most powerful effects were on western New York, which had been a raw frontier accessible to the East only over a notoriously bad state road. By 1830, the New York corridor of the Erie Canal, settled largely from hill-country New England, was one of the world’s great grain-growing regions, dotted with market towns and new cities like Syracuse, Rochester, and Buffalo.

The Erie Canal was an immense success, and legislators and entrepreneurs in other states joined a canal boom that lasted for 20 years. When construction began on the Erie Canal, there were fewer than 100 miles of canal in the United States. By 1840, there were 3,300 miles, nearly all of it in the Northeast and Northwest. Northwestern states, Ohio in particular, built ambitious canal systems that linked isolated areas to the Great Lakes and thus to the Erie Canal. Northeastern states followed suit. A canal between Worcester and Providence linked the farms of central Massachusetts with Narragansett Bay. Another canal linked the coal mines of northeastern Pennsylvania with the Hudson River at Kingston, New York. In 1835, Pennsylvania completed a canal from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh.

**The canal boom was followed quickly by a boom in railroads.** The first of them connected burgeoning cities to rivers and canals. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, for example, linked Baltimore to the rivers of the West. Although the approximately 3,000 miles of railroads built between the late 1820s and 1840 helped the market positions of some cities, they did not constitute a national or even a regional rail network. A national system developed with the 5,000 miles of track laid in the 1840s and with the flurry of railroad

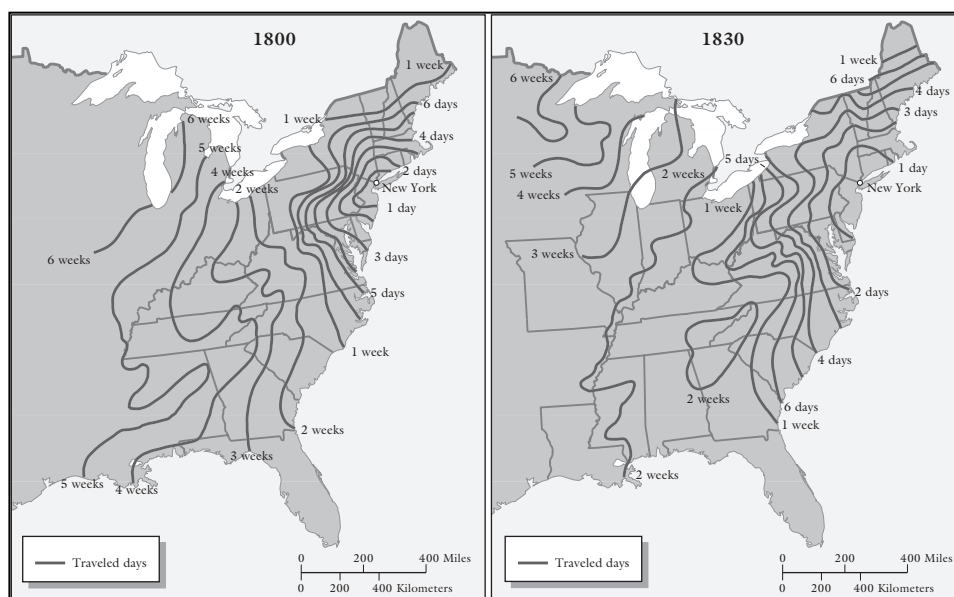
building that gave the United States a rail network of 30,000 miles by 1860—a continuous, integrated system that created massive links between the East and the Northwest and that threatened to put canals out of business. In fact, the New York Central, which paralleled the Erie Canal, rendered that canal obsolete. Other railroads, particularly in the northwestern states, replaced canal and river transport almost completely, even though water transport remained cheaper. By 1860, few farmers in the North and West lived more than 20 road miles from railroads, canals, or rivers that could deliver their produce to regional, national, and international markets.

### ***Time and Money***

The transportation revolution brought a dramatic reduction in the time and money that it took to move heavy goods. Turnpikes cut the cost of wagon transport, but goods traveled most cheaply on water. In 1816, freight rates on the Ohio–Mississippi system had been 1.3 cents per ton-mile for downriver travel and 5.8 cents for upriver travel. Steamboats cut both costs to a bit more than a third of a cent. The Erie Canal and the Ohio canals reduced the distance between East and West and carried goods at about a cent per ton-mile. By 1830, farmers in the Northwest and western New York could grow wheat and sell it at a profit on the New York market.

Improvements in speed were nearly as dramatic. The overland trip from Cincinnati to New York in 1815 (by keelboat upriver to Pittsburgh, then by wagon the rest of the way) had taken a minimum of 52 days. Steamboats traveled from Cincinnati to New Orleans, then passed goods on to coasting ships that finished the trip to New York City in a total of 28 days. By 1840, upriver steamboats carried goods to the terminus of the Main Line Canal at Pittsburgh, which delivered them to Philadelphia, which sent them on to New York City for a total transit time of 18 to 20 days. At about the same time, the Ohio canal system enabled Cincinnati to send goods north through Ohio, across Lake Erie, over the Erie Canal, and down the Hudson to New York City—an all-water route that reduced costs and made the trip in 18 days. Similar improvements occurred in the densely settled and increasingly urbanized Northeast. By 1840, travel time between the big northeastern cities had been reduced to from one-fourth to one-eleventh of what it had been in 1790. These improvements in speed and economy made a northern market economy possible.

By 1840, improved transportation had made a market revolution. Foreign trade, which had driven American economic growth up until 1815, continued to expand. The value of American exports in 1815 had stood at \$52.6 million, while imports totaled \$113 million. Both rose dramatically in the years of the market revolution: exports (now consisting more of southern cotton than of northern food crops) continued to increase, and the flow of imported manufactured goods increased as well. Yet foreign trade now accounted for a smaller *proportion* of American—particularly northern—market activity. Before 1815, Americans had exported about 15 percent of their total national product. By 1830, exports accounted for only 6 percent of a vastly increased national production. The reason for this

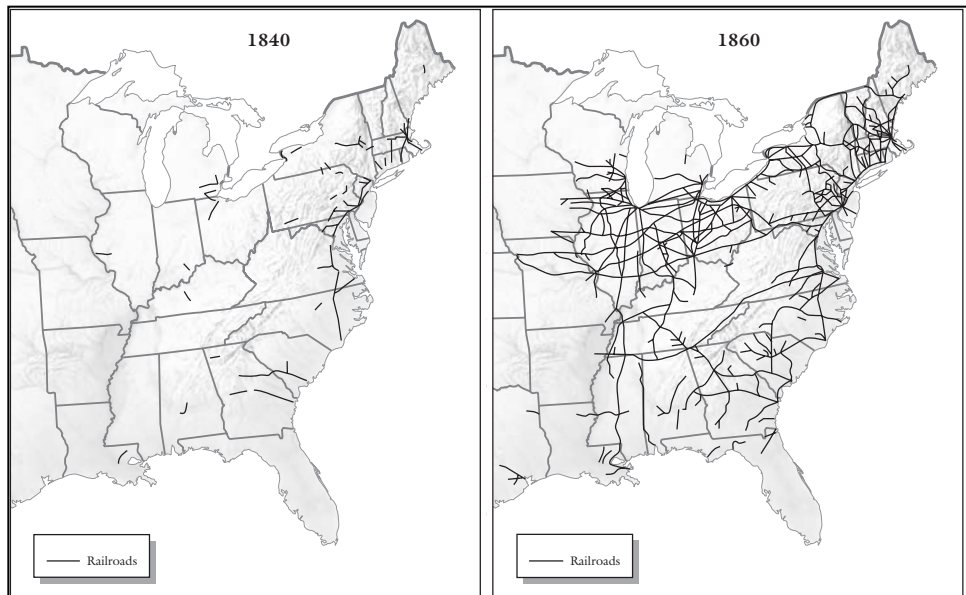


**Map 8.3 Time Required to Travel from New York City, 1800 and 1830** These maps illustrate the increasing ease of travel in the first third of the 19th century. In general, travelers could cover nearly twice as much territory in a day in 1830 than in 1800, although in both cases travel became more difficult as one left the densely settled east.

shift was that after 1815, the United States developed self-sustaining domestic markets for farm produce and manufactured goods. The great engine of economic growth in the North and West was not the old colonial relationship with Europe but a self-sustaining domestic market.

### *Markets and Regions*

**Henry Clay** and other proponents of the **American System** (see chapter 11) dreamed of a market-driven economy that would transcend sectionalism and create a unified United States. But until at least 1840, the market revolution produced greater results within regions than between them. The farmers of New England traded food for finished goods from Boston, Lynn, Lowell, and other towns in what was becoming an urban, industrial region. Philadelphia traded manufactures for food from the farmers of the Delaware Valley. Although the **Erie Canal** created a huge potential for interregional trade, until 1839 most of its eastbound tonnage originated in western New York. In the West, market-oriented farmers fed such rapidly growing cities as Rochester, Pittsburgh, and Cincinnati, which in turn supplied the farmers with locally manufactured farm tools, furniture, shoes, and other goods. **Thus until about 1840, the market revolution was more a regional than an interregional phenomenon. Yet it was clear to politicians, and to anyone else who looked at a map, that the New England, mid-Atlantic, and Northwestern states were on their way to becoming an integrated market society—one**



**Map 8.4 Railroads in the United States, 1840 and 1860** In these 20 years, both the North and South built railway systems. Northerners built rail lines that integrated the market economies of the Midwest and the East—both within sections and between them. For the most part, Southern railroads linked the plantation belt with the ocean. Revealingly, only a few lines connected the North and South.

that did not include southern plantations that grew for export (see chapter 9). It was not what Henry Clay had had in mind.

### Northeastern Farms, 1815–1860

In the old farming communities of the Northeast, the transformations of the early 19th century sent many young people off to cities and factory towns and others to the West. Those who remained at home engaged in new forms of agriculture on a transformed rural landscape, while their cousins in the Northwest turned a wilderness into cash-producing farms. In both regions, farmers abandoned the old mixed, safety-first agriculture and began to raise a single crop intended for distant markets. That decision committed them to buying things that their forebears had grown or made, and thus to participate as both producers and consumers in a new market economy.

An early 19th-century New England farm geared toward family subsistence required only 3 acres of cultivated land, 12 acres of pasture and meadow, another acre for the house, outbuildings, and vegetable garden, and a 30-acre woodlot to stoke the hearth that cooked the food and heated the house. Visitors to even the oldest towns found farmsteads, tilled fields, and pastures scattered across a heavily wooded landscape. Overcrowding had

encouraged some farmers to turn woodlots into poor farmland, but New Englanders who tried to grow grain on their rocky, worn-out soil could not compete with the farmers of western New York and the Northwest. At the same time, however, the factories and cities of the Northeast provided Yankee farmers with a market for meat and other perishables. Beef became the great New England cash crop. Dairy products were not far behind, and the proximity to city markets encouraged the spread of poultry and egg farms, fruit orchards, and truck gardens. The burgeoning shoe industry bought leather from the farmers, and woolen mills created a demand for wool, and thus for great flocks of New England sheep. As a result, millions of trees were stripped from the New England landscape to make way for pastureland.

The rise of livestock specialization reduced the amount of land under cultivation. Early in the century, New Englanders still tilled their few acres in the old three-year rotation: corn the first year, rye the second, fallow the third. By the 1820s and 1830s, as farmers raised more livestock and less grain, the land that remained in cultivation was farmed more intensively. Farmers saved manure and ashes for fertilizer, plowed more deeply and systematically, and tended their crops more carefully. These improved techniques, along with cash from the sale of their livestock and the availability of food at stores, encouraged Yankee farmers to allocate less and less land to the growing of food crops. In Concord, Massachusetts—the home town of the agrarian republic—the portion of town land in tillage dropped from 20 percent to 7 percent between 1771 and 1850.

The transition to livestock-raising transformed woodlands into open pastures. As farmers leveled the forests, they sold the wood to fuel-hungry cities. It was a lucrative, although short-term, market: in 1829, a cord of wood sold for \$1.50 in Maine and for \$7 in Boston. In the 1820s, manufacturers began marketing cast-iron stoves that heated houses more cheaply and more efficiently than open hearths, and canals brought cheap Pennsylvania anthracite to the Northeast. Farmers who needed pastureland could gain substantial one-time profits from the sale of cut wood. The result was massive deforestation. In 1790, in the central Massachusetts town of Petersham, forest covered 85 percent of the town lands. By 1830, the creation of pastureland through commercial woodcutting had reduced the forested area to 30 percent. (By 1850, woods covered only 10 percent of the town, the pasturelands were overgrazed and ruined, and the landscape was dotted with abandoned farms.)

With the shift to specialized market agriculture, New England farmers became customers for necessities that their forebears had produced themselves or had acquired through barter. They heated their houses with coal dug by Pennsylvania miners. They wore cotton cloth made by the factory women at Lowell. New Hampshire farm girls made straw hats for them, and the craftsmen of Lynn made their shoes. By 1830 or so, many farmers were even buying food. The Erie Canal and the western grain belt sent flour from Rochester into eastern neighborhoods where grain was no longer grown. Many farmers found it easier to produce specialized crops for market, and to buy butter, cheese, eggs, and vegetables at country stores.

The turning point came in the 1820s. The storekeepers of Northampton, Massachusetts, for instance, had been increasing their stock in trade by about 7 percent per decade since the late 18th century. In the 1820s, they increased it 45 percent and now carried not only local farm products and sugar, salt, and coffee, but also bolts of New England cloth, sacks of western flour, a variety of necessities and little luxuries from the wholesale houses of New York City and Boston, and pattern samples from which to order silverware, dishes, wallpaper, and other household goods. Those goods were better than what could be made at home, and for the most part they were cheaper. The price of factory-made cloth, for instance, declined sixfold between 1815 and 1830.

As a result, spinning wheels and handlooms disappeared from the farmhouses of New England. Farm families that bought the new cast-iron stoves enjoyed pies and bread baked from western white flour; the old “Rye and Injun” disappeared. All of these things cost money and committed farm families to increasing their cash incomes. Standards of living rose dramatically. At the same time, northeastern farmers depended on markets in ways that their fathers and grandfathers would have considered dangerous not only to family welfare but to the welfare of the republic itself.

## The Northwest

One reason the market revolution in the Northeast went as smoothly as it did was that young people with little hope of inheriting land in the old settlements moved to towns and cities or to the new farmlands of the Northwest. Between 1815 and 1840—precisely the years in which northeastern agriculture became a cash-crop business—migrants from the older areas transformed the Northwest Territory into a working agricultural landscape.

### *Southern Settlers*

In the Northwest until the 1820s, most settlers were yeomen from Kentucky and Tennessee, usually a generation removed from Virginia, the Carolinas, and western Maryland. They moved along the Ohio and up the Muskingum, Miami, Scioto, Wabash, and Illinois rivers to set up farms in the southern and central counties of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. When southerners moved north of the Ohio River into territory that banned slavery, they often did so saying that slavery blocked opportunities for poor whites. The Methodist preacher Peter Cartwright left Kentucky thinking, “I would get entirely clear of the evil of slavery,” and “could raise my children to work where work was not thought a degradation.” Similar hopes drew thousands of other southern yeomen north of the Ohio.

But even those who rejected slavery seldom rejected southern folkways. Like their kinfolk in Kentucky and Tennessee, the farmers of southern and central Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois remained tied to the river trade and to a mode of agriculture that favored free-ranging livestock over cultivated fields. The typical farmer fenced in a few acres of corn and left the rest of his land in woods to be roamed by hogs known as “razorbacks” and “land sharks.” These animals were thin and tough (they seldom grew to over 200 pounds), and they could run

long distances, leap fences, and fend for themselves in the woods. They were notoriously fierce; more settlers were injured by their own hogs than by wild animals. When it was time to gather the hogs for slaughter, many settlers played it safe and hunted them with guns.

The southern-born pioneers of the Northwest, like their cousins across the Ohio River, depended more on their families and neighbors than on distant markets. Newcomers found that they could neither rent tools from their southern neighbors nor present them with “gifts” during hard times. Southerners insisted on repaying debts in kind and on lending tools rather than renting them, thus engaging outsiders in the elaborate network of “neighboring” through which transplanted southerners made their livings. As late as the 1840s, in the bustling town of Springfield, Illinois, barter was the preferred system of exchange. “In no part of the world,” said a Scotsman in southern Illinois, “is good neighborhood found in greater perfection than in the western territory.”

### ***Northern Farmers***

In the 1820s, with improved transportation and with the wars with Indians and Canadians at an end, northeastern migrants entered the Northwest. They settled near the Great Lakes, filling the new lands of Michigan and the northern counties of the older northwestern states. Most of them were New Englanders who had spent a generation in western New York (such settlers accounted for three-fourths of the early population of Michigan). The rest came directly from New England. Arriving in the Northwest along the market’s busiest arteries, they practiced an intensive, market-oriented agriculture. They penned their cattle and hogs and fattened them up, making them bigger and worth more than those farther south. They planted their land in grain and transformed the region—beginning with western New York’s Genesee Country in the 1820s and rolling through the Northwest—into one of the world’s great wheat-producing regions. In 1820, the Northwest had exported only 12 percent of its agricultural produce. By 1840, that figure had risen to 27 percent, and it stood much higher among northern-born grain farmers.

The new settlers were notably receptive to improvements in farming techniques. While there were plenty of southern proponents of progress and plenty of backward northerners, the line between new and old agricultural ways separated northern grain farmers from corn, hogs, and southern settlers. In breaking new land, for instance, southerners still used the old shovel plow, which dug a shallow furrow and skipped over roots. Northerners preferred newer, more expensive cast-iron plows, which cut cleanly through oak roots four inches thick. By the 1830s, the efficient, expensive grain cradle had replaced the age-old sickle as the principal harvest tool in northwestern wheat fields. Instead of threshing their grain by driving cattle and horses over it, farmers bought new horse-powered and treadmill threshers and used hand-cranked fanning mills to speed the process of cleaning the grain.

Most agricultural improvements were tailored to grain and dairy farming and were taken up most avidly by the northern farmers. Others rejected them as expensive and

unnatural. They thought that cast-iron plows poisoned the soil and that fanning mills made a “wind contrary to nater,” and thus offended God. John Chapman, an eccentric Yankee who earned the nickname “Johnny Appleseed” by planting apple tree cuttings in southern Ohio and Indiana before the settlers arrived, planted only low-yield, common trees. He regarded grafting, which farmers farther north and east were using to improve the quality of their apples, as “against nature.” Southerners scoffed at the Yankee fondness for mechanical improvements, the systematic breeding of animals and plants, careful bookkeeping, and farm techniques learned from books. “I reckon,” said one, “I know as much about farming as the printers do.”

Conflict between intensive agriculture and older, less market-oriented ways reached comic proportions when the Illinois legislature imposed stiff penalties on farmers who allowed their small, poorly bred bulls to run loose and impregnate cows with questionable sperm, thereby depriving the owners of high-bred bulls of their breeding fees and rendering the systematic breeding of cattle impossible. When the poorer farmers refused to pen their bulls, the law was rescinded. A local historian explained that “there was a generous feeling in the hearts of the people in favor of an equality of privileges, even among bulls.”

## Farm Families

### **Focus Question**

How did northern farm families experience the transition into commercial agriculture between 1815 and 1850?

### **Households**

The market revolution transformed 18th-century households into 19th-century homes. For one thing, Americans began to limit the size of their families. White women who married in 1800 had given birth to an average of 6.4 children. Those who married between 1800 and 1849 averaged 4.9 children. The decline was most pronounced in the North, particularly in commercialized areas. Rural birthrates remained at 18th-century levels in the southern uplands, in the poorest and most isolated communities of the North, and on the frontier. (As New Yorker Washington Irving passed through the Northwest in the 1830s, he noted in his journal: “Illinois—famous for children and dogs—in house with nineteen children and thirty-seven dogs.”) These communities practiced the old labor-intensive agriculture and relied on the labor of large families. For farmers who used newer techniques or switched to livestock or grain, large families made less sense. Moreover, large broods hampered the ability of future-minded parents to provide for their children and conflicted with new notions of privacy and domesticity that were taking shape among an emerging rural middle class.

Before 1815, farm wives had labored in the house, the barnyard, and the garden while their husbands and sons worked in the fields. With the market revolution came a sharper distinction between male work that was part of the cash economy and female work that was not. Even such traditional women's tasks as dairying, vegetable gardening, and poultry raising became men's work once they became cash-producing specialties. A Pennsylvanian who lived among businesslike New Englanders in the Northwest was appalled at such tampering with hallowed gender roles and wrote the Yankees off as "a shrewd, self-ish, enterprising, cow-milking set of men."

At the same time, new kinds of women's work emerged within households. Though there were fewer children to care for, the culture began to demand forms of child-rearing that were more intensive, individualized, and mother-centered. Store-bought white flour, butter, and eggs and the new iron stoves eased the burdens of food preparation, but they also created demands for pies, cakes, and other fancy foods that earlier generations had

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**THE NEW WASHING DAY**  
The new washing day is a day of ease and comfort. The woman can now wash her clothes in a tub, and the children can play in the dirt. The new washing day is a day of happiness and leisure.

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Premium Awarded at the late Fair of the American Institute, N. Y.  
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**A Soap Advertisement from the 1850s** The rigors of "Old Washing Day" lead the mother in this advertisement to abuse the children and house pets, while her husband leaves the house. With American Cream Soap, domestic bliss returns: The children and cats are happy, the husband returns, and the wife has time to sew.

only dreamed of. And while farm women no longer spun and wove their own cloth, the availability of manufactured cloth created the expectation that their families would dress more neatly and with greater variety than they had in the past, and women spent more time sewing, washing, and ironing. Similar expectations demanded greater personal and domestic cleanliness and taste, and farm women worked at planting flower beds, cleaning and maintaining prized furniture, mirrors, rugs, and ceramics, and scrubbing floors and children. The market and housework grew hand in hand: among the first mass-produced commodities in the United States was the household broom.

Housework was tied to new notions of privacy, decency, and domestic comfort. Before 1820, farmers cared little about how their houses looked, often tossing trash and garbage out the door for pigs and chickens that foraged near the house. In the 1820s and 1830s, as farmers began to grow cash crops and adopt middle-class ways, they began to plant shade trees and to keep their yards free of trash. They painted their houses and sometimes their fences and outbuildings, arranged their woodpiles into neat stacks, surrounded their houses with flowers and ornamental shrubs, and tried to hide their privies from view. The new sense of refinement extended into other aspects of country life. The practice of chewing (and spitting) tobacco was gradually banned in churches and meeting halls, and in 1823, the minister in Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, ordered dogs out of the meetinghouse.

Inside, prosperous farmhouses took on an air of privacy and comfort. Separate kitchens and iron stoves replaced open hearths. Many families used a set of matched dishes for individual place settings, and the availability of finished cloth permitted the regular use of tablecloths, napkins, doilies, curtains, bedspreads, and quilts. Oil lamps replaced home-made candles, and the more prosperous families began to decorate their homes with wallpaper and upholstered furniture. Farm couples moved their beds away from the hearth and (along with the children's beds that had been scattered throughout the house) put them into spaces designated as bedrooms. They took wash stands and basins out of the kitchen and put them into the bedroom, thus making sleeping, bathing, and sex more private than they had been in the past. At the center of this new house stood the farm wife, apart from the bustling world of commerce but decorating and caring for the amenities that commerce bought, and demanding that men respect the new domestic world that commerce had made possible.

### ***Neighborhoods***

By 1830, the market revolution was transforming the rural landscape of the North. The forests had been reduced, the swamps had been drained, and most of the streams and rivers were interrupted by mill dams. Bears, panthers, and wolves had disappeared, along with the beaver and many of the fish. Now there were extensive pastures where English cattle and sheep browsed on English grasses dotted with English wildflowers like buttercups, daisies, and dandelions. Next to the pastures were neatly cultivated croplands that were regularly fertilized and seldom allowed to lie fallow. And at the center stood painted

houses and outbuildings surrounded by flowers and shrubs and vegetable gardens. Many towns, particularly in New England, had planted shade trees along the country roads, completing a rural landscape of straight lines and human cultivation—a landscape that looked both settled and comfortable, and that made it easy to think of nature as a commodity to be altered and controlled.

Within that landscape, old practices and old forms of neighborliness fell into disuse. Neighbors continued to exchange goods and labor and to contract debts that might be left unpaid for years, but debts were more likely to be owed to profit-minded storekeepers and creditors, and even debts between neighbors were often paid in cash. Traditionally, storekeepers had allowed farmers to bring in produce and have it credited to a neighbor/creditor's account—a practice that made the storekeeper an agent of neighborhood bartering. In 1830, half of all the stores in rural New England still carried accounts of this sort, but storekeepers increasingly demanded cash payment or charged lower prices to those who paid cash.

The farm newspapers that appeared in these years urged farmers to keep careful records of the amount of fertilizer used, labor costs, and per-acre yields, and discouraged them from relying on the old system of neighboring. Neighborly rituals like parties, husking bees, and barn-raising—with their drinking and socializing—were scorned as inefficient and morally suspect wastes of time. The *Farmer's Almanac* of 1833 warned New England farmers: “If you love fun, frolic, and waste and slovenliness more than economy and profit, then make a husking.”

By 1830, the efficient northern farmer concentrated on producing commodities that could be marketed outside the neighborhood, and used his cash income to buy material comforts for his family, to pay debts, and to provide a cash inheritance for his children. Although much of the old world of household and neighborhood survived, farmers created a subsistence and maintained the independence of their households not through those spheres but through unprecedented levels of dependence on the outside world.

## The Beginnings of the Industrial Revolution

### **Focus Question**

What was the relationship between urban-industrial growth and the commercialization of the northern countryside?

In the 50 years following 1820, American cities grew faster than ever before or since. The old seaports—New York City in particular—grew rapidly in these years, but the fastest growth was in new cities that served commercial agriculture and in factory towns that produced for a largely rural domestic market. Even in the seaports, growth derived more from commerce with the hinterland than from international trade. Paradoxically, the market revolution in the countryside had produced the beginnings of industry and the greatest period of urban growth in U.S. history.

***Factory Towns: The Rhode Island System***

Jeffersonians held that the United States must always remain rural. Americans, they insisted, could expand into the West, trade their farm surpluses for European finished goods, and thus avoid creating cities with their dependent social classes. Some Federalists argued that Americans, in order to retain their independence, must produce their own manufactured necessities. Proponents of domestic manufactures argued that Americans could enjoy the benefits of factory production without the troublesome blight of industrial cities. They assured Americans that abundant water power—particularly the fast-running streams of the Northeast—would enable Americans to build their factories in the countryside. Such a decentralized factory system would provide employment for country women and children and thus subsidize the independence of struggling farmers. It was on those premises that the first American factories were built.

The American textile industry originated in industrial espionage. The key to the mass production of cotton and woolen textiles was a water-powered machine that spun yarn and thread. The machine had been invented and patented by the Englishman Richard Arkwright in 1769, and the British government forbade the machinery or the people who worked with it to leave the country. Scores of textile workers, however, defied the law and made their way to North America. One of them was Samuel Slater, who had served an apprenticeship under Jedediah Strutt, a partner of Arkwright who had improved on the original machine. Working from memory while employed by Moses Brown, a Providence merchant, Slater built the first Arkwright spinning mill in America at Pawtucket, Rhode Island, in 1790.

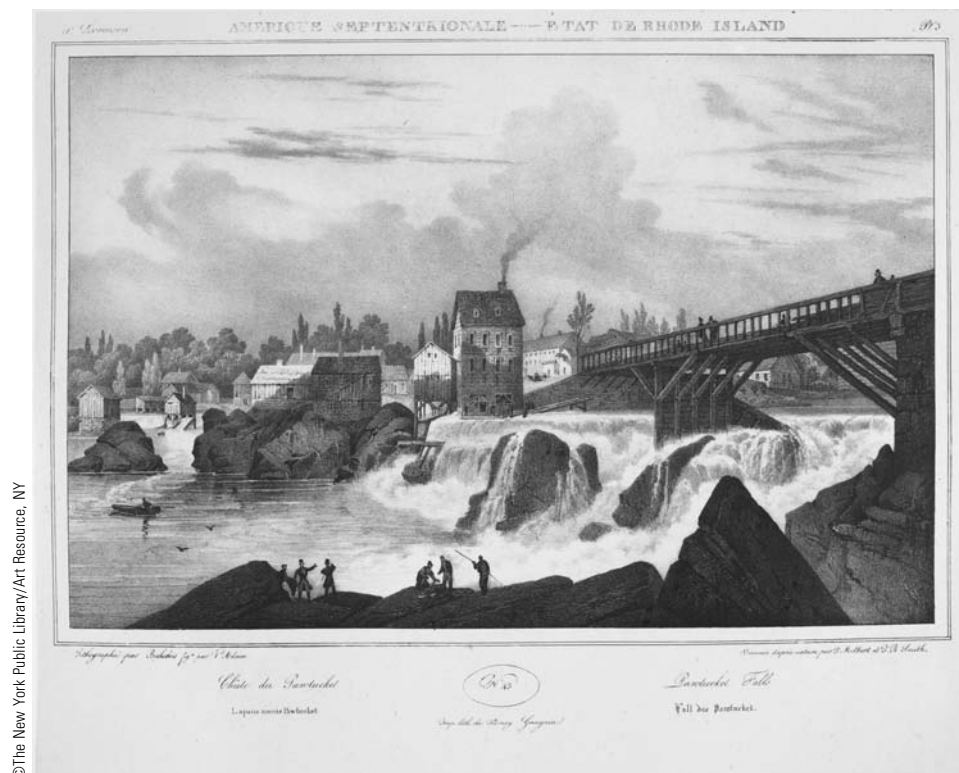
Slater's first mill was a small frame building tucked among the town's houses and craftsmen's shops. Although its capacity was limited to the spinning of cotton yarn, it provided work for children in the mill and for women who wove yarn into cloth in their homes. Thus this first mill satisfied American requirements: it did not require the creation of a factory town, and it supplemented the household incomes of farmers and artisans. As his business grew and he advertised for widows with children, however, Slater was greeted by families headed by landless, impoverished men. Slater's use of children from these families prompted respectable farmers and craftsmen to pull their children out of Slater's growing complex of mills. More poor families arrived to take their places, and during the first years of the 19th century, Pawtucket became a disorderly mill town.

Soon Slater and other mill owners built factory villages in the countryside where they could exert better control over their operations and their workers. The practice became known as the Rhode Island or "family" system. At Slatersville, Rhode Island, at Oxford, Massachusetts, and at other locations in southern New England, mill owners built whole villages surrounded by company-owned farmland that they rented to the husbands and fathers of their mill workers. The workplace was closely supervised, and drinking and other troublesome practices were forbidden in the villages. Fathers and older sons worked either on rented farms or as laborers at the mills. By the late 1820s, Slater and most of the other owners were getting rid of the outworkers and were buying power looms, thus transforming the villages into self-contained factory towns that turned raw cotton into finished

cloth, but at great cost to old forms of household independence. When President Andrew Jackson visited Pawtucket in 1829, he remarked to Samuel Slater, “I understand you taught us how to spin, so as to rival Great Britain in her manufactures; you set all these thousands of spindles to work, which I have been delighted in viewing, and which have made so many happy, by a lucrative employment.” “Yes sir,” replied Slater. “I suppose that I gave out the psalm and they have been singing to the tune ever since.”

### ***Factory Towns: The Waltham System***

A second act of industrial espionage was committed by a Boston merchant named Francis Cabot Lowell. Touring English factory districts in 1811, Lowell asked questions and made secret drawings of the machines. He also experienced a genteel distaste for the squalor of the English textile towns. Returning home, Lowell joined with wealthy friends to form the



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**Pawtucket in 1817** Here is America's first textile milling town. It is set beside a waterfall that provides power for the mills. A bridge runs directly over the brink of the falls, and men and boys fish and play in the pool below them. It is a pastoral scene, the combination of nature and human artifice that early factory promoters held up as the ideal and attainable industrial landscape for the United States. But it is the factories and poor houses in the background, and not the river and its charms, that have a future.

Boston Manufacturing Company—soon known as the Boston Associates. In 1813, they built their first mill at **Waltham**, Massachusetts, and then expanded into Lowell, Lawrence, and other new towns near Boston during the 1820s. The company built mills that differed from the early Rhode Island mills in two ways: (1) they were heavily capitalized and as fully mechanized as possible; they turned raw cotton into finished cloth with little need for skilled workers; and (2) their workers were young, single women recruited from the farms of northern New England—farms that were switching to livestock raising, and thus had little need for the labor of daughters. The company provided boardinghouses for them and enforced rules of conduct both on and off the job. The young women worked steadily, never drank, seldom stayed out late, and attended church faithfully. They dressed neatly—often stylishly—and read newspapers and attended lectures. They impressed visitors, particularly those who had seen factory workers in other places, as a dignified and self-respecting workforce.

The brick mills and prim boardinghouses set within landscaped towns and occupied by sober, well-behaved farm girls signified the Boston Associates' desire to build a profitable textile industry without creating a permanent working class. The women would work for a few years in a carefully controlled environment, send their wages back to their families, and return home to live as country housewives. These young farm women did in fact form an efficient, decorous workforce, but the decorum was imposed less by the owners than by the women themselves. In order to protect their own reputations, they punished transgressions and shunned fellow workers who misbehaved. Nor did they send their wages home or, as was popularly believed, use them to pay for their brothers' college educations. Some saved their money to use as dowries that their fathers could not afford. More, however, spent their wages on themselves, particularly on clothes and books.

The owners of the factories expected that the young women's sojourn would reinforce their own paternalism and that of the girls' fathers. Instead, it produced a self-respecting sisterhood of wage-earning women. Twice in the 1830s, the women of Lowell went on strike, proclaiming that they were not wage slaves but "the daughters of freemen." After finishing their stint in the mills, many Lowell women entered public life as reformers. Most of them married and became housewives, but not on the terms their mothers had known. One in three of them married Lowell men and became city dwellers. Those who returned home remained unmarried longer than their sisters who had stayed on the farm, and then married men about their own age who worked at something other than farming. Thus the Boston Associates kept their promise to produce cotton cloth profitably without creating a permanent working class, but they did not succeed in shuttling young women between rural and urban paternalism and back again. Wage labor, the ultimate degradation for agrarian-republican men, opened a road to independence for thousands of young women.

### ***Cities***

The market revolution hit American cities—the old seaports as well as the new marketing and manufacturing towns—with particular force. Here there was little concern for creating

a classless industrial society: Vastly wealthy men of finance, a new middle class that bought and sold an ever-growing variety of consumer goods, and the impoverished women and men who made those goods lived together in communities that unabashedly recognized the reality of social class.

The richest men were seaport merchants who had survived and prospered during the world wars that ended in 1815. They carried on as importers and exporters, took control of banks and insurance companies, and made great fortunes in urban real estate. Those in Boston constituted an urbane and responsible cluster of families known as the Boston Brahmins. The elite of Philadelphia was less unified and perhaps less responsible, and that of New York even less. These families continued in international commerce, profiting mainly from cotton exports and from a vastly expanded range of imports, they speculated in urban real estate, and they sometimes invested in manufacturing ventures.

Below the old mercantile elite (or, in the case of the new cities of the interior, at the top of society) stood a growing middle class of wholesale and retail merchants, small manufacturers, and an army of lawyers, salesmen, auctioneers, clerks, bookkeepers, and accountants who handled the paperwork for a new market society. At the head of this new middle class were the wholesale merchants of the seaports who bought hardware, crockery, and other commodities from importers (and increasingly from American manufacturers) and then sold them in smaller lots to storekeepers from the interior. The greatest concentration of wholesale firms was on Pearl Street in New York City. Slightly below them were the large processors of farm products, including the meat packers of Cincinnati and the flour millers of Rochester, and large merchants and real estate dealers in the new inland cities.

Another step down were specialized retail merchants who dealt in books, furniture, crockery, and other consumer goods. In Hartford, Connecticut, for instance, the proportion of retailers who specialized in specific commodities rose from 24 percent to 60 percent between 1792 and 1845. Alongside the merchants stood master craftsmen who had become manufacturers. With their workers busy in backrooms or in household workshops, they now called themselves shoe dealers and merchant tailors. At the bottom of this new commercial world were hordes of clerks, most of them young men who hoped to rise in the world. Many of them—one study puts the figure at between 25 percent and 38 percent—did move up in society. Both in numbers and in the nature of the work, this white-collar army formed a new class created by the market revolution, particularly by the emergence of a huge consumer market in the countryside.

In the 1820s and 1830s, the commercial classes transformed the look and feel of American cities. As retailing and manufacturing became separate activities (even in firms that did both), the merchants, salesmen, and clerks now worked in quiet offices on downtown business streets. The seaport merchants built counting rooms and decorated their warehouses in the “new counting house style.” Both in the seaports and the new towns of the interior, impressive brick-and-glass storefronts appeared on the main streets. Perhaps the most telling monuments of the new business society were the handsome retail arcades that began going up in the 1820s. Boston’s Quincy Market (1825), a two-story

arcade on Philadelphia's Chestnut Street (1827), and Rochester's four-story Reynolds Arcade (1828) provided consumers with comfortable, gracious space in which to shop.

### ***Metropolitan Industrialization***

While businessmen were developing a new middle-class ethos, and while their families were flocking to the new retail stores to buy emblems of their status, the people who made the consumer goods were growing more numerous and subsequently were disappearing from view. With the exception of textiles and a few other commodities, few goods were made in mechanized factories before the 1850s. Most of the clothes and shoes, brooms, hats, books, furniture, candy, and other goods available in country stores and city shops were made by hand. City merchants and master craftsmen met the growing demand by hiring more workers. The largest handicrafts—shoemaking, tailoring, and the building trades—were divided into skilled and semiskilled segments and farmed out to subcontractors who could turn a profit only by cutting labor costs. The result was the creation of an urban working class, not only in the big seaports and factory towns but in scores of milling and manufacturing towns throughout the North and the West as well.

The rise of New York City's ready-made clothing trade provides an example. In 1815, wealthy Americans wore tailor-made clothing. Everyone else wore clothes sewn by women at home. In the 1820s, the availability of cheap manufactured cloth and an expanding pool of cheap—largely female—labor, along with the creation of the southern and western markets, transformed New York City into the center of a national market in ready-made clothes. The first big market was in “Negro cottons”—graceless shirts, pants, and sack dresses in which southern planters clothed their slaves. Within a few years, New York manufacturers were sending dungarees and hickory shirts to western farmers and supplying inexpensive clothing to urban workers. By the 1830s, many New York tailoring houses, including the storied Brooks Brothers, offered fancier ready-made clothes to the new middle class.

High rents and costly real estate, together with the absence of water power, prohibited locating large factories in cities, but the nature of the clothing trade and the availability of cheap labor gave rise to a system of subcontracting that transformed needlework into the first “sweated” trade in America. Merchants kept a few skilled male tailors to take care of the custom trade and to cut cloth into patterned pieces for ready-made clothing. The pieces were sent out, often by way of subcontractors, to needleworkers who sewed them together in their homes. Male tailors continued to do the finishing work on men's suits, but most of the work—on cheap goods destined for the countryside—was done by women who worked for piece rates that ranged from 75 cents to \$1.50 per week. Along with clothing, women in garrets and tenements manufactured the items with which the middle class decorated itself and its homes: embroidery, doilies, artificial flowers, fringe, tassels, fancy-bound books, and parasols. All provided work for ill-paid legions of female workers.

Other trades followed similar patterns. For example, northeastern shoes were made in uniform sizes and sent in barrels all over the country. Like tailoring, shoemaking was

## HISTORY THROUGH FILM

### A MIDWIFE'S TALE

*Directed by Richard D. Rodgers (PBS).*

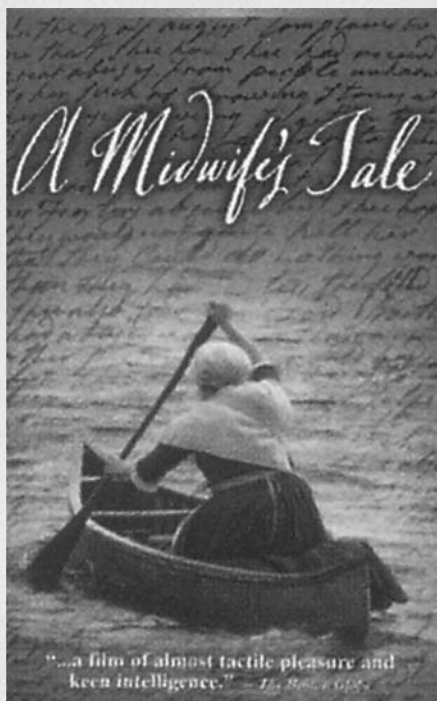
**T**he historian Laurel Thatcher Ulrich's *A Midwife's Tale* won the Pulitzer Prize for history and biography in 1991. Shortly thereafter, the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) turned the book into a documentary movie—a close and imaginative analysis of the diary of Martha Ballard, a Maine farm woman and midwife of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Events are acted out on screen, and period modes of dress, housing, gardening, washing, coffin-making, spinning and weaving, and other details are reconstructed with labored accuracy.

The viewer hears the sounds of footfalls, horses, hand-looms, and dishes, but the only human sounds are an occasional cough, exclamation, or drinking song. The principal narrative is carried by an actress who reads passages from the diary, and Thatcher occasionally breaks in to explain her own experiences with the diary and its interpretation. The result is a documentary film that knows the difference between dramatizing history and making it up. It also dramatizes the

ways in which a skilled and sensitive historian goes about her work.

Martha Ballard was a midwife in a town on the Kennebec River. She began keeping a daily diary at the age of 50 in 1785, and continued until 1812. Most of the film is about her daily life: delivering babies, nursing the sick, helping neighbors, keeping house, raising and supervising the labor of her daughters and niece, gardening, and tending cattle and turkeys. In both the book and the film, the busyness of an ordinary woman's days—and a sense of her possibilities and limits—in the early republic comes through in exhausting detail. The dullness of her life is interrupted only occasionally by an event: a fire at her husband's sawmill, an epidemic of scarlet fever, a parade organized to honor the death of George Washington, the rape of a minister's wife by his enemies (including the local judge, who is set free), and a neighbor's inexplicable murder of his wife and six children.

divided into skilled operations and time-consuming unskilled tasks. Men performed the skilled work of cutting and shaping the uppers. The drudgery of sewing the pieces together went to low-paid women. In the shops of Lynn, Massachusetts, in the shoemakers' boardinghouses in Rochester and other new manufacturing cities of the interior, and in the cellars and garrets of New York City, skilled shoemakers performed the most difficult work for taskmasters who passed the work along to subcontractors who controlled poorly paid, unskilled workers. Skilled craftsmen could earn as much as \$2 per day making custom boots and shoes. Men shaping uppers in boardinghouses earned a little more than half of that. Women binders could work a full week and earn as little as 50 cents. In this as in other trades, wage rates and gendered tasks reflected the old family division of labor, which was based on the assumption that female workers lived with an income-earning husband or father. In fact, increasing numbers of them were young



The PBS documentary movie *A Midwife's Tale* is based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning book of the same name by historian Laurel Thatcher Ulrich.

There is also the process of getting old. At the beginning, Martha Ballard is the busy wife in a well-run household. As she ages and her children leave to set up households of their own, Ballard hires local girls who—perhaps because an increasingly democratic culture has made them less subservient than Ballard would like, perhaps because Ballard is growing old and impatient, perhaps both—tend to be surly. Her husband, a surveyor who works for merchants speculating in local land, is attacked twice in the woods by squatters and spends a year and a half in debtor's jail—not for his own debts but because, as tax collector, he failed to collect enough. While the husband is in jail and his aging wife struggles to keep the house going, their son moves his own family into the house and Martha is moved into a single room and is made to feel unwanted—a poignant and unsentimental case of the strained relations between generations that historians have discovered in the early republic.

*A Midwife's Tale* is a modest film that comes as close as a thorough and imaginative historian and a good film-maker can to re-creating the texture of lived experience in the northeastern countryside at the beginning of the 19th century. Students who enjoy the movie should go immediately to the book.

women living alone or older women who had been widowed, divorced, or abandoned—often with small children.

In their shops and counting rooms, the new middle class entertained notions of gentility based on the distinction between manual and nonmanual work. Lowly clerks and wealthy merchants prided themselves on the fact that they worked with their heads and not their hands. They fancied that their entrepreneurial and managerial skills were making the market revolution happen, while manual workers simply performed tasks thought up by the middle class. The old distinction between proprietorship and dependence, which had placed master craftsmen and independent tradesmen, along with farm-owning yeomen, among the respectable “middling sort,” disappeared. The men and women of an emerging working class struggled to make dignity and a sense of public worth in a society that hid them from view and defined them as “hands.”

## Conclusion

In the first half of the 19th century, northern society became based in buying and selling. The Northeast—New York City in particular—sloughed off its old colonial status and moved from the periphery to the industrial and financial core of the world market economy. Other countries have made that transition: England was first, Japan was the most recent. Both of those countries, however, deemphasized agriculture, drew their populations into cities, and relied on the export of manufactured goods as their principal source of income. The American North, on the other hand, built factories and commercial farms at the same time and as parts of the same process. The market for American manufactures was in the American countryside. (Industrial exports from the United States were insignificant until the end of the 19th century.) The principal market for American food was in American towns and cities, and even on farms whose proprietors were too busy with staple crops to grow the old array of food. **The result was a massive commercialization of the Northwestern, mid-Atlantic, and New England states, and the beginnings of their integration into a unified northern capitalist democracy.**

### SUGGESTED READINGS

Douglas C. North, *The Economic Growth of the United States, 1790–1860* (1961) is an economic overview of these years, while George Rogers Taylor, *The Transportation Revolution, 1815–1860* (1951) remains the best single book on its subject. On rural society in the North, see Christopher Clark, *The Roots of Rural Capitalism: Western Massachusetts, 1780–1860* (1990); Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785–1812* (1990); Martin Bruegel, *Farm, Shop, Landing: The Rise of a Market Society in the Hudson Valley, 1780–1860* (2002); Jack Larkin, *The Reshaping of Everyday Life, 1790–1840* (1988); Carolyn Merchant, *Ecological Revolutions: Nature, Gender, and Science in New England* (1989); John Mack Faragher, *Sugar Creek: Life on the Illinois Prairie* (1986) treats settler societies.

Solid studies of industrial communities include Thomas Dublin, *Women at Work: The Transformation of Work and Community in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1810–1860* (1979); and Anthony F. C. Wallace, *Rockdale: The Growth of an American Village in the Early Industrial Revolution* (1978). The best introduction to the seaports in these years is Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (1999). Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class* (1984) remains essential.

Visit the Liberty Equality Power Companion Web site for resources specific to this textbook: <http://www.thomsonedu.com/history/murrin>

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