

THE AGE OF TECHNOLOGY

**STUDENTS' GUIDE
TO THE HISTORY OF
THE UNITED STATES**

The industrial revolution during the 18th and 19th centuries revolutionized the world. Before, people used hand tools or basic machines. But with the industrial revolution came special machinery, factories and mass production.

Brave new world

While the industrial revolution made the middle and upper classes richer, it was bad for poor people, who were taken advantage of by the rich. **Salaries**² for factory workers were low and working conditions could be dangerous and often boring. **Unskilled**³ workers had little job security and could easily lose their jobs. Children were part of the **labor force**⁴. They often worked long hours and were used for very dangerous jobs like cleaning the machinery.

Steam, the new God

In America, the industrial revolution started around steam. In the early 1800s, American Robert Fulton built the first commercially successful **steamboat**⁶. By the mid-19th century, steamships were cruising across the Atlantic Ocean. About this time, the steam locomotive was also coming into use, thanks to the work of British engineer Richard Trevithick.

Money never sleeps

The Industrial Revolution also saw the rise of banks and industrial investors, as well as a factory system dependent on owners and



Children had to work long hours, often in dangerous working conditions.

managers. The New York Stock Exchange[•] was founded in the early 1790s.

Iron power

In America, it was the iron and steel industries that made the country the world's major industrial country at the beginning of the 20th century. Between 1880 and 1890, steel production increased by ten times. By 1910 America was producing more than 24 million tons, the most of any country.

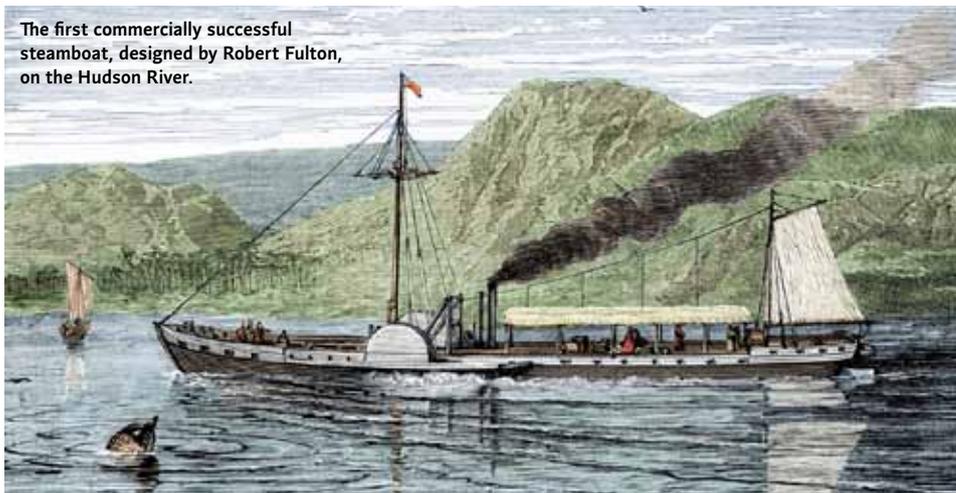
Rise of unions

Unfortunately the industry would not have unions until the 1930s. Unions wanted long-term labor reform. Though it took **decades**⁸, they fought for better **wages**⁹, reasonable working hours and safer working

conditions. The **labor movement**¹⁰ led efforts to stop child labor, give **health benefits**¹¹ and provide aid (= help) to workers who were injured or retired. **Jacy Mayer** (USA)

CULTURE POINT

New York Stock Exchange – located in Wall Street, Manhattan, it is the world's largest stock exchange (burza)



The first commercially successful steamboat, designed by Robert Fulton, on the Hudson River.

VOCABULARY

- ¹ **industrial revolution** [in'dʌstriəl] – průmyslová revoluce
- ² **salary** [sæləri] – plat
- ³ **unskilled** – nekvalifikovaný
- ⁴ **labor force** ['leɪbə fɔ:ɪs] – pracovní síla
- ⁵ **steam** [sti:m] – pára
- ⁶ **steamboat** – parní loď
- ⁷ **unions** ['ju:njənz] – odbory
- ⁸ **decade** ['dekeɪd, di'keɪd] – desetiletí
- ⁹ **wage** [weɪdʒ] – plat
- ¹⁰ **labor movement** – dělnická hnutí
- ¹¹ **health benefits** – zdravotní příspěvky