

TRANSATLANTIC IDENTITIES



4. INDUSTRIAL IMPACTS

October 11, 2023

INDUSTRIAL IMPACTS

THERE WERE TWO INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTIONS IN THE 19TH CENTURY. The first, which began in Britain, involved the introduction of machinery, powered first by water and then by coal and steam, to do work that previously had been managed by hand. This would have a profound effect on the lives of ordinary people. It would also be reflected in the arts: painters generally viewed these developments in a positive light; poets warned of the danger of losing one's soul; novelists found ways to span the gap.

Although the Second Industrial Revolution had equivalents in other countries, it was primarily associated with the rise of America to world status as an economic power. Mainly this was a matter of scale and communication: mass production, and the linking of mines, steelworks, and factories in vast networks connected by rail, coordinated by recent discoveries in electricity and telegraphy. It was a period that made a few tycoons very rich, often at the expense of the working masses; the Gilded Age was by no means golden for everybody. *rb.*

INTRODUCTION

Differences between the Industrial Revolutions in the two countries.

COMPARISON: Distant views

Wyld: *Manchester from Kersal Moor* (1852, Royal Collection)

Inness: *The Lackawanna Valley* (1856, Washington NGA)

Fisher: *View of Salem from Gallows Hill* (1818, Salem)

A. ATTITUDES IN PAINT

Painters appear to delight in the dramatic opportunities created by the new factories and the atmospheric effects of their smoke. Does this match the attitudes of the educated public at large?

COMPARISON: British industrial paintings

Anonymous: *A Pit Head* (early 1800s, Liverpool)

Scott: *Iron and Coal* (1861, Wallington UK)

COMPARISON: Works by Wright of Derby

Wright: *Iron Forge* (1772, London Tate)

Wright: *A Philosopher at the Orrery* (1776, Derby)

Loutherbourg: *Coalbrookdale by Night* (1801, Science Museum)

Turner: *Dudley* (1832, Lever Gallery)

B. ATTITUDES IN WORDS

Most writers tend to retreat into visions of a purer past. But a few thrill to the energy and clangor of the new industrial cities.

Rideing: article on Sheffield (Harpers, 1884)

♪ **Blake:** *Jerusalem* (music by Sir Hubert Parry)

COMPARISON: Two versions of Blake's *Chimney Sweeper*

♪ **Blake:** *Chimney Sweeper, Songs of Innocence* (Toby Jones)

♪ **Blake:** *Chimney Sweeper, Songs of Experience*

Elizabeth Barrett: *Cry of the Children*, excerpt

♪ **Alexander Smith:** *Glasgow*

Photos: New Lanark (1786) and Saltaire (1851)

♪ **Video:** Hammonds Saltaire Band

Alexis de Tocqueville on Manchester

♪ **Gaskell:** *North and South*, excerpts (2004 BBC series)

C. AMERICA ON THE MOVE

We look at two inventors who laid the groundwork for the expansion of American industry, and at the rapid development of American railroads.

COMPARISON: Two American Inventors

Matthew Brady: Daguerreotypes

Poster: Baltimore and Ohio Railroad

♪ **Wilder:** *By the Shores of Silver Lake*, excerpts from Chapter 3

♪ **Cotten:** *Freight Train* (Peter, Paul & Mary)

♪ **Traditional:** *The Ballad of Casey Jones* (Johnny Cash)

D. THE GILDED AGE

Jumping ahead to the end of the century, we look at the contrast between the lives of the Robber Barons and the many working men and women whose low wages made possible the wealth of the few.

Howard Zinn: *A People's History of the United States*, excerpt

COMPARISON: Cartoons from the 1890s

♪ **Video:** Strike of 1877 at Camden Station

♪ **Pete Seeger:** *Casey Jones, the Union Scab*

COMPARISON: Newport and the Lower East Side

Jacob A. Riis: images from *How the Other Half Lives* (1890)

♪ **Fellowes:** *The Gilded Age* (HBO 2022), excerpts

Elizabeth **Barrett** Browning (1806–61, *English poet*), Amy **Beach** (1867–1944, *American composer*), William **Blake** (1757–1827, *English poet and painter*), Matthew **Brady** (1824–96, *American photographer*), Robert **Burns** (1759–96, *Scottish poet and composer*), John Heaviside **Clark** (1771–1863, *Scottish painter*), Elizabeth **Cotten** (1893–1987, *American singer-songwriter*), Elizabeth **Gaskell** (1810–65, *English novelist*), Anthony Philip **Heinrich** (1781–1861, *American composer*), George **Inness** (1825–94, *American painter*), Joseph **Keppler** (1838–94, *American cartoonist*), Philippe de **Loutherbourg** (1740–1812, *British painter*), Samuel F. B. **Morse** (1791–1872, *American painter and inventor*), William **Rideing** (1853–1918, *American writer*), Jacob A. **Riis** (1849–1914, *Danish-American photographer*), John Singer **Sargent** (1856–1925, *American painter*), William Bell **Scott** (1811–90, *Scottish painter*), Alexander **Smith** (1829–67, *Scottish poet*), Alexis de **Tocqueville** (1805–59, *French writer*), JMW **Turner** (1775–1851, *English painter*), Eli **Whitney** (1765–1825, *American inventor*), Laura Ingalls **Wilder** (1867–1957, *American novelist*), William **Wordsworth** (1770–1850, *English poet*), Joseph **Wright** of Derby (1734–97, *English painter*), William **Wyld** (1806–89, *English painter*)

The course website is www.brunyate.com/britain-america

I will always respond to mail at rogerbrunyate@gmail.com