

The New Industrial America

- The Expansion of Industry
 - Natural resources fuel industrialization
 - After the Civil War the US was still largely an agricultural nation but only 60 years later (1920s) the country had become the leading industrial power in the world.
 - Several factors for the industrial boom:
 - Wealth of natural resources
 - Government support for business
 - Growing urban population which provided cheap labor and markets for new products
 - Black Gold
 - **Edwin L Drake** successfully used a steam engine to drill for oil near Titusville Pennsylvania, that removing oil from beneath the earth's surface became practical
 - This breakthrough started an oil boom that spread to Kentucky, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana and Texas
 - New Uses for Steel
 - The railroads, with thousands of miles of track, became the biggest customer for steel but inventors soon found additional uses for steel = barbed wire, farming machines
 - Was used for the Brooklyn Bridge and once complete was called a wonder of the world
 - Skyscrapers = steel frame
 - Inventions Promote Change
 - The Power of Electricity
 - **Thomas Alva Edison** established the world's first research laboratory. Here he perfected the Incandescent light bulb which was patented in 1880 and later invented an entire system for producing and distributing electrical power
 - The harnessing of electricity completely changed the nature of business in America.
 - By 1890, electric power ran numerous machines from fans to printing presses.
 - More important, electricity allowed manufacturers to locate their plants wherever they wanted, not just near sources of power, such as rivers.
 - Inventions Change Lifestyles
 - **Alexander Graham Bell** invented the telephone, which was the most dramatic invention next to the light bulb
 - The telephone opened the way for the worldwide communication network