Land Transportation

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The primary author is the individual who drafted the first version of this section; a section that could have been modified since it was originally published.

Advancements in Transportation Technology

The main transportation in the early 19th century was horse and carriage. It was not until later in the century where the railroad started to change the lives of ordinary people. The railroads were used to travel rather long distances and in only select areas. Horses with cars or wagons were mainly used for people to get from place to place in their everyday live. The steam boat was invented in the early 19th century. This became a very important way of transportation. It allowed a large amount of people and goods to be moved from place to place. It became so popular that captains and crews would break out in fights over how many people they could carry. The train by far was the most useful and important in the advancement of transportation. The train allowed people to travel great distances and change their lives.

The Steam Engine

Steam Engines are often said to be a major moving force behind the industrial revolution. The use of these engines began to appear in factory machinery. The factories benefitted greatly from the use causing an economic expansion. The development of the engines caused the attempt to apply them to transportation. Many different tries were made to make a successful engine. The first successful trail of a working locomotive was built by Richard Trevithick in the United Kingdom. The first railway expedition took place on February 21, 1804.

The Transcontinental Railroad

The first transcontinental railroad was constructed between 1863 and 1869 across the United States. It was a 1,907 mile long contiguous railroad line. It was to connect the pacific coast with the existing eastern U.S. rail system. The railroad connected the San Francisco Bay with Bluffs, Iowa which was connected to the rest of the eastern rail system. The railroad was constructed by three private companies: Union Pacific Railroad, Central Pacific Railroad Company of California, and Western Pacific Railroad Company. Each company was in charge for a section of the track to construct. The railroad system allowed easier access to the economically booming west coast. With the help of this massive
railroad system available, people across the eastern part of the country took the chance to find wealth in the western part of the country.

**Economic Impact**

California expected an immediate *economic relief* of prosperity with the new railroad to the other half of the country. These expectations did not take way quickly. In fact, the railroad system actually caused general depression throughout the area. The merchants within the area were now competing with eastern businesses and manufacturers. The intense competition from those eastern cities caused a recession for almost a decade. Also, the easy access to the western part of the country allowed a flood of workers to enter the area. The vast supply of workers greatly decreased wages and increased unemployment.

**Works Consulted**


