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The Birth of the Industrial Revolution

In the 1700s, a great **revolution** (rev-uh-LOO-shuhn) began in Great Britain. It was a revolution of industry. It marked the end of people living in rural societies and making the things they needed by hand. People began creating machines to do the hard work. Factories were built and banks were opened. This time is known as the Industrial (in-DUHZ-tree-uhl) Revolution, and it changed the history of the world forever.

Why did it start in Great Britain? Only this nation had all the necessary factors. It had wealth and men who were willing to risk their money. It had a banking system to pair savers' funds with investors. It also had raw materials such as coal and iron.



Great Britain was the first country to have cotton mills.



The Industrial Revolution started in Great Britain. It did not take long for the changes to reach the United States.

Laissez-Faire

In 1776, a new book recommended the idea of *laissez-faire* (leh-sa-FAIR). This means that the government should never interfere in business. There would be no laws to govern industry. Businesses would not need to show concern for its workers.

Afraid of Machines

Until about 1850, mobs of people attacked and wrecked machines. They feared machines would someday take away their jobs. Before long, people saw that they could not avoid **technological** (tek-no-LOH-geh-cuhl) change.

Also, in Great Britain there were more people than were needed to work on the farms. This offered a labor force for factories. And, inventors could **patent** (PAT-uhnt) what they made. The chance to earn a lot of money led many to try to create new inventions.

The British government had laws to support its businesses. When the British traded with its many colonies, it sought favorable terms for the merchants. Great Britain also had well-kept roads and canals. This made it easy to move and trade materials.