

Well located for the original iron and later steel industries. Local iron-ore and coal easily mined on the exposed Yorkshire coalfield. Poor transport systems when the industry was set up forced the resources to be used on site. The Don and Sheaf rivers fed by heavy rainfall in the Pennines provided water power.

Sheffield became 'Steel City' and 'Made in Sheffield' became synonymous with quality. Sheffield became a major supplier of steel manufactured goods to the large and expanding market in the UK, the growing colonial empire and in fact the whole world.

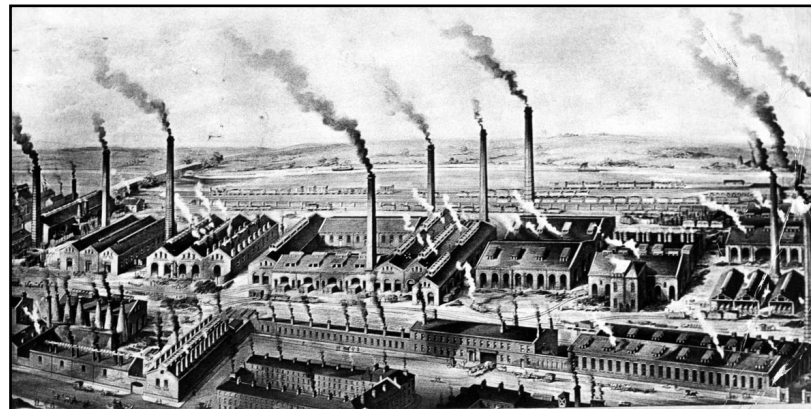
Industrial innovation took place in Sheffield that allowed the steel industry to grow and prosper. Crucible steelmaking allowed large quantities of constant quality steel to be made. Later the Bessemer Steel Converter brought mass production to the steel industry. Special processes were invented in the area, silver plating, and later stainless steel manufacture in electric arc furnaces.

The original industry was based at places like Abbeydale industrial hamlet on the River Sheaf and Kelham Island on the River Don. At these sites iron and later steel making took place and water power was used in the grinding process to make the knives (Blades) that the area was famous for. Both places were the original sites of the metalworking industries that made Sheffield a world name for iron and steel.

CHANGING PLACES SHEFFIELD INDUSTRIALISATION

As the steel making industry became more efficient the raw materials available in Sheffield and the Don valley declined and other sites on ore fields and on the coast became better, lower cost locations for steel making. During the first half of the 20th century Sheffield retained its importance due to Industrial Inertia.

As the iron and steel manufacturing and metalworking industries continued to grow in Sheffield so did the size of the city. A skilled labour force developed which attracted more factories and industries. The area also maintained its importance by specialising in forging, grinding and special steels and alloys of steel such as stainless steel. As the local economy grew it became more dependent on steel and engineering which through the 19th and early 20th century was the dominant form of employment in the city.



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Industrial Inertia involves several factors, not least the pool of skilled labour and technical education that had built up in the area. The area had existing factories and plants and the economic benefits of agglomeration that had developed in the area with the links existing between steel making and subsidiary industries, and an existing efficient local infrastructure. Government Development Area policies also tried to keep the industry important to prevent mass unemployment.