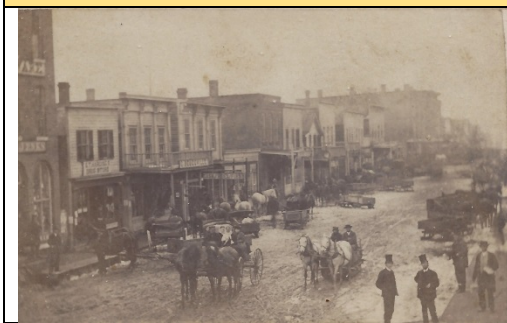


Chapter 68d -- We The People In 1820: Towns & Cities



Dates:
1820

Sections:

- Small Towns Dot The Landscape
- Sizable Cities Materialize

Time: 1820

Small Towns Dot The Landscape



A Prosperous Rural Setting in Connecticut

In 1820, the vast majority of Americans – over nine in ten – still live in the country, on farms.

Where Americans Live

Year	Rural	Urban
1820	93%	7%

They are proudly independent and self-reliant, but also “neighborly” by nature, and drawn to establishing communities, for commerce and for the common good.

Gradually their farms are connected to one another by cart paths and dirt roads, some bordered by wooden fences to contain livestock.

At the intersection of these roads, small towns form up.



A Small Town in America: Circa 1820.

The towns are typically built along a Main Street, lined on both sides by storefronts.

Most are simple wooden structures, with signs announcing their wares.

The center of activity in town tends to be the General Store, a place for people to gather, to socialize, and to buy the everyday necessities of life.

Range Of Goods Sold In General Stores

Soft Goods	Cloth bolts, silk, thread, pins and needles, buttons, underwear, hats, shoes, leather, dungarees, dresses.
Hard Goods	Firearms, ammunition, lanterns, lamps, rope, crockery, tableware, cooking utensils, tools, farm equipment.
Consumables	Coffee beans, tea, flour, sugar, spices, baking powder, crackers, molasses, tobacco, candy, select foods.
Apothecary	Patent medicines, remedies, soaps and toiletries.



America's First "General Stores"

As towns expand, other venues open up – a saloon, an inn, a stables, possibly a jail, eventually a post office.

Time: 1820

Sizable Cities Materialize



Traffic along Main Street in an Emerging City

Towns that are inland and “off the beaten path” tend to grow at a slow pace.

But some graduate into full-fledged cities, depending on their locations.

The main determinant of growth lies in proximity to a sizable body of water – the east coast ocean or an inland river or lake – along with a port that accommodates shipping.

Later on, as transportation systems evolve, other factors come into play, most notably access to one or more high traffic roads or, eventually, technology advances such as canals, railroads, and manufacturing.

When several of these factors overlap, a city’s growth can be exponential.

In the North, for example, Boston, Philadelphia and Baltimore all double or triple in population between 1790 and 1820 – and the New York count reaches 123,706, a four-fold jump.

Two Southern port cities – Charleston and New Orleans – top the 20,000 mark in total residents.

And the nation’s capital, Washington, DC, also joins the top ten list on population.

Top Ten Cities In America

1790	Pop	1820	Pop
New York	33,131	New York	123,706
Philadelphia	28,522	Philadelphia	63,802
Boston	18,320	Baltimore	62,738
Charleston	16,345	Boston	43,298
Baltimore	13,503	New Orleans	21,176
No. Philadelphia	9,913	Charleston	24,780
Salem	7,921	No Philadelphia	19,678
Newport	6,716	So Philadelphia	14,713
Providence	6,380	Washington DC	13,247
Marblehead	5,661	Salem	12,731
ave	14,641		39,987