**Chapter 18: The Rise of the City**

1869

Corcoran Gallery of Art, the nation's first major art museum, opens in Washington, D.C.

Preceding New York City's Metropolitan Museum of Art, which opened two years later, this gallery was the first of many such cultural institutions to be supported by elite groups in cities across the country.

1871 Chicago fire

The great Chicago fire killed 250 people and left 100,000 homeless. The business district,

formerly constructed of wood, was quickly rebuilt of brick and stone, and the city rapidly

recovered. Wooden buildings were later banned throughout the city.

1873 Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner publish The Gilded Age

This satirical novel about nineteenth-century business affairs lent its title to a historical period of materialism and cultural shallowness.

1875 Dwight L. Moody launches urban revivalist movement

Urban revivalism drew vast crowds, bringing urban dwellers, still villagers at heart, back to the church with optimistic, nondenominational messages.

1876 Alexander Graham Bell patents the telephone

Communication was greatly enhanced by this invention, which was so popular that by 1900 one and a half million telephones were in use in the United States.

National Baseball League founded

Businessmen discovered that money could be made in spectator sports and proceeded to

organize baseball to that end.

1878 Electric arc-light system installed in Philadelphia

Previously gaslit city streets became safer with this development. Practical applications of electricity transformed many aspects of urban life.

1879 Thomas Edison creates a practical incandescent lightbulb

This invention made it possible for electric lighting to be used extensively in homes, offices, and factories.

Salvation Army arrives from Britain

Putting into use methods developed in the slums of London, the Salvation Army set out to provide for the spiritual and material needs of the urban poor.

1881 Andrew Carnegie offers to build a library for every American city that will maintain it

Andrew Carnegie would build the libraries if the communities agreed to maintain them. By 1907, he had established more than a thousand libraries at a cost of almost $4 million.

1883 New York City's Metropolitan Opera founded

The Vanderbilts and their newly rich friends founded the Metropolitan Opera when they were barred from purchasing boxes at the Academy of Music, which was controlled by the families of "old wealth."

Brooklyn Bridge opens

The use of new construction methods made it possible to build this suspension bridge. It is still considered a masterpiece of both engineering and aesthetic achievement.

Joseph Pulitzer purchases the New York World

Pulitzer built this newspaper into one of the most powerful in the nation. Publisher William Randolph Hearst's competition with the World helped start the Spanish-American War in 1898.

1885 William Jenney builds first steel-frame structure, Chicago's Home Insurance Building

Although it was not a skyscraper, this building paved the way for the construction of taller and taller structures.

1887 First electric trolley line constructed, in Richmond, Virginia

Frank Sprague's invention quickly caught on, and by 1900 the trolley car had become the

dominant means of urban mass transit.

1892 John D. Rockefeller founds University of Chicago

Philanthropists in this period endowed several universities, including Vanderbilt, Tulane, and Johns Hopkins. John D. Rockefeller's gift was unusual in that, unlike the aforementioned, the university he founded was not named after him.

1893 Chicago World's Fair

In the six months that it was open, this fair had more than 27 million visitors.

"City Beautiful" movement

The Chicago Fair inspired this movement to improve the aesthetic quality of America's cities by adding more parkland, building broad boulevards and parkways, adopting zoning laws, and designing planned suburbs.

1895 William Randolph Hearst enters New York journalism

Hearst bought the New York Journal newspaper to challenge Pulitzer's World, and increased circulation by engaging in sensational journalism.

The comic strip "The Yellow Kid" appears

Hearst printed this newspaper comic strip in yellow ink. This technique led to the term "yellow journalism" to describe a paper's sensationalist reporting of news events.

1897 Boston builds first American subway

The first underground rapid-transit system appeared in Boston, but it was in New York City that the subway achieved its greatest potential.

1900 Theodore Dreiser publishes Sister Carrie

Dreiser was the greatest American novelist of the naturalism school, and this work's depiction of the impact of urban life on its heroine is no less relevant today than it was when the book first appeared.

1901 New York Tenement House Law

So-called New Law tenements were required to have open courts, indoor toilets, and fire

safeguards, but enforcement of the law was lax and nothing was done to improve existing

housing stock.

1904 New York subway system opens

The first New York City subway ran the length of Manhattan and immediately began to change the demographics of the metropolitan region.

1906 San Francisco earthquake

The most severe damage in this violent natural disaster came from the firestorm that followed the quake. Hundreds of people died, and property damage was estimated at $500 million.

1913 Fifty-five-floor Woolworth Building opens in New York City

The erection of this "Cathedral of Commerce" marked the beginning of Manhattan's famous skyline.