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American History Essay

Finally! The Erie Canal was finally finished in 1825 after eight long years of building the 363 mile long waterway. It allowed farmers to ship goods from Toledo, Ohio, on the western side of Lake Erie, all the way to the coastal port of New York City, which became the biggest port in 15 years of the opening of the Erie Canal. The Erie Canal cut travel cost and time. The Erie Canal building expenses were about $7 million, but were quickly counter parted by the savings of the farmers in America. The boom of goods because of the Industrial Revolution caused transportation to be a major desire; canals soon were put into the spotlight of the frenzy for better shipment of goods. At first, the Erie Canal was known mockingly as “Clinton’s Big Ditch”, after the New York Governor Dewitt Clinton because he was the one who proposed the plan. The ironic nickname suddenly vanished after the success of the Erie Canal began.

The Erie Canal led to a huge economic growth of the United States. One way is that the Erie Canal cut costs and travel time. Compared to the traditional wagon on the bumpy dirt road, the travel time was decreased from 21 days to 8 days (Doc.2). The cost of shipping was reduced from $100 per ton to $10 per ton (Doc.2). The Erie Canal also gave a boost to New York City. Before the opening of the Erie Canal, New York City was the country’s fifth largest seaport (Doc.1B). 15 years after the opening of it, New York City became the busiest port in the United States (Doc.1B). Another way the Erie Canal was important to the economic growth of the United States was that it created a new waterway. Commercial vessels could travel north up the Hudson River and all the way to Lake Erie (Doc.1A). The Erie Canal caused industries around the Hudson River and New York’s ports to become more vital to the economy (Doc.1A). The final way that the Erie Canal contributed to the United States financial system is that it ran through many cities. The Erie Canal ran through trading cities of Buffalo, Syracuse, Troy and Albany (Doc.3). This increased trade, which increased the United States economic development (Doc.3). The success of the Erie Canal started a roar of more canals such as the Oswego Canal. The Erie Canal was later enlarged from 4 feet deep and 40 feet wide to 7 feet deep and 70 feet wide to accommodate the increasing water traffic. In conclusion, the Erie Canal played a big part in amplifying the United States economy.

The Erie Canal started to make the United States more noticeable on the globe. The 363 mile long canal shaped the profile of American commerce. The Erie Canal modernized both the economy of United States and the way of transporting goods, from flatboats traveling downstream on the canal to steamboats traveling upstream on the canal.