Beginning with the first high pressure steam engine used for transportation, adapted from Watt’s original steam engine by Oliver Evans in the United States at the turn of the 19th Century, steam-powered railroads grew to become the dominant form of overland transportation in the 19th Century before being replaced by electric and diesel-electric trains in the early 20th Century. The American railroad began as a dense network connecting the densely populated eastern states before expanding westward with the first transcontinental railroad. The primary impetus for the western railroads was the government’s desire to gain greater control over western lands both politically and militarily. As a result, the government issued land grants and loans to railway companies in return for building the western railroads which were not able to be profitable on their own. As the railways became more widely used and commercially profitable, a number of technological advancements were made to improve the performance, safety, and efficiency of steam trains. Examples of these improvements include centrally-controlled air brakes—which allowed the engineer to simultaneously control the brakes on all of the cars from the engine—and standardized wheel setups which including more and larger driving wheels and articulated trucks to allow locomotives to put down increasing quantities of power. The steam locomotive, however, was eventually replaced by all-electric and diesel-electric engines, which, despite the numerous improvements in steam locomotion, achieved higher performance and had lower maintenance costs.