The Upper Grand section of the Lehigh Navigation is built from Mauch Chunk to White Haven. With 20 dams and 29 locks, this waterway overcame a difference in elevation of more than 600 feet.

Fire at the Avondale Mine near Plymouth, Luzerne County, kills 110 miners. In response, Pennsylvania enacts the first mine safety laws, but the disaster spurs mine union activity.

The Bethlehem Iron Company begins production of iron railroad rails at its South Bethlehem location. Bethlehem Iron Company was the predecessor of the Bethlehem Steel Company.

Slate quarrying begins rapid growth with the founding of Bangor by Welsh immigrant Robert Jones. The “Slate Belt” extends through central Northampton County from Slatington to Bangor.

The American Industrial Revolution begins with the first large-scale production of iron using anthracite coal and local iron ore, at the Lehigh Crane Iron Works in what is now Catasauqua.

The peak year of anthracite coal transport on the Lehigh and Delaware canals; 1.3 million tons of anthracite are delivered from northern mines. The Lehigh Valley Railroad opens late in the year.

The Delaware Canal and Morris Canal connect with the Lehigh Navigation (completed in 1829) at Easton. The three-canal system carried anthracite to the Philadelphia and New York markets.

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1848 Slate quarrying begins rapid growth with the founding of Bangor by Welsh immigrant Robert Jones. The “Slate Belt” extends through central Northampton County from Slatington to Bangor.

1855 The peak year of anthracite coal transport on the Lehigh and Delaware canals; 1.3 million tons of anthracite are delivered from northern mines. The Lehigh Valley Railroad opens late in the year.

1863 The Great Flood of June 3-5, the Lehigh River region’s worst-ever natural disaster, destroys the Upper Grand section, the upper Lehigh lumbering industry, and much of the Lehigh Canal.

1869 Fire at the Avondale Mine near Plymouth, Luzerne County, kills 110 miners. In response, Pennsylvania enacts the first mine safety laws in the United States, but the disaster spurs mine union activity.