



Fifty Machines that Changed the Course of History (Fifty Things That Changed the Course of History)

Eric Chaline

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The most significant machines of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Fifty Machines that Changed the Course of History is a fascinating survey of the mechanical devices that propelled 18th-century society into the 19th and 20th centuries.

The book celebrates more than 200 years of technological development at the height of the Industrial Revolution. These are not generic inventions but rather specific, branded machines whose names in many cases have become synonymous with the machine or its purpose.

The entries fall into eight categories relating to their sphere of influence: Industry, Agriculture, Media, Transport, Science, Computing, Energy and Home. Concise text describes the machines, what led to their invention, and the effects on society. Annotated diagrams, illustrations, photographs and "Key Feature" insets enrich the coverage.

These are a few of the 50 machines described:

- Stephenson's Rocket (1829), the first locomotive designed for passenger transport
- Harrison power loom (1851) produced the bulk of the world's cotton cloth during the First Industrial Revolution
- Westinghouse alternating current system (1887) brought electrical power and lighting to homes and workplaces
- Hoover suction sweeper (1908) revolutionized domestic cleaning
- Lumière cine projector (1896) and Marconi radio (1897) together heralded the dawn of the media age
- Baird "Televiso" (1930), the first television set
- More recently, the Motorola DynaTAC cellphone (1983) ensured that we would always be able to "phone home."

Fifty Machines that Changed the Course of History is perfect for history buffs and anyone who is fascinated by the complexity and beauty of mechanical devices.

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