

The United States and every town and city is always changing. From technologies in various industries to laws being passed, and even to the people that contribute to American's society, laws, and industries throughout the entirety of our country's lifespan, the United States is always evolving. Significant changes can especially be observed between the 1880's Gilded Age, and the 1930's Depression Era, or the Great Depression. These changes can be discovered from observing grocery stores from both of these eras. These observations include the number of employees, the lights in the building itself, and the method goods are placed around the grocery stores, which can be compared when analyzing grocery stores in Madera from the 1880's and the 1930's.

If one were to discuss the differences between grocery stores from the 1880's and grocery stores from the 1930's, one would take the number of employees into consideration, and connect this information to how grocery stores operated in both time periods. In Picture 1, which captures a grocery store in Madera from the 1880's, numerous employees are shown, and in Picture 2 from the 1930's, there is only one man present. Two possible causes for this are the change in service of grocery stores and the loss of jobs in the United States from the Great Depression. Before the 1910's, grocery stores did not serve customers as we know today. Customers called employees at the store, or approached the store, and the employees would arrange the needed items to be picked up from the store itself. After 1916, when the grocery store Piggly Wiggly was founded, grocery stores where customers serve themselves the products were invented. By the 1930's, the need for employees may have faltered due to the absence of customers giving lists of items they need to clerks, which can be portrayed by the absence of numerous employees in Picture 2. However, even if this was not the case, the economic collapse of the Great Depression could also be a cause of the absence of employees. About a quarter of the American workforce was unemployed in the peak of the Great Depression, which may be reflected by the pictures. However, it is not just the employee count that may have been affected.

Another factor to be considered when comparing the grocery stores from the 1880's and 1930's would be the way the grocery stores had light. The grocery store in Picture 1 was darker in terms of the

amount of light in the building, with just lamps and candles, while the store in Picture 2 had numerous light bulbs hanging from the ceiling. After Thomas Edison's contributions to the incandescent lamp, or the light bulb, these light bulbs began to be available to the public in the 1880's, but it was a slow process of distribution to Americans. In the 1880's, the vast majority of functioning lights in the United States were still from other sources, such as candles, which is evidently presented in Picture 1, in which the grocery store was faintly lit up with other sources of light. However, the grocery store in Picture 2 had light bulbs hanging from the ceiling across the store, portraying how far the technology has been distributed by the 1930's. Even then, the placement of goods around the grocery stores in both periods of time and its significance must be remembered.

While one may see similar items placed around the grocery stores, their placement is a significant difference. While the general assortment for advertising the goods may be similar, the items are placed for different methods of convenience. In Picture 2, a majority of grocery items are lined up in aisles, which is a similar idea to how grocery stores look today. However, in Picture 1, boxes of fruit are shown on the floor and in the middle, and long tables are aligned at the sides of the grocery store. While this may seem insignificant, these details tie back to the service systems of these grocery stores in their time periods. As previously stated, in the 1880's, grocery stores were not in a system where customers serve themselves and check out. The customers picked an assortment of items for the employees to give to these customers, which may have been the reason why the grocery items were sorted differently than what is normal in grocery stores today, and in the 1930's, which followed the system where customers obtain the items without assistance. This change presents how, over a period of time, the United States and the people adapt to innovation.

When it comes to industrial changes, such as the food retail industry and the grocery stores with it, many aspects have evolved. From employment to technology, and even the placement of grocery items, grocery stores have adapted over time with innovations in the United States. This proves that a change in a corner of the world can resemble a significant change in the world itself.