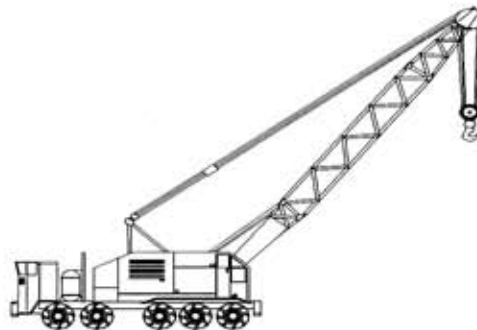


Cranes used in factories, mines, and on docks, were powered by steam, beginning in the mid-1800s. By 1846, hydraulically-powered cranes were used for hauling cargo on docks. These early hydraulic cranes used water pressure, but oil pressure is used today. In the 1880s, electrically powered cranes and cranes on rails came into use.

No new developments in crane design were added until the 1920s. This is when the first truck-mounted crane was used. Also during this time, cranes were powered by gasoline and diesel fuel. Telescopic booms were invented in the 1950s. The boom could now be extended to pick loads up from farther away and from greater heights. This also made the cranes more powerful, allowing them to lift loads up to 22 tons in weight.



Modern cranes have come a long way from the vines first used to lift loads. There are now semisubmersible cranes on off-shore oil rigs, that can lift loads up to 6,720 tons when working together. There are even flying cranes on transport helicopters. What kind of crane will they think of next?

