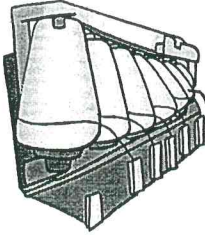


The Factory System

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Inventions

- New inventions led to the development of the "Factory System", and often one invention led to the creation of another.
- The *Flying Shuttle* by John Kay wove cloth faster, and this created an increased demand for thread.
- James Hargreaves then created the *Spinning Jenny*, and Richard Arkwright created the *Water Frame* to spin thread much faster. The water frame used water to power it, and most early factories needed to be located close to sources of running water.
- Edmund Cartwright created the *Power Loom* -- a fully mechanized way of making cloth. This was a large, dangerous machine that was powered by the steam engine.
- The power loom led to an increased demand for raw cotton and the creation of the *Cotton Gin* by Eli Whitney.



Child Labor

- Child labor was prized for several reasons -- children were cheaper to employ, and they were small. Their hands and bodies fit into small spaces. Thus they swept under the machines, and changed the bobbins of thread when empty. These tasks required the quick, 'nimble' hands of children.
- Children as young as 5 or 6 worked full 12 hour days.
- Children were often permanently disfigured or disabled from factory work. This was often *not* the result of accidental injury, but rather was the result of the years of bending or standing or crouching.



Sweatshops

- Many textile factories were given the nickname "sweatshops" because of the hot and sweaty environment maintained within, and because the labor was "sweated" out of the workers.
- The temperatures inside of textile mills were kept warm and humid in order to prevent the cotton threads from breaking.
- The air of a textile factory was filled with cotton fibers, and often created lung diseases in the workers. Eye inflammations, tuberculosis, deafness and mouth cancers were not uncommon in factory laborers.
- Early factories had no safety features on machines. It was not difficult to get fingers, hands, arms, hair, clothes or feet caught in the machines. Such incidents resulted in disability, disfigurement and death.



The Work Day

- The work day was long -- 12 to 14 hours, six days a week, with limited breaks for meals.
- Everything was now governed by the clock, and not by the rhythms of life, as agricultural life had been. Time was now the master of work patterns, not nature.
- The work in the factory was boring and repetitive, leading the worker to feel like a machine -- de-humanized.
- There was no disability, and there were no sick days. If a worker could not work, for whatever reason, he was fired. There was a surplus of unemployed people waiting to take any job. Physically disabled workers often ended up begging in the streets.

