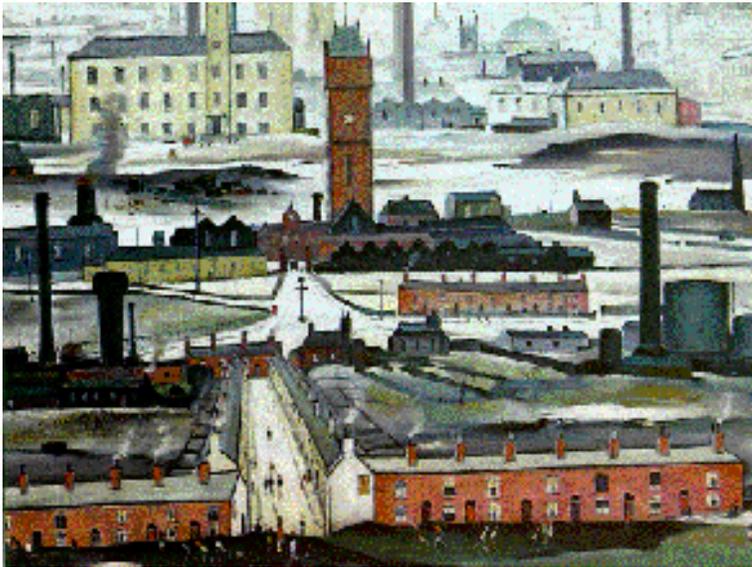


Cottage Industry to the Factory



The Industrial Revolution brought great change to people lives, especially in the area of work. Since machines weren't employed in the work area yet, all items were produced by hand and had no need for a large capital or separate workstations. The Industrial Revolution changed all that. Machines were expensive but there was a big profit to be made if a person could

own a couple of machines and people to mass-produce items.

The Cottage Industry was based on the concept of workers would buy raw materials from merchants and bring it back to their home where they would produce a specific item. This system was competent but slow and tedious. Since items were produced all by hand, goods were made slow and the workers productivity was very low. Subsequently, the prices of the products were high and only affordable to the rich. The worker/boss relationship was exceptional because the worker was frequently also the boss.

As the factory system shrouded over workers, conditions in the workplace declined, pay was low and animosities among the workers and the supervisor arose. The factory system was based on the principal of a person with his/her own capital who sets up his or her own company. The person with the capital could buy numerous machines and store them in one building and hire people to come work in the building. This came to be known as the Factory System. The factory system was a reliable way to lower prices on goods but the quality of the worker's life declined. Children and women worked tedious hours, many developing diseases like spinal curvature. As workers became more aware of their potential rights, many banded together to form Labor Unions. These groups gave rights to the workers and gave them the power to strike. As more and more laws were enforced regarding the working schedule, working conditions improved and the factory system began to blossom.

1. What were some of the basic problems with making items in the Cottage System?

2. Why was the relationship between the worker and the boss so good in the Cottage System?

3. How did working conditions become poorer as factories replaced homemade products?

4. How did workers attempt to improve the working conditions in factories?



5. Looking at the picture above explain if you believe this is a good representation of a cottage industry? Support your answer with facts from the picture.
