**An extract from the Memoir of Robert Blincoe. Blincoe was an apprentice from the age of seven. This describes his first day at work.**

“They reached the mill at about half-past-five in the morning. The moment he entered the doors the noise appalled him and the smell seemed unbearable. His first task was to pick up the loose cotton that fell upon the floor. He set to it eagerly although he was much terrified by the noise of the machinery and half-suffocated with the dust.

Unused to the smell he soon felt sick by constant bending. He therefore sat down but soon found out this was strictly forbidden. His overseer used his whip to prove this point. He stayed on his legs until 12o’clock. Blincoe suffered greatly with thirst and hunger.”

**Leonard Horner, a factory inspector, describes what happened to a young girl in a textile factory**

“She was caught by her apron which wrapped around the shaft. She was whirled round and repeatedly forced between the shaft and the carding engine. Her right leg was found some distance away.”

**Women Miners in the English Coal Pits**

Betty Harris, age 37: I was married at 23, and went into a colliery when I was married. I used to weave when about 12 years old; can neither read nor write. I work for Andrew Knowles, of Little Bolton (Lancs), and make sometimes 7s a week, sometimes not so much. I am a drawer, and work from 6 in the morning to 6 at night. Stop about an hour at noon to eat my dinner; have bread and butter for dinner; I get no drink. I have two children, but they are too young to work. I worked at drawing when I was in the family way. I know a woman who has gone home and washed herself, taken to her bed, delivered of a child, and gone to work again under the week.

I have a belt round my waist, and a chain passing between my legs, and I go on my hands and feet. The road is very steep, and we have to hold by a rope; and when there is no rope, by anything we can catch hold of. There are six women and about six boys and girls in the pit I work in; it is very hard work for a woman. The pit is very wet where I work, and the water comes over our clog-tops always, and I have seen it up to my thighs; it rains in at the roof terribly. My clothes are wet through almost all day long. I never was ill in my life, but when I was lying in.

My cousin looks after my children in the day time. I am very tired when I get home at night; I fall asleep sometimes before I get washed. I am not so strong as I was, and cannot stand my work so well as I used to. I have drawn till I have bathe skin off me; the belt and chain is worse when we are in the family way. My feller (husband) has beaten me many a times for not being ready. I were not used to it at first, and he had little patience.

I have known many a man beat his drawer. I have known men take liberties with the drawers, and some of the women have bastards.

Patience Kershaw, age 17, Halifax: I go to pit at 5 o'clock in the morning and come out at 5 in the evening; I get my breakfast, porridge and milk, first; I take my dinner with me, a cake, and eat it as I go; I do not stop or rest at any time for the purpose, I get nothing else until I get home, and then have potatoes and meat, not every day meat.

#### **Andrew Ure,**[**The Philosophy of Manufactures**](http://www.amazon.co.uk/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=William+Hutton&x=10&y=18#/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=Andrew+Ure&rh=n%3A266239%2Ck%3AAndrew+Ure)**(1835).**

#### I have visited many factories, both in Manchester and the surrounding districts, during a period of several months and I never saw a single instance of corporal punishment inflicted on a child. The children seemed to be always cheerful and alert, taking pleasure in using their muscles. The work of these lively elves seemed to resemble a sport. Conscious of their skill, they were delighted to show it off to any stranger. At the end of the day's work they showed no sign of being exhausted.

**Nassau Senior, a factory owner, gave his view (1837)**

“The easiness of the work makes long hours possible. Most of the work is merely that of watching the machinery, and piecing the threads that break. The work is not as hard as a shopman behind a counter in a busy shop.”

**Weight of Factory Children**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table showing the Comparative Weight of Factory and Non-Factory Children (in lbs.)** | | | | | |
| Age | Average weight of males in factories | Average weight of males not in factories | Age | Average weight of females in factories | Average weight of females not in factories |
| 9 | 51.76 | 53.26 | 9 | 51.13 | 52.40 |
| 10 | 57.00 | 60.28 | 10 | 54.80 | 54.44 |
| 11 | 61.84 | 58.36 | 11 | 59.69 | 61.13 |
| 12 | 65.97 | 67.25 | 12 | 66.08 | 66.07 |
| 13 | 72.11 | 75.36 | 13 | 73.25 | 72.72 |
| 14 | 77.09 | 78.68 | 14 | 83.41 | 83.43 |
| 15 | 88.35 | 88.83 | 15 | 87.86 | 93.61 |

**Average Height in 1836**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Age** | **Average height of**  **males in Factories** | **Age** | **Average height of**  **females in Factories** |
| 9 | 3ft. 11in. | 9 | 4ft. 0in. |
| 10 | 4ft. 2in. | 10 | 4ft. 1in. |
| 11 | 4ft. 2in. | 11 | 4ft. 2in. |
| 12 | 4ft. 4in. | 12 | 4ft. 4in. |
| 13 | 4ft. 6in. | 13 | 4ft. 7in. |
| 14 | 4ft. 8in. | 14 | 4ft. 9in. |
| 15 | 4ft. 10in. | 15 | 4ft. 10in. |
| 16 | 5ft. 0in. | 16 | 4ft. 11in. |

**Deaths in Leeds (city in England)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Leeds: 1780-1782** | | **Leeds: 1813-1830** | |
| **Ages** | **Percentage of Deaths** | **Ages** | **Percentage of Deaths** |
| 0-5 | 44 | 0-5 | 53 |
| 5-9 | 9 | 5-9 | 9 |
| 10-14 | 4 | 10-14 | 5 |
| 15-19 | 7 | 15-19 | 7 |
| 20-29 | 11 | 20-29 | 17 |
| 30-39 | 16 | 30-39 | 19 |
| 40-49 | 21 | 40-49 | 23 |
| 50-59 | 27 | 50-59 | 31 |
| 60-69 | 47 | 60-69 | 44 |
| 70-79 | 68 | 70-79 | 67 |
| 80-89 | 89 | 80-89 | 88 |