

“Two children I know got employment in a factory when they were five years old.....the spinning men or women employ children if they can get a child to do their business.....the child is paid one shilling or one shilling and six pence, and they will take that (five year old) child before they take an older one who will cost more.” **George Gould, a Manchester merchant, written in 1816.**

“The smallest child in the factories were scavengers.....they go under the machine, while it is going.....it is very dangerous when they first come, but they become used to it.” **Charles Aberdeen worked in a Manchester cotton factory, written in 1832.**

“The task first allotted to Robert Blincoe was to pick up the loose cotton, that fell upon the floor. Apparently nothing could be easier.....although he was much terrified by the whirling motion and noise of the machinery and the dust with which he was half suffocated.....he soon felt sick and was constantly stooping; his back ached. Blincoe took the liberty to sit down. But this he soon found was strictly forbidden in cotton mills. His overlooker, Mr. Smith, told him he must keep on his legs. This he did for six and a half hours without a break.” **John Brown, a reporter for “The Lion”. Written in 1828.**

“We went to the mill at five in the morning. We worked until dinner time and then to nine or ten at night; on Saturday it could be till eleven and often till twelve at night. We were sent to clean the machinery on the Sunday.” **Man interviewed in 1849 who had worked in a mill as a child.**

“In the evening I walked to Cromford and saw the children coming from their work. These children had been at work from 6 o'clock in the morning and it was now 7 o'clock in the evening.” **Joseph Farington, 22nd August 1801 (diary entry)**

“I began work at the mill in Bradford when I was nine years old.....we began at six in the morning and worked until nine at night. When business was brisk, we began at five and worked until ten in the evening.” **Hannah Brown, interviewed in 1832.**

“Very often the children are woken at four in the morning. The children are carried on the backs of the older children asleep to the mill, and they see no more of their parents till they go home at night and are sent to bed.” **Richard Oastler, interviewed in 1832.**

“Woodward and other over lookers used to beat me with pieces of thick leather straps made supple by oil, and having an iron buckle at the end, drew blood almost every time it was applied.” **John Brown quoted in the “Lion” newspaper in 1828.**

“Sarah Golding was poorly and so she stopped her machine. James Birch, the overlooker, knocked her to the floor. She got up as well as she could. He knocked her down again. Then she was carried to her house.....she was found dead in her bed. There was another girl called Mary.....she knocked her food can to the floor. The master, Mr. Newton, kicked her and caused her to wear away till she died. There was another, Caroline Thompson, who was beaten till she went out of her mind. The overlookers used to cut off the hair of any girl caught talking to a lad. This head shaving was a dreadful punishment. We were more afraid of it than any other punishment for girls are proud of their hair.” **An interview in 1849 with an unknown woman who worked in a cotton factory as a child.**

“When I was seven years old I went to work at Mr Marshall’s factory at Shrewsbury. If a child became sleepy, the overlooker touches the child on the shoulder and says “come here”. In the corner of the room there is an iron cistern filled with water. He takes the boy by the legs and dips him in the cistern, and then sends him back to work.” **Jonathan Downe interviewed in June 1832.**

“I have seen my master, Luke Taylor, with a horse whip standing outside the mill when the children have come too late.....he lashed them all the way to the mill.” **John Fairbrother, an overlooker, interviewed in 1819.**

“I work at the silk mill. I am an overlooker and I have to superintend the children at the mill. Their strength goes towards the evening and they get tired. I have been compelled to urge them to work when I knew they could not bear it. I have been disgusted with myself. I felt myself degraded and reduced to the level of a slave-driver. **William Rastrick, interviewed in 1832.**

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