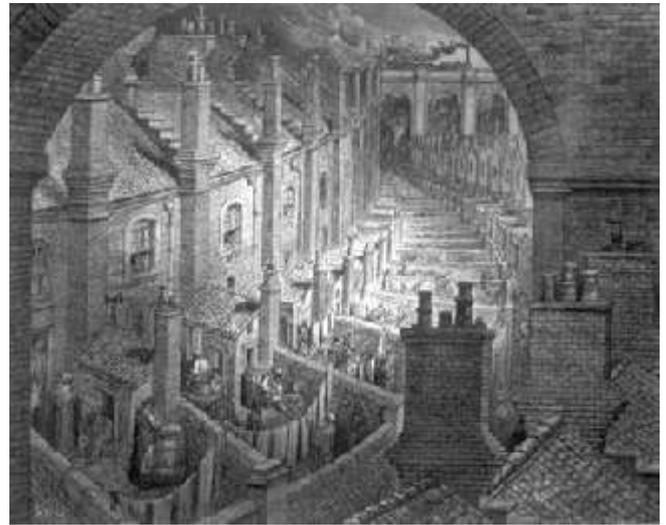


The Industrial Revolution

Both Isambard Kingdom Brunel and *HMS Warrior* were products of an extraordinary period of economic change and technical and mechanical innovation which began in Britain in the last quarter of the 18th century. This period of change spread out from Britain and altered the face of the whole world. It became known as the *Industrial Revolution*.

When we think of the phrase 'Industrial Revolution' today, we think of huge smoking chimneys, large families living in tiny tenement houses, grim cotton mills, coal mines and, of course, workhouses. For a lot of people in the 18th and 19th centuries this was the grim reality of daily life and it really was a revolution.



Over London by Rail - Gustav Doré c. 1870

At the start of the 18th century Britain had relied on agriculture to drive its economy and the vast majority of the working population spent their days working on the land. But from the middle of the century all this began to change with James Watt's improvements to the steam engine, the invention of the spinning jenny, improvements in machine tools and other technological innovations. Britain moved from an economy based on agriculture to one based on industry.

So while French revolutionaries were lopping aristocratic heads off and hoping to build a state based on the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity, in Britain, businessmen and inventors were transforming their society's capacity to feed and sustain a growing population. By doing this they created economic activity on an unparalleled scale. England's revolution was truly an industrial revolution.

If we really examine the matter, the industrial revolution was actually made up from four different, but connected, revolutions.

- ? *The Population Revolution.* The population of England expanded massively from the mid-eighteenth century, with a growing proportion of people living in the towns. To sustain this population explosion there had to be an ...
- ? *Agricultural Revolution.* Farming had to be re-organized with a shift from open field to enclosed farming. Science was applied increasingly to farming methods with the development of crop rotation schemes, the increasing use of fertiliser, better drainage and the practice of selective breeding. More crop production meant there had to be a...



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- ? *Transport Revolution* to move the food around. Improved roads were followed by canals and then railways to convey food and raw materials to the growing towns. More people with more money helped to feed a...
- ? *Manufacturing Revolution*. New ways were found of making things and on a scale never before seen. Technological breakthroughs were made in the textile industry by men such as Hargreaves, Crompton and Arkwright. Pottery was revolutionized by Wedgwood's development of porcelain making techniques. The work of men such as Watt and Boulton saw the harnessing of steam power and the use of Britain's coal resources transformed the productive capacity of industry.

This industrial revolution is usually associated with the Midlands and the North of England. The cotton factories of Lancashire, the woollen mills of the West Riding of Yorkshire, the engineering works of the North East and the Black Country of the Midlands, the iron working trades of Sheffield and the coal mining villages of Lancashire, Yorkshire, the North East and Midlands.

The South, however, while it may have remained mainly agricultural had a part to play in this story. The Admiralty was a major consumer of industrial goods. Henry Cort at the iron works at Funtley played a vital role in the development of iron production techniques. In the nineteenth century Portsmouth Dockyard became the largest single industrial complex in the world.



Who Was Henry Cort?

OK, the name's Watt, Arkwright Watt. I'm an ace history detective and I've got a problem.

I've been hired to dig up some dirt on a guy named Cort, Henry Cort. Trouble is I can't find nothing, nada. Either this guy's as clean as a whistle or I'm looking in all the wrong places.



So that's where you come in kiddo. I hear you're quite the hotshot so this is what I want you to do - I want you to do some snooping. Find out what you can about this guy, build up a file so we can nail him.

Like I said, there's not much to go on but word on the street is that he's a 'man of iron'. Sure as heck don't mean anything to me, but from what I hear you should be able to put the pieces together.

The only other thing I got is a couple of addresses:

www.tilthammer.com/bio/cort.html

www.fareham.gov.uk/council/general/henrycort/historyhcort.aspx

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Cort

I've walked all over the joint but I can't find them. Maybe you'll have better luck.

Good luck and good snooping.

