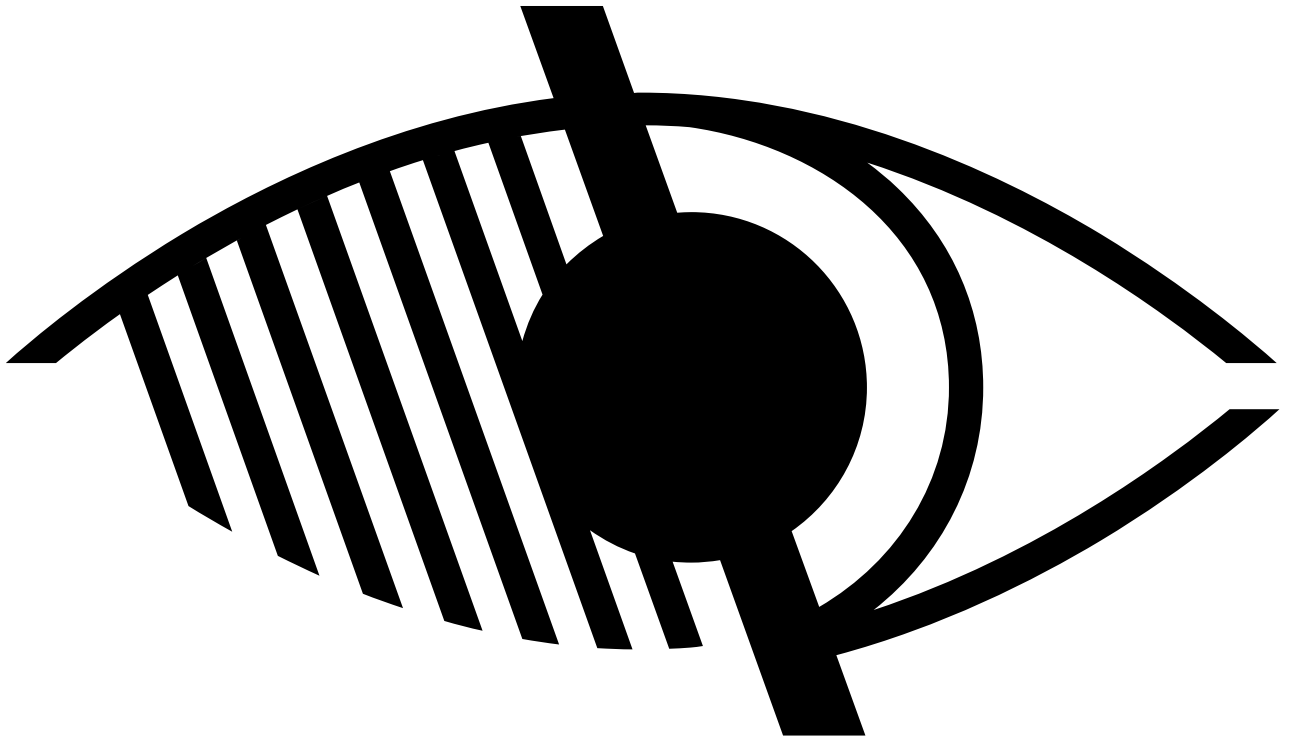


Large-print book

Please do not remove from the gallery




Textiles Gallery

Upper Level: Book 1

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Accessible features

There is step free access to the whole of the Textiles Gallery. It is located on the ground floor of the main museum building, the New Warehouse. The gallery is split over two levels. A ramp connects the upper and lower levels.

All film with sound in the gallery has subtitles. Transcripts are provided for all audio exhibits.

There are five exhibits in the gallery.

Ear defenders are available for visitors who may need them during our daily textile machine demonstrations. Please ask the staff demonstrating the machinery.

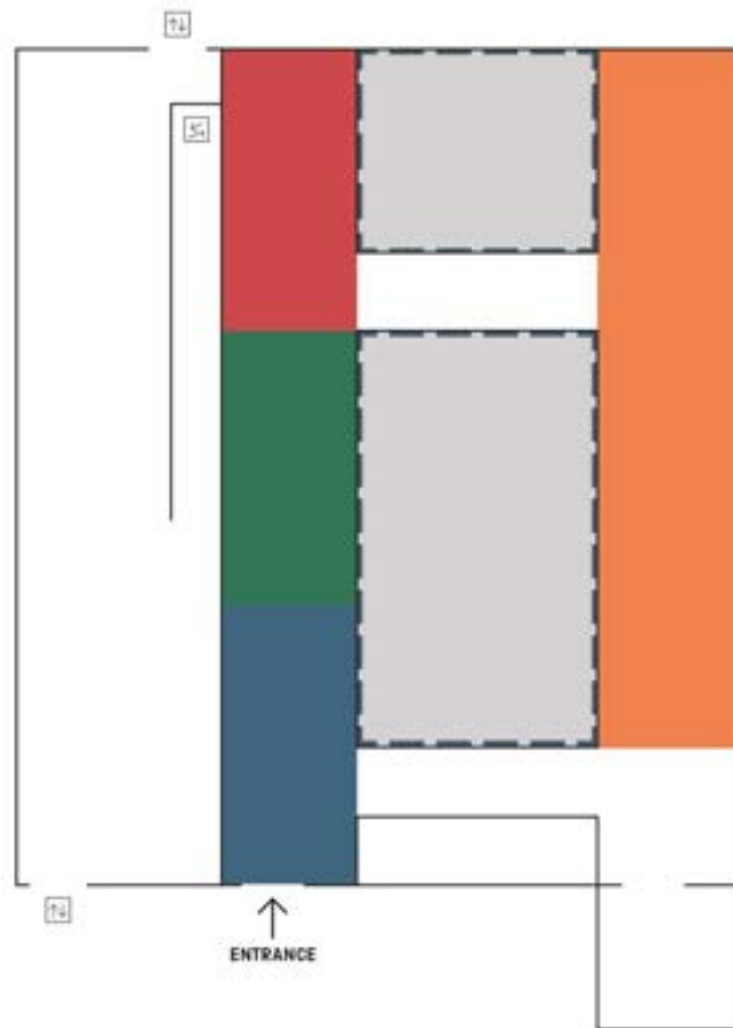
Gallery layout

The gallery is split over two levels. This book covers the upper level. A separate book is available for the lower level.

The gallery is on the ground floor of the New Warehouse. It is entered from the Revolution Manchester gallery into the upper level. The gallery is a large, nearly square space in a historic railway warehouse building. The displays are on a platform that surrounds a central 'well' where the working textiles machines are located. These historic machines are regularly demonstrated. Visitors watch from the platform level. There is a glass safety barrier around the central 'well'.

The upper level is split in to three colour coded sections. **Manchester: Made of cotton,** **The sights and sounds of Manchester's mills** and **The science of textiles**. The displays combine historic objects, text panels and object labels. There are some hands on exhibits and audio visual content.

Gallery map



 Manchester: Made of cotton

 The sights and sounds of Manchester's mills

 The science of textiles

Introduction

Textiles Gallery

Welcome to the Textiles Gallery. Here you can find out how cotton shaped Manchester.

Explore the city's relationship with textiles, from the Industrial Revolution to today.

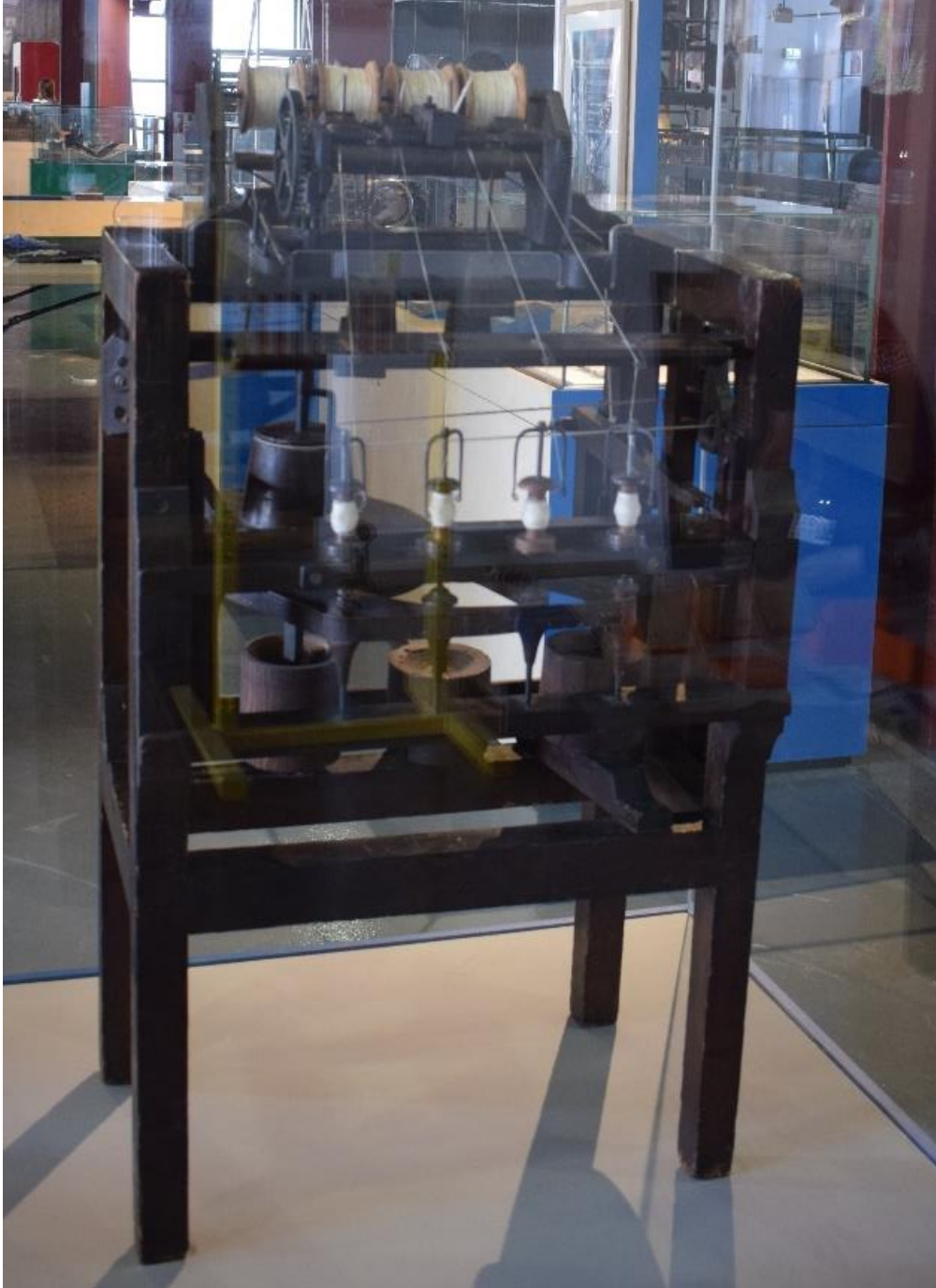
Discover the impact Manchester's cotton industry has had on lives across the world.

Manchester: Made of cotton



Water frame

Richard Arkwright, around 1775



Transforming working lives

This water powered spinning machine transformed the way people worked. 250 years ago, it ran day and night in one of Arkwright's cotton mills.

Its moving rollers thinned out the cotton, then its rotating spindles twisted it into yarn.

Instead of spinning at home, people now worked long, repetitive and exhausting days in the mill looking after the machines.

Have machines changed the way you work?

Purchased with support from the Heritage Lottery Fund
Science Museum Group. Object no. Y2000.48

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Manchester: Made of cotton

Cotton transformed Manchester into a city like nothing the world had ever seen. From its towering mills, bustling warehouses and crowded streets came new ways to live and work.

Explore objects and stories and get hands-on to discover how Manchester's thinkers and makers created a city built on cotton.

Makers and machines

Skilled makers and creative thinkers transformed Manchester into the cotton capital of the world.

They developed powered machines and built towering mills that could spin and weave more cotton than ever before.

Their determination to make money from cotton changed Manchester forever.

From the 1780s, the small town grew quickly and dramatically into a sprawling industrial city.

A spark of invention

Richard Arkwright's water frame made the mass production of cotton yarn possible for the first time.

Demand for cotton goods was rising and Arkwright knew a machine would work faster than people spinning by hand at home.

A successful invention needed skills and money. Many makers had already failed. Arkwright, a determined business person, kept a close eye on their efforts and mistakes.

In 1768, he and John Kay, a clock maker with the skills to build machines, developed the water frame.

It could spin large quantities of strong, even threads, becoming an instant success.

Sir Richard Arkwright

by Joseph Wright, 1790



A man of many traits

Arkwright was very rich when he sat for this portrait. Selling the yarn spun in his mills brought him huge profits.

Some admired his success, but others thought he was greedy and dishonest. He fought to stop people copying his water frame, despite borrowing other inventors' ideas to develop it.

Arkwright set up the first steam powered spinning mill in Manchester in 1782. By 1802, the town had more than 50 mills.

Oil on canvas

Science Museum Group. Object no. 1989-431

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Craze for cotton

Merchants first brought cotton cloth to Britain from India around 500 years ago.

People around the world had been making it for thousands of years.

Cotton cloth was lighter, brighter and could be washed and dried more easily than the heavy, woolen fabrics people in Britain were used to.

It was also valuable for trading. Merchants exchanged cloth for goods across the world.

The craze for cotton reached a peak in the early 18th century. It drove makers to find ways to meet the rising demand.

Floral fashions

Printed cotton dress

around 1830

This dress is made from cloth woven and printed in Britain, but the floral patterns are imitations of Indian designs. The dress is frayed and stained from being worn again and again.

Manufacturers in Manchester learned how to make cloth like the Indian cottons people craved. New machines made it possible to produce them in huge quantities.

Can you spot the similarities between this cloth and the Indian fabric on the right?

Lent by Salford Museum and Art Gallery.

Loan no. L2018-46

Hand painted floral cotton cloth

India, around 1700

Skilled makers created this cotton cloth by hand, in India.

Prized for its quality and beauty, in Britain it was fashionable to make curtains and bedspreads out of cloth like this.

Science Museum Group. Object no. Y2002.23.2

Checked cotton cloth

type made in Manchester from around 1750

In West Africa, British traders exchanged cloth like this for captured human beings. They sold the people into slavery.

Manchester manufacturers learned to produce these checked fabrics. They profited from the sale of their cloth at untold human cost.

What would you say to a manufacturer making money like this?

Science Museum Group. Object no. E2018.0314.1

Feel these fabrics

What do you notice?

Which would you prefer to wear?

Although used in countries like India for thousands of years, cotton cloth only became popular in Britain from the 17th century. Before then, people in Britain were used to other fabrics like wool.

Today cotton is the world's most widely used material for clothes.

East Indiaman Herefordshire

William John Huggins, 1815



Cotton, trade and power

East India Company sailing ships introduced Indian cottons to Britain. The company also sold the cloth around the world.

By dominating other countries, sometimes with violence, Britain controlled trade across the globe.

By the 1780s, British traders had begun selling Manchester made cloth around the world.

India's skilled makers struggled to compete with Manchester's mass-produced cotton goods and thousands lost their livelihoods.

Oil on canvas

Donated by Admiral Sir Arthur Moore

Science Museum Group. Object no. 1934-307

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Machine revolution

Faster and more reliable technology quickly replaced earlier inventions.

It did not take long for skilled engineers to develop machines for every stage of cloth making.

From opening bales to cleaning cotton, spinning yarn to weaving cloth, bleaching fabric to printing designs, the new machines could do it all.

By the early 19th century, Manchester was a hub of engineering, full of skilled machine makers. Their expertise supplied the technology cotton manufacturers demanded.

Hand saw

around 1800



Small workshops and simple tools

Samuel Crompton used simple tools like this saw in his workshop in Bolton to develop the spinning mule.

The machine imitated the movements of a hand spinner's fingers, stretching out and twisting the cotton at the same time.

It could spin yarn as fine and strong as a skilled hand spinner, in the huge quantities manufacturers needed. Its efficiency made the mule the industry standard for over 150 years.

Science Museum Group. Object no. Y1986.184

Spinning mule cops around 1960



The spinning mule twisted cotton into yarn, then wound it into cones called cops.

By the 1920s, engineers had improved the spinning mule so that one machine could spin up to 1300 cops at the same time.

Science Museum Group. Object no. E2018.0317

The Cotton Mule Creel

by Edna Lumb, 1974



Elk Mill in Oldham was the last mule spinning mill in Lancashire when artist Edna Lumb painted this impression of its spinning room.

Have a look at this gallery's working spinning mule, which came from Elk Mill.

Facsimile

Science Museum Group. Object no. 1974-626

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Power loom factory of Thomas Robinson Esqr. Stockport

around 1849

Row upon row of power looms filled this huge weaving mill in Stockport. Belts, shafts and wheels connected the looms to the mill's steam engine, which powered the machines.

Facsimile

Science Museum Group. Object no. 2000-1076

Power loom model

Seville and Woolstenhulme, Oldham, 1857



Machine made cloth

This model power loom demonstrated an ingenious feature. If its thread broke, the loom stopped automatically, until the weaver fixed the problem.

It took decades to perfect a machine that could make cloth as well as a skilled hand loom weaver. In 1830, Manchester engineer Richard Roberts finally found a way. He mass produced his looms in cast iron, making them affordable and quick to supply to mill owners.

Science Museum Group. Object no. 1874-149

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Money makers

In their hurry to make money from cotton ambitious manufacturers transformed the small town of Manchester into a booming industrial centre.

They built steam powered cotton mills and filled them with new machinery and people ready for long days of hard work.

By 1800, the smoking chimneys of cotton mills had begun to fill Manchester's skyline. People came from all over to see the town's extraordinary growth for themselves.

Coins

1799 and 1806



Hidden treasure

Somebody hid these coins in the roof of Murrays' Mills during its construction. People often concealed money to bring luck or wealth.

Perhaps it was Adam and George Murray, Scottish entrepreneurs who set up the mill in Ancoats, to the east of Manchester's centre.

Many other manufacturers built cotton mills in Ancoats, which grew quickly into a huge cotton spinning complex.

Science Museum Group.

Object nos. 2018-29, 2018-30, 2018-31, 2018-32

Smoke consuming at Ancoats, Manchester 1820

In this drawing, people discuss attempts to reduce pollution in Ancoats.

Smoke and soot from the chimneys of Manchester's steam powered cotton mills made the air unhealthy and the sky gloomy.

Do you think pollution is a problem in our cities today?

Facsimile

Science Museum Group. Object no. 1989-43

Millwright's tool

W. Wright, Manchester, around 1790

Mill builders used this tool to calculate the size of the wheels needed to connect machines to the steam engines that powered them.

Science Museum Group. Object no. 2018-25

Water frame spindle

around 1780



Archaeologists found this water frame spindle in Murrays' Mills.

Richard Arkwright charged mill owners to use his water frame, calculating how much they owed based on the number of spindles in their mill.

Science Museum Group. Object no. 2018-35

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Listen to an account of the sights and sounds of industrial Manchester, 40 seconds

Journalist Angus Bethune Reach's description of Union Street in Ancoats, from Manchester and the Textile Districts in 1848. Audio, read by an actor.



Image: Spinning mills on Union Street in Ancoats, Manchester, around 1820.

Science Museum Group Collection

Clothing the world

Manchester's cotton industry created new connections between people around the world.

Merchants sold the cloth made by mill workers in Manchester to customers across the globe. People thousands of miles away, many enslaved, grew the raw cotton mill owners needed.

Manchester's city centre became the trading heart of the textile industry. By the 1830s, it had hundreds of cotton warehouses and an experimental transport network that kept cotton moving in, out and across the world.

For every taste

People around the world used the cloth made in Manchester's mills to create clothes and furnishings of every description.

Manchester's manufacturers produced textiles in a huge variety of colours, prints and designs to meet their customers' diverse tastes.

They followed fashions in different countries carefully and found ways to mass produce the patterns people wanted.

Trademark printing blocks, cotton bolt ends and shippers' tickets around 1880–1960



Lighthouses, slippers and castles

Manchester cotton merchants attached trademarks with colourful, detailed designs onto the cloth they sold.

Textile companies employed artists to design their trademarks using pictures or words they thought would appeal to their customers.

Skilled makers turned them into printing blocks by hammering thin strips of metal into wood.

Do any of your clothes have trademarks?

Science Museum Group Collection

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Can you find these images in the colourful display above?

Look carefully, some might be the other way around.

These designs were drawn, made and printed between around 1880 and 1960. Cotton merchants used them to represent themselves and their products to customers worldwide.

Where do you think the products were going?

Would any of these designs encourage you to make a purchase?

Textile pattern book around 1835



A colourful catalogue

Textile printers created books like this to record the designs they created. They stuck in a small sample of each style and gave it a number.

Discovering what different customers wanted was a demanding job. Some companies sent people around the world to report on current fashions. This helped designers back in Manchester create styles that would sell.

Which patterns would you like to wear?

Science Museum Group. Object no. YA1996.2838

Wax printed fabrics

ABC Wax, Manchester, around 1960–1990



ABC Wax started making textiles like these at their Manchester factory in 1908. They sold them to customers in West Africa for almost 100 years before production moved to Ghana in 2007.

Science Museum Group. Object no. E2018.0315

Drawing instrument set

A.G. Thornton, Manchester, around 1890

When textile designers needed to draw straight lines or perfect circles, they used instruments like these.

They also had to be skilled at creating patterns by hand and drawing from memory.

Science Museum Group. Object no. Y5000.179

Textile designs

Jean Elizabeth Gregson, Manchester,
around 1930



Jean Elizabeth Gregson was a design student at the Manchester School of Art when she created these textile patterns.

Manchester's cotton industry relied on creative designers to come up with new patterns for cloth.

Facsimile

Science Museum Group. Object no. 2014-3008

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The cost of cotton

Enslaved people forced to grow cotton on plantations in the southern states of America met Manchester's demand for plentiful and affordable raw cotton.

The city's wealth and success depended on this system of human exploitation.

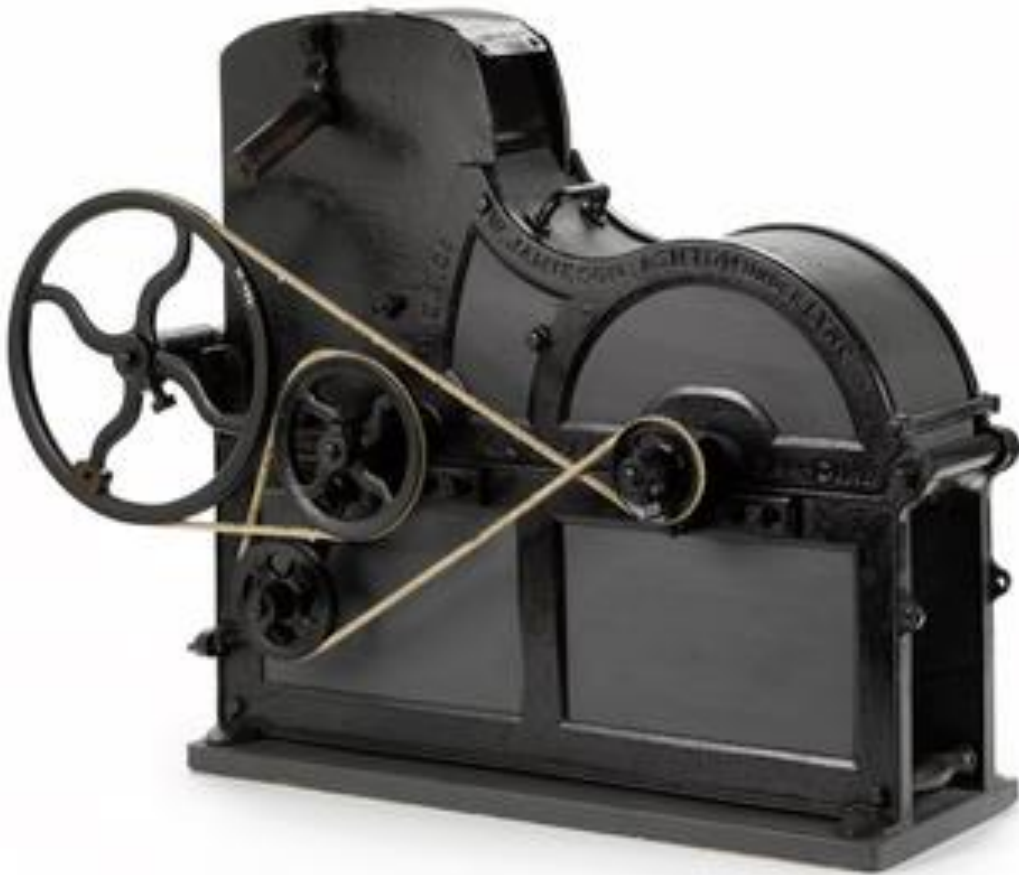
It provided manufacturers with cotton at the prices and in the quantities they desired.

We are working to develop how we reveal the links between Manchester and the transatlantic slave trade in the museum.

Through research, consultation and partnerships we will look at our collections and displays in new ways.

Model cotton gin

W. Jamieson, Manchester, around 1860



The invention of the cotton gin in 1793 resulted in a million more enslaved people being forced to grow cotton in the United States of America.

Small rotating saws inside the gin separated the freshly picked cotton fibres from their seeds. It made it much easier to clean cotton on the plantations where it grew.

This sped up cotton processing and increased the demand for enslaved labour to plant and pick it.

Donated by the India Office
Science Museum Group. Object no. 1880-99

Raw cotton samples

around 1914

These raw cotton samples show some of the different varieties of cotton grown around the world.

The cotton with the shortest fibres was the most difficult to clean until the invention of the cotton gin.

Donated by W.S. Murphy

Science Museum Group. Object no. 1914-112

Warehouse city

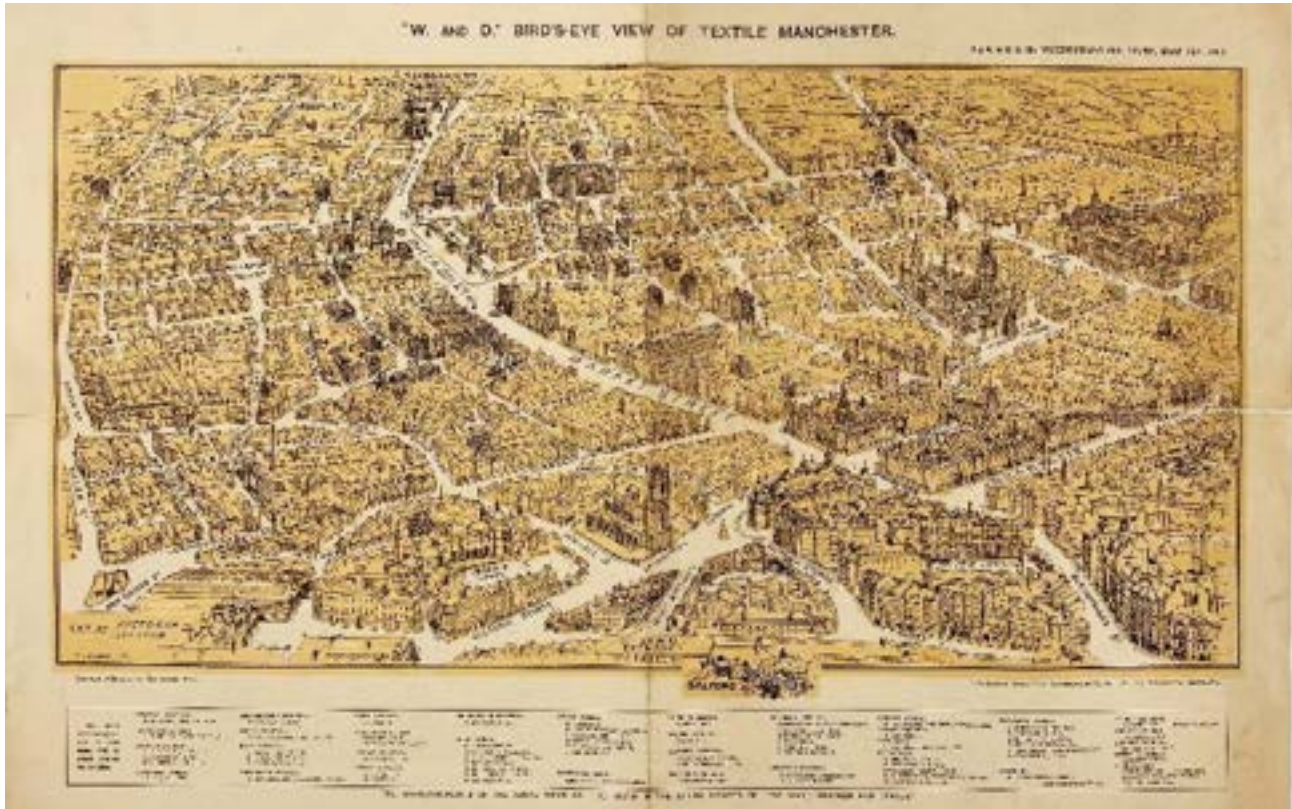
Manchester's cotton warehouses were hives of activity. They were a hub for the cloth made in Manchester and across Lancashire. Customers inspected cloth on the brightly lit top floors, whilst in the basement, workers packed orders into bales.

In the 1840s, rich merchants and manufacturers began to build grand and decorative warehouses to show off their wealth.

They created a distinctive cityscape that still defines Manchester today.

Birds-eye View of Textile Manchester

The Warehouseman and Draper, Manchester, 1898



Manchester's cotton warehouses were clustered around a few streets in the city centre. Lots of the warehouses on this map are now used as flats, offices and restaurants.

How many do you recognise?

Facsimile

Science Museum Group. Object no. YA2003.64

Architect's model of S. & J. Watts' and Co. warehouse, around 1850



A warehouse like a palace

The people of Manchester had never seen such a beautiful cotton warehouse when James Watts opened his in the city in 1856. Its rows of decorative windows impressed customers and let in plenty of light so they could inspect the cloth on sale.

How many styles of windows can you spot on the warehouse?

You can still see the warehouse building on Portland Street.

Science Museum Group. Object no. Y1978.34.1

Look inside Watts' warehouse

Behind the fancy exterior, discover the everyday workings of a Manchester cotton warehouse. Look out for the large windows that let in lots of light.

Find the animal worker. What are they doing?

Can you spot the presses that workers used to pack the cloth?

Image: Workers packing customers' orders in the basement.

Historic England Archive

Image: Women making boxes and preparing cloth in the box room.

Historic England Archive

Image: Workers printing and cutting textiles in the pattern room.

Historic England Archive

Image: Railway workers delivering cloth by horse and cart.

Science Museum Group Collection

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Moving goods

Keeping raw cotton and finished cloth moving in and out of Manchester was vital to the textiles trade. Roads and a canal system carried goods before engineers built a pioneering railway between Manchester and Liverpool in 1830.

The railway made it cheaper and faster for merchants and manufacturers to move cotton and cloth between Manchester's mills and Liverpool's port.

1830s



These receipts let cotton merchants know their goods had been loaded onto a sailing ship in Liverpool, ready for transport. They also told them how much they owed for the shipping.

If you look carefully at the receipts, can you see the destinations of the goods?

Science Museum Group. Object no. YA2013.25

Image: Oldham Road goods shed in Manchester, 1924

Science Museum Group Collection

It happened here: Liverpool Road Station

This site opened in 1830 as the Manchester station of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway.

In this warehouse, built in 1880, goods including cotton and cloth were unloaded from wagons onto the platform, where you are standing now.

Championed by cotton manufacturers and merchants, the railway was an engineering feat that transformed the textiles trade.

Railway goods receipt 1886



This is a receipt for cotton yarn shipped through Liverpool Road station.

From the beginning, cotton was one of the railway's most important cargos. The first ever wagon load of goods that arrived here in December 1830 held 136 bales of cotton.

Science Museum Group. Object no. E2017.2216.1

New ways to live and work

Nobody had seen anything like Manchester before.

By 1831, its population of 188,000 was double what it had been just 20 years earlier.

This rapid and uncontrolled growth created a new, urban environment for the people who flocked to work in its cotton mills.

Mill work was a new type of toil. It transformed people's days and became a way of life for generations of families. Outside the factory walls, in sprawling, swarming Manchester, workers lived lives nobody had planned for.

Ruled by machines

Manchester's mill workers toiled in time with their machines. The new system of cotton manufacturing changed the way they organised their daily lives.

Winter or summer, rain or shine, the machines set the pace and the factory clock told them when to work and when to rest. Time was money and some dishonest manufacturers even tried to fiddle the time in their mills, forcing their employees to work for longer.

Park Green Mill clock

E. Hartley, Macclesfield, 1810



Controlling time

This double faced clock helped manufacturers control their employees' working hours to keep up production.

The bottom face showed the real time. The top face showed 'mill time'. Its hands were connected to the water wheel and like the mill machines, they only moved when the water wheel turned.

If the water wheel stopped or slowed down, so did 'mill time'. Workers could only go home when 'mill time' said so.

Science Museum Group. Object no. Y1971.28

Pocket watch

Ollivant and Sons, Manchester, around 1850



Clock makers developed ways to mass produce clocks and watches, making them affordable to mill workers who needed to get to work on time.

Science Museum Group. Object no. Y1989.161.2



Image: Boiler man wearing a pocket watch at Mount Street Mills in Manchester, around 1910.

Science Museum Group Collection

Toil

Manchester's cotton mills were hot, humid and deafeningly noisy. Fast moving machines and air thick with cotton dust made them dangerous places to work.

Common to almost all mill jobs were the very early mornings, long hours and repetitive tasks.

Most workers' occupations were decided by their age or gender. Some tasks needed strength, whilst others called for dexterity and concentration.

Coffee grinder

around 1850

Every morning before sunrise, Manchester's mill workers gathered around hot coffee stalls, waiting for the 6 o'clock factory bell to signal the start of their working day.

Donated by William G. Julian

Science Museum Group. Object no. 1922-482



Image: People arriving for work outside a cotton mill, around 1910.

Past Pix / Science & Society Picture Library

Sweeping brush

around 1900



Small children used brushes like these. They climbed and crawled amongst the mills' moving machines to sweep away cotton dust, which could cause fires.

In 1833, new laws banned mill work for children under nine.

Science Museum Group. Object no. YINP741.1.1



Image: Young sweeper in a cotton mill in America, around 1930.

Past Pix / Science & Society Picture Library

Oil can

around 1900



Workers used oil cans to keep the mill machines' moving parts running smoothly.

To save time, they often had to oil the machines during their dinner hour, when work was supposed to stop.

Science Museum Group. Object no. YINP741.1.2

Shuttle

around 1930



Weavers loaded shuttles by sucking thread through a hole. Sharing germs and inhaling cotton fibres made this an unhealthy practice.

Shuttles travelled across looms at great speed.

A stray shuttle could smash a window, or even knock out a tooth.

Science Museum Group. Object no. E2018.0329.1



Image: Weaver at her loom in a weaving shed, around 1910.

Past Pix / Science & Society Picture Library

Spanner

around 1920

It was the tackler's job to fix machine breakdowns, using tools like this spanner.

Paid by the amount of cloth they made, weavers could not afford for their looms to stop. They tried to keep on the good side of the tackler.

Science Museum Group. Object no. Y2002.19/CM56



Image: Tackler repairing a loom in a weaving shed, around 1910.

Past Pix / Science & Society Picture Library

Messrs. Barlow and Jones Ltd,
Manchester and Bolton, 1919
3 minutes 30 seconds

Cleaning and carding, spinning and weaving, this film shows workers and machines at Barlow and Jones Ltd turning raw cotton into finished cloth. The Bolton company produced the film to promote their business.

Film, edited, black and white, silent
The North West Film Archive at Manchester
Metropolitan University

Paregoric elixir bottle

around 1800

This bottle contained a cheap medicine which mill workers used to treat coughs and asthma.

The air inside the mill was thick with cotton dust. Constantly breathing in these tiny fibres caused lung problems.



Friedrich Engels' description of dusty cotton mills.

Lent by the Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group.

Object no. A119982 Pt13

Water flask

around 1920

Most workers had a flask so they could drink water to battle the heat. The mill was hot and humid to stop the threads breaking.

It was usually the youngest workers' job to bring water.



Samuel Hird's description of a hot spinning room.

Science Museum Group. Object no. Y2002.19/T270.1

Brass ear trumpet

around 1850



Before hearing aids, people used ear trumpets like these to help them hear better.

Hundreds of thunderous machines operating together made the mill a deafening place.

Without ear protection, many workers experienced hearing loss.



Shaw's description of a noisy weaving shed.

Lent by the Wellcome Collection
to the Science Museum Group.

Object no. A602544

Mill safety notice
around 1930



Accidents were common amongst mill workers.

The government eventually brought in laws to force factory owners to look after their employees' safety.

However, many ignored them. It cost money to build guards on machines and stop them for cleaning.



Samuel Hird's description of a mill accident.

Science Museum Group. Object no. YMS0544

Press the buttons to hear 30 second descriptions of life in Manchester's mills, read by actors.

1. Friedrich Engels' description of the dusty atmosphere inside Manchester's cotton mills from *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, 1845.
2. Description of a hot spinning room and its thirsty workers by Samuel Hird, child mill worker in the 1890s.

Courtesy of the University of Manchester Library

3. Marjory Shaw, mill worker in Oldham in the 1940s, remembers the deafening noise of a weaving shed.

Greater Manchester Sound Archive, Archives+,
Manchester Central Library

4. Description of a mill accident by Samuel Hird, child mill worker and later factory inspector from 1908 to 1941.

Courtesy of the University of Manchester Library

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Lives transformed

For the thousands of people working in Manchester's mills, life was transformed.

Families competed for every patch of living space. They crammed into small, badly built houses on crowded streets near the cotton mills.

By the 1840s, people had begun to realise the impact Manchester's transformation was having on its workers. However, it took a long time for living conditions to get better.

Image: Annie Bates, a young carding room worker at Howe Bridge spinning mill in Wigan, around 1900.

Wigan and Leigh Archives

Child's clogs around 1870



The children who wore these tiny clogs never owned them. A school in Manchester lent them to children whose families could not afford to buy shoes.

Workers could earn good wages in Manchester's mills, but work was never guaranteed. Cotton shortages or low demand for cloth could shut the mills. Workers then had to go without wages. Many struggled to afford food, clothes and a place to live.

Science Museum Group. Object no. 2015-2004

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Mill worker's shawl

around 1900

Women made up over half the Lancashire cotton industry's workforce. On their way to and from the mill, most women and girls wore woollen shawls.

Although some people argued their place was at home, women wanted to work. Many families relied on their wages.

Lent by Salford Museum and Art Gallery.

Loan no. L2018-45

A Street Scene in Manchester

by Thomas Armstrong, 1861

This is an impression of a street in industrial Manchester.

People were shocked at the town's living conditions. Manchester grew quickly, with no planning. There were not enough toilets and no clean, running water where many workers lived.

Can you imagine what these children's lives were like?

Oil on canvas

Lent by Manchester Art Gallery. Loan no. L2018-44

Spin the dice

Use the pictures and your imagination. Create a story, set on the streets of 19th century industrial Manchester.

Who is your main character?

What is their life like?

Are they having a difficult day or enjoying themselves?

Archaeological material around 1840–1930



Traces of everyday lives

These items once belonged to workers in industrial Manchester. Archaeologists uncovered them whilst exploring the foundations of workers' homes.

Although their houses have disappeared to make way for offices and flats, these items help reveal how workers in Manchester lived their lives.

Which everyday objects would show what your life is like today?

Science Museum Group Collection

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