



What the Industrial Revolution Did for Us

Gavin Weightman

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The latest in the popular What the Did For Us series of books, *What the Industrial Revolution Did For Us* is a journey back in time, giving the reader an insight into how British life was transformed between 1750 and 1830, and how it shaped the world we live in today. So what did the Industrial Revolution do for us? Without the huge advances in science, engineering and medicine and the cast of extraordinarily colourful inventors and scientists who revolutionised the way we think, our modern world would be very different. We would be without vaccinations against contagious diseases and have no anaesthetics for surgery. The industrial revolution also gave birth to our national obsession with tea drinking, the mass production of crockery for the house-proud newly emerging Middle Classes and the transformation of clothing worn by the ordinary man and woman. As well as huge leaps in the evolution of machinery and manufacturing, our transport system was completely overhauled as the first ever steam trains emerged, roads were drastically improved, and canal mania took over Britain. The great industrial cities burgeoned and London became the international power it still is today. From the quacks advertising their potions to the new Middle Classes to the great innovators and entrepreneurs such as Robert Stephenson, James Watt and Josiah Wedgwood, *What the Industrial Revolution Did For Us* takes us right to the heart of the excitement of this revolutionary age. This book and the BBC television series it accompanies takes us back in time in the eyes of the eighteenth century tourist embracing the newness and invention of this incredible era. Contents: Introduction by Dan Cruickshank Chapter 1: A Potent Brew Chapter 1 looks at the remarkable discoveries that, in just 100 years, created the modern global economy and much of the world in which we live. It tells the story of coal and iron, but also of tea, the invention of the toaster and how Kew Gardens came to be formed. Chapter 2: New Lives: New Landscapes How industrialisation changed the face of modern Britain with the development of machines that took work out of the home and into factories. Chapter 3: Steaming Along We travel through the longest tunnels, over the highest bridges and in the first ever steam trains to explore the impact of the Industrial Revolution on the way we get from A to B. Chapter 4: The Lure of London From the architecture of London to the development of shopping and the start of the modern consumer society. Chapter 5: A Remedy for Quacks Up until the mid 18th century, you had a better chance of survival if you chose not to visit a doctor. But these rather grim facts of life and death were about to change. The Industrial Revolution brought the hope that technology and progress might produce a world without disease and suffering. Modern Medicine covers everything from anaesthetic to Scurvy, vaccines to madness. Chapter 6: Cannon-Fire This chapter focuses on the developments taking place in warfare and weapons during this turbulent period.

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