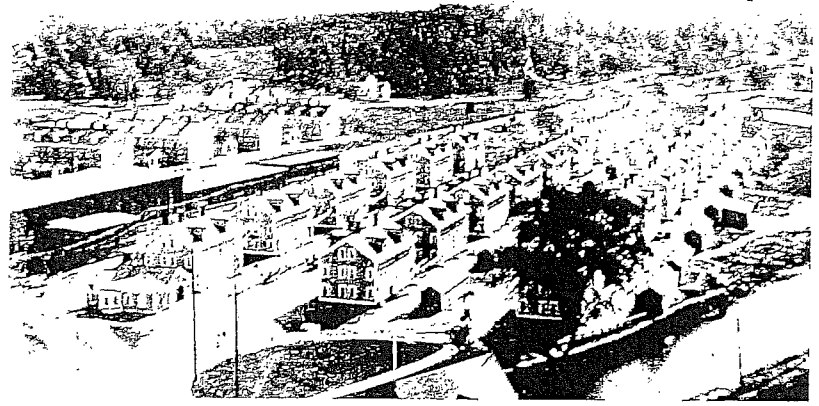


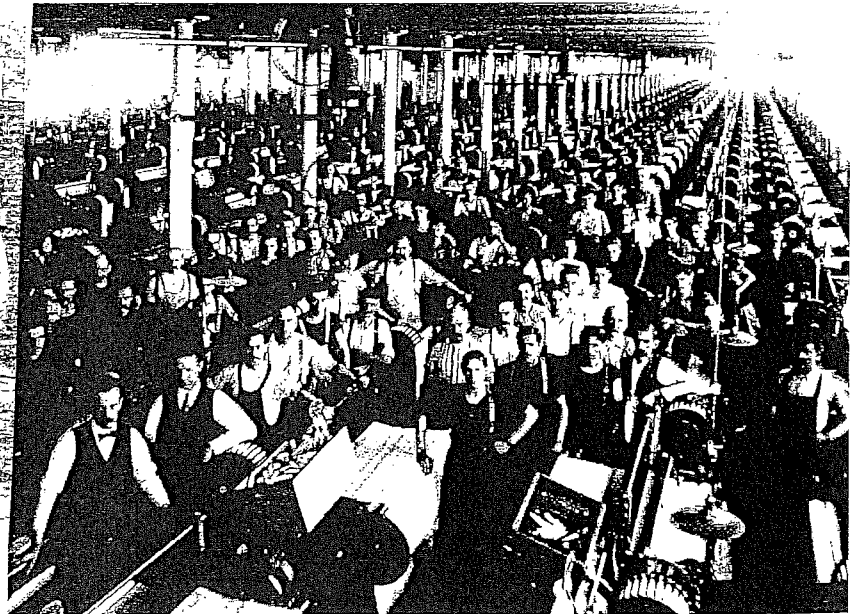
Earliest known view of Gros. Dale Co. Mill, North Grosvenor Dale.



View of three Rows and Greek Village, near the end of the nineteenth century.



Mill workers. Notice sign: "no ball playing on these premises."



Grosvenor Dale Co. weave room, 1920.

Grosvenor Dale Co. Mill

North Grosvenor Dale, CT

(from *Thompson Bicentennial Memory Book 1785-1985*)

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Thompson mill workers, spool room, late 1800's.

As the Industrial Revolution swung into gear, women flocked to the cotton, silk, and woolen mills to spin, card, weave, and inspect the finished cloth. Although this was an emancipation of sorts, it was also a demanding and difficult existence for men, women, and youth alike. At the mill from 6:00 or 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. for 5½ or 6 days a week, the workers hardly ever saw the sunlight. There were no fringe benefits — only the weekly wage of about \$3.00.

A Mechanicsville resident speaks about her family's mill experiences: "My father worked in the mill from the time when he was out of school to the day he died. My mother worked there only after my father died. I worked in the mill until it closed. I worked for the Grosvenor Dale Mill and

for the Cluett-Peabody Mill. I heard of a woman long ago who went to work when she was 7 years old, but that was before child labor laws.

"This was a nice village — a peaceful town. Working in the mill was labor, but not too hard — just part of a living. When I first went to work, we had no breaks. A whistle would blow for the hour's nooning. There was only one shift, from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Everyone came and went at the same time.

"There was no bickering or running each other down or competition for each other's jobs then. I liked to work with the people — we all helped each other. There was very much pride in the work produced. You made the product as though you were going to buy it."

From a mill worker's song:

*I've worked in the cotton mill all my life — And I ain't got nothin' but a
barlow knife — It's hard times cotton mill girls — It's hard times everywhere.*

*Us kids worked twelve hours a day — For fourteen cents of measly pay — It's hard
times cotton mill girls — It's hard times everywhere.*

*When I die don't bury me at all — Just hang me up on the spinning room wall — Pickle
my bones in alcohol — It's hard times everywhere.*



Three Rows, North Grosvenor Dale, the turn of the century.

In the early 1880's, many immigrants from Sweden and from Canada came to work for the Grosvenor Dale Company. Each family, with its baggage, was assigned to a company-owned tenement. The Company Store furnished each home with chairs, table, beds, stove, lamps, and the necessary cooking and eating equipment. These were charged to the head of the family and a small amount was deducted from his salary every week.

The Grosvenor Dale Company sold coal and wood, and they owned a large herd of cattle. Milk was delivered daily with the exception of Sunday. The employees were not overcharged. Rents ranged from \$.99 to \$1.27 per week. The houses were almost new, and because the company had its own painters, paper-hangers, and carpenters, the inside and the outside of the houses were kept in repair. The Company also hired one policeman for each village.

There were four-family tenement houses, com-

plexes that held ten to twelve, and cottages and brick houses with two families each. Both Swedish Village and Three Rows, or "Canada," had the same type of homes. A plot of lawn bordered by a fence made the setting complete.

There was no running water, but interspersed here and there were pumps and wells in sufficient number to accommodate the needs of the families. Monday was wash-day, (white clothes were washed and boiled, and hung in the sunshine), so there was a great deal of commotion on Sunday evenings as the men waited in line to get wash tubs and wash boilers filled.

Lamp-posts with kerosene lamps gave a dim light to the streets. The lamp-lighter arrived at dusk carrying a small ladder, a can of kerosene, and a box of matches. He was always a delight to the children, who laughed with glee as the lamp in their neighborhood was lit.