

# The union



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

“ TheUnion” In colonialAmerica, most of the manufacturing was done by hand in a home. Labor took place in workshops attached to the side of a home. As towns grew into cities, the demand for manufactured goods increased. Some workshop owners began hiring helpers to increase production. Relations between the employer and helper were generally harmonious.

They worked side by side, had the same interests and The factory system that began around the mid 1800s brought great changes. The employers no longer worked beside their employees. They became executives and merchants who rarely saw their workers. They were less concerned with their welfare than with the cost of their labor. Many workers were angry about the changes brought by the factory system. In the past, they had taken great pride in their handicraft skills, and now machines did most of the work, and they were reduced from the status of craft workers to common laborers.

The were also replaced by workers who would accept lower wages. The Industrial Revolution meant degradation rather than progress. As the factory system grew, many workers began to form labor unions to protect their interests. The first union to hold regular meetings and collect dues was organized by Philadelphia shoemakers in 1792.

Soon after, carpenters and leather workers in Boston and printers in New York also organized unions. Labor's tactics in those early times were simple. Members of a union would agree on the wages they thought were fair.

They pledged to stop working for employers who would not pay that amount.

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