

# Robert Owen

**Robert Owen** (/ˈoʊn/; 14 May 1771 – 17 November 1858) was a Welsh textile manufacturer, philanthropic social reformer, and one of the founders of utopian socialism and the cooperative movement. Owen is best known for his efforts to improve the working conditions of his factory workers and his promotion of experimental socialistic communities. In the early 1800s Owen became wealthy as an investor and eventual manager of a large textile mill at New Lanark, Scotland. (He initially trained as a draper in Stamford, Lincolnshire, and worked in London before relocating at the age of 18 to Manchester and going into business as a textile manufacturer.) In 1824 Owen travelled to America, where he invested the bulk of his fortune in an experimental socialistic community at New Harmony, Indiana, the preliminary model for Owen's utopian society. The experiment was short-lived, lasting about two years. Other Owenite utopian communities met a similar fate. In 1828 Owen returned to the United Kingdom and settled in London, where he continued to be an advocate for the working class. In addition to his leadership in the development of cooperatives and the trade union movement, he also supported passage of child labour laws and free, co-educational schools.

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Biographies of Owen

**Robert Owen**



Owen, aged about 50, by William Henry Brooke

<b>Born</b>	14 May 1771 <div>Newtown,<span> </span>Montgomeryshire,<span> </span>Wales</div>
<b>Died</b>	17 November 1858 (aged 87) <div>Newtown,<span> </span>Montgomeryshire,<span> </span>Wales</div>
<b>Occupation</b>	Co-operator; social reformer, textile mill co-owner; philanthropic capitalist
<b>Spouse(s)</b>	Ann (or Anne) <div>Caroline Dale</div>
<b>Children</b>	Jackson Dale (b. 1799) <div>Robert Dale (b. 1801)</div> <div>William (b. 1802)</div> <div>Ann (or Anne)</div> <div>Caroline (b. 1805)</div> <div>Jane Dale (b. 1805)</div> <div>David Dale (b. 1807)</div> <div>Richard Dale (b.</div>

Other works about Owen

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## Early life and education

Robert Owen was born in Newtown, a small market town in Montgomeryshire, Wales, on 14 May 1771, to Anne (Williams) and Robert Owen. His father was a saddler, ironmonger, and local postmaster; his mother was the daughter of a Newtown farming family. Young Robert was the sixth of the family's seven children, two of whom died at a young age. His surviving siblings were William, Anne, John, and Richard.<sup>[1][2]</sup>

Owen received little formal education, but he was an avid reader. He left school at the age of ten and was apprenticed to a Stamford, Lincolnshire, draper for four years. He also worked in London draper shops as a teenager.<sup>[3][4]</sup> Around the age of eighteen, Owen moved to Manchester, where he spent the next twelve years of his life. Initially, he was employed at Satterfield's Drapery in Saint Ann's Square.<sup>[5][6]</sup>

While living in Manchester, Owen borrowed £100 from his brother, William, to enter into a partnership to make spinning mules, a new invention for spinning cotton thread, but exchanged his share of the business within a few months for six spinning mules that he operated in a rented factory space.<sup>[7]</sup> In 1792, when Owen was about twenty-one years old, mill-owner Peter Drinkwater made him manager of the Piccadilly Mill at Manchester; however, after two years of working for Drinkwater, Owen voluntarily gave up a contracted promise of partnership, left the company, and went into partnership with other entrepreneurs to establish and eventually manage the Chorlton Twist Mills in the Chorlton-on-Medlock area of Manchester.<sup>[8][9]</sup>

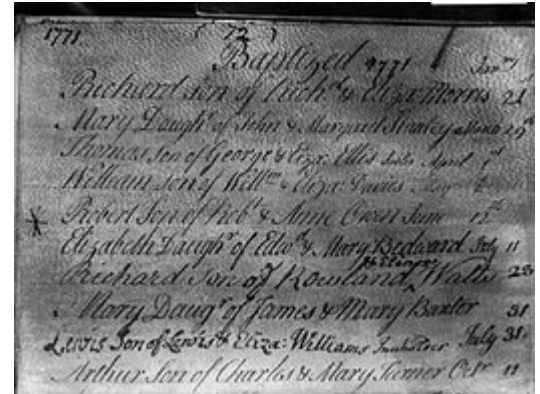
By the early 1790s, Owen's entrepreneurial spirit, management skills, and progressive moral views were emerging. In 1793, he was elected as a member of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society,<sup>[9]</sup> where the ideas of reformers and philosophers of the Enlightenment were discussed. He also became a committee member of the Manchester Board of Health, which was instigated, principally by Thomas Percival, to promote improvements in the health and working conditions of factory workers.<sup>[10][11]</sup>

## Marriage and family

During a visit to Scotland, Owen met and fell in love with Ann (or Anne) Caroline Dale, the daughter of David Dale, a Glasgow philanthropist and the proprietor of New Lanark Mills, a large textile mill in New Lanark, Scotland. Robert and Caroline Owen were married on 30 September 1799. Following their marriage, the Owens established their home in New Lanark, but later moved to Braxfield, Scotland.<sup>[9][12][13]</sup>

Robert and Caroline Owen had eight children, the first of whom died in infancy. Their seven surviving children included four sons and three daughters: Robert Dale (1801–77), William (1802–42), Ann (or Anne) Caroline (1805–31), Jane Dale (1805–61), David Dale (1807–60), Richard Dale (1809–90) and Mary (1810–32).<sup>[9][4][14]</sup> Owen's four sons, Robert Dale, William, David Dale, and Richard, as well as his daughter, Jane Dale, followed their father to the United States, becoming U.S. citizens and permanent residents of New Harmony, Indiana. Owen's wife, Caroline, and two of their daughters, Anne Caroline and Mary, remained in Britain, where they died in the 1830s.<sup>[15][16]</sup>

	1809)
	Mary (b. 1810)
<b>Parent(s)</b>	Robert Owen and Anne (Williams) Owen <sup>[1]</sup>



Baptism record of Robert Owen in the Newtown Parish Register

## New Lanark textile mill

In July 1799 Owen and his partners bought the New Lanark mill from David Dale, and Owen became the New Lanark mill's manager in January 1800.<sup>[9][12]</sup> Encouraged by his success in the management of cotton mills in Manchester, Owen hoped to conduct the New Lanark mill on higher principles than purely commercial ones. David Dale and Richard Arkwright had established the substantial mill at New Lanark in 1785. With its water power provided by the falls of the River Clyde, the cotton-spinning operation became one of Britain's largest. About 2,000 individuals were associations with the mill; 500 of them were children who were brought to the mill at the age of five or six from the poorhouses and charities of Edinburgh and Glasgow. Dale, who was known for his benevolence, treated the children well, but the general condition of New Lanark's residents was unsatisfactory. Over the years, Dale and his son-in-law, Owen, worked to improve the factory workers' lives.<sup>[17][18]</sup>

Many of the workers were in the lowest levels of the population; theft, drunkenness, and other vices were common; education and sanitation were neglected; and most families lived in one room. The respectable country people refused to submit to the long hours and demoralising drudgery of the mills.<sup>[19]</sup>

Until a series of Truck Acts (1831–1887) required employees to be paid in common currency, many employers operated the truck system that paid workers in total or in part with tokens. The tokens had no monetary value outside the mill owner's "truck shop," where the owners could supply shoddy goods and charge top prices.<sup>[20]</sup> In contrast to other employers, Owen's store offered goods at prices slightly above their wholesale cost.<sup>[12]</sup> He also passed on the savings from the bulk purchase of goods to his workers, and placed the sale of alcohol under strict supervision. These principles became the basis for the cooperative shops in Britain, which continue in an altered form to trade today.<sup>[10][21]</sup>

## Philosophy and influence

Owen tested his social and economic ideas at New Lanark, where he won the confidence of his workers and continued to have great success due to the improved efficiency at the mill. The community also earned an international reputation. Social reformers, statesmen, and royals, including the future Tsar Nicholas I of Russia, visited New Lanark to study its operations and educational methods.<sup>[12][22]</sup> The opinions of many of these visitors were favourable.<sup>[23]</sup>

Owen's greatest success was his support of youth education and early childcare. As a pioneer of infant care in Britain, especially Scotland, Owen provided an alternative to the "normal authoritarian approach to child education."<sup>[24]</sup> The manners of the children brought up under his system were beautifully graceful, genial and unconstrained; health, plenty, and contentment prevailed; drunkenness was almost unknown; and illegitimacy extremely rare. Owen's relationship with the workers remained excellent, and all the operations of the mill proceeded with smoothness and regularity. Furthermore, the business was a commercial success.<sup>[19][12]</sup>



Robert Owen's house in New Lanark, Scotland.



Truck system of payment by order of Robert Owen and Benj Woolfield, National Equitable Labour Exchange, July 22nd 1833.

However, some of Owen's schemes displeased his partners, forcing him to arrange for other investors to buy his share of the business in 1813 for \$800,000 (US).<sup>[12]</sup> The new investors, who included Jeremy Bentham and William Allen, a well-known Quaker, were content to accept a £5000 return on their capital.<sup>[19]</sup> The ownership change also provided Owen with an opportunity to widen the scope for his philanthropy. He became an advocate for improvements in workers' rights, child labour laws, and free education for children.<sup>[12]</sup>

In 1813 Owen authored and published *A New View of Society, or Essays on the Principle of the Formation of the Human Character*, the first of four essays that he wrote to explain the principles behind his reform-minded and socialistic philosophy.<sup>[25]</sup> Owen had originally been a follower of the classical liberal and utilitarian Jeremy Bentham, who believed that free markets, in particular, the right of workers to move and choose their employers, would release the workers from the excessive power of capitalists. However, Owen developed his own, pro-socialist outlook. In addition, Owen, a deist, criticised organised religion, including the Church of England, and developed a belief system of his own.<sup>[26][27]</sup>

Owen felt that human character is formed by circumstances over which individuals have no control. As a result, individuals cannot be praised or blamed for their behaviour or situation in life. This principle led Owen to conclude that the secret behind the correct formation of people's characters is to place them under proper environmental influences – physical, moral and social – from their earliest years. These notions of the irresponsibility of humans and of the effect of early influences on an individual's character formed the basis of Owen's system of education and social reform.<sup>[28]</sup>

Relying on his own observations, experiences, and thoughts, Owen considered his view of human nature to be original and "the most basic and necessary constituent in an evolving science of society."<sup>[29]</sup> Owen's philosophy was influenced by Sir Isaac Newton's views on natural law, and his views resembled those of Plato, Denis Diderot, Claude Adrien Helvétius, William Godwin, John Locke, James Mill, and Jeremy Bentham, among others. Owen did not have the direct influence of Enlightenment philosophers.<sup>[29][30]</sup>

Owen's work at New Lanark continued to have significance throughout Britain and in continental Europe. He was a "pioneer in factory reform, the father of distributive cooperation, and the founder of nursery schools."<sup>[4]</sup> His schemes for the education of his workers included the opening of the Institute for the Formation of Character at New Lanark in 1818. The institute and other educational programmes at New Lanark provided free education from infancy to adulthood.<sup>[25][9]</sup> In addition, he zealously supported factory legislation that culminated in the Cotton Mills and Factories Act of 1819. Owen also had interviews and communications with the leading members of the British government, including its premier, Robert Banks Jenkinson, and Lord Liverpool. Owen met with many of the rulers and leading statesmen of Europe.<sup>[31][32]</sup>

Owen also adopted new principles to raise the standard of goods his workers produced. A cube with faces painted in different colours was installed above each machinist's workplace. The colour of the face showed to everyone who saw it the quality and quantity of goods the worker completed. The intent was to provide incentives to workers to do their best. Although it was not a great incentive by itself, the conditions at New Lanark for the workers and their families were idyllic for the time.<sup>[32][31]</sup>

## Eight-hour day

Owen raised the demand for an eight-hour day in 1810, and instituted the policy at New Lanark. By 1817 he had formulated the goal of the eight-hour workday and coined the slogan: "Eight hours labour, Eight hours recreation, Eight hours rest."<sup>[33]</sup>

## Models for socialism (1817)

Owen embraced socialism in 1817, a turning point in his life, and began making specific efforts to implement what he described as his "New View of Society."<sup>[18]</sup> Owen outlined his position in a report to the committee of the House of Commons regarding the country's Poor Laws.<sup>[34]</sup> In addition, when misery and trade stagnation after the Napoleonic Wars were capturing the attention of the country, the British government invited Owen to offer his advice on what could be done to alleviate the industrial concerns. Although Owen attributed the immediate causes of misery to the wars, he also argued that the underlying cause of distress was the competition of human labour with machinery and recommended the establishment of self-sufficient communities.<sup>[4]</sup>

Owen proposed that communities of about 1,200 people should be settled on land from 1,000 to 1,500 acres (405 to 607 ha), with all of them living in one large building that had a public kitchen and dining halls. (The size of his proposed community is likely to have been influenced by the size of the village of New Lanark.) Owen also recommended that each family should have its own private apartments and the responsibility for the care of their children until they reached the age of three. Thereafter, children would be raised by the community-at-large, but their parents would have access to them at mealtimes and on other occasions. Owen further suggested that these socialistic communities might be established by individuals, parishes, counties, or other governmental units. In every case there would be effective supervision by qualified persons. The work and the enjoyment of its results should be experienced communally. Owen believed that his idea would be the best form for the re-organisation of society in general.<sup>[19][31]</sup> He called his vision for a socialistic utopia the "New Moral World."<sup>[25]</sup>

Owen's utopian model changed little during his lifetime. His fully developed model considered an association of 500 to 3,000 people as the optimum number for a good working community. While mainly agricultural, it would possess the best machinery, offer a variety of employment, and, as far as possible, be self-contained. Owen further explained that as the number of these communities increased, "unions of them federatively united shall be formed in circle of tens, hundreds and thousands"<sup>[35]</sup> linked in a common interest.

## Arguments against Robert Owen and his answers

Owen always tried to spread his ideas to wider communities. First of all, he started publishing his ideas in newspapers. Owen then sent these newspapers to parliamentarians, politicians all over the country, and other important people. The first negative reactions to his ideas appeared after these newspaper articles were published.

The opponents of Owen's ideas thought that Owen's plans would result in an uncontrollable increase in population and poverty. The other main criticism stated that Owen's plan and the common use of everything would essentially make the country one large workshop. William Hone claimed that Owen saw people as unravelled plants from his roots, and that he wanted to plant them into rectangles. Another spokesman accused Owen of wanting to imprison people in workshops like barracks and eradicate their personal independence.



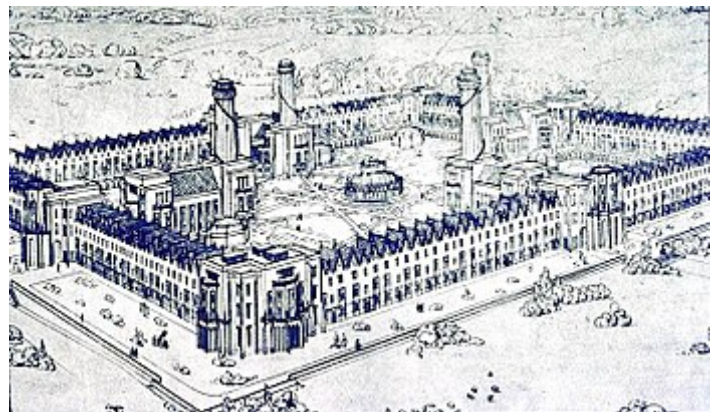
A statue commemorating Owen in Manchester, in front of The Co-operative Bank.

Owen's opponents had begun to regard him as an enemy of religion. His influence with the ruling circles, which he had hoped would help him to accomplish his "Plan", started diminishing and rumours about his lack of religious conviction spread. Owen believed that, unless a change can be made in the character of the individuals and the environment in which they live, these people will be hostile to those around them. As long as such a social order is perpetuated, the positive aspects of Christianity can never be put into practice. Owen also considered it necessary to give people more freedom in order to improve the situation of the poor and working classes. Unless people are better educated, unless they gain more useful information and have permanent employment, they are a danger to the security of the state when given more freedom than the British Constitution of the time. Without having to make any changes in the national institutions, he believed that even merely reorganizing the working classes would result in great benefits. Owen was thus opposed to the views of radicals who wanted to bring about a change in the public's mentality through the expansion of voting rights.<sup>[36]</sup>

## Community experiments in America and Britain

To test the viability of his ideas for self-sufficient working communities, Owen began experiments in communal living in America in 1825. Among the most famous of these was the one established at New Harmony, Indiana.<sup>[4]</sup> Of the 130 identifiable communitarian experiments in America before the American Civil War, at least sixteen were Owenite or Owenite-influenced communities. New Harmony was Owen's earliest and most ambitious experiment.<sup>[23]</sup>

Owen and his son, William, sailed to America in October 1824 to establish an experimental community in Indiana.<sup>[37]</sup> In January 1825 Owen used a portion of his own funds to finalise the purchase of an existing town that included 180 buildings and several thousand acres of land along the Wabash River in Indiana. (In 1824 George Rapp's Harmony Society, the religious group that owned the property and had founded the communal village of Harmony (or Harmonie) on the site in 1814, decided to relocate to Pennsylvania.) Owen renamed it New Harmony and established the village as his preliminary model for a utopian community.<sup>[25][38][39]</sup>



New Moral World, Owen's envisioned successor of New Harmony. Owenites fired bricks to build it, but it was never constructed.

Owen attempted to gain support for his socialist vision among American thinkers, reformers, intellectuals, and public statesmen. On 25 February and 7 March 1825, Owen delivered addresses in the U.S. House of Representatives to the U.S. Congress and others in the U.S. government that outlined his vision and plans for the utopian community at New Harmony, Indiana, as well as his socialist beliefs.<sup>[25][40]</sup> The audience to hear his ideas included three former U.S. presidents (John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison), in addition to outgoing U.S. president James Monroe, and president-elect John Quincy Adams.<sup>[41]</sup> His meetings were possibly the first discussions about socialism in the Americas; they were certainly a major step towards the beginnings of discussions about socialist thought in the United States. Owenism, among the first socialist ideologies active in the United States, is considered the starting-point of the modern Socialist movement in the United States.<sup>[20][19]</sup>

Owen convinced William Maclure, a wealthy scientist, philanthropist, and Scot who was living in Philadelphia to join him at New Harmony. Maclure became Owen's financial partner. Maclure's involvement in the project subsequently attracted scientists, educators, and artists such as Thomas Say, Charles-Alexandre Lesueur, and Madame Marie Duclos Fretageot,

among others. These individuals helped to establish the utopian community at New Harmony as a centre for educational reform, scientific research, and artistic expression.<sup>[25][42]</sup>

Although he intended to build a "Village of Unity and Mutual Cooperation" south of town, his grand plan was never fully realised, and Owen returned to Britain to continue his work. During his long absences from New Harmony, Owen left the experiment under the day-to-day management of his sons, Robert Dale Owen and William Owen, and his business partner, Maclure. The New Harmony communal experiment proved to be an economic failure, lasting about two years, but it attracted more than a thousand residents by the end of its first year. The socialistic society was dissolved in 1827; however, many of the town's scientists, educators, and artists, and other inhabitants, including Owen's four sons, Robert Dale, William, David Dale, and Richard Dale Owen, and his daughter, Jane Dale Owen Fauntleroy, resided at New Harmony after the social experiment ended.<sup>[9][25][42]</sup>

Other utopian experiments in the United States included communal settlements at Blue Spring, near Bloomington, Indiana; Yellow Springs, Ohio; and the Owenite community of Forestville Commonwealth at Earlton, New York, as well as other projects in New York, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee. Nearly all of these experiments ended before New Harmony was dissolved in April 1827.<sup>[43][44]</sup>

Owen's utopian communities attracted a mix of people, many of whom had the highest aims; however, their members also included vagrants, adventurers, and crotchety, and other reform-minded enthusiasts. In the words of Owen's son, David Dale Owen, the communities attracted "a heterogeneous collection of Radicals", "enthusiastic devotees to principle," and "honest latitudinarians, and lazy theorists," with "a sprinkling of unprincipled sharpers thrown in."<sup>[45]</sup>

Josiah Warren, one of the participants at New Harmony, asserted that community was doomed to failure due to a lack of individual sovereignty and personal property. In describing the Owenite community, Warren explained: "We had a world in miniature — we had enacted the French revolution over again with despairing hearts instead of corpses as a result. ... It appeared that it was nature's own inherent law of diversity that had conquered us ... our "united interests" were directly at war with the individualities of persons and circumstances and the instinct of self-preservation ..."<sup>[46]</sup> Warren's observations on the reasons for the community's failure led to the development of American individualist anarchism, of which he was its original theorist.<sup>[47]</sup> Some historians have attributed the demise of the New Harmony experiment to a series of disagreements among its members.<sup>[48]</sup>

Social experiments also began in Scotland in 1825, when Abram Combe, an Owenite disciple, attempted the development of a utopian experiment at Orbiston, near Glasgow, but the project failed after a trial of about two years.<sup>[49]</sup> In the 1830s additional experiments in socialistic cooperatives were made in Ireland and Britain. The most important of these were that at Ralahine, established in 1831 in County Clare, Ireland, and at Tytherley, begun in 1839 in Hampshire, England. The former proved a remarkable success for three-and-a-half years until the proprietor, having ruined himself by gambling, had to sell his interest in the enterprise. Tytherley, known as Harmony Hall, or Queenwood College, was designed by the architect Joseph Hansom.<sup>[50]</sup> It also failed.

## Return to Britain

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Although Owen made brief visits to the United States, London became his permanent home and the centre of his activities in 1828. After an extended period of friction with William Allen and some of his other business partners, Owen relinquished all of connections to New Lanark.<sup>[9][48]</sup> He is often quoted as comment Allen at the time, "All the world is queer save thee and me, and even thou art a little queer".<sup>[51]</sup> Having invested most of his personal fortune in the failed New Harmony communal experiment, Owen was no longer a wealthy capitalist; however, he remained the head of a

vigorous propaganda effort to promote industrial equality, free education for children, and adequate living conditions in factory towns. In addition, he delivered lectures in Europe and published a weekly newspaper to gain support for his ideas.<sup>[48]</sup>

In 1832 Owen opened the National Equitable Labour Exchange system,<sup>[9][52]</sup> a time-based currency in which the exchange of goods was effected by means of labour notes; this system superseded the usual means of exchange and middlemen. The London exchange continued until 1833; a Birmingham branch operated for only a few months until July 1833.<sup>[53]</sup> Owen also became involved in trade unionism. He briefly served as the leader of the Grand National Consolidated Trade Union (GNCTU) before its collapse in 1834.<sup>[9]</sup>



Portrait of Owen by John Cranch, 1845

Socialism first became current in British terminology in the discussions of the Association of all Classes of all Nations, which Owen formed in 1835<sup>[54]</sup> and served as its initial leader.<sup>[55]</sup> Owen's secular views also gained enough influence among the working classes to cause the Westminster Review to comment in 1839 that his principles were the actual creed of a great portion of them.<sup>[56][31]</sup> However, by 1846, the only long-lasting result of Owen's agitation for social change, carried on through public meetings, pamphlets, periodicals, and occasional treatises, remained the co-operative movement, and for a time even that seemed to have utterly collapsed.<sup>[19][31][20]</sup>

## Role in spiritualism

In 1817, Owen publicly claimed that all religions were false.<sup>[57]</sup> In 1854, at the age of 83, Owen converted to spiritualism after a series of sittings with Maria B. Hayden, the American medium who is credited with introducing spiritualism to England. Owen made a public profession of his new faith in his publication *The Rational Quarterly Review* and in *The future of the Human race; or great glorious and future revolution to be effected through the agency of departed spirits of good and superior men and women*, a pamphlet that he also wrote.<sup>[58]</sup>

Owen claimed to have had mediumistic contact with the spirits of Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and others. He explained that the purpose of these communications was to change "the present, false, disunited and miserable state of human existence, for a true, united and happy state ... to prepare the world for universal peace, and to infuse into all the spirit of charity, forbearance and love."<sup>[59]</sup>



Tomb of Robert Owen, Newtown, Powys

Spiritualists have claimed that after Owen's death his spirit dictated to the medium Emma Hardinge Britten in 1871 the "Seven Principles of Spiritualism," which the Spiritualists' National Union used as "the basis of its religious philosophy."<sup>[60]</sup>

## Later years

As Owen grew older and more radical in his views, his influence began to decline.<sup>[48]</sup> Owen published his memoirs, *The Life of Robert Owen* (1857), a year prior to his death.<sup>[9]</sup>



## Death and legacy

Although he had spent the majority of his life in England and Scotland, Owen returned to his native village of Newtown at the end of his life. He died at Newtown on 17 November 1858, and was buried there on 21 November. With the exception of an annual income drawn from a trust established by his sons in 1844, Owen died penniless.<sup>[9][4][61]</sup>

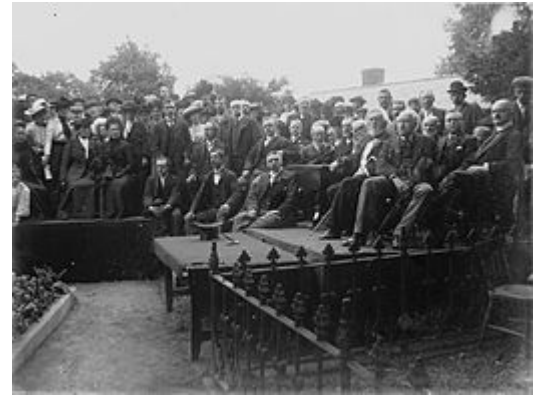
Owen was a reformer, philanthropist, community builder, and spiritualist who spent his adult life seeking to improve the lives of others. An advocate of the working class, he improved working conditions of factory workers, which he successfully demonstrated at New Lanark, Scotland; became a leader in trade unionism; promoted social equality through his experimental utopian communities; and supported passage of child labour laws and free education for children.<sup>[48]</sup>

Owen was ahead of his time as a social reformer. He offered his vision for a communal society that others could consider and apply as they wished.<sup>[62]</sup> In *Revolution in the Mind and Practice of the Human Race* (1849), Owen further elaborated that character is formed by a combination of Nature or God and the circumstances of the individual's experience.<sup>[63]</sup> Citing the beneficial results achieved at New Lanark, Scotland, during his thirty years of work in the community, Owen concluded that a person's "character is not made *by*, but *for* the individual,"<sup>[64]</sup> and that nature and society are responsible for each person's character and conduct.<sup>[65]</sup>

Owen's agitation for social change and the Owenites whose work he inspired, including the efforts of his own children, helped to establish and promote long-lasting social reforms in the area of women's and workers' rights; the establishment of free public libraries and museums; childcare and public, co-educational schools; pre-Marxian communism; and the development of the cooperative and the trade union movement. New Harmony, Indiana, and New Lanark, Scotland, the two towns with which he is most closely associated, remain as lasting reminders of his efforts.<sup>[25][66]</sup>

Owen's legacy of public service continued with his four sons, Robert Dale, William, David Dale, and Richard Dale, and his daughter, Jane, who followed him to America to live at New Harmony, Indiana:

- **Robert Dale Owen** (1801–1877), an able exponent of his father's doctrines, managed the New Harmony community after his father returned to Britain in 1825. In addition, he wrote articles and co-edited with Frances Wright the *New-Harmony Gazette* in the late 1820s in Indiana and the *Free Enquirer* in the 1830s in New York City. Owen returned to New Harmony in 1833 and became active in Indiana politics. He was elected to the Indiana House of Representatives (1836–39 and 1851–53) and U.S. House of Representatives (1843–47), and appointed as 1853–58) to Naples. While serving as a member of Congress, he drafted and helped to secure passage of the bill that founded the Smithsonian Institution in 1846. He was elected as a delegate to the Indiana Constitutional Convention in 1850,<sup>[4][67][68][69]</sup> and argued in support of widows and married women's property and divorce rights. Owen also favoured legislation for Indiana's tax-supported public school system.<sup>[26]</sup> He later succeeded in passing a state law giving. Like his father, Robert Dale Owen believed in spiritualism, authoring two books on the subject: *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World* (1859) and *The Debatable Land Between this World and the Next* (1872).<sup>[15][70]</sup>
- **William Owen** (1802–1842) came to the United States with his father in 1824. Because of his business acumen, especially his knowledge of cotton-goods manufacturing, he remained at New Harmony after his father returned to Scotland, and served as an adviser to the community. He also organised New Harmony's Thespian Society in 1827. Owen died of unknown causes at the age of forty.<sup>[16][71][72]</sup>
- **Jane Dale Owen Fauntleroy** (1805–1861) immigrated to the United States in 1833 and settled in New Harmony. She was a musician and an educator who established a school in her home. In 1835 Jane Dale Owen married Robert Henry Fauntleroy, a civil engineer from Virginia who lived at New Harmony.<sup>[73][74][75]</sup>
- **David Dale Owen** (1807–1860) immigrated to the United States in 1827 and resided at New Harmony for several years. He trained as a geologist, natural scientist, and earned a medical degree. David Dale Owen was appointed a



Crowds of locals gather to commemorate Robert Owen at his grave in Newtown, 1890s

United States geologist in 1839. His work included extensive geological surveys in the Midwest, more specifically the states of [Indiana](#), [Iowa](#), [Missouri](#), and [Arkansas](#), as well as the [Minnesota Territory](#). His brother, Richard, succeeded him as the state geologist of Indiana.<sup>[76][77]</sup>

- [Richard Dale Owen](#) (1810–1890) immigrated to the United States in 1827 and joined his siblings at New Harmony. He fought in the Mexican–American War in 1847, taught natural science at Western Military Institute in Tennessee from 1849 to 1859, and earned a medical degree in 1858. During the [American Civil War](#) Owen was a colonel in the [Union army](#) and served as a commandant of [Camp Morton](#), a prisoner-of-war camp for [Confederate soldiers](#) at [Indianapolis, Indiana](#). After the war, Owen served as Indiana's second state geologist. In addition, he was a professor at [Indiana University](#) and chaired its natural science department (1864–79). Owen helped plan [Purdue University](#) and was appointed its first president (1872–74), but resigned before its first classes began and resumed teaching at IU. Owen spent his retirement years conducting research and writing.<sup>[77][78][79]</sup>

## Honours and tributes

- The Co-operative Movement erected a monument to Robert Owen in 1902 at his burial site in Newtown, Wales.<sup>[4]</sup>
- The [Welsh people](#) donated a bust of Owen by Welsh sculptor Sir [William Goscombe John](#) for the International Labour Office library in [Geneva, Switzerland](#).<sup>[4]</sup>

## Selected published works

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- *Observations on the Effect of the Manufacturing System*. (London, 1815).
- *Report to the Committee of the Association for the Relief of the Manufacturing and Labouring Poor* (1817).<sup>[80]</sup>
- *Two Memorials on Behalf of the Working Classes* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 181<sup>[81]</sup>
- *An Address to the Master Manufacturers of Great Britain: On the Present Existing Evils in the Manufacturing System* (Bolton, 1819)
- *Report to the County of Lanark of a Plan for relieving Public Distress* (Glasgow: Glasgow University Press, 1821)
- *An Explanation of the Cause of Distress which pervades the civilised parts of the world* (London and Paris, 1823)
- *An Address to All Classes in the State* (London, 1832)
- *The Revolution in the Mind and Practice of the Human Race* (London, 1849)

Collected works:

- *A New View of Society and Other Writings*, G. Claeys, ed. (London and New York: Penguin Books, 1991)
- *The Selected Works of Robert Owen*, G. Claeys, ed., 4 vols. (London: Pickering and Chatto, 1993)

Archival collections:

- Robert Owen Collection, National Co-operative Archive, United Kingdom.<sup>[82]</sup>
- New Harmony, Indiana, Collection, 1814-1884, 1920, 1964, [Indiana Historical Society](#), Indianapolis, Indiana, United States<sup>[83]</sup>
- New Harmony Series III Collection, Workingmen's Institute, New Harmony, Indiana, United States<sup>[84]</sup>

## See also

- [Cincinnati Time Store](#)
- [José María Arizmendiarieta](#)



Robert Owen Memorial, next to The Reformers Memorial, Kensal Green Cemetery, London

- [Labour voucher](#)
- [List of Owenite communities in the United States](#)
- [Owenstown](#)
- [Owenism](#)
- [William King](#)

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- Siméon, O. *Robert Owen's Experiment at New Lanark. From Paternalism to Socialism* (<https://www.palgrave.com/de/book/9783319642260>) (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007)

## External links

- Works by or about Robert Owen (<https://worldcat.org/identities/lccn-n80-37004>) in libraries (WorldCat catalog)
- Brief biography at the New Lanark World Heritage Site (<http://www.newlanark.org/robertowen.shtml>)
- The Robert Owen Museum (<http://robert-owen-museum.org.uk/>), Newtown, Wales
- Video of Owen's wool mill ([https://archive.org/details/Socialist\\_paradise](https://archive.org/details/Socialist_paradise))
- Brief biography at Cotton Times (<http://www.cottontimes.co.uk/oweno.htm>)
- "Robert Owen (1771-1858) social reformer, founder of New Harmony" (<http://faculty.evansville.edu/ck6/bstud/robtowen.html>), University of Evansville, Indiana
- "Robert Owen and the Co-operative movement" (<http://www.historyhome.co.uk/peel/economic/owencoop.htm>)
- Brief biography at *The History Guide* (<http://www.historyguide.org/intellect/owen.html>)
- Brief biography at age-of-the-sage.org ([http://www.age-of-the-sage.org/historical/biography/robert\\_owen.html](http://www.age-of-the-sage.org/historical/biography/robert_owen.html))
- *Heaven On Earth: The Rise and Fall of Socialism* at PBS ([https://www.pbs.org/heavenonearth/leaders\\_thinkers.html](https://www.pbs.org/heavenonearth/leaders_thinkers.html))
- "Owen, Robert" ([https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/1911\\_Encyclop%C3%A6dia\\_Britannica/Owen,\\_Robert](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/1911_Encyclop%C3%A6dia_Britannica/Owen,_Robert)). *Encyclopædia Britannica* (11th ed.). 1911.
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