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# IN THE CANNERIES



Not only did American children work *in* the canneries, some children also worked on the boats which caught the food that canneries would preserve. Lewis Hine took this photograph during January of 1909. <u>He describes it with these words</u>: "A young oyster fisher [?] Others smaller employed in busy season. Apalachicola, Fla. Randsey Summerford says he starts out at 4 A.M. one day, is out all night in the little oyster boat and back next day some time. Gets a share of the proceeds. Said he was 16 years old and been at it 4 years. Lives in Georgia and is here 6 months a year. Location: Apalachicola, Florida." Image online via the National Child Labor Committee collection, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division. Click on it for a better view.

From sardine canneries (in <u>Eastport</u>, Maine <u>where children</u> did dangerous work) to shrimp and oyster canneries (in places like <u>Biloxi</u>, Mississippi and Bluffton, South Carolina where children and African-Americans worked side-by-side), child labor was a pervasive part of American life during the first decades of the 20th century. The photos of Lewis Hine take us back in time to observe working American children:

• Five-year-old <u>Preston</u> and 6-year-old Elsie <u>Shaw</u> (note her missing left arm) worked (in 1911) as cartoners while other <u>youngsters</u> served as <u>cutters</u> or fish <u>cleaners</u> for Maine's Seacoast Canning Company.

• <u>Mildred Kron</u> (aged three in 1911) and her sister Gertrude (aged five) were only two of many <u>children</u> who <u>shucked oysters</u> or <u>picked</u> shrimp <u>for</u> Biloxi's <u>canning</u> companies. <u>Most</u> started work at 7:00 a.m. and weren't <u>tall enough</u> to do their jobs.

• Every member of the Peter Elvis family, except the baby, worked for the Barataria Canning Company in Biloxi, Mississippi. <u>Pictured</u> at their New Orleans home in 1911, Jo (the 7-year-old boy) worked Saturdays and Alma (a 3-year-old girl) was "learnin' the trade," according to her mother.

• Cora Croslen, and her 3-year-old daughter Alma, both worked at Barataria. <u>They</u> were originally from Baltimore, Maryland.

• The "shucking boss" supervised as women and children <u>shucked</u> oysters in Dunbar, Louisiana.

• Maude Daly (age 5) and her sister <u>Grace</u> (age 3) each picked about one pot of shrimp a day (in 1911) for the Peerless Oyster Company in Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi.

Today, men who work in America's coal mines do some of the hardest work in the country. During the first decades of the 20th century, before modern equipment made a hard job a bit easier, young boys toiled underground in those same Appalachian mines.

# See Learning Tasks for this story online at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/IN-THE-CANNERIES-Child-Labor</u>

# Media Stream















Sardine Cannery in Eastport Maine Image, described above, online courtesy Library of Congress.

PD

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Sardine-Cannery-in-Eastport-Maine

<u>Seafood Plant Docks</u> Image, described above, online courtesy Library of Congress.

PD View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Seafood-Plant-Docks</u>

Young Cannery Worker Image, described above, online courtesy Library of Congress.

PD View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Young-Cannery-Worker</u>

Lad Working at the Oyster Cannery Image, described above, online courtesy Library of Congress.

PD

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Lad-Working-at-the-Oyster-Cannery

<u>Cannery Workers, Including Young Children</u> Image, described above, online courtesy Library of Congress.

PD View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Cannery-Workers-Including-Young-Children</u>

Young Preston Shaw - A Cartoning Worker Image, described above, online courtesy Library of Congress.

PD View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Young-Preston-Shaw-A-Cartoning-Worker

Elsie Shaw a Cannery Worker Image, described above, online courtesy Library of Congress.

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View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Elsie-Shaw-a-Cannery-Worker

















#### <u>Working as a Cutter</u> Image, described above, online courtesy Library of Congress.

PD View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Working-as-a-Cutter</u>

Working Children Image, described above, online courtesy Library of Congress.

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View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Working-Children

#### Canning Workers at Home

Image, described above, online courtesy Library of Congress.

PD

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Canning-Workers-at-Home

<u>Shrimp Pickers</u> Image, described above, online courtesy Library of Congress.

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#### Youngsters at Work

Image, described above, online courtesy Library of Congress.

PD View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Youngsters-at-Work</u>

#### Child Workers - Maude and Grace Daly Photograph as described from the Library of Congress. PD

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Child-Workers-Maude-and-Grace-Daly

### Children Shucking Oysters

Photograph as described from the Library of Congress. PD View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Children-Shucking-Oysters</u>

Children Working in a Biloxi Cannery Photograph as described from the Library of Congress. PD

 $View \ this \ asset \ at: \ \underline{http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Children-Working-in-a-Biloxi-Cannery$ 















## Cora Croslen and Three-Year-Old Daughter Both Worked Photograph as described from the Library of Congress.

PD View this asset at:

 $\underline{http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Cora-Croslen-and-Three-Year-Old-Daughter-Both-Worked}$ 

#### <u>Mildred Kron - Working at Age Three</u> Photograph as described from the Library of Congress. PD

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Mildred-Kron-Working-at-Age-Three

## Standing on Boxes at the Workstation

Photograph as described from the Library of Congress. PD View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Standing-on-Boxes-at-the-Workstation

### Women and Children Shucked Oysters

Photograph as described from the Library of Congress.

PD View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Women-and-Children-Shucked-Oysters

<u>Working the Line</u> Photograph as described from the Library of Congress. PD View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Working-the-Line</u>

Young Fish Cleaners Photograph as described from the Library of Congress. PD View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Young-Fish-Cleaners</u>

Young Girl at Work

Photograph as described from the Library of Congress. PD View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Young-Girl-at-Work</u>