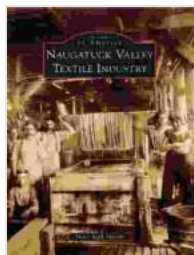


# The Naugatuck Valley Textile Industry: A Photographic History of the Mills and Workers

The Naugatuck Valley in Connecticut was once home to a thriving textile industry. At its peak in the early 20th century, there were over 100 textile mills in the valley, employing tens of thousands of workers. The industry played a major role in the economic and social development of the region, and its legacy can still be seen today in the many historic mill buildings that dot the landscape.



## Naugatuck Valley Textile Industry (Images of America)

by Mary Ruth Shields

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

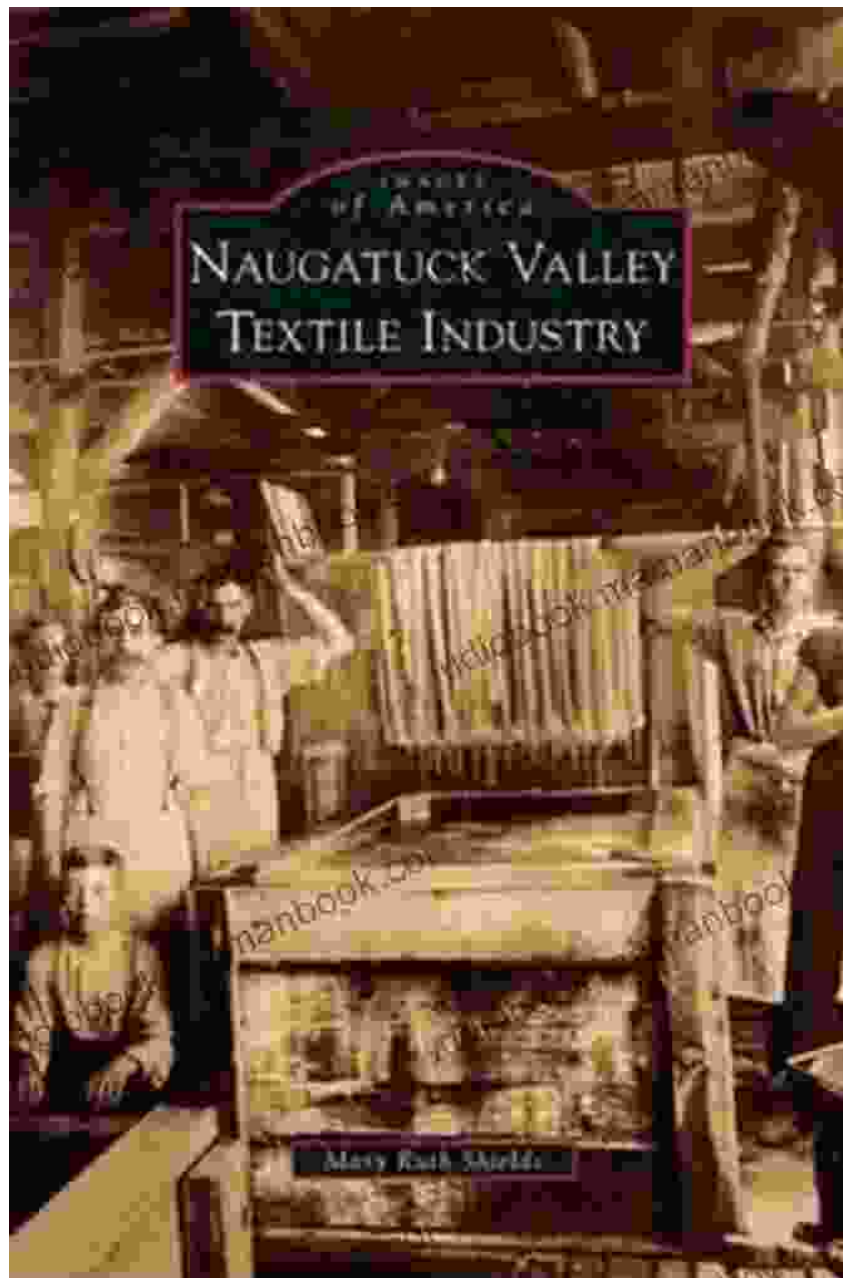
Language : English  
File size : 40760 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting: Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 131 pages



This article presents a photographic history of the Naugatuck Valley textile industry, from its early beginnings to its decline in the mid-20th century. The images in this article are drawn from the collections of the Naugatuck Valley History Center and the Waterbury Public Library.

## The Early Years

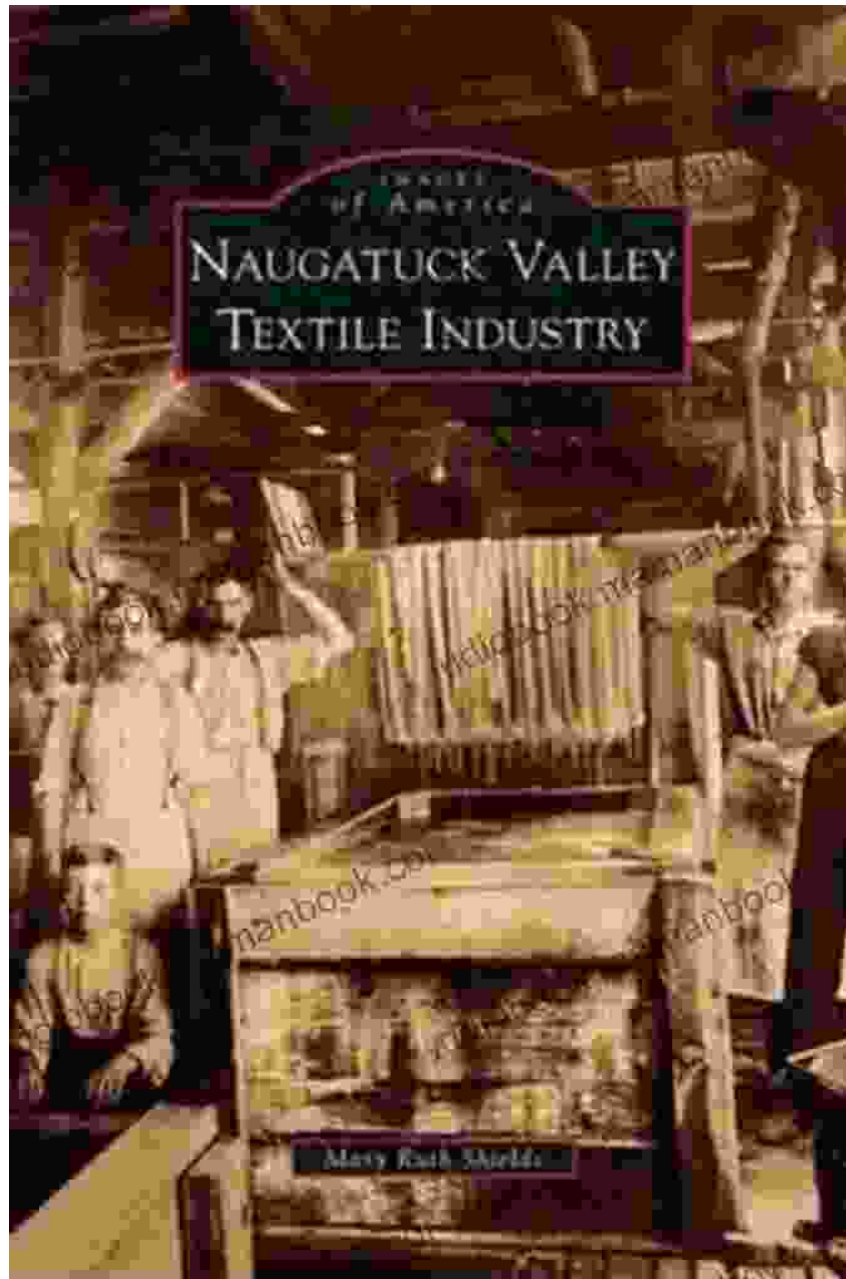
The Naugatuck Valley's textile industry began in the early 19th century, when a number of small woolen mills were established in the towns of Waterbury, Naugatuck, and Ansonia. These mills produced a variety of woolen goods, including cloth, yarn, and blankets. By the mid-19th century, the industry had begun to expand, and a number of larger mills were built in the valley. These mills produced a wider range of products, including cotton and silk goods.



## **The Golden Age**

The Naugatuck Valley textile industry reached its peak in the early 20th century. During this time, the valley was home to over 100 textile mills, employing tens of thousands of workers. The industry was a major factor in the region's economy, and it played a significant role in the development of the region's infrastructure and social services.

The textile mills of the Naugatuck Valley produced a wide range of products, including clothing, fabrics, and yarns. The industry was particularly known for its production of fine worsted woolens, which were used to make high-quality suits and other garments.



Textile workers in the Naugatuck Valley

## The Decline

The Naugatuck Valley textile industry began to decline in the mid-20th century. A number of factors contributed to this decline, including the rise of synthetic fibers, the increasing cost of labor, and the competition from

foreign producers. By the 1970s, most of the textile mills in the valley had closed.

The decline of the textile industry had a significant impact on the Naugatuck Valley. The loss of jobs led to economic hardship for many families, and the closing of the mills left a number of vacant buildings and industrial sites.

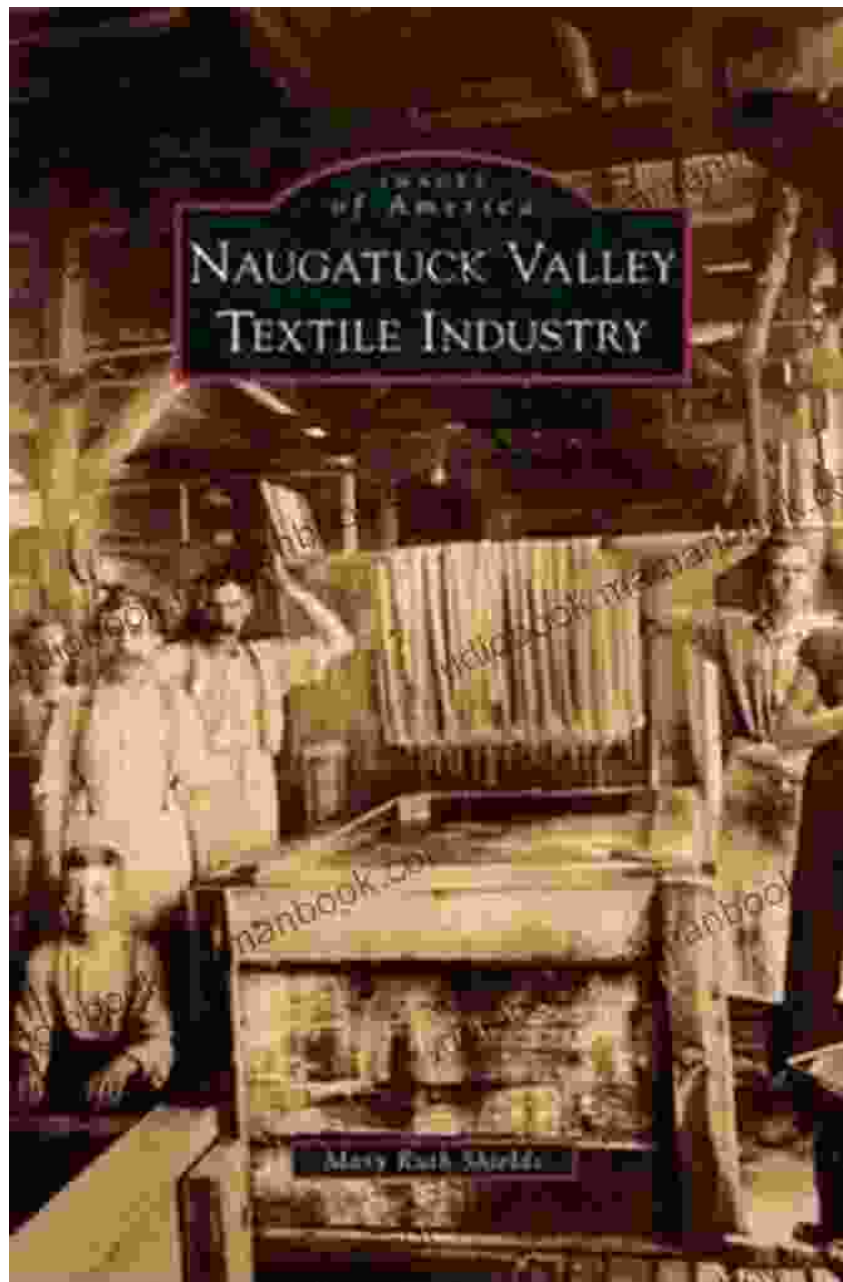


## **The Legacy**

The legacy of the Naugatuck Valley textile industry can still be seen today in the many historic mill buildings that dot the landscape. These buildings are a reminder of the industry's once-important role in the region's economy and social development.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in preserving and revitalizing the Naugatuck Valley's textile heritage. A number of former mill

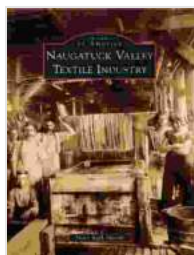
buildings have been converted into new uses, including apartments, offices, and retail space.



A revitalized textile mill in the Naugatuck Valley

The Naugatuck Valley textile industry was a major force in the economic and social development of the region. The industry's legacy can still be seen today in the many historic mill buildings that dot the landscape. These

buildings are a reminder of the industry's once-important role in the region, and they continue to play a vital role in the community today.

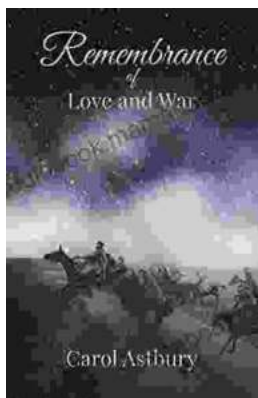


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