



*From the MixCache.com library*

SAMPLE COPY

# Cooper Industries

MixCache.com

SAMPLE COPY

## Table of Contents

- **Introduction**
- **Chapter 1** Foundations: The Birth of an American Enterprise
- **Chapter 2** Mount Vernon to Mainstream: Early Years and Local Impact
- **Chapter 3** Steam Power Revolution: Engines at the Core
- **Chapter 4** Innovation and the Corliss Engine Era
- **Chapter 5** The Traction Engine and America's First Tractors
- **Chapter 6** Building Through Change: The Railroad and Industrialization
- **Chapter 7** Shifting Gears: From Steam to Gas Engines
- **Chapter 8** The Natural Gas Engine Breakthrough
- **Chapter 9** Merging for Growth: The Birth of Cooper-Bessemer
- **Chapter 10** Engines of War: Cooper-Bessemer in World War II
- **Chapter 11** The War Effort: Marine and Industrial Contributions
- **Chapter 12** Postwar Challenges and New Directions
- **Chapter 13** Early Acquisitions and Expansion
- **Chapter 14** The Era of Diversification
- **Chapter 15** Cooper's Move to Houston: Becoming a National Leader
- **Chapter 16** The "Cooperization" Philosophy: Streamlining Success
- **Chapter 17** Building a Conglomerate: Major Acquisitions of the Late 20th Century
- **Chapter 18** Lighting the World: McGraw-Edison, Crouse-Hinds, and Product Expansion
- **Chapter 19** Managing Cycles: Rationalizing the Business Portfolio
- **Chapter 20** Entering the New Millennium: Embracing Globalization
- **Chapter 21** Strategic Growth: International Acquisitions and Opportunities
- **Chapter 22** Preparing for the Future: Innovation and Market Position
- **Chapter 23** The Eaton Acquisition: Transformation and Transition
- **Chapter 24** Cooper's Legacy: Brands, People, and Technology
- **Chapter 25** Looking Forward: Enduring Influence and Future Prospects

## Introduction

Cooper Industries stands as a microcosm of American industrial evolution. Founded in 1833 by Charles and Elias Cooper in Mount Vernon, Ohio, the company's journey from a small, horse-powered foundry to a diversified global enterprise mirrors the shifting tides of national and global economic trends. Its history is woven through the very fabric of American progress, reflecting the challenges, triumphs, and constant reinvention that define the spirit of enterprise.

The story of Cooper Industries is one grounded in innovation and adaptability. In its earliest years, the company's focus on agricultural and household goods addressed the practical needs of a growing nation. Yet, as technology evolved and America entered the era of steam power, Cooper Industries seized the moment, pivoting to manufacture steam engines and compressors that powered industry and enabled expansion westward. This ability to sense and seize opportunity would become a hallmark throughout its history.

Through the turbulence of the 20th century, particularly during the world wars, Cooper Industries contributed significantly to the industrial backbone of the United States. The company's engines not only fueled economic growth but also powered naval vessels, transport ships, and vital manufacturing plants, supporting the Allied efforts in World War II. This era highlighted not just technical prowess but a deep-seated sense of responsibility to country and community—attributes that would continue to shape its culture and strategy.

As the American and global economies transformed at the close of the twentieth century, so too did Cooper Industries. Aggressive diversification, executed through an ambitious series of mergers and acquisitions, expanded its footprint far beyond its origins. By adapting its portfolio to meet modern market demands—shifting toward electrical components, power management systems, and international growth—it thrived amid global competition, eventually becoming a fixture of the S&P 500.

The acquisition by Eaton Corporation in 2012 marked both an end and a beginning. While Cooper Industries ceased to exist as an independent entity, its legacy endured, woven into the fabric of Eaton's operations and the everyday lives of people and industries around the world. Its brands, innovations, and corporate philosophy continue to influence the power management sector, ensuring that the name and spirit of Cooper Industries persist even as the landscape of industry changes.

This book traces the remarkable trajectory of Cooper Industries—from humble beginnings through eras of incredible change and challenge—offering insight not only

into the company itself, but also into the evolution of American business. Through this history, readers will discover the interplay of innovation, adaptability, and strategic vision that transformed a small Ohio foundry into a global powerhouse, and consider the lessons and legacy left for the industries and leaders of tomorrow.

SAMPLE COPY

## **CHAPTER ONE: Foundations: The Birth of an American Enterprise**

The year is 1833. Andrew Jackson occupies the White House, the Erie Canal is a bustling artery of commerce, and the young United States is a nation brimming with raw potential and an insatiable appetite for growth. Out in the burgeoning West, in a small, determined town nestled in the rolling hills of Ohio, two brothers, Charles and Elias Cooper, laid the groundwork for what would become a global industrial powerhouse: Cooper Industries.

Mount Vernon, Ohio, in the early 19th century, was a far cry from the industrial hubs that would soon dot the American landscape. It was a place where self-reliance was not just a virtue but a necessity, and where ingenuity was often born of immediate need. It was in this environment that Charles and Elias, recognizing the demand for foundational goods in a rapidly expanding agricultural society, established their foundry.

Initially, the venture was known as the C&E Cooper Company, and their operations were remarkably humble. Their first products were as fundamental as the frontier itself: plows to break the stubborn Ohio soil, hog troughs for livestock, and kettles and stoves for the homesteads that were steadily populating the region. It was a business built on the back of basic, yet essential, castings, literally fueled by the muscle of a horse named Bessie, who provided the power for their early machinery.

The brothers, Charles born in 1811 and Elias in 1814, had returned to their hometown of Mount Vernon to embark on this entrepreneurial journey. Their initial establishment, the Mount Vernon Iron Works, was situated on Sandusky Road, a location chosen with an eye toward accessibility and the burgeoning transportation networks of the era. With a workforce initially consisting of just the two of them, they set about the demanding work of pouring molten metal and shaping it into the implements necessary for daily life and agricultural progress.

The early product catalog of the C&E Cooper Company reflected the agrarian demands of their market. Besides plows and hog troughs, they manufactured maple syrup kettles, essential for a regional economy that often relied on local resources, as well as sorghum grinders and wagon boxes, further demonstrating their commitment to serving the practical needs of farmers and settlers. It was a business that required both brawn and a keen understanding of the local economy.

In 1836, a significant, albeit modest, upgrade signaled the Cooper brothers' forward-

thinking approach: they replaced Bessie, their equine workhorse, with a small steam engine. This shift from animal power to mechanical power was a harbinger of the industrial revolution that was beginning to gather momentum across the nation. It allowed for greater efficiency and capacity, moving the company a step closer to the heavy industry it would eventually embrace. Alongside this, they also transitioned from charcoal to coke for fuel, another sign of their willingness to adopt more efficient industrial practices.

The foundational years of Cooper Industries, though focused on relatively simple products, established a critical precedent: an unwavering commitment to adapting to changing needs and leveraging emerging technologies. While the immediate future would see the company deepen its roots in its home region, these initial decisions, made by two brothers in a small Ohio foundry, laid the essential groundwork for a legacy of innovation and expansion that would span nearly two centuries. The company, then known as C. & G. Cooper Company, would be formally incorporated in 1895.

SAMPLE COPY

---

*This is a sample preview. Purchase the book to read the full content.*

Visit [MixCache.com](https://MixCache.com) to purchase the complete book.

SAMPLE COPY