

**Social Classes** The Victorian Era in Britain was dominated by the reign of Queen Victoria (1837–1901). This class was divided into three subcategories: Royal, those who came from a royal family, Middle Upper, important officers and lords, and Lower Upper, wealthy men and business owners (Victorian England Social Hierarchy). Merchants and shopkeepers became popular occupations as trade, both domestic and overseas, flourished. It was also referred to as the Bourgeoisie, and consisted of those who had skilled jobs to support themselves and their families. The large scale of new industries such as railroads, banks, and government meant that more labor was needed to make sure the cities were able to function (Loftus). Instead, they were landowners and hired lower class workers to work for them, or made investments to create a profit. The expansion of the Middle class during this time was due to the rapid growth of cities and the economy. The white collar professions had the ability to move up in the corporate rankings and earn a higher salary. Moreover, the Middle class was also divided into two categories, higher level and lower level. People from the lower middle class typically worked for those in the Higher level (Victorian England Social Hierarchy). The social classes of this era included the Upper class, Middle class, and lower class. Those who were fortunate enough to be in the Upper class did not usually perform manual labor. It was helpful to have connections to those in powerful positions as they were able to get jobs more easily. Although it was a peaceful and prosperous time, there were still issues within the social structure.