

## Co-Op, the People's Business

By Johnston Birchall

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The "Co-op", one of the world's most successful businesses, has been a common experience for millions of working-class people in Britain since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. This work celebrates, in words and pictures, the history of a social movement which began with shopkeeping and grew into a large-scale international business, completely owned and controlled by its customers. This title tells how this British invention spread across the world - from the 28 "Rochdale Pioneers" of 1844 to the 700 million members of today's International Co-operative Alliance - and how it was adapted to meet a variety of human needs, including worker, housing, fishing, agricultural and credit co-ops. It shows how, as a third way between capitalism and state control, co-operative businesses continue to transform the lives of the poorer people in the "Third World" and in the post-communist countries of Eastern Europe.

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## Co-Op, the People's Business By Johnston Birchall Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #4281605 in Books
- Published on: 1994-08
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 11.25" h x 8.75" w x .75" l,
- Binding: Paperback
- 200 pages

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