



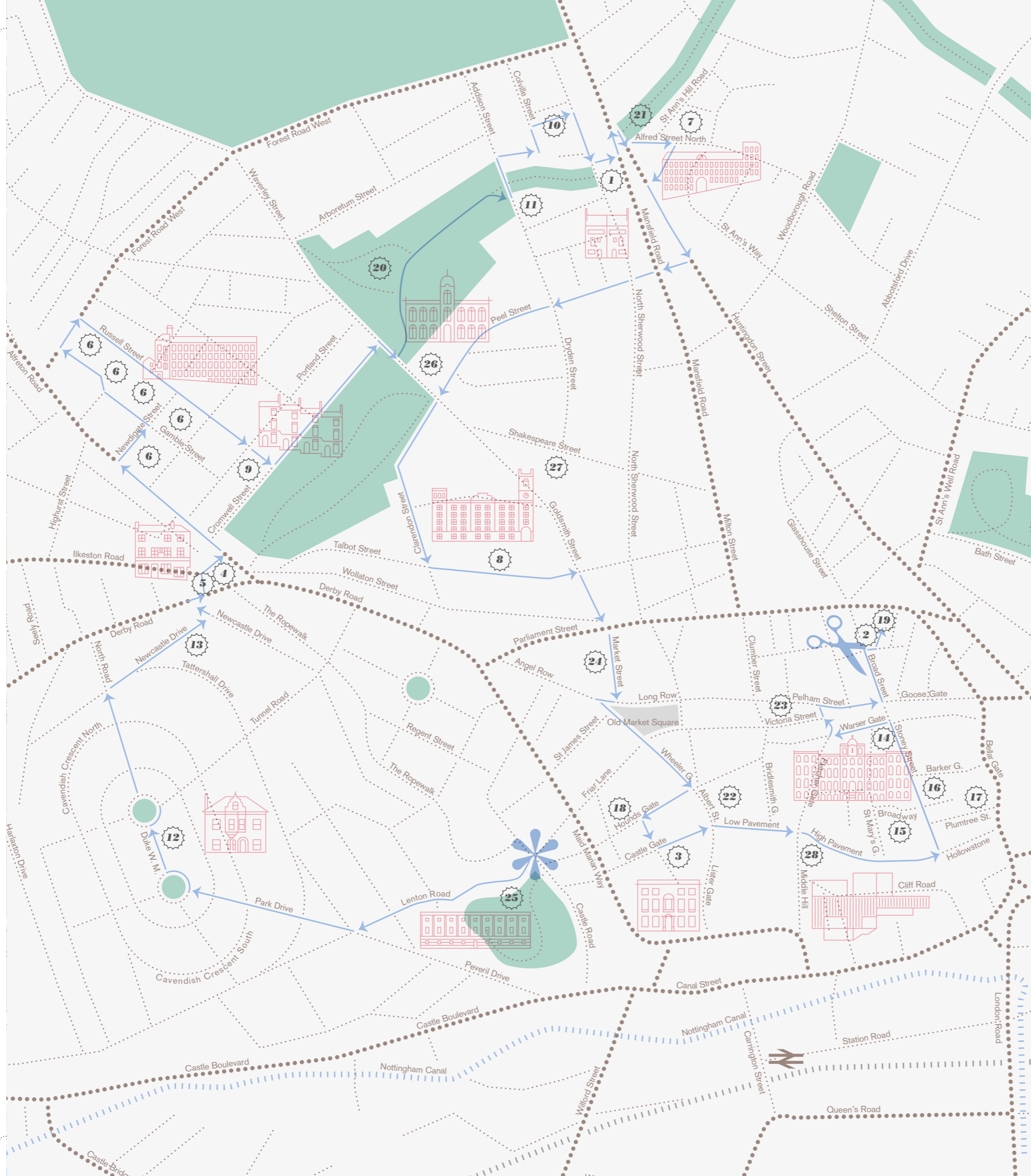


Key

-  Start
-  Finish
-  Suggested route
-  Roads & paths
-  Main roads
-  Green space

Locations

- 1 Framework knitters' workshops, Farros, North Sherwood Street
- 2 Framework knitters' workshops, 26-30 Broad Street
- 3 Hosiery merchant's house, 19 Castle Gate
- 4 Ilkeston Road, early Victorian pubs & shop
- 5 John Levers plaque, St Helens Street
- 6 All Saints lace factories
- 7 Oldknows' lace factory
- 8 Lamberts lace dressing factory
- 9 Workers' housing, Cromwell Street
- 10 Workers' housing, Colville Terrace
- 11 Middle class housing, Addison Street
- 12 Horace Arthur Fisher's house, 1 Duke William Mount
- 13 John Jardine's house, 25 Newcastle Drive
- 14 Adams' lace warehouse
- 15 Birkin's lace warehouse
- 16 Heymann's lace warehouse
- 17 Plumtree Street lace warehouses
- 18 Copestake & Co lace warehouse, Houndsgate
- 19 Roger Watson Laces, Western Street
- 20 The Arboretum
- 21 Enclosure Walks
- 22 Albert Street
- 23 Victoria Street
- 24 Market Street
- 25 Nottingham Castle Museum & Art Gallery
- 26 College of Art & Design, Waverley Street
- 27 Arkwright Building, Shakespeare Street
- 28 Nottingham Contemporary, Weekday Cross



Walk
Lace
NOTTINGHAM

NOTTINGHAM

Lace Walk



Manufactured lace had a momentous impact on Nottingham: helping to change a turbulent county town into a modern industrialised municipality. In the space of just a few miles, this guided walk will show the sheer scale and speed of this change.

Created on the occasion of Lace Unravelled, a Nottingham City Museums & Galleries project, funded by Arts Council England. Written and designed by Chris Matthews.

Lace Walk



Stoney Street, c.1900, at the epicentre of the lace industry (courtesy of L. Cripwell and www.picturethepast.co.uk)

Introduction

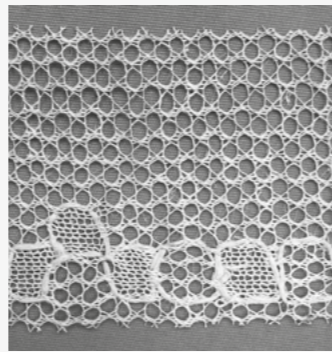
Manufactured lace had a momentous impact on Nottingham: changing a turbulent county town into a modern industrialised municipality. Within the middle decades of the nineteenth century the development of this industry effected nearly every aspect of town life: economy, urban development, population, public institutions and even political ethos. It's also remarkable how, in the space of just a few miles, it is possible to see the sheer scale and speed of this change – workshops, factories, warehouses, streets, housing, parks and public buildings – all transformed by the lace industry.

The manufacture of mechanised lace first emerged in the 1760s, the town's prosperity having been built on the hosiery industry: the manufacture of cotton stockings using machines powered by hand. These machines were operated in small workshops in the top floor rooms of domestic houses naturally lit via long horizontal windows. Such buildings could be found all over the town but only a few survive, such as those on North Sherwood Street (1) and Broad Street (2), while hosiery merchants built splendid Georgian town houses such as 19 Castle Gate (3). Nottingham was therefore a tightly packed town, by 1840, 50,000 people were residing in the same area which in 1787 had housed only 17,000.

Emergence

Amidst this backdrop many framework knitters were experimenting with their machines and developing technology which could produce patterned lace for scarves, shawls and curtains etc. This brought prosperity for many who were frustrated by the quality of life in the old town and in due course migrated to the new suburbs, such as those at New Radford, New Basford and Carrington. Today little remains of these early nineteenth century districts, save a few shops, pubs and houses in places like Ilkeston Road (4) beside which is a plaque to John Levers (5) – one of those early inventors of a lace machine.

This new prosperity would have been short lived were it not for two contributing factors during the 1840s: the growth of the railway network and the authorisation for the town to build on its neighbouring fields; the Sand Field (All Saints & Arboretum), Clay Field (St Ann's) and the Meadows.



A sample of the earliest mechanised lace by Robert Frost from 1769 (courtesy of Nottingham City Museums & Galleries)



How the industry started: machines driven by hand similar to the early hosiery trade (courtesy of Nottingham City Council & www.picturethepast.co.uk)



How the industry progressed: power driven machinery overlooked by skilled lace workers (courtesy of A. P. Y. Gallon & www.picturethepast.co.uk)

For a long time both of these changes were resisted by many of the town's older retailers and property owners but were supported by many within the lace and hosiery industries. The subsequent building boom of the 1850s saw houses built by the thousand and factories and warehouses by the hundred.



Kirks Lace Factory, Newdigate Street, built 1872 (courtesy of Nottingham City Council & www.picturethepast.co.uk)

Success

The greatest concentration of lace factory buildings that survive are those in the All Saints area, between Gamble Street and Russell Street (6). Perhaps the most impressive in terms of scale was that built by Samuel Oldknow at St Ann's Hill (7), while Lambert's on Talbot Street (8) is the most architectural. Workers' housing from this period was superior to the old slums of Narrow Marsh but criticised by contemporaries for its irregularity and inadequate construction. Perhaps the best surviving workers housing from the 1850s can be found on Cromwell Street (9) and Colville Terrace (10). Middle class housing survives in greater numbers, in places like Addison Street (11) near the Arboretum but more profusely in the Park Estate. Here, on land sold by the Duke of Newcastle, many successful lace industrialists lived in housing that was largely designed by T. C. Hine. Some of the most notable of whom include lace manufacturer Horace Arthur Fisher at 1 Duke William Mount (12) and machine builder John Jardine at 25 Newcastle Drive (13).

The most visible expression of this success is the Lace Market – a concentration of lace warehouses owned by various firms, where lace was finished, marketed and sold. As such the appearance of these warehouses was given the utmost attention, the most notable of which are those on Stoney Street, such as Adams (14), Birkin (15) and Heymann (16). Both the Adams and Birkin warehouses were principally built in the 1850s and designed by T. C. Hine. Thomas Adams was a Quaker from Newark noted for his Christian ethics and paternalism, while Richard Birkin was a self-made man from Belper, who became mayor of Nottingham on four occasions. The Heymann firm was started by German Jewish migrants who opened up the lace industry to international markets from the 1830s onward – the warehouse being built in 1894. Other firms spread out in neighbouring streets: Plumtree Street (17), Barker Gate, Warser Gate, St Mary's Gate, Pilcher Gate, Fletcher Gate and Hounds Gate (18).



Stoney Street's lace workers, c.1910. By this time Nottingham's lace industry was at its peak (courtesy of L. Cripwell & www.picturethepast.co.uk)



Adams Lace Warehouse, Stoney Street, built 1855 and designed by T. C. Hine (courtesy of Nottingham City Council & www.picturethepast.co.uk)



Most employees in the lace warehouses were women, who were often tasked with mending the lace (courtesy of Nottingham City Museums & Galleries)

Legacy

Lace manufacturing suffered gradual decline for most of the twentieth century and almost disappeared by the 1990s – a result of international competition, changing fashions and industrial policy. Today the only surviving firm in the city centre is Roger Watson Laces on Western Street in Hockley (19). It might seem that the history of lace has disappeared but its legacy has had far reaching consequences. The Arboretum (20), the Enclosure Walks (21), Albert Street (22), Victoria Street (23) and Market Street (24) were developed during the boom years of the mid nineteenth century and often under the civic leadership of lace industrialists like Richard Birkin. But it is perhaps the economic and cultural consequences which are the most profound. Industries such as Boots, Players & Raleigh grew out of the skills and consumer spending of the lace workers. Nottingham Castle (25) was converted into a museum and art gallery in 1878, a scheme promoted by the lace industrialists. The College of Art & Design, later Nottingham Trent University, (26) was originally built in 1863-5 for the development of lace design. Similarly, the Arkwright Building (27) was originally financed from a secret donation believed to have been from Lewis Heymann. And today Nottingham Contemporary (28) art gallery is adorned with a "cherry blossom" Birkin lace design from a time capsule buried nearby, the original 1847 sample is now part of Nottingham City Museums & Galleries nationally Designated Lace Collection. The pattern was set by Trent Concrete – a firm initiated by the lace industrialist Ernest Jardine.



A lace worker with draughts, designs and samples (courtesy of A. P. Y. Gallon & www.picturethepast.co.uk)



College of Art & Design, Waverley Street, built 1863-5 and designed by Frederick Bakewell of Nottingham (courtesy of L. Cripwell & www.picturethepast.co.uk)