

## PART 4: 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY WORKSOP

There were a number of mills using water, wind and steam. The oldest was the Priory water mill which had been in continual use since medieval times. About 1820 the leat feeding the Priory mill was dammed to form a large pond known as the Canch. Priory Mill ceased operation as a mill in 1876, due to pollution of the Canch, which was later filled in. In 1826 there were three windmills, one on the north side of the canal, one in Kilton and the last to the south of the town, in the area still called Windmill Lane. The Worksop Proprietary Mill Company owned the steam mill on Gateford Road for 'grinding corn for the poorer classes at a lower rate'. A number of large steam-driven flour mills were built including the Albion Mill on Eastgate in 1906.



Albion Mills about 1910



A 19<sup>th</sup> century painting showing malt kiln cowls to the right of the Priory Gatehouse

Malting had been the most important trade in the town since medieval times, as the local soil is excellent for growing barley. The kilns were built of stone with pantile roofs. John Holland wrote in his 'History of Worksop' in 1826:

'There are a great number of malt kilns standing about in every direction. Whatever others think, to my eyes these structures are rather picturesque than unpleasing objects, partly from their general construction, but principally from the appearance of their cowls, as the wooden turn-about hoods on their roofs are termed.' In 1831 there were 40 maltsters in Worksop.



Dock Road Malt Kilns about 1970



Workers at Stones' Malt Kilns in 1905

The Worksop Railway Act was passed in the House of Lords on July 7 1846. The Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway Company engaged architects Weightman and Hadfield, who employed James Drabble of Carlton in Lindrick to build the station at a cost of £7,850 using white Steetley Stone. It opened on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1849. In 1875 the Midland Railway Company opened a branch line to Nottingham and Mansfield. The Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway Company changed its name to the Great Central Railway in 1897 and constructed the canopy, longer platforms, waiting areas and refreshments rooms in 1899.



Worksop Railway Station in 1906



Street map of Worksop in 1848

In 1854, in his book 'Worksop and Sherwood Forest', Edwin Eddison describes Worksop:

'Worksop is a market town, situated in a wide valley formed by gently rising hills, that run from east to west. From the north it has a very pleasing appearance, with its white and picturesque railway station near; its rather peculiar feature, the numerous poplars; its twin towered and noble church; its red houses, relieved by green meadows and park land below; the whole backed by a chain of finely wooded hills, which stretch from it, occasionally opening to form an oasis-like park, to Birkland or Sherwood Forest. Emerging upon it from the south woods, we see richly cultivated fields, extending miles north, relieved at intervals to the right and left, by dark and waving woods. Entering it from the east and west we have some agreeable glimpses of the old town, as it lies quietly below...It is altogether, a pleasant, clean, and cheerful looking town; and has well built, wide and commodious streets, and good houses; although more are wanted of the middle class character. This defect will probably be remedied, as the Duke of Newcastle, whose near residence is like to add considerably to the prosperity of the neighbourhood, proposes to let land, in small quantities, and at moderate rents, in favourable situations about the town for villa residences, on building leases.'

Malting increased in the town with the coming of the railway. The demand from breweries in Sheffield and Manchester turned the industry into a major concern and in 1852 the Clinton Malt Kilns were built near the railway station. These kilns had the capacity to dry 300 quarters of malt every 4 days. A map of 1860 shows 29 buildings marked as malt kilns. White's Directory of 1875 describes the town: 'There are now a great number of malt kilns in the town, the cowls or hoods of which form a striking peculiarity in the scenery of the place. The amount of duty paid to the Excise for malt in the Worksop district is about £50,000 per annum. The principal markets for this article are Sheffield, Manchester etc.'



John Preston's malt kiln on Eastgate built in 1876

In 1875, Sheffield Brewer Thomas Berry opened the gas-fired Station Kilns by the railway at the top of Sherwood Road. In 1876, John Preston built new maltings in Eastgate beside the railway and in 1880, William Stones built one in Gateford Road. In 1880 the malt tax of 2s 8d for every bushel of malt was repealed causing a rapid increase in production.

Malting was naturally accompanied by brewing. The Priorwell Brewery Company was situated in Wellhouse Yards. In 1881 it amalgamated with another brewery, Smith and Nephew of Dock Road, to become the Worksop and Retford Brewery Company.



Worksop and Retford Brewery in 1930



Worksop and Retford Brewery workers about 1910

With much of the area being heavily forested, timber had always been an important local commodity. There were a number of saw mills which specialised in packing cases for use in the Sheffield cutlery industry. East of Priorswell Road was Benjamin Garside's woodyard which in 1840 was contracted to supply railway sleepers to the North Midland Railway Line between Derby and Leeds. Godley and Goulding were another firm, situated between Eastgate and the railway until their premises were destroyed by fire in 1951.



Godley and Goulding saw mill

There were a number of Windsor chair makers in the town including John Gabbitas, Richard Allsopp, William Gilling, William Brammer and Jack Kelk.



Left, William Brammer's chair factory at the Priory Mill about 1910. Right, Jack Kelk in 1929



Examples of Worksop Chairs

In 1854 the Duke of Newcastle sank the coal test bore at Shireoaks, a small hamlet of 24 cottages. Eventually in 1859 a hard seam of coal was reached. Initially about 60 men were employed, rising to 600 by 1871. Housing the new workforce began on Sandy Lane with Crown Street, Creswell Street, Prospect Place and Smethurst's Row being built. This area became known as the Building Grounds as more arable land was turned into streets of houses.



The visit of the Prince of Wales to Shireoaks Colliery in 1861



Shireoaks Colliery railway



St John Street



Shireoaks Colliery canal boat

Manton Colliery, owned by the Wigan Coal and Iron Company Ltd, opened in 1898. By 1900 50% of the male workforce of Worksop worked in coal mining. This led to the expansion of housing towards the east of the town.



Manton Colliery about 1920

Please go to **Worksop's Industrial Past** for more information

Since the arrival of the canal and railway, large number of newcomers had come to the town to work in its expanding industries. However, there had been no proper scheme to lay out the town with good or sanitary housing. Most of the original houses were patched-up timber buildings and the new houses were cheaply constructed and often of substandard quality.

Worksop had no elected local government until Worksop Urban District Council was created in 1894. The Court Leet, a medieval institution held by the lord of the manor, was similar to a parish council and until 1894 was the only opportunity the townspeople had for making their views known. As the townspeople were tenants of the lord, there was no incentive for any changes unless he wished it and provided the finance.

In the 1830s the Industrial Revolution had become responsible for over-crowding in many towns. Diseases such as cholera, smallpox and typhoid were becoming a serious concern as workers were dying in large numbers. The Government passed the Public Health Act in 1848 and set up the General Board of Health which was able to establish Local Boards of Health in areas where the death rate exceeded 23% per 1000. Worksop's death rate in 1847 was 26.6% per 1000. In 1850 Mr William Lee, the Superintending Inspector, arrived in Worksop to start an inquiry into the sewage, drainage, supply of water and sanitary conditions of the inhabitants.



Marecroft in 1965



Low Town in 1965

Dr Henry Hase, the medical officer of Worksop Poor Law Union, gave evidence that many cottages had only one bedroom, 10 feet square and 6 to 8 feet high, though many were smaller 'low confined places and in bad repair', especially in Low Town Street and Marecroft. Several families lived in one cottage with 4 or 5 people in one bed. He counted 90 people living in 1 house in Norfolk Street in 7 rooms. There were many lodging houses in the town for people who could not afford their own homes. There were 7 lodging houses in Norfolk Street and several in Abbey Street. In one case there was one privy for 60 people. A privy was an outside lavatory. In Church Walk there were 3 or 4 privies, 5 manure heaps and 8 piggeries. Marecroft was regarded as the worst area, described as 'a locality that has ever been the hot bed of fevers' and 17 people had recently died there from cholera.

Water was from pumps or wells shared by several houses with the inhabitants of some properties having to walk over 100 yards to a shared well. Where there was no well, river or canal water was used. As the privies were basically holes dug into the ground, the effluent seeped through the soil into the unlined wells contaminating the water supply. Open drains polluted the Canch until it gradually filled in the area so that by 1876 the mill wheel could no longer turn. Rain water, referred to as 'soft water', was collected when ever possible as the only source of clean water.



Langley Street, 1958



Westgate, 1899



Privies on  
Leadhill in 2008

The death rate was discussed in the report: 'In 1847, one child in 5 died before they were a year old. Continuing the same comparison, I find that the average age of all who died in the registration district in 1841 was 35 years and 10 months. In the parish of Worksop, the average age in 1847 was 33 years and 2 months. In 1848, 32 years; and in 1849, it had fallen down to 29 years and 4 months.'

The findings of William Lee's report were as follows:

'VI. That the excessive disease and mortality are due to the following serious defects:

- a. No public or systematic water supply.
- b. Absence of all proper drainage.
- c. Unpaved and ill paved courts and alleys.
- d. The town uncleansed.
- e. Dilapidated, filthy, obscene privies, with open cess pools.
- f. Bad ventilation and crowding of houses.

VII. That much of the necessary improvements as are of the nature of public works, may in all probability be accomplished at the following rates per week for a cottage house:

- a. A constant supply of pure water with a tap in the house at one penny.
- b. Systematic drainage of the site of the town, including the houses, courts, and water closet or improved privy with the use of soil-pan apparatus at one penny.
- c. Impervious and durable pavement of the courts at one farthing.
- d. Perfect cleansing of all the streets, courts etc at one half penny.

VIII. That the above charges taken altogether would be less than the cost of the present miserable substitutes for a water supply alone.

IX. That the present loss from preventable sickness and mortality in the parish is about £8,536 per annum.

X. That the decomposing refuse which now destroys the health and lives of the inhabitants, might be applied with great facility and advantage to the agricultural land within the district, so as to increase its fertility, and yield a considerable revenue to the public funds of the town.

XI. That there is no Local Act of Parliament in force within the district for any of the purposes of the Public Health Act.

Whereupon I respectfully recommend:

1. That the Public Health Act (1848) ...should be applied to the parish of Worksop, in the county of Nottingham'.

Please go to **Public Health Report** for a full version

In August 1852 Worksop elected its first townspeople to the Local Board of Health. 29 people contested the 9 seats. Their responsibility was to raise rates to be used to construct sewerage pipes and create a source of clean drinking water. The Board appointed a Clerk, a Surveyor and an Inspector of Nuisances. Unfortunately, as most of the board members were the local businessmen who owned the properties which they rented out to the lower classes, there was little incentive for them to find the money by raising rates for the improvements, as they were the principal rate payers.



It was not until thirty years later in 1881 that Bracebridge Pumping Station was built to pump sewerage from the town to fields in Kilton. The engine house, boiler shed, offices and a house for the attendant cost £7,000. The twin beam engines, the boilers and pumps cost a further £4,500. It was capable of pumping 400,000 gallons of water every 12 hours. Coal was brought by barge to power the boiler and beam engines. The original machinery was dismantled after World War II and electric pumps were installed. The pumping station is now disused following the building of a new plant at Kilton.



Bracebridge Pumping Station

However, clean drinking water was still not properly addressed by the Local Board of Health. Some areas such as Creswell Street had recently been built with no wells or any other provision for water for its inhabitants. There was a further cholera epidemic in 1871 with 38 people dying before midsummer and this prompted several local businessmen to set up independently the 1875 Worksop Water Works Act to provide piped clean water to the town. The Local Board of Health opposed the measure, mainly because the Board members were still largely the property owners who would have to fund the connection of pipes to the houses they rented out.



Creswell Street

This caused great annoyance to the people of the town. A letter was printed in the local paper, signed Lucy of Marecroft: 'They say as how by paying two pence or three pence a week we can have water fit to wash with brought to our door. Well, the whole of the last blessed summer I could hardly get a sup, and many's the morning I have had to be up before daylight when there has been a drop of rain to get the bucket, and many a fight have my neighbours had over the soft water pump'. The Local Board of Health reluctantly agreed to support the Act and by 1878 water was first piped into the town, having been raised by steam pump from a specially built reservoir at Sunnyside.

As well as the major industries of the town, Worksop had a number of shops and trades carried out on a small scale. In White's Directory of 1832 trades listed included basket makers, blacksmiths, boat builders, boot and shoe makers, braziers and tin men, brick makers, cabinet makers, curriers, hat makers, iron and brass founders, ironmongers, linen drapers, milliners and dress makers, nail makers, rope and twine makers, saddlers, tanners, watch and clock makers, and wheelwrights. Over the next fifty years these trades continued to flourish.

In the 1870s Potter Street looked very different from the present day as the list of occupants below shows:

House numbers and trades in Potter Street in 1879

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Hooson Brothers, Grocers, Brewers and Maltsters | 2. Misses Broadberry Fish & Game Dealers         |
| 3. James Rawlinson, Hairdresser                    | 4. The Corn Exchange                             |
| 5. Frank Lester, Tobacconist                       | 6. The Post & Telegraph Office                   |
| 7. Christopher Heaps, Boot Maker                   | 8. Henry Sissons, Book seller, Music seller      |
| 9. Robert Welburn, Watchmaker                      | 10. Frank Sissons, Auctioneer & Printer          |
| 11. John Hardy, Butcher                            | 12. Isaac Newton, Surgeon                        |
| 13. William McHale, Hardware Dealer & Haberdasher  | 14. Hodding and Beevor, Solicitors               |
| 15. James Preston, Saddler                         | 16. Beckett and Co's Old Bank                    |
| 17. William Hayes, French Horn Inn                 | 20. Mary Fitzpatrick, Milliner, Dressmaker       |
| 21. D. O'Connor, Surgeon                           | 24. William Ouzman, Retford & Worksop News       |
| 23 – 31 Private Houses                             | 26. Alfred Littler, Confectioner                 |
| 33. Mallender, Painters & Plumbers                 | 28. Public Dispensary                            |
| 35. James Rollitt, Builder                         | 30. Christopher Rose, Glass & China Dealer       |
| 45. Frederick Staton, Professor of Music           | 32 – 36 Police Station                           |
| 61. Chas Marsh, Boot Maker                         | 38. Worksop Club Limited                         |
| 63. The Methodist Free Church                      | 40. Mrs Davy, Shopkeeper                         |
| 65. Isaac Atkinson, Shopkeeper                     | 42. Edward Wilkinson, Carver & Gilder            |
| 67. Edward Martin, Tailor                          | 44. Henry Christy, Currier                       |
| 71. Boundary Inn                                   | 46. T. Leith & Co, Machinists & Implement Makers |
| 79. George Gregory, Shopkeeper                     | 92. Joseph Goacher, Pork Butcher                 |
| 81. Leith and Co, Coach Builders                   | 98. Jane Trevor, Fishmonger                      |
| 111. Abraham Lockwood, Boot Maker                  | 100. Walter Widdowson, Shopkeeper                |
| 113. Cross Keys Inn                                | 102. Job Limb, Bookseller                        |
| 115. Charles Atkinson, Shopkeeper                  | 116. John Pattison, Pawn Broker                  |

There was a large number of public houses in Worksop as would be expected in a town where malting and brewing were the main industries. In 1832 there were 30, rising to 60 by 1879. The population had also doubled in this period. The locations in 1879 shows the growth of new streets

### White 1832

Anchor, Eastgate  
 Blue Bell, Park Street  
 Boat, Priorswell Road  
 Bull Inn, Market Place  
 Cross Keys, Potter Street  
 Crown Inn, Potter Street  
 French Horn, Potter Street  
 George Inn, Bridge Street,  
 Golden Ball, Bridge Place,  
 Golden Lion, Bridge Street  
 Greyhound, Coney Street  
 Half Moon, Newgate Street  
 Holly Bush, Market Place  
 King William, Abbey Street  
 Lord Nelson, Bridge Street,  
 Marquis of Granby, Bridge Street  
 New Ship, Westgate  
 Norfolk Arms, Norfolk Street  
 Old Black Bull, Market Place  
 Old Ship, Market Place  
 Pheasant, Gateford Road,  
 Red Lion, Market Place  
 Reindeer, Newgate Street  
 Royal Oak, Newgate Street  
 Smith's Arms, Potter Street  
 Sportman's, Bridge Street  
 Wheat Sheaf, Bridge Street  
 White Hart, Market Place  
 White Lion, Park Street

### White 1879

Anchor, Eastgate  
 Beehive, Eastgate  
 Blue Bell, Norfolk Street  
 Blue Bell, West Street  
 Boundary Inn, Potter Street  
 Bull, Market Place  
 Butcher's Arms, Bridge Street  
 Colliery Inn, Shireoaks Road  
 Cross Keys, Potter Street  
 Crown, Shireoaks Road  
 Fox, Lowtown Street  
 French Horn, Potter Street  
 Gas Tavern, Canalside  
 George Inn, Bridge Street

### White 1879

Greyhound, Coney Street  
 Golden Ball, Bridge Place  
 Golden Lion, Bridge Street  
 Greendale Oak, Norfolk Street  
 Greyhound, Coney Street  
 Holly Bush, Market Place  
 Kilton Inn, Kilton Road  
 Kings Head, Carlton Road  
 Lion Hotel, Market Place  
 Manton Inn, Cheapside  
 Marquis of Granby, Bridge Street  
 New Inn, Lead Hill  
 Newcastle Arms, Carlton Road  
 Norfolk Arms, Norfolk Street  
 Odd Fellows, Netherton Road  
 Old Bull, 90 Bridge Street  
 Old Ship, Market Place  
 Peacock, Netherton Road  
 Portland Arms, Bridge Street  
 Priorswell, Kilton Road  
 Queen's Head, Bridge Street  
 Railway, Carlton Road  
 Railway, Newgate Street  
 Reindeer, Newgate Street  
 Robin Hood, Newgate Street  
 Royal George, Kilton Road  
 Royal, Market Place  
 Royal Oak, Abbey Street  
 Sawyers Arms, Lowtown Street  
 Ship, Westgate  
 Shireoaks, Westgate  
 Stag, Bridge Street  
 Station Inn, Carlton Road  
 Swan, Castle Street  
 Three Horse Shoes, Gateford Road  
 Travellers' Rest, Gateford Road  
 Unicorn, Bridge Street  
 Victoria, Carlton Road  
 Vine, Carlton Road  
 Volunteer, Lead Hill  
 Waterford, Gateford Road  
 Wheat Sheaf, Bridge Street  
 White Hart, Market Place  
 White Horse, Abbey Street  
 White Lion, Park Street  
 White Swan, Lowtown Street  
 Woodhouse, Haggonfields

Between 1850 and 1900 the town quickly expanded with a number of new roads laid out. Newcastle Avenue had been built by the 4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Newcastle in 1842, when he diverted the river Ryton and this gave an incentive to improve that area of the town. In 1900 the Cattle Market was moved and an imposing arcade of shops was built on the corner of Newcastle Avenue and Bridge Street.



Above, Bridge Street  
Left, The Arcade on  
Newcastle Avenue

In 1851 the Corn Exchange which was built following demolition of houses in the Market Place. It was designed by Charles Gilbert of Nottingham in the Venetian style and administered by the Corn Exchange and Market Company who raised £5,000 from £10 shares. In 1882 it was purchased by the Local Board of Health. It became known as the Town Hall in 1894 when Worksop District Council became the local authority. Originally the Market Place was surrounded by buildings, with access to it by two alleyways, in one of the most intensively occupied areas of the town. In 1882 more buildings were demolished to create the present Market Place.



The Town Hall before alteration in 1970



The Market Place before buildings were  
demolished in 1882

In Bridge Street shops and hotels were given new ground floor facades although many of the upper storeys remained Georgian. Victoria Square was laid out on Common End when the Worksop and Retford Brewery Office was built there in 1882. The Victoria Cottage Hospital was built on Watson Road to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1897. The hospital was enlarged in 1912 to commemorate the coronation of King George V when a children's ward was built at the expense of Sir John Robinson who lived at Worksop Manor. Further wards were paid for by the Duke of Portland and there were further extensions in 1924.



Victoria Square about 1910



Above Left: Victoria Hospital in 1905

Above Right: the opening of the extensions in 1912 with Sir John Robinson and the Duke and Duchess of Portland

Left: the operating theatre in 1924

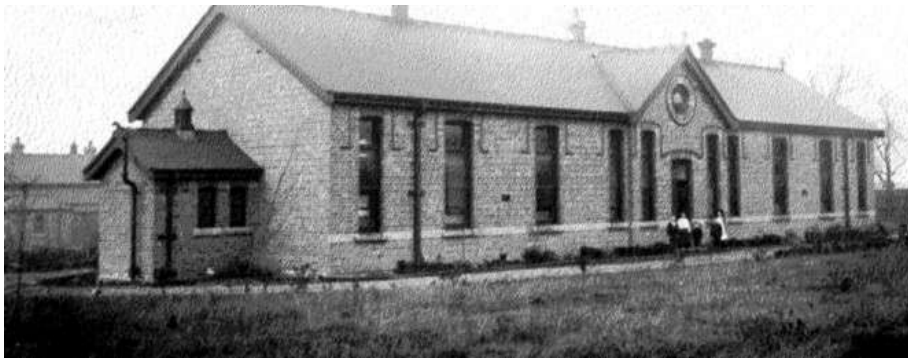
In the 1864 Directory the workhouse in Eastgate is described as 'a handsome stone building built in 1837 at a cost of £4,400 inclusive of 3 acres of land and can accommodate 200 inmates'. In 1902 the Poor Law Infirmary was opened on Kilton Hill for 84 patients. This became Worksop Infirmary Hospital and later Bassetlaw Hospital. A sanatorium was erected in 1911. Before the National Health Service was created in 1944, money for the hospitals was raised by public collections.



The Workhouse



Kilton Infirmary in 1930



The Isolation Hospital or sanitorium in 1912

A parade in Potter Street to raise money for Worksop Hospitals in 1907



A number of churches and chapels were built in Worksop between 1820 and 1920.

St John's parish church was built on Gateford Road in 1868, designed by architects Clark and Son of Nottingham.

Kelly's Directory for 1912 describes St Anne's Church: 'A new church for this district is now being erected in Newcastle Avenue; it is of Darley Dale stone in the Perpendicular style; the cost will be about £1,500, the sole gift of Sir John Robinson J.P. of Worksop Manor'.

In 1840 a new Catholic Church was built by the 12<sup>th</sup> Duke of Norfolk in Park Street at a cost of £3,000.



St John's Church  
About 1910



St Anne's Church



Engraving of St Mary's  
Catholic Church in 1854

John Wesley visited Worksop in 1780, preaching on Lead Hill 'in a lamentable place of dirt and dust'. He described preaching to 'only to a small company of as stupid people as I ever saw'. However, Methodism flourished in the town during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in Bridge Street was built in 1813. In 1845 it was considerably enlarged and a school room and vestry added. In 1863 a new chapel and schools were erected in Newcastle Street with 700 sittings. When it burnt down in 1969 the chapel was rebuilt on the same site.



The Wesleyan Methodist Church in Newcastle Street about 1910

The United Free Wesleyan Ebenezer Chapel in Potter Street was built in 1837 with 500 sittings. A new chapel was built in 1875 in Potter Street on the site of an earlier one.



Left: The old United Free Wesleyan Ebenezer Chapel in 1870

Right: The new Chapel about 1900





Left: The Primitive Methodist Chapel on Newgate Street was built in 1832 and altered in 1864.

Below Left: The Independent Methodist Chapel was built on Westgate in 1830.

Below Right: The Zion Primitive Methodist Chapel was built in 1881 in John Street.



Above Left and Right:  
The Congregational Church was built in 1876 in Bridge Place

Right: The Salvation Army Citadel was built in Newcastle Avenue in 1909

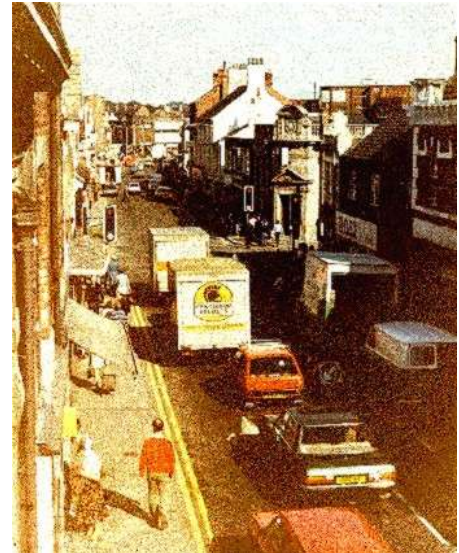


In 1925 the principal industries of the town were coal, malting, milling and timber. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century coal mining became the major industry. Shireoaks Colliery closed in 1990 and Manton Colliery in 1994. Manton was the eighth pit in Bassetlaw to close since the miners' strike of 1984.

The population of the town has risen from about 1,000 in 1636; 3,263 in 1801; 6,197 in 1841; 10,410 in 1871; 16,112 in 1916 and 23,206 in 1925. By the year 2000 the population was about 40,000.

Although much of the town had radically changed and improved since 1832, many of the original cottages remained as workers' housing until after 1950. Over the next 20 years they were demolished, one hundred years after the Board of Health inspector had condemned them. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, large residential estates have been built in Manton and Gateford.

The town centre traffic congestion was improved in 1985 when the A57 bypass was built. Bridge Street was pedestrianised in 1989.



Above Left: construction of the by pass in 1985  
 Above Right: Bridge Street before pedestrianisation  
 Below: Bridge Street in 1990



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