

Industry

Excellent transport links by road, river, canal and rail have encouraged the development of industry in Quorn throughout the centuries, with the two most significant industries being textiles and quarrying.

Lace Making

From the early 1800s up to the 1860s, Quorn had a lace industry, which at its peak supported five lace factories. The village was renowned for its patterned lace gloves and in 1841 Quorn glovemaker, John Boot, patented an improvement to the lacemaking machine, so that patterns could be incorporated into the bobbinet (hexagonal net) as it was woven.

Framework Knitting

In the late 1700s, 90% of stocking frames (mechanised knitting machines) in Britain were located in the East Midlands. In 1841 20% of Quorn's working population were framework knitters operating from their homes or small workshops. The whole family would be involved, with children winding thread and women seaming the flat knitting into stockings. The rented frames had to be paid for, even when work was scarce, often causing extreme hardship. By 1881 the framework knitting industry had virtually disappeared as factories using steam power took over.



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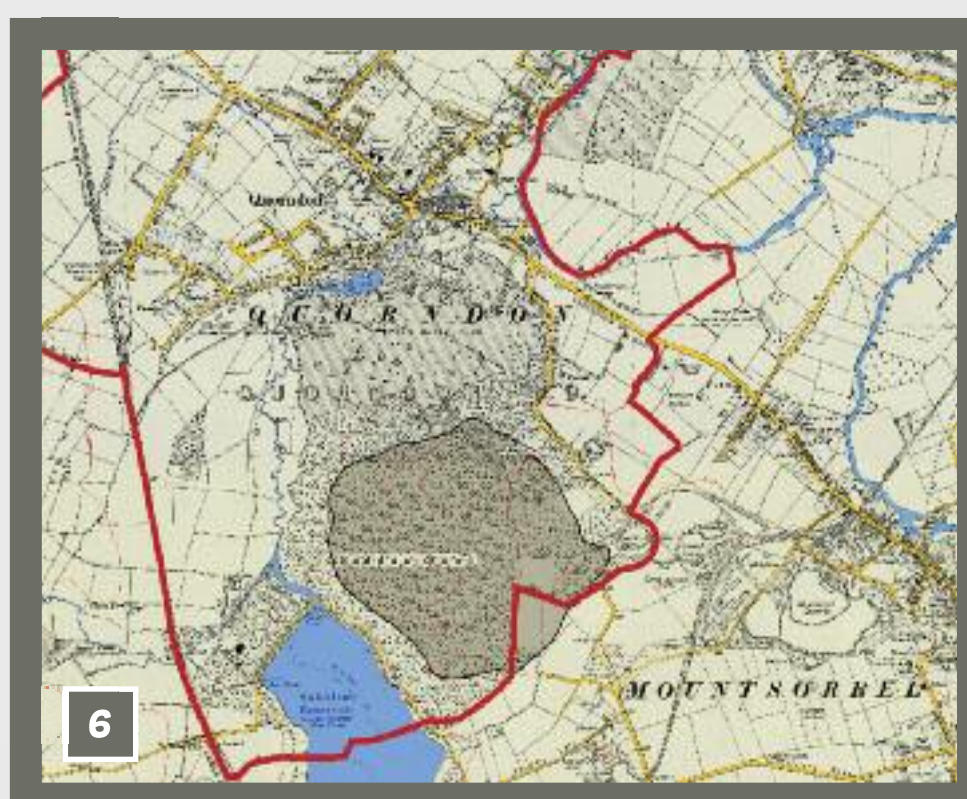
- 1 A framework knitter.
- 2 A piece of Victorian decorated bobbinet lace of the type made in Quorn.
- 3 A weaving room in Wright's factory, early 1920s. Second from the right is 14 year old Nellie Marchant of Barrow Road.
- 4 Aerial view of Wright's Factory in the early 1950s, looking over Leicester Road to Stafford Orchard.
- 5 'Quorna' branded tape, once made at Wright's factory.
- 6 A 1930s map showing the old quarries and the approved excavation area of the quarry in 2020 (shaded brown). Quorn Parish boundary is outlined in red.

M. Wright & Sons Ltd

In 1870 Michael Wright moved his elastic webbing company from Leicester to Quorn. By 1911 Wrights employed over 30% of the working population of Quorn, and leading up to WWI (1914) they employed over 2,000 people, making mainly military webbing. In 1998 the Mill chimney was demolished and shortly afterwards part of the factory site was developed for housing. This family firm continues to thrive in the centre of Quorn.

Mountsorrel Quarry

Pink granite (granodiorite) found in



Mountsorrel and Quorn has been used since Roman times, but quarrying greatly expanded in the 18th century when the rock was in high demand, not only for building, but for roads and later railway ballast. This provided employment for many Quorn men.

The original quarries were owned by the Danvers of Swithland (later the Earls of Lanesborough) but in the 1840s the operation was taken over by the Martin family. This led to them establishing the Mountsorrel Granite Company in 1854 which continued until bought by Redlands in 1959. In the 21st century, Tarmac took over the Quarry and also bought the adjoining Quorn House estate.

In the 1970s quarrying started in Buddon Wood, and Mountsorrel Quarry is now one of the largest hardcore quarries in Europe, supplying stone for major national projects, roads, runways and ballast for Britain's 20,000 miles of railway track. Over 90% of the extraction area is now in Quorn. Buddon Wood Hill, which once dominated the Quorn landscape, has been wiped off the map and is now the deepest open hole in the UK.