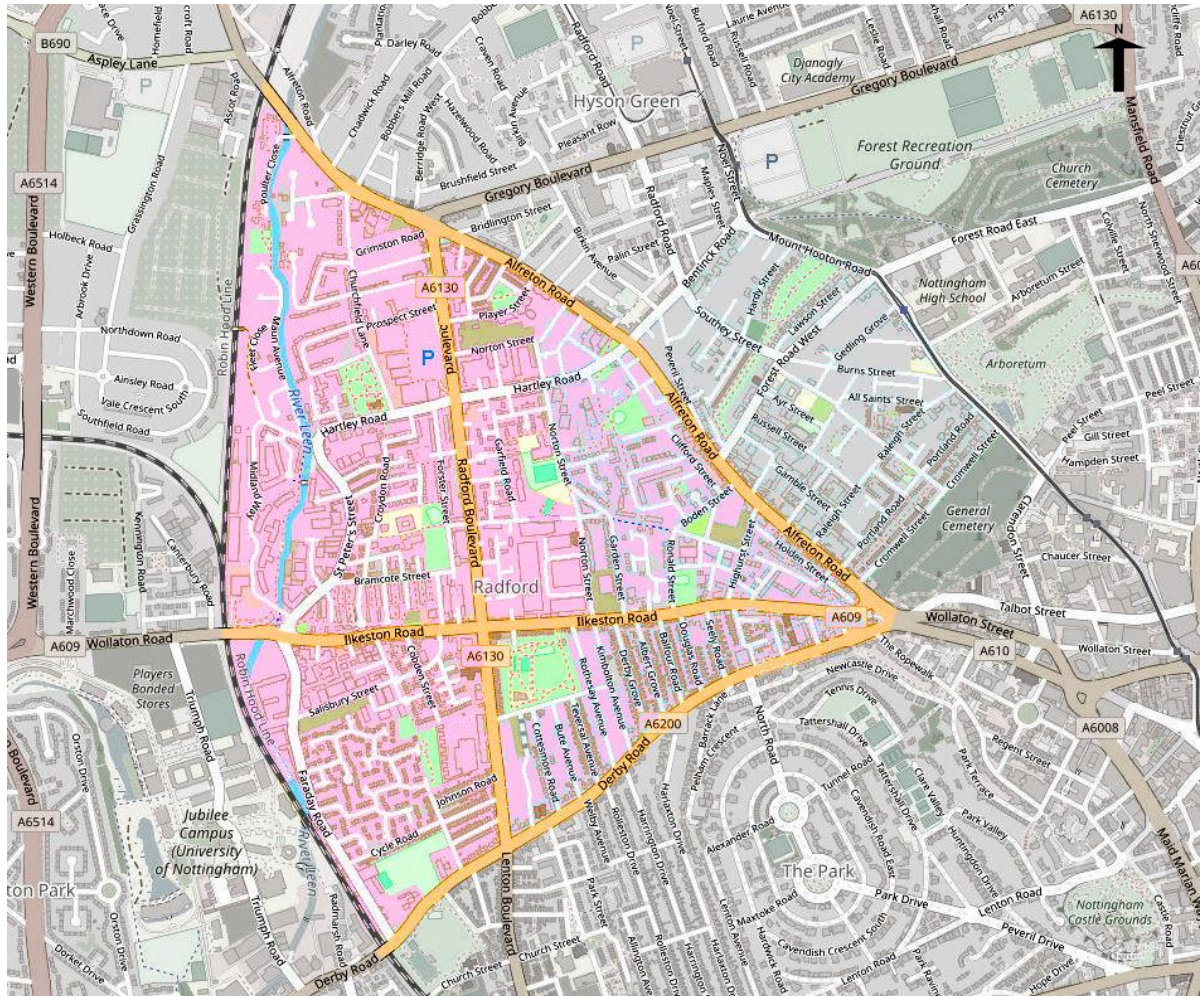


Radford, Nottingham by Graham Woodward

Radford lies to the west of Nottingham city centre and takes its name from an old ford on Alfreton Road where the River Leen cut through the red sandstone rock near Bobbers Mill; hence the name Red-ford. Today the river is a shadow of its former self.

Radford is mentioned in the Domesday Book (1086) as part of the property of William Peverel, Lord of the Manor. In 1105 he gave part of his land at 'Radeford' to Lenton Priory and it became part of Lenton parish. Aspley was part of Radford Parish until 1877.



In this guide, Radford is the area coloured pink on the map shown above. It comprises an area of one-and-a-half square kilometres, from Bobbers Mill and Alfreton Road in the north to Derby Road in the south, bounded on the west by the Midland Railway line to Mansfield and on the east by Canning Circus. By the late 1830s it was the second largest parish in Nottinghamshire, with a greater population than even Newark.

The land east of Radford Boulevard and Lenton Boulevard was named New Radford, a new parish carved out of the old one in April 1845. The area northeast of Alfreton Road is now part of the modern Hyson Green & Arboretum ward, as is part of the area around Bobbers Mill. Hyson Green was once part of Radford parish, but a modern sign at the Alfreton Road end of Bentinck Road welcomes visitors to Hyson Green, which fits with the division shown on the map. The area west of the railway line was in Lenton parish and was until the 1930s open land all the way to Wollaton village, just over two kilometres away.

Until the 1790s, the area east from St Peters Street up to Canning Circus was open pasture. The Radford Marsh area, now Faraday Road, consisted of common grazing land for sheep and all the land between Ilkeston Road and Derby Road was open land. The only buildings of any significance were alongside the River Leen. The first 'modern' houses were built in 1796 on Burke Street, near the top of Alfreton Road in an area originally called 'New Weston', but later called New Radford. In 1801 the population of Radford was 2,269, but within 40 years it had reached 12,637 to become almost a quarter of the city's population, as the lace industry became established in the 1830s. This sudden rise in the population placed immense pressure on the parish's limited housing stock and other amenities, and this is what prompted the rapid yet cramped development of Radford. By 1901 Radford's population was 35,354, one seventh of the enlarged city's population of 240,000.

The area was slow to have basic facilities. Fresh water for the new houses was not available until a well was sunk in Holden Street in 1824. The owner pumped water into tanks and then sold it door-to-door for a ha'penny a bucket. Further housing development did not begin until after the 1845 Enclosure Act. In 1877 Radford became part of Nottingham when the borough expanded massively to also take in Basford, Bulwell, Lenton, Sneinton, North Wilford, The Castle, Brewhouse Yard, Standard Hill and The Park Estate. Radford Boulevard was built in 1883 linking Castle, Lenton and Gregory Boulevards to form a ring road around the west side of the town, making travel by horse and cart out of Nottingham much easier than having to climb the steep Derby Road or Mansfield Road.

Churches

Radford's first parish church was St Peter's Church, a large medieval building which stood on the corner of Churchville (renamed Hartley Road in 1877) and Churchfield Lane. A new church (below) was built in 1812 after the old building fell into disrepair; the new church is now a Grade II listed building. The upper part of Hartley Road was originally called Outgang Lane. In the picture below, Players No.2 and No.3 factories can be seen in the background.





The second major church was Christ Church on Ilkeston Road, next to Ronald Street. It was the Parish church of New Radford and was built in 1844, although not consecrated until 1845. It was built of sandstone and according to one reference was, "*built when church architecture was at its worst*". It consisted of a chancel, nave, clergy, vestry, south and west porches, gallery and west turret with one bell. It closed in 1943 and the parish was united with All Souls, Raleigh Street. Christ Church was demolished in 1951 and all that remains today is this gateway and a large garden of rest.



Most of the old gravestones (left) have been placed around the edge of the site. Some of the people remembered on these old slate stones would have been the first residents to move into New Radford. The headstone of James Danby states that he died in 1860 aged 77, which means that his birth year was 1782/3. This was when Radford was still a rural area and Ilkeston Road was a country lane.



(Above) All that remains of Christ Church on Ilkeston Road. (Below) The graveyard is now a garden of rest.



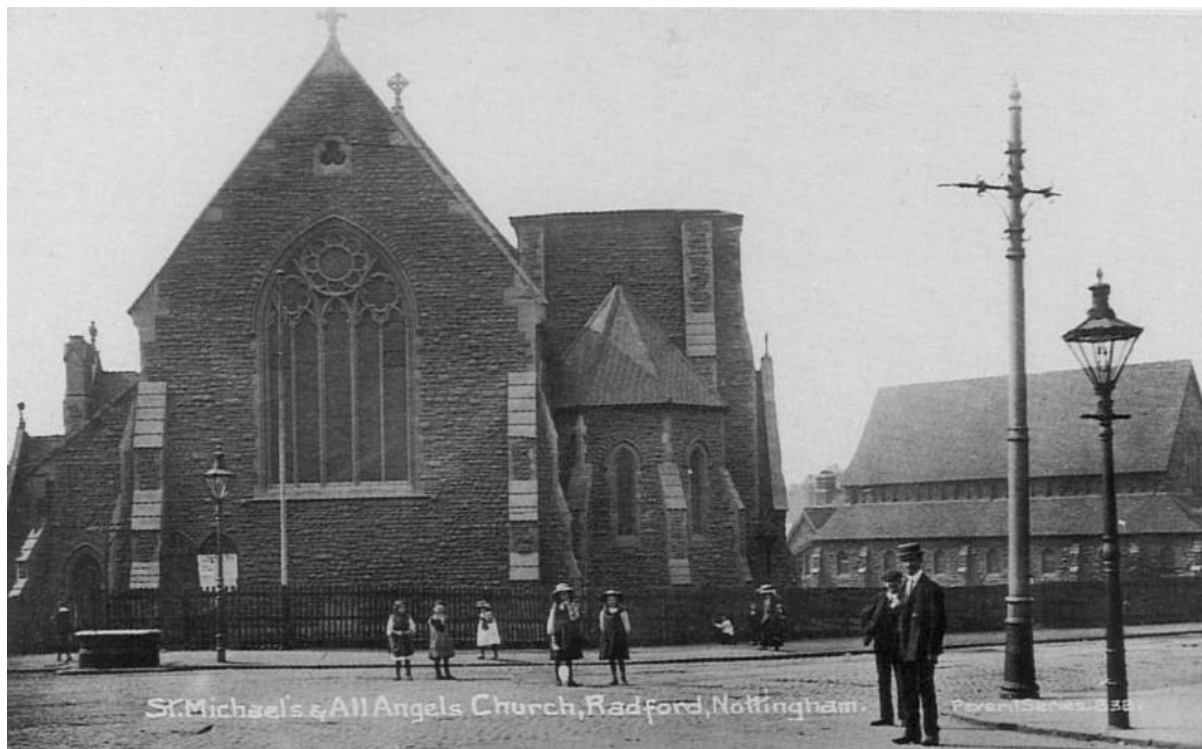
At the junction of Lenton Boulevard and Ilkeston Road was All Souls Church, built in 1894. It was often referred to as being a Lenton church but served the residents of Radford as much as those in Lenton, as did the nearby school and library.

The road junction was known locally by some as 'ation' corner, pronounced 'ay-shun'. The buildings on the four corners of the crossroads gave rise to this nickname.

The church on the southeast corner meant salvation; the school on the southwest corner provided education; a pub on the northeast corner threatened damnation; and a pawnbroker's shop on the northwest corner was a sign of ruination. The church was demolished in 1980, but a new one (right) was built in its place along with a sheltered housing complex.

(Below - clockwise) The school, the old butcher's shop (designed by Watson Fothergill) with the pawnbroker's shop behind, and the pub, the Gregory, named after the prominent Nottingham family from the early 1600s.





St Michael's and All Angels (above), on the corner of Hartley Road and Alfreton Road, was built in 1888 as a Chapel of Ease for St Peter's Church and consecrated in 1889. It was built next to a mission hall which opened in 1884. The church was built of Bulwell Stone, but a lack of funds meant that it was finished hastily in 1902, partly in brick. A Lady Chapel was added in 1924 but by the end of the 1960s it was in a poor state. It was demolished in 1975 and today the site is an open space.

Whilst the established church had a large presence in Radford, the non-conformists also made their mark. By 1881 there were over seventy non-conformist churches in Nottingham, with Basford having what seemed like the highest density. A Methodists church (below left) was built on St Peter's Street in Radford in 1878 and a Congregational Chapel (below right) was on the corner of Ilkeston Road and Cobden Street; the latter has now been demolished.



Derby Road Methodist Church (below) was built in 1915 and replaced an earlier chapel. It is today referred to as Lenton Methodist Church.



Also, on Derby Road opposite the northern entrance to the Park Estate is the former Congregational Church (left), built in 1880. It is now the Greek Orthodox Church of the Virgin Mary Eleousa. It was built of brick with ashlar dressings and is in the Perpendicular Revival style – a very apt term as it is very ‘perpendicular’, ie. slender and tall.

Although it is now a Greek Orthodox Church, the interior is very much ‘as built’ and it has extensive wall paintings inside. At the back was a Sunday school that fronted Ilkeston Road.

River Leen

Old Radford relied heavily on the River Leen as a valuable supply of water for animals and as a source of power. Three water-powered corn and flour mills stood along the River Leen in Radford: A Corn Mill (below), next to Radford Station on St Peter's Street, built in the eighteenth century; a flour mill on New Road where it meets Hartley Road; and a corn mill at Bobbers Mill. A weir and pond were built at each site to harness the water supply.



After the mill at St Peter's Street closed, it was used by J.L. Chettle Ltd, a road haulage and storage firm. The mill stood next to Radford House (below) that originally was the home of the Wilson family, headed by William Wilson, a Radford cotton mill owner whose father was Mayor of Nottingham in 1811, 1816 and 1828. Later the house was used as the offices of Butterworth and Walker, new and used car dealers, until it was demolished in 1959 to make way for a new garage (later a Renault main dealers).



St Peter's Mill was demolished in 2008 to make way for a major development of industrial units, shops and student flats serving the new Jubilee University Campus, built on the former site of Raleigh Cycles on Triumph Road.

There are no remains of the mill on New Road, and Bobbers Mill is covered later in this guide.



By the 1830s, the Leen was effectively an open sewer and was always prone to bursting its banks, flooding the St Peter's Street area (above). It was still able to cause serious flooding as late as 1947 when this photograph was taken. The floods in 1947 affected a large part of Nottingham, especially the Meadows area of the city, following the big thaw of the heavy snowfall that fell that winter. The building on the left-hand side of the road (beyond the second lamp post) was the Old Rose pub (below), demolished about 2009. The Radford Marsh area on the south side of Ilkeston Road was aptly named, as it too flooded regularly, more so than the St Peter's Street area.



Lace Manufacture



Originally, Radford's rural economy centred on the River Leen, but it was the arrival of the lace and hosiery trade in the 1830s that changed Radford from a rural parish to one of the industrial heartlands of Nottingham.

Before the big hosiery factories came to Radford, most of the lace and stocking production in Nottingham was carried out by out-workers in their own homes.

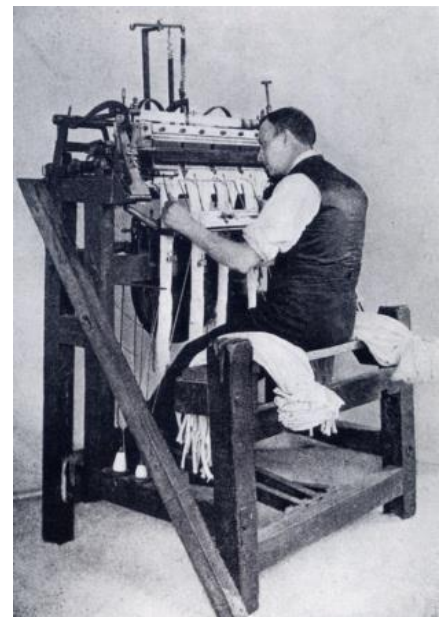
(Left) This house at 238 Alferton Road, built in 1850, was once the home of an out-worker. The tell-tale sign is the long floor to ceiling windows on the second floor, known as a Top-Shop, where lace was finished after being produced on a stocking frame. The house is now Grade II listed.

This is the only house of its type left in Radford, but others can still be seen on Broad Street in the city centre. The need to bring as much natural light into the building was vital in the days before the arrival of electricity and when candles were an expensive luxury for most ordinary people.

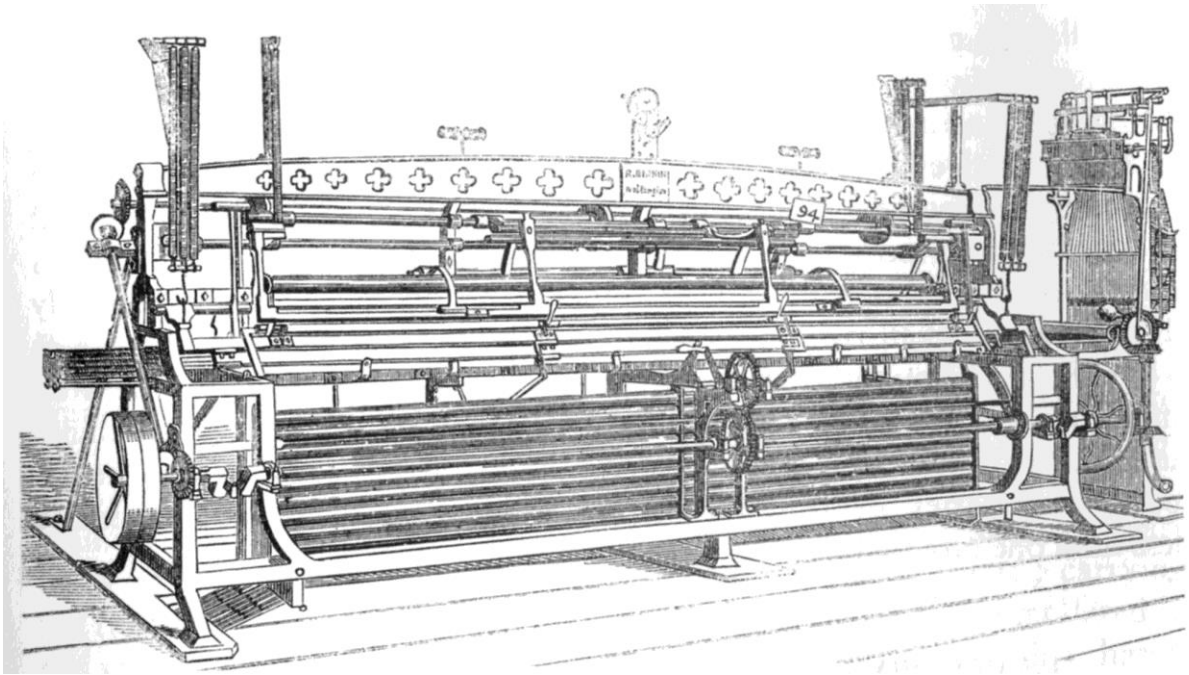
The Alma Tavern next door was originally three houses, each showing signs of once having Top-Shop windows, probably bricked up when the houses were converted into a pub in the 1860s.

The Stocking Frame was invented in 1589 by William Lee, a Nottinghamshire clergyman. By about 1775 stocking frames were being adapted to make lace as well as stockings, and this soon had a dramatic effect on the producers of hand-made lace. By 1812 there were 2,600 frames in use in Nottingham, and when work for hand lace-makers declined due to over-supply, riots broke out and many frames were smashed. The Government passed an Act that made the offence punishable by death, although some men were instead sentenced to transportation.

Despite the riots, by 1844 there were still over 770 frames in use in Radford, Hyson Green and Basford, and they continued to be worked until the early 1900s. A typical frame is shown on the right. What finally killed the home-based industry, and the use of the Stocking Frame, was the arrival of vast factories where machines could produce 1,000 meshes a minute compared to six a minute by hand.



In 1813, John Leavers came to Radford from Sutton in Ashfield, and adapted John Heathcoat's 1808 bobbinet machine to make lace much faster and on a much larger scale than before. Until 1823 they were used solely to make plain net, working on a 60 inch beam at 80 motions per minute. A typical machine is shown below. Most were three-metres wide and weighed about 17 tons.



In 1841 Hooton Deverill added a Jacquard, a continuous card punched with holes that controlled the bobbins, allowing the insertion of thick thread and the manufacture of sophisticated patterning in the lace, like hand-made lace.

The Leavers machine was first manufactured at Gamble's factory, later on Raleigh Street, and was soon taken up by lace manufacturers in the town. These modified lace making machines produced exceptionally fine patterns and this type of lace became a Nottingham trademark that made it the lace capital of the world.

Originally the Leavers machines were worked by the hands and feet of the operator until a development in the 1850s converted the machines to rotary motion, making it possible to power them by steam.



(Left) A plaque commemorating John Leavers' invention is attached to a wall on St Helens Street, Canning Circus. (Below) You can see one of his marvellous machines in the Industrial Museum at Wollaton Hall.



Once the Leavers machine could be driven by motive power, large mills were built to hold rows of machines driven by overhead shafts and belts. Many factories were tenement buildings, occupied in some cases by as many as 20 different lace making firms.

In the Radford area, most of the large mills were built around Raleigh Street in what is now part of the Arboretum ward. Most of these factories are still standing, but nearly all are either student flats or private flats. However, despite the factories being in one location, there were very few houses built nearby and most of the new factory workers lived in Radford or Hyson Green. New Basford also had a considerable number of lace factories, displacing a large contingent of stocking frame workers.

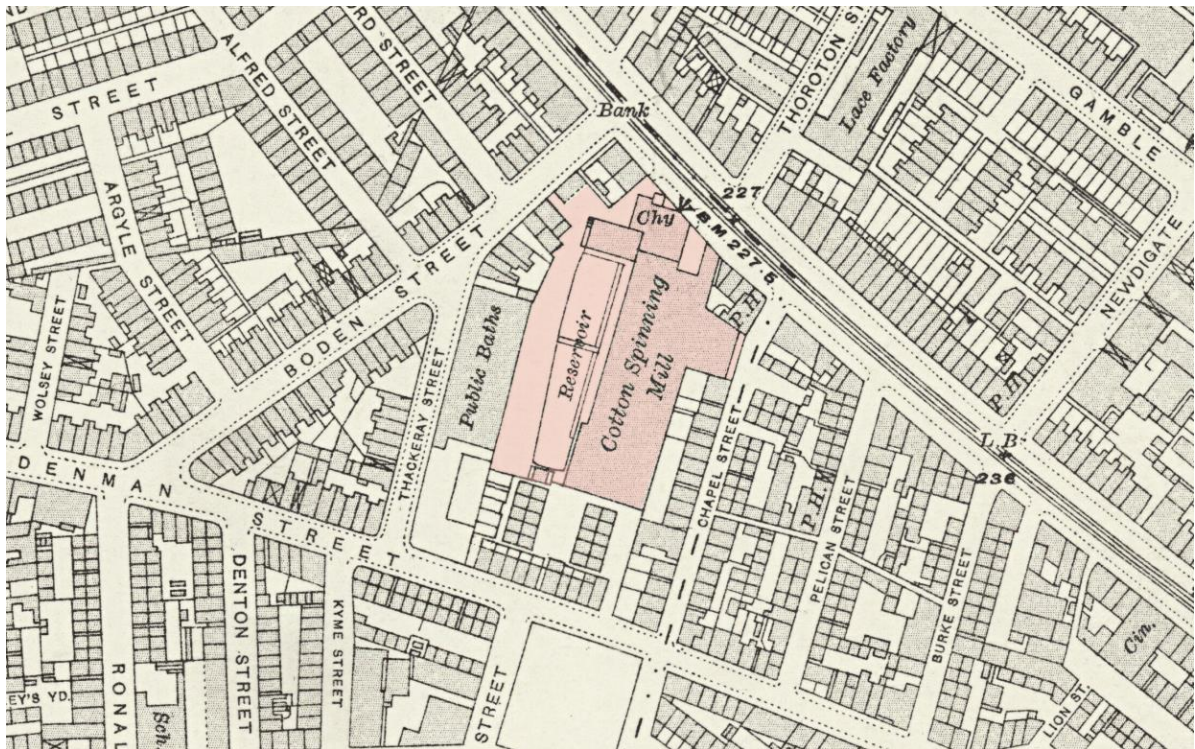
Radford had four large lace factories: Forest Mill on Alfreton Road; Radford Mill on Ilkeston Road; The Clyde Works on Denison Street and The Boulevard Works on Radford Boulevard.

Forest Mill (below) on the southwest side of Alfreton Road between Bowden Street and Highurst Street was built about 1840 by John Lawson Thackeray & Sons. It was primarily a cotton-spinning mill but also produced lace thread and later went on to produce 'Radford-Check' Viyella, invented in 1894, made from Merino wool and cotton. In 1851 at the Great Exhibition, the owners were awarded a Gold Medal for their fine lace thread.

Thackeray & Sons was taken over in the 1950s by Jersey Fabrics, who later amalgamated with Kapwood Lace to form Jersey Kapwood in October 1960. The mill buildings were modified many times over their 140-year life span, with the glazed offices being added sometime after the Second World War. The Mill closed in 1981 and has now been demolished.



The original Forest Mill extended a long way back towards Denman Street and stood next to the public baths on Thackeray Street. The full extent of the site can be seen on the map below, an extract from the 1913 OS Map.



Chapel Street is now called Highurst Street. The public baths were the only place many residents could get a bath, and there was also a laundry. The offices at the northern end of Highurst Street (below) were built on the site of the old public house (PH), shown on the map.



Radford Mill (below) on Ilkeston Road, dates in part from 1850 but was extensively altered and added to in the late 1880s. It was once occupied by Thomas Hollins, developers of the Viyella brand. When the mill closed in the 1950s the site was acquired by Nottingham City Council and let as industrial units.



The part on Norton Street (below) was called Merino Mill and has now been demolished.





Radford Mill (above) has recently been redeveloped as student accommodation, the new building (below) being designed in a sympathetic style to match the old building.



The Clyde Works (below) on Denison Street, built in 1881, was a multi-storey tenement factory financed by Spowages, bobbin makers. They retained ownership of the factory until the 1950s.



The factory had twenty-two bays and was five storeys high. It was later acquired by J P Frymanns & Fletcher Ltd who made warp knitted fabrics for upholstery and special cotton Milanese for polishing glass. They renamed the building Fryma House. In 1980 Frymanns were the UK's largest exporter of knitted industrial mesh fabric.

The building was demolished in 1992 and the site used for a housing complex. The flats in the background are the Buckland Court complex, built in the 1960s.

(Right) The entrance facing Denison Street had large gates with metal bollards each side to protect the brickwork from damage by cartwheels.





The Boulevard Works (above) at the corner of Hartley Road and Radford Boulevard is typical of the later factories that were built in Nottingham. It was built in 1883 by FJ and JH Perry for their firm Bentwood Ltd and is described by Elaine Harwood in her book *Nottingham (a Pevsner Guide)* as, “*probably the finest surviving tenement lace factory*”. It later became the home of Marathon Knitwear. The clock at the top of the building, fitted later, originally came from the old town hall at Weekday Cross in Nottingham when it was demolished to make way for the new Great Central Railway.

At five storeys high and thirty-nine bays long, it was the largest factory of its kind in Radford. It housed 234 standings of Leavers and plain net lace machines. In its heyday the factory employed upwards of 500 workers, working in pairs. They worked from 4am to midnight in two split shifts of ten hours a day each. The temperature in the factory was often between 25-30 degrees Centigrade, necessary to keep the lace workable. Children as young as six years old were employed to load bobbins. The machines were highly dangerous, with workers regularly losing fingers in the poorly guarded mechanism, and there was always the risk of fire from the highly flammable cotton and wool fibres.

On top of this was the constant drone of the machines, driven by leather belts running off pulleys attached to shafts that ran the full length of the factory.

In 1914, the highest weekly wage in the industry was paid to thread twisters, who received on average 39/6d per week, about £200 today.





The Boulevard Works occupies an 'island' site between Radford Boulevard, Hartley Road, Forster Street and Norwood Road. The section fronting Hartley Road and along Forster Street (above) was added in 1896, built specially to manufacture curtain lace. The façades are dominated by the large windows, necessary to bring as much light as possible into the work area. The Norwood Road end housed embroidery machines.

(Right) The Norwood Road end shows the large ratio of glass to brickwork. (Below) The original entrance to the extension on Hartley Road is more akin to a church than a factory, but in some ways these factories were the new 'Cathedrals' of commerce.





The Radford Boulevard façade (above) has thirty-nine bays built of polychrome brick with segment-headed windows. Power for the factory was converted from steam to electricity in 1945 and it was the last tenement lace factory in Nottingham to be occupied. It is now called 'Cotton Mills Student Village' and has been converted into apartments.

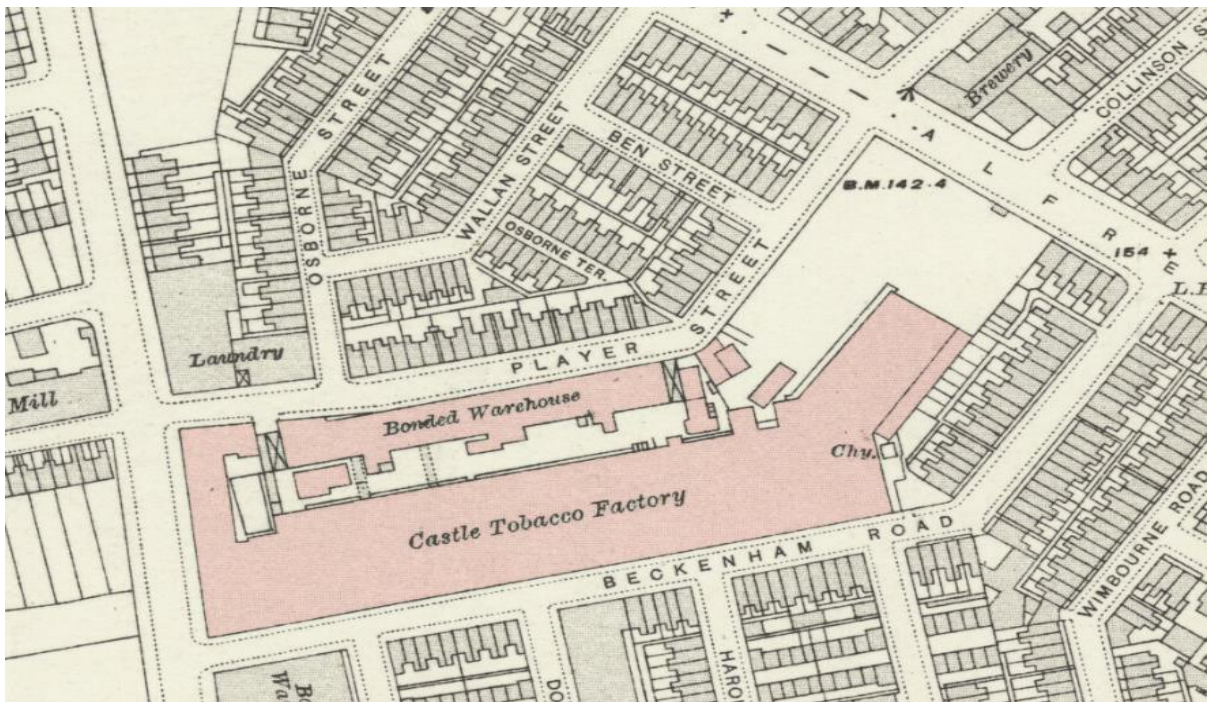
(Below) The factory dominates the horizon when seen from Bobbers Mill.



When John Player (tobacco manufacturer) came to Radford in the 1880s, he built a large factory on Player Street (below) for future expansion. Between 1883 and 1902 it was rented out as a tenement lace factory with over 70 different tenants. As cigarette production increased, lace makers were moved out and by 1903 the whole building was used as a bonded warehouse where the tobacco was stored, then later for cigarette production.



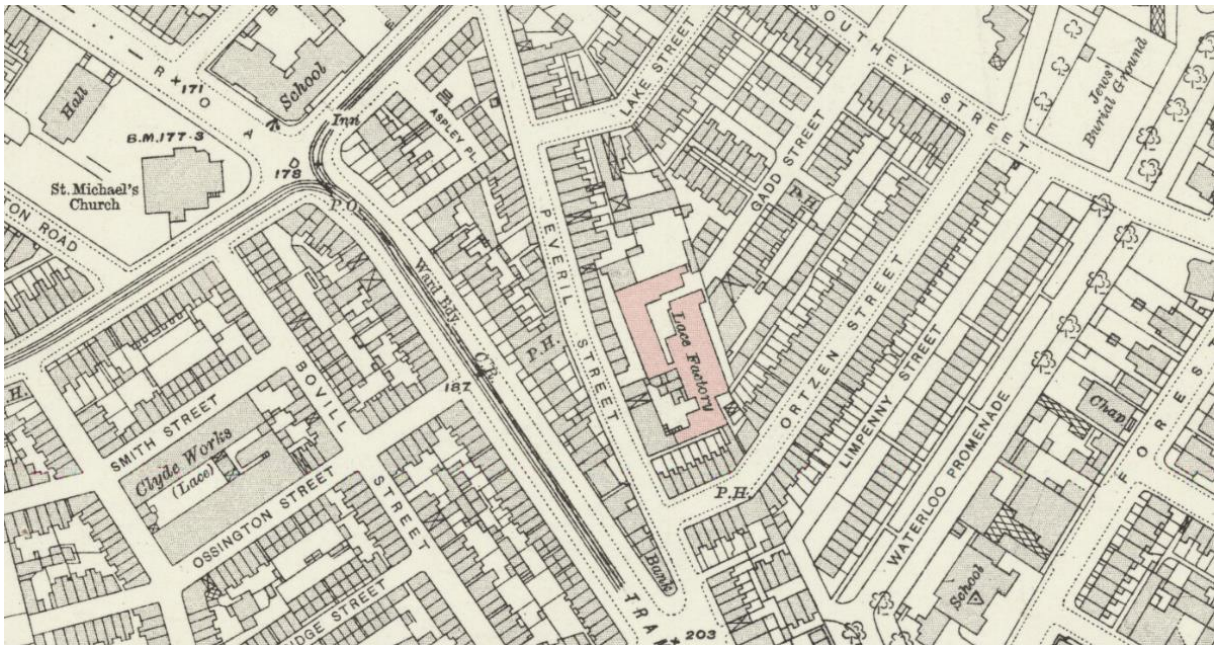
The 1915 OS Map below shows the scale of the site. The building was later converted into three parts, mainly offices: Adam House, Burton House and Carlton House, but was recently destroyed by fire - more about Players later.



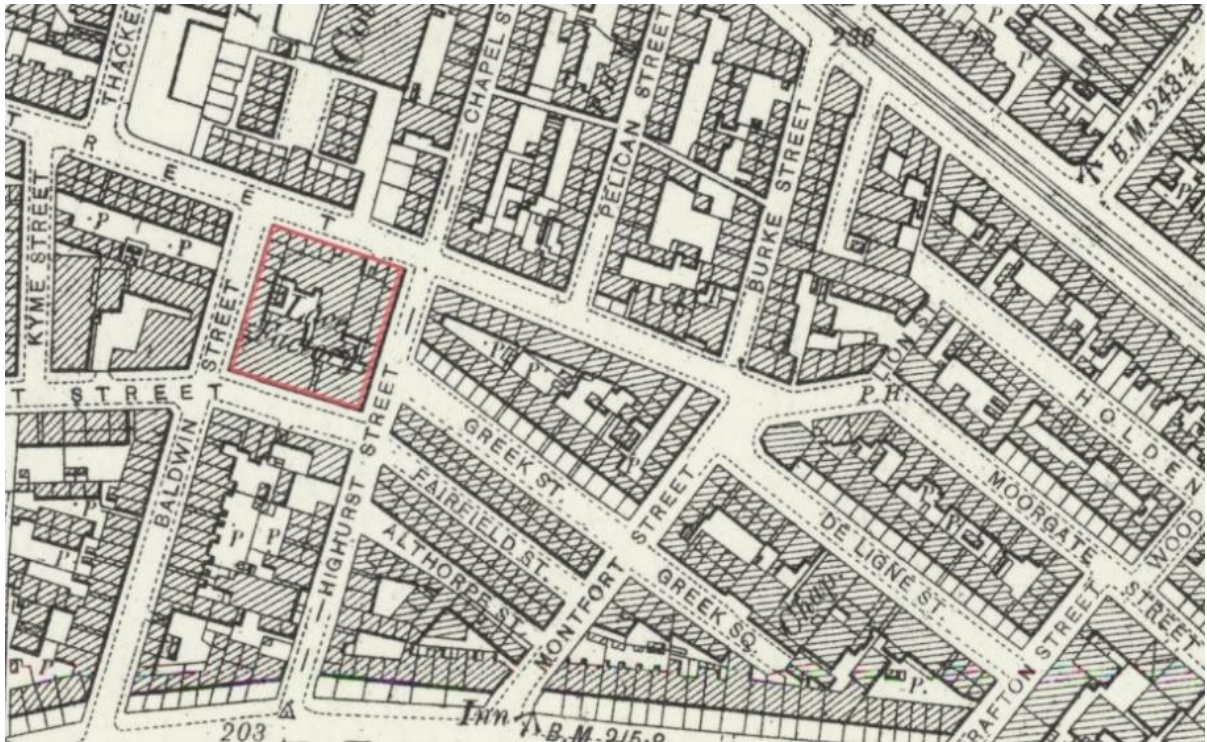
Some lace factories were built on a more 'human' scale, such as the one below on the corner of Grant Street and Baldwin Street. It was Bate's Lace Machine factory, built in the 1850s.



John and James Gadd had a large lace factory on Peveril Street (below), built about 1850. In 1854 it had 14 lace makers as tenants, and at one time housed as many as 18 lace firms. Gadds occupied the building until 1870 when it was taken over by Henry Carrier & Sons, hair-net makers from Ilkeston. It has long since been demolished.



Foote's Workshop, later Herbert's Factory, was on a square piece of land between Denman Street in the north, Highurst Street in the east, Grant Street in the south and Baldwin Street in the west. The map below shows the site in 1901.



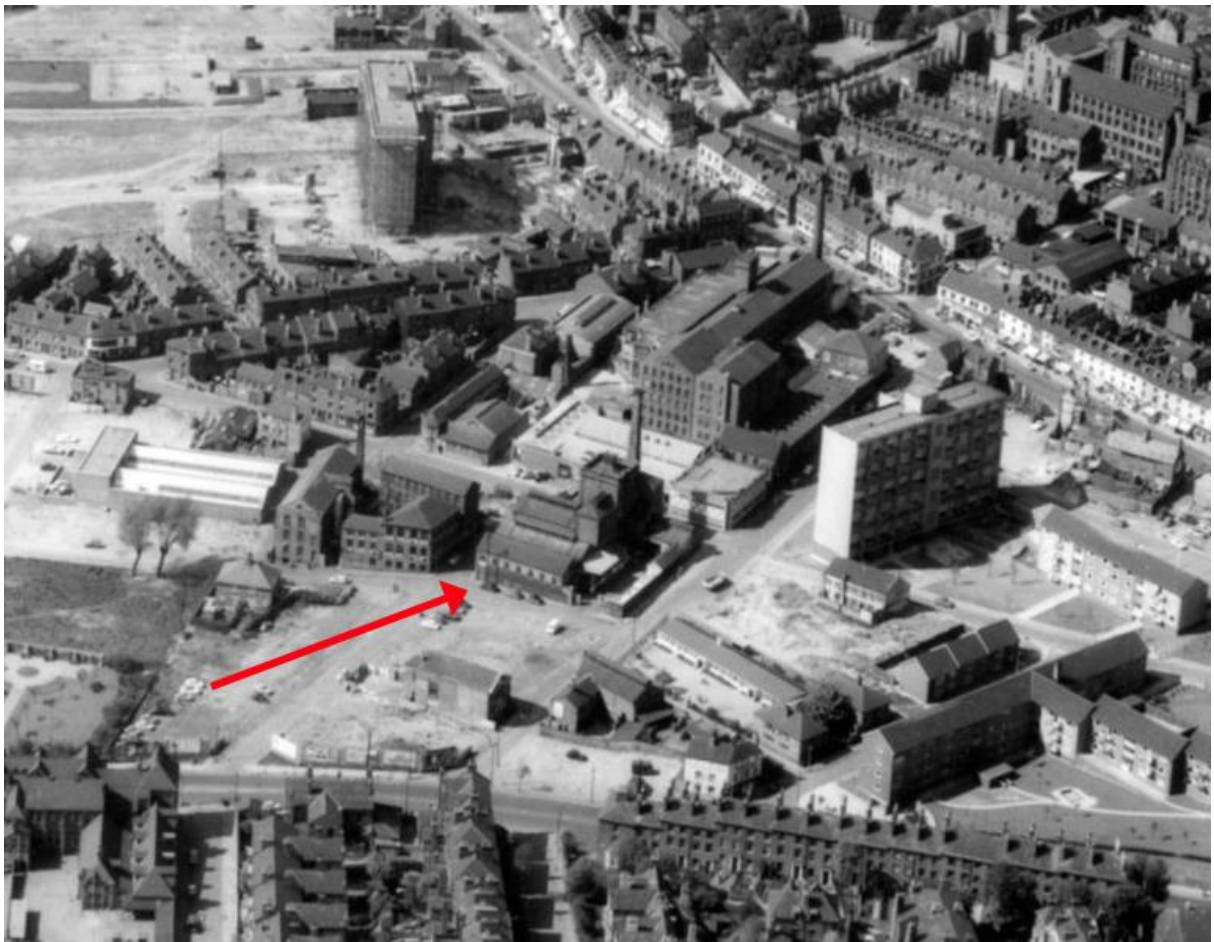
The factory was originally called Foote's Works, owned by R Foote and was built in the late 1820s, one of the earliest factories in New Radford. The main entrance was on Grant Street. By 1843 it housed 52 hand operated machines. William Herbert bought the factory and began a successful business.

T. Herbert & Co were making lace as early as 1858 at their works on Hounds Gate. The firm consisted of John Herbert, Thomas Herbert and William Herbert. Thomas was an Alderman on Nottingham Town Council in 1858 and a Trustee of the Institute for the Blind and several schools.

The factory in Radford was soon converted to steam power by William Herbert for his own machines and by 1861 William and Thomas were in situ along with 24 tenants with 80 machines. In 1862 the factory was owned by W Herbert & Sons which they occupied along with seven other lace making firms. By 1864 the number had risen to 10 tenants which included: William Birks, machine holder; Brook & Hopewell, lace crinoline manufacturers and Humphreys, Botham & Wyer, machine builders. In 1881, thirteen tenants were on site.

By 1894 the owners were now T. Herbert & Co. in occupation with George Stevenson, a hosiery manufacturer, and James Brothers, lace makers. Herbert's were still there in 1910 with A.H. Stevenson, a ribbed-hosiery manufacturer, but by 1915 the factory was owned by W. Spowage & Co, bobbin and carriage makers who later built the Clyde Works on Dennison Street.

The factory has now been demolished and replaced by small industrial units.



Herbert's Factory was still standing in 1966 when the area around Denman Street was being redeveloped. It is shown above by the red arrow. The current buildings are shown below.



Raleigh Cycles



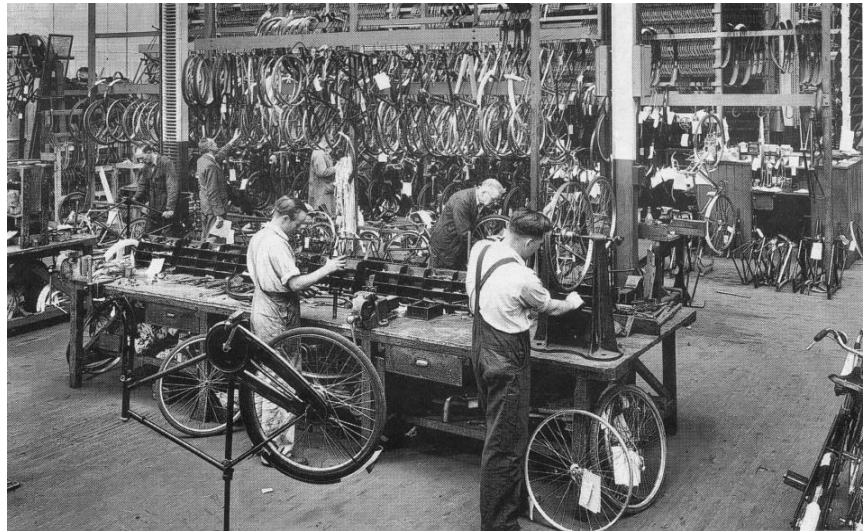
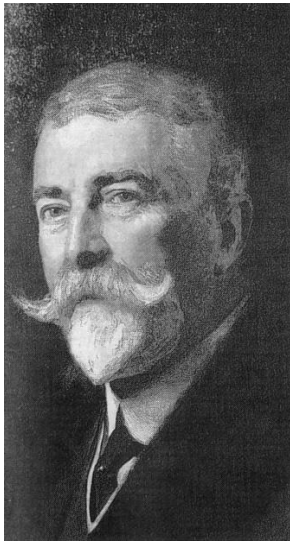
About the same time as lace manufacture reached the height of its success, other industries arrived in Radford. One of these was the manufacture of bicycles.

In 1887, two men, Woodhead and Angrois, financed by William Ellis, had a company making bicycles in a small factory (above) on Raleigh Street. The workforce of 12 people made three hand-made cycles a week. In 1888 Frank Bowden bought the business and immediately expanded production into an old hosiery factory on Russell Street and by 1890 employed 200 people, making 60 bicycles a week. By 1891 annual profits reached £13,000 (£1.2 million today) and in 1896 the firm moved to a new factory at Radford Marsh (Faraday Road).

In 1902 the firm bought the hub-gear makers Sturmey Archer, and later absorbed Humber, Rudge, Triumph and BSA cycles. By the start of the First World War Raleigh produced 60,000 bikes a week (3.1 million a year) and was the largest cycle manufacturer in the world.



In the 1930s Raleigh dabbled in the production of three-wheel motorised vehicles. The first was a small light delivery van with motorcycle front forks and handlebars, often referred to as the Girder-fork van. In 1934 they produced the Raleigh Safety Severn, a three-wheel car (left) which sold for £95. When they stopped production, the Chief designer, Tom Williams, bought the equipment and remaining parts and moved to Tamworth, Staffs, where his new company, Reliant Motors, produced three-wheelers for the next 65 years.



(Above left) Frank Bowden, who founded Raleigh Cycles in 1888. (Above right) Wheel assembly at the works.

In 1931 Raleigh built their new headquarters, Howitt House, (below) on Lenton Boulevard, designed by the architect T Cecil Howitt who also designed the Council House in the Old Market Square. The building also contained a large ballroom. Raleigh left Nottingham in the 1990s, and today the building is a business centre and is Grade II listed.



In 1960, Alan Silitoe's novel, *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* was made into a film, shot in Radford and other parts of Nottingham. It was a story about a young machinist, Arthur Seaton, played by Albert Finney, who worked on the production line at Raleigh, housed in a factory site behind the head offices. Silitoe, and his father before him, worked at Raleigh and many say that the film is a quasi-autobiography. It showed the harsh nature of factory work at the time, but which paid a good wage (£14 per week). Silitoe was later awarded an Honorary degree at Nottingham Trent University and a local housing complex in Radford has been named after him. He died in 2010, aged 82 years.

In 1979 the owners of the old cycle factory in Raleigh Street applied for its demolition despite Nottingham City Council having attached a heritage-building plaque to the façade. The impending loss of this historic building prompted an article in the Nottingham News, but it did not stop the demolition. The site is now a large housing complex, Raleigh Square.

Raleigh's birthplace in the balance

NEAR THE top of Raleigh Street is a curious sight — a derelict building, soon to be demolished, on which the city council has placed one of those spanking new green plaques which indicate a building of historic interest.

Hawk-eyed citizens will have observed a number of these around the city, most of them showing where something was rather than is.

In Raleigh Street, it still is — just. The plaque records that "The Raleigh Cycle Company was founded here in 1888," and high on the building can be made out with difficulty the faded letters "Raleigh Works".

For this is indeed the site of that momentous encounter between wealthy young Frank Bowden, advised less than a

year before that he was a dying man, and the two men who had made the bicycle on which he had pedalled back to fitness.

Survive

The rest is industrial history. He bought his way into the business (named after the street, of course) and used his commercial flair to expand production in just over a decade from ten bicycles a week to

12,000 a year.

The building is unlikely to survive.

The owners Jane D. Ltd., who manufacture children's clothing on adjacent Newdigate Street, were at first quite keen to renovate the building as a training school. But although the city council has offered financial assistance, they are now almost certain to demolish

it and extend their present factory instead.

This they are perfectly entitled to do. The council has already given planning permission, and the building is in an industrial and commercial improvement area.

It is a pity, nevertheless. A few yards further down Raleigh Street is a large expanse of cleared land which will shortly be developed as housing. It would be pleasant if this brand new community could keep its small but unique piece of history.

Origins

Beyond this, of course, is the wider question of how far Nottingham as a whole wants to preserve its industrial past. Of the three great industries which sprang from individual enterprise at the end of the last century, Boots will soon be the only one whose origins remain, the survival of Jesse Boot's little shop in Goose Gate having been assured.

The only reminder of John Player's first shop on Beeston Market Hill is another green plaque, high up on a great square pillar of modern Market Square House and most easily read from the top deck of a bus to Bulwell.

Clearly, a similar fate awaits the original Raleigh Works.

The original Raleigh Works — soon to be demolished, despite the "historic interest" plaque over the archway (inset). (photo: Mike Williams).



The third big employer to arrive in Radford was John Player, tobacco manufacturer.

John Players Tobacco



John Player (left) came to Nottingham in 1852 and in 1864 was listed in White's Directory as a tobacconist. In 1877 he purchased a small tobacco works in Broad Marsh from William Wright who had been making tobacco products since the 1820s.

John Player was the first manufacturer to sell pre-packed tobacco over the counter. He was so successful that in 1881 he began building three new factory blocks on a 12 hectare (30-acre) site on Alfreton Road in Radford that later linked up with the newly built Radford Boulevard. In 1883 he developed his Navy Cut brand, but he died in 1884 leaving his wife to run the company for nine years until his two sons, John Dane Player and William Goodacre Player, were old enough to take over. By the 1930s the firm employed over 7,500 people and was one of the world's largest tobacco manufacturers.



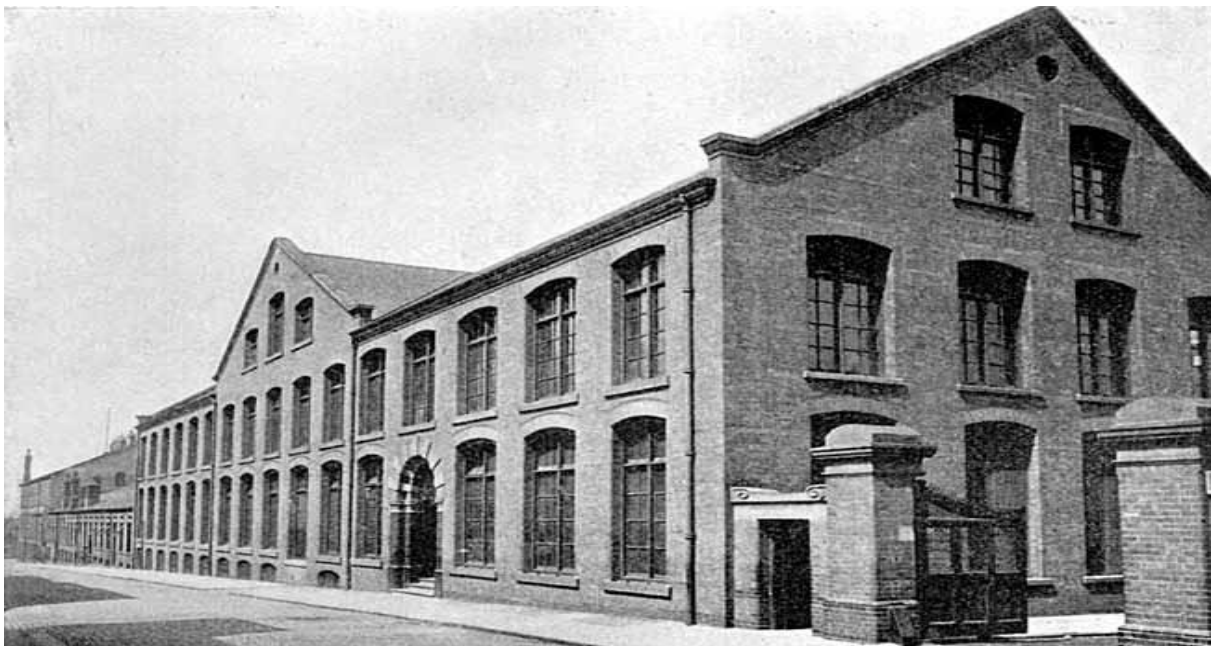
The new factory site on the east side of Radford Boulevard (above) was huge, as can be seen from this photograph taken in 1906 from the top of the Boulevard Works on Hartley Road. Apart from the six houses in the foreground, most of the buildings seen here belonged to Players. The floor area of all the buildings in this factory complex amounted to 30,000 sq.m (322,900 square feet).

The road in the foreground is Radford Boulevard, built in 1883. To the left of the six houses can be seen the three pointed gables of Player's first bonded warehouse on the corner of Beckenham Road, now part of Norton Street, where tobacco was stored. Player's offices at the junction of Player Street can just be seen beyond the warehouse and the site ends where a laundry's small chimney stands in the distance. The two long buildings on the horizon are the No.1 factory between Player Street and Beckenham Road.



(Above) The No.1 factory occupied a site between Player Street (left) and Beckenham Road beyond the tall chimney. The building in the foreground was part of the original offices on Radford Boulevard.

(Below) This was the third building along the north side of Beckenham Road, and was built in 1883. The view is looking due west towards Radford Boulevard. At some later date, the gates on the right were replaced with the loading bays shown on the next page.

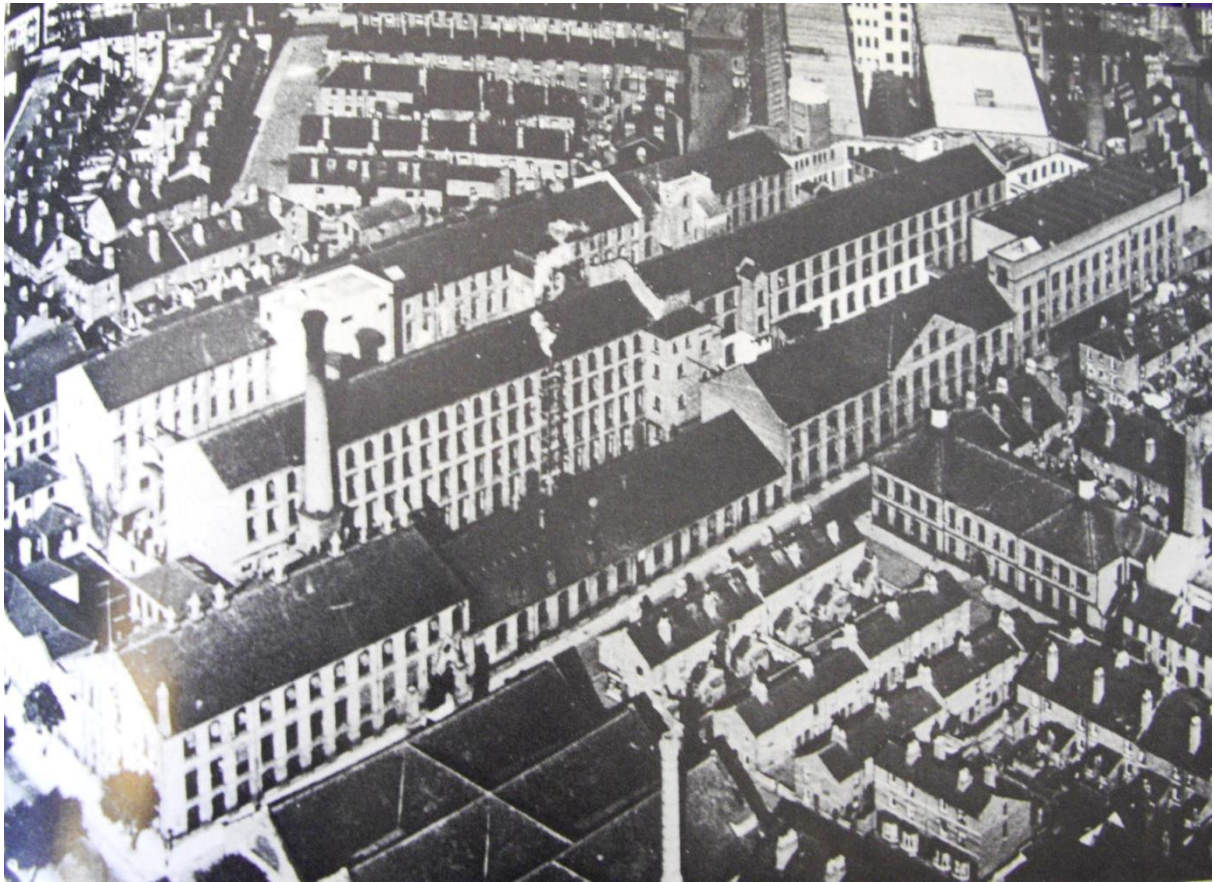




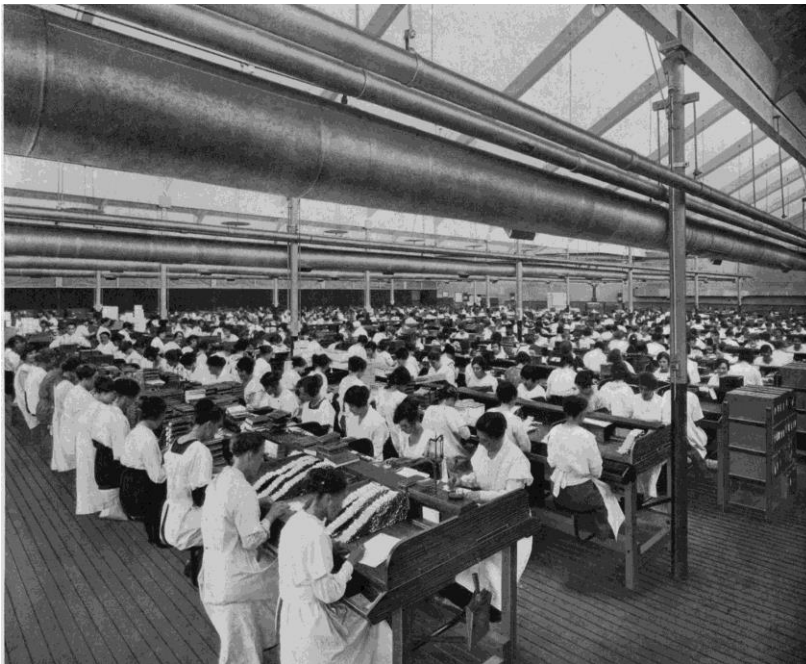
(Above) This photo from the early 1920s is of the loading bays on Beckenham Road, now called Norton Street. One of the lorries has the letters GCR on its bonnet, probably a Great Central Railway delivery vehicle.

(Below) A factory extension, fronting Alferton Road, was added about 1916. It had a massive presence on Alferton Road, as shown in this postcard view from about 1930.





(Above) By 1900, Players factory complex dominated the area around Radford Boulevard.



At the No.1 factory, female employees made cigarettes by hand and then packed them into cartons. Women were chosen because they were thought to be more adept at delicate work.

Navy Cut was sold as either cigarette tobacco in tins or as ready-made cigarettes in packets. Cigarette-making machines were introduced about 1901 and output quadrupled. Pipe tobacco was also produced at the site. By the outbreak of war in 1914 the firm employed 2,500 workers, rising to 5,000 by 1926.

By the start of the 1930s, two-thirds of all cigarettes sold in Britain were made by Players, and two-thirds of those were Navy Cut brand.

The Castle Cavendish Works (below) was built in 1899 in Dorking Road and was used as a cardboard store and carton factory. It is now a conference centre



(Below) Castle Cavendish Building, Dorking Road



In 1901, Players and thirteen other British cigarette manufacturers, including firms such as WD & HO Wills and Lambert & Butler, formed the Imperial Tobacco Group to counter a possible take-over by ATC, an American producer. The group members traded under their own names, but by working together they successfully fought off the threat from abroad.

(Below) The offices on Radford Boulevard are shown on these two postcards that date from about 1923.





In 1932 Players built a new, No.2 factory (above) on Radford Boulevard which had a total floor area of 20,400 sq.m (220,000 square feet). It was used solely for cigarette manufacture. It was demolished in 1987 and the site is now Castle Retail Park. The clock and the art-deco railings (below) are all that remain of the old factory.



In 1939 Players built their No.3 factory with a floor space of 31,800 sq.m (343,000 square feet). It was behind the No.2 factory, facing Churchfield Lane. It was demolished in 1987.

After John Dane Player and William Goodacre Player retired in 1932, they made significant donations to good causes in Nottingham. In 1936 John paid for the building of St Margaret's Church, Aspley and William gave £180,000 to the General Hospital. They both supported development of the Children's Hospital at Mapperley Park, Nottingham and when John died he left £2.5 million and William's estate later amounted to £1.6 million.



The picture above, taken about 1945, gives you some idea of the vast site occupied by Player's three main factories in Radford. On the left in the foreground is Alfretton Road. The No.1 factory occupied a dog-leg site between Norton Street and Player Street. The six-storey building in the centre with a flat roof was the No.2 factory on Radford Boulevard, and the No.3 factory was beyond that, fronting Churchfield Lane (far right).

(Below) The new Player's offices, Radford House, on Radford Boulevard opened in 1967 - Player Street is on the left in the picture. They later became offices for Nat West Bank.





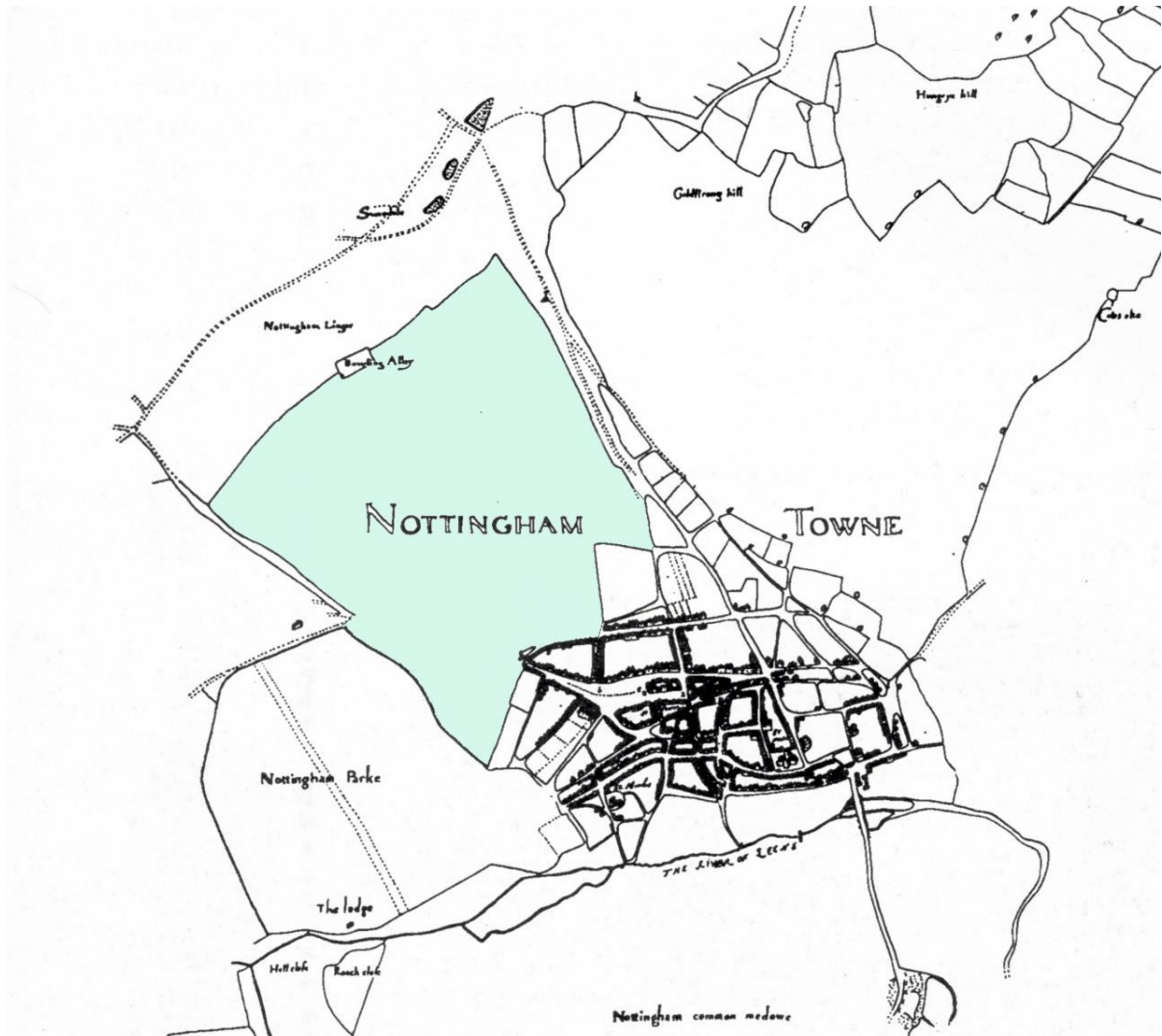
(Above) The offices on Radford Boulevard, either side of Player Street, were linked by this over-bridge. (Below) South of Player Street, on Radford Boulevard, an old laundry was replaced by these offices in the mid-1960s, later occupied by Lloyds Bank.



In 1976 John Player & Sons left Radford and moved to a new £14 million factory at Lenton where production peaked at 17 billion cigarettes a year (2016); that factory has now closed.

Housing

The industrialisation of Radford after the Bobbin-net fever of the 1820s brought with it the need to build houses for the workers on a large scale. Before then Radford was just part of a large open space.



The Crown Survey Map of Sherwood Forest (above) dated 1609 shows how open and undeveloped it was around Nottingham. Radford and Hyson Green are in the area coloured green on the map, known as the Sand Fields. What is quite stark is that neither Derby Road, Ilkeston Road or Alfreton Road existed. These were built after the Nottingham and Ilkeston Turnpike Trust was established in 1764 - there was a tollhouse at Bobbers Mill as late as 1824.

In 1796 Benjamin Darker, a needle-maker, built four houses near Burke Street on the southwest side of Alfreton Road opposite what is now Newdigate Street. These were some of the very first 'modern' houses to be built in the parish. He then built nine others towards what was later to become Denman Street. The land cost 2s. (10p) per yard, about £10 in today's value. He insured the thirteen houses with the Phoenix Fire Office for £500 and in the policy the district was called "New Weston," not New Radford. At that time there were no sewers and as mentioned earlier there was also no piped water supply as we know it today.

The map below, dated 1832, shows Old Radford still very rural, centred mainly around St Peter's Street beside the River Leen. There is also a cluster of buildings at Canning Circus. (The red line marks the town's former western boundary.)



St Peters Church is shown on the map by a + sign at the junction of Church Field, later renamed Churchfield Lane. Apart from the church, none of the old properties shown on the map remain today. The White Horse pub on the corner of Faraday Road (formerly known as Radford Marsh) was rebuilt on the foundations of an inn built in 1661 – it was one of thirteen inns and twenty beerhouses in the parish. Today all the remaining pubs are either Victorian or Edwardian buildings. Even the Nottingham Canal (left on the map near the Coal Yard), built in 1792, has been filled in along that stretch.

Outgang Road was sometimes called Outgang Lane and ran from St Peters Church to Sherwood Forest. It is effectively the line of the modern Hartley Road and Bentinck Road. Records in 1488 refer to it as "*the outgoings of Radford and Lenton leading toward the Linges on the northern side*". The Lings was the place where Heather (Ling) grew. The modern name for the area is The Forest. It was, until the mid-Victorian period, an area of sandy waste, covered with Heather. It was once part of Sherwood Forest and formed the northern boundary of the town. It had not been dense woodland for many centuries, as records from 1330 show that when King Edward III crossed the area on his way to Nottingham Castle to apprehend Roger Mortimer, the area was described as an open space. It was enclosed in 1798 and made available for development. The area known as Forest Fields was developed between 1885-1910.

According to Robert Mellors in his publication '*Old Nottingham Suburbs*' published in 1914, the Forest area became known as High Sands, as opposed to the low sands of Radford. Some say that this is the origin of the name, Hyson Green, ie. High-Sands Green.

During this period in history, wages were low and if you couldn't work because of illness or old age the only safety net was the Workhouse. (State old age pensions were not introduced until 1 January 1909.)

The original Radford Poor Law Workhouse was at 18 St Peter's Street (right). It housed 120 inmates and was described by Mellors as, "*a miserable monument of how the helpless poor were treated in the olden time*". Later, a more modern facility was built on Norton Street, with capacity for 210 inmates. When the Radford Union was abolished in 1880 the premises on Norton Street became a school and industrial training institute, offering apprenticeships to enable poor children to gain a trade. The old workhouse became a debtor's prison for a short while but was later converted into two cottages. It was demolished in 1968.



The development of Radford took off at a rapid pace from about 1840. Some of the lowest quality houses were built on the east side of St Peter's Street where it joined Ilkeston Road. They had shared toilet blocks, remote from the houses, and baths were taken at the local bathhouse. The 1899 OS Map below shows the cramped layout of the streets and gives some idea of the expansion in the fifty-year period since the Enclosure Act was passed in 1845. Many of the houses had to be replaced at the turn of the century.



Most of the early houses were two-up, two-down properties. Houses in New Radford were slightly better quality than those in Old Radford, and when the parish became part of Nottingham in 1877 new building standards were imposed that upped the build quality. Most of the early house were back to back terraces with a large common yard between the two rows of houses, often with a shared water pump or common tap. Three storey houses with

indoor toilets were not built until much later, and then only along the boulevard. The street names were based on popular themes: Citadel Street, Rifle Street, Target Street, Bastion Street and Gatling Street representing early military life. Others were based on places, such as London boroughs: Norwood Road, Dulwich Road, Brixton Road, Clapham Street and Sydenham Road.

By the 1850s, Nottingham had some of the worse slums in the country. Those in Middle Marsh in the city were the worst, with the area now occupied by King and Queen Street a close second. Radford was inspected by government inspectors in the late 1840s who found that the health, sanitation and hygiene standards in the parish were appalling.



Clapham Street



Mozart Street



Trafalgar Terrace



Denman Street



Clapham Street



Citadel Street



Rifle Street



Wimbourne Road



Wimbourne Road



Typical passageway



Outside toilet

The area between Denman Street, Alfreton Road and Independent Street on the east side was redeveloped from the 1950s onwards. High-rise flats, such as Highcross Court, were built. Next came the Hartley Road and Forster Street areas in the late 1970s when these pictures were taken.



Every street had a least one corner shop selling essential goods. Unlike with supermarkets today, shopping meant visiting several different shops: the butcher, baker, greengrocer and the hardware store.

(Left) This shop on Garfield Road is typical of many in the area. They were live-in shops rather than lockups - it ended its days as a café.

Many streets were swept away completely in the redevelopment of the 1980s, and some were made into cul-de-sacs. Garfield Road (right) originally ran from Hartley Road in the north through to Denman Street in the south, but after the redevelopment it was divided into several parts. Denman Street ran for about a kilometre from St Peter's Street to a point near Canning Circus and was later split and re-named in three parts: West, Central and East.



Denman Street (below left) was a major shopping 'centre' in its heyday, but has now been divided into segments, no longer open to through traffic along its original length.



Hartley Road (below) was also a major shopping area, and Alfreton Road was lined with small shops all the way up to Canning Circus. The nearest market was at Hyson Green, held twice a week, but otherwise the corner shop ruled the day.



Hartley Road had a wide range of shops for such a short stretch of road. It had two pubs (the Boulevard Hotel and the Colonel Burnaby), a post office, several chip shops, a cinema (the Windsor) and two churches. Even today it still has a variety of shops, including a gun shop! The corner shop seen here on the left was once Needham's Motors, a motorcycle business run by James Needham, the elder brother of Dave Needham who in 1970 won a Gold Medal at the

British Commonwealth Games as a flyweight boxer. He later went on to become British Bantamweight champion in 1974 and British Featherweight champion in 1978. He died in 2008.

Tucked behind the shops and houses in the warren of side streets stood a vast array of small workshops and cottage-industry style factories, making goods of all kinds. One little known example was the chocolate factory on Wimbourne Road (below).



My wife's aunt, Connie Bath, worked here with her friend Doris Elliott who lived at 14 Wimbourne Road. Connie was married at St Michaels Church, but later moved to Clifton. She returned to Radford in the 1970s and lived at Manston Mews. Doris lived in Radford all her life and died in 2010 aged 93.

The chocolate factory closed in the early 1960s and was demolished in 1980.



Wimbourne Road (below) had a mix of both two and three storey houses. The part shown below was redeveloped in 1980 and is now called Crewe Close, although the other end where it meets Alfreton Road, now blocked off from Hartley Road, still has the old name.



Most of these houses did not have a bathroom. The bath was often in the kitchen, fitted with a large removable wooden top so it could be used as a kitchen worktop. It was lifted off the bath when it was bath night.

The toilet was usually in a small building half-way down the garden. There was no electric light and in winter it was freezing cold.

Many of the houses were too small or too badly built to be modernised and were instead replaced. Some houses survived – Forster Street retained quite a lot, having bathrooms built on the back of the houses.

Radford Boulevard, (below) was built in 1883, and was a much more middle-class road, lined with relatively expensive houses. Most were built in the villa style, with large stone bay-windows, except at the Gregory Boulevard end where some open plots remained until the 1920s. Most of the Boulevard's houses have survived today, relatively unscathed. The other dominant feature of the boulevard, and one that goes with its name, is the trees that line the entire length of the road and are a majestic addition to the area.



The site of the old Children's Institute and Hospital on Norton Street and Independent Street was redeveloped in the early 1960s. Large blocks of flats were built to rehouse residents displaced by redevelopment elsewhere in the city.

Buckland Court, Bampton Court, Mellors Court and Broadway Court on Norton Street (below left) and High Cross Court on Independent Street (below right) are typical examples of the 1960s idea of modern housing. Both units were revamped in the 1990s. Buckland Court and the others were renamed Ash View, Pine View, Oak View and Willow View following their revamp, but High Cross Court has now been demolished.



(Below) The flats dominate the skyline for miles around, especially after they were upgraded.



By 2018 the population of Radford Ward was about 24,000, with a 55/45 percent male/female split. The ward boundary was revised in 2019 and the figures have therefore changed slightly, but not significantly. Nearly one third of the population was born outside the UK. The two biggest religious groups were Christian (40%) and Muslim (12%), although over 7,200 people (30%) declared themselves to be of "No Religion"!

Schools



At the time of the Enclosure Act, 1845, most schooling in Radford comprised of a weekly visit to a Sunday School attached to one of the churches. The rest of the time was spent working in either the local coal mine, on the land or later in one of the lace factories. Radford 'Village' school was based in a private house on St Peter's Street and was fee paying. (Compulsory attendance at school up to the age of 10 years was not introduced in England until 1880.)

In 1870, School Boards were set up to provide adequate schooling for children, with the first Nottingham School Board building opening on Bath Street in 1874. Radford, with its large population, required numerous schools and today four major school buildings survive, although one is no longer a school.

Bentinck Road school (above) was built in 1880 by the School Board. The Douglas Infant School on Ilkeston Road, another Board School, designed by A.N. Bromley, was built in 1885. The school on the corner of Ilkeston Road and Radford Boulevard was designed by George Hine, the son of TC Hine, and built in 1887 (it is no longer a school). A large school complex on Berridge Road and Brushfield Street was built about 1890 and catered for children from both Hyson Green and Radford. A large school on Forster Street was demolished in the 1970s.

Forest Fields Grammar School on Stanley Road, in Berridge ward, also designed by A.N. Bromley, opened in 1891 having been moved from the Lace Market where it was called High Pavement School. Although not in Radford it was the main grammar school for Radford children. It was originally a boys' only school, with girls going to Manning School, on Gregory Boulevard, which opened in 1931. Later, Forest Fields became a mixed school and today the building is used as a primary school.

Another school that served Radford children was Cottesmore on Lenton Boulevard. It was a mixed secondary-modern school and has now been demolished.



(Above) Ilkeston Road Board School was built in 1887, designed by the architect George Hine. (Below) Berridge Road school is now in Hyson Green ward and is still a school. It was built about 1890 and was always very much a Radford School.





(Above) Ilkeston Road Board School was designed in 1885 by A.N. Bromley. It is still a school. (Below) Forest Fields Grammar School was also designed by A.N. Bromley and was built in 1895. It is now a Grade II listed building and is used as a primary school.



Local Sunday schools provided religious education. The one below on Forster Street, is dated 1890.



(Below) The Chapel or Congregational Hall on Norton Street was also a Sunday School and dates from 1894.



Pubs

With the influx of industry and housing came the pub. In 1832 there were 13 inns in Old Radford, but many more were built over the next 50 years.



One of the grandest Radford pubs was the Boulevard Hotel (above) on the corner of Hartley Road and Radford Boulevard. It was built in 1883 and originally had its own small brewery at the rear. It closed for a while in the 1990s but then re-opened, although recently it seems to have closed again.



The Colonel Burnaby (left) on the corner of Denison Street is one pub that has survived. It was named after the famous Victorian adventurer Frederick Gustavus Burnaby who crossed the English Channel by balloon in 1882.

The pub now stands alone, dominated by the high-rise flats built in the 1960s. It once had a roaring trade from the workers at Fryma House lace factory (shown earlier) which stood on Denison Street.

By 1901 there were 14 pubs in the two kilometre stretch along Alfreton Road between Bobbers Mill Bridge and Canning Circus. The Grand Hotel (below) was at the Bobbers Mill end of Alfreton Road and is now a religious temple.



The Clarence Hotel (below) on the corner of Thurman Street is still a pub today, recently offering shared rooms from as little as £21 a night with bed and breakfast!



The Alma Inn (below) at the junction of Alfreton Road and Berridge Road has now closed. It was originally called the Alma Tavern and appears on the 1883 OS Map as a block of three buildings. The pub name comes from the Crimean War when the army defeated the Russians at the Heights of Alma in 1854.



The Moulders Arms (below) on Bovil Street is now the Islamic Information Centre.





A few doors up Alferton Road from the Alma is Chopin's Bar, formerly the Spread Eagle Hotel. Although the building has been modified considerably since its heyday, it closed only recently.



The Windmill Inn (below) was on the southwest side of Alfreton Road in front of Highcross Court, backing onto Clifford Street. It replaced a three-storey brick building set back from Alfreton Road. The new pub opened in the late 1960s but has now closed. The flats in the background have been demolished and replaced by modern low-rise housing.



(Below) The original pub.





(Above) At the junction of Alfreton Road and Forest Road were these two pubs: The Forest Inn (the red brick building on the left) and the Queens Hotel (the white building on the right).

(Below) Three doors up from the Queens Hotel was this pub, the Cricketers Arms.





The Generous Briton (above) was on the corner of Newdigate Street, and (below) the Running Horse was on the corner of Cromwell Street.



On the corner of Wood Street, near Canning Circus, was the Rose and Crown (below). It was built on the site of the old Radford Lunatic Asylum, erected in 1790 and closed in 1857 when the architect TC Hine built a new hospital for the insane on Coppice Road, St Ann's.



(Below) At the top of Alfreton Road, almost at Canning Circus, is a pub that was once called the Red Lion. It is shown on the 1899 OS Map as being a pub but may well have been there much earlier. It is now called the Organ Grinder.





The Sir John Borlase Warren (above) at Canning Circus now stands on an island site that was the original junction of Derby Road, Alfreton Road and Ilkeston Road. Admiral the Rt Hon Sir John Borlase Warren was born at Stapleford about 1753. He was a successful Admiral of the fleet, renowned for being rather daring. He defeated the French in 1798 off Tory Island, Ireland and received many accolades from Parliament. He died in 1822. The pub dates from about 1799. (Below) The Falcon Inn stands at the top of Alfreton Road - there are no Radford pubs on Derby Road.



Ilkeston Road also had its fair share of pubs. Sevens (below) at the top of Ilkeston Road, near Canning Circus, was a modern pub, more a bar really and never the most popular venue. It has since been demolished and replaced by one of the best looking modern high-rise buildings of recent times.



(Below) The Wheatsheaf was on the corner of Highurst Street. It is now a pharmacy.





(Above) The Sir Garnet Wolseley pub, later called the Globe, was on Denman Street Central that ran parallel to Ilkeston Road. It has now been demolished.

(Below) The Old Peacock pub on the corner of Blooms Grove Street is now studio flats. The street took its name from the old area, known for its gardens and grove of blooms, with views west over the Leen Valley towards Wollaton Hall.





The next pub to the west was the Gregory Hotel (above) on the corner of Radford Boulevard. It may still be a working pub.

(Below) The Jolly Higglers on Ilkeston Road, a later pub building that replaced the original on the corner of Prince Street, has also closed and is now a Tesco Express Supermarket.





(Above) The Nottingham Arms on Dulwich Road is now two private houses.

(Below) The Dover Castle on Denman Street Central is now a block of 14 flats.





The Marquis of Lorne (above) on Salisbury Street in the Radford Marsh area is now private flats. The houses around the pub were occupied mostly by workers at Raleigh's Cycle Works, and most have been demolished. The area is now light-industrial.

(Below) The Radford Variety Club was on Salisbury Street but was severely damaged by fire and has now been demolished. The site is now a car park.



On the corner of Ilkeston Road and Faraday Road is one of Radford's most famous pubs: The White Horse. It is famous for its appearance in the 1960s film, *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, but may also be the oldest pub site in Radford.



Records show that a pub called the White Horse has stood on the site since 1661. A picture of the original pub in 1900 is shown below. According to Robert Mellors, the original pub was dated 1661 and the diamond shaped item between the two Dutch gables (below) may be a date plaque that was removed in 1912 when the building was extensively rebuilt.

The gables in each photo are different suggesting that the pub was completely rebuilt, but a comparison of the 1901 and 1915 OS maps show that the site for both buildings is the same shape and size which suggests that the new pub was at least built on the same foundations and maybe within the gutted shell of the old pub.

This means the claims that the building dates from the mid-17th century may have some 'foundation', so to speak!



Across Faraday Road, where Sillitoe Court now stands, stood the original Crown Hotel (below). The pub was demolished in 1935 just before the road and bridge over the railway were widened. Radford Station can be seen on the right in the background. The railway marks the western edge of Old Radford, and beyond the bridge is part of the Lenton & Wollaton East Ward.



When the old crown pub was demolished, the licence was moved to the new Crown Hotel at 'Raleigh Island' (the junction of Middleton Boulevard and Western Boulevard) now more often called 'Crown Island'. The replacement pub (below), on the corner of Radford Bridge Road, was built in 1935 in the Art Deco style and is a classic example of the architecture of the time.



(Below) The Plough Inn on St Peter's Street was built in the 1920s and is still a working pub. It is now The Nottingham Brewery tap house.



(Below) Although not strictly a pub, the old snooker club on Alfreton Road, near the Capitol Cinema, did sell alcohol. The building is not dated but was probably built in the 1920s or 30s.



Radford Station

In 1848 the Midland Railway Company built a line from Nottingham to Mansfield and Worksop to bring coal to Nottingham from the north Nottinghamshire coalfields. The line originally crossed Wollaton Road on a level crossing, but a bridge was built in 1882 and the station rebuilt.

After the bridge was built, the station had a booking office at road level, with the platforms on the north side of the bridge. The line also served the Gas Works on the south side of Wollaton Road, and Radford Colliery to the north of the station. A link west to Trowell via Wollaton was opened in 1876.

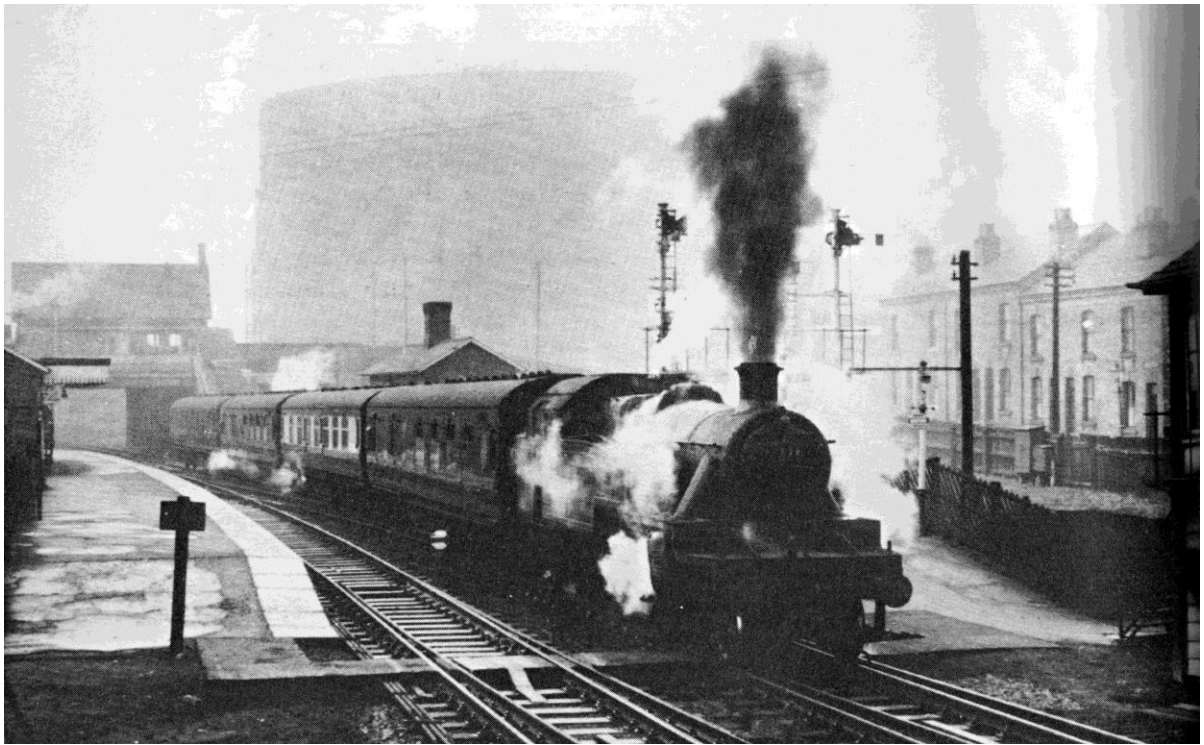


(Below left) A coal train passing through the station in 1956 and (right) a Kirkby to Wellingborough coal train in 1958.



The weighbridge offices and the station house (below) were all that remained of the station in 1980 when these pictures were taken. The station was closed in 1964 as part of the Beeching cuts, and was later demolished, but the line remained open for coal traffic. It is now called the Robin Hood line and is again carrying passengers to Bulwell, Hucknall, Mansfield and Worksop. The station site is now occupied by a Supermarket.





(Above) A view of Radford Station about 1950 with a train heading north towards Bobbers Mill on its way to Hucknall and Worksop.



(Above) Radford Station in 1934 looking north from the site of the gas works on Radford Marsh (now called Faraday Road). This picture was taken before the bridge at Wollaton Road was widened in 1936.

Bobbers Mill

The next point north along the railway line after Radford Station was Bobbers Mill where the Midland Railway line originally crossed Alfretton Road on a level crossing. Today, Bobbers Mill is in Hyson Green ward but has always been considered to be a part of Radford.



(Above) This view of Bobbers Mill crossing in 1929 is looking northwest towards Nuthall Road. Aspley Lane is off to the left behind the old Wheatsheaf Pub. The area beyond the pub was still open fields; today it is the site of housing in the Whitemoor area.



(Right) Today the old crossing site is fenced off, replaced by a bridge in 1930, but the original footbridge is still standing.

The old Wheatsheaf Pub stood where the 'Bathrooms' sign is. It was demolished about 1950 and replaced with a new pub facing the realigned main road. The new pub is now a McDonald's restaurant.

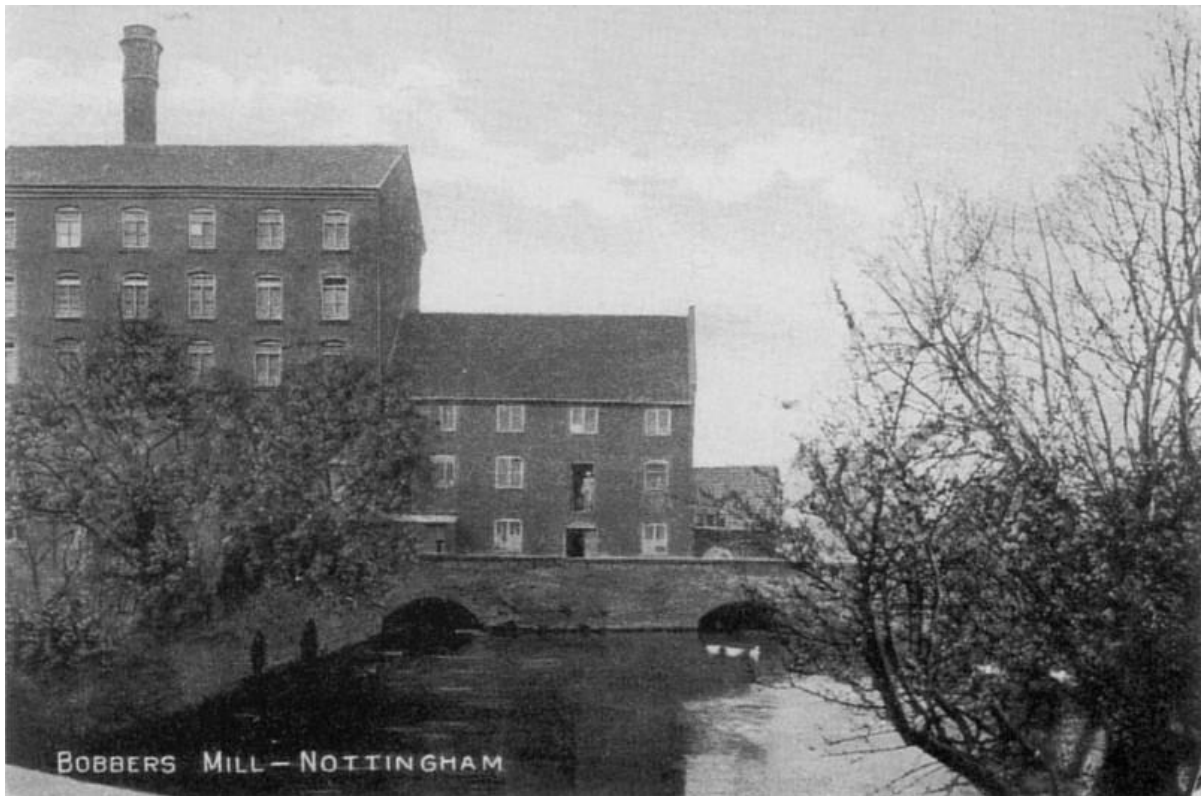
Radford Colliery (right) stood next to the railway line between New Road and Bobbers Mill Bridge. It was sunk in 1898 and was one of seven collieries that were opened along the Leen Valley around that time. At one time it employed 1,200 people. It closed in 1964.

The coal was at varying depths, the deepest being at 251m (824ft). The pit was linked underground to Wollaton Colliery, 2km (1½ miles) to the west.



This picture of the colliery and Bobbers Mill was drawn by Thomas William Hammond. Thomas was born in Philadelphia, USA in 1854, the son of émigrés from Nottingham. He was orphaned at the age of four and came to Nottingham to live with his grandparents in Mount Street. After studying at the Government School of Art he went on to draw many well-known scenes in Nottingham until his death in 1935.

(A book, *A City in the Making*, containing the drawings of Thomas Hammond is available from the Nottingham Civic Society.)



(Above) Bobbers Mill was one of three flour mills scattered along the line of the River Leen. There had been a mill at Bobbers Mill since the reign of Henry II (1154-89), who ordered that an annual payment be made to Lenton Priory out of the mill rents.

The 1955 edition of the OS Map shows the mill still in situ, but it had been demolished by the time the 1966 map was published. Next to the mill stood a bleaching and dying works that serviced the output from the lace mills. This belonged to Hicking & Pentecost.

After lace had been made it had to be washed and dyed or bleached if it was to be sold as white lace. Most lace makers outsourced this work, and Hicking's was one of several sites along the line of the Leen that undertook the work. It was a major complex that has only recently been demolished.



(Left) The remains of Hicking & Pentecost's bleaching and dying works. No prizes for guessing what the last site owner sold.

Cinemas

The Bobbersmill end of Radford has one of its most iconic buildings, the Capitol Cinema (right) on Churchfield Lane.

The Capitol, a former 'Art Deco' style cinema near the junction of Newquay Avenue and Alferton Road was designed by Nottingham architect Reginald W.G. Cooper (his third cinema design). It had seating for 1,122 customers and was built in 1936 for the Levin brother's 'Invincible Cinemas' Circuit.

Looking from above, the tower's construction was deliberately skewed so that it faced more towards Alferton Road than directly onto Churchfield Lane. Inside the auditorium, the seating was provided in stalls and a circle. The screen opening was rather narrow, which in later years made the screening of Cinemascope films a problem which contributed to its demise as a cinema.

It closed as a cinema on 8th June 1968 after a showing of "Up the Junction" with Suzie Kendall. It was converted into an independently operated bingo club and was extensively redecorated in 1988. It continued as the Carlton Bingo Club until 2004, after which it was converted into the Mt. Zion Millennium City Church. It is now a Grade II listed building.



The Windsor Cinema (below) on Hartley Road opened in 1939 and closed on 8th June 1963. It then became John Player & Sons' cigarette coupon showrooms and is now a carpet shop.



The highly decorative Orion Cinema (below) opposite Raleigh Street on Alfreton Road opened on 15th May 1913 as the Electra House Cinema and had seating for 800. It closed on 18th April 1959 and has since been demolished, replaced by shops.



Ilkeston Road Picture House, near St Peter's Street, opened in 1914 and closed in 1962. It has been demolished.

Banks

Radford had four banks on Alferton Road and one on Radford Boulevard. Perhaps the most elegant, or bizarre depending on your preference, was the Midland Bank (below) on the corner of Peveril Street and Alferton Road, seen here in 1979. It was designed by the Nottingham architect, A.N. Bromley and built in 1884. It is now an apartment block.





This bank (above) on the corner of Alfreton Road and Boden Street belonged to Lloyds Bank Ltd and was also designed by A.N. Bromley in 1913.

The Midland Bank had a second branch in Radford, on the corner of Alfreton Road and Raleigh Street (below), built in 1902, designed by the architect Laurence Bright.





(Above) This building on the corner of Alfreton Road at Canning Circus is now a bar but was once a bank, hence the pub's name – The Over Draught.



This Angling Centre (above) on Radford Boulevard near Denman Street was once a branch of the United Counties Bank Limited, later to become part of Barclays Bank. It is mentioned in the 1885 trade directory so must have opened soon after the boulevard was built in 1883.

Street items

(Below) The offices and yard of Skills Coaches was once on Alfreton Road, near the corner of Forest Road. Skills was founded in 1919 by Arthur Skill and their original bus garage was at the back of this shop, accessed from Forest Road. Later they moved the coaches to St Peters Street. As well as the shop, the site on Alfreton Road sold fuel to private motorists, at one time for 4/8d a gallon (about 23p). By 1979 when this photograph was taken the pumps had been unused for some time and the price of petrol had quadrupled to £1.10 per gallon. The site has since been redeveloped and is now a housing complex known as Sunbourne Court.



This fire hydrant (left) is on Denman Street West near Radford Boulevard. There was another on Norton Street, but that has recently (2020) been removed.

No one seems to know much about them. There are thirteen in the city, and some bear the name G.D. Hughes, which stands for George Douglas Hughes of Nottingham who opened a foundry on London Road in the 1860s. Most have the water outlet at the top, facing upwards, normally closed off with a screw-in plug. A few others have a side outlet but are otherwise the same. There is one in the Park Estate that has a fluted column instead of a plain one, but that is the only one like it.

These hydrants seem to be specific to Nottingham but are not listed or on the local list. Perhaps they should be. 📖

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