

Sutton and Mansfield's historic cotton mills



well read
informed communications

This education Pack developed by Kate Dawson at Well Read in consultation with local heritage groups and schools. Particular thanks to Denis Hill, Heritage Consultant for his help providing historic background.

at Mill Waters heritage site

Farming and the cotton industries

Before the mills families made a living by farming and producing material (or textiles) in their homes.

The children broke up the raw wool or cotton fibres; the women would spin the yarns; and the men would weave the yarn on a loom.



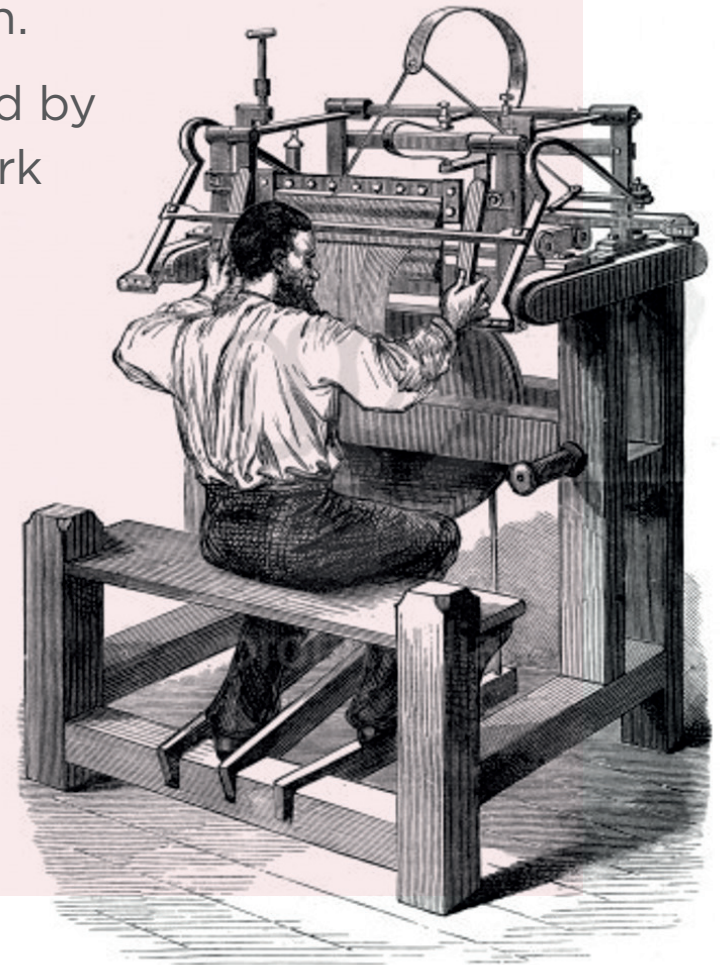
Advances in technology

The invention of the Spinning Jenny in 1764 meant yarn could be produced much faster.



By 1844 there were over 1800 frames in Sutton.

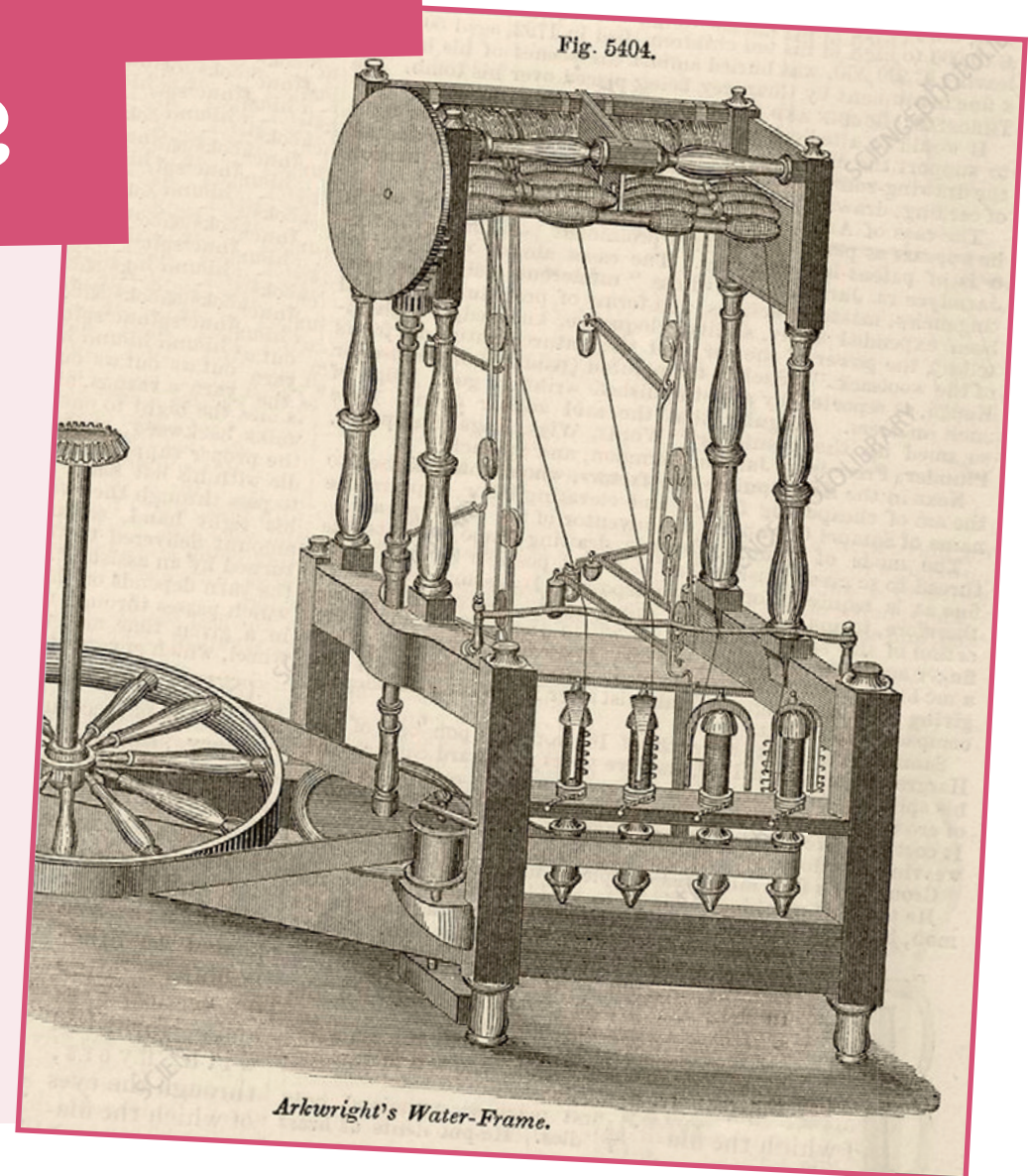
These were used by skilled framework knitters, or 'stockingers' to make textiles in their homes.



The invention of the water frame

Richard Arkwright's water spinning frame could spin up to 128 threads at a time, which was an easier and faster method than ever before.

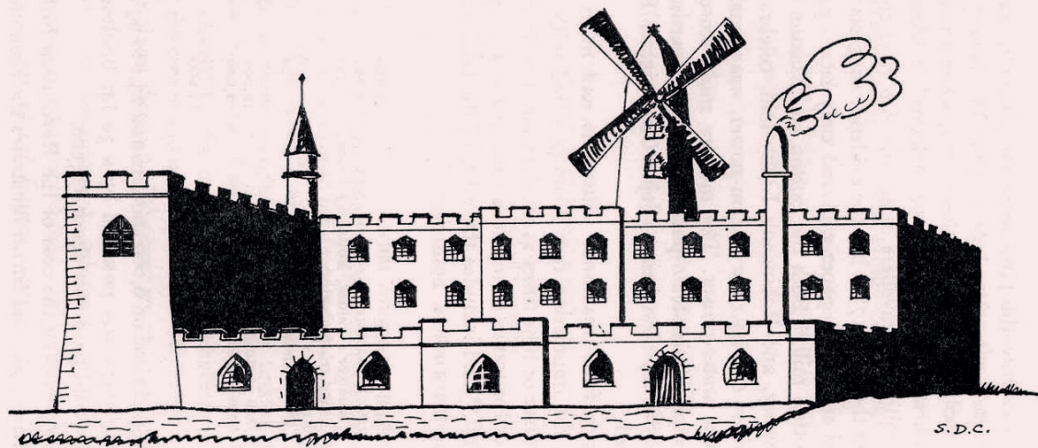
The water frame put the stockings out of business because they had to buy the yarn which was more expensive than the raw material.



Sutton (or Unwin's) Mill

Samuel Unwin built his first factory, or 'works', near Eastfield Side based on Arkwright's water-powered mill in Cromford, Derbyshire.

This is an engraving of what the factory would have looked like from a picture drawn on Unwin's promissory note – a kind of I.O.U.



Sutton Mill, near Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, c. 1784
(From an engraving on Samuel Unwin's promissory notes)



Sutton Lawns and Dobson's Mill



This is a sketch of old Sutton Hall which Unwin built as his family home. The gardens became what are now known as Sutton Pleasure Lawns.



The Hall is no longer there, but this is a photograph of Unwin's old mill (then called Dobson's mill) before it was converted into a residential property.

King's Mill

Records of a King's Mill go back nearly 1000 years. Originally it would have milled flour.

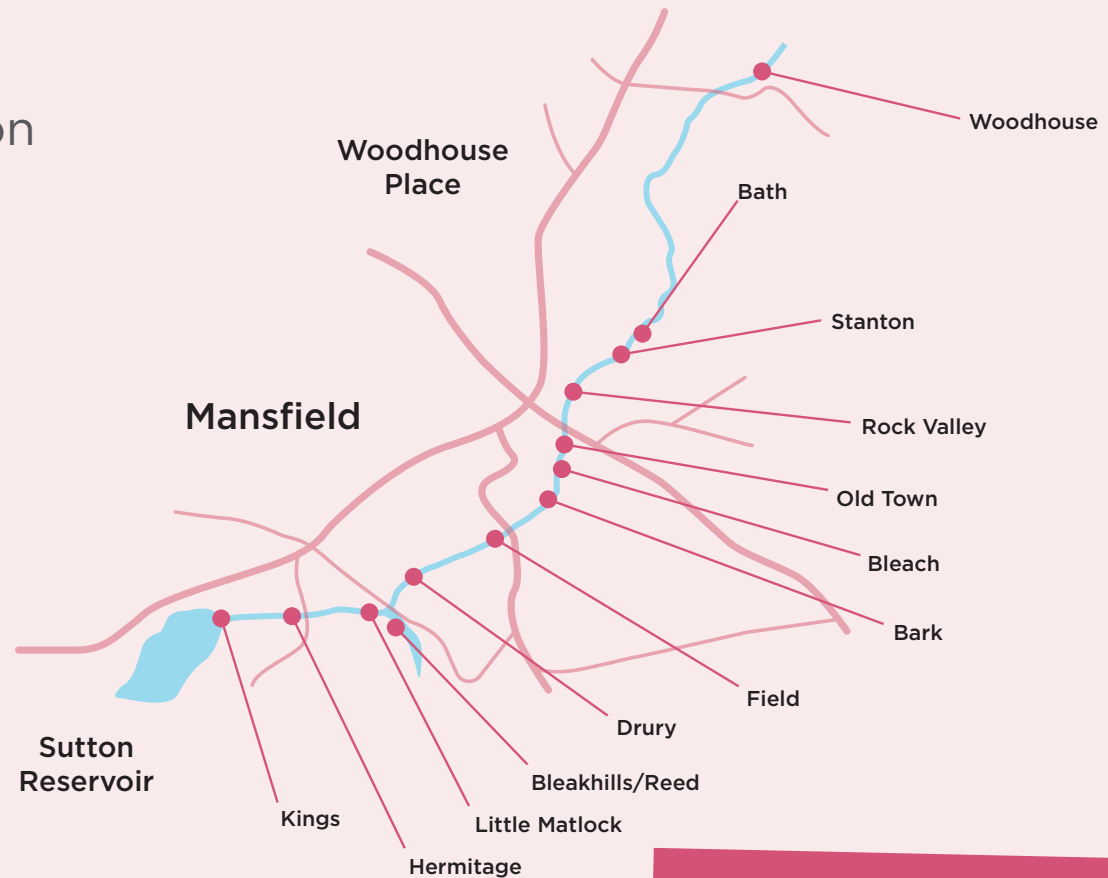
This is how the old mill might have looked in 1787, by Albert S Buxton, who painted it in 1920.



Conversion of the corn mills for the textiles industry

The Duke of Portland commissioned the conversion of the corn mills to carry out cotton spinning and other textiles processes.

By the mid 1800s there were many water powered mills along the banks of the River Maun.

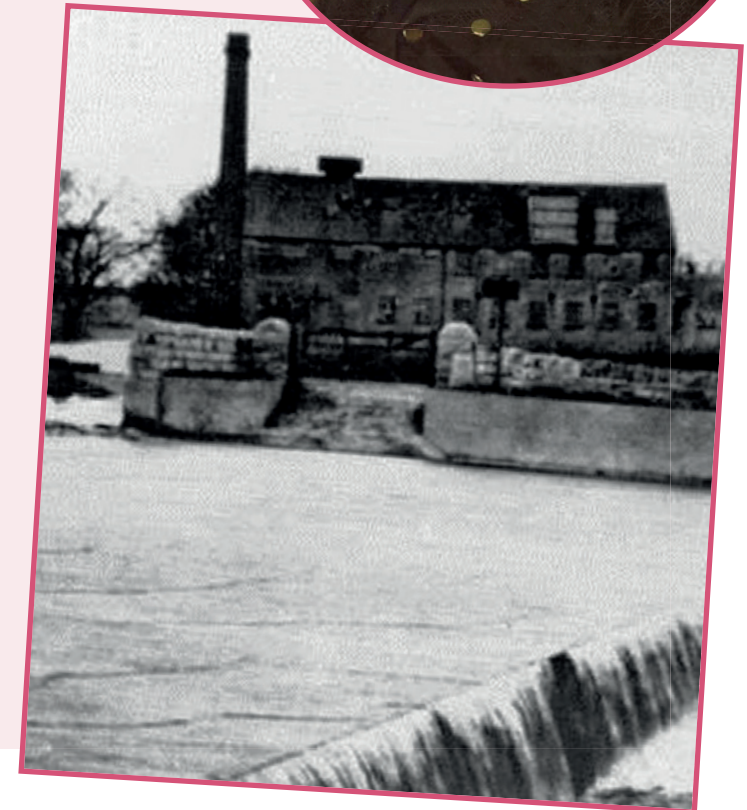


1901 Bartholomew Map

Why is there a reservoir at Kings Mill?

In 1839 the 4th Duke of Portland (circled) created the 72 acre (29 hectares) King's Mill Reservoir, to increase the head (supply) of water to the nearby mills to further boost productivity. It took two years and cost £9,000. In return the mill owners paid rates to the Duke for 40 years.

The old King's Mill was submerged when the reservoir was flooded and rebuilt nearby. This photo shows the new mill that was built in around 1840.



Hermitage Mill

Here is a photograph of Hermitage Mill taken around 1900.

The building is Grade II listed which means it can't be demolished.

The owners have permission to convert it into sheltered accommodation.



Street names relating to the mills

Kings Mill Road

Sutton Road

Unwin Road

Hermitage Lane

Millersdale Avenue

Kings Lodge Drive



Mill Court