

THE HEATON LANE GASWORKS

In 2022 archaeological excavations revealed the remains of Heaton Lane Gasworks and Wellington Bridge Mill on this site.

The Heaton Lane Gasworks was established by mill owner Henry Booth in 1828. The gasworks originally comprised three gas holders, a retort house and several other related structures. This privately-owned infrastructure served a vital role in providing lighting within the nearby mill at Wellington Bridge.

In 1839, the gasworks was purchased by the Stockport Corporation, who sought to extend the supply across the Borough. As the market for gas reached beyond the factory setting to other commercial and domestic premises and for illuminating streets, the works were expanded, eventually replacing areas of back-to-back housing and Wellington Bridge Mill. By 1876, the demand for gas far outstripped the supply from the Heaton Lane works and a new site was acquired at Portwood. Gas production at the site ceased in 1907.

The early 19th-century gas holders were replaced with two much larger examples. During the archaeological investigation the remains of one was exposed, revealing that its thick brick walls were sealed with a layer of clay to prevent gas from escaping the structure. The archaeological investigation also recorded the remains of an office building, a weighbridge and yard entrances.



WELLINGTON BRIDGE MILL

Wellington Bridge Mill was established by 1841 to produce cotton yarn. Around 300 workers were employed at the mill.

In the eastern part of the site, archaeological excavations uncovered parts of the spinning hall, a large five-storey structure with a basement situated next to John Street. The remains of the mill's engine house were also found including four substantial stone engine beds, used to support the steam engine.

Wellington Bridge Mill continued to produce textiles until around 1895 when it was absorbed into the gasworks. The mill and gasworks were eventually demolished in 1934.

