The invention of the stocking frame in 1589 by Calverton curate William Lee launched three centuries of development in machine-made textiles in the East Midlands. With over 2000 parts, it was able to produce at a fast rate stockings, underwear, and eventually lace (by

The Knitters' Circular and Monthly Record.

An organ for the Hosiery Trade.

Telegraphic Address-"KNITTER, LEIGESTER."

No. 1.]

LEICESTER, JANUARY, 1894.

[Vol. I.]

A depiction of William Lee's inspiration for the stocking frame from Vol 1 of *The Knitters' Circular and Monthly Record* (Leicester, 1894). PSC ACC 2971.

dropping stitches to create holes in the fabric). The frames could be operated from home, providing work for whole families with women and children engaged in finishing the knitted garments.

The East Midlands became the centre for framework knitting thanks in part to local developments in cotton and silk spinning by Richard Arkwright and Jedediah Strutt, and wages which undercut those set by the London-based Framework Knitters Company. William Felkin's 1844 census of stocking frames found more than 27 times the number in the East Midlands than the rest of the country combined.

Machine-made lace was an offspring of the hosiery industry thanks to the invention of a machine patented in 1809, based on the stocking frame, by Derbyshire framesmith John Heathcoat. It was capable of replicating the motion of cushion lace bobbins to twist the yarn, creating a hexagonal bobbin net to which a pattern was added by female hand embroiderers.

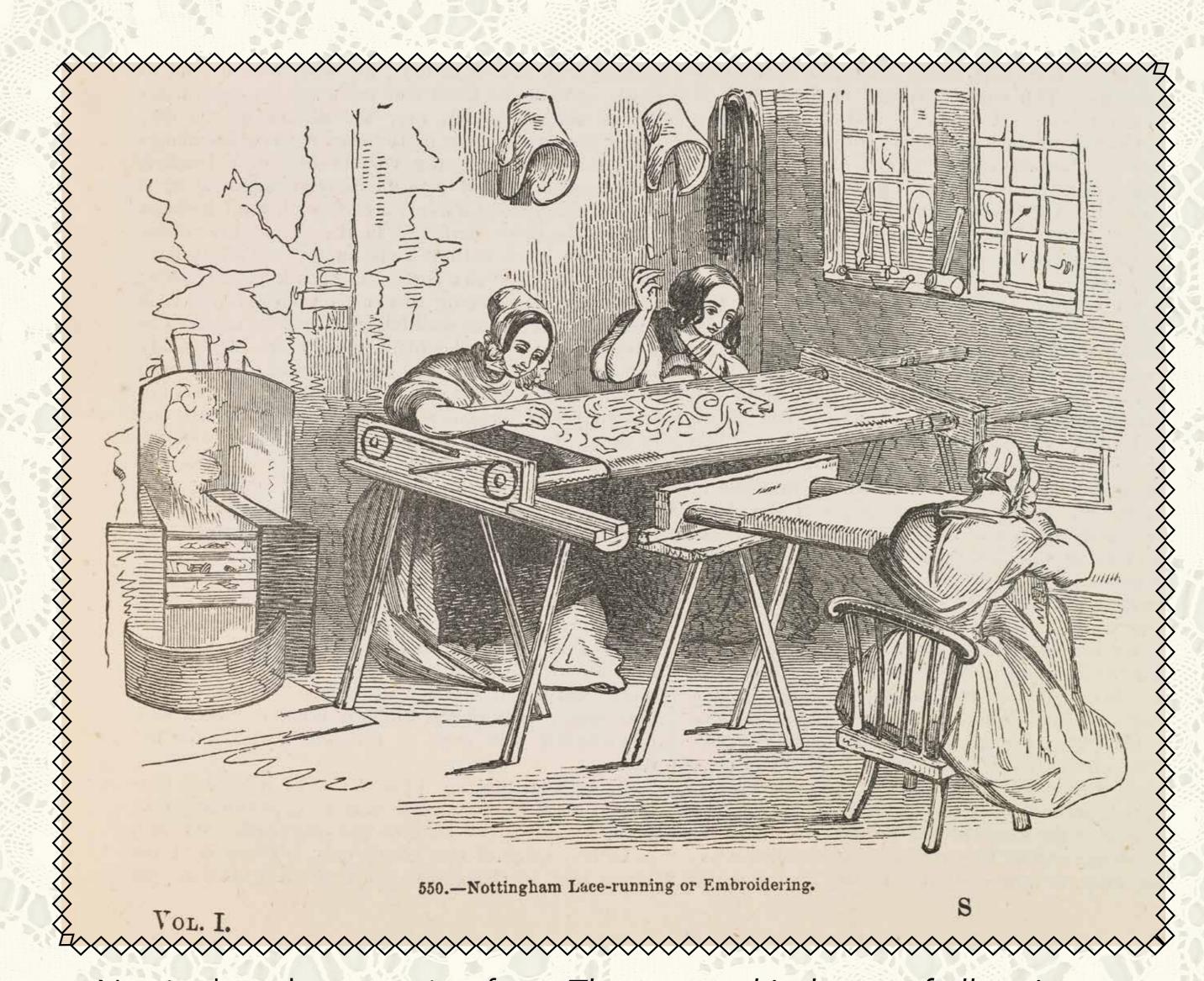
Lace machines were finally able to produce patterned lace when in 1813

Nottinghamshire's John Levers introduced the machine which bears his name
(also spelled Leavers). The machine used jacquard cards, punched cards
controlling the threads, to create the pattern. Nottingham lace became
famous around the world, and lace machines manufactured in the region
were widely exported. When the lace industry fell into decline, the skilled
mechanics would go on to bring their expertise to the city's bicycle
industry.

Lace is fashionable: be in fashion"

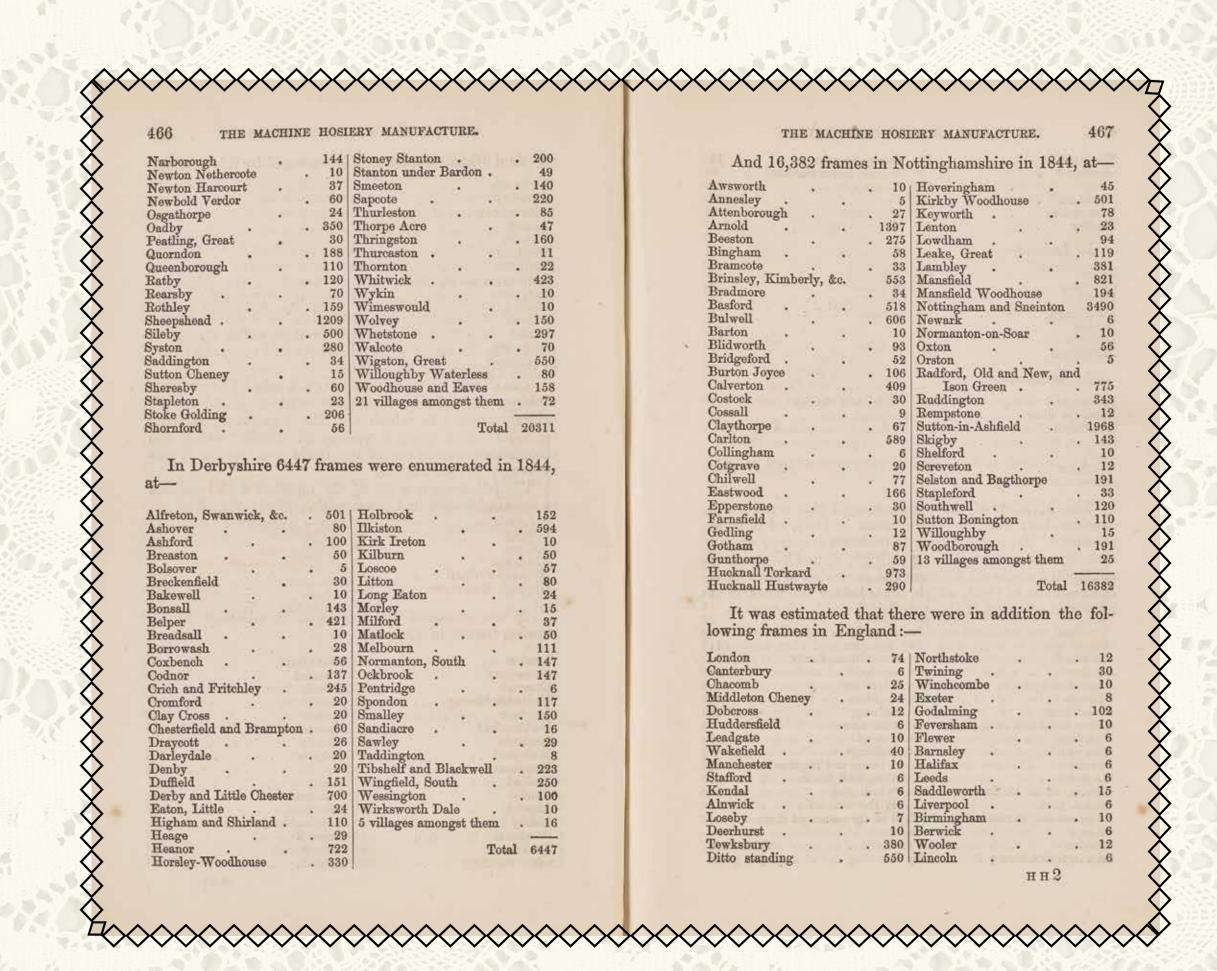


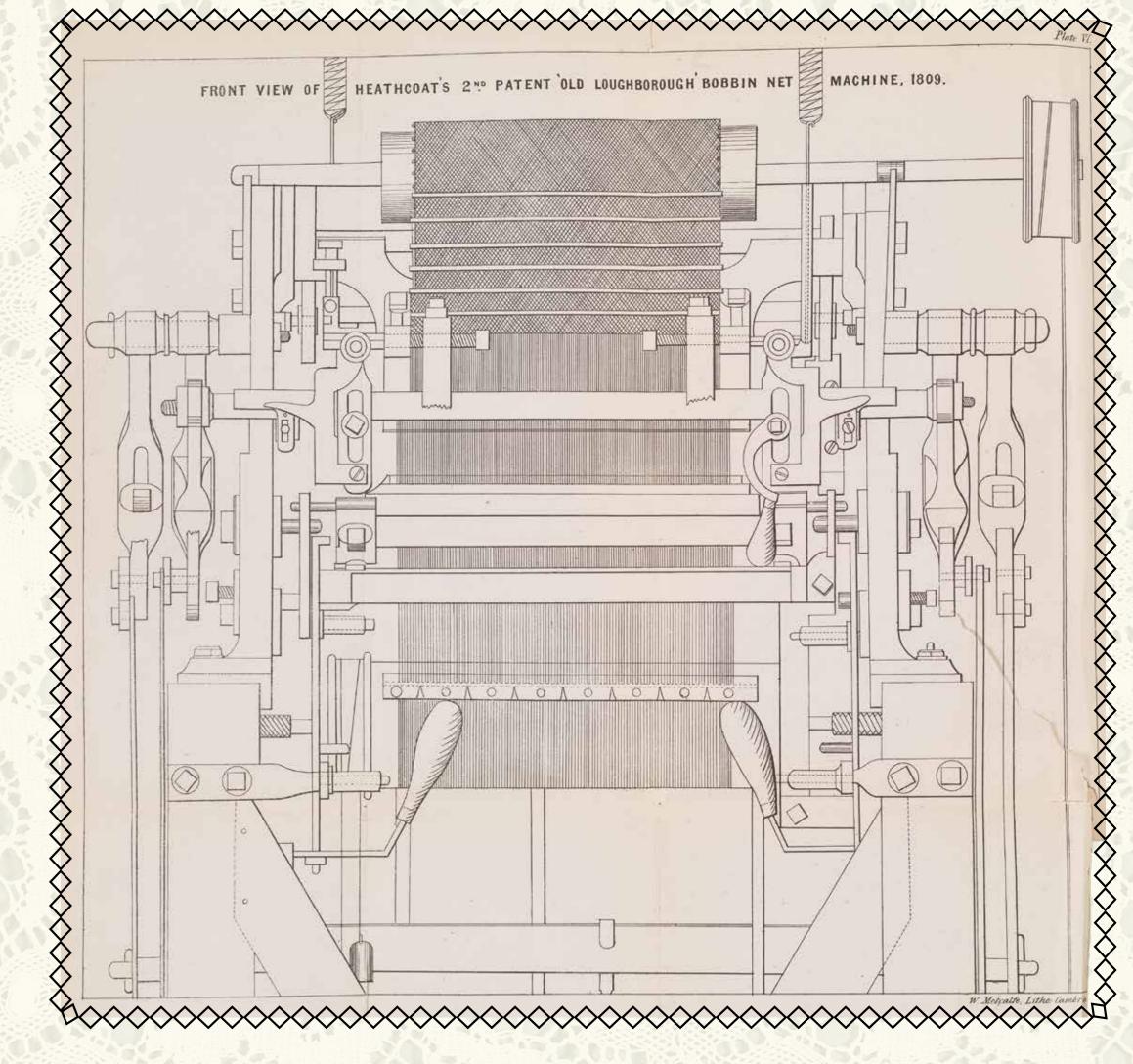
An employee working the last stocking frame at Frederick Longdon & Co Ltd, Derby, c.1970s. BLD 13/4.



Nottingham lace-running from *The arts and industry of all nations...* (London, c.1860). Charles Knight Collection Oversize N7425.A7.







Above: List of stocking frames in 1844 and Heathcoat's 'Old Loughborough' bobbin net machine, both from A History of the Machine-wrought Hosiery and Lace Manufactures by William Felkin (London, 1867). East Midlands Special Collection Not 3.022 FEL.



