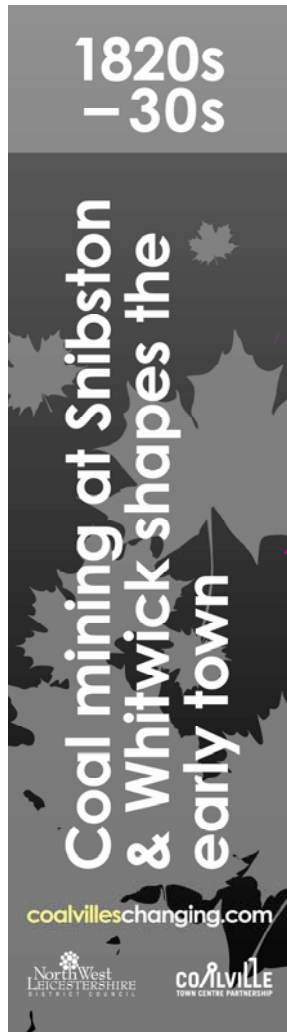




## A BRIEF HISTORY OF COALVILLE IN 6 BANNERS



The development of the new town of Coalville was initiated by William Stenson, who returned to the area from the Forest of Dean coalfield, to sink a mine in Whitwick parish in the 1820s. Subsequently, George Stephenson initiated coal mining at Snibston, where Snibston Colliery opened in 1833.



Having reached coal, Stenson investigated means of transporting it to the Leicester market and was successful in persuading the great George Stephenson to support the building of one of the world's earliest railways. The Leicester and Swannington Railway opened in 1832, and had a small station at Long Lane (now Ashby Road) in Coalville – the first street in the town. The railway was extended to Burton upon Trent in 1845, placing Coalville on an important route between Burton and Leicester, with later links to Nuneaton and Shepshed.



Houses, chapels and schools were built for the miner's families, and speculators and traders arrived to meet their demands for goods. Other industries sprung up around the railway, including quarrying, textile and engineering industries, such as railway wagon production. Coalville was famous for the quality of its terracotta clay, and Coalville mosaic tiles were world-renowned.



## A BRIEF HISTORY OF COALVILLE IN 6 BANNERS

1868

George Smith of Coalville  
campaigns for the rights  
of brickyard children

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Disturbed by the conditions in which children and young women were forced to work, George Smith gained fame as a Victorian social reformer, who as a private individual successfully fought to bring children and women of the brick and tile yards under the protection of his Brickyard Act of 1884. George was dismissed from his job at the brick yard for his involvement, but went on to lobby for improvements to conditions for child workers on canal boats and gypsies.

1940s

Spitfire landing gear  
made in Coalville  
& Whitwick

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During the Second World War, factories across the UK were converted from their normal manufacturing business to make parts for war machinery such as planes, tanks and guns. Factories in Whitwick were converted to make the landing suspension gear for Spitfires and Seafires.

1960s  
– 80s

Action Man toys  
manufactured in  
Coalville

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Manufacturing evolved in Coalville during the 20th Century. Cascelloid, founded in 1909 utilising First World War surplus nitrocellulose to produce thermoplastics, successfully manufactured plastic toys for most of the century. Eventually, trading as Palitoy, the "Action Man" range was produced and sold in the United Kingdom and Australia by Palitoy Ltd of Coalville from 1966 until 1984. Palitoy are also notable for their manufacturing of Tiny Tears, Care Bears and Star Wars figurines.