

Lancaster Civic Vision

Celebrating our Heritage – Enhancing our Environment – Shaping our Future

QUARRIES IN LANCASTER

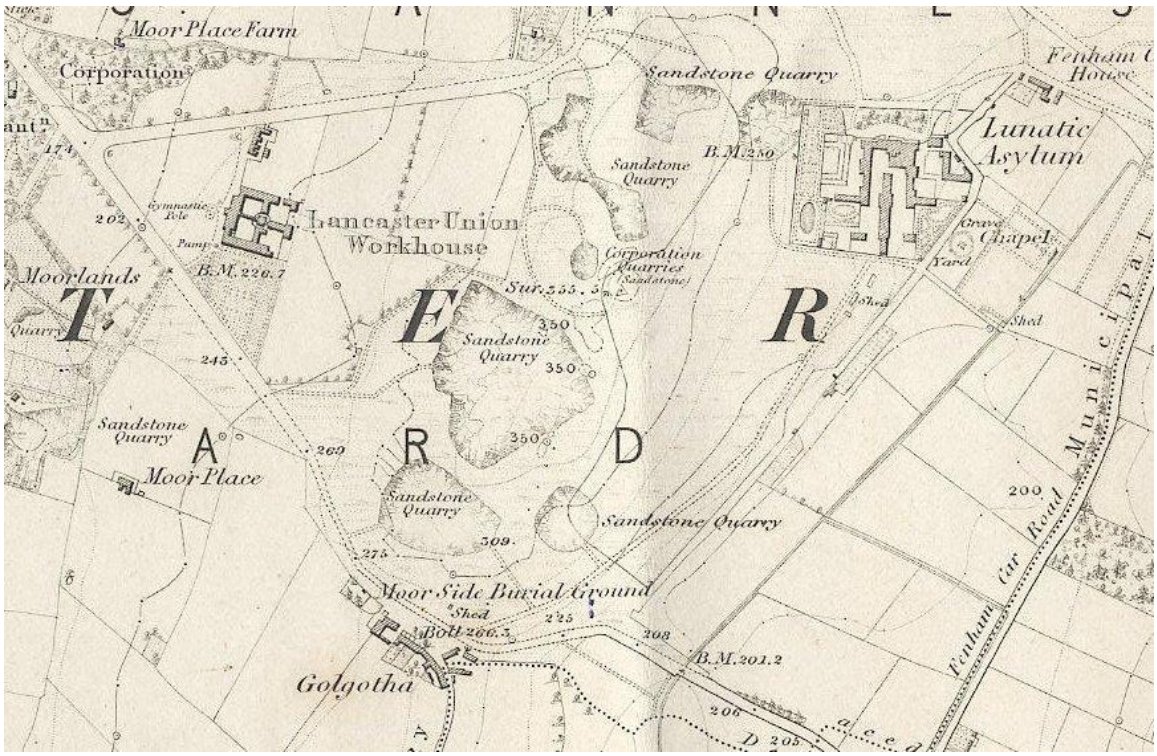
Lancaster Civic Vision Guide 106

In Guide 52 *The Building Stones of Lancaster*, we showed that traditionally Lancaster has been a city built of stone. Until the coming of the railways, construction stone – heavy, bulky and needed in large amounts – was very expensive to transport over long distances by horse and cart. Hence Lancaster's building stones – mostly Carboniferous sandstones – came from local quarries. This Guide locates the largest of these quarries.

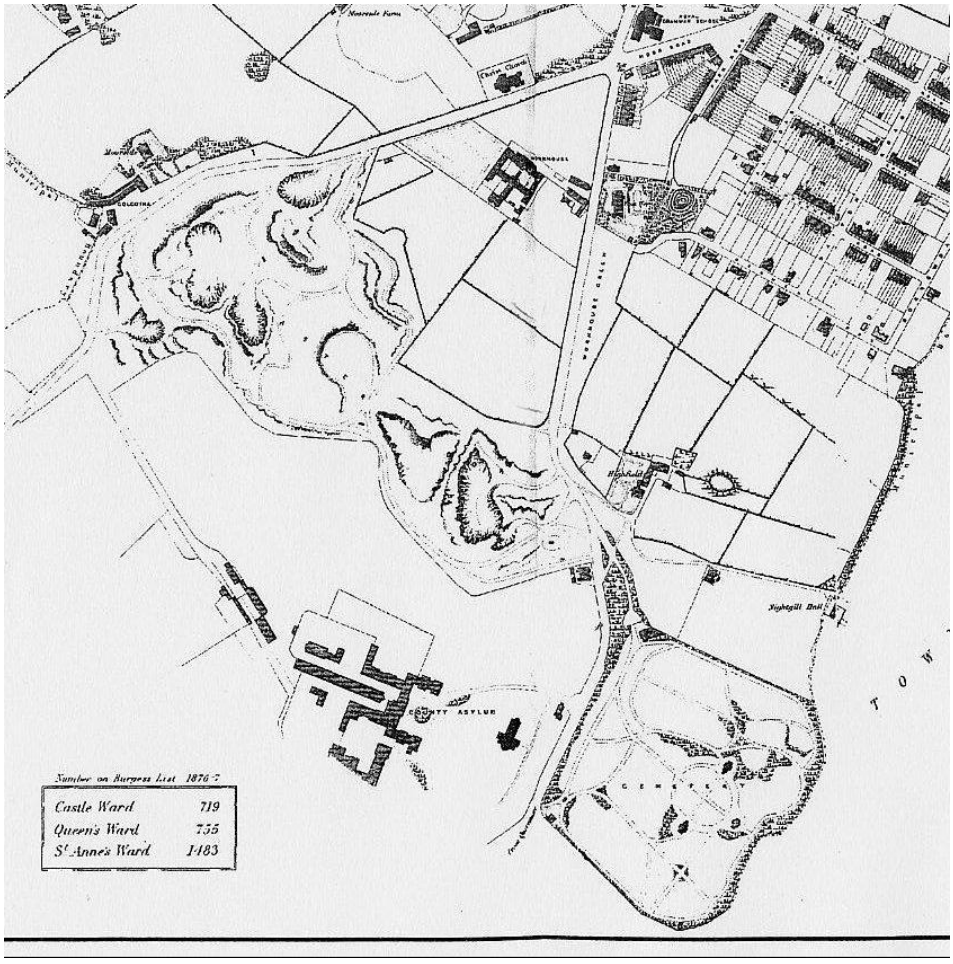
The best known, to those who live in Lancaster, are the quarries in what is now Williamson Park, which were so near the town and the road was downhill to the building sites.

The two maps below (Ordnance Survey of 1844–5 and Harrison and Hall in 1877) show that there were several quarry faces. The right to extract stone was leased out to various quarriers.

The cliffs, left when quarrying had ceased, created a dramatic backdrop when the landscaped Park opened to the public. More details about the park can be found in Guide 35 *Four Parks in Lancaster and Morecambe*.



The quarries as shown on the OS map at 1.10,560 in surveyed in 1844–5



The quarries as shown on Harrison and Hall's map of 1877
West is at the top of the map.

Another quarry near the town was Scotch Quarry in the Primrose area, shown below in the OS 25-inch map of 1891. It is now an open space for the local community.

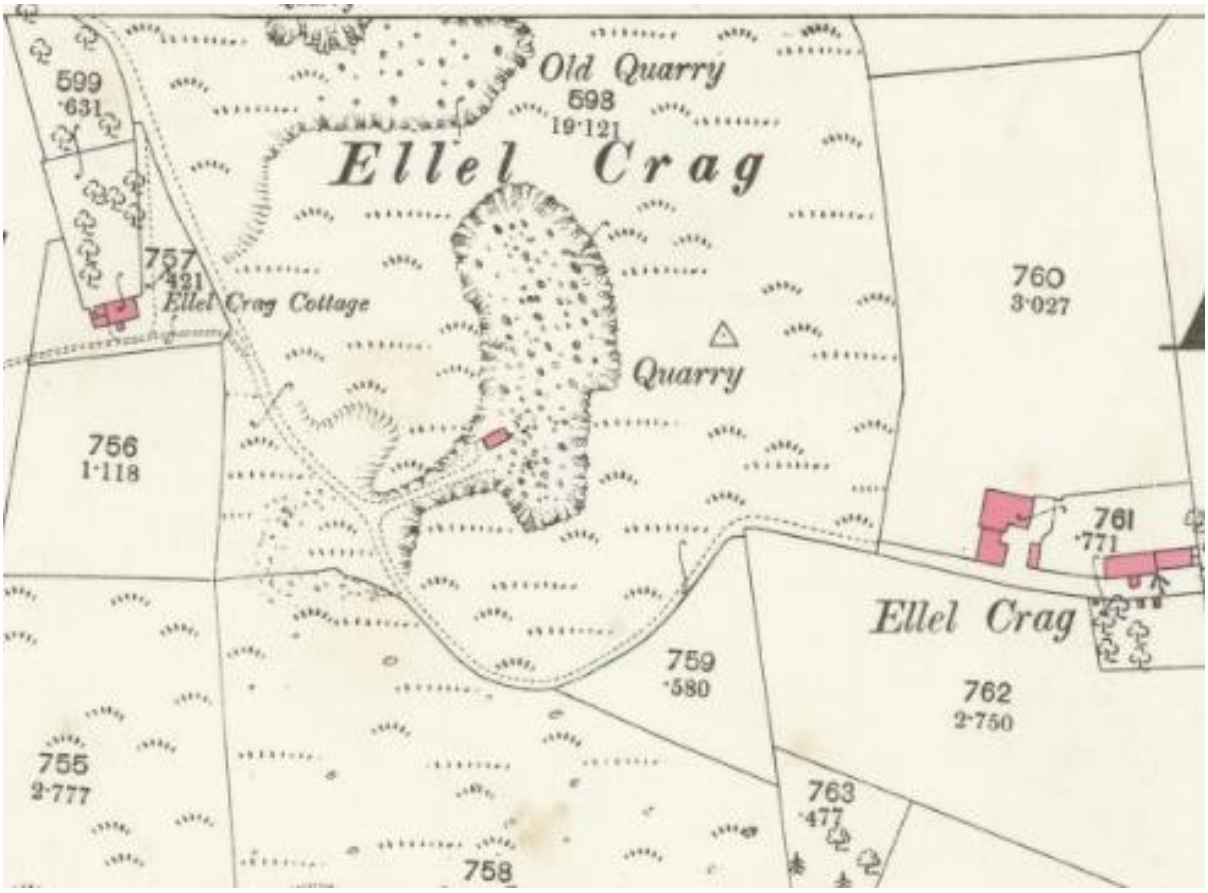


Scotch Quarry, OS 25-inch map 1890–1

A little further from town was Greaves Quarry, which was east of Fern Bank in Scotforth. It was filled in – as a Corporation rubbish tip – to form a playing field accessed from York Road in Bowerham.

The largest of the local quarries was Ellel Crag, east of Galgate, shown below on the OS 25-inch map of 1890. It was a fully operational quarry until recently. It is now used as a recycling centre for sand and aggregates.

It produced a fine- to medium-grained sandstone that was creamy-buff in colour when first quarried and easy to work. Sandstones very like that quarried at Ellel Crag were taken from Welby Crag, Mainstones and Yeat House, all east of Lancaster.



Ellel Crag Quarry OS 25-inch map 1890

The area also has many smaller quarries, perhaps used for a short period for a set of houses or for farm or estate buildings.

Further away from Lancaster there are major quarries at Over Kellet where limestone is still quarried.

Text – Gordon Clark.
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