



Secret Swindon

Angela Atkinson 978-1445-68338-6 £14.99 Paperback

Secret Swindon explores the lesser-known history of the Wiltshire town of Swindon through a fascinating selection of stories, unusual facts and attractive photographs.

What is now Swindon's Old Town – or Old Swindon as it might rightfully be called – began life as an Anglo-Saxon settlement. That early version of Swindon became a small market town and a sculpture of a ram marks the site where the livestock market once took place, one of many pieces of public art that punctuate the town.

As a sleepy market town, Old Swindon would likely have stayed were it not for the Industrial Revolution. The subsequent acceleration in Swindon's growth began with the 1810 construction of the Wilts and Berks canal and later the North Wilts canal, though the real transformative factor came between 1841 and 1842 with the historic decision by Isambard Kingdom Brunel and Daniel Gooch to establish their Great Western Railway works in Swindon.

Swindon's connections to London and the South West made it possible for many later industries to come to the town. Over the decades, Swindon's engineering and manufacturing associations have run the gamut, from BMW to Honda, Garrard record decks to Triumph lingerie and Bluebird toys with iconic aviation playing its part.

Today's Swindon is a surprising, multi-layered, creative hotspot that is home to artists and writers of every genre and calibre. Author Angela Atkinson peels back a few of these layers and shows how surprising Swindon is. In *Secret Swindon*, she explores some of the lesser-known episodes and characters in the history of this Wiltshire town, bringing to life tales of those who have lived in it and the places they inhabited.

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