

Victorian Ilkley

Mike Dixon - Friends of the Manor House

While Ilkley has a long history, at the start of Victoria's reign it was no more than a village. It was the arrival of 'The Water Cure' and the Hydropathic Hotels that brought about a rapid increase in its importance as an inland spa, and desirable residency.

Begin at the Manor House, Castle Yard BP2

Walk right past MH along the path by All Saints churchyard and round the path to the traffic lights at Church St, A65 junction

The church was founded in Anglo Saxon times, using stone on site from the Roman Fort. It is mentioned in the 1086 Norman Domesday Book. There is a 15th century tower and north wall. The south east was re-built in 1860-61 when the church was enlarged to cater for the increasing summer population of Ilkley.

The small garden at the corner was until 1959 the site of the old Wheatsheaf Hotel. Right across Church St is the 1890s rebuilt coaching inn, the Rose & Crown [Black Hat]. At the start of Leeds Road were two adjoining 1860s pubs: The Star and The Wharfedale. As this junction was a narrow "dog-leg", the latter pubs were demolished to make a new cross junction, but not before a replacement pub, The Wharfedale Star [The Dalesway], had been opened in September 1905. On the opposite corner the Crescent Hotel erected in 1860 **BP18** with large rear stabling.

Cross at traffic lights, walk up Brook St.

Originally a stream (brook) ran down the east side but this was culverted in 1853 making an unusually broad street. Immediately on the right, Miss Sarah Beanlands had Ilkley's first shopping development, Brook Terrace, built in 185. The houses on the east side were gradually turned into shops. After the Middleton land sales, starting in 1867, a farm and cottages on the west side were demolished to make way for shops and banks.

Stop opposite Railway Rd. Look right up to the back of the Railway Station

In 1865 Ilkley Station opened, with two lines terminating (as now) at Ilkley. The extension to Skipton opened in 1888, with an iron girder bridge across Brook St and the re-alignment of Railway Road made way for the two new through-line platforms. The [Costa Coffee] was Beanlands grocery shop, with a back archway (Railway Rd) to their warehouse. Here on the west side of Brook St by the Bradford Penny Bank, built in 1885 [Barclays Bank], is the residual gap for the extended railway. The low stone wall is a remnant of the western abutments and viaduct that ran behind The Grove until the 1970s. The gap is filled by reused stone 20th century shops.

Cross at the zebra crossings, turn up left onto the station fore court

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BP12 is the railway station. Across the road is the late 1860s Midland Hotel and the Station Hotel [originally the North View Hotel]. The original Station Hotel on Brook St was demolished in the 1880s to make way for the railway bridge. Opposite, the shops with apartments above occupied by Dacre Son and Hartley was built in 1870.

Return to Brook St, cross the crossings and turn up left to go along The Grove
Across The Grove is a block of banks and offices also erected in 1870. Then there is Christchurch, originally the Congregational Church built in 1869, in the Victorian Gothic style. The spire is 40 metres (130 feet) high and had seating for 644 people. The shops on The Grove were erected between 1870 and 1900.

Cross Cunliffe Rd to continue on The Grove.

The Canker Well, once a drinking fountain garden. On the right is an old marble bath, inscribed: "In honour of Vincent Priessnitz, the Silesian peasant to whom the world is indebted for the blessing of the system of cure by cold water, this fountain is gratefully erected and inscribed by Hamer Stansfeld. Ben Rhydding, XXIX May MDCCCXLIV" (29 May 1844)." This is a relic of the great Hydro demolished 1954/55.

Walk around the corner of The Grove, with the Memorial Gardens on your left, to the junction with Regent Road.

On the right Grove Square **BP7** built after the 1872 sale of the cricket field

Cross Regent Rd continue down Bolton Bridge Rd

Go past the terrace of Victorian houses. At the end is the gap where the railway viaduct ran. The brick [Coop shop] was built as an 1890s workshop concealed by the viaduct only its front was built in stone. Then is The Old Wesleyan Chapel **BP17**

Turn right onto Skipton Rd and walk towards the town centre.

After 100 metres across the road is the 1637 Ilkley Grammar School **BP5**. It closed in 1872 when the pupils went to the new National Schools on Leeds Road. In 1893 a new Ilkley Grammar School opened on Cowpasture Rd. Further on are the former Stables and then [Lister Court] 1829 New Inn, later renamed The Lister's Arms Hotel after the first landlord John Lister.

Cross Cunliffe Rd and continue along Church St

The Box Tree was a dairy next to stables and old cottages which were replaced in 1895 by Beanlands Arcade, a group of shops under a glass roof.

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Cross Hawksworth St then cross the pelican crossing and turn left

A street of mainly early Victorian cottages and shops with a taller 1895 building. The Flying Duck, was once a detached farmhouse. Over the door is the date of renovation, 1709 CNA, when the Cunliffe family came to live there.

Come to Bridge Lane and turn right to Castle Hill

On the left was a donkey field - donkeys were used to transport summer visitors up to White Wells. In the wall opposite are steps that led up to the cottage where John "Donkey" Jackson lived. Just past Castle Hill is the handsome doorway of Castle House, once Low House, a farmhouse renovated in 1732. By the 1890s it was a café and lodging house. The other houses were added after the 1868 land sale.

Walk up Castle Hill past the 1870s cottages back to Castle Yard