

Welcome

This heritage trail gives an introduction to the story of Leeds, concentrating on the legacy of Victorian times and some of the people, places and spaces that have made the city what it is today. Internationally known for its varied Victorian architecture, Leeds is the UK's third largest city. It is surrounded by beautiful countryside and famous as the gateway to the Yorkshire Dales. Renowned for its commerce, shopping and digital industries, Leeds is also justly proud of its vibrant culture, music and arts scenes and its sporting achievements.



On the other side of this trail, you will find information that takes you from 12th Century Leeds into the 19th Century when the industrialists, architects, philanthropists and engineers made their mark. On this side, we invite you to explore a section of other historical themes that tell the story of industrial Leeds. You will also find information to direct you to other sources of interest and information including Leeds' fascinating museums and its Central Library.

Thwaite Mills Waterfall is a fully restored working watermill in a riverside setting rich in wildlife. See the power of water as two huge waterwheels drive the mill and visit the blacksmith's workshop and manager's house. www.leeds.gov.uk/thwaitemills

Leeds Industrial Museum at Armley Mills, once the world's largest woollen mill, presents a fascinating insight into the city's industrial heritage with steam engines, a spinning mule and many more fascinating exhibits. www.leeds.gov.uk/armleymills

Abbey House Museum, once the gate house of Kirkstall Abbey, is a lively, interactive museum. Step back in time and explore the Victorian streets for glimpse of life in 19th Century Leeds. www.leeds.gov.uk/abbeyhouse

Leeds City Museum has four floors of interactive and exciting galleries. Come face to face with the Leeds tiger, steps into Ancient Worlds, explore the story of Leeds, and dig for fossils in the Life on Earth gallery. www.leeds.gov.uk/citymuseum

Leeds Art Gallery. Home to one of the best collections of British art outside London, the Art Gallery showcases a wealth of well-known artists and presents a dynamic temporary exhibitions programme. Renowned for its modern sculpture collection, more extensive than any regional gallery in the UK, the Gallery is also strong in the area of Victorian painting. www.leeds.gov.uk/artgallery

Local and Family History Library www.leeds.gov.uk/localandfamilyhistory Located on the second floors of the fabulous Leeds Central Library. Explore the collection of over 50,000 books about the city and region, as well as local newspapers, maps, photographs, theatre playbills, and much more. Free access to Ancestry and other online resources, talks, workshops and expert staff to with your enquiries. In addition you can explore our photographic collections on our Leodis website, www.leodis.net

A town of the times is this great hive of workers, whose labours are for the welfare of mankind, and whose products have the whole wide world for their market...Though Leeds may lack the classic charm of Greece or Italy, or even the time-honoured dignity that reposes in our own ancient cathedral towns, she can place in the counterbalance her nine hundred factories and workshops, monuments of her wealth, industry and mercantile prestige.



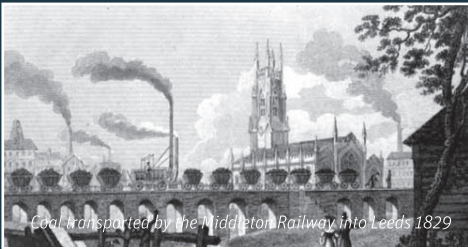
Armley House - Gott's Mansion

Originally a plain house built in 1781 for local merchant Thomas Woolrick, Armley House in Gott's Park three miles west of Leeds, was bought in 1804 by Benjamin Gott, the owner of Armley Mills and Bean Ing. Gott became one of the largest employers in England and was the first great entrepreneur of the wool and cloth trade. Between 1810 and 1822 he remodelled the house and ensured that like his mills, it was extensively fire proofed. In addition to exterior changes including the pillars reminiscent of ancient Greek temples, and the landscaping of the park by Humphrey Repton, Gott also used the property to house his fine art collection. It included works by Rubens, Titian and Caravaggio, illustrating the passion for art that led Gott, this powerful industrialist, to preside over the founding of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society.

John Atkinson Grimshaw - artist of Leeds



Atkinson Grimshaw was born in 1836 in Leeds. At the age of 24, to the dismay of his parents, he left his job as a clerk for the Great Northern Railway to become a painter. He first exhibited in 1862 under the patronage of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society and his early paintings were mostly of still life - birds, fruit and flowers and woodland scenes. His primary influence was the Pre-Raphaelites and Grimshaw went on to create landscapes of accurate colour, lighting, vivid detail and realism, producing city and suburban street scenes and views of the docks in London, Glasgow and Leeds. His careful brushwork and skill in capturing the light enabled him to depict the mood of a scene. His somewhat romanticised lamplit streets and misty waterfronts have come to be associated with industrial Leeds in Victorian times. Several of Grimshaw's paintings are in the collection of Leeds Art Gallery.



Coal - fuel for a growing town

In 1880 there were over 100 coalmines in and around Leeds, and Middleton Colliery was supplying 48,000 tons of coal to the town's industry each year. This made Leeds into the powerful industrial and manufacturing centre it became during the industrial revolution. It led to the development of brick making, pottery works including the famous Leeds Pottery with its iconic creamware, chemical manufacture and heavy engineering.

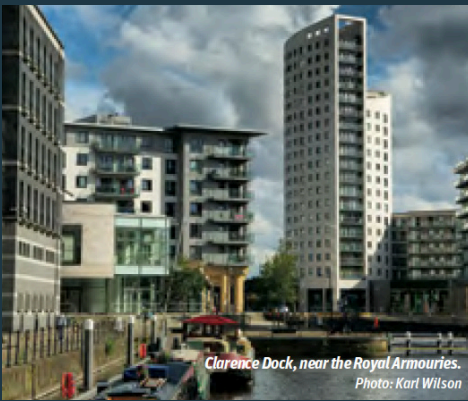


The railways in Leeds

The prosperity of Leeds has always been built on its excellent transport facilities. In the early 19th Century it welcomed the coming of the railways and became one of the great railway towns of Victorian times, at one time boasting five stations in the city centre. Leeds also supplied the world with locomotives and even today locos built here can be found as far away as Fiji, Chile and Australia. Several surviving locomotives are on display at Leeds Industrial Museum, including Jack (pictured) who used to haul fireclay at John Knowles (Wooden Box) Ltd in Derbyshire.

River and canals - the route to the world

In 1699 an Act of Parliament led to the start of work on the Aire and Calder Navigation connecting Leeds and the River Aire with the east coast at Hull. Weirs - short "cuts" equipped with a series of locks, and a towpath were created and by 1704 the original work was completed, including 12 locks on the River Aire near Leeds. Now the cloth merchants of Leeds had access to European ports. Going west to Liverpool, the Leeds to Liverpool Canal was built in just seven years from 1770 to 1777.



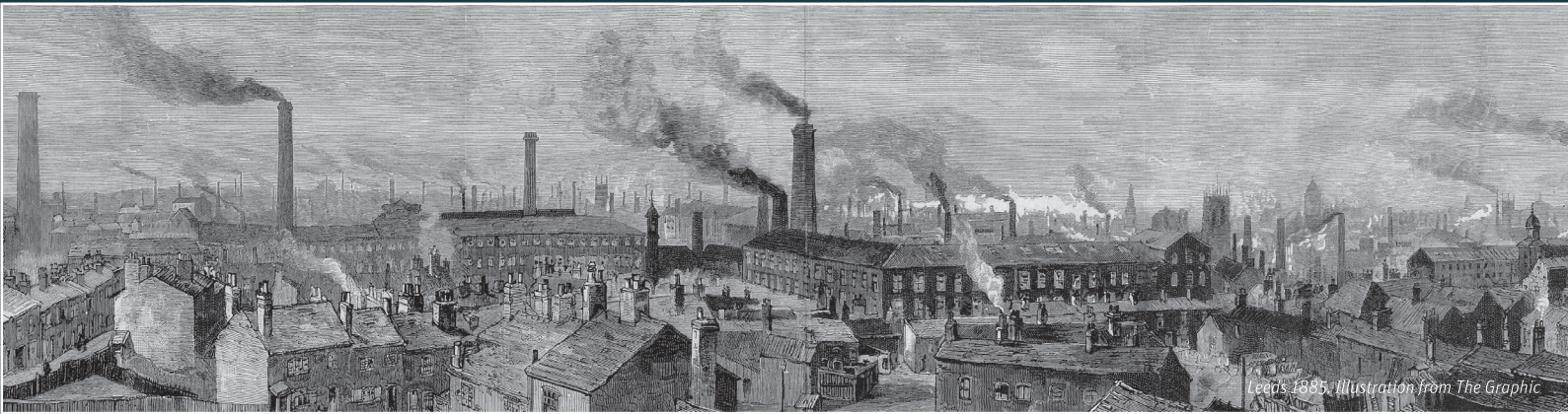
It joined the Aire and Calder Navigation making Leeds a major inland port, with the waterways carrying huge amounts of cloth, coal, stone, timber and industrial products from its engineering works. With the coming of the railways, use of the river gradually declined, but it is still used for freight and carries canal boats for tourists and those who live on the Canal. The waterfront is a major part of city life, with its hotels, apartments, offices, the shops and restaurants of Clarence Dock and the internationally important Royal Armouries. The towpath is popular for walkers and cyclists and connects the museum at Armley Mills, Abbey House Museum at Kirkstall Abbey and Thwaite Mills.

Leeds General Infirmary A

The first Leeds General Infirmary was opened in 1771 on what is now Infirmary Street off City Square. The cost of £4,599 was raised by the people of Leeds. The current hospital on Great George Street was designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott and work began in 1863.



The design was based on the pavilion plan recommended by Florence Nightingale, with narrow wards linked by arcades allowing good ventilation. It featured the latest innovations, with plenty of baths and toilets, hydraulic hoists to reduce the physical work of nurses and a central Winter Garden where patients could stroll amongst exotic plants and trees. The building was visited in May 1868 by The Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII).



Briggate D Boar Lane F



Still one of the busiest shopping streets in Leeds, Briggate - the 'road to the bridge' - was laid out in 1207 by the Lord of the Manor Maurice Paynel. It had 30 'burgage' plots each side where for a small rent people could live and carry out a trade or craft. A busy market took place there - the forerunner of today's market on Kirkgate. The layout of 13th century Briggate is still reflected in its pubs, hotels and yards, for instance Whitelock's Ale House in Turk's Head Yard. The covered arcades, for which Leeds is so well known, were laid out towards the end of the 19th century and into Edwardian times and also follow the pattern of the old street. Look up and you will still see the frontages of many 19th century buildings. Boar Lane, which was widened in 1868 catered for the 'higher class' shopper with its expensive and fashionable establishments. Long before Harvey Nichols and the Trinity Shopping Centre, it was the site of the first department store in Leeds. Built in 1888 The Grand Pygmalion sold clothes, gloves, umbrellas, haberdashery, china, vases, upholstery, and furniture.

Hunslet Mill and Victoria Works - once mighty mills by the river



This now derelict building on the bank of the River Aire on the way to Thwaite Mills is the former flax reeling works of John Wilkinson. Its architect was William Fairbairn, the leading engineer and designer of mill buildings. He had already designed Armley Mills for Benjamin Gott and the towering Saltaire Mills in Shipley near Bradford. Completed in the 1840s, Hunslet Mill was built in red brick, and with its seven storeys was the largest flax mill in Leeds when the industry was at its height. It employed over 1500 female flax reellers. Later it was used for the manufacture of linen and then blanket weaving. Next to Hunslet Mill stands Victoria Works which produced linseed oil from flax seeds. It dates from 1836.

Children - hard times

Before 1833 few children went to school and many worked long hours in the mills in terrible conditions - as they were cheaper to employ than men. Some learned to read the Bible at Sunday School but it was not until the factory legislation of 1833 that children had to have at least two hour of schooling each day. The 1844 Factory Act require three hours schooling and



saw the introduction of the factory half-timer - children who spent half their day at school and half their day at work. But it wasn't until the 1870 Education Act that publically funded Board schools were set up where children learned reading, writing and arithmetic.

Marshall and Murray - 19th century entrepreneurs G

In 1788 John Marshall took over the water mill in Adel just north of Leeds, where he began to work with the younger engineer Matthew Murray who helped him develop a way to use cotton spinning machinery for spinning flax into linen yarn. In 1791 he moved to Holbeck near the canal.



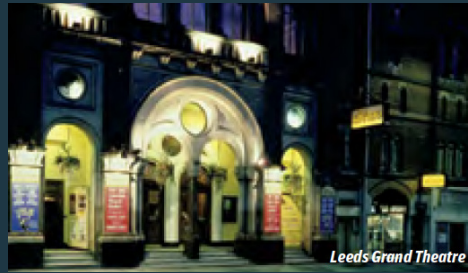
Here he built his first mill and used a Boulton and Watt steam engine to power this revolutionary new machinery for spinning linen yarns used in the production of heavy linen cloth. Over the next 40 years, six mills were constructed on the site. By far the most impressive is the vast Temple Works, built to house the large machines that required a warm atmosphere to stop the delicate yarn breaking. The mill is based on the Temple of Edfu in Egypt. A layer of earth sown with grass was used to insulate the waterproof membrane on the roof and sheep were put to graze there! Matthew Murray is considered by many to be the father of the Leeds engineering industry. A brilliant engineer, he pioneered the use of steam engines and flax heckling machinery. With his partners Fenton and Wood, Murray went on to set up the Round Foundry in Holbeck, where he became famous for producing textile machinery, steam engines and locomotives.

Leeds Grand Theatre and the City Varieties Music Hall B C

As industry thrived there was an increasing demand for entertainment for the working population. From public houses grew music halls, a relaxed space for the enjoyment of a varied programme of weird and wonderful acts. The City Varieties Music Hall, now famous around the world, opened in 1865 as 'Thornton's New Music Hall and Fashionable Lounge' delighting the crowds with comedians, contortionists, trapeze artists and reptile conquerors. Wealthier Victorians turned to the more cultural experiences at the licensed theatres with their rich surroundings and respectable entertainment.



Amidst great excitement, Leeds Grand Theatre opened its doors in 1878 with a performance of William Shakespeare's 'Much Ado About Nothing'. Both these well-loved and nationally renowned venues continue to welcome and entertain audiences today and pride themselves on celebrating their restored Victorian features and rich histories.



Find out more about one of the most famous Leeds companies - Potts Clocks by picking up a copy of the Potts Clock Heritage Trail.

Potts were based in Leeds from 1862 until the company was sold on in the mid 20th Century. This family business was responsible for many of the fine clocks you still see around the city and on public buildings around Yorkshire and the UK. Leeds Minster, the Corn Exchange, the Old Post Office in City Square and Holy Trinity Church on Boar Lane all boast a fully operational Potts Clock.

Credits

The Illustrated History of Leeds
Steven Burt and Kevin Grady: Breedon Books 1994

Leeds Heritage Trail
Brian Goodward: Leeds Civic Trust 2000

Leeds (Pevsner Architectural Guides)
Susan Wrathmell 2008

Leeds Civic Trust www.leedscivictrust.org.uk

Leodis www.leodis.net

Leeds Local and Family History Library
www.leeds.gov.uk/localandfamilyhistory

M&S Trail
www.marksintime.marksandspencer.com

Walk it

Leeds Industrial Heritage Trail



Leeds is very compact and walkable, easily accessible by bus, train or car. Leeds Bradford Airport is just half an hour from the city centre by bus. There are numerous car parks and ample blue badge car parking spaces in the city centre.

Leeds Visitor Centre

VisitLeeds is a friendly visitor information centre and art gallery shop located at the Leeds Art Gallery on The Headrow, open 7 days a week.

0113 378 6977
www.visitleeds.co.uk

 @VisitLeeds
 @LoveLeedsMore
 @VisitLeeds

Leeds Travel Information

With up-to-the-minute information about car parking spaces, public transport and walking routes, travelling into and around Leeds has never been easier.

0113 245 7676
www.leedstravel.info

Walkit.com

The urban walking map and route planner helps you get around Leeds on foot. Get a walking route map between any two points, including your journey time, calorie burn, step count and carbon saving. Its quick, free, healthy and green.

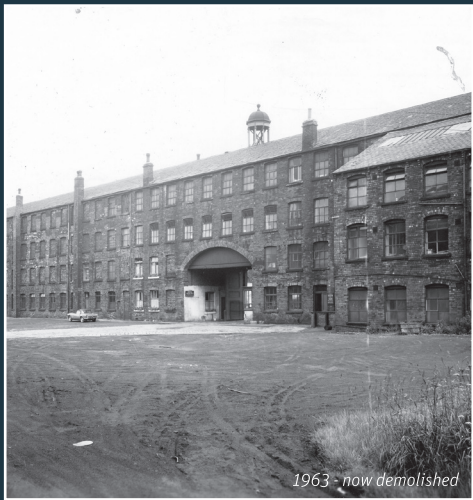
www.walkit.com/leeds





1 Kirkstall Abbey

In 1152 work began to build Kirkstall Abbey on a remote wooded site on the River Aire, three miles North-West of the centre of Leeds. The mighty Cistercian monastery, with its church, gatehouse (now Abbey House Museum), dormitories, chapter house and dining halls took 30 years to complete. Today, nearly 900 years later, it is one of the best preserved Cistercian ruins in the country and one of the city's major tourist attractions. The monks of Kirkstall became wealthy landowners and were responsible for the development of agriculture over a wide area. In 1280 the Abbey owned 11,000 sheep and so began the story of the cloth industry in Leeds. The wool was taken by packhorse to the ports of Hull and Scarborough for export to Italy, where it became famous for its high quality.



3 Bean Ing Mill

Built by Benjamin Gott in 1792 and extended in 1829, Bean Ing was the world's first integrated woollen mill. For the first time, all processes taking raw wool to finished cloth took place on one site, although traditional domestic techniques for spinning and weaving lasted there for some years. To save on space, its stair towers were built externally. In order to provide gas lighting for the workers, Gott built his own gas plant for the mill, just as John Marshall did in his flax mill south of the River Aire in Holbeck. Other innovations included the installation of the first heated cloth dye houses in 1814. Bean Ing was demolished in the 1960s.



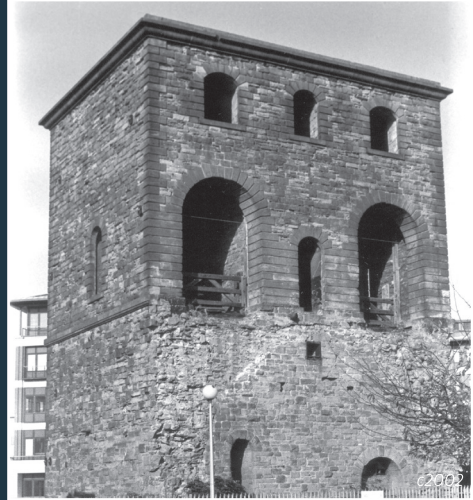
5 Leeds Town Hall

The famous Leeds Town Hall was designed in 1852 as a statement of wealth and civic pride. The architect was 29 year old Cuthbert Brodrick of Hull - then unknown. His design reflected the importance of Leeds as a centre of trade and commerce and included a magnificent entrance, courtrooms, police cells, council offices, a suite for the Mayor and the ornate Victoria Hall. Completed in 1858, the Town Hall was opened by Queen Victoria. At the time, industrial Leeds was a dirty, polluted place with a great deal of poverty, but the Builder magazine said of the Town Hall 'it is one of the gorgeous structures of its class'... that... 'tells of the luxury of kings.' Today, in a very different 21st century city, it remains Leeds' most iconic and well-loved building.



2 Armley Mills

With the River Aire taking a sweeping curve around a narrow plateau and its rocky bed providing a natural fall, Armley Mills occupies one of the best sites in West Yorkshire for harnessing the power of water. There has been a mill here since at least 1559. In 1788 Colonel Thomas Lloyd's mill on the site was destroyed by the first of a series of fires. It was following one such fire in 1805 that the 'fireproof' woollen mill we see today was built by Benjamin Gott. Despite taking direct hits from air-raids in 1942, the mill, under the ownership of Bentley & Tempest Ltd, continued production until 1969. Today it houses Leeds Industrial Museum, home to internationally significant collections telling the story of industrial Leeds.



4 Central Station Lifting Tower

The former truck-lifting tower of Central Station is the only surviving building of the Great Northern Railway complex. Over 10m high and originally one of a pair, it dates from the opening of the station in 1846, and was used to lift goods trucks from the low-level Leeds and Thirsk Railway's depot to the high level passenger line on the viaduct arches. The scars of the demolished viaduct can still be seen on the tower's south side. The station closed in 1967 and was demolished. Now the tower stands alone - a monument to Victorian Engineering.



6 Leeds City Museum

Leeds City Museum was designed by Cuthbert Broderick, the architect of the Town Hall and the Corn Exchange. Completed in 1868, it was originally a Mechanics Institute providing educational opportunities for 'working men' and had a large circular lecture room (now the Museum's Brodrick Hall), studios for painting, carving and modelling, engineering and plumbing workshops, classrooms, a reading room, library and dining rooms. Later it became the Civic Theatre and in 2008 it was transformed into the Leeds City Museum. With its dramatic steps, entrance and columns it remains one of the most impressive Victorian buildings in the city.



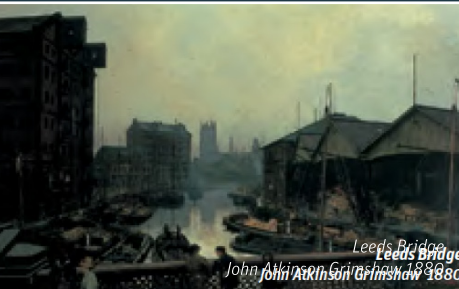
7 Municipal Buildings

Often described as the 'Municipal Palace', the Municipal Buildings were designed by George Corson, who went on to create Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House. Completed between 1881 and 1884, it housed the water, rates, gas and civic engineers' offices, the hackney carriage department and the Public Library. The ceiling of the Reading Room was so beautiful it was said to distract people from their reading. The Art Gallery was built in this impressive building has also housed the City Museum. Today it is the Central Library and Leeds Art Gallery, with the former Reading Room, now the Tiled Hall Caf , linking the two - its dazzling tiles and ceiling beautifully restored.



9 Corn Exchange

Following his triumph with Leeds Town Hall, Cuthbert Brodick was chosen in 1860 to design the Corn Exchange. Still considered one of Britain's finest Victorian buildings, it was deliberately located near the markets and the White Cloth Hall. Brodick had visited France in 1844 and it is thought he modelled his design on the corn exchange in Paris, the Halle au Bl , with its cast iron dome and wide, open courtyard surrounded by a vaulted arcade with open arches. The ornate Leeds Corn Exchange is built from local stone. The windows in the vast oval hall were specifically designed to exclude direct sunlight so the dealers could accurately judge each sample of corn before completing the sale. It is now a thriving space for distinctive shops and restaurants.



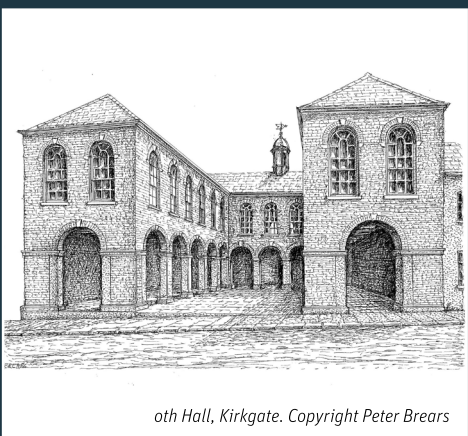
11 Leeds Bridge and the Waterfront

In 1694 an early water-pumping engine was constructed on what is still Pitfall Street off The Calls, near Leeds Bridge. Pitfall Mills drew water from the river and pumped it to a reservoir near St John's Church on Briggate. From there it was distributed by a series of pipes to houses in the town. As the population of Leeds increased in the 19th century and industry grew, the river became more and more polluted with chemical effluent. It was effectively an open sewer with dead animals floating in it. Nearby, Leeds Bridge was the first crossing point on the river, probably dating from Roman times. The present bridge was made of cast iron in 1873. It was here that Louis le Prince first used his single lens camera to make the famous moving film of horse drawn traffic passing over the bridge.



8 Park Square

During the 1780s the Park Estate was built here on the site of a medieval park. Work to construct the Park Square itself began in 1788. The people who lived there was some of the leading families in Leeds - merchants, lawyers, surgeons and the clergy. The estate even had its own church, St. Paul's, demolished in 1905. Gradually, land to the south was developed for industrial use including Benjamin Gott's Park Mills at Bean Ing. St Paul's House in Park Square was built in 1878 in the 'Moorish' style as a clothing warehouse for John Barran, the pioneer of 'ready to wear' clothing. During the 19th century the houses were converted to offices, largely for the medical and legal professions. Today Park Square is a delightful oasis in the busy city, still surrounded by offices with the same elegant facades.



10 First White Cloth Hall

In 1711, to complete with nearby towns, the first White Cloth Hall for trading white (undyed) cloth was built in Kirkgate. Local merchants and tradesmen provided the £1,000 for the build. According to Ralph Thoresby the 18th century historian, the Hall was built on the site of old almshouses 'upon pillars and arches in the form of an exchange, with a quadrangular court within.' In recent times it became shops and an amusement arcade. As trade in Leeds expanded, a second White Cloth Hall was built in Meadow Lane, south of the river, in 1756. The First White Cloth Hall is now part of an initiative which with the help of the Heritage Lottery fund will revitalise the area.



12 Thwaite Mills

Situated on a natural bend in the River Aire, Thwaite Mills is ideally placed to harness the power of water. The earliest recorded building here was a fulling mill in 1641, where woollen cloth was covered with a mixture of fuller's earth and sheep urine to remove oil and dirt before being pounded by large hammers, or 'stocks', to give the fibres more strength. The buildings currently occupying the site were built between 1823 and 1825. The longest serving tenants were the Horn family who used the mill to crush chalkstone, china stone and flintstone to make putty, until its closure in 1976. Today the site is home to Thwaite Mills Watermill - an exciting museum and one of the last remaining examples of a water-powered mill in Britain.