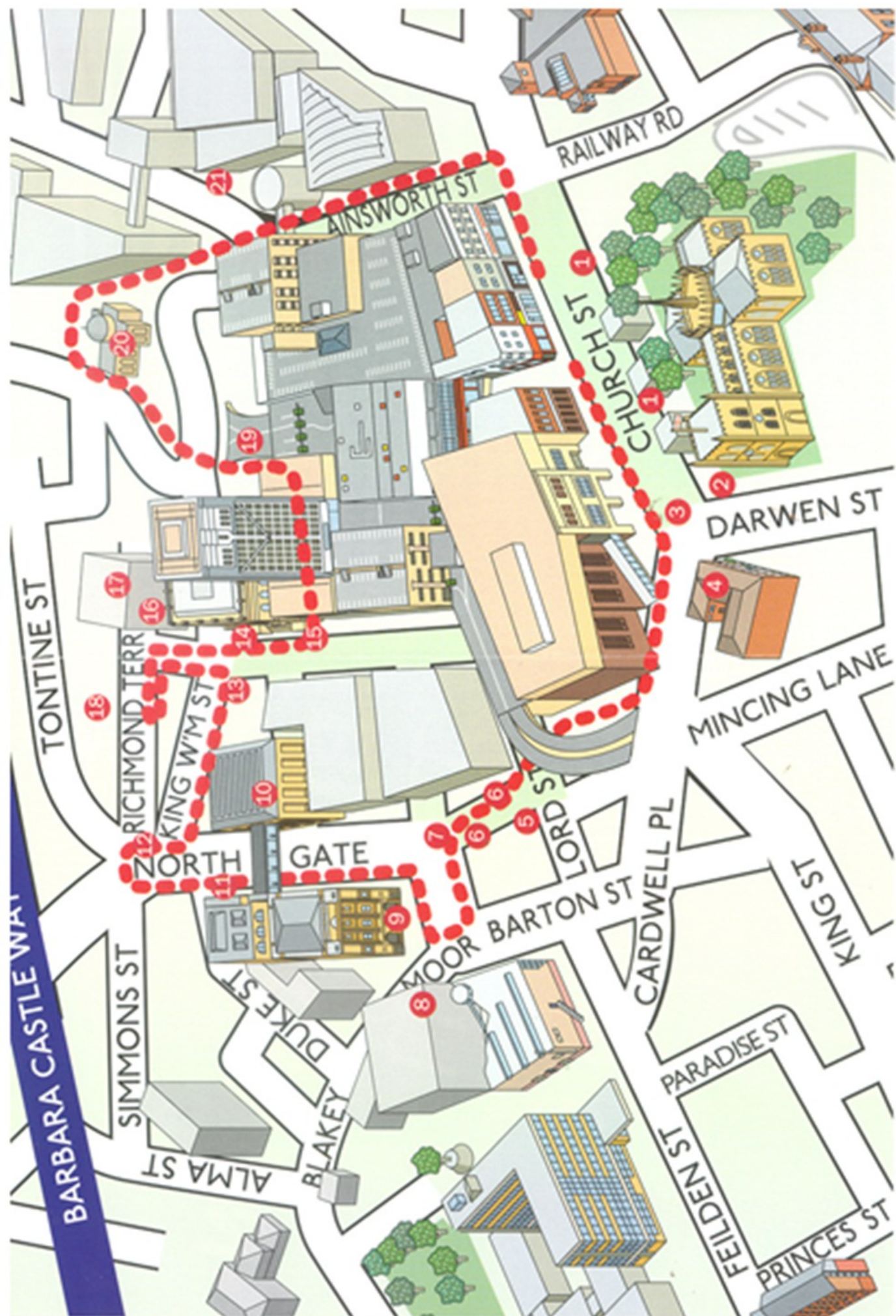


BLACKBURN



TOWN TRAIL NORTH



Blackburn Town Centre Trail North

Start on Church Street with your back to the Cathedral

1. Turn left along Church Street, passing a series of modern artworks entitled "Transitions", which represent both the growth of the cotton plant and the growth of Blackburn.

The Waterloo Pavilions, on your left, were built in 1835 as three separate buildings, now restored with the spaces between enclosed with glass.



2. Alongside the Waterloo Pavilions is the Cathedral Gateway with three elaborate cast-iron gates. The gateposts seem to date from the construction of the 1820/26 parish church, but the route between them, known as the Ancient Carriage Drive, may well mark the traditional entrance to the grounds of the medieval parish church.

3. The "Woven Globe", commissioned for the Millennium along with an almost identical sculpture in Darwen town centre, stands in the vicinity of the town's market cross.

4. Opposite is the Old Bank, its massive stonework and window-bars designed to offer re-assurance during times of unrest. Even as late as 1878 Blackburn was the scene of cotton riots. The bank's grandest feature is the north east angle of the building, which has been cut out to house a high iron gateway set within an imposing round arch.



5. Turn right into Higher Church Street and right again under the car park ramp at the top of **Astley Gate**, to the junction of **Northgate** and **Lord Street West**. The 1830s Lloyds TSB building is on your left. Northgate, here, is very narrow with the old building lines preserved, even though the original buildings have gone.



6. On the right is a plaque marking the site of the shop where pioneer film makers, **Mitchell and Kenyon** had their business and where their ground-breaking films from the late 19th and early 20th century were found. Further along on the left is a blue plaque, marking the site of the Paganini Inn named after the famous violinist who stayed there in 1833. Here the names, Higher, Middle and Lower Cockcroft recall the cockfighting days.

7. **Northgate** now widens out and on the left is a statue of **William Ewart Gladstone**, widely regarded as a champion of the people. It was originally on the Boulevard, where it was unveiled in November 1899 by the Earl of Aberdeen. In 1955 it was re-sited outside the old Technical College and in 1983 it was relocated to its present site. Unlike the statue, the adjacent, red telephone kiosk, one of one of the K6 designs by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, is listed.



8. From here can be seen the main front-age of Blackburn College on **Blakey Moor**, built as a Golden Jubilee tribute to Queen Victoria. The foundation stone was laid on 9th May 1888 by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, watched by an estimated 5,000 people.

9. On the left-hand side of Northgate is King George's Hall.

Its foundation stone was laid by King George V from the steps of the old Town Hall on 10th July 1913 by means of an electrical device. The accommodation comprised three halls - a lecture hall, assembly hall and the main King George's Hall. The First World War delayed building work and the halls were not completed until 1921.



10. Across the road is the Library, formerly the Co-operative Society Emporium, now remodelled but retaining some of the original features, both inside and out.

The Library is situated at the junction of Northgate and Town Hall Street, once known as Thunder Alley.



11. Next to King George's Hall is the building until recently occupied by the Central Police Station, and still used as the town's court house.

It was formally opened by Sir Harry Hornby on 25th July 1912. The two figures, representing Justice and Mercy, can be seen over the two main entrances.

12. At the top of Northgate is Sudell Cross and today's answer to the Big Lamp that stood here once, Simon Watkinson's The Braid, installed in March 2007 as part of a revamp.

Straight ahead, on the other side of the dual carriageway, Shear Brow starts to climb the hill. Formerly known as Shire Brow, it was the original northern exit from the town.



13. Turn right along King William Street, laid out in the 1830s and we come to the former Cotton Exchange, whose cornerstone was laid on 10th March 1863 by the Mayor, J B S Sturdy.

This ceremony is recorded in the painting by Vladimir Sherwood, (later, the architect of the Moscow History Museum in Red Square), which now hangs in the Museum. It opened in April 1865. Outside exchange hours the premises were used for public meetings and concerts, and soon becoming the main centre of entertainment in the town. Charles Dickens gave his last public reading outside London here on April 19th 1869. Between 1912 and 2006 it served as a cinema.

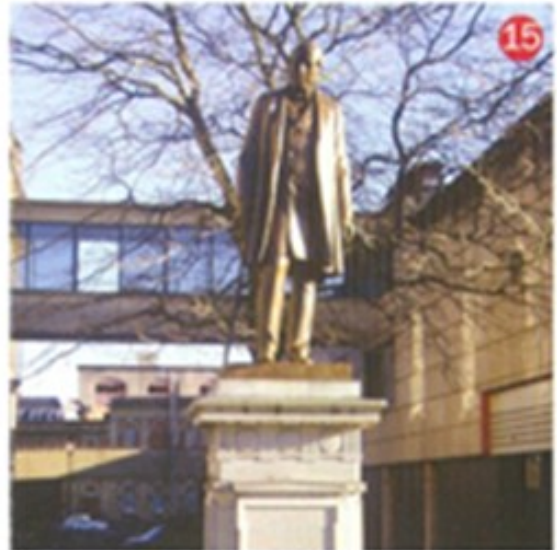
14. The old Town Hall is straight ahead.

The cornerstone was laid on 28th October 1852, by Joseph Feilden, Lord of the Manor, and it opened on 30th October 1856. In addition to an assembly room, council chamber and offices, the building also housed the court, police offices and cells until 1873.



15. To the right of the bronze sculpture of William Henry Hornby, unveiled on the 18th July 1912 by Sir "Harry" Hornby, his eldest son.

Originally, it stood in Limbrick, overlooking Sudell Cross. In 1970 it was moved, without its original ornate plinth, to its present site. William Henry Hornby became the town's first Mayor in 1851. In the political arena he earned both the grudging admiration of his opponents and the nickname "Th'owd Gam' Cock".



16. To the left of the old Town Hall is the former Lewis Textile Museum, built in 1858 by John Neville Howarth, to house his printing and stationery business.

Mr T B Lewis purchased the building in 1933 and had it made ready to accommodate the Textile Museum. He gifted the building to the town in September 1936. The Textile Museum opened on 28th September 1938, with an art gallery on the first floor. It closed in 2006.



17. Turn left up Museum Street to the Museum and Art Gallery opened on 11th July 1874.

Originally it was the Library as well as the Museum. It was extended eastwards in the 1890s, when the pictorial panels by C W Searle were added, depicting; on the north side - Commerce, Textiles, Iron Founding and Agriculture; on the west front - Art, Literature and Science. The tiled pictorial panels inside the porch depict Poetry (left) and Science and Labour (right). The Museum houses the outstanding Hart Collection of books, manuscripts and coins, as well as a notable collection of Japanese prints and the largest collection of religious icons outside London. Many of the exhibits from the Lewis Textile Museum are now on display in the Museum.

18. We then come to Richmond Terrace, commenced in the 1820s and completed by 1838. Originally built as houses, early residents included John Baynes, the mill owner and Thomas Dutton, the brewer. The terrace has now largely become offices for various professions. The doorways vary in detail, the most elaborate being number 11, the former Witton Estate Office.



19. Retrace your steps to the Hornby statue. Beyond the car park ramp is the County Court Buildings, opened during the Cotton Famine in March 1864. Court day was Monday. Its jurisdiction covered the townships of the Blackburn Poor Law Union.

20. To the left lies the former St John's Church, architect unknown.

It was erected on land given by Henry Sudell, who contributed half the £8,000 cost. The first stone was laid in June 1787. It was consecrated on July 31st 1789 by the Bishop of Chester. Built as a Chapel of Ease to the Parish Church, it gained its own parish in 1847, but was de-consecrated in 1975. Its bi-centenary was celebrated in 1989 since when it has been converted internally into a Centre for the Voluntary Services. The graveyard contains the vaults of some notable families. Adjacent on Victoria Street and James Street are various examples of Georgian domestic architecture, now used for business and commercial purposes.



Turn right, past the former telephone exchange, into Ainsworth Street. St John's Tavern, a modern building on the site of a far older hostelry, once known as the Gaping Goose, where the wardens of St John's Church held their meetings.

In October 1801, a sedan chair was stolen from here during the hours of darkness and was later found nearby in St John's churchyard. This prompted calls for improved street lighting in the town.

Acknowledgements

This booklet has been updated by Blackburn with Darwen Library and Information Service and is adapted from the original Heritage Town Trails leaflet produced in September 2007.

The information contained in this booklet was correct at the time of going to print, but the town's regeneration may cause certain buildings to change in the future.

Photography Credits

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

Bruce Kitchin—Blackburn trail

Malcolm Taylor—Blackburn Railway Station art work

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Simon Webb—Darwen trails

Cotton Town

More information and learning journeys about both towns can be found on www.cottontown.org

