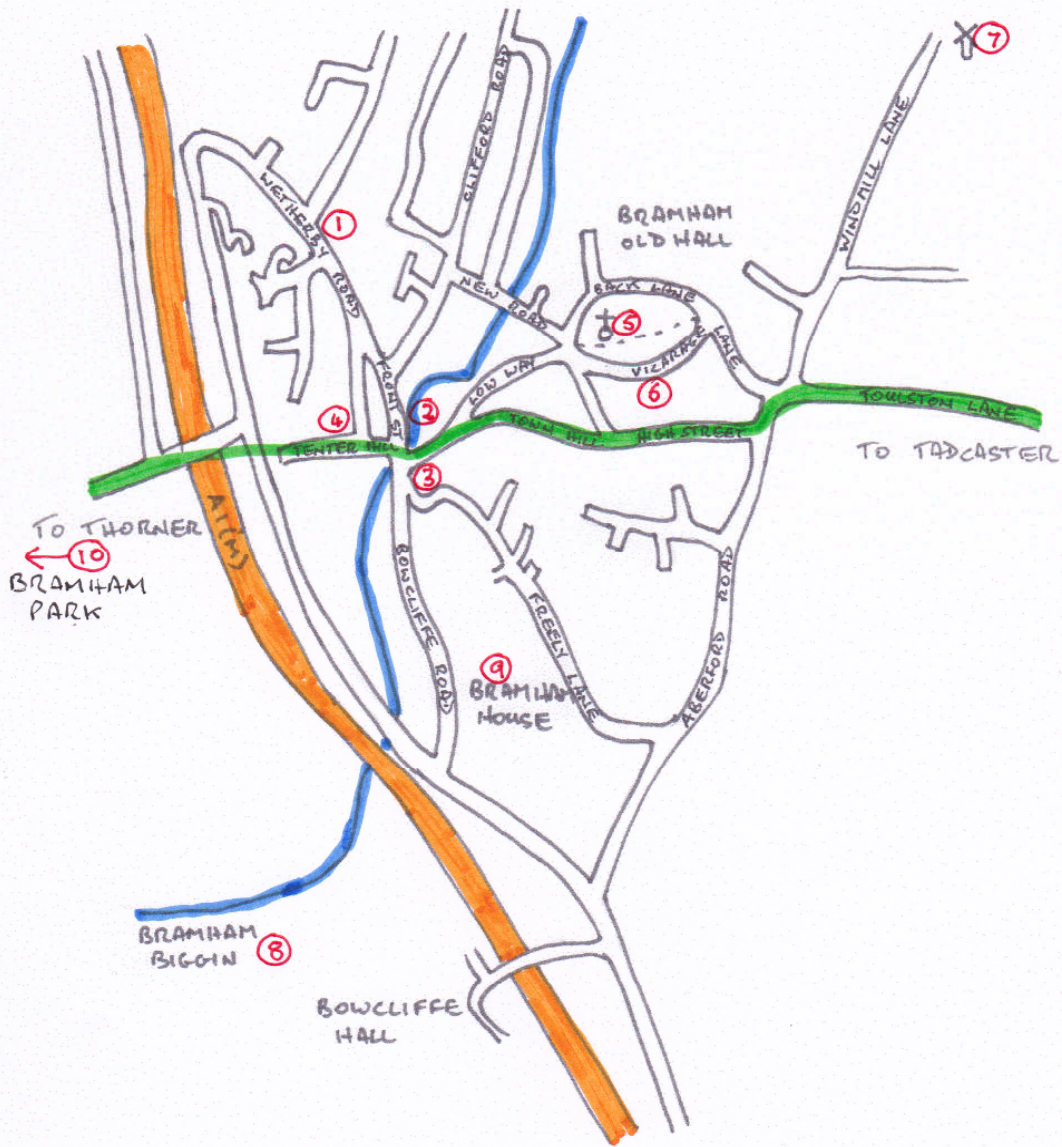


# A HISTORICAL WALK AROUND BRAMHAM VILLAGE



POINT OF INTEREST MENTIONED IN TEXT ①

LINE OF ROMAN ROAD

## A HISTORICAL WALK ROUND BRAMHAM VILLAGE

Start in the churchyard (5) of All Saints' Church. The importance of this site before the Norman Conquest is witnessed by the large oval-shaped churchyard. The Norman church dates from about 1150. The tower was added in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and the side aisles in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Perpendicular spire is rare in West Yorkshire (there are only 2 others - at Aberford and Kirk Deighton). The church was substantially restored in 1853. Successive generations of burials have raised the level of the churchyard above the level of the church. The churchyard contains ancient yew trees and at its' eastern end are small mounds surmounted by cherry trees which mark the sites of mass graves from the battles of Bramham Moor (1408) and Towton (1461). The Headmaster and pupils of Bramham College who died in the outbreak of cholera at the College are buried at the western end opposite the church door.

On the other side of Back Lane opposite the church is Bramham Old Hall. The present building dates from the Stuart period, with the date 1681 appearing over a door lintel. It may be the site of the first manor house.

The Old Vicarage. (6) dates from 1678.

At the far end of the churchyard turn left and then right to go up Vicarage Lane to the point where the Roman Road from Tadcaster (Toulston Lane) enters the village. To your left at the top of Windmill Hill stands the tower of Bramham Windmill.(7). The sails were lost in a storm in 1829 and not replaced. It was subsequently used for some time as a water tower.

Turn right into Aberford Road and then right again into High Street, following the line of the Roman Road. There are many older houses and cottages in this street. The first house on the right, New York Inn Farm, was once an inn but subsequently became a temperance hotel when it lost it's licence. As you walk down High Street you will pass 3 more farm sites (on the left) and the Swan Inn which remains a popular meeting place for villagers. As you go down Town Hill, note on your left the vertical cut through the rock. Was this the work of Roman military engineers?

The line of the Roman Road passes across the Square from Town Hill to Tenter Hill. There were once 3 coaching inns in and around the Square. The Red Lion remains as an inn whilst the Bay Horse (1700) and the White Horse are now residential properties. The village pump stood opposite the Red Lion, as did a small garage and a petrol pump. The War Memorial in the middle of the Square records the names of Bramham men who did not return from the First and Second World Wars. There is a former quarry behind the houses opposite the Red Lion.

Walk up Tenter Hill. There is a Cyclists Touring Club badge above the door of the former White Horse Inn, and the building a few yards up on the right (Carlton House) was a school for young ladies in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Note how the original bypass dominated the village from high up on the embankment. The modern cutting has reduced the roar of the traffic to more acceptable levels.

Turn along Back Street. At it's entrance you can see older buildings with pantile roofs where the lower courses of the roofs are of stone. This is to keep the rain out of the infill of the stone walls (pantiles are lighter and can be lifted in high winds). You can also see windows which have been blocked in to avoid the window tax. Note that the rear walls of some of the buildings of Front Street are built in brick. There was once a brick and tile works just north of Bramham on the Great North Road.

Continue up Wetherby Road (the course of The Great North Road) to Diamond Jubilee Gardens (1) – Bramham's newest landmark, with a fitting memorial stone in Magnesian Limestone. Then

turn back and walk down Wetherby Road into the village. On your left as you walk down into the village are some of the houses built by Wetherby Rural District Council after the First World War.

Walk along Front Street. The village school once stood on the corner of Front Street and Clifford Road. It was rebuilt by public subscription in the 1830's. Only the school house was left after the new school was built on the outskirts of the village. On the other side of Front Street the present row of cottages once accommodated several small shops. The General Store, which now includes the Post Office remains an important feature of village life. The building was once a Primitive Methodist Chapel. Note the varying quality of the stone of the cottages using the local Magnesian Limestone. Two of the cottages bear the date 1790. Up to the 17<sup>th</sup> century most of the cottages in the village would have been timber framed with thatched roofs.

At the side of the Garage you can see the slope leading down to the Beck for watering cattle (2). The Great North Road was an important route for drovers taking cattle south and there were once two of these watering places for cattle passing through the village. The converted barn on the other side of the Beck is one of the oldest buildings in the village.

Walk along the side of the Beck to the village square. (3)

From the Square you can **return to the Church** and the start of the walk by turning left along Low Way past the former Wesleyan Methodist Chapel. The original chapel was constructed in 1817 and rebuilt in 1906. The house opposite the Chapel was once a shop and housed the Post Office until it moved to Front Street.

**Alternatively you can extend your walk** by going up Bowcliffe Road and up the hill to Aberford Road.

Turn left along Aberford Road back towards the village and then left again along Freely Lane, past the playing field and the currently empty Bramham House (9). The house was built by a vicar of Bramham in 1806. It was used as a childrens' home until the late 80's. Continue down the (**steep**) slope of Almshouse Hill, with good views over the village, and return to the village square.

**From the junction** of Aberford Road it is also possible to cross the A1 and take the private road into Bramham Park and beyond using public footpaths. Bramham Biggin (8) is located a few hundred yards along the estate road on the right.

**Bramham Biggin** was the site of Bramham College, which was opened in 1842/43. It was a large and flourishing school for the sons of gentlemen. It closed in 1869 following an outbreak of cholera which killed several pupils and the Headmaster. Unusually, the College had it's own gas works which became the Bramham Consumers' Gas Company in 1860 and continued to supply gas to the village after the closure of the College. The College building was allowed to become derelict and was eventually demolished and the stone used in the rebuilding of Bramham Park in 1907. Only Bramham Biggin, the original building on the site, remains.

**Bramham Park** (10) was built at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century by Robert Benson, Lord Bingley, whose father had been granted the extensive lands of the estate by William and Mary. The original house was gutted by fire in 1828 and not restored until 1906-1914 using stone from the former Bramham College. The estate has remained within the same family (now the Lane-Foxes) to the present day and is now the home of the Bramham Horse Trials and the Leeds Festival.