

## Astley Bridge Heritage Stroll

Walk One in the 'Crompton Walks' series takes us through part of the Crompton ward at Astley Bridge. On the route you will uncover an internationally famous washing brand, faith buildings, site of an old orphanage, stories of everyday people and architectural treasures.

**Time:** 30 minute stroll    **Distance:** 1.92 miles    **Energy used:** 140 calories

Origins of Astley Bridge – takes its name from the bridge over the Astley Brook which meanders through the valley, traditionally this would've been agricultural lands. The name Astley is the "Ast" for Ash trees or a clearing in the east "Ast" and the word "ley" would have been a clearing in a wooded area.

Blackburn Road – once the old road to Blackburn, a simple track used by riders on horseback, often not fit for carts in winter. In the eighteenth century a fee was paid to use the roads; paid at a toll gate.

1



**St Pauls C of E Primary School**, Newham Street, BL1 8QA

Here is the modern St Pauls C of E Primary School, however if you look at the older stone buildings opposite you can see the original St Pauls Infant School which dates from 1870.

Community memory: "I remember the deliveries... coal, fish, potatoes and the "pippin man" I called him. He must've had a lisp, he was selling crumpets, as a child all I heard was "pippin" and I would shout to me mam "the pippin man, the pippin man".

2



**House, corner of Crompton Way**, Seymour Road

This attractive house built in 1880 by Bolton architects JJ Bradshaw and John Gass was the gatehouse lodge to the Watermillock property and lands opposite.

Community memory:

"Where the Watermillock is my mum told me she used to play in a moat a long time ago".

3



**Watermillock**, Crompton Way, BL1 8TJ

The building is now a restaurant. It was built in 1880 by Bolton architects JJ Bradshaw and John Gass, as a grand residence for the Thwaites family. Eden and Thwaites bleach works was situated at Waters Meeting (now known as The Valley).

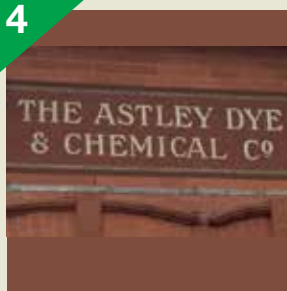
Community memory: "We knew the people that ran the Watermillock, they said it was haunted. They were in the garden one night; they looked up and saw a skeleton in the window of the dining room".



## Visit Bolton

**A Bolton Community Inspired Walk**  
[www.visitbolton.com/cromptonwalks](http://www.visitbolton.com/cromptonwalks)

4



**Astley Dye and Chemical Company**, Mallison Street, BL1 8PP

The international ACDO brand was developed here by founder Harry Pilling in 1919. To promote the product Harry would take his mother to demonstrate the product. With Harry talking about the product and his mother doing her washing, church halls and schools were packed full as she scrubbed and showed off the miracle washing tablet.

5



**Astley Bridge Chapel**, Eden Street, BL1 6NY

Astley Bridge Chapel, built in 1883 by J Simpson architect for Astley Bridge Local Board, stands within an open aspect of Astley Bridge cemetery. The land was purchased from the Eden Trust to provide an eight acre site. Henry Warburton, credited with expanding the Warburtons bakery in the early twentieth century, is buried here. He was also a local magistrate, Alderman and Mayor of Bolton in 1930-1931.

6



**Former Eden Orphanage gatehouse**, Thorns Road / Pendle Court

All that remains of the Eden Orphanage is a date stone on the former gatehouse property. The orphanage which occupied the lands here was built with a £50,000 bequest from the will of James Eden, bleacher of Eden and Thwaites bleachworks at Waters Meeting. £10,000 of the funds to be utilised on erecting the building; Bolton architect J Bradshaw, completed the building in 1879 in the Gothic Style. It housed 80 children, but closed in the 1950s. As well as accommodation, there was a school, playgrounds, a swimming pool, servants quarters, wash-houses, an infirmary and gymnasium.

7



**ASDA supermarket, former site of Hesketh's Mill**, Blackburn Road, BL1 8QG

Before the supermarket, Hesketh's Mill stood here. There had been a mill here since 1866. The site was known locally as 'T-tip', a well known spot every Friday for a local "pot fair" with auctions. Circuses and fairs would also set up stalls to entertain local people.

Community memory: "1965 I worked at Hesketh's Mill. I was 16 years of age, my father-in-law worked for Greenhalgh and Shaw's mill".

8



**Birley Street houses**

These stone houses are of architectural value within this local conservation area. They were built for local mill workers around 1850. Birley Street is named after a local vicar at nearby St Paul's Church: Reverend A Birley vicar 1858-1869.

Community memory: "my Dad had to walk from Blackburn Road near here all the way to Horwich for work". (1960s)

9



**St Paul's Church**, Astley Bridge, Holland Street, BL1 7ET

This was built in 1848 to hold 745 people. The land was a gift from Lord Wilton. The £4000 funding to build the church came from local mill owners the Greenhalgh brothers and bleacher Thomas Thwaites. In 1868 it was extended by architect J Medland Taylor to accommodate 1168 people, due to an increased population working in the nearby mills.

