

HISTORICAL WALKING TOUR OF BRATTON ROUTE



FEATURES

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Melbourne House 2. Bratton House 3. Cleeve Terrace (former mill) 4. Luccombe Mill 5. St James' Church 6. Reeves Orchard | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Village Green (former Reeves Ironworks) 8. Baptist Chapel 9. Court House, Court Farm, Grange Farm 10. Yew Trees 11. Lower Mill |
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MAP REF.	FEATURE	DETAIL
	The Exchange	1936 telephone kiosk – START & FINISH

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	<p>Bratton is made up from three hamlets – Littlestoke, the area near the church of St. James; the stream called Milbourne/Stradbrook, along the East boundary of the village; and Braectun, at the intersection of Court Lane and Lower Westbury Road.</p> <p>START THE WALK BY GOING EAST, TOWARDS MELBOURNE HOUSE</p>	<p><u>(Little) Stoke</u>: from Old English (stoc) , means a secondary or dependent settlement, in this case of Westbury. <u>Milbourne</u>: means a stream with a mill. <u>Braectun</u>: means a settlement with newly cultivated land.</p> <p>“Bratton” used as collective term for the three hamlets in 13th century, when there were over 50 households in total.</p> <p>In 1545 there was a long legal argument over whether Bratton was a separate parish or a chapelry of Westbury. In 1625 the claim to be a separate parish was renewed. In 1845 Bratton granted independence from Westbury as a parish, but church remained associated with Westbury until 1995 when it became part of the United Benefice of Bratton, Edington and Imber, Coulston and Erlestoke.</p>
	<p>The Duke – public house</p>	<p><u>The Duke</u>. Formerly the White Horse, thought to have been developed from a pair of 18th century cottages. The old Duke was located within what is now the grounds of Bratton House (behind the War Memorial). n.b. it is not known which duke was commemorated in the name.</p>
<p>1</p>	<p>Melbourne House</p>	<p>The house was built in 1768, probably for William Whitaker of the prosperous clothier family. Formerly included a maltings at the back. C19 addition of wing to rear. Dormer windows are C20.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Bratton House</p>	<p>Grade 2*. Built on his freehold land by Philip Ballard in 1716 but original house completed in 1732 by John Aldridge Ballard (PB died in 1723). Ballards are mentioned in Bratton church records as far back as 1542. They were farmers and lived at Ballards Home Living, now Grange Farm, which we will see later.</p> <p>Designed in Queen Anne style with red and black bricks which were rendered with cement in C19th. William Aldridge, son of JAB, inherited the house in 1740. Ownership passed to his wife Mary in 1803, who in April 1803 married Edward Seagram. ES soon extended the house. His family created the Seagrams whisky company in Canada. William Seagram, son of ES, inherited BH in 1845 and built a large chapel in the grounds.</p> <p>Ownership passed to Wadham Diggle in 1914. WD and his son both served in the Royal Navy and also successfully invested in mining in Canada and Australia. They rebuilt and enhanced various parts of the house. WD also donated the war memorial to the village.</p> <p>BH was bought by Sir Horace Seymour, an ambassador, in 1935. It was the home of a convent school from Hampstead during WW2. HS died in 1979 and his wife moved into a bungalow that had been built in the grounds. BH was then bought by Lord and Lady Loch who in turn sold it in 1997. The present owners bought it in 2004.</p>
	<p>1 Melbourne St</p>	<p>(White cottage) 1621. Altered C19. Used to be a shop.</p>

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3	Cleeve Terrace (Mill)	Upper or Aldridge's Mill. Watermill on the site for centuries. Converted to cottages 1909 when mill was demolished.
4	Luccombe House	Built by Thomas Jarvis. Early C19. Also a mill here (slightly downstream) but demolished. Pond fed from Luccombe Springs in valley running from south of here.
5	St James' Church	<p>Grade 2*. Some of the tombs are also Grade 2.</p> <p>Proportions of Nave and Chancel suggest an earlier Saxon church into which a Norman tower was inserted.</p> <p>Base of tower pillars C11/12.</p> <p>Both Transepts and probably Porch before 1400.</p> <p>c1400: Tower rebuilt, Nave roof raised and clerestory windows and Aisles added; Transepts and Porch partially rebuilt.</p> <p>Heavily restored c1860 including roof renewed (but not changed in appearance) and stained glass added.</p> <p>Vestry completed 1925.</p> <p>Stained glass E window given by William Seagram of Bratton House in 1860.</p> <p>Stained glass W window given by Mr Laverton of Westbury also in 1860 but tracery is C15 and was restored in 1992.</p> <p>Font almost certainly Norman but extensively recut in 1860.</p> <p>Organ built about 1860, after removal of a musicians' gallery at the west end of the church. Has been at various positions in the church.</p> <p>Friends' Fund raises money for repairs. Monday Gang of senior citizens, maintains churchyard and some aspects of church fabric. Assisted in removal of all 6 bells, and their replacement in the renovated bell chamber in 2021-22.</p>
		Church Steps. In records in 1831 but probably much older. Restored by The Monday Gang in 2009-2010.
6	Reeves Orchard & Church Hill Cottage	Reeves Orchard donated to the village by the Reeves family. Church Hill Cottage built for the verger on C19th.
	The Oratory - top of "The Butts"	The Oratory. Formerly the National (Anglican) School. The date stone 1877 probably refers to an enlargement, as it is thought to have been in existence in 1846, and a cottage or other building on the site seems to have been in use as a Sunday School in 1820.

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7	Village Green and Reeves Ironworks	<p>Founded by Robert (carpenter/wheelwright) and John Reeves (blacksmith) in about 1840. Grew rapidly including a foundry by late-1840s. By 1853 equipment produced included iron ploughs, harrows, water carts and shepherds' huts. Site expanded to include an office, boiler house, foundry, smithy, carpentry shop, fitting and erecting shops, saw pit, paint shop and stores. Products sold nationally and internationally. Exhibited at the Great Exhibition 1851. Some iron came from Westbury; some coal from Radstock. Workforce of about 40 in 1851 rising to 69 in 1914. Craftsmen drawn from the Midlands, Wales and Ireland. Reeves' ethic placed a high importance on workers welfare. Gas main from Westbury installed in 1904, which also supplied many Bratton houses.</p> <p>After WW2 Reeves were unable to compete with large international firms and didn't update their products. Went into receivership in 1970 and whole works was demolished in 1973. Now the site of the village green. Several implements displayed in Bratton gardens.</p>
		Manor Fields housing – built 1977-79.
8	Baptist Chapel	<p>Central part 1734; extended c1780 & 1818. Grade 2*. Manse 1802.</p> <p>Strong Baptist tradition in Bratton due to Reeves and Whittakers.</p>
		Scotts Farm pre-1773, rebuilt late-C18
9	Court Farm (CF), Court House (CH), Grange Farm (GF)	<p>CF: early-C17, altered in C18 (1707 on extension). Dwelling for the Longleat tenement called Butchers or Frickers.</p> <p>CH: Grade 2*. Late-C14, altered mid-C17 (internal dates 1626 & 1656). The Court House and its associated land was the dwelling for the Longleat tenement called Wincks, and the Bratton manor court met here, hence the name. Remained one of the tenements until the Longleat estate sold its Bratton properties in the late 19th and early/mid 20th centuries. Associated with various members of the Whitaker family</p> <p>GF: C17, altered 1739 by John Aldridge Ballard.</p>
10	Yew Trees	Grade 2. The dwelling of the Longleat tenement called Smarts. Housed a school run by Jeffery Whitaker in the 18th century but was then badly damaged by the arson of a later pupil, hence some rebuilding.
	Various Houses along Lower Road	<p>Whittakers (a conversion from farm building / dairy / cottage) and Yew Tree Farmhouse C17, altered C18 & C20.</p> <p>Ivy Cottage: 1639, addition in C18.</p> <p>Peach Tree Cottage rebuilt 1736.</p> <p>Pear Tree Orchard 1997</p> <p>Winters late-C17. Retirement home of William Ballard, father of Phillip Ballard builder of Bratton House.</p> <p>East Marsh Farmhouse C16, altered C17.</p>
11	Lower Mill	Pre-1773. Probably on site of original Saxon mill, since Milbourne is a Saxon word for a stream with a mill. Corn mill then fulling mill. Closed c1930s. Mill wheel still in position inside house.