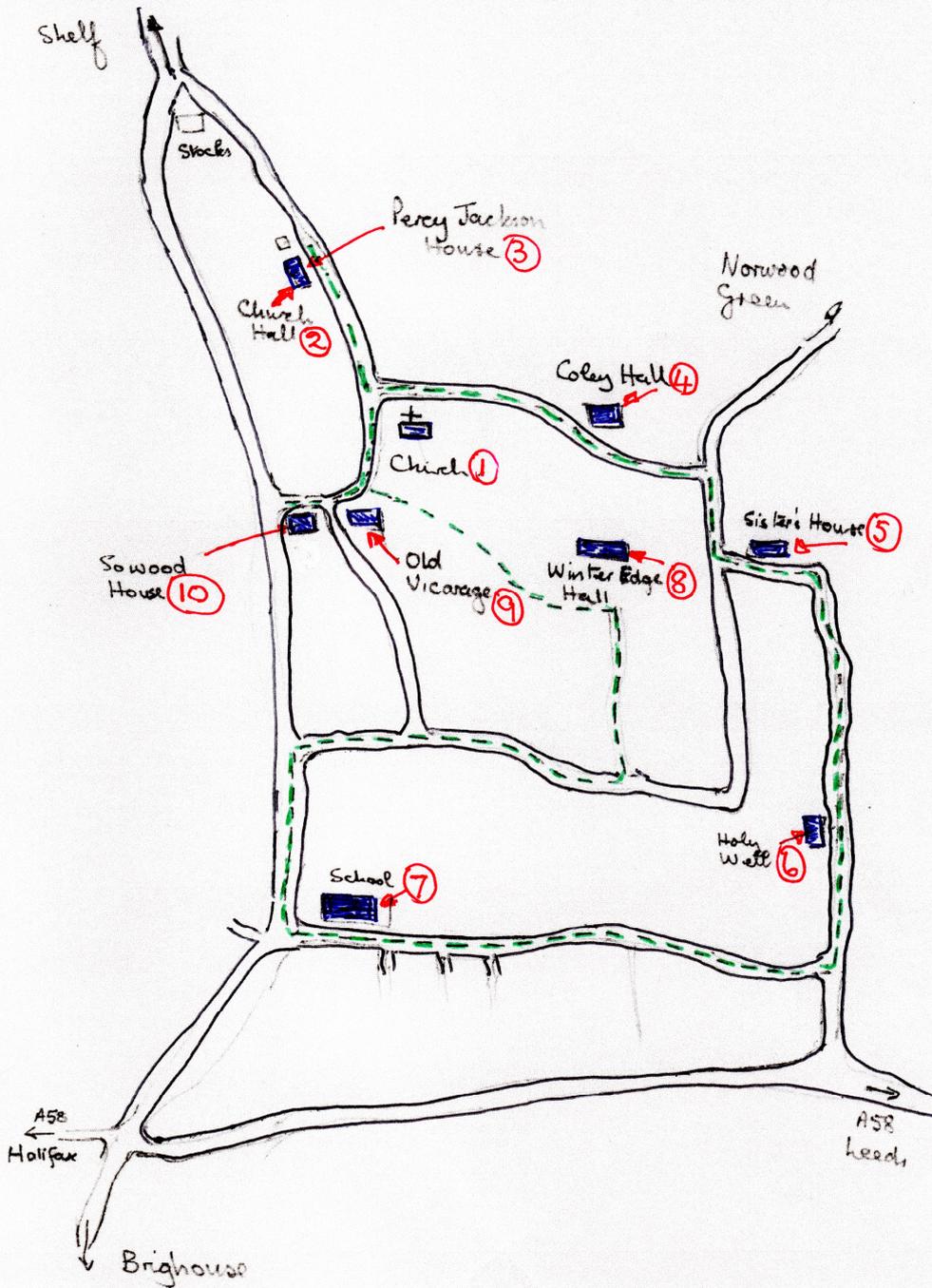




HISTORIC WALK

AROUND THE PARISH OF COLEY

Heritage Trail



Parking is available on the roadside outside of the church.

Stand outside the west door and look to the North, West and South

NUMBER 1. COLEY CHURCH



The earliest references to settlement at Coley are found in the Wakefield Court Rolls in 1277 and 1286, pertaining to land owned there by Sir John de Coldelay, whose surname the word Coley was no doubt corrupted from. The name means cold field.

However, certain clues do remain in the name of nearby Priestley Green, a field belonging to a priest, and the preponderance of holy wells in the area. Hellewell Syke, Lister Well and St. John's Well which was believed to possess healing powers and can still be found in a field above the hamlet at Coley Hall.

WHY BUILD A CHURCH AT COLEY?

In 1513, there was no A58, the village of Hipperholme began at Towngate and was connected to Halifax via Kirk Lane and a road over the hill.

Why did they purchase this acre of land? The land was the highest point between Halifax and Bradford, equal distance from Hipperholme, Shelf and Northowram and at the junction of the road leading towards Wakefield and Bradford. Wherever possible churches were built on the top of the hill and not in the valley.

The original church was 13.5 yd wide and 28 yd long a single storey building with a tower. In 1596 the church was enlarged and was the first to be pewed. In 1631, the Rev'd Denton enlarged the church.

In 1711 the church was partially rebuilt and built in the tower were two inscribed stones, that were incorporated when the present church was built. One gives a date and the other an inscription.

In 1818 the foundation stone was laid for a new church to be built. This included the addition of choir vestry, removal of side galleries re-siting organ, central heating installed and the old box pews removed.

Leave by the church gate and turn right and walk up the road until you reach the church hall

NUMBER 2. COLEY CHURCH HALL

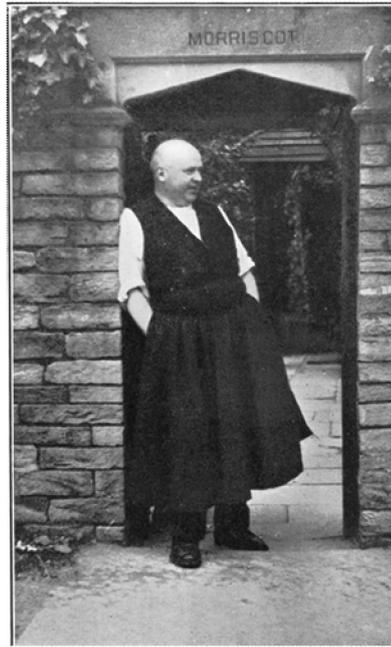


Coley National School was built in 1843 at a cost of £352 9s.6d and opened in 1845. It was the first elementary school in the area and had accommodation for 300 children. The first report on the school in 1846 indicated that there were 114 children. There were many more boys than girls and, noted the inspector, "discipline is not good but much improvement has taken place I am told". The numbers at the school declined steadily and the school closed in the summer of 1875.

It was given to the church for the teaching of religious instruction and from that time it has continued to this day to teach young people

Continue to walk 20 metres up the road to the cottage with the name Morriscot

NUMBER 3. PERCY JACKSON'S HOUSE



Percy Jackson was a well known wood carver and had carved many screens and pulpits for local churches. The wood carver and his son lived at Morriscot, just above the school on Coley Road. Harry designed and carved the war memorial at Norwood Green and was responsible for many ornate wood carvings in the local house and nearby churches. Harry Percy junior spent some years travelling the world after the war before returning to Coley where he joined his father in business. Harry junior carved the screens in the church

Now return back to the church and take the track by the side of the church

NUMBER 4. COLEY HALL



The earliest references to settlement at Coley are found in the Wakefield Court Rolls in 1277 and 1286, pertaining to land owned there by Sir John de Coldelay, whose surname the word Coley was no doubt corrupted from. Later, in 1326, Brother Thomas Larchier, prior of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, recorded that Henry de Coldelay “held a certain tenement in Coldelay of their house,” which is to say that de Coldelay rented the land from the Knights. The Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, also known as the Knights of Malta or the Knights Hospitallers, were a Christian military order originally established in 1080 to care for sick pilgrims travelling to the Holy Land. In England, however, all property of the Knights was confiscated during the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1540.

It is also interesting to note that John the Baptist was often depicted as a severed head and the gateway to Coley Hall features a particularly fine example of the motif. Although the relief was carved in 1649, more than a century after the Hospitallers had lost the land, that fact does not preclude the persistence of the image in the local psyche.

It is thought that the body of the current hall was built by Samuel Sunderland around 1640, passing to his nephew Langdale in 1646. During the Civil Wars, Langdale fought for the Royalists as a Captain of a Troop of Horse under the Earl of Newcastle and whilst he was resident at the Hall, it suffered badly from bombardment by passing Parliamentary troops, necessitating the rebuilding of its south frontage

Continue on this rough road until you reach the tarmac road. Turn right and walk on the footpath until you reach Syke Lane then turn left and walk a few metres to where there is water flowing from under some flag stones.

NUMBER 5. THE SISTERS HOUSE



A more recent tradition concerning Priestley Green pertains to the Sisters’ House, which stands directly behind Lister’s Well. A dwelling on this site is recorded as far back as the

13th Century but the current cottage was built in 1630 by Samuel Sunderland of nearby Coley Hall. Local legend says that it was once home to the Appleyard sisters, who for want of a place to worship nearby, decided they would found a church themselves. However, they disagreed over precisely where it should be located so they built one each, Coley Chapel and Eastfield Chapel, with the house supposedly exactly half-way between the two. The story is doubtless intended to explain how two chapels came to be built so close together but it is demonstrably apocryphal as the chapels were built in 1529, a whole century before the Sisters' House. Set into the pavement in the centre of the hamlet is Lister's Well or more simply just as the Holy Well.

Instruction. Continue down Syke lane until you reach 3 stone troughs at the side of the field

NUMBER 6. HOLY WELL



It had been regarded as a holy place long before that even, a conclusion which might be drawn from the concentration of holy wells in the vicinity of the hamlet.

The first and most imposing of these is Hellewell Syke Well (which means "holy well by boggy land") where a spring feeds a series of four troughs adjacent to Syke Lane as it approaches Priestley Green from Lightcliffe. It is set amidst a profusion of ash trees, which are often associated with sacred waters. There has been evidence of a well at Hellewell Syke since Saxon times. The second site is set into the pavement in the centre of the hamlet and is known as Lister's Well or more simply just as the Holy Well. The third example is St. John's Well which is behind Coley Hall.

Continue to walk until you reach Bramley Lane, turn right and walk to the end of the road until you reach Hipperholme Grammar School

NUMBER 7. HIPPERHOLME GRAMMAR SCHOOL



This picture of the 18th Century Hall of the School was executed by Mr. Harold Little in 1945, and purchased by the Headmaster. The Memorial Gateway was erected in 1919 in the memory of Capt. M. P. Andrews, Headmaster, who was killed near Ypres in the first World War, and to the masters and boys who fell in the same war.

The earliest documented history of the School was in 1534 when the first references to a School at Coley Church for the local boys of Hipperholme are recorded. In 1648 The Grammar School's Founder, Matthew Broadley, bequeathed £500 to open the first school in the village of Hipperholme. Richard Hudson was appointed as master in 1725 and embarked on an ambitious development scheme which involved building a completely new schoolroom which is now the Senior School Hall.

By 1800 over 200 pupils were being taught at the school, many coming from some distance. One of these pupils was John Marshall who later founded the important flax spinning business in Leeds. The 'school house' was built to provide accommodation for the Head Master and pupils wishing to board in the 1880s. The building now houses the Head Master's study, classrooms, the art room and the physics laboratory.

In 1902 the school became part of the West Riding County Council local education authority and a few years later Lightcliffe Preparatory School, was established in the former Liberal Club providing education to children aged 3 to 11. In 1985 The Hipperholme Grammar School Foundation was launched as a new Independent School and joined, in 2005, by Lightcliffe Prep as the Foundation's Junior School.

At the end of the school yard, turn right into Denholme Gate Road, continue up the road until you reach Northedge Lane. Turn right and continue down the road, past Soaper House Lane until you reach a break in the wall. Follow this footpath up toward the old house on the hill.

NUMBER 8. WYNTEREDGE HALL



The double Maltese cross of the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem appears on a north gable of this ancient homestead, built in 1371. The hall, as it now stands, has been built in three sections, the middle being the oldest. To the back on the north gable is the double Maltese cross, significant of the fact that the Knights of St John had established a religious settlement or priory there. Many Latin inscriptions once existed about the building, but the only one now obvious is 'Meliora Spero (we hope for better times) 1693' on an out building. In a bedroom in the oldest part is excellently preserved plaster work over the fireplace, which includes the coat of arms of the Saltonstalls, owners from 1584 to 1624 (Sir Richard Saltonstall, Bart was Lord Mayor of London in 1597). Captain Langdale Sunderland rented the hall around 1650. It was from the stable yard that the Royalist fired small cannons at Coley Hall.

Continue past the house on the top path crossing over the stile until you reach the road, turn left down the hill until you reach the Old Vicarage

NUMBER 9. OLD VICARAGE



This was the vicarage for St John's Church, and was probably built in 1789. It was the home for all the incumbents until 1980.

Continue past the old vicarage to the next building on the left.

NUMBER 10. SOWOOD HOUSE



Constructed in 1631 and when renovated in workmen stumbled across a mysterious iron box concealed in the brickwork behind a chimney. Upon opening it, they found a human skull. Forensic examination of the skull, however, revealed that it dated to the seventeenth century and was probably placed in the chimney when the house was built, as “protection against witches”. It was buried in the churchyard. Afterwards the house began to be haunted by cries of ‘Where is my head’. When, on the advice of the vicar, it was replaced in the chimney the cries ceased.

The building once housed the pupils who attended school in the church and continue when the school was moved to its present location. Up to 20 years ago, the pupils from Hipperholme Grammar School were brought to the house to remind them of the origin of the school.

Return up the hill back to the church where your journey began.



ST JOHN THE BAPTIST
SERVING
COLEY AND NORWOOD GREEN

