

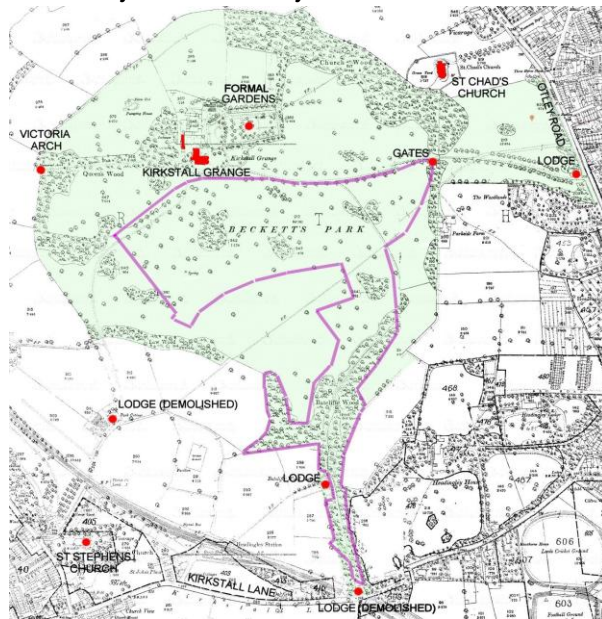
# KIRKSTALL GRANGE ESTATE (BECKETT PARK) HERITAGE WALK

The walk starts and finishes at the James Graham building on the Leeds Beckett University campus. Allow between 1½ and 2 hours

- The majority of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Kirkstall Grange estate still survives, consisting mainly of Beckett Park and the Leeds Beckett University campus. Most of the key elements still remain despite later development.



Boundary of the 19<sup>th</sup> century estate



Public park boundary and key features on 1892 OS map

## KEY DATES

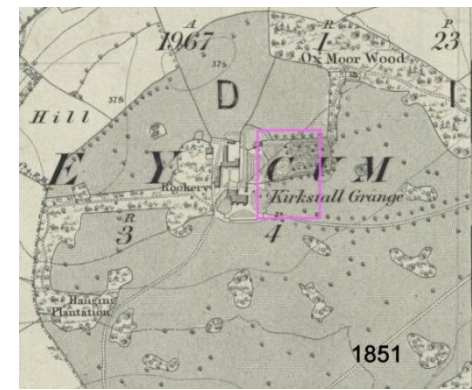
- Romano-British coffin and cyst** - evidence of likely Roman villa in vicinity.
- 1070 – After Norman conquest** given to Ilbert de Lacey by William the Conqueror, and ruled from Pontefract castle.
- 1152 – Kirkstall Abbey founded**, and land later called New Grange given to the abbey. A grange is an outlying farm supplying needs of abbey. E.g. Allerton Grange, Moor Grange.
- 1539 – Dissolution of the monasteries** by Henry VIII in 1539 – Kirkstall Abbey unroofed.
- 1539** Estate given to **archbishop Thomas Cranmer** (burnt at stake in 1556 in Mary I's reign)
- 1583** – passed to **Foxcroft family** from Halifax
- 1626 - New Grange built** by Benjamin Wade
- 1752 – present house built** by James Paine for Walter Wade
- 1805 - 1818 - John Marshall (flax spinner) was tenant. Marshalls Mill in Holbeck. Later (1840s) built Egyptian-style Temple Mills in Holbeck. Reared sheep and planted 450 acre grounds.
- 1834** New Grange **bought by William Beckett**, son of founder of Beckett's Bank. Renamed Kirkstall Grange
- 1908 sale by Baron Grimthorpe** to pay off debts. Leeds Council bought some to build City Of Leeds Training College and to provide a public park. Part was bought by Wades Charity in 1909 and leased to Council. 1912 City of Leeds Training College built – Wrennaissance style by George Walter Atkinson
- 1914 – 1924 – Military Hospital** (dental and plastic surgery; 600 patients, 90 nurses).

## 1 JAMES GRAHAM BUILDING

- James Graham was Director of Education at the time of construction.
- The building, like all the other 1912 college buildings, is listed Grade II.
- Note the Council crest over the doorway and the owls on the cast iron rainwater hoppers

## 2 THE ACRE

- The Acre (actually measuring 4.3 acres) is the grassed rectangle surrounded on three sides by the 1912 college buildings.
- The northern half of the Acre is the site of the Grange's formal gardens, which enjoyed extensive views over Leeds. The estate is the highest ground in the area, with fine views in all directions.
- A holly on the west side is the sole survivor from the garden's topiary.
- From the Acre the Grange's impressive staircase lantern can be seen poking out of the roof.



1851 OS map with the Acre marked

## 3 KIRKSTALL GRANGE

- The Grange is a Palladian mansion built in 1752 for Walter Wade by architect James Paine who also designed Nostell Priory and Chatsworth House stables



The Grange before 1858 improvements

- William Beckett made improvements in 1858, adding extra bay windows and extending the service wing.
- The Beckett crest on the front gable consists of 4 boar's heads
- The Grange is listed Grade II\*
- The fine interior plasterwork, fireplaces, shutters, etc. still survive in good condition.



Women's common room in the Grange 1912 when it was a women's hostel



- Famous visitors include William and Dorothy Wordsworth (1807); Oscar Wilde, Arthur Sullivan, Prince of Wales (1890s); Churchill 1907.

#### 4 RELATIONSHIP TO THE PARK

- The Friends hope to restore visual connection between the Grange and its parkland by removing trees and replacing the hedge with railings.

#### 5 STONE PIERS

- The curious old stone piers at the southern edge of the Acre were once surmounted by large antique Japanese urns which were originally at entrance to the forecourt of the Grange. They were moved to the Acre when the college was built but have since disappeared.



Grange with Japanese lanterns 1909;



Architect's proposal for college (note Japanese urns)

- The avenue along the drive is shown on the 1851 OS map. Several of the older beech may be survivors of this avenue but most are later.



Air photo of college (1920s?). Note hospital huts, original beech avenue, new planting south and east of new buildings.

#### 6 ST CHAD'S CHURCH

- View of St Chad's spire across playing field – listed grade II\*. Built 1868 on land given by Beckett family, to designs by William Beckett's nephew Edmund Beckett Denison, First Lord Grimthorpe, and architect T H Crosland. Extended 1911. Grimthorpe was a skilled horologist who also designed the clock mechanism of Big Ben and worked with Potts of Leeds..

*If you have time you could walk to point 7 before returning to point 8*

#### 7 GATE LOGE AND PIERS ON OTLEY ROAD

- The lodge, stone piers and boundary wall date from 1836 and are listed Grade II. .



Otley Road lodge c.1910

#### 8 GATES AND RAILINGS



- These resemble those at the gate lodge on Otley Road, and until recently it was assumed that they were relocated to the park in the late 1920s when the housing estate was built. However this 1910 photograph shows them in the current position. The stone piers are listed Grade II.
- The Friends of Beckett Park hope to raise funds to have the gates and railings restored.

#### 9 THE AIR-RAID SHELTER



The flat-topped mound west of the gates is a WW2 air-raid shelter for residents of the housing estate. Its entrances have been filled in but it still exists below ground.

*The photo shows the similar Chapel Allerton park air raid shelter under construction*

#### 10 TENNIS PAVILION

- The concrete platform east of the skate park is the site of the 1927 tennis pavilion and park keeper's store.



Tennis pavilion 1927

#### 11 TREE PLANTING

- Many mature trees across the park have died in recent years. New specimens planted by the Friends in 2016 include tulip tree, handkerchief tree, and cedar as well as traditional parkland species such as sweet chestnut and oak. Each is labelled with its Latin and English name. Smaller trees have been planted in the woodlands to rejuvenate them.

#### 12 COMMEMORATIVE OAK

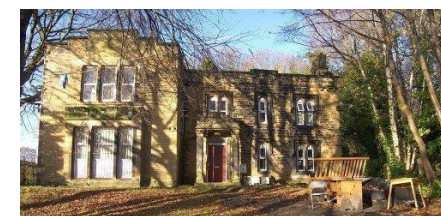
- This oak tree was planted in 2015 to mark the formation of the Friends of Beckett Park.

*If you have the time you could walk to points 13, 14 and 15 before returning to point 12*

#### 13 BATCLIFFE WOOD

- Looking southwards, Batcliffe Wood can be seen in the distance. The wood was part of the Kirkstall Grange estate, and the track through it provided a southern approach from Kirkstall Lane.

#### 14 BATCLIFFE WOOD HOUSE



- This was the southern gate lodge for the park

#### 15 GATE LODGE



In 1836 this lodge was built in the same style as the one at point 7. It was demolished in the 1950s when Queenswood Road was constructed.

#### 16 PLAY AREA

- The play area was built in 2010 on the site of the 1920s bowling green

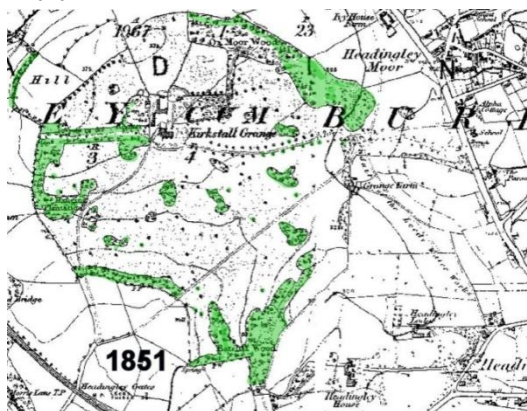


## 17 QUEENSWOOD CENTRE PLAYING FIELD

- The Queenswood Centre was built on land taken from the park. It is hoped that in the future the playing field can be returned to the park.

## 18 WILLOW COPSE

- The willow copse north of the playground was planted in 2016 to benefit wildlife. It is on the site of a 19th century pond,
- The original parkland trees, 200 to 250 years old, are shown on early OS maps. Many have died recently, and were replaced with new specimens in 2016.



1851 OS Map accurately showing tree positions



Present day (Google earth)

## 19 CRICKET PITCH

- South of the university's 'Acre' is the park's now-disused cricket pitch

## 20 WOODLAND MANAGEMENT

- The Friends of Beckett Park have planted many saplings (donated by the Woodland Trust) to restore the woodlands and create hedges.

## 21 RIDGE AND FURROW

- Most of the park shows evidence of 'ridge and furrow' – resulting from ploughing techniques used from the late Roman period (5th century) to the 17th century. The plough moved clockwise along narrow cultivation strips, each time pushing the soil into the centre of the strip, resulting in distinct ridges over time.



Ridge and furrow



Ploughing of the type which resulted in ridge and furrow (oxen were used rather than horses)

## 22 BARRAGE BALLOON MOORINGS

- Two tarmac strips in the s.e. part of the park were for tethering barrage balloons in WW2, part of the defences of the Yeadon Avro aircraft factory.

## 23 WILDFLOWER SEEDING

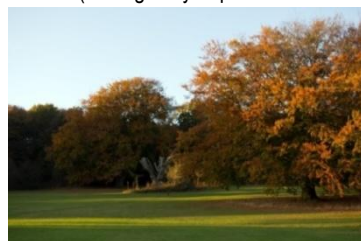
- Two wildflower areas were sown in 2018 with the help of Buglife to provide food for insects. They also give a fine display in summer.

## 24 THE MEADOW

- The north-western part of the park is mown once a year to allow native grasses and wildflowers to thrive and benefit wildlife.
- Emley Moor TV mast can be seen from the park, 15 miles away.

## 25 OLDEST PARKLAND TREES

- Some of the parkland beech and oak trees are up to 250 years old. Look carefully at the trunks – many large branches sprout from 3m where they were pollarded (cut regularly to provide timber and animal fodder).



Parkland trees 200 to 250 years old

## 26 VICTORIA ARCH

- This Grade II listed building was dedicated to Queen Victoria for her visit to open the Town Hall in 1858. William Beckett hoped the Queen would be his guest at the Grange but to his disappointment she stayed at Woodsley House, the home of the Mayor of Leeds. The arch had views over Kirkstall Valley, unfortunately now obscured by self-sown trees. Hanging Plantation was renamed Queens Wood at the same time.



Victoria Arch 1909

## WEBSITES OF INTEREST:

History of Leeds Beckett University Campus -

<https://libguides.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/archives/history>

Book about military hospital - [www.firstworldwarhospital.co.uk/](http://www.firstworldwarhospital.co.uk/)

Historic photographs of Headingley -

[www.headingleyleeds.com/historic-headingley](http://www.headingleyleeds.com/historic-headingley)

Historic photographs of Leeds - [www.leodis.net/](http://www.leodis.net/)

Friends of Beckett Park - [www.beckettpark.org.uk/](http://www.beckettpark.org.uk/)

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**To join Friends of Beckett Park and receive regular emails about our activities send an email to [friendsofbeckettpark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofbeckettpark@gmail.com)**

FRIENDS OF BECKETT PARK







- - - - - Route of guided walk (1.5 miles)
- ..... Optional additional route
- 13 Main points of interest
- Other features of interest

**FRIENDS OF BECKETT PARK**  
**HERITAGE OPEN DAY WALK 2019**  
**KIRSTALL GRANGE ESTATE**  
 Leeds Beckett University Campus & Beckett Park