



Leyland Industrial Heritage Walk

1. Quinland

This area of Leyland was a parcel of land bought by James Quin of the rubber industry who attempted to attract more people to work in his factory by creating this small estate with the help of architect David Grant. The land was parceled off by Quin who kept the freehold to the various lessees with the remaining land being leased to his stepson John Berry Smith.

2. Herbert Street Works

In Herbert Street, Lancashire Steam Motor Company rented the disused Springfield Wire Mills previously owned by J Lord & Sons between 1888 and 1893. It was built in the early 1870's by James Quin as a subsidiary of James Quin & Co Limited only becoming Brookfield Rubber Works Limited when Quin lost control of Leyland Rubber Co in 1883, the firm going bust on his death in 1886. Here LSMC established their first factory with twenty employees until their building was ready in 1902, they then used both premises. The photograph of the workforce with Henry Spurrier on the right and James Sumner on the left was taken on John Street.

3. Gas Works, Gold Thread Works & the Clock

When the Gas Works was demolished in the early sixties to make way for Churchill Way, there not only disappeared the sight but also the smell of an industry. This works was built after the Leyland & Farington Gas Company was registered in 1856 and empowered by a special act in 1863. The name was changed to Leyland Gas Co Inc in 1909.

The Springfield Works at the bottom of Chapel Brow was owned by G.L Tootells Ltd. It was founded in 1862 where gold and silver wire was manufactured into gold and silver thread and plate, tambouring threads, braids, cords and tinsels. This business continued into the 1950's.

4. Leyland Printing

This was established as a printing company in Leyland in 1901 and over a century later it is still run by the great grandchildren of the original founder Thomas Edward Mould. The business occupied a number of sites in Leyland beginning in Towngate almost opposite the Public Hall. In 1932 they had plans for a new office, workshop and shop approved for the site at 52 – 58 Hough Lane which is now occupied by Icelands Supermarket.

5. Leyland Motors – Canteen & South Works

The site of the South Works stretches from Balcarres Road to Hough Lane, being acquired by the Motors during the First World War. It was first used for the construction of the various types of bodies for the R.A.F. vehicles, construction starting in 1916. The canteen was a three storey building was constructed with the use of concrete by prisoners of war during the First World War. The main use of the building was the canteen situated in the centre with enough space to accommodate the full workforce at that time. The top floor was originally used as an experimental workshop before the drawing office took over in 1927. Following years of disuse, the 3 storey building was finally demolished in 1995.

6. Leyland Motors – Water Street Smithy

The Sumner family had conducted business at the Smithy on Towngate for many years until in 1892; it passed down to James Sumner as a going engineering concern, the business producing iron and brass castings. Following experiments with steam, the successful production of a prize-winning lawn mower resulted in the formation of J. Sumner Ltd. The Preston firm of T. Coulthard and Co. took a half share in Sumner's works to make more capital available. Later George Spurrier from Manchester took over the Coulthard interests, George's brother, Henry, returning from the U.S.A. where he had been working as a railway draughtsman. The Lancashire Steam Motor Company was formed in 1896, with Sumner being joined by the Spurrier family on the board of directors

7. Regent Cinema, Woolworths, Leyland Motors – Car Garage & The Gables

The ASDA was the site of the Regent cinema from 1932 until 1949, when the building had a fire, which closed the cinema forever. The building later became the Leyland branch of Woolworths, with its distinctive wooden floor, the area still known as Woolworth's corner. The name of the Regent is still remembered with Regent Road further along Towngate.

By the nineteenth century Census returns the Gables was referred to as Thurstans Farm. In 1731, the building became a public house, and then in 1776 a surgeon took up residence, the property finally being brought in early 1900s by Dr. Walter Johnson, who built an imposing redbrick house which he called "The Gables", his brother Sydney Johnson was the architect. Dr. Johnson practised in Leyland for 50 years, on his death the house was brought by brewery Greenall Whitley and converted into a public house retaining its name "The Gables".

8. Leyland Motors – North Works

At the entrance to the North Works on Northcote Street on the wall of a small office building, there used to be a brass plate, which read "The Lancashire Steam Motor Co. - Registered Office ". In August, 1903, the company was registered privately under the Limited Liability Act, having previously been joined by William Norris, A.M. Inst. C.E., M.I.M.E. Mr. Henry Spurrier, jun., who now held the position of managing director; Mr. James Sumner, director and works manager; and Mr. Norris, director and chief engineer. With the growth of the firm's business new and larger premises were rendered necessary to keep pace with the growing output, and a site at Leyland was purchased covering over seven acres on which the North Works was built.

9. Lily Bank, Spring Bank & United Reformed Church

Lily Bank and Spring Bank - These two houses stood on the junction of Hough Lane and Quin Street. The house on the left, Spring Bank, last occupant, Barclays Bank before being demolished and the house on the right, Lily Bank later became the Midland Bank. These semi-detached houses were built by David Grant, who was also the architect for the Congregational Church. He had his office at the side entrance of Lily Bank, acting also for the Leyland & Farington Building Society. It was later occupied by amongst others, Charles Elliott, manager of the Leyland Gas Co. Spring Bank was the home of Henry Spurrier of Leyland Motors Ltd., and his son who became Sir Henry Spurrier was born there. Both houses later used as Doctors and Dentists before becoming the banks.

United Reformed Church - In 1874, when the Ebenezer Chapel in Towngate became too small for the worshippers, it was decided to build a new church and school. Mr. J.G. McMinnies, of Farington Lodge, secured the land in Hough Lane on a 999-year lease, the ground rent being paid by him for the rest of his life. The plans for the new church and school were prepared by David Grant, architect, of Lily Bank, Hough Lane. The new church was opened on October 12th, 1877, and is built of stone with a lofty roof and a tower 80 feet high. There is accommodation for 480 people, the cost of construction being approximately £6,000.

10. Iddon Brothers, Brookfield Rubber Works & BTR

James Iddon was born in 1859. He was educated at the Leyland Grammar School, near Preston, and in 1876 he commenced a seven years' apprenticeship in the engineers' department of the Leyland Rubber Co, then James Quin & Co. On its completion in 1883 he went to America, and worked during the next two years at the works of Sellers and Co., Bement Miles and Co., and Baldwin and Co., all of Philadelphia. In 1885 he returned to England to take the post of chief engineer to the Leyland Rubber Co., and held that position until 1888, when he started in business for himself, under the name of Iddon Brothers, engineers and rubber machinists at the Brookfield Iron Works, Leyland. His firm erected large rubber works both in this country and on the Continent, and supplied the machinery, some of which was invented by himself. He was one of the first to grasp the importance of hydraulic pressure in connection with rubber vulcanization, and his advocacy of the principle was eventually justified by its general adoption. He also devised a number of machines which have been used in the manufacture of pneumatic tyres.

A rubber works was established in 1905 as Whitehead & Roberts in the Ajax Works which is situated at the bottom of Quin Street behind the church and can be seen on the 1909 Ordnance Survey map and confirmed in the trade directories of 1913 and 1922. The site was extended into Newsome Street along John Street between 1907 and 1912. It was incorporated in 1907 as the Wood Milne Rubber Company having been established by Mr TH Roberts of the Roberts family of Farington House. In 1911, a petrol store was applied for, followed by offices, warehouse, tyre room, laboratory, boiler house and chimney in 1915 on Golden Hill Lane. The site would seem to be the buildings between Pearfield House and Golden Hill House, both of which would become part of the site in future years.