



The Westbury Blue Plaque Trail

Westbury is first mentioned in the Domesday Book and was held in 1066 by Edith, Edward the Confessor's queen. It had a market from 1252 and sent representatives to parliament from 1448 until 1886. The town became an important centre for the woollen cloth industry and many of its older buildings are associated with it. Agricultural links remained strong notably with Church Farm in Church Street and Town Farm in Alfred Street.

Bratton Road. The section between Newtown to Warminster Road was turnpiked in 1825 and with Alfred Street formed a bypass around the town.

A. Oddfellows Hall. Built c1890. Prince Alfred Lodge was the local branch of the Oddfellows Friendly Society. On the opposite side of the road is a former school 1884.

1. The Laverton.1872-3. The hall was given to the town for a wide range of public events, concerts and entertainments. In 1890 it hosted a banquet for the Australian cricket team, which was defeated, at Grass Acres, by Mr Laverton's Eleven, which included WG Grace. Rooms of this impressive building are still available for public hire and community use and is home to Westbury Town Council.

B. 6-8, Bratton Road. 6 is a timber framed house, built between 1480 and 1530; main range (hall) with cross wing (parlour). There is a late 19th century commercial sized brick oven. 8 is a stone addition, probably early 17th century.

C. Westfield House, Bratton Road: Built by William Greenland between 1853-1860.

2. Prospect Square.1869. Built by Abraham Laverton. The rents from the 32 houses on the right and left sides of the Square maintained the seven almshouses at the top end with pensions for their occupants.

D. The Pottery, Newtown: Originally a school 1847.

Alfred Street. The earliest reference is 1827. Named after the Saxon king whose victory over the Danes at Edington in 878 was the great founding battle of England.

3. Bitham Mill. Bitham House stood on the site but had gone by the early 19th century. The steam engine installed in 1829 powered the factory until 1939. Run together with the Angel mill by A Laverton & Co.

E. The Little House. A tan yard and then malt house were run together by the owners in the mid 19th century.

F. The Horse and Groom. First mentioned in 1882. During WW2 a mortuary was set up in a stable, now The Alfred Room. The only body it received was that of a German airman whose airplane crashed in 1944.

G. 21, The Lodge. c1850: Several horse trainers were based here between 1889-1927, with gallops on the downs. The stables were used as workshops by VC Boulton, glove makers, from 1932, although during WWII parts for aircraft were manufactured here.

H. Conservative Club (Ferndale house): Early 18th century clothier's house with fine windows, and workshops at rear.

Market Place. On the west side is a fine facade of late 18th century buildings.

I. The Ludlow Arms, Fore Street: Formerly The King's Arms. A Post Office was moved here in 1744. Before that it was The Forester.

4. The Old Town Hall. 1815. Built on the site of a market house by Sir Manasseh Massey Lopes. He bought the borough in order to control the electorate of 61 and so its representation in Parliament. He was MP for the town, but stood down for 15 months in 1829-30, in order to allow Robert Peel, who later founded the Metropolitan Police, a seat. Market stalls were set up on the open ground floor.

5. The Lopes Arms. Previously the Abingdon Arms and before that The Bell. Thought to be on the site of a 16th century inn, Saint George and the Dragon. It is recorded at the end of the 18th century that at election time the candidates were sworn in at the Guildhall and then carried on chairs covered with ivy to the inn, whilst throwing silver to the crowds.

6. All Saints Church. William Westbury, a justice of the King's Bench, was allowed to build a chantry chapel (the present north aisle chapel) in 1437, and he was probably responsible for the rebuilding of the whole church which took place at this time. Restored by TH Wyatt, architect (1847).The sunken garden beside the churchyard was dug in 1826 as the mill pond for Town Mill. Verger's Cottage was the vicarage until the late 18th century. Church hall and office, a school for girls 1873.

Maristow Street. Previously Silver Street; renamed between 1822 and 1830 by Sir Manasseh Massey Lopes after his Devon estate.

J. 1-3 was the family's home in Westbury.

Edwards Street. Previously Edward's Lane.

K. 11, Edward Street. Former Police station, built c1870.

L. 14-16, Edward Street. Was the Post Office until 1924.

M. The Garden House. Built c1800; a clothier's house. It was a bank from the late 19th century, and then a Post Office from 1923.

7. The Library. c1800; the home of the owners of Angel Mill. Home Mill adjoined on the north side. This was used a school in the mid-19th century. This annex was rebuilt and became an umbrella factory, which relocated there during WW2.

8. Angel Mill. 1806. The original mill, now converted to flats, is an impressive building of four storeys with pediment. Later buildings include a weaving shed 1868.

Church Street. Called Rotten Row from the mid-18th to mid-19th centuries.

N. 2, Edgar House 10, Cambridge House and 15, Ivy House, have fine 18th century frontages.

9. Westbury Swimming Pool. 1887-8. In winter the pool was boarded over and used as a gymnasium and dance hall. The baths remained open throughout the year. In the winter of 1914-1915 soldiers were billeted here.

O. 24-28, Church Street. Factory 1824. 26-28 became a short-lived technical school established by WH Laverton in 1897.

10. 35 Church Street. Probably the house of the Precentor (or Chantor) of Salisbury Cathedral, who was the ecclesiastical authority in the parish (until 1846), and lord of the manor of Westbury Chantry. The obligation, in a lease of 1826, for accommodation to be provided for him and his staff, reflected a long standing association.

P. Little Chantry was Church Farm. The date stone 1723 probably refers to alterations to an existing building.

Q. 23-33, Church Street. Formerly Church Terrace built c1820.

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Explore Westbury's history on the Blue Plaque Town Trail.

