

Ousegate is a primary street in Selby's conservation area. The River Ouse has been central to Selby's development and Ousegate shows the working relationship of the town to the river and the connections to the wider region that this once represented.

To set the scene, cross the former Toll Bridge, noting the plaques on the bridge support and on the toll house. **The view (1)** from the Barlby side shows the Ouse, with the remnants of its working wharves in the foreground and the Abbey rising in the background, over 18th and 19th century commercial and domestic properties. In 1891, over twenty businesses traded on Ousegate.

Look across to the right to see one of the town's last remaining **working mills (2)** and next to it, almost hidden by pigeon-infested warehousing, the medieval **Abbot's Staithe (3)** where the Abbey's water-borne trade was conducted.

To the left is a view of the rail swing bridge and beyond that, flats at the site of the canal basin.

Return across the bridge and turn right at the foot of the bridge. Across the road are a row of high quality 18th and 19th century properties, of which **Corunna House (4)** is the most interesting and prominent. The commercial properties show **carriage arches (5)** that once allowed horse-drawn vehicles into their rear yards. These yards were also business places.

Go back to the traffic lights but don't be fooled by what seem to be Tudor-framed buildings on the corner. This is just cladding over 19th century brickwork.

Cross the road and proceed, with the river on your left, to come to an **observation platform (6)** that allows sight of urban dereliction.

The abandoned **garage site (7)** was a thriving cycle and radio shop. **Decaying jetties and wharves (8)** remind us where commercial ships would dock to trade and day boats ply for passengers.

All along the river bank you can see **bollards (9)** used to hold ships' ropes to secure vessels against river currents.

It was not an easy matter to work a boat in and around Selby. Study the current on the Ouse and the narrowness of the

passage through the bridges. On many occasions the wooden structure of the old Toll Bridge was damaged, leading to its closure to road traffic.

With all this trade going on it is not surprising that Ousegate had numerous drinking facilities. **The Riverside pub (10)**, formerly the "Royal Oak", is a grade II listed public house. Notice the oak leaf motif in the keystone of the arch.

Turn left as you leave the platform. Across the road are mid 19th century wharf side warehouses, **Liversidge's (11)** on the site of the Customs House and **Tyson's Ironworks (12)**. Both these businesses made their money by supplying goods and services to the agricultural concerns in and around Selby. Their position near to river and canal, made trading easier. Cross the road to see traces of this trade in the remnants of **window lettering (13)**.

The warehouses are fine buildings, in brick and stone, built to a highly detailed Italianate style. The delicate and detailed brick and stonework mark opulent buildings, typical in industrial towns but rare in Selby, and show the development of the town's economy during the 19th century.

If the Ironworks gate is open you might spy a **cannon (14)** in the courtyard. This is a modern model, but could celebrate the civil war Battle of Selby, when cavalry under Colonel Fairfax stormed along Ousegate towards the King's men defending the river crossing.

Access to the railway also boosted trade. **The Station Inn (15)** is another listed building, with a bracket decorated in hop carvings and leaded glass windows.

Cross Ousegate and continue under the railway bridge. Former rail cottages have **wheel motifs (16)** in the brickwork. The rail bridge over the river can still swing to let large vessels pass.

Beyond the bridge is the 1834 **terminus** of the former **Leeds to Selby Railway (17)**. Selby had the first railway station in Yorkshire. The volume of trade is clear from the enormity of the remaining building. Inside were six platforms: four for goods and two for passengers, who had to cross Ousegate on foot, then up a gangplank to board boats for Goole, Hull or York. There was so much trade that it was all converted into a goods shed by 1841, dated on the **lintel (18)**.

The Highwayman (19) another listed building, was the "Malt Shovel".

Behind the pub is the huge **Ousegate Maltings (20)** of 1874. Farmers supplied grain by road, water and rail for malting. The product could then be easily moved on due to Selby's excellent transport links. The maltings is now on private property and in a perilous condition.

In the private car park, a single buffer stop and large brick sheds are all that remain of the huge railway infrastructure once present. Naming the new road "The Goods Yard" aptly describes its former purpose.

Re-cross Ousegate to walk next to the flood wall. More decaying jetties can be viewed. Pass through the modern development, built on a dock site, to emerge at the **canal basin (21)**. From the 1780s, development in Selby had spread towards the canal as it was another route for goods to and from Leeds, Goole, Hull and the continent.

Beyond the lock are the **keepers' cottages (22)** and the "**Lazy Cut**" (23) where goods were transferred between canal and river.

Cross the lock gate and follow the path over steps.

The walk now goes towards semi derelict industrial scrubland. Ceramic bricks in a red brick wall used to spell out **Rostron's (24)**. This site was a paper mill.

The grey bulk of **Cochrane's shipyard sheds (25)** looms. Ships were launched sideways into the river, producing a massive wave.

Follow the path right, then left. Before the shipyard closed in the 1990s, hundreds of workers arrived at their jobs through **Cochrane's gates (26)** at the end of Carr Street.

Turn right up Carr Street, named after a local builder, then right again along Denison Road, named after the first Lord Londesborough. Views between the houses emphasise the size of the shipyard.

A half-mile stroll past **Rostron's frontage (27)** of 1936, with contemporary ironwork, brings you to the canal **swing bridge (28)**.

Go across and head right, up the towpath. Turn left at the lock basin and return through the flats, along Ousegate to the starting point at the old Toll Bridge.



This leaflet is part of a series covering Selby's Hidden Heritage.

This circular walk is approximately two miles long. Some places have narrow pavements or are close to the water; please take appropriate care.

The other leaflets in the series are:

Selby in the 20th Century: Some surprising examples of modern architecture.

Plaque Parade: A tour around sites linked with famous people and events in Selby's history.

Signs & Symbols on the Shopfront: Unlock the mystery of street-side signs and symbols.

Selby Canal Towpath Tour: From the industrial lock basin to tranquil countryside, by the Canal.

Selby has a rich and proud heritage in shipbuilding, agriculture, manufacturing and transport. By observing what remains, and looking at how new developments have absorbed these influences, the often-hidden history that is all around us can be brought to light.

The maps used are illustrative only. Information is accurate at the time of writing in Spring 2009.

If you would like a large print copy of this publication or for further information on all the topics covered in these leaflets contact Groundwork North Yorkshire on 01757 703758 or email northyorkshire@groundwork.org.uk.

There is a huge range of sources and expertise concerning local history at Selby Library. Contact them on 0845 034 9540 or email selby.library@northyorks.gov.uk.

For information about the Selby Civic Society contact 01757 268418.

Selby's
Hidden
Heritage

First Rate
Ousegate

This project is supported by:



Guide to the walk

Toll bridge

General view of how Ousegate fits in with the rest of Selby.

Ousegate buildings facing the river to the west of the bridge

Carriage arches. Detailed masonry. Window fittings. Rear yards.

Riverside observation platform

Road and rail bridges. Remains of riverside jetties and bollards.

Ousegate to east of bridge

Fine warehouses. Fading lettering on windows and brickwork.

Beyond rail bridge

Dimensions of goods shed. Maltings and goods yard.

Canal basin

Canal buildings. Lock keepers' cottages, modern flats.

Beyond the lock

Shipbuilding sheds, industrial wasteland.

Denison Road

View of sheds and pond. 1930s building detail.

Towpath beyond swing bridge

"Lazy Cut" goods transfer area.



OUSEGATE

