

Lancaster Civic Vision

Celebrating our Heritage – Enhancing our Environment – Shaping our Future

STREETS RENAMED IN LANCASTER

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You know where you are in a town by the street names that comprise the addresses of houses and other buildings. We think of street names as fixed, for convenience if nothing else. But Lancaster has witnessed a number of cases where the name of a street still found today was changed at some point in the past.

This leaflet does not deal with streets given a name that remains in use today, nor with streets that no longer exist. Nor does it consider minor changes of spelling – for example, More Lane and Moor Lane; Dam Side (or Dam Side Street) to Damside Street.

Here are some examples of name changes in Lancaster streets. This is largely based on the series of early maps of Lancaster before the first Ordnance Survey maps in the 1840s and then the subsequent OS maps.

The earliest map was compiled by John Speed in 1607. Then came Richard Kuerden's map of 1685 (sometimes called the Towneley or Docton map). Stephen Mackreth's map of 1778 was followed by Christopher Clark's map of 1807, Jonathan Binns's map of 1821 and Edward Baines's map of 1824.

Harrison and Hall's map of Lancaster in 1877 fills a gap in the OS coverage. The streets of Morecambe and Heysham were mostly created more recently than those in central Lancaster and so changes of name are far rarer there.

Sometimes it is not clear whether a name applies only to a group of houses or whether for a time that name also applied to the street and so formed a postal

address now no longer in use. Further research will be needed to date exactly and explain some of the name changes.

Aldcliffe Road
One of the simple changes was when Aldcliffe Road was 'promoted' from a Lane to a Road between the OS 6-inch map of 1844 and their 1891 map.

Ashford Road
This was a lane westwards from the Scotforth crossroads, unnamed on the 1891 OS 6-inch map, but by the 1910 map it was called Ashford Road. Meanwhile a group of ten houses along its eastern end had been named Portland Terrace, a name no longer in postal use, but still visible to passers-by.

Barton Road
As late as the OS 6-inch map of 1910, this was called Barton Lane. The road was realigned in the late 1920s and by the 1931 OS 6-inch map it had been 'upgraded' to Barton Road.

Bowerham Road
A group of houses on Bowerham Road, built in 1895–6 near its present-day junction with Coulston Road, was originally known as Gordon Terrace or Gordon Villas. As building extended south from Adelphi Street after the 1891 OS map, the name Bowerham Road came to cover these properties in normal usage though Gordon Terrace is still their correct postal address. Bowerham Road was still Bowerham Lane on Harrison and Hall's map of 1877 and a northern part of it was called Bowerham Terrace. The southern section of Bowerham Road continued to be called Bowerham Lane until housing was built along it and it too became Bowerham Road.

Bulk Road
What is now Bulk Road was, until the First World War, Germany Street. On Mackreth's map of 1778 there was no Germany Street, just Germany Bridge which spanned the 'Old Mill Race' to Damside Street or Dam Side.

Caulkeld Lane
This is the short, steep passage between Church Street and Damside Street. It was called Caucalt Lane on Kuerden's map of 1675 and Calcold Lane on Mackreth's map

of 1778. This is more a respelling of how this very minor road's name was pronounced than a full renaming. It is one of Lancaster's oldest streets.

Charles Street
This short street in Greaves was called Alfred Street until the 1880s.

Cheapside
Cheapside continues the line of Penny Street between Market Street and Church Street. It used to be called Pudding Lane and before that Butcher Lane /Street. On Baines's map of 1824 Pudding Lane had become Cheapside.

China Street
In 1899 it became China Street rather than China Lane after the road had been widened. Speed's map called it Kelne Lane and Kuerden's map used Chiney Lane.

Church Street
Speed's map referred to St Mary Strete. Later, Kuerden's map called it St Mary or Church Street. By Mackreth's map of 1778 it was firmly Church Street. 'St Mary' is the official name and dedication of what is often called the Priory Church on Castle Hill.

Greaves Road
Three groups of terraced houses (Halcyon Terrace, c. 1856; West Greaves c. 1857; and Vine-Yards built by 1871) are today part of Greaves Road but predate the naming of that street.

Hala Road
Up to the OS 25-inch map of 1889 the road east from the Scotforth crossroads was called Hala Hill. The western section in Scotforth Village had become Hala Road by the time of the OS25-inch map of 1910. The road eastwards from the ford over the beck remained Hala Hill and that is still its name though it has been realigned.

King Street
The road that runs from White Cross north to its junction with China Street and Market Street is today called King Street. Previously there were many name changes.

On Speed's map of 1607 it is called Chennel Lane. Kuerden's map of 1685 uses Kemps Lane for the northern section between roughly Spring Garden Street and the Market Street junction, and uses Back Lane for the southern section from Spring Garden Street to White Cross. Mackreth's map of 1778 calls the whole route Back Lane.

Baines's map of 1824 renames the northern section (between Market Street and Common Garden Street or Middle Street) King Street, while the southern section remains as Back Lane. Harrison and Hall's map of 1877 names the southern section Upper King Street. The whole street – Market Street to White Cross – had become King Street by the time of the OS 6-inch map of 1891.

Long Marsh Lane

On Mackreth and Clark's maps of 1778 and 1807 **Marsh Lane** ran west from Castle Park, forking into, first, the route that now runs westwards over the railway line and, second, another branch to the north west, also called Marsh Lane. These had become West Road and **Long Marsh Lane** respectively by the time of the OS 6-inch map of 1844. Part of Long Marsh Lane comprised cottages formerly known as Wennington Place.

Lune Street

On all the early maps this road in Skerton was simply 'the road to/from Kendal' leading north from the medieval bridge over the River Lune, near today's Millennium Bridge. Baines's map of 1824 showed it as Cross Street as did the OS 6-inch map of 1844. By the OS map in 1891 it had become Lune Street.

Meeting House Lane

Kuerden's map of 1685 calls this track out of the town 'Kiln Lane'. By the time of Mackreth's map in 1778 it is had been renamed Meeting House Lane, the Friends Meeting House having been built there in 1677 and rebuilt in 1708.

Morecambe Road

As late as the 1910 OS 6-inch and 25-inch maps this road west from Skerton Bridge was called Heysham Road – it went via Oxcliffe. The main road to Morecambe was then further north via Torrisholme.

When today's direct road to Morecambe was opened in 1922, the whole route west from Skerton was named Morecambe Road and this is how it was shown on the OS 6-inch map of 1931.

New Street
Laid out around 1745, this street was called 'Charles or New Street' on Mackreth's map of 1778 but by Clark's map of 1807 it had settled on New Street.

North Road
Between 1877 and 1890 what is now North Road was renamed, having previously been part of Damside Street.

Park Road
Called Quarry Road sometime before 1877.

Queen Street
By Clark's map of 1807 this had become Queen Street but on Mackreth's map of 1778 the road leading off Queen Square is called Rope Walk and is shown as a country lane rather than a town road. The renaming coincides with the building of new properties along the street.

St Leonard's Gate
This is perhaps the most contentious street name in Lancaster in terms of its spelling, though the essence of its name has not changed. Kuerden called it St Leonard Street. Today the Ordnance Survey and Open Street Map use St Leonard's Gate.

The Royal Mail calls it St Leonards Gate. Early town maps by Mackreth and Clark prefer St Leonard Gate. The street name-plates at the east and west ends of the street use different spellings. In many older publications St Leonardsgate, St Leonardgate and St Leonard-gate were used. Take your pick!



One street – different street signs at each end

Scotforth Road

Two groups of terraced houses built along what is now Scotforth Road were called Rose Bank (1889) and Sea View (1893). These names disappeared from postal use when Scotforth Road was designated. The OS 6-inch map of 1910 is the first to show Scotforth Road by that name, Lancaster's borough boundary having been moved southwards. The earlier designation of Scotforth Road was as a part of the Garstang and Heron Syke Turnpike Road.

Spring Garden Street

Sometime before Mackreth's map of 1778, Spring Garden Street was called Mackrell Street, with various spellings of Mackrell. The name may derive from a local innkeeper and landowner.

Other useful sources of information include:

1) Andrew White and Michael Winstanley's book on *Victorian Terraced Housing in Lancaster.* (Lancaster: Lancaster University: Centre for North-West Regional Studies, 1996).

2) Andrew White's book on *Lancaster: a History*. Chichester: Phillimore.

If you know of other local streets that have changed their names, do let us know.

Text – Gordon Clark. Photos – David Morgan

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