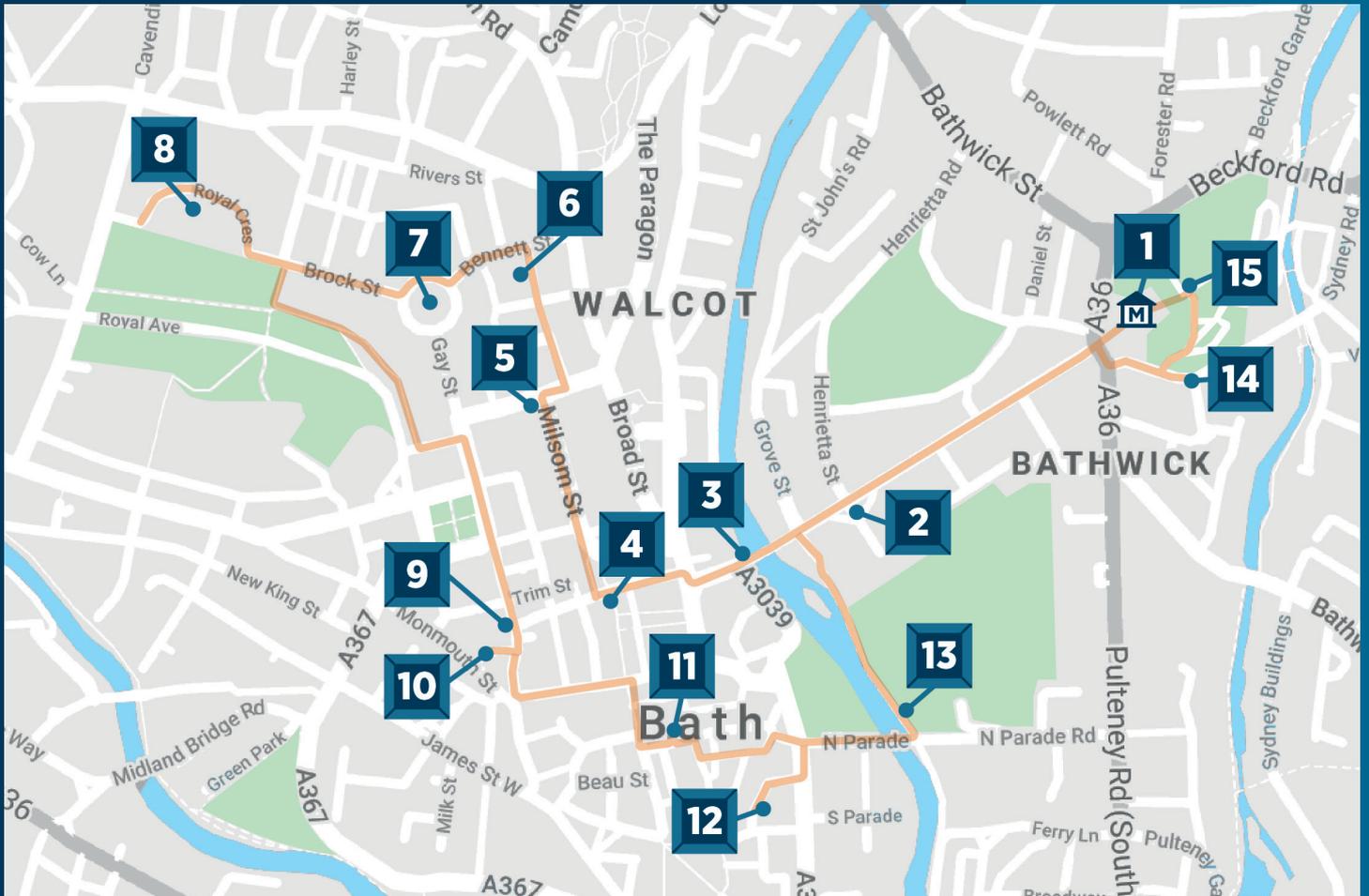


FOLLOW THE FOOTSTEPS OF BATH'S FASCINATING RESIDENTS

THE
HOLBURNE
MUSEUM

A self-guided walking tour exploring the lives of sitters depicted at the Holburne Museum



A sprawling system of golden, limestone structures, cobbled streets and manicured squares, Bath has remained relatively unchanged since it emerged as a centre of commerce and pleasure in the eighteenth century.

This trail tells the stories hidden within the Palladian pillars and Neoclassical architecture: the lives of the inhabitants and visitors that truly made it the place to be.

We hope you enjoy this self-guided tour of Bath's well-known sights and that it provides some interesting historical background to the people portrayed at the Holburne Museum.



Time: 120 minutes



Distance: 2.9 miles



Landscape: Urban



Location: Bath
City Centre



Route: Circular



Start and Finish:
Holburne Museum

1 HOLBURNE MUSEUM



Charles Jagger, Sir William Holburne, 1827

The Holburne Museum is home to an extensive collection of silver, porcelain, Italian maiolica, bronzes, old master paintings, eighteenth-century portraits, miniatures and ceramics. Many of the Museum's portraits depict famous visitors and inhabitants of the city, providing a valuable insight into the world of Georgian Bath.

The collection was founded by Sir William Holburne (1793–1874), fifth Baronet of Menstrie. Holburne's enthusiasm for art was sparked by his eighteenth-month Grand Tour – an educational journey through continental Europe, undertaken by young British aristocrats.

Directions

With your back to the Holburne Museum, look at the row of houses across the road to the right. No.4 Sydney Place is the former home of Jane Austen. Cross the road to Great Pulteney Street, directly in front of you. Walk down until you reach Laura Place – a roundabout with a fountain in the middle.

2 GREAT PULTENEY STREET



Angelica Kauffman, Henrietta Laura Pulteney, c.1777

Born in 1766 to William Johnstone (later Sir William Pulteney) and Frances

Pulteney, Laura spent her childhood in London. As a young woman she was directly involved in her father's business and his development of estates in England, Scotland, India and America. She gained a reputation as a shrewd businesswoman and the 'richest spinster in Europe'.

She was also known for her love of dance and music. This carefree spirit is captured in the portrait of the eleven-year-old Laura by the Swiss artist Angelica Kauffman. This passion persisted into adulthood and in 1791 an anonymous piece of dance music was published entitled 'Miss Pulteney's Fancy'.

In 1792, aged 26, she became Baroness of Bath. Two years later she married her father's first cousin, General Sir James Murray. In 1803 she was elevated to Countess of Bath and in 1805 she inherited much of her family's fortune following her father's death.

Directions

Continue down the street to Pulteney Bridge.

3 PULTENEY BRIDGE

Commissioned by Sir William Pulteney and built by architect Robert Adam, the bridge was completed in 1773 as a replacement for the former Bathwick ferry, which connected Pulteney's Bathwick estate to the city centre.

As a young man, William Johnstone was a lawyer in Edinburgh. In 1760 he married Frances, daughter and heir of Daniel Pulteney. In 1767 Frances Pulteney inherited the family fortune. William Johnstone and his daughter, Henrietta Laura, both adopted the Pulteney name.

William was heavily motivated by financial gain and amassed further wealth through economic ventures across the world, particularly through plantations in America and the West Indies. The property development of Bathwick was largely supported by the Pulteney family ties to slavery.

Directions

Cross over Pulteney Bridge, and straight up Bridge Street. At the intersection onto High Street, turn right, then immediately left, onto Upper Borough Walls. Continue down Upper Borough Walls and pause at the crossing with Union Street. If you look up, you will see the lettering of the Royal Mineral Water Hospital.

4 ROYAL MINERAL WATER HOSPITAL



Thomas Gainsborough, Dr Rice Charleton, c.1764

Bath has long been recognised as a site of medicine and recovery. In 1597 a Royal Assent called for free access to its mineral springs but the Act, and public access, were repealed in 1714 due to the excessive numbers of poor patients seeking cures and respite from the Bath waters.

This did not deter visitors and in 1727 architect John Wood was enlisted to design a public hospital. With support from businessman Ralph Allen and society leader Beau Nash the hospital was opened in 1742.

A renowned physician at the hospital was Dr Rice Charleton. He was educated at Oxford University and was famed for his work on the chemistry of Bath's mineral waters and their role in cases of paralysis from lead poisoning.

Charleton was also Thomas Gainsborough's family doctor and friend. He collected many paintings by the artist, some of which may have been given in lieu of payment for medical treatment.

Directions

Turn right up Old Bond Street, leaving the hospital behind you. Stop at the bottom of the hill to look up Milsom Street.

5 MILSOM STREET

Georgian Bath attracted many wealthy and stylish visitors, particularly during the summer months, known as 'the Season'. Milsom Street was constructed in 1762 by Thomas Lightholder. It became one of the most prestigious shopping areas in the country. Bath's temporary residents had expensive tastes and the city became a centre

of trade for commodities such as sugar, tea and tobacco.



Wedgwood, Plaque for a shoe buckle: Flora, 1780-1800

Josiah Wedgwood, the eighteenth-century potter and entrepreneur, opened a showroom on Milsom Street in 1774. Alongside exclusive and expensive vases and crockery, this plaque for a shoe buckle shows the range of his fashionable goods.

Directions

Walk to the top of Milsom Street and cross the road. Turn right and then immediately left up Bartlett Street. Keep walking upwards, crossing Alfred Street onto Saville Row. Turn left onto Bennett Street, then take the first left. Stop at the front of the Assembly Rooms.

6 THE UPPER ASSEMBLY ROOMS



Thomas Rowlandson, The Comforts of Bath, plate 10. 'A country dance in the Assembly Rooms', 1798.

The Bath Upper Assembly Rooms opened in 1771 and played a central role in the social entertainment and recreation of Bath's inhabitants. Public assemblies were a way for eligible men and women to meet potential partners. Admittance was secured through the purchase of a subscription for a series of balls that occurred throughout the season, with each attracting anywhere from 800 to 1200 guests.

Plate 10 of Thomas Rowlandson's series 'The Comforts of Bath' depicts a ball here. The evening festivities would often begin with a formal cotillion led by the Master of Ceremonies. Guests could also enjoy English country dancing, as

illustrated. It was common for these dances to descend into rowdy spectacles in which wigs—and polite manners—were lost.

Directions

Return to Bennet Street and turn left; walk until you reach the Circus.

7

THE CIRCUS

NUMBER 17: HOME TO THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH



Thomas Gainsborough, *Lady in a Blue Cloak*, c.1765

Thomas Gainsborough was a British painter and co-founder of the Royal Academy. He moved to Bath in 1759 and attracted the high-paying clientèle of the city's social elite.

The Holburne has several portraits by Gainsborough, including this painting of an unidentified lady and that of Dr Rice Charleton (see Stop 4), to whom Gainsborough owed his recovery from a persistent illness.

NUMBER 7: HOME TO THE PITT FAMILY



William Hoare, *The Pitt Family of Encombe*, 1758-1761

William Pitt the Elder, 1st Earl of Chatham, was a British Whig statesman who achieved fame leading Britain during the Seven Year's War. His arrival in Bath was prompted by persistent attacks of gout. He owned this house for ten years and regularly visited for treatment.

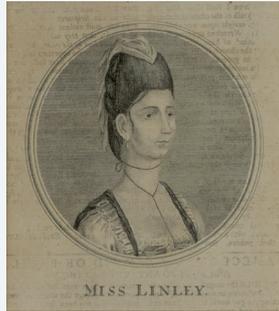
Directions

Exit the Circus via Brock Street. Keep on Brock Street

until you reach the Royal Crescent. Walk the full length of the Crescent for the best views.

8

THE ROYAL CRESCENT



Unidentified artist, *Miss Elizabeth Linley*, c.1779.

The Royal Crescent is one of Bath's most iconic landmarks, completed by John Wood the Younger in 1775. The 150-metre crescent is made up of 30 terraced houses; these have been home to many notable families, among which the Linley family at No. 11.

Thomas Linley was a composer and Musical Director of the Bath Assembly Rooms. His daughter Elizabeth Ann was equally well known. The 'Beauty of Bath' was courted by many and engaged to a much older man at 16. She avoided the marriage by claiming she was in love with another, so the suitor withdrew the proposal.

Elizabeth fell in love with playwright Richard Brinsley Sheridan and they eloped to France. Upon their return to Bath, Sheridan officially asked for Elizabeth's hand in marriage, but was rebuffed due to his age and lack of money. This did not stop the couple, who left love letters to each other in the stone grotto under North Parade Bridge. Thomas Linley eventually relented, and Elizabeth and Richard were married in St Marylebone Church in London in 1773.

Directions

Walk back to the entrance of the Royal Crescent, where Brock Street and Upper Church Street interconnect. On the corner, you will see a wide path that runs down the left side of Royal Crescent lawn. This is known as the Gravel Walk and was designed to provide sedan chair access from the Royal Crescent to Queen Square. Proceed down the path and near the end look for a sign to the Georgian Garden (open Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm), which was recreated using plans from approximately 1770.

At the end of the Gravel Walk turn left onto Queen's Parade Place. At the end of the road, turn right onto Gay Street. Walk down Gay Street until you reach the traffic lights. Cross the road diagonally and, with Queen's Square on your right, continue until the corner of Northumberland Buildings and Barton Street. Walk the full length of Barton Street, until it becomes Saw Close, and reach an open square. Beau Nash's residence and Bath Theatre are on your right.

9

BEAU NASH'S HOUSE



Nathaniel Hone, *Richard 'Beau' Nash*, 1750

To the right of the Theatre Royal is the last residence of Richard 'Beau' Nash. Nash was the longest serving and most influential of Bath's Masters of Ceremonies. As the 'King of Bath', Nash created the Lower Assembly Rooms as a place of entertainment, gambling and seasonal balls, and established a system of rules of polite behaviour for residents and visitors.

Beau Nash remained Master of Ceremonies for 57 years, until he was caught embezzling money from the subscriptions to the Assembly Rooms. By 1740, poor finances led to his eviction from his home (now the Garrick's Head pub). He moved to the house before you, where he lived until his death in 1762.

Despite the controversy over his finances, Nash remained popular, and the city rallied together to provide him with a lavish funeral at Bath Abbey. He died as he lived, in everlasting grandeur.

Directions

Face the front of the Theatre Royal. Walk to the left edge of the building, and down St John's Place. Stop outside the Garrick's Head.

10

THE GARRICK'S HEAD

The Garrick's Head takes its name from one of Britain's most famous actors. David Garrick was an actor, playwright, theatre manager and producer. He was a regular performer at the Theatre Royal, London. The original Bath Theatre, on Orchard Street (Stop 12), was one of the most prestigious outside of London, so he also performed there during tours of his shows. As an actor, Garrick was known for his realistic interpretations that contrasted starkly with the bombastic style popular until then. The Holburne owns three oil paintings of Garrick in character.



Johan Zoffany, *David Garrick as Sir John Brute*, c.1763

Directions

Return to Saw Close and turn right, away from the Theatre Royal. Continue down Saw Close and bear left onto Westgate Street. Walk down Westgate Street and turn right at the crossways, onto Stall Street. Walk down Stall Street until you reach a series of pillars on your left. Walk through the pillars to find the Pump Room on your right and Bath Abbey ahead.

11

PUMP ROOM AND GAINSBOROUGH'S HOUSE

As the practice of drinking the thermal waters of Bath gained popularity in the late eighteenth century, a pump was installed to allow patients access to the water. In 1706 the original Pump Room was erected to provide shelter for the increasing number of visitors. Over the following century the building witnessed multiple renovations, including the addition of a large ballroom in 1796.



Thomas Gainsborough, *The Byam Family*, c.1762-66

To the right of Bath Abbey is the former location of Thomas Gainsborough's first house; its front door opened onto the busy pedestrian and sedan chair route of Abbey Street. Drawn to Bath by the increasing demand for portraits, Gainsborough bought the property in 1758. Although the house was demolished following the discovery of the Roman Baths in 1892, it is easy to imagine some of the sitters, like the Byam family, enjoying the Baths and Pump Room before visiting Gainsborough to commission a portrait.

Directions

Facing the front of Bath Abbey, turn right and walk across the square, along the back of the Roman Baths. At the edge of the square, turn left onto York Street and proceed to the end. Turn right and keep following the pavement until you reach the edge of North Parade. Turn right onto Pierrepont Street and right again onto Pierrepont Place - accessed through a set of columns on the right. Follow the street as it curves to the left; stop at 12 Old Orchard Street, now the Masonic Hall.

12

OLD THEATRE ROYAL



Unidentified artist, *Orchard Street, Bath from The Theatre Tourist*, published by T. Woodfall, 1804

Eighteenth-century Bath saw the growth of its theatre scene as numbers of visitors increased. In 1747 plans for a permanent theatre were drawn up. This site on Orchard Street was chosen for its central location and the building was funded through investment by Beau Nash,

among others. The theatre was granted a Royal Licence in 1768, attracting successful attendees and actors. By the end of the eighteenth century, a season performing at Orchard Street was essential for any London actor.

Sarah Siddons was one of the leading tragic actors of the day. She joined the Old Theatre Company around 1780 and contemporary critics described her as 'tragedy personified'.



Unidentified artist, *Mrs. Siddons in The Grecian Daughter*, 1780-1800.

Siddons became entangled with a fellow actor, William Brereton. Despite his marriage, Brereton became infatuated with Siddons. His love was unrequited and he succumbed to mental illness. After a failing career, he was committed to an asylum in Hoxton and died in 1787.



Henry Walton, *William Brereton with a portrait of Henry Woodward*, c.1780

Directions

Return back down Old Orchard Street and turn left onto Pierrepont Street. At the crossroads ahead, turn right onto North Parade. Continue down North Parade, walking on the left side.

Before you reach the end of North Parade, on the left is a doorway with a staircase exit that will bring you down to the side of the river. Walk down the stairs.

13

LOWER ASSEMBLY ROOMS

Within the Parade Gardens are the remains of the original Lower Assembly

Rooms, constructed in 1708 by Thomas Harrison. During the day they were used for promenading, whilst at night the Rooms held dances and card games. It was here that Beau Nash operated as Master of Ceremonies and enforced his code of conduct.

These assembly rooms were destroyed by fire in 1820, except the portico and exterior walls, which now form a part of the Literary Institution.



Thomas Logon, *Fan Leaf: View of North Parade*, 1749

In this fan, the foreground shows the Lower Assembly Rooms. In the centre are two gentlemen. One of them has removed his white hat in order to greet the other. This distinctive element, as well as the lack of a wig, identifies the gentleman as Beau Nash.

Directions

Walk along the river towards Pulteney Bridge. Follow the path until you reach the staircase at Pulteney Bridge that will take you up to Argyle street. Turn right along Argyle street, walk the full length of Great Pulteney Street and cross the road until you face the Holburne. Follow the road round to the right, onto Sydney Place. Walk up Sydney Place and stop at number 93.

14

SYDNEY PLACE



Studio of Johan Zoffany, *Queen Charlotte*, c.1766

Sophia Charlotte married King George III in 1761. At the time this portrait was painted she was around 21 and was the mother of four children. As Bath was a popular place with the elite, the Queen visited on numerous occasions.

93 Sydney Place was her home during one of her last visits to Bath in 1817, a year before her death. During that time the house was lavishly equipped and a second house at 103 Sydney Place was reserved for her entourage.

Directions

Crossing the road from 93 Sydney Place, walk back down the road until you reach an entrance to the park. Follow the path until it intersects with another path.

15

SYDNEY GARDENS



John Hil after John Claude Nattes, *Sydney Hotel: The Garden Front*, 1805

Sydney Gardens (originally Bath Vauxhall Gardens) opened at the end of Great Pulteney Street in 1795.

Designed as a commercial pleasure garden, it was a site for public breakfasts, promenades and galas. The walled grounds contained bowling greens, a maze, a swing, sham castle and a grotto. The main building, Sydney House, contained tea and card rooms, a ballroom, coffee room, and a public house. This building, now the Holburne Museum, was the only gateway to the site.

Credits:

This trail has been devised by Helena Smith Parucker (UCL placement student, 2021) and Madeleine Boylan George (BSU placement student, 2021) in collaboration with the Holburne's curatorial team. Graphic design by Marina Calvo.