



**1. Brierfield House/  
Brierfield Town Hall**  
Brierfield House was built by Henry Tunstall for his family in 1833 and named after the pasture it was built in. The Tunstall family often held meetings for the newly established Wesleyan Methodist congregation in their wash house.  
In 1901 the house became the new Town Hall for the Urban District Council of Brierfield. J.T. Landless, the Borough Surveyor

then added its balustrade parapet and a door-case with consoles supporting a balcony.  
Unfortunately it no longer acts as the Town Hall or offers council services for the people of Brierfield, but ownership was transferred back to the Town Council in 2014 for them to run for the good of the community. The building is now Grade II listed.  
**Colne Road  
Brierfield BB9 5NP**

**2. Old Fire Station**  
The Old Fire Station was opened in 1901 and was designed by J.T. Landless, the Town Surveyor. It Cost £1000 for the building and £200 for the equipment. You can still see the three big broad arches below the tripartite windows above.  
The first Fire Engine, named Ellen, was bought in 1907.  
Brierfield Fire Brigade had been formed in 1892 but was disbanded

in 1924 when Nelson Fire Brigade took over looking after Brierfield's fire services. The fire station consequently ceased its operations.  
From 1928 the top floor of the building housed the library, which was very popular and often had queues of people waiting to get in. This closed when the current library was opened in 1962.  
**Colne Road  
Brierfield 5NP**



**3. Primitive Methodist Chapel**  
The Primitive Methodist Chapel was built in 1866 at a cost of £1800. It was later enlarged and re-roofed in 1889 and an organ was bought by philanthropist Andrew Carnegie in 1908. By 1909, the total cost of the chapel was about £4,000.  
The building has four bays with a four bay pediment and subdued Italianate forms. The building ceased to be a place of worship in

1955 and is now a gym.  
There was an early chapel which was built on land just off Halifax Road which had been founded in 1832. It closed in 1866 when the new chapel was built on Burnley Road. There is a graveyard at the site with a few remaining gravestones.  
**Burnley Road  
Brierfield BB9 5AD**

**4. The Primitive Methodist Sunday School**  
The Primitive Methodists built their Sunday School next to the chapel in 1887. It is said that the building won an architectural prize for its style and architecture which is markedly different from the rest of the buildings in the town.  
The building has been described as being in the Free Renaissance style. It consists of a 3 bay centre

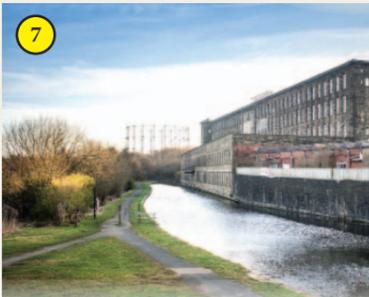
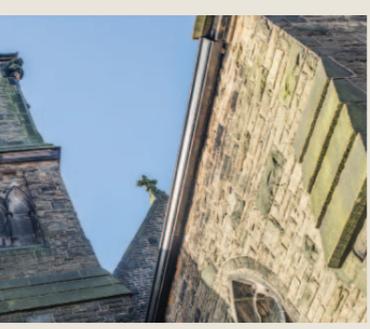
with a stepped parapet and large arched upper windows flanked by bulging stair bays.  
You can still see an odd stained glass window or two from the outside of the building.  
**Burnley Road, Brierfield, BB9 5AD**



**5. The Baptist Church**  
The church was opened in 1886 with money from Abraham Altham, a man who came from nothing to be a very successful business man. Although he died before the church was completed, his estate continued to pay for the running costs for the first 20 years.  
The inside of the building is largely unchanged since it was built (possibly one of the only churches in East Lancashire that still retains all its original

fixtures and fittings and has had no structural alterations). It still retains all its pitched pine fittings, pews and ceiling and has the original immersion bath, although the Victorian plumbing has been modified.  
A new school room was opened in 1910 and a new organ was added in 1939 to replace the one that had been given to the church in 1898.  
**Burnley Road  
Brierfield BB9 5HX**

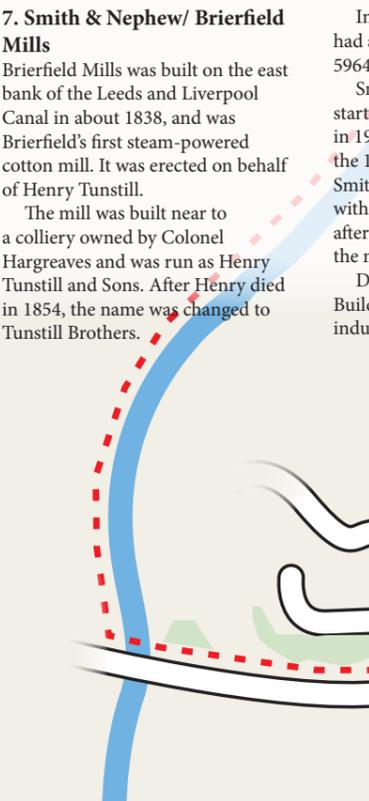
**6. St Luke's Church C of E**  
General Sir James Yorke Scarlett laid the foundation stone of St Luke's in 1871, and the Church was completed in 1872.  
The church was built by James Green and has a clock and bell tower. The congregation added a vestry, and acquired an organ from William Hill and Sons in 1888 for the sum of £670 which was loaned to the church by the choirmaster Edward Stocks Massey, part of the Massey Brewery family.  
The organ consists of a gothic case and the pipes are made of 'spotted metal' which is rich in tin.  
In 2003 the organ was listed as a Grade II historic instrument by the British Institute of Organ Studies as the organ had been restored and slightly modified over the years to make it easier to play.  
The church also has a number of memorial stained glass windows.  
**Burnley Road  
Brierfield BB9 5JL**



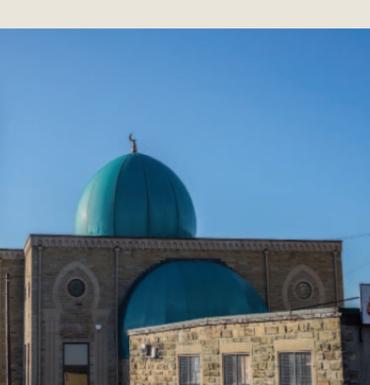
**7. Smith & Nephew/ Brierfield Mills**  
Brierfield Mills was built on the east bank of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal in about 1838, and was Brierfield's first steam-powered cotton mill. It was erected on behalf of Henry Tunstall.  
The mill was built near to a colliery owned by Colonel Hargreaves and was run as Henry Tunstall and Sons. After Henry died in 1854, the name was changed to Tunstall Brothers.

In 1925, the mill reported that it had a total of 86,340 mule spindles, 5964 ring spindles and 2786 looms.  
Smith and Nephew Textiles Ltd started producing surgical bandages in 1957, and modernised the plant in the 1960. The company operated as Smith and Nephew plc and merged with the German Beiersdorf AG soon after trading as BSN Medical Ltd in the mill.  
Designated Grade II Listed Building in January 1988. The cotton industry continued to be the main

employer until well into the 1960s.  
In 2006, BSN ceased production of woven cloth at Brierfield Mills. Final production ceased in September 2010.  
After years of disuse, Pendle Council bought the mills in 2012 and the historic buildings are being transformed into a new destination called Northlight.  
**Dale Street/Pendle Street  
BB9 5NH**



**8. Jamia Mosque Sultana**  
The Jamia Mosque Sultana first opened its doors in 1972 when local residents bought and converted number 3 Bridge Street. The mosque catered for a small population of people who worked in the local textile industry. Over the years the Mosque Committee bought numbers 5 & 7 to meet the growing demand until it was decided that a new Mosque should be built.  
The new mosque was opened in 2013, after 8 years of planning and raising funds, both locally and nationally. It cost approx. £4 million



main church for the Wesleyans and Primitive Methodist congregations and the Congregationalists when they merged locally in 1957.  
Prior to the chapel being built, the Wesleyans used the wash house of Brierfield House and then met in a converted cellar in Lomas Row before adapting the space over two bedrooms in Halifax Road to make a chapel in 1848.  
A Sunday school was also built and opened in 1862. In 1881 a new school was built which can still be seen, although it no longer belongs to the church.  
The Church has two memorial stained glass windows to commemorate soldiers who died in WW1 and belonged to the church. The building is Grade II listed.  
**Colne Road  
Brierfield BB9 5RD**



# A walk through history

Brierfield lies between the towns of Nelson and Burnley on the A682. Its population at the last census in 2011 was 4,862. In 1851, before Brierfield became a town it was part of Little Marsden with a population of 3,997.

## Origins

Brierfield is a good example of a Lancashire town that developed around a cotton mill in the 1830s.

Originally part of Marsden, it became a legal township in 1868 and was named Brierfield after the pastures and fields that it rose from.

At the beginning of the 19th century, the area was little more than farmland with the odd cottage or two. But by 1850 the area had already become densely populated with terraced cottages and housing surrounding a variety of weaving and spinning sheds.

## Industry

Mills and factories revolutionised working practices. People who originally either worked on the land or were cottage weavers moved to working in

factories full time.

Some mills were run by the person that owned them. Other mills offered space and power so that small businessmen could start up without having to invest a lot of money. This practice was called room and loom.

Employment in the mills brought economic migrants originally from the surrounding areas and towns.

Later, in the 1950s and 60s, people came from abroad when the government invited workers from the sub-continent of India to come to the UK to take up jobs in the mills.

Many of these migrants to Brierfield, who were mainly from the new republic of Pakistan stayed in the area, bringing their families, faiths and cultures to Brierfield.

## Henry Tunstall

Henry Tunstall was born in 1802 in Wheatley Lane, a village close to Brierfield.

He was already a wealthy and successful business man when he moved his family to Little Marsden. Brierfield House was built for him and his family in Brierfield Pasture in 1833.

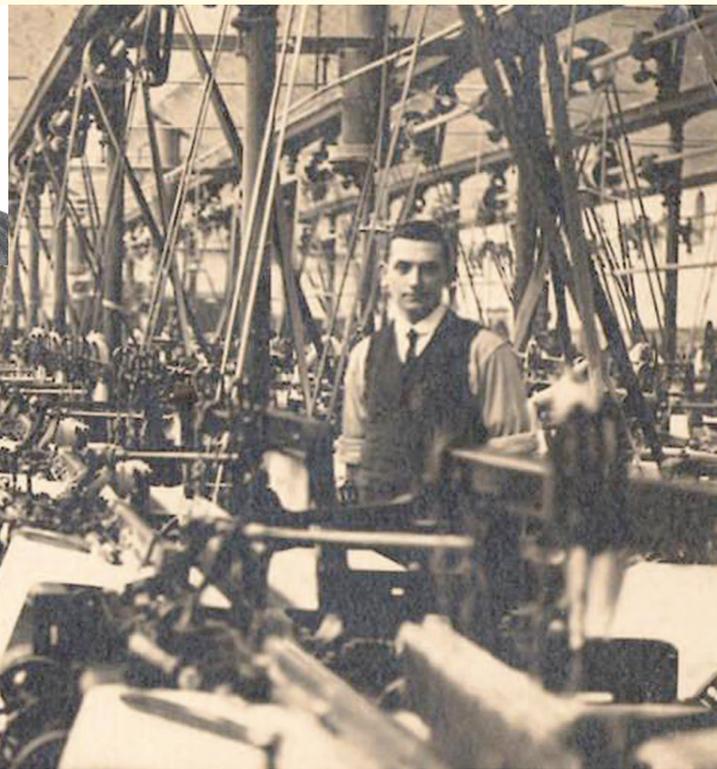
Henry thought that the area was the ideal location to expand his business. It had plenty of land to develop, good communication links (the canal had already opened in 1796) and a road, of sorts, was already operating between Burnley and Nelson. There was an operational coal mine at Low Pit that would provide a cheap power supply.

Mr Tunstall and his sons built Brierfield Mills alongside the canal where he built and installed spinning and weaving machines.

Henry petitioned for and was successful in bringing the railway to Brierfield in 1848. Due to his efforts he was offered a place on the railway company board.

A committed Christian, Henry and his family were acutely aware of the circumstances of others. They followed the teachings of the church, providing funds and help for many people across the area during their lifetimes.

He and his wife broke from the Providence Chapel on Halifax Road and decided to help fund a new Wesleyan Chapel in Brierfield. He died in 1854 before the new chapel was completed and never saw Brierfield become a legal township in 1868. After his death, his sons continued his philanthropic work.



## Religion

In 1652 George Fox climbed Pendle Hill, an iconic landmark seen from the town. After his climb, he saw his vision of a great many people which inspired him to found the Quaker Movement. The town has a long association with the Quakers and there's been a meeting house at Marsden Cross since 1760.

By the 1800's Brierfield residents continued to be mainly non-conformist.

By the 1900's there were nine different places of worship, many of which were funded by local entrepreneurs. Several are still standing and are open today along with a new £4 million mosque.

The Anglicans opened St Luke's church in 1872 and in 1901 the Catholics built Holy

Trinity in Richard Street, along with a school. This closed in 2008 when the congregation was relocated to Nelson and the church was demolished. In 1957, the Primitive Methodists, Congregationalists and Wesleyans all merged and moved into the Wesleyan Methodist Church, now the Methodist Church.

By the 1890's there were more churches than pubs in Brierfield. Tram drivers, from as early as the 1890's, christened Brierfield The Holy City. This call was taken up by the bus conductors from the 1930's, when buses were first introduced on the route.

## More on the trail...

This trail includes some of the buildings mentioned above, detailing Brierfield from the 1800's to the present day. The trail

also highlights some of the more famous entrepreneurs and philanthropists that shaped the rise of the town.

Today the housing and community is more diverse and the town is no longer focused on a single industry after BSN Medical Ltd. (formerly known as Smith & Nephews or Brierfield Mills) closed its weaving sheds and mill in 2010 to move production overseas. This huge mill, now known as Northlight was bought by Pendle Council in 2012.

## Like to find out more about Brierfield?

Many people connected with the buildings on the trail are happy to open their doors and show you around.

Please arrange this prior to visiting. Go to the Brierfield blog for more photographs and extra information on the town's history.

[www.brierfieldtowntrail.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.brierfieldtowntrail.blogspot.co.uk)



## Abraham Altham

Abraham Altham was born into a devoutly religious family in 1841 in Haggate, Burnley. His father was a Baptist preacher, but his parents died when he was young. Abraham first worked in a local quarry hewing stones, but rose from these humble beginnings to become one of the most influential men in East Lancashire.

At twenty three he became a wholesaler in Burnley where he also began his tea business in 1872. His business grew across East Lancashire and it was estimated that he sold eight tons of tea a week to a quarter of a million tea drinkers in the North of England!

By his death in 1885 he had significantly expanded the number of his shops across Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cheshire and Lincolnshire. He started a travel agency in 1877 which is still running today.

He was an extremely generous benefactor to many causes and provided the funding for the Brierfield Baptist Church with enough funds to run it for 20 years after his death.

He built Oakleigh House in Reedley (now the Oaks Hotel) for himself and his family and there is a huge stained glass window portraying the tea harvest on the magnificent staircase.



## General Sir James Yorke Scarlett

General Scarlett was born in 1799 and died in 1871 shortly after laying the foundation stone for St Luke's Church, Brierfield.

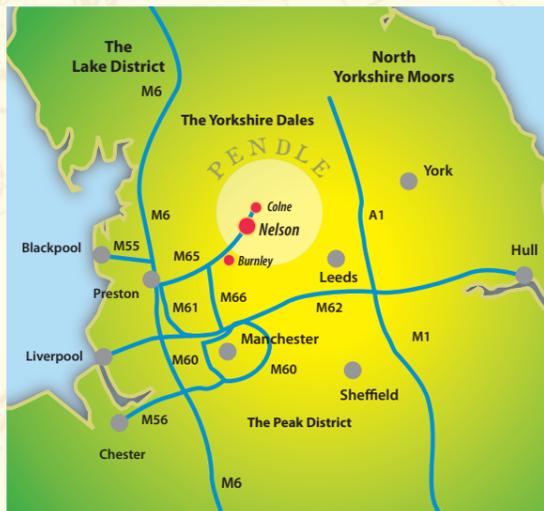
The second son of Baron Abinger, General Scarlett was educated at Eton and Cambridge before being stationed at Burnley Barracks as a young officer.

On his marriage he became the joint owner of Brierfield Low Pits Mine.

He famously led the successful Charge of the Heavy Brigade at Balaclava which earned him a promotion to the rank of Major General.

A military man all his life, he did, however, dabble in politics and became MP for Guildford and later stood for Burnley but was defeated at those elections.

His obituary in the Burnley Advertiser stated that: "...nor was he only generous to the poor. He was first and foremost in every work of public good, aiding and helping generously in his own true Christian Catholic Spirit. There is scarcely one work of good in the town and neighbourhood of Burnley which does not yield evidence of his large-hearted generosity. And it is for this that the people loved him so."



## VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRES

Discover Pendle Centre, Boundary Mill, Colne Tel: 01282 856186  
Pendle Heritage Centre TIC, Barrowford Tel: 01282 677150  
County Info Centre, Transport Interchange, Nelson Tel: 01282 698533

Brierfield Heritage Trail is one of many fascinating trails in Pendle, including trails on *The Pendle Witches*, and other Pendle towns like *Colne*, *Barrowford* and *The Steam and Stream Trail* in *Barnoldswick*. For more information on these trails and Pendle as a whole please go to [www.visitpendle.com](http://www.visitpendle.com).

For more information and contact details go to [www.brierfieldtowntrail.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.brierfieldtowntrail.blogspot.co.uk).

For more information on Northlight go to [www.northlightpendle.co.uk](http://www.northlightpendle.co.uk)



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Main photography by Andy Ford.

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Support from Brierfield now and then.

