

HSBC BANK IN LEEDS

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The HSBC Bank, like most banks, has a long history of mergers, frequently with a resulting change of name. Many new banks were founded in the second half of the nineteenth century in response to the need for ever more finance for the booming growth of business in Victorian times.

HSBC plc acquired the Midland Bank in 1992. Since 1836, the first year that "Midland" was included in the title there have been the following changes of name.

1836 Birmingham & Midland Bank.

1850 Birmingham & Midland Bank Ltd.

1891 London & Midland Bank Ltd.

1898 London City & Midland Bank Ltd.

1918 London Joint City & Midland Bank Ltd.

1923 Midland Bank Ltd.

1982 Midland Bank pic.

1999 HSBC pic.

HSBC has many historic connections with the City of Leeds. The earliest link is with the private banking firm of Perfect and Co, which was established in Pontefract in about 1800 and opened an office in Leeds in 1814. This firm was acquired in 1834 by the newly established Yorkshire District Bank, which used the Perfect and Co. premises in City Square as its head office. In 1843 the bank was reconstructed as the Yorkshire Banking Company, which was acquired by the London City & Midland in 1901.

The HSBC network also incorporates the business of the Exchange and Discount Bank and the Leeds & County Bank. Mr. John James Cousins founded the Exchange and Discount Bank in 1860. He was the first banker to set up in business in Park Row and according to one local historian *'His staff was one small boy in buttons'* Nearby, the Leeds & County Bank had been established in 1862 and had opened a number of branches in the Leeds area. Both these banks were bought by Midland in 1890.



**HSBC Manager Mr John Paylor and staff member Diane Hogg
August 10th 2001 Celebrating 100 years of banking in Oakwood.
In suitable clothing. By permission of Mr. Paylor**

When the bank's name was changed to Midland Bank Ltd in 1923, its main office was in City Square on the corner of Boar Lane and Bishopgate. This imposing building (now Flare) had been built in 1899 as the new head office of the Yorkshire Banking Company. Another fine building had been acquired when the York City & County Bank at no.35 Park Row was absorbed by the London City & Midland Bank in 1918. This building is now occupied by The Woolwich.

The York City & County Bank, formed in York in 1830, had emerged as the chief rival of the Yorkshire Banking Company. In 1909 it was taken over by the London Joint Stock Bank, which in turn was absorbed by the London City & Midland Bank in 1918.

The present head office of the HSBC in Leeds was built across Bond Court (No.33 Park Row) on the site of the old Museum and Philosophical Hall, which was built in 1819-1822 with stone from the Oakwood & Harehills quarries. This grand Georgian building was demolished in June and July 1966 and the new offices were opened on 9th June 1969.

The HSBC Bank's branches at Chapel Allerton, Garforth and Oakwood were all opened by the London City & Midland Bank Ltd in the latter half of 1901. They started out as sub-offices to the City Square branch until Chapel Allerton and Oakwood were transferred to the North Street branch. By the 1920s their opening hours were established as 10.00 am to 2.30 pm on weekdays and 9.30 am to 11.00 am on Saturdays.

In July 1928 Chapel Allerton and Oakwood were separated from the North Street branch for bookkeeping purposes. It was also about this time that the Chapel Allerton branch moved its location at No 47 Harrogate Road to new premises at No.108 Harrogate Road. Members of staff from North Street were transferred to look after the day-to-day running of the offices. Mr. Lorraine and Mr. Pitt were appointed clerk-in-chiefs at Chapel Allerton and Oakwood. They earned salaries of £510 and £470 respectively. Mr. Dewhurst and Mr. Huddleston joined them as their assistant clerks. As the most junior member of the staff Mr. Huddleston only received an annual salary of £90. The Garforth office remained a sub-branch of City Square until the 1960s.

The Leeds branches of Chapel Allerton, Garforth and Oakwood are proud to have celebrated their centenaries. Today they are part of HSBC Bank, a principal member of the HSBC Group, which is one of the world's largest banking and financial services organisations, with some 6,500 offices in 79 countries and territories.

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