**Bingley - the Throstle’s Nest of England**

The ancient Saxon township of Bingley is to be found in the middle of the Aire Valley, lying in the valley bottom on the highway (A650) between Bradford and Keighley (4 miles E.S.E. from the latter and 6 miles NW by N of the former and 14 miles W by N of Leeds. Its ancient township and parish boundaries are located in the upper division of the Wapentake of Skyrack and were formerly in the West Riding of the county of York (now in West Yorkshire).

The valley road from Bradford and Leeds crosses the river Aire at Cottingley Bridge (east of the town) and also in the town centre at Ireland Bridge (Millgate). The A650 road, having passed over a mound of glacial moraine, forms the main street of Bingley, and part of the road, the main railway line to Carlisle and the Leeds-Liverpool Canal (1770) all converged with the river within a furlong’s breadth of each other. After 1800, and following the mechanisation of the worsted industry, mills and houses invaded the slopes mainly on the northern side of the ancient township but failed to completely destroy the beauty of surrounding dale or the upland villages around. Even in the post industrial world of the third millennium, on a fine summer’s day standing to the rear of the Bingley Arts Centre building and looking westward towards Ireland Bridge, the description of Bingley’s first official historian still holds true:

*'ancient houses round its venerable parish church, the little place lays deeply embossed amidst high craggy hills and embowering woodlands and well does it deserve its title of:- “The Throstle’s nest of England” ‘.*

**Chronological table of local events**

**Year**
1212 - Grant of market charter by King John to the Lord of the Manor of Bingley
1529 - Foundation of Bingley Grammar School
1686 - Ireland Bridge built
1753 - Market Place, buttercross and stocks erected in Main Street
1770 - Construction of the Leeds-Liverpool Canal
1815 - Eldwick Cragg Wesleyan Chapel opened
1846 - Construction of the Midland Railway
1847 - Constitution of the First Improvement Commission
1847 - Railway from Shipley to Keighley and Bingley railway station opened
1848 - Bingley Gas Company formed (private)
1864 - Harden Road reservoir completed
1865 - Prince of Wales Park opened
1867 - Gasworks purchased by Commissioners
1868 - Market (Saturday) transferred to Myrtle Place
1868 - Creation of Holy Trinity parish
1869 - Prince of Wales Park acquired 1870
1870 - Mechanics Institute opened
1872 - Purchase of first steam Fire Engine
1880 - Sacred Heart Catholic Church opened
1881 - Lease of water from St Ives estate
1882 - Market rights purchased from Lord of the Manor
1887 - Bingley Technical College erected
1888 - Old Market Place and stocks removed to Prince of Wales Park
1888 - Elm Tree Hill removed for widening of Main Street
1888 - Eldwick Beck Wesleyan Chapel built
1889 - Bingley Technical School opened
1891 - Midland Hotel erected
1891 - Bingley Cottage Hospital opened
1892 - Opening of Public Library and Baths
1892 - New Bingley railway station opened
1894 - Commissioners reconstituted as Urban District Council
1895 - First Sewage Disposal works opened at Dowley Gap
1898 - Urban Districts of Bingley, Bingley Outer and Wilsden amalgamated
1901 - Fire Station erected in Main Street
1903 - New road (Keighley Road) made through churchyard
1908 - Myrtle Park purchased
1911 - Bingley Training College for women teachers opened
1912 - Cottingley Toll Bar removed
1914 - The first tram reaches Bingley
1920 - Wilsden Cemetery land purchased
1927 - Princess Hall and Baths opened
1928 - St Ives Estate purchased
1931 - St Ives Golf Course opened
1939 - Last tram leaves Saltaire depot
1974 - Bingley becomes part of Bradford Metropolitan District
1974 - Old Holy Trinity church demolished
1975 - Dedication of new Holy Trinity church
1979 - Bingley Training College closed
2002 - Mornington Road Methodist Church demolished
2002 - Bingley Technical School closed
2004 - Bingley Relief Road (the new A650) opened
2009 - 5-Rise shopping centre opened, replacing Myrtle Walk
2011 - Bingley Hospital demolished
2011 - New Beckfoot School built, the old one demolished

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