**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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