

Historical Development of the Villages of Bingley Parish

Cottingley

The manor of Cottingley (or Cotinglei as it was then shown) appeared in the Domesday Book of 1086 within the parish of Bingley and at that time it was described as waste land.

Little is known about the development of the village from that time until the Reformation and what is known in the early days revolves round the principal residence of the village – Cottingley Hall, originally called Cottingley House.

Residents of Cottingley House/Hall included the Franke, Dobson and Lamplugh families from the late 16th century to the mid 18th century. They were followed by the Ferrand, Thornton, Lupton, Firth, Alderson Smith, Stansfield and Priestley families through to the early 20th century.

It is not surprising then that several residents of Cottingley House/Hall went on to achieve remarkable fame. These included William Wickham (politician/diplomat/spy), Richard Thornton (geologist/explorer), John Gillies Priestley (physician/scientist) and Arthur Harry Briggs (mill owner/philanthropist).

Originally sited approximately where the Church of St. Mary and St Monica now stands, Cottingley House/Hall had several re-incarnations, with at least two built and demolished before the present Cottingley Hall was built in 1915 some distance away and which is now a nursing home.

The village itself was, for many generations, reliant on agriculture for its survival but with the Industrial Revolution it became a centre for the tanning industry. Coal mining (over 40 coal pits at one time) also played a big part in the expansion of the village in the 19th century and, when that died out, wool processing became the major employer in the village at Cottingley Mills. Evidence of coal mining can still be seen in the Cottingley Moor Road/North Bank Road area.

Some of the earliest buildings still standing are, inevitably, farm houses with Beckfoot Farm, Manor Farm, Marchcote Farm and Stock-a-Close Farm all built in the mid 17th century. These, and other buildings in the area, bear the “double-cross” insignia of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem indicating that they were once within their control.

Cottingley has fourteen listed buildings of which one, when it was built, was quite unique. Cottingley Town Hall was opened in 1865 and comprised a nondenominational church, a day school, a Sunday school, a library, a Mechanic’s Institute and, on one evening a week, a bank. It is still in use today as a church and community centre, complete with original clock and pipe organ, both in good working order.

Education within the village began with classes being held in a former blacksmith’s shop and when that became too small for the increasing number of children, the resulting campaign for larger premises was satisfied by the building of the Town Hall. A new primary school was built, appropriately enough, on School Street in 1933 and, when that was closed in 2002, educational

matters were transferred to the former Cottingley Middle School on Cottingley Moor Road. At one time there were four schools within the parish boundaries.

When the Town Hall was built it was the only public building in the village which could cater for large events and was consequently used by various local associations for entertainments, meetings and fund raising events. One of the users was a thriving Choral Society which put on twice-yearly performances.

Cottingley became an Anglican parish in its own right in 1886 when the Rev. John Simpson was appointed its first vicar. Previously, from being built in 1877, St. Michael and All Angels Church had been a mission church of Holy Trinity, Bingley. Since then the church has moved twice. The present church was opened in 2008 and the building alongside serves as Cottingley's second community centre.

The Roman Catholic parish of St. Mary and St. Monica was formed in 1970 with services held at Cottingley Manor School until the present church was built in 1998.

Cottingley Manor has also been an important building. During its existence it has been a private residence, built in 1915 by Arthur Harry Briggs as a wedding present for his son, a Roman Catholic School and Church and, in its present form, a health and fitness club. During the Second World War it was used for deaf and crippled children who had been evacuated from Lister Lane School for Physically Defective Children.

Cottingley, today, has worldwide fame (or infamy) for just one event. That, of course, is the activities of two young cousins, Frances Griffiths and Elsie Wright, who claimed, towards the end and just after the First World War, to have photographed fairies at the back of their house near Cottingley Beck. The pretence took in several well known celebrities, gained much publicity and was maintained for several decades until the truth was revealed. One of the girls, though, maintained that the last photograph taken was genuine.

Cottingley, though, has more to offer from its history than just that hoax. It is indeed a village of history, industry, fantasy and culture.

Cottingley had among its residents, for more than 40 years, a well published poet, James Allan Mackereth, and several residents have made significant contributions to public service, both local and national.

Just like all communities in the United Kingdom, Cottingley suffered losses in both World Wars. A memorial to the fatalities of the First World War stands near the entrance to St. Michael and All Angels Church, while a tablet listing 147 men who served in the First World War can be found on the inside wall of Cottingley Town Hall Church.

Cottingley had active participants in the political and social spectrum and, at one time, supported a Liberal Club, Conservative Club and Working Men's Club. Alas, the only one still active is the Conservative Club in Smith Street.

Since the end of the First World War the village has expanded quite substantially so that it now has, in effect, two distinct parts – the “old” village and the “new” village – and further expansions are planned for the future.

Crossflatts

The hamlet of Crossflatts would probably have been a crossing point of the River Aire where the land was flat.

When the mills started circa 1777, the streets of workers houses stretched downhill from it to the main road in parallel all the way to the railway bridge. Just one half of one street remains and two other buildings that have not been demolished, they are Aire Street also the Methodist Chapel and The Royal Public House.

Crossflatts was part of the Ryshworth Hall and Farm until 1918 when the Sugden family sold the whole estate. It was bought by the original Bingley Town Council who built the council estates alongside a few private dwellings.

There has been little new build housing apart from infill development until recently with the cricket field development and the new development over the canal bridge.

The village is not as well served now as it was. In the 1950s we had a large Co-op, two barbers, two chip shops, a general grocers, two green grocers, a post office, an off licence, a scrap yard, four corner shops, two hairdressers, a garage, a café, two places of worship, a butchers, a haberdashers, two drinking establishments, a T.V electricians, public toilets and a newsagents. At Morton Lane bottom was a corner shop, a newsagents and a butchers and opposite a bakers now a Tesco mini mart. In total 31 businesses approx.

Whilst the number of shops has declined there are numerous businesses covering a multitude of trades with the larger ones to be found on the Castlefields Industrial Estate.

The original boundaries of the village have probably changed very little over the years and were traditionally defined by landscape. This would however leave hamlets and housing close outside the boundaries without an identity and so they are attached to the village.

The eastern boundary started around the Bingley side of the bridge over the railway as you came from Bingley. But did not encompass Castlefields which by its closeness has always been associated with Crossflatts. Castlefields is a settlement built adjacent to Castlefields Mill and at one time may have been part of the Ryshworth Estate.

The western boundary originally seemed to be the school side of Morton Lane with the section of houses between Morton Lane and Poplar Terrace being incorporated possibly after 1920. Morton Beck formed the bottom half of the western boundary past the cricket field however this appears to have been extended upon the building of the foundry which is now housing UKAR (formerly the Bradford and Bingley Building Society), Magnet and B&M.

The northern boundary was always thought to be the canal stretching from Morton Lane to Sleningford Road and on to the Five Rise Locks. The houses over the canal on Micklethwaite Lane are technically part of Micklethwaite but are nearer Crossflatts.

The southern boundary was the railway which ran at the bottom of Queens Road, Kings Road and along the boundaries of the council recreation field (the Rec) and the Grammar School playing field and the Cricket Club grounds.

The village does not have any Conservation Areas as such other than the Grade Two* listed property now divided into four houses, Ryshworth Hall. Construction started sometime c1500 of which none or very little evidence still remains, being added to over the years and reaching its

largest size and importance in the mid-1700s when visitors staying over included Charles Wesley one of the founders of the Methodist Church movement. When owned by Bingley Council (1918 - 1985) conversion to council housing and repairs were done which did not fit with the listed status and so it is not original and due to vandal damage when tenants were moved out it came close to being destroyed. Its future is more secure than at almost any time in its past but it will never live up to its Grade Two with a star listing.

The only other area which may possibly come under the heading of conserved area within the village is the Grammar School playing fields, administered by now BMDC (tenanted by a rugby club) which if correct was gifted to the Grammar School on the proviso that it would never be sold off.

Crossflatts has minimal historic evidence now. Within the village there is only Ryshworth Hall which has any history to it. The mills have gone and all the streets demolished to build the Evergreen Walk complex and flats between Canal Road and the canal with the former Thomson Court being built on the site of a farm leaving little evidence of earlier times.

Castlefields as a hamlet around a mill still remains with listed buildings in evidence. There are buildings over the canal but these are more Micklthwaite than Crossflatts. Just over the boundary with Bingley are the Five Rise Locks.

Eldwick

The landscape of Eldwick owes its formation to glacial periods, overflow channels creating the 'Eldwick Bumps' undulating land between Heights Lane and the valley of Eldwick Beck. A relatively level plain for farmland rises to moorland.

A tiny settlement was first recorded in the 11th century Domesday Book as Helguic, but after that, grants from monastic Rievaulx (for Faweather and Golcar) brought farms. Between the 13th and 14th centuries local Manor Courts records list people living at Helewike, Ellewick and Johanna de Helwyke lived 'under the cross', probably at Eldwick Hall owned by the Knights of St. John. The Eldwick Hall and its farm of 1696 and many other farms were built in the 17th century.

Above all these it was at High Eldwick that records of a larger settlement show a linear pattern along the packhorse from Keighley to Otley. Cottages were occupied by handloom weavers, materials were supplied to them and, finished pieces were collected later. Eldwick Hall was built far below the upper 'village'.

The first buildings in the Eldwick Beck location were three Tudor Alms-houses (today opposite the former Wesleyan Chapel at the centre of the Eldwick Conservation Area). At the old High Eldwick settlement, a beerhouse licence was transferred from Rattlebank Hall in 1787 to Intake Farm to become 'The Fleece', then, after the arrival of the Hudsons (1809), Dick took over in 1850 so his famous name remains.

Along the road a chapel/schoolroom for High Eldwick 'village' was erected in 1815. Toils Farm/Middle Farm across from Eldwick Hall was often visited by John Wesley from 1759. The first Eldwick Beck Chapel was built in 1832 to be succeeded by the much larger building in 1888. It was 1800 which created Eldwick Beck village and ended that at High Eldwick – with the construction of a four storey worsted spinning mill, together with dam and cottages. The mill closed in 1881 but an older building in The Green (beyond the Acorn) was used to 'scribble' wool

fleeces, and there were eleven cottages for workers, all worsted weavers or wool combers. In 1828 it became a Corn Mill.

Farming continued, helped by lime burning in brick kilns, hence Brick Kiln Row (Park Top Cottages). The major development in the growth of Eldwick was the 1861 Enclosure of Gilstead Moor, when 'allotments' of land were awarded, with the creation of 'occupation roads'. Open moorland between Eldwick Beck Bottom and Gilstead saw Warren Lane, Sheriff Lane, Saltaire Road, Glen Road, and Gilstead Lane formalised, leading to the building of 'villas' for prosperous merchants and factory owners from Bingley and Manningham.

The village school opened in 1877, in Otley Road, as did the Church of St. Lawrence (1893).

Local quarrying provided ample building stone and stone 'slates' were mined either side of Warren Lane. The enclosure also created Prince of Wales Park (1863-65) and the Warren Lane allotments for the 'labouring poor'. Both the Acorn and The Travellers Rest (the latter opposite the large chapel) were 19th century Beck Bottom establishments. The Barron family opened the Bingley Brickworks in 1875, in Heights Lane manufacturing bricks, tiles and drainpipes. So, by the end of the 19th century the population was very diverse and housing equally so. Into the 20th century the mill had closed, more houses were built around Otley Road, more shops opened but market gardening was developed in Saltaire Road and Glen Road where large gardens were converted to produce fruit, flowers and vegetables for Bingley shops.

Social life revolved around the school (used for public events) and the village library. Even the church, without pews but with a sliding partition, could use the main body of the church for social events. Various societies and sports groups developed but at the same time many workers were then employed in Bingley and beyond. Gas lighting came by 1900 and a 'garden city' was planned for the edge of Gilstead Moor, off Warren Lane in 1907. One large house and six cottages were built before the scheme was abandoned, the site 'being too exposed!' For many years following, Warren Lane, with the exception of Warren Park and Warren Farm had no houses. Only Otley Road and the developments beyond, between West View, Saltaire Road and Gilstead Lane made up the village.

All that changed in the 1950s with the then massive Heaton Estate almost doubling Eldwick in size. In a way, that led to the building of Eldwick Memorial Hall as the new social centre in 1954 (later supplemented by Birches Club), the tennis courts and the earlier recreation ground. Even with all the new housing, within the next 25 years, the village lost its long established garage, butchers, greengrocers, bakers, newsagents and even the fish shop! (Now there are the beauty salons, hairdressers, the health centre and pharmacy and two play schools).

A modern middle school was built in Warren Lane which may have paved the way for the 1986 Wimpey and the Redrow/Bryant Swan Avenue estates of 2000 from previous farmland. It was the Swan Avenue segment that ran through the locally held view of the boundary between Eldwick and Gilstead. So postal addresses became disputed by some residents!

Elsewhere, many farm buildings and barns became domestic properties as did the old school (children moving to the former middle school), and both the original 1832 and 1887 chapels. Church and chapel became an episcopal Eldwick Church. Eldwick may no longer be classified as a village but it still has a sense of community with village events and many clubs and societies, in an enviable location, bounded on three sides by a natural landscape, above the Aire Valley on Gilstead Edge, below Baildon/Bingley Moor, and adjacent to Shipley Glen.

Gilstead

Gilstead is one of the earliest settlements in Bingley Parish, having its first mention in the century after the Domesday Book. 'In addition to Priesthorpe Gilstead was a new settlement, whose land extended down to the river at Dowley Gap (while the land between the village and Eldwick Beck remained uncultivated until the nineteenth century as Gilstead Moor) (1)

Geographically, Gilstead is in a very special position which directs its identity as a community. It is situated on high ground 200 feet above Bingley to the north-east of the town centre. To the north, east and south it is bounded variously by Shipley Glen, the River Aire and the escarpment of Gilstead Moor. To the north-west recent housing developments have merged the previously separate communities of Gilstead and Eldwick.

Most of the housing was built in the 20th century as Gilstead did not develop in the Industrial Revolution as an industrial/manufacturing area like Bingley town, but remained agricultural in nature. Such trades as existed were agricultural or connected to the wool trade, but on a small scale. The last major housing development was the building of approximately 400 homes at the Swan Avenue estate between 2000 and 2007.

Substantial properties in the Gilstead area, pre 1914 included Littlebeck Hall, Gilstead Hall, Oldfield House and Milner Field, home to Sir Titus Salt Jnr from 1869. (See separate entry for Milner Field). Following the Enclosures of Gilstead Moor in 1861, John Preston, a Bradford chemist, homeopath, photographer and painter bought two allotments and began building Littlebeck Hall, possibly using stone from the original building at Milner Field. His brother Ben Preston, a poet bought land nearby and built a house called Hammondale. He obtained a beer license and this became the Glen Hotel, which still serves the village. Both brothers benefited from inheritance from their uncle Benjamin Hammond, a wealthy Bradford butcher and cattle dealer.

Milner Field Farm is the original 'home farm' which served the Milner Field household. It is still a working dairy farm and forms a valuable link with the original Milner Field estate and the village of Saltaire.

Sir Fred Hoyle, internationally renowned astronomer was born and lived on Primrose Lane and was descended from the Preston family on his mother's side. He was a pupil at (and dedicated truant from) Bingley Grammar School. A section of the A650 Bingley Bypass is named after him and there are blue plaques on the house at Primrose Lane and at the school in recognition of his achievements. He spent much of his childhood and youth trespassing in the Milner Field grounds and on Gilstead Moor, which encouraged his curiosity and interest in the natural world.

Gilstead Moor or 'The Craggs' still forms a natural boundary between Bingley, Eldwick and Gilstead. It provides fantastic views over the Aire Valley, is an area of ecodiversity, providing habitats for many species of flora and fauna and is a very popular area with local residents for walking.

Gilstead village is served by the church of St Wilfrid, dedicated in 1906. St Wilfrid's Community Hall is well used by local community groups and as an after school club. The former Gilstead Middle School, which served children between 9 -13 years was closed in 2000 due to reorganisation and became the new home for the expanded Eldwick Primary School. The village has the Glen Pub on Gilstead Lane and The Fisherman's Pub at Scourer Bridge.

Gilstead 'rec' or recreation ground is a large open space in the centre of the village with a play park, football field and nature walk. Bingley Juniors use the football pitch and the changing rooms, which were provided with the help of Gilstead Village Society. The play space is popular and well used, but dated and the nature walk benefited in the late 20th century from a WREN grant but in later years has become neglected. However, Gilstead Village Society have begun work on restoring and improving the area to make it more attractive, better used and appreciated.

Gilstead Village Society has been in existence for well over thirty years and is a thriving society dedicated to improving and maintaining the village environment, providing social and community activities and raising money to benefit the village. In recent years they have provided a defibrillator at St Wilfrid's Community Hall, donated money towards the repair of the Mechanics Institute clock in Bingley, and erected a war memorial to the Gilstead soldiers at the top of Primrose Lane. There is a group of dedicated volunteers who maintain the flower beds and planters along Gilstead Lane and have the nature walk as an ongoing project. Social and charity events have included Remembrance Day services, a Great Get Together Community Picnic for the Jo Cox Foundation, MacMillan Coffee Mornings and an annual tea party for senior citizens. The committee meet regularly at The Glen and can be found on Facebook at Gilstead Village Society.

Gilstead is a thriving area and this brings its own pressures, for example on maintaining distinct boundaries and from ever-increasing traffic volumes. Therefore, it is even more important that the village retains its separate identity as a safe, welcoming and open community, while remaining an essential element of Bingley Parish.

Micklethwaite

The village is located on the valley slopes and is mostly linear in form with clusters of buildings along Micklethwaite Lane and Carr Lane, with the largest clusters of development around two village greens. From the swing bridge over the Leeds to Liverpool canal in the South it steps up the hillside, creating character and long distance views across the Aire Valley, to the junction of Carr Lane with Otley road in the north. Pastoral fields with stone walls surround the village providing an open, green setting and illustrating its agricultural character. The wooded Micklethwaite Bank provides an impressive eastern backdrop to the village, giving way to moorland above, while fields slope down to the canal and Morton Beck to the west.

Micklethwaite was founded towards the end of the 9th century by Vikings who established a scattered farming settlement in a clearing. The name is pure Scandinavian and is derived from two Norse words Mykel (great) and thevit (clearing). The village was laid to waste in the Norman Conquest of 1066 which ended the Viking system of governance. Micklethwaite was mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 and quickly recovered, underpinning the early growth and prosperity of Bingley. A textile mill was built at Holroyd in 1812 and was followed by a small number of workers' houses in the village. Two Wesleyan Methodist Chapels were built in the village in 1854 and 1875, possibly signs of a dissenting community, with the latter closing in 2005. Many farm buildings have been converted to dwellings along with the mill and the chapels. A number of modern houses were built in the middle of the village after the 1950s reflecting the popularity of Micklethwaite as a commuter settlement. The 1801 Census recorded 242 inhabited houses in Micklethwaite. The 2001 Census recorded 139 properties and a population of 296. The conversion of Airedale Mills to dwellings has added 24 properties and the building of Micklethwaite Landings has recently added another 27 properties.

Lands at Micklethwaite were donated to Drax Priory between the 12th and 14th centuries. Monks farmed these lands and probably collected their produce at the original Micklethwaite Grange. The dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII in 1536-9 probably led to the allocation of monastery-owned land to freeholders who gradually accrued wealth and rebuilt their farmhouses and farm buildings in stone to reflect their wealth and status in the late 16th and 17th centuries. Examples include part of Manor House (6-8 Victoria Street), which dates from the late 16th century and Micklethwaite Grange, which is dated 1695. The malthouse at Croft House Farm represents another activity in Micklethwaite, which was probably established by the monks of Drax Priory. Lime burning was an important industry in the area in the 17th and 18th centuries, but textiles did not gain a strong foothold in Micklethwaite until the introduction of factory machinery to the region and the construction of Holroyd Mill in 1812 and Airedale Mills in the early 19th century. The employees of both of these mills probably lived in the mostly demolished back-to-back houses at New Street and Union Street (constructed in 1852) and at Peas Acre and The Green.

Micklethwaite Conservation Area was designated in 1976 and covers the majority of this historic agricultural village. The Conservation Area Assessment was released in December 2005, following a workshop with villagers in 2004; and an Appraisal to review the Assessment was done in 2009. Bradford Council are currently on the third round of reviews for Conservation Areas and when each is completed the new review will replace the original assessment and appraisal. There are 14 Grade II listed buildings in the Conservation Area from across five centuries. These include the Manor House, the oldest and the most recent, a Grade II Listed K6 telephone kiosk, designed in 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, whose top panels display the emblem of George VI.

Micklethwaite has only three vehicular ways out and in. Northwards via Micklethwaite Lane and Carr Lane onto the difficult junction with Otley Road. Southwards via Micklethwaite Lane and either straight down over the canal bridge to Keighley Road or Eastwards up Sty Lane and Greenhill Lane onto Lady Lane. Micklethwaite Lane is narrow, with steep slopes and sharp bends by the upper village green. It has a narrow footpath on one side, but only from the canal bridge to Beck Road. Carr Lane and Sty Lane are also narrow and steep and have no footpath. In snow and/or icy conditions, the only access can be over the canal bridge. There are no public services in Micklethwaite.

There is a thriving Micklethwaite Village Society, run by volunteers, whose objectives are to safeguard the local environment and to promote a sense of community spirit, care, well-being and pride amongst all residents. As a result, the two village greens were formally registered as Village Greens in 2005. In 2017 the Village Society was allowed to refurbish and install a defibrillator in the telephone kiosk. This work was funded by the Society, together with a matching grant from Bingley Town Council. There is a Queen Victoria (No 609) post box. The Micklethwaite Lane allotments provide a local green space.

In December 2007, following local consultations, Bradford council, in partnership with Micklethwaite Village Society, produced a Local Action Plan. A key message was that residents wanted Micklethwaite to remain as a separate and distinct community which retained the characteristics of village life. A major concern was the unsuitability of Micklethwaite Lane for busy, large and fast traffic; drivers ignore warning signs and longer vehicles get stuck on the bend by the upper green. Other than increased levels of traffic, which have exacerbated problems, nothing has changed. A 20 mph speed limit, long requested and better restrictions for longer and large vehicles, would be welcomed.

A more recent concern, following approval for the large development on the Greenhill site, is the included move to make Sty Lane one-way westwards. This would remove one of the three vehicular exits for Micklethwaite residents, enjoyed for generations and would have a devastating impact on villagers and their close community ties with Bingley, Eldwick etc. Maintaining this access up Sty Lane is the unanimous wish of all in Micklethwaite.