

HECKMONDWIKE CC

DOWNTOWN HECKMONDWIKE

1000 AD – 2005 AD



Though it is unclear exactly when it was founded, the name 'Heckmondwike', from the Old English 'Heamund's Farm', suggests that there was a settlement here long before the Norman Conquest of 1066.

Only seven families were recorded as dwelling in Heckmondwike in 1379, according to Poll Tax records. As the local economy developed due to the prosperity of the cloth production of the town, so did the population. By the late 1600s there were fifty houses with around 250 inhabitants.

IN DENIAL...

There was no church that Heckmondwike could truly call its own until 1830, and this is highly unusual for the time. However, this would explain the history of religious dissent for which the town has become locally infamous.



The number of non-conformist chapels, such as Upper Independent Chapel on High Street, makes up for this. The first non-conformist meeting house was established in 1674; though meetings had to be held in secret. Upper Chapel Cricket Club, now known as Heckmondwike and Carlinghow C.C., find their roots at this chapel. The original Upper Independent Chapel was built in 1701, and the picture above is of the fourth building to stand on the site.

THE MARKET PLACE

The market in the centre of Heckmondwike has been held since before 1760. In 1810, it was extended and received an official charter. This was despite Dewsbury's attempts to block it, due to the threat thereby posed to its own market. In 1880 the traditional market day was altered to include Tuesdays as well as Saturdays.



Heckmondwike Market Place, 1910



Heckmondwike Market Place, 2004

A BOOMING TRADE

Heckmondwike has always been a thriving town for cloth production. There is evidence of this from as early as the sixteenth century.

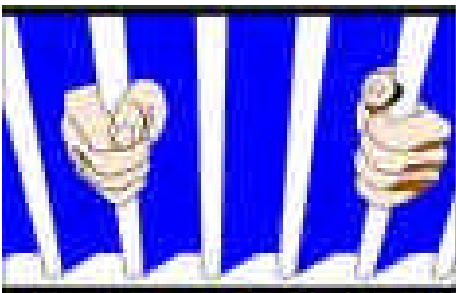


This later evolved into blanket making, which proved so prosperous a trade that the town folk built their own Blanket Hall in 1811. The picture above is of this very building, taken in 1885.

JAILHOUSE ROCK

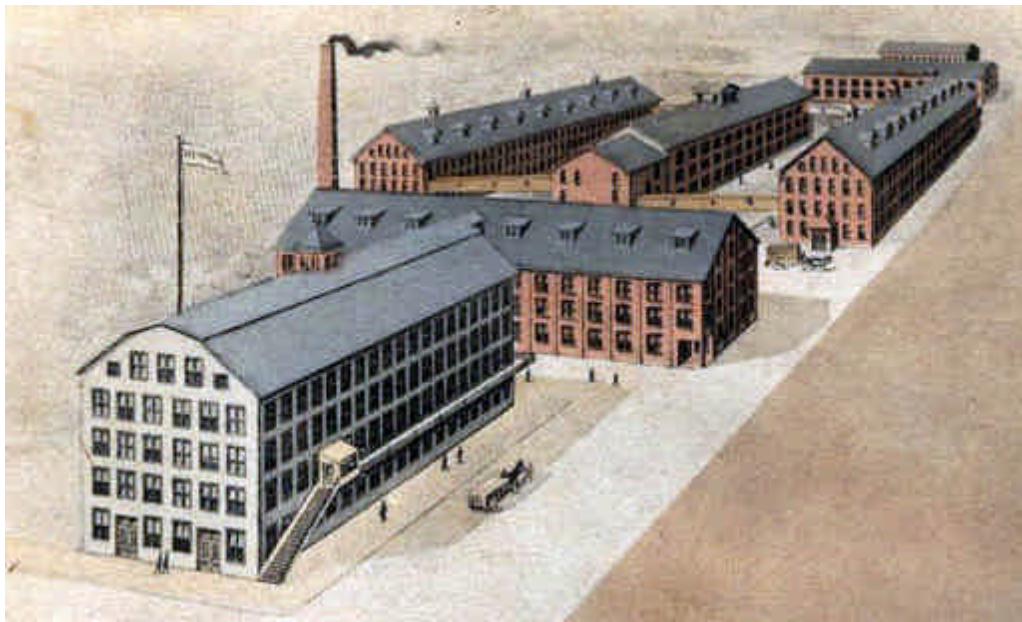
Another notable aspect of the town's history is White Lee Jail, established in 1850.

John Howard, the prison reformer, noted during a visit that male and female prisoners were kept separately, which was '**very kind and prudent and... peculiar to this prison**'.



POPULATION GROWTH

With the industrial revolution came a rise in population...and more widespread disease.



It was not until the early 1850s that the town set up a Health Board to solve the problems of sanitation and drainage. Eventually this became part of the Urban District Council, which remained in existence until 1974, when Heckmondwike became part of Kirklees.

CORRECT GRAMMAR

Heckmondwike Grammar School was essentially a product of the Education Act of 1870. On 29 January 1894, the Building Committee agreed to build a large mixed school that could accommodate over 900 children.



Heckmondwike Grammar School, 1905.

The school itself opened on 17 January 1898, with 907 pupils assembling in the main hall. The first headmaster was Mr R.S. Cahill, who continued in this role until 1923. The current head is Mr M.C. Tweedle, who has been the headmaster since 1990.

FAME AND FORTUNE

Joseph Priestley (1733-1804), though born in nearby Birstall, spent most of his childhood in Heckmondwike.

Priestley was a key voice in the campaign for the inclusion of geography, history and science in school curricula. As a scientist he identified ten gases, including oxygen.



City Square, Leeds



John Curwen (1816-1880) was born in Heckmondwike, and was also an education reformer. He pioneered

LOCAL RIVALS!

Heckmondwike C.C. are not the only cricket club that are, or have been, located in the town. Heckmondwike also hosts:

HECKMONDWIKE & CARLINGHOW UNITED CRICKET CLUB

Ground located on Chapel Lane.

HECKMONDWIKE PARISH CRICKET CLUB

An ex-local club with obvious church-based links.