

A Walk Down Ranmoor Market

Part Two: Ranmoor's Shops, People and Public Houses

This week's blog is the second instalment of our two-part commentary that accompanied our summer walking tours 'A Walk Down Ranmoor Market'. This part focusses on Ranmoor's shops, people and public houses.

This image, probably from around the late 1890s, shows us the Bull's Head occupied two of what must have been originally a short terrace of three cottages. This reflects the pub's origins as a private house. Records show that around the mid-nineteenth century, pen and pocketknife manufacturer Jonathan Swann lived here with his family and that they added to their income by selling beer. However, it seems that the next occupants, took the business on as an established public house. This was Charles Slowe (1866 - 1880s) and his family. Charles had married his wife Catherine at St John's, and their daughter would go on to do so too. It was also Charles who changed the name of the establishment to the Bulls' Head.



Fig. 6: Highland Laddie/Bull's Head

Returning to the photograph, it may be possible to make out **A.B. SLOWE** above the door. This was Albert Benjamin Slowe, who took on the proprietorship of the pub from his father in 1885. Albert advertised his establishment as 'a First-class Old-Established Country Inn, situated ... amidst the most charming scenery that Sheffield possesses ...[with] Cabs, Billiards, and Cricket Ground attached'.

The western third of the building remained as a cottage until around 1900 and we can see that there's a wall dividing the front garden from the pub's front yard and a man is leaning in his doorway. He's mirrored by the two people outside the pub – one with a bowler and moustache posing with one foot on the doorstep while the other looks like a youngster, standing with his thumbs in his waistcoat pockets. Marr Terrace is just visible on the right.



Fig 7: the Broomhill to Ranmoor bus

There's a sign for COLLIS' CAB STAND next to the window on the right of the pub and **figures 7 and 8** illustrate how the Bull's Head served as a transport hub between the 1850s and early 1900s.

This service ran between the Bull's Head at Ranmoor Market and the York Hotel in Broomhill – a journey of about a mile. Look closely and you will see on top a little boy standing clutching the rail. His name was Joseph Cyril Lockwood and he later recognised himself in this picture when it was included in a book published in the 1940s.

Figure 8 shows the driver posing, (perhaps a little begrudgingly), with his whip raised. The stance of the horse's rear legs suggest it is resting; maybe the horse and driver had been in that position for some time while the photographer was setting up his shot. The ladies in the carriage look as if they're dressed up for the occasion, as do the onlookers standing by the pub entrance. A boy is standing to the rear their carriage, looking as if he's enjoying the scene, as does the little dog in the centre foreground. Perhaps this picture was taken at the start of a special holiday outing.



Figure 8

The photograph in figure 9 was probably taken around the same time, (perhaps the same day), as figures 4 and 5 with the same tramlines and overhead cable supports visible and the same bare wintery branches from overhanging trees. Nearest to the camera is a row of three shops which provide fine examples of Victorian shopfront design. Their beautiful window displays are crammed with enticing goods. These buildings retain their traditional features to this day and are best viewed from across the road. From this distance, you can appreciate how the carved stone pilasters with their floral details provide a balanced frame for the shopfronts.



Fig. 9. Ranmoor Market Shops in the early 1900s

On the left edge of the photo is Eardley's Chemist, perhaps the most elegant of the three. An advert for VIROL stands out. Virol was developed by the makers of Bovril in 1899 and was a popular food supplement during the early 20th century, promoted with the slogan 'Children Thrive on Virol'. On the fascia above the chemist's window there are three pale shapes - two diamonds and a circle. Still visible today, these shapes contain the date 1879 and what may be images of apothecaries.

In the middle is Broughton's Grocers: 'Provision Merchants and Italian Warehousemen'. 'BOVRIL' and 'PICK AXES' are advertised and a wooden hand truck is propped up against the kerb.

The final shop of the trio, (furthest away from us in the picture), is the Post Office. There is a sign for DYE attached at right angles to the end column. Prior to this, it had been one of the outlets for Ranmoor's Wildgoose brothers who were the original owners of these shops and who sold meat, fish, game and poultry. This end unit became a Post Office and stationers in the early 1890s.

We saw Brocksopp's butchers earlier in figure 5. This time we see Arthur Benjamin Brocksopp (1867-c.1945) standing in the doorway. Benjamin Brocksopp and his family, (which included his wife Susannah and six children), lived here above their shop from 1895-1936. Brocksopp was from a family of butchers based in Broomhill who moved west to set up business in the new Ranmoor Market. Brocksopp's was the first in a long line of butchers trading from number 370 Fulwood Road, continuing with Chris Beech, whose name now stands above the shop window. The steel runners for hanging the meat carcasses seen in the photo are still in situ. The Brocksopp family grave is in Fulwood Churchyard.

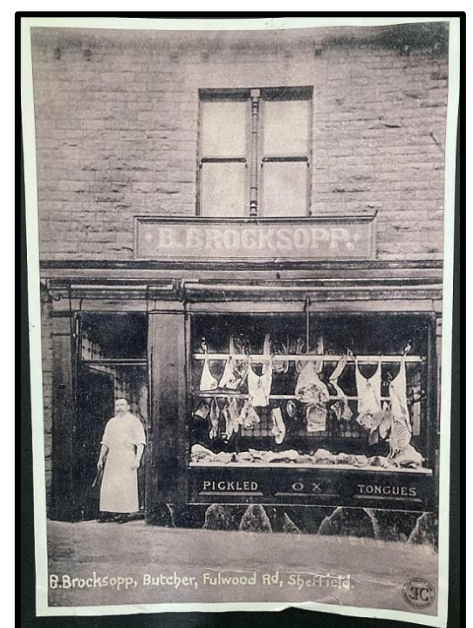


Fig 10: B. Brocksopp, Butcher, Fulwood Rd, Sheffield



Fig 11, 12 & 13: The Marsdens of Marr Terrace

These images relate to the Marsden family of Marr Terrace. The Marsdens are a family with roots and branches across the old Upper Hallam area. Several Marsden families lived on the sloping terraced street which was originally called 'Market Place'. Selina and William Marsden raised their family of nine children right at the top of Market Place at number 41 between 1880s and the 1900s. William was a stone mason, perhaps employed in the construction of St. John's Church, and all five of his sons would go on to follow their father's trade. In 1864 Selina (aged 23), William (aged 37) and their two-year-old son John were living on the edge of Dale Dyke Dam when it burst. The newspaper article on the left is from an interview with Selina, (aged 70 in the photograph), where she recounts their terrifying and brave escape from the flood waters some fifty years previously. Their youngest son Reynald (1879 – 1934) is pictured as he begins his adult life aged 14, when he was living at Marr Terrace. To the right of Reynald is a picture of the family gravestone in Fulwood Churchyard. The inscription at the top remembers Selina and William's youngest child, Kate, who died aged just five.

The Ranmoor Inn: the final stop

Our tour of Ranmoor Market concluded with a look at the Ranmoor Inn. Facing east towards town and welcoming travellers passing along the road to Fulwood, the story of the Ranmoor Inn mirrors that of its west end-counterpart, the Bull's Head. It started as a 'beerhouse' in the 1850s, principally run by Sarah Worrall whose husband James was a bootmaker. After the death of Sarah and James in the 1860s, their son George took over, transforming their private house into a public house, licensed to sell alcohol and looking like the building we see today.

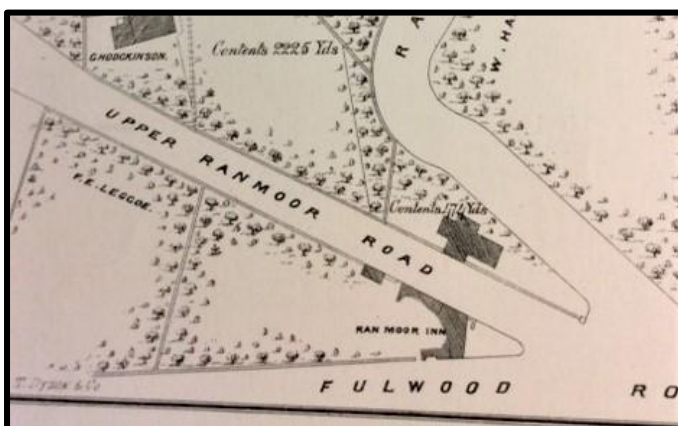


Fig 14: map 1875



Fig 15: Early 1900s showing two forms of transport

This sale plan shows how the pub stood almost alone on its spur of land in 1875. There is the distinctive shape of a church across the road - Ranmoor St. John's was built on this site four years later.

The image above suggests the hustle and bustle around the inn in the early 1900s and captures a time of transition in transport. To the left, a woman is stepping onto a tram while the centre of the photograph is dominated by horse-drawn cabs waiting for fares.



Fig 16: Early 1900s



Fig 17

Our look at Ranmoor Market concludes with a quieter scene from the early 1900s. The Ranmoor Inn has a flagpole, while the arched sign reads GOOD STABLING and RAOB. The letters stand for Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes which was a philanthropic organisation for men and their families.

Set into the floor outside the pub, this old iron ring was used to lower beer casks into the cellar.

Conclusion

The guided walk on which this piece is based invited us to 'meet' past residents of Ranmoor Market. As well as looking back to historical records for information, I also sought the perspectives of the present Ranmoor shops community which included current residents, traders and their living descendants. Their contributions brought life and warmth to the project and highlighted the threads connecting the past to the present. I am very grateful for their help with my research.

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