

Castle Markets Project - Oral History

Transcription

Interviewee Details

Name: Anonymous (by request)

ID Number: CM_022_Anonymous

Place of Birth: Sheffield

Year / Date of Birth: 1927

Interview Details

Interviewer: Hannah

Date / Time:

Place: Castle Market

Audio File Nos: CM_022_Anonymous

Transcript

Hannah: Please could you tell me what your name is, where you were born and the year you were born?

Anonymous: My name is REDACTED and I was born in 1927.

Hannah: Whereabouts?

Anonymous: In Sheffield at the Nether Edge Hospital.

Hannah: Can you tell me what your earliest memories of this market are?

Anonymous: well going with my mother not as soon as I was born, I'm sure. My mother used to visit the market regularly on Tuesdays and Fridays and I would, and Saturdays, yes it was Saturdays as well. Of course, I'd would go with her on a Saturday and as I say I remember that it was quite a game keeping up with her because she would be so absorbed in what she was looking at on the stalls she would forget that she'd got me, well I must have been six or seven and I'd still got to keep an eye on where mother was or I would have lost her. She was so absorbed in what she was looking at.

Hannah: What sort of thing did she buy?

Anonymous: Well materials mainly but I know she bought all her household stuff there, in fact I think I am still using an enamel casserole dish that she might have bought for 2.11 (and three farthings)

Hannah: Its had a good long life that casserole dish.

Anonymous: Well its a very good stout casserole dish and its not nearly as heavy as these modern

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French things that weigh a ton when they're empty.

Hannah: So is that in the 'Rag and Tag' Market?

Anonymous: It was in the Rag and Tag yes, that was where we mainly went and of course, there were, it was all open, you know that don't you, and there were stalls with the sloping canvas and that dripped on you if you weren't careful because when it was raining you had to be very careful and it was always crowded and dirty and wet under, and muddy under foot. It wasn't at all really, not like the modern market. Yes, that was the Rag and Tag and the material stalls were there, she loved the materials, she bought all her food there

Hannah: Where was the market then?

Anonymous: There was a market hall built in Victorian times??? I don't, when did the

Hannah: Down the road.

Anonymous: Yes, just down the road, yes, was that damaged during the war?

Hannah: I don't know but the Norfolk Market Hall was demolished when they opened the Castle Market. This replaced it.

Anonymous: and they replaced it. You see I've lived through all that but you don't remember, I don't remember, no. But I know she'd buy her food she'd buy her ??? she'd buy her material she'd buy any household things she wanted, you could get anything under the sun from the market. [Name of someone I think] ??? shouting, and That was absolutely fascinating, so it would be in the 30s that I'd be going round. Yes, as I say I'm very vague about that time and then when I'd finished my training and started working I used to go to the market then and look for material and I know what I used to love, my mother used to try to dissuade me from getting them, I must have been about 10 or 11, there was a stall which sold horrible American comics, they were huge things and they'd the most lurid sci-fi and monster stories in them. I don't think you could get that sort of thing anywhere else but I do remember when I got the chance and mother wasn't looking I'd buy one of those and she'd be cross at me and say that's rubbish. She was a great reader you see. But I went through my sci-fi period before I went to grammar school.

Hannah: Were you a bit of a tomboy?

Anonymous: No, no I wasn't but all that science fiction really grabbed me at that age. I can't understand it now.

Hannah: Have you got any now?

Anonymous: No, I went through that and I find I don't go back in the things I like to do. I think if I go back I don't think, oh I'm sorry I went back cos it isn't as I remembered it. But these horrific and it was, they were mainly cartoons as well and the most lurid pictures. It really was the most hideous sort of material that a child should be reading and this is why my mother was horrified, we didn't know that.

[Both laugh]

Hannah: Did you come to the market as a teenager with your friends?

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6:30 Anonymous: Um, no, my teenage years coincided with the war. I was twelve when it started, I was eighteen when it finished. When I got to college I found out I should have been very awkward and disruptive as a teenager but I was too worried about the war. Its funny that really. I think I was more awkward in junior school before I went to grammar school. Once I got to grammar school than I was doing things that were really interesting. No I didn't come with my friends. In fact I don't remember, well as I say it was war time, we got the blitz at the beginning of the war and that altered the centre of Sheffield. We broke up for Christmas holidays earlier than we would have done that year but we didn't suffer any damage. But, no if I went to the market it was, it was when I was a junior I would go to the market and then as a teenager I don't think I went into the market much as a teenager. I didn't go into town much, hadn't got the money. Teenagers today are spoilt aren't they. They've got money for cosmetics and all sorts of things. I didn't have. We didn't, well there must have been some in my time but in our situation there wasn't. I never had any set spending money. If I wanted to go to the pictures I'd ask them for some money and they'd give it to me but there was no such thing and I'd no grandparents in Sheffield. My parents weren't Sheffield people, they came to Sheffield when they married. My mother was Welsh, mu father worked on the railway His wage I think was £3.10d a week . So it was a good job my mother was a creative person who bought a sewing machine and made our clothes and you know it was a skill. I know very well that they sacrificed things to make sure I had a good education, that I went to college and sort of thing.

Hannah: Did your mum teach you to sew?

Anonymous: My mother would not, what did she teach me. She read to me all the time, I knew my letters and I was nearly reading before I went to school. She was not what you would call a teacher, she wasn't patient enough, she was too creative ???? but oh come on what was the question?

9:54 Hannah: She taught you how to sew?

Anonymous: Well she taught, she helped me to learn to knit and the first little thing that I knitted all plain was a little jacket for a teddy bear and then she crochet all round it in ??? It did look pretty but she didn't teach me to sew and as a teenager I wasn't allowed anywhere near the sewing machine, the treadle sewing machine, in case I broke it. Have you ever tried to use a treadle machine. There is an art in treadling and keeping the steady treadle going and if you stopped it broke the thread and it all went back. It was a real art. I learnt to use a treadle machine when I went to college cos I had a marvellous teacher in the junior school and we did needlework and it was she who taught me to sew and encourage me to make, I made an underskirt and I made a nightie, I made all sorts of things with her. She was great and the sewing that she had taught me, all the seams, were different seams, french seams, {???) are what I learnt from her at junior school. But when I went to college I discovered down in the cellar a row of treadle machines and I used to go down on my own or friends would come down with me and I practised on those treadle machines until I could use a treadle machine. Cos when college was finished and I was back home, my parents went away that summer after I'd finished college. When they came back my mother was amazed because I'd made a dress for myself.

Hannah: Were you in trouble?

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Anonymous: No, no I was twenty by then. {Both laughing} She was just staggered that I'd successfully conquered the treadle machine and from then on I was making my own clothes.

Hannah: Do you have a favourite memory of the market?

Anonymous: Not really, well my favourite memory is all these beautiful fabrics I was able to buy and they helped a lot. As I say, I remember that 'Amoid' that Nottingham firm that made 'amoid', how uncomfortable it was but in the, especially when it rained.

Hannah: Amoid, what was the amoid.

Anonymous: Amoid, A M O I D ,it was a Nottingham firm and they made an ointment which was very good if you had anything sceptic, any cut that went sceptic instead of healing and I don't remember that as a child we had much, very much that was any use and I know my father had a very bad, I don't what you'd call it, it was on his leg, it was a bad patch which was refusing to heal and a workmate told him about this 'amoid' in the market and he went and bought some and it healed quite rapidly and from then on we always had amoid in the house and it really was good stuff. But that disappeared completely when the Rag and Tag market went. They never took a stall in the new market and I think probably competition from the drug companies drove them out of business, or they may have gone out of business because there was nobody to carry on the firm, but it really was wonderful stuff.

Hannah: So have you kept coming back to the market as an adult?

Anonymous: As an adult I've come back to the market, I lived all the time with my parents, I never married and it was a regular thing Saturday I would come with mother to the market and help her as she got older help her to carry things. Then she got beyond it, I'd got a car by then and then my father used to come with me and he would carry things but every week on a Saturday that was a trail to the market to shop for food for the next week.

15:15 *Hannah:* And you're still coming here now?

Anonymous: And I'm still coming here and I'm still buying quite a lot of things from here. I'm afraid the supermarkets get more custom than the market now because they're more convenient but if I want any fish, if I want any meat I would buy the fresh meat from the butchers in the market but materials are nothing like what they were and I don't sew any more anyway so that doesn't matter. But other stalls I find the electrical stall I can get electrical things that are old fashioned that the ordinary shops don't keep and this to me is the beauty of the market. The big shops will only keep what they can sell readily. The market stall holders will keep stuff that's sort of oddments and er , I can get things here and of course they're cheaper. That's a big thing. [Laughing]

16:30	<i>Hannah</i>	When the new market opens do you think you'll go there.
	<i>Anonymous</i>	Oh I shall certainly go there and hope to see a lot of these same traders. Oh and a word about the chippie, there's an article in today's 'Star' about the chippie, how good it is, and I agree with them. It's the best chip shop in the town. Lovely food.

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	<i>Hannah</i>	The one upstairs? It is very nice.
	<i>Anonymous</i>	You've sampled it as well have you?
	<i>Hannah</i>	Yes, it will be my treat on Saturday.
	<i>Anonymous:</i>	Jolly good, well I was heading there today, forgot completely that its Thursday when most of the stalls, many of the stalls aren't here. So I finished up at 'Sals' and had a nice jacket potato with butter. [Laughing]
17:21	<i>Hannah</i>	Do you think the new market will be very different to this one?
	<i>Anonymous</i>	I fear that it may be too much like the Malls that appear everywhere, full of the same shops. I go to Meadowhall and I just buy a sandwich and I walk about Meadowhall, I never buy anything. There's nothing in any of those shops. [Bell rings] except Lakeland. {??????} That's more down to earth but well I shall reserve my judgement until after I've seen it. I just, as I say, I hope that they, a lot of these traders wont be able to afford the stalls in the new, because that's a big thing, the rents are bound to be high.
18:20	<i>Hannah</i>	Is there anything else you'd like to tell me?
	<i>Anonymous</i>	I don't think so.
	<i>Hannah</i>	Thank you very much.