

Castle Markets Project - Oral History

Interview Transcription

Interviewee Details

Name: Dennis Knight

ID Number: CM_042_DennisKnight

Place of Birth: Sheffield

Year / Date of Birth: December 1950

Interview Details

Interviewer: Hannah

Date / Time:

Place: Castle Market

Transcription

Time		
	Hannah	So if you tell me your name, where you were born and the year you were born in?
	Dennis	Yeh. Well my name is Dennis Knight, I were born in Sheffield, in Northern General Hospital actually and 1950, December 1950.
	Hannah	Thank you. What's your earliest memory of the markets in Sheffield?
	Dennis	Oh my earliest memory is of the old Rag Market and the Norfolk Market Hall. I lived with my grandparents when I was a child and my grandmother was always at the weekends, Saturday, she was always coming down to the markets, buying all her fruit and veg from the Rag Market and then go round to the Norfolk Market Hall.
01:00	Hannah	What did you think of coming with her.
	Dennis	Oh I enjoyed it, it was quite interesting because I remember there was a, in the old Norfolk Market Hall, there was a Pet Stall called Maceys but it was made out the actual like a, what looked like a stream running through the floor where he kept the fish. It were glass covered and I found that, as a young little kid, I found it fascinating. And also the old market, the Rag Market you could get some stall holders giving you, well shouting out their wares and the prices but they made it entertaining and I always remember one fella selling crockery and he'd get half a dozen plates and start trying to shuffle 'em like a pack of cards then I'd think he's going to drop ;em he's going to break'em but

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		he never did. And he had a stick and he'd all of sudden in the middle of a sentence bang the table with his stick and you thought he was going to smash the plates but he never did.
02:15	Hannah	Right, just look at me now and I'll take your photo. Thank you.
	Dennis	Also another thing they had which I found fascinating was a giant pair of scales, that weighed people but it was all polished brass that looked like gold with a chair at one side which was all plush red velvet and the whole lovely thing was in this space as where we are now it was massive and the other side was a big platform where you'd put the weights on. It was like the old fashioned weighing scales you know you used for weighing vegetables but it was for weighing people and I've never ever seen anything like that since. I thought that was fascinating.
03:10	Hannah	So were you weighed in it.
	Dennis	Yes I was.
	Hannah	So was that your grandmother taking you to be weighed.
	Dennis	Yes.
	Hannah	Do you remember how often you did it?
	Dennis	Oh only three or four times, I remember being weighed on it.
03:31	Hannah	To check you were growing?
	Dennis	Yes, but it was more like, to a little kid it was the experience of actually sitting was quite a you know....'Oh can I sit on that' because it looked, you know all the polished brass work it was smart like the spiral brass poles, it looked fascinating. Couldn't believe, they made weighing machines like you find in most chemists like you stood on and put a penny in, this was something totally different, just the sight of it people, I think people came just to see things like that.
04:16	Hannah	Yes, a clever way of getting the kids to enjoy something that you might be pleased to do otherwise.
	Dennis	Yes it was.
	Hannah	Did you keep coming as a teenager?
	Dennis	Yes I did, I'd often call in on a Saturday and perhaps have a cup of coffee and a sandwich at one of the cafes and all of the many different stalls at that time and there was also, this is back in the sixties, late sixties when all Carnaby Street was almost dictating the fashions and there were several clothes stalls selling you know up to date

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		<p>fashionable clothes and I often came you know and looked round them. There was one called Winstons it was Winstons and it used to be just here where that shoe shop is now but then in the seventies they moved downstairs and quite a bit of a story, he actually got a TV actor to open it. Now Emmerdale hadn't been going long, it used to be called Emmerdale Farm and one of the Sugden family, I don't remember it, Jack Sugden, Joe Sugden was played by a person called Fraser Hinds and they got him to open it. Anyway I was in the market saw the crowd, I thought I'd have a walk round, came back later thought he'd gone and I went in to have a look at something and all of a sudden this figure came out and I looked 'Oh that's Fraser Hinds' and next thing puts his hand on my back and pushed me to the wall so he could get passed, he actually pushed me out of the way.</p>
06:37	Hannah	That's a bit rude isn't it.
	Dennis	Yes it was.
	Hannah	Did he apologise.
	Dennis	No he didn't say a thing.
	Hannah	So when you saw him on Emmerdale afterwards did you say 'he pushed me'..... So did you buy your clothes here>.
	Dennis	I have bought some clothes, yes.
07:02	Hannah	What kind of thing do you buy?
	Dennis	<p>Oh its all sorts really, I have bought shirts from Harringtons, I've forgotten the name of the other, I have bought shirts from Harringtons, I've bought t-shirts from market stalls, you know, many times over the years and also I bought, they've always had very good shops selling greetings cards in here and they've always been much cheaper than shops and for years and years I've been coming in here buying birthday cards and Christmas cards for my family and some of them you can get real beautiful cards, big ones for a fraction of the price you'd pay in supermarkets or other shops. [????] When my mother, she suffers from glaucoma and as she got older her eyesight went. I could even get the cards for her to send to the family and I always come here. If I couldn't get them at that one there's another one somewhere in here, one downstairs and one by the other staircase just off the fish market, there used to be a little one at the top of there. So if you couldn't find it at one you'd find it at another. So if a birthdays coming up, I could just go round from one stall after another, I knew I'd come out with just the right cards.</p>

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09:02	Hannah	Yes, there's quite a few card shops in here.
	Dennis	Yeh.
	Hannah	How do you shop here now. How often do you come and what sort of things do you buy?
	Dennis	Well I usually come about perhaps once or twice a fortnight and I usually.... there's one stall, one of the last few remaining stalls downstairs and I've bought t-shirts from there occasionally. They have good you know with printed ones like animals, like lions and tigers and that sort of thing and I also buy food from the fish market, there's one stall selling pieces of chicken which I get that, my chicken from there and I did buy a pair of shoes from that stall over there actually, not so long back, they was nice shoes, soft casual, I was going for something comfy at the time and I found a pair there, I think they were only thirteen quid. I've bought several pairs of shoes from there and I used to get, there's a stall downstairs selling DIY. I've bought certain things from there in the past but since Wilkinson's opened their prices are much cheaper [?????]
10:51	Hannah	So you buy quite a big mixture of things here then don't you? Food and clothes and household things?
	Dennis	Yeh.
	Hannah	And do you have a favourite memory of the market.
	Dennis	I remember as a child my mother used to take me downstairs to the biscuit stall at the bottom of the main staircase selling cakes and biscuits. I remember coming in, I was only young, to meet my mother when she had finished work and I would always have a biscuit and I would always have a chocolate biscuit. I remember that. [This is very disjointed as there was a lot of background noise]
11:50	Hannah	That's lovely.
	Dennis	I can't really think of anything you know.
	Hannah	No that's great.
	Dennis	Yeh. The thing is it used to be a lot more crowded than it is now. Most days of the week and especially on Saturdays.
12:11	Hannah	So how do you feel about it closing?
	Dennis	Well, I will be sorry to see it go because its been a good building but on the other hand I know its old and if it was renovated it would need a lot of money spending on it. Also underneath here is the remains of

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		Sheffield Castle and that could not be excavated with the building still here. I would like to see that excavated so long as they don't put up a you know, like they did down the road a [?????] block of flats or an anonymous office block in its place. I wouldn't like to see that.
	Hannah	Thank you very much, that's great.