

# The Ranmoor Society

October 2015

## Sheffield's Brewery Heritage

At our June meeting John Dowd, previous chairman of Sheffield CAMRA, explained how important brewing had been in nineteenth century Sheffield when it was second only to Burton on Trent in terms of producing bitter beer. Whereas at this time London brewed *Porter*, due to the type of water available locally, Sheffield's preference was for *Bitter*. Between 1750 and 1999 Sheffield had 45 or so working breweries and in the late Victorian era there were about 1400 licensed premises in the city, a higher per capita ratio than anywhere else in the country. The needs of Sheffield's steelworkers accounted for much of this, whilst domestic beer consumption was a reflection of the poor quality of the water supply. It's a wonder that any water eventually found its way into the River Don!

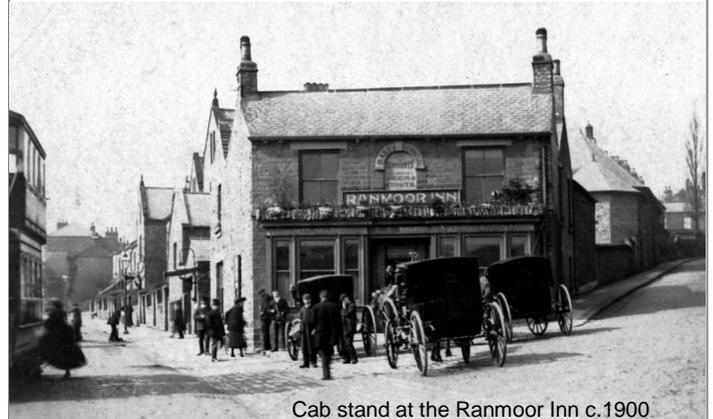
Many local breweries were founded in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century as the City's population was expanding rapidly. When the Beer Act of 1830 removed beer duty and made licenses to sell beer available to any householder for a £2 fee (and thus took them out of magistrates' control), the number of beer houses proliferated. This was the case in Ranmoor and Nether Green with its relatively rural population of farmers, file workers and quarry workers. Some enterprising individuals began to brew beer for sale at home alongside their existing trades.

None of the 45 breweries established in Sheffield over the years survived into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Some of those mentioned by John Dowd in his talk may strike a chord with members. We have listed the more notable in the panel overleaf.

## Local Hostelry History

The building that later became the **Ranmoor Inn** had emerged as a beerhouse by 1841 when it was a house occupied by George Worrall, then described as not only "a boot and shoe maker" but also "a beerhouse keeper". The Ranmoor Inn name had certainly become established by 1851 when James Worrall ran it with his wife Sarah. James (perhaps George's brother) was also a 'shoe maker' and he had an apprentice shoe maker living with them.

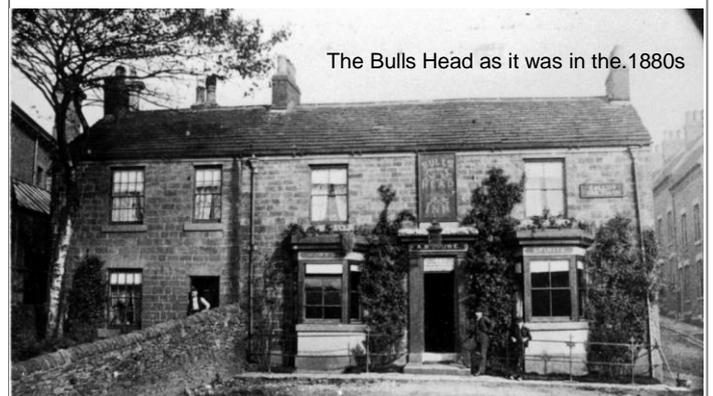
Within 10 years the Inn had added a bowling green nearby although that seems to have been short-lived. By the 1890s a cab business run by James Collis operated from the rear of the premises (a sign on the front announced "Cab Stand in the Yard") and continued to do so until about 1917.



Cab stand at the Ranmoor Inn c.1900

As its status changed from a lowly beerhouse to that of a fully fledged inn (i.e. entitled to sell wines and spirits as well as beers), it was extended, probably at the front, and it became a Tennant's House. The logos announcing "Tennant's Ales" and "Wiley's Spirits", still etched on the glass of its front bay windows, celebrate the long association between the Tennant's brewery and the Ranmoor Inn. The latter continues although the Inn is no longer tied to a brewery.

In a similar way, the **Bulls Head** had humble beginnings. As early as the 1830's, it was just a beerhouse, occupied by Jonathan Swan who was a "pen and pocket knife manufacturer". Presumably he and his wife prepared and sold beer from his home.



The Bulls Head as it was in the 1880s

By 1851 it had been transformed to an "inn" offering wines and spirits and rejoicing in the name "Highland Laddie". By the next census Jonathan Dungworth, who

was primarily a “saw handle manufacturer” was doubling up as “innkeeper”. The Highland Laddie became the Bull’s Head in 1866 under the proprietorship of “publican” Charles Slowe. At this stage the pub seems to have occupied only two of what must have been originally a small terrace of three cottages with the leftmost one remaining in private hands until about 1900. The photograph above shows this and also that it was providing a hub for “Collis’s Cab Stand”. This must have been very convenient facility for those people using the pub as a terminus for the horse-drawn bus service that ran between the Bulls Head and the York Hotel in Broomhill and the Kensington Tea Rooms in Hangingwater.

The Society’s archive contains photographs showing that the small brewery of Richdale and Tomlinson of Bramall Lane supplied the Bulls Head at this time. Founded in 1860, that became Richdale’s Britannia Brewery Company in 1899, was taken over by Hammonds of Bradford, and was eventually absorbed by the Bass Charrington group in the 1970’s.

Records show another beerhouse in our area during the first half of the 18th century. This, somewhere in Hangingwater, seems to have eventually metamorphosed into the “*Rising Sun*”. From the 1830s to the 1850s it was run initially by Alethea Biggin, the wife of table knife grinder Joseph Biggin, in another example of how early beer selling was frequently associated with other trades, as with both the Ranmoor Inn and the Bulls Head. By the 1850s Philip Warbleton was recorded as holding a license for the sale of beer, wine and spirits (i.e., no longer a simple beerhouse) but also employing 10 men in a file manufacturing business here.



The original Rising Sun, facing east c1880

By 1859 a William Marsden was the landlord. During this time it formed part of a group made up of file-makers’ workshops, a larger house and other cottages. But by the early 1900s Sheffield Corporation decided to widen Fulwood Road to allow the installation of a tram terminus and the old pub had to go, along with the adjacent buildings and a new, larger “Rising Sun” arose alongside it but set back from and now facing the road instead of at right angles to it.

## Sheffield’s Early Breweries

**Tennant’s Exchange Brewery** was founded under a different name in 1820. For some years it was next to the old Corn Exchange in Exchange Street but when the Duke of Norfolk decided to build a market hall on the site in 1852 it was relocated near Lady’s Bridge retaining the “Tennant’s Exchange Brewery” name. This and its 700 pubs were absorbed by Whitbread in 1962, but brewing here ceased in 1993.

**Ecclesall Brewery** was built in 1829 on South St (behind Sheffield Station) but rebuilt in 1865 near Moorhead, near the Crimea Monument, to become **Moorhead Brewery** owned by Thomas Berry. By 1884 this company owned 100 pubs and brewed 50,000 barrels a year.

**Truswells Brewery**, Eyre St (1847-1955). By 1891 output from here was 40,000 barrels a year.

**Nanson and Company**, near Lady’s Bridge, was founded in 1791 and finally closed after several mergers in 1954 after 163 years.

**W H Birks** (1858) merged with Nanson and was then absorbed by Gilmours’ in 1900. Their watchword was that they supplied *Fine Ales to Private Families.*

**Thomas Rawson and Company** was one of the earliest local breweries, founded in 1758. It closed in 1940 when it became part of Gilmour’s. By 1891 the company’s Sheffield output was 50,000 barrels a year.

**Gilmours** were originally wine and spirit merchants. After digesting several breweries, they owned 342 pubs and off-licences when they became part of the Tetley empire.

**William Stones Cannon Brewery** in Rutland Road was founded in 1848. It was sold to Bass in 1968 when it had 250 pubs and 65 off-licences. The Cannon brewery ceased production in 1999.

**Carter Milner and Bird** (1892-1942) founded the Hope Brewery on Mowbray St. and were famous for their Jubilee stout and Carling lager. It later became **Hope & Anchor Breweries** and moved to Claywheels Lane in Hillsborough in 1972 before absorption by Bass Charrington. The brewery closed in 1993.

**Bradley and Company’s “Soho Brewery”** in Ecclesall Road was founded in 1837. In 1868 it was bought by Septimus Henry Ward and became **SH Ward’s “Sheaf Brewery”**. Vaux took it over in 1973 and closed it in 1999. It was the last old Sheffield brewery to close after 162 years continuous brewing on this site.

## November Meeting 17<sup>th</sup> November

Sheffield Industrial Museums Trust is the umbrella organisation covering the three unique heritage sites and museums in the City: Kelham Island Museum, Shepherd Wheel and the Abbeydale Industrial Hamlet.

In his talk to us John Hamshere, head of the Trust, will focus on the Industrial Hamlet, which has recently been awarded £1million from the Heritage Lottery Fund for restoration of the site.

### Ranmoor Society Committee 2015

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