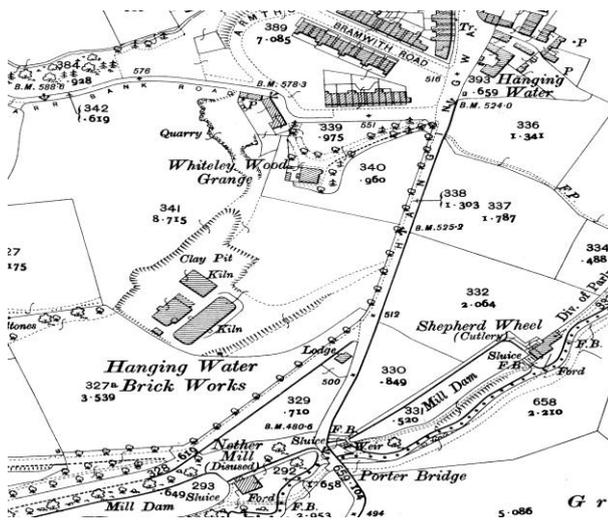


The Hangingwater Brick Company

The Hangingwater Brick Company was typical of many others that grew up around Sheffield in response to the suburban building boom at the end of the 19th century. It was established around 1898 on ground south of Carr Bank House and near to Whiteley Wood Grange (since demolished), and to the rear of the houses that now stand on Whiteley Wood Road (see the 1902 O.S. map below). On the photo opposite, dated 1893, the original site has been outlined (courtesy of J Andrews).



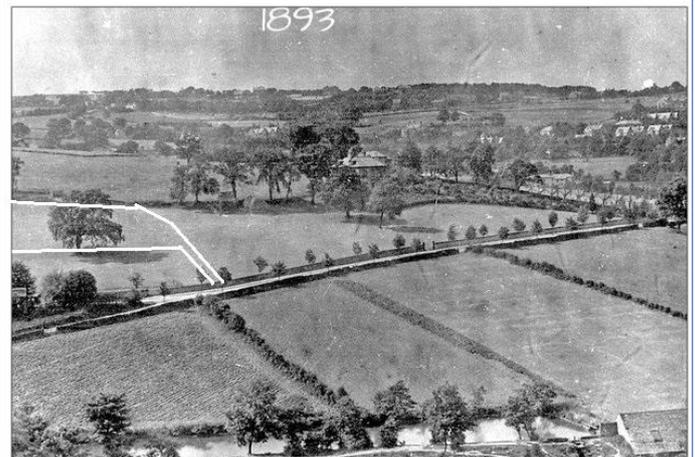
Its site was probably determined by a local source of clay here. A pit was excavated and kilns erected for brick making. It is unclear who exactly its customers were but it is likely that many of its products found their way into many of the brick built terraces growing along the tentacles of Sheffield's tram network. Its bricks were manufactured with the maker's mark "H B Co." and can probably be found in many houses in our area.



During its short existence the brickworks seems to have had problems. Brick making requires heat and kilns require chimneys. The company's chimney towered 120 feet above the surrounding area and from time to time would emit noxious smoke and fumes. Following

complaints, the owners were required by the court to abate the smoke nuisance, but failure to comply resulted in a fine.....all of £2.00!

Other problems involved health and safety. John Hawke, a lad of 14 years employed at the works, fell whilst wheeling a barrow across a plank. He was fatally injured when the barrow fell on him "injuring him badly about the body and the head". The inquest at The Bull's Head returned a verdict of accidental death.



During WW1 demand for bricks fell sharply and the business became unsustainable. The doors closed in 1916 and for the next 15 years the company charged for the right to tip rubbish into the clay pit. It's said that 20,000 loads were tipped over the period with a charge of six pence per load being advertised. The chimney stood for around a further 10 years after the closure.

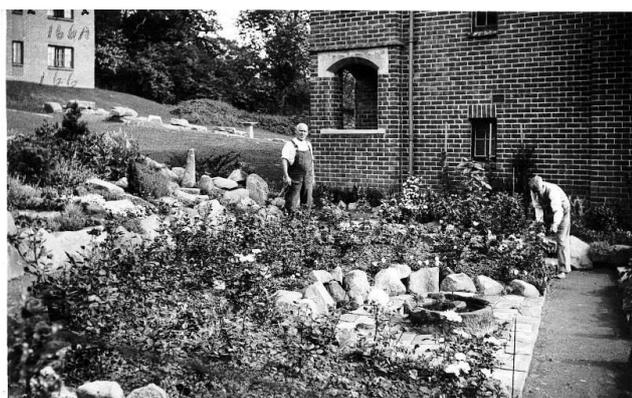
The site found a completely different use in the 1930s as the new home for the Ranmoor Lawn Tennis Club and simultaneously for the construction of Hangingwater Cottages on the adjacent land in 1934. These comprised four blocks, each with four residences, originally designed specifically as homes for older people.

Memories of Hangingwater Cottages

Some of you will remember Mike Gill (a long-time member of the Society). Before he died he recorded some poignant memories of two of its residents who, when a young boy, he got to know well.

"The Cottages were built on the site of the Hangingwater Brick Company. In my childhood, the site was a rubbish tip, privately owned I think. We local children never entered the place, hazardous and unhygienic until, in about 1932 following a major factory fire tons of debris

were deposited: thousands of unfinished hand-tools and thousands of charred tool handles etc. Mr. Hattersley, lived here at number 164 for well over 20 years. Frederick ("Chippy") West became the gardener here in 1934 after presiding at the fish and chip shop at 100 Hangingwater Road for around 25 years. As a young schoolboy at the Central Secondary School for Boys I regularly walked to and from its new building at High Storrs every day, via "Dead Lane" (Highcliffe Road). I used to run home for a quick lunch and so went past Hangingwater Cottages four times daily. Always a friendly greeting from Mr West: a cheerful and lovable man. Without any mechanical aids Fred West and Mr Hattersley between them constructed that lovely garden and rockery, and it is a fitting monument to them both".



The Ranmoor Lawn Tennis Club

Possibly not many of us will be able to remember anything about the Ranmoor Lawn Tennis Club founded c.1930. It was situated on Hangingwater Road, tucked away behind Whiteley Wood Road and looking down towards Shepherd Wheel and the Porter Brook. Tennis became popular in Sheffield after it was "invented" in the 1870s and after the All England Croquet Club allocated one of their lawns in Wimbledon for this new-fangled game. Tennis became particularly popular amongst Victorians at week-end house parties and it benefited from attracting a female interest which cricket and football did not. Avant-garde women found that they could escape chaperones and that it allowed them to mix more easily with the opposite sex.

It appears there were no less than nine tennis clubs in Sheffield around the time the Sheffield L. T. A. was founded 1889. They included Rustlings (founded in 1883), Hallamshire (founded in 1885) and Abbeydale, with others such as Ecclesall, Brincliffe, Pitsmoor and Nether Hallam (in Hillsborough). By 1915 there were 15 clubs listed by the Sheffield L.T.A. and interest was still growing. The Fulwood Bowling & Tennis Club was first proposed in 1910. One of its founder directors was Mr. James Dixon

who lived at Tylecote in Gladstone Road. He held a key position that allowed him to persuade his father, Henry Isaac Dixon (living at Stumperlowe Hall), to sell off two acres of his land adjacent to Slayleigh Lane and Chorley Road. At this time it was farmland sloping down to a fairly level cricket pitch near Goole Green.

So by the late 1920s, the quarried site of the Hangingwater Brickworks had finally been filled in, and the land had become available new ventures such as the Ranmoor Lawn Tennis Club. It was soon boasting five courts with a pavilion. Of course the immediate years leading up to the onset of war in 1939 must have been difficult in many ways and after it the Ranmoor Club merged with the Endcliffe Tennis club to form the Hangingwater Lawn Tennis Club. It became well known in the seventies for competing in the S & D leagues and for its senior and junior tournaments, Indeed it also attracted certain Yorkshire County players including Sue Mappin, who at one time was ranked number 28 in world tennis.

However by 1980/81 as the tennis pendulum began to swing back, the pavilion was in need of repair, and the lease was due for renewal at an increased rate. So sadly with low membership numbers the perhaps inevitable decision was to disband the club.

Heritage Open Day on 17th September

Heritage Open Days take place each year across the country and this year many events are planned in Sheffield between 9th and 18th September to provide us with opportunities to visit new places and enjoy different experiences relating to Sheffield's history and heritage. St John's Ranmoor has agreed to participate by opening the church to visitors on **Saturday 17th September** offering the chance to study its architecture and interior. Visitors may get the chance to experience the art of bell ringing too. The Ranmoor Society will join in by putting on a display of old maps and photographs from our archive that show how the suburb of Ranmoor developed alongside the church and its parish over a century and a half. Assuming good weather we also plan an evening walk.

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