

The Lost Greens of Fulwood and Ranmoor

We tend to think that the archetypical village green is more predominant in southern and lowland Britain. However there was a time when many of the local villages and hamlets, now surrounded or threatened by urban sprawl to the west of Sheffield once looked out on to idyllic greens. The greens may no longer exist but if we look hard enough, there is clear evidence that many farms and cottages were once arranged around a small central green. The clues are still preserved in their place names. Greens were once part of the many thousands of acres of common land linked to a traditional farming system that operated in England from medieval times until the beginning of the 19th century when they were allotted to private individuals after enclosure.

The green in **Nether Green** had developed from an area of common land created where several lanes (Willow Lane, Water Lane, Carr Lane and Tom Lane) joined Nether Green Road. Before enclosure common land rights would have been shared between various local tenants for the pasture of animals and perhaps “turbury” the right to dig for peat as fuel. When it was finally enclosed in 1805 it was awarded to Samuel Binney, a “yeoman” of Fulwood who already owned most of the eight cottages, and several barns, cow-houses, smithies and workshops here and was then eligible to develop the land for his own purposes. The green would have extended well in front of the cottages and beyond their current gardens to the southern side of what is now Fulwood Road.

We should not forget Nether Green’s less renowned sister, **High Green** in Sandygate, located near to the Plough Inn on Sandygate Road and near to High Green Cross, a way-marker for the old packhorse route between Sheffield and Hathersage where it may originally have marked a junction that may have since disappeared. Both green and cross are mentioned in the 1637 survey by John Harrison and shown on the 1850 Ordnance Survey map. High Green was also enclosed in 1805 and gets no mention at all by the 1905 Ordnance Survey whilst the remains of the cross is shown as a pile of stones! Together, the existence of Nether and High Greens seem to indicate that they may once have been located at either end of a continuous area of common land.

Continuing towards Fulwood we find several greens in close proximity. **Goole Green** was an open area chosen for the location of Fulwood Church in 1837 but mentioned by John Harrison in his 1637 survey when he refers to it as Gold Greene. It is believed that this name was derived from the corn marigold or charlock (field mustard). This seems to have been regarded as a weed according to a charter dated c.1400 relating to Beauchief Abbey that suggests that the Abbott and Convent might consider fining their tenants if they were shown to have failed to cleanse their lands from “golds”. Other versions of the name over the centuries include Gould, Goule, Goole and Gool (which is the one you will find on the 1850 Ordnance Survey map. Goole Green House, situated off Brookhouse Hill, and close to the

Guildhall was the home of William Woodhouse and a licensed public-house and house of prayer well before the Fulwood Church was built. It was demolished c.1967. A photo available on Picture Sheffield is marked on the back as “Hallam Preaching House”

School Green grew up at the point where Stumperlowe Hall Road joined the Old Fulwood Road (previously Willow Lane) before Slayleigh Lane was extended to meet the modern, widened Fulwood Road. This is where the blacksmith’s shop (now Ranmoor Garage) and the old Hammer and Pincers pub (later a coffee house) stood.

Before the land was enclosed **Brookhouse Green** was a broad area situated near the bottom of Crimicar Lane where it merged into Brookhouse Hill and up towards Goole Green. Here it linked up with a public track used by people to reach Back Lane, now Chorley Road. Around 1790 John Barber built a cottage on this part of the green for his son but in so doing he encroached on common land (apparently the ownership of this common land was unclear at the time), and so when the commons were enclosed a few years later he became liable to pay a fine to the Manor Court or even forfeit the property. However as he was a freeholder of property in Tom Lane he kept the cottage. This building still stands at the junction of Brookhouse Hill and Chorley Road following its enlargement and conversion into two cottages in 1863. Its position indicates the original extent of Brookhouse Green.



Jeffrey Green
Fulwood

As we move further west into the Mayfield Valley a number of other clues tell us of several long lost greens and their adjacent settlements. Old maps show that, at the junction of Mark Lane and Foxall Lanes used to lie **May Green** which, according to old documents traditionally used to host annual feasts and games on May Days. Opposite the end of David lane is a track on the left signposted to Workhouse Cottages, built c.1700 that once stood facing on to open space known as **Workhouse Green**. Apparently the name is derived from their earlier function of housing the poor from Sheffield Workhouse. If one continues along Mayfield Lane and then turns right up Gorse Lane you will pass Birks Green farm near an earlier **Birks Green** and then immediately after the left hand turn to Brown Hills Lane you will find **Jeffrey Green** just below Bennett Grange looking remarkably much as it must have done prior to enclosure (see photo). Looking across to the other side of the Mayfield Valley at the junction of Hangram Lane and Cottage Lane you will find the collection of old cottages known as Woodcliffe which we think were once arranged around **Whiteley Wood Green**, since absorbed into the surrounding fields.

Along Long Causeway to the Plough Inn

In last year's Ranmoor Notes we told the story first of the Steads and then the Creswicks at Snaithing Farm following the research into their family history by Society members Anne and Stuart Barratt. They have continued with Ann's family history and in particular that of the Creswicks who were known to be farmers in Sandygate as well as in Ranmoor. This has thrown up some interesting details about the Plough Inn in Sandygate which confirms it has enjoyed something of a double life. We know that the stone plaque above the door of the present Plough Inn carries the date 1695 and that this came from its predecessor when it was demolished c.1900. It has been possible to trace back its ownership and occupation by the Creswick family as far back as 1772 when William Creswick was farming 11 fields close by. He was followed by his brother John in 1792, John's sons, Richard and Joseph in 1811, Richard's son Joseph in 1829 and latterly by Ann, Joseph's wife when widowed in 1859. She then continued to farm here until her death in 1886.

It is unclear as to when licensed victualling was added to the farming activities. The building appears as "Causeway House" in the 1841 census clearly suggesting that it was primarily the farmhouse of Causeway Farm. At the 1851 census the same building had now become "The Plough Inn", a suitably appropriate agricultural epithet perhaps. Certainly Ann, who before her marriage to Joseph had lived with her aunt Charlotte at the Ball Inn in Pitchford Lane would already have good experience in the licensed trade and the position of this hostelry on the main road between Sheffield and Hathersage would have brought in plenty of business from weary travellers who would have appreciated refreshment after their long climb from the town or after negotiating Stanage Edge. Its earlier name, "Causeway House" conveys its historical roots as, until it became Sandygate Road, the road was known as "Long Causeway" when it was a medieval packhorse route. NB a "causeway" is defined as "a raised path, especially across a wet area", but in earlier centuries it may also have described a route paved with setts.

The Marble Knight

When George Wostenholm was planning the respectable residential estate in Ranmoor that, in 1864, was to become the Storth Crescent Land Society he was probably already thinking about how to market the 41 plots. The wide, tree-lined and seductively curved avenues needed names that appropriately reflected the high status of the substantial houses he envisaged. So his gaze fell on W.E. Gladstone (then the Chancellor of the Exchequer) and J.R. Graham (another prominent politician, later Home Secretary and First Lord of the Admiralty). These were names that surely would attract the right kind of people! But in order to link Gladstone and Graham Roads he extended the Fulwood Road taking the line of an existing footpath to Nether Green. Wostenholme originally chose to name it Chantrey Road. Who was he?

Francis Chantrey was a local man with more humble antecedents who had died some 20 years earlier having been born in 1781 on his parents' farm in Norton. Initially he had worked as a grocer's boy in a Fargate shop aged 14, but by the time he died he had become one of Britain's greatest sculptors with many outstanding and enduring works to his

name, been knighted and amassed a fortune.

By the age of 16 he had become an apprentice to the owner of a Fargate emporium that dealt in wood carvings and paintings where his artistic potential was recognised. He took lessons in painting and by 1802 he had set himself up as a portrait artist, receiving commissions from notables of the area.

He moved to London in 1804 where he exhibited pictures at the Royal Academy. Gradually he began specialising in sculptures but life was difficult as he struggled to make a reasonable income. After he married his cousin, Mary Wale, in 1809 who came from a wealthy family it enabled him to move to a house of his own, build two more houses and a studio and buy a stock of marble.

He carved busts of William Wordsworth and the Duke of Wellington amongst many others with many pieces going to churches, cathedrals and stately homes across the Empire. One of his most famous works was *The Sleeping Children* which attracted a great deal of attention when it was exhibited at the Royal Academy before being installed in Lichfield Cathedral.



The Duke of Wellington
in London's Exchange
by
Sir Francis Chantrey

He and his wife remained happily married for 32 years until his sudden death in 1841 when he left £150K to his widow (over £15M in today's value). There were no children and upon Mary's death in 1875 the residue of £105K was used to fund the Chantry Bequest for the encouragement of British painting and sculpture. Originally administered by the Royal Academy, at the end of the nineteenth century the collection was transferred to the newly opened National Gallery of British Art on Millbank (eventually to become Tate Gallery). The bequest remained the main source of funding for the initial collection of what is now Tate Britain and it remains active today.

Sir Francis was buried at St James' Church, Norton in a tomb he designed himself. An obelisk in his honour, placed at the entrance to the church grounds, was funded by friend. Chantrey Street and the Chantrey Arms pub, both in Woodseats, provide a link to the great man even if, in Ranmoor, Chantrey Road soon reverted back to Fulwood Road.

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