

Title: David Whitehead Interview

Creators: Rick & Julia Goldsmith

Project: 'Chewing the Cud: Memories from Hereford's Old Cattle Market'

Subject: Autobiography, Living and working around Hereford's Old Cattle Market, Heritage

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Identifier: David-Whitehead

Interview Date: 2010, Hereford

Interviewee: David Whitehead (speaker, male)

Interviewer: Marsha O'Mahony & Julia Goldsmith (speaker, female)

Camera & Sound: Richard Goldsmith (male)

Producer: Julia Goldsmith

Language: English

Type: Video

Width: 1920 pixels

Height: 1080 pixels

Scan type: Progressive

Stereo/Mono: Stereo Mixdown

Duration: 12 min 7 seconds

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Transcript:

[00:00]

Julia opens the interview asking David about the history of Hereford's cattle market pre-coinage. David talks about how Hereford has always been famous for its cattle - the king's tributes in the dark ages were paid in cattle as there was no coinage until the 9th Century. [00:28] There are several places that have been identified as hubs for cattle trading, and in those times as Hereford was very much a part of the Celtic/Welsh world meaning English kings often had their work cut out for them if they wanted their tribute. [00:50] Little & Much Cowarn are some of these early hubs. [01:18] We know that horned cattle were traded in Hereford from some of the old street names such as Rotherwall Street (Now Aubrey Street behind the Green Dragon) which translates from Anglo-Saxon to 'the well for horned cattle' - Rotherwas also stems from the same element.

[01:49]

It's significant that Aubrey street remained the cattle market throughout the Middle Ages into the early modern period when Broad Street became the primary livestock market - the oblong shape of which was formed by the jostling of the cattle 'broadening' the street.

[02:48]

David explains that when Railways started appearing in the mid 19th century they were sold to the county as a huge chance at making Hereford a great centre for cattle trading - which resulted in the North/South route going through Barton which prompted discussions about moving the cattle market to be nearby but as more stations appeared on the line that allowed people to draw cattle from other parts of the county - requiring a larger centre.

[04:00]

This is when, in the 1850's, the Hereford improvement commission decided that an area in New Market Street was ideal, as it was near both stations and would have access from many roads.

[04:29]

David describes living in Edgar Street opposite the cattle market, and recalls being near the Rose Garden pub in Holmer and having to jump into the hedge witnessing throngs of horses being driven to market - likely one of the few last times this would have happened. [05:12] David recalls the tradition of going out on a Saturday evening after the markets had left to recover the blemished oranges and apples traders would leave behind, alongside any fruit

boxes that could be broken up into good firewood!

[05:50]

David explains how the archaeology of Herefordshire shows the importance of cattle to the county since pre-monetary times - meaning the constituents of the city had a relatively high meat diet. Briefly overviewing [06:29] how this maintained until the Railways revolutionised the distribution of cattle and resulted in the consideration and building of the new market.

[06:59]

There was some difficulty with the area that they chose though. Some of the land was owned by the county surveyor, Charles Heather, a civil servant who was quite agreeable to the plans, but the rest of it was owned by a member of the Bulmer family who were rather more reluctant to part with it. [07:38] These aspects of Hereford at the time were in the hands of the 'improvement commission' that had been established in the late 18th century and had paved and drained the entire city, introducing new waterworks and sewage works. [08:20] Creating the New Market was up to them and they had to agree with the City Council on a plan to maintain the retail markets that were pre-existing which resulted in the Buttermarket being developed.

[08:55]

David summarises the New Cattle Market development, the butter market and later the introduction of wednesday and saturday retail use of the market.

[09:47]

David recalls when the horse-chestnut trees that were planted amongst the pens at the market were cut down. Remembering how they were an important part of the character of the market, and their coming down was a surprise.

[11:03]

David talks about the outcry that resulted from the felling of the Cattle Market trees.

This film was made by Catcher Media for the Hereford Cathedral Close project in association with In Our Age and supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Watch the video interviews on the vimeo showcase:
<https://vimeo.com/showcase/7908663>