

The Di Felices of Ancoats, Birmingham and Picinisco

Memory, Culture and Inheritance

My family lived in the centre of the industrial suburb of Manchester, Ancoats, the area fondly and colloquially referred to as 'Little Italy'. The first Di Felice arrivals from Picinisco, Collaruta were Serafino and Filomena, by 1880s they founded a business based upon the employment of their co-nationals in street musicians/lodging houses and later cafes and ice-cream vending. This pattern was mirrored in Birmingham by their son Eugenio in the early 1900s Serafino and Filomena had four sons all of whom owned small businesses: Eugenio/Ernesto (Italian nationals) , Lorenzo and Antonio. The family was instrumental in the founding and development of the Italian community, its businesses, its culture and notably its institutions.

My father carried on this tradition, and it was always with immense pride that he referred to 'Ancoats as his inheritance', his grandfather, father and uncle acted as intermediaries, writing correspondence giving advice particularly in the courts.