

Introduction

‘I am told there are people who do not care for maps’ wrote Robert Louis Stevenson in an essay about *Treasure Island*. He went on to declare that they provided ‘an inexhaustible fund of interest for any man with eyes to see or twopence-worth of imagination’. The purpose of this volume is to invite readers to use their eyes and imagination to look at a selection of the published and manuscript maps and plans of the rich and extensive cartography of Manchester, ranging from the eighteenth century to the present day.

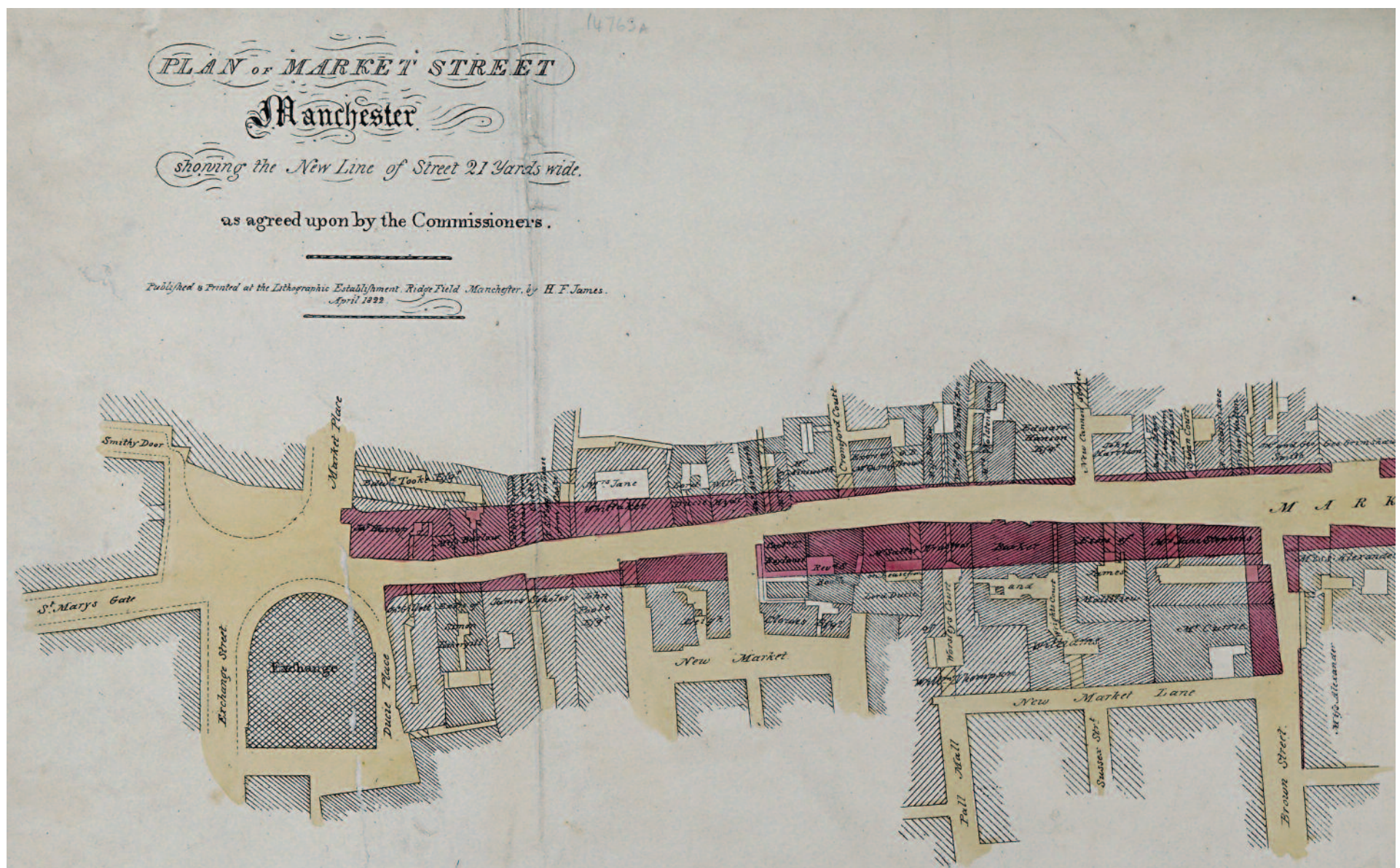
The topography in which the city sits has been well captured by contemporary satellite maps, which show the partial amphitheatre formed by the Pennines to the north and east and the flatter land of the Cheshire Plain and south Lancashire to the south and west. Once-separate towns have gradually coalesced to form one of the largest of Britain’s conurbations. The sequence of maps that we use here to explore Manchester’s history helps to chart this growth and the changes that have transformed a relatively insignificant small town into the Cottonopolis of the nineteenth century and the conurbation of today.

Maps of the town and its wider region provide vital evidence of the changes that marked this growth. Its earliest published maps date only from the second quarter of the

eighteenth century. Earlier plans of the town appear not to have survived, although there are still faint hopes that the lost survey of Manchester that John Dee engaged Christopher Saxton to produce in 1596 may turn up one day. The town’s first real map, the eighteenth-century plan by Casson and Berry, included a small plan that purported to be of the town in 1650. But it was not until the 1790s that accurate large-scale maps were published in the shape of the two large-scale plans by Charles Laurent and William Green.

In the early nineteenth century, the speed of urban change meant that numerous maps were published, but were soon out of date. However, Manchester was richly served by the long sequence of accurate plans published by James Pigot in his trade directories. New larger-scale maps of the town were infrequent, an exception being Bancks’s plan of 1832. However, in 1851 two landmark maps appeared. The first was by Joseph Adshead covering the township on the unprecedented scale of 80 inches to the mile (1:792). Hot on its heels came the Ordnance Survey plan of the borough on a scale of 60 inches to the mile (1:1056). They became important tools in planning and managing the town. Previously, major projects such as the widening of Market Street in the 1820s relied on plans commissioned from local surveyors, but subsequently, as the papers

OPPOSITE. F. Ramspott, *Manchester 3d Render Satellite View* . . . (2016) [AUTH]



H.F. James, *Plan of Market Street . . . showing the new line of street 21 yards wide . . .* (1822) [MLA]

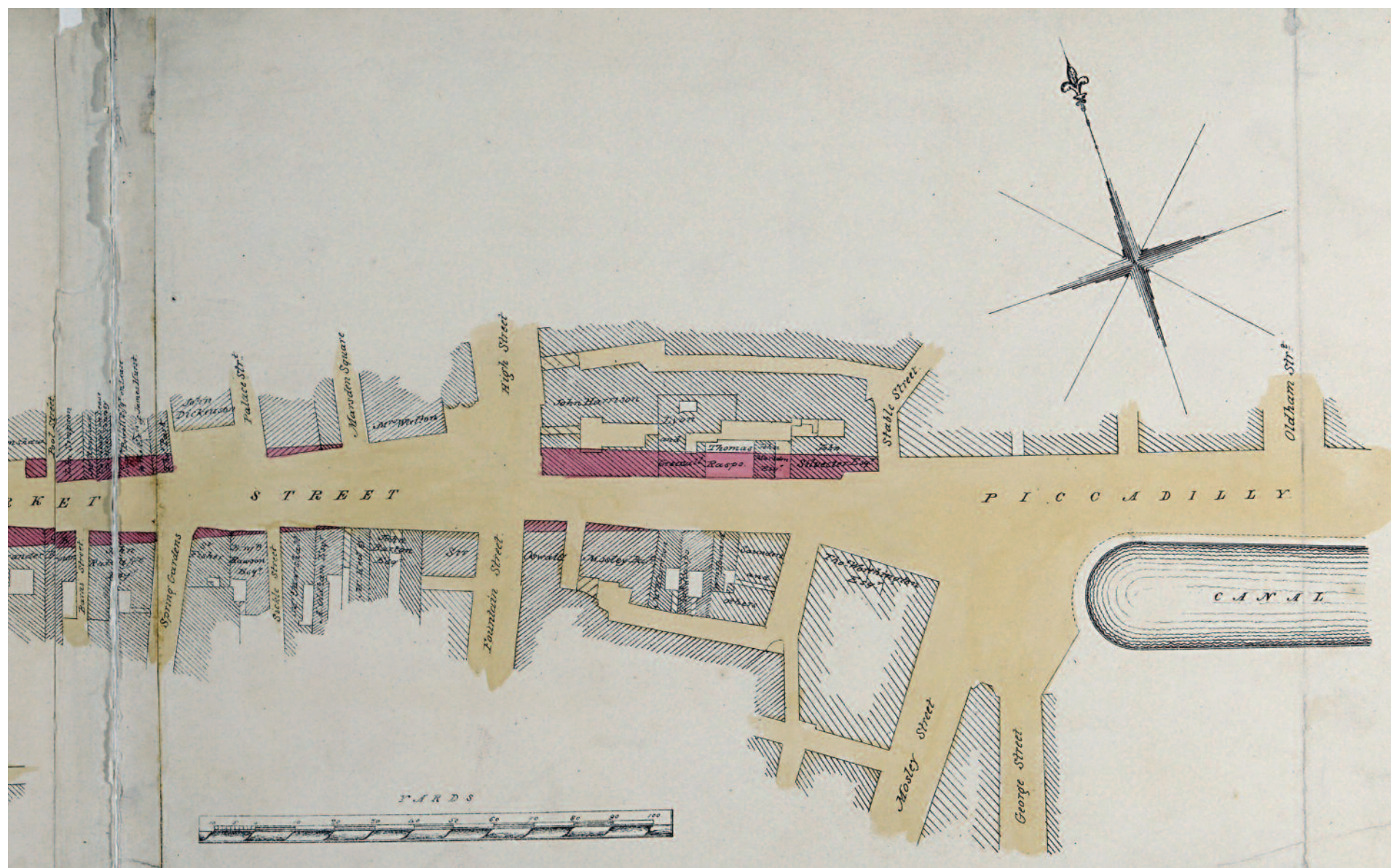
It is clear how narrow the original street was at its western end where it entered the town centre.

of council committees reveal, the use of Ordnance Survey sheets became routine. Maps also became important evidence in public debates, no more so than in the building of Manchester's much-admired town hall.

Throughout these years the bread-and-butter work of surveyors continued to be the making of property maps. In most cases their plans have not found their way into public archives, although there are exceptions, including, fortunately, some of the town's larger landowners and charities. The land market was a busy one, involving developments ranging from

the running-up of cheap terraced housing for the working class in outcast Ancoats to the building of socially exclusive residential districts such as Victoria Park, plans that provide further insights into the much-discussed social divisions of the city.

The nineteenth century also began to see the publication of specialist maps. These included numerous maps charting the canal revolution – Manchester was the terminus of the country's first and last major canals (Bridgewater Canal and Manchester Ship Canal) – and the railway revolution that began with the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester



Railway in 1830. These years also saw the emergence of maps that contributed to the analysis of social problems. It was one of a small number of towns to map the first cholera epidemic, a small but essential step in studying the epidemiology of this lethal disease. Social reformers also recognised the usefulness of maps in highlighting social problems. Unsurprisingly for a city that was the headquarters of one of the foremost temperance pressure groups, the United Kingdom Alliance, there was a drink map identifying the location of licensed premises. By the Edwardian period, social reformers were more confident

in using maps, exemplified by Thomas Marr's mapping of housing problems, although Manchester never had an equivalent of the poverty maps produced for London and York by Booth and Rowntree. Mapping the city's social issues continues to the present day, a recent example being a 2014 map aimed at providing rough sleepers with information about the services available to assist them.

Maps also became part of the ongoing leisure revolution. These featured in numerous guidebooks, coming of age in the cycling mania of the 1890s. Visitors to the famous Belle Vue

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Rough Sleepers, Rough sleeper map (2014) [AUTH]

pleasure gardens were able to plan their day by consulting plans of the grounds.

Maps continued to be important in planning, and in the twentieth century some of the most memorable were those connected to the grand planning schemes which aimed to attack the city's 'irredeemable ugliness' or, even more ambitiously, to build a New Jerusalem. Rowland Nicholas's *City Plan of Manchester 1945* remains one of the cardinal documents of Manchester's post-war history. However, as in the street widening schemes of the previous century, actual change tended to be piecemeal rather than wholesale. A more

concerted effort was evident by the 1990s as the city looked to revitalise its economic base and to regenerate large areas that had suffered the depredations of successive economic recessions and the impacts of de-industrialisation and globalisation.

Although Manchester's libraries have built up large collections of historical maps, interest in maps among historians of the city has been merely sporadic. Towards the end of the nineteenth century Charles Roeder, a member of Manchester's German community, tried to lift the collective amnesia shrouding earlier town maps, eventually persuading George Falkner to republish William Green's map of 1794. He knew

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C. Roeder, *Roman Manchester* (1900) [MLA]
The relationship between the Roman fort in the south and the medieval centre around the cathedral in the north.



Green's map from having used it when investigating the Roman settlement of Mamucium.

Interest in historical maps continued to be sporadic for much of the twentieth century, which meant that the provenance of even some of the landmark maps of Manchester remained uncertain. Similarly, only skeletal biographies were available even for important surveyors such as Richard Thornton; and investigation of the map publishing work of printers such as Henry Blacklock and George Bradshaw (who became synonymous with railway guides) remains incomplete. More positive developments include a carto-bibliography compiled by Jack

Lee in 1957, but it was left to individuals like Neil Richardson to try to stimulate interest by republishing some of the historic large-scale plans of Manchester and Salford.

We hope that the wide range of maps and plans in this collection will encourage interest and generate closer research into the city's maps and map-makers, enabling them to be more generally integrated into the work of urban historians and others. To that end we have provided a brief introduction to each of the selected maps, our one-farthing addition to that vital 'twopence-worth of imagination' that is needed to appreciate all of the facets of the jewels in this cartographic treasure chest.