

Desmond MacHale, now an emeritus professor of mathematics, has already brought out, in 1985, a biographical study of his famous predecessor at Cork. The main purpose of that book, however, was to offer a discussion of Boole's work as a mathematician and logician. Now he is joined by Yvonne Cohen, who studied mathematics and history at Cork, to present an entirely different sort of book. The volume under review draws attention to Boole's life beyond mathematics, and provides a great deal of detail about his early life, his family, his health, his personal relationships, his musical and poetical interests and his travels in Ireland and Europe. That MacHale and Cohen are able to do this is a consequence of the purchase by University College Cork of an extensive collection of manuscripts, notably letters, assembled by Boole's admiring sister Mary Ann which had remained stored for over a century in a chest in the United States. It is undoubtedly a treasure trove of material, and the generous selections in this book will be fascinating to all those interested in the remarkable story of George Boole or in the wider question of working class autodidacts and intellectuals of the nineteenth century.

The book is arranged in an unusual way. The first two chapters are not written by the authors but by Boole's daughter and sister, setting out the family background and the life-story. A series of chapters then follow in which Boole's story is told through extensive extracts from his letters to his sister, his close friends the doctor John Bury and the bookseller William Brooke and others. The authors have opted to give the reader first hand access to the Boole collection rather than use the material to tell the story themselves. The book concludes, rather surprisingly, with a chapter arguing that similar experiences, capabilities and appearances amount to 'compelling evidence' that Boole was the model for Arthur Conan Doyle's character Professor James Moriarty. It is an enjoyable, if optimistic, conclusion to an interesting book.

STEPHEN ROBERTS is the author of *The Chartist Prisoners: The Radical Lives of Thomas Cooper (1805-1892) and Arthur O'Neill (1819-1896)* (Oxford, 2008). He is Reviews Editor of *The Local Historian*.

**MANCHESTER: MAPPING THE CITY** by Terry Wyke, Brian Robson and Martin Dodge (Birlinn 2018 256 pp ISBN 978-1-78027-530-7)

Manchester was among the most rapidly-expanding cities in Britain during the industrial revolution. Terry Wyke, Brian Robson and Martin Dodge trace this transformation of Manchester and its sister city Salford through a comprehensive collection of maps and plans from local and national archives and their own collections. This is a richly illustrated, well researched and beautifully presented volume, in which Wyke, Robson and Dodge demonstrate the wide range of material that can be considered as a map. The survey ranges from early eighteenth-century panoramic views, the first detailed town plans and Ordnance Survey maps, the detailed Goad insurance maps, railway route diagrams including the wonderful tiled wall of Victoria station, through to the succession of visionary and functional planning maps to deal with the problems of urban life, from disease in the 1840s, water and sewage in the 1880s, pollution in the 1950s, and the various attempts at regeneration in the post-war periods, the 1970s and 1990s. Indeed, the key points in Manchester and Salford's history are represented through maps, arguably much more clearly and directly than textual sources.

The short chapters are chronological and themed along the dominant changes evident in that year's maps. So for 1837, we are presented with the plans for a gated enclave of middle-class villas around Victoria Park. The aim of creating an attractive *rus-in-urbe* did not work out, but the park idea was resurrected in 1846. Mark Philips MP's concerns about the effects of urbanisation and industrialisation on the population led to the opening of the first public parks. For 1904 there is Thomas Marr's colour-coded map of housing conditions in Manchester and Salford, vividly illustrating how the concentric circles of class segregation and poverty that Engels had identified sixty years earlier had expanded and deepened. The collection makes sure to emphasise how all the maps were not merely descriptive; those such as Marr's were designed as tools by social reformers and the local authorities to help solve the problems of the age. The 1945 Manchester Plan is among the most ambitious of the post-war plans, reflecting the utopianism of the era in its designs for a radically reconfigured city centre and the mass slum clearance and rebuilding of the suburbs. Austerity and practical considerations meant that

the plans were never implemented in full. Later experiments, perhaps most notoriously the Hulme Crescents (mapped in 1972), indicated the reach of the local state in the mid-twentieth century in shaping the everyday lives of residents and their identities in determining where they should live. The maps from the 1980s and 1990s chart the effects of de-industrialisation and socio-economic decline, and the multi-interest attempts to refigure the city in response, from the reinvention of Salford Quays into a cultural media centre, to regenerating east Manchester with investment from New Labour's New Deal for Communities in 1998.

This book is an essential accompaniment to historical geographies and demographic histories of Victorian urbanisation and industrialisation and of twentieth-century planning. It demonstrates the power of maps to chart the impact of socio-economic change at a range of scales from the micro-geographies of the street to the big vistas of the panorama, and will serve as a key guide to cartographic and planning sources for local and regional history.

KATRINA NAVICKAS is *Reader in History at the University of Hertfordshire* and the author of *Protest and the Politics of Space and Place 1789-1848* (2015).

**A FLEET STREET IN EVERY TOWN The provincial press in England 1855-1900** by Andrew Hobbs (Open Book Publishers 2018 ISBN 9781783745593) £23.95

The title of this book suggests that the author has taken on a colossal task. There were in excess of a thousand provincial newspapers published weekly, bi-weekly and in some cases daily across England in the second half of the nineteenth century—indeed, Andrew Hobbs tells us that Liverpool boasted no less than twelve newspapers in the 1860s. In truth, to get anywhere near a complete geographical survey would require an edited volume with a good number of contributors working on specified regions. How does Hobbs resolve this difficulty? His solution is to offer a close reading of the producers, consumers and content of the newspapers published in one Lancashire town—the *Preston Chronicle*, the *Preston Guardian* and the *Preston Herald*—and supplement what he has discovered with periodic comparisons with the newspapers of other towns and then wider extrapolations about the provincial press. Inevitably such an approach leads to omissions. For example, John Thackray Bunce, who edited the *Birmingham Daily Post* for 36 years and was of the great newspaper editors of Victorian England, does not get a single mention in this book. Similarly two chapters on the production of the local press are based entirely on the diaries of Andrew Hewitson, a reporter for the *Preston Guardian* and subsequently the proprietor of the *Preston Chronicle*.

However, I am happy to report that the impossibility of one author examining such a wide range of material has not prevented Hobbs from writing a very interesting and useful book. I thoroughly applaud his declaration that attention should move to 'the marginalised majority: those citizens who lived outside London and the majority press that they read'. The abolition of the three main newspaper taxes between 1853 and 1861 ushered in a significant expansion of the provincial press. As prices reduced—morning newspapers cost a penny and evening newspapers a halfpenny—circulation increased and with it advertising revenue. With leading citizens as proprietors, and highly conspicuous premises in town centres, provincial newspapers served as beacons of Victorian localism. When an MP returned from London to present his annual report or a town meeting was called, these papers devoted column after column to reporting speeches. Towards the end of the century detailed write-ups on the efforts of local football teams were provided. Yet, as Hobbs makes clear, these papers also looked beyond their own localities. Thanks to the nationalisation of the telegraphs and the establishment of the Press Association, the local press was also able to carry news from London and elsewhere in the country.

Hobbs tells us that, in the early years of expansion, newsrooms in pubs (which enabled discussions to take place) and reading rooms in libraries were particularly popular places to consume local newspapers. The latter were very well attended—the large number of illustrations in this book include two great photographs from Preston and Manchester—and multiple copies of newspapers had to be provided. Hobbs goes on to explain how towards the end of the century private consumption of newspapers at home became increasingly common. These readers engaged with their newspapers, sending in a great deal of correspondence, ranging from points about local political controversies to complaints about the state of their towns.

# THE LOCAL HISTORIAN

JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY

July 2019

[www.balh.org.uk](http://www.balh.org.uk)

Volume 49 No 3



- Windsor's late medieval fraternity of the Holy Trinity
- House-naming in nineteenth-century Cheltenham
- Sir Herbert Brewer and music at Gloucester Cathedral
- Territory, core families and migration: a Herefordshire study
- Middlesbrough's steel magnates and the urban sphere 1880-1931
- Ewell, Surrey: an enlightened village in the eighteenth century
- Opinion: the Club and the Foundry—local history in the present
  - Review article: books about the West Midlands