

ANCOATS: PROTECTING THE UNPROTECTABLE?

Steve Little

On the corner of Great Ancoats Street and Oldham Road stands the 'Crown and Kettle', its Gothic windows boarded up, neglected, its future uncertain — a metaphor for the whole of Ancoats. The district experienced massive physical and social neglect during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, although some made a great deal of money here. It is an area where the social costs of urbanisation appear to have always outweighed the social benefits. Public concern did little to address the district's fundamental problems, any action was piecemeal and short term. In more recent times the district has continued to be neglected, nothing has changed. In the revival of conservation since the 1960s which has helped to protect and save some of central Manchester's cultural monuments and at Castlefield some of its industrial monuments, although there has been some listing of buildings, Ancoats appears to have gained little. Indeed it has seen the steady demolition of many of its important buildings. Ancoats remains on the margin of Manchester's consciousness. Indeed, even historians dealing with the city have generally neglected Ancoats.

Yet Ancoats is a district of more than local significance. In the 1790s the development of steam driven cotton spinning mills in the district helped to create the world's first industrial working-class suburb. The Industrial Revolution did not transform the whole country, it began in specific places; in Manchester one of those places was Ancoats. Because of this Ancoats' history does not really belong to Manchester it belongs to the world.

The significance of Ancoats is not to be found in a list of firsts — although there are many such that can be attributed to the area — but rather in the phenomenal urban growth, the establishment of large scale factories and the application of steam to the productive process. James Watt of the Birmingham Boulton and Watt Company, the leading British manufacturer of steam engines, had complained in 1780 of the slowness of Manchester manufacturers in taking up their engines. However, by the last decade of the century the Company had their hands full with finding engine erectors, prosecuting manufacturers who were breaking their patents and answering the many enquires after their engines from Manchester and Salford. By 1800, within a mile or so of the Cotton Exchange in St Ann's Square, there were probably more steam engines at work than anywhere else in the world.

The first manufacturer in the area to order a Boulton and Watt engine was Peter Drinkwater of Bank Top Mill who had one erected in 1789. Other early textile users included the Salford Twist Company, Robert Owen of Chorlton-on-Medlock and Duck and Potts of Oak Street. Not all the enquires for Watt engines were taken up, some like J. Mabbot, a snuff manufacturer of Hanging Ditch, asked about a patent engine but never took out an

order. They may well have gone to Bateman and Sherratt of Salford, who could supply a cheaper engine, even one that broke the Birmingham patent, until they were prosecuted in 1796. There were about 40 Boulton and Watt engines in the town and probably twice as many manufactured by other companies. Early users of patent engines in Ancoats included William Seedhouse and Thomas Bound but the most notable was the firm of McConnel and Kennedy of Union Street (now Redhill Street). Indeed Kennedy claimed, in a paper to the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, that his company was the first, in 1797 to drive a cotton spinning mule direct by steam power. McConnel and Kennedy were certainly the first of the fine spinners to use a steam engine of any real size, ordered in that year of 1797. Their neighbour Adam and George Murray ordered a Boulton and Watt engine the following year. The mill for this engine still stands today and may well have the claim of being the oldest surviving urban steam driven mill in the world. If it is, then it can be said to be rarer and probably historically more significant than the Pyramids.

The McConnel and Kennedy Mills and their neighbours stand in an area that grew in a haphazard manner from the late eighteenth century onwards. The district of Ancoats was always a mixture of houses, commercial and industrial building, Churches, shops, hostels and public houses. This rich collection of disparate buildings did not remain fossilised during the nineteenth century, indeed municipal improvements from the 1890s onwards meant that small areas of Ancoats were entirely rebuilt. In the inter-war years developments on the major streets — notably Great Ancoats Street — considerably altered the facade. However, in spite of this rebuilding, large parts of the original buildings remained virtually intact — though not, of course, unmodified — until the 1939-45 war. However, since 1945 the area has been ravaged without any real thought for its historic



The Crown and Kettle has an uncertain future



Murray's Mill (with McConnel & Kennedy's in the background) from the opposite side of the Rochdale Canal.

significance or possible preservation. This process, in spite of some recent listing of one or two of the more significant sites, still goes on and a survey of Ancoats buildings since 1945 could well become a mere catalogue of destruction. Some of the buildings that have gone are well remembered: Ancoats Hall, the Round House and Alfred Waterhouse's Public Library; some are hardly remembered at all, and some may well be best forgotten.

The catalogue of destruction is still however not complete and there are many buildings that survive, often more by accident than by design. Unless some forceful and imaginative planning is entered into and some *active* conservation is done much of what is left will go, one way or another. Possibly the odd facade will remain as a reminder of this unique inheritance of the buildings that were at the very heart of the 'coming of age' of the industrial period. Campaigns to save some of what is left cannot fall entirely on the shoulders of Manchester: this is a National Heritage! Given that there is little money for such enterprises in the local public purse, lead money for regeneration and conservation must come from a wider source. The national, indeed international, significance of the area needs to be established so that the call for resources can have that wider appeal. The iconography of William Green's 1794 map of Manchester and Salford shows the figure of Manchester pouring money into the hands of Britannia, the source of this wealth is alluded to with a representation of a mill, a shuttle and a beehive, the symbol of industry. If the Manchester area was playing such an important part in the development of the country at that and subsequent periods then some call on the national resources that go into historical and heritage conservation is justified. Ancoats must have some call on these resources.

This is not to suggest that moves have not been made to do something about the area. In recent years Ancoats has been made subject to three special designations. In 1984 it was designated 'as an industrial Improvement Area and it is also part of the East Manchester Area Initiative. This has meant that there has been some 'cleaning up' of the district; the cleaning of the canals and the landscaping of some derelict industrial sites. Although some of the results may not be all that could be desired, many of the changes are better than nothing in a climate of decay and demolition. The recent face-lift to the Redhill Street canal bridge over the Rochdale Canal is an examples of good improvement. The problem is often in such schemes one of trying to keep ahead of the vandals and rubbish dumpers. The most important step forward, in terms of conservation, has been the declaration in 1989 of the area between Oldham Road and the Rochdale Canal as a conservation area. Once designated the City commissioned a report from a firm of consultants, First

Interpreters, to look for a way to regenerate the area. The report, presented in 1990, was a little disappointing, the main thrust being a tourist-led regeneration rather than seeing industrial rejuvenation as an essential part of a conservation package. This report now gathers dust. Neglect is still the major trend, although the recent start on the redevelopment of the 1824 Beehive Mill may be a sign of better things to come.

'Survivors'

The declaration of the Ancoats Conservation Area in 1989, as has been already stated, was an important step forward. However, little has been done since then. Buildings in the area continue to deteriorate, these include at least one listed building, St Peter's Blossom Street, which is rapidly reaching the stage of becoming a dangerous structure. But many buildings still stand and the locality still retains enough to evoke its historic significance. The mills, close to the Rochdale Canal, are inevitably the focal point. Mike Williams, in his article in this issue, brings out their character and their





Victoria Square, recently refurbished.

place in history; only recently listed they play an important part in establishing the character of the surrounding district.

However, they are not the whole story. On the west side of the Conservation Area is Oldham Road with an almost entire facade of late Georgian and early Victorian buildings. There is no uniformity about them and they neatly reflect the piecemeal manner in which the area grew, but these buildings are, with one or two exceptions, in a very sorry state and may not survive for long. There are already plans to demolish much of the Great Ancoats Street end of Oldham Road, which contains some important examples of early nineteenth-century housing. Opposite Thompson Street is the rather pleasing facade of Manchester's first major municipal housing initiative: Victoria Square. Designed by the London firm of Spalding and Cross in 1889 it was built to house some 848 people in 237 double and 48 single tenements. The structure, recently refurbished, also included four laundries and sixteen shops. Its outward appearance is much as it was when it was built, apart from the fairly recent addition of shrubbery in the centre of the courtyard and two modern lift shafts. The original features include the ring where tradespeople tied their horses when reporting to the superintendent. This building is listed and has, therefore, some protection; it is still used by the Corporation and is mainly sheltered housing today. Opposite, just off Sherratt Street, is Anita Street, also listed, which contains early municipal housing first occupied about 1894. The street was originally called Sanitary Street. In the 1960s the 'S' at the beginning of the word and the final 'ry' were removed in order to change the name, there being an objection to living in a street with what was considered to be a socially awkward name. These dwellings are maisonettes, and were originally let out in one, two or three room units, according to assessed need. On George Leigh Street are more municipal houses, contemporary with Anita Street, these were unusual in having five rooms in each house for the families who moved into them in the mid-1890s.

Three school buildings survive in the area. Coats' School, on Jersey Street, which was opened in 1821 by a Henry Coats. Coats lived at 75 Jersey Street and was described by James Butterworth in his *Trades of Manchester* of 1821 as 'one of the best penmen in the town and a headmaster'. It was last used as a school in the 1860s by a Daniel O'Dwyer. By 1869 William Shaw, a mattress maker, was using the building, after which it had many uses. Sadly it 'fell down' when it was recently being renovated and had to be completely

rebuilt. Surviving virtually intact is St Michael's School on George Leigh Street. Today, it is a hostel for men but was still in use as an educational establishment in the 1960s. It did not have its own playground and the children were escorted to Sanitary Street as it was, which had been designated as a 'play street' and they spent their playtimes there. Also on George Leigh Street is a municipal school built in 1912, like so many inner-city schools built after the 1902 Education Act, there was little space for play areas and part of the playground was on the roof.

The Great Ancoats Street facade of the Conservation Area has not fared well since 1945. The dominant building on this street is the black vitrolite and clear glass Express Building, designed by Owen Williams and completed in 1939. This handsome building had to be built around No.9, Whittacker

House, because the occupier of No.9, a furniture maker, refused to sell to the newspaper company. The red brick building with its Dutch gable is due to be demolished as part of the redevelopment of the Express site. Close by is the striking Hudson Building, built in 1924, probably for Harris Lebus, the cabinet makers. Further down the street still stands the Manchester City Electrical Company's 'transformer' station, built in 1927 to convert electricity for the Tramway system. At No.53 is a fine red brick building



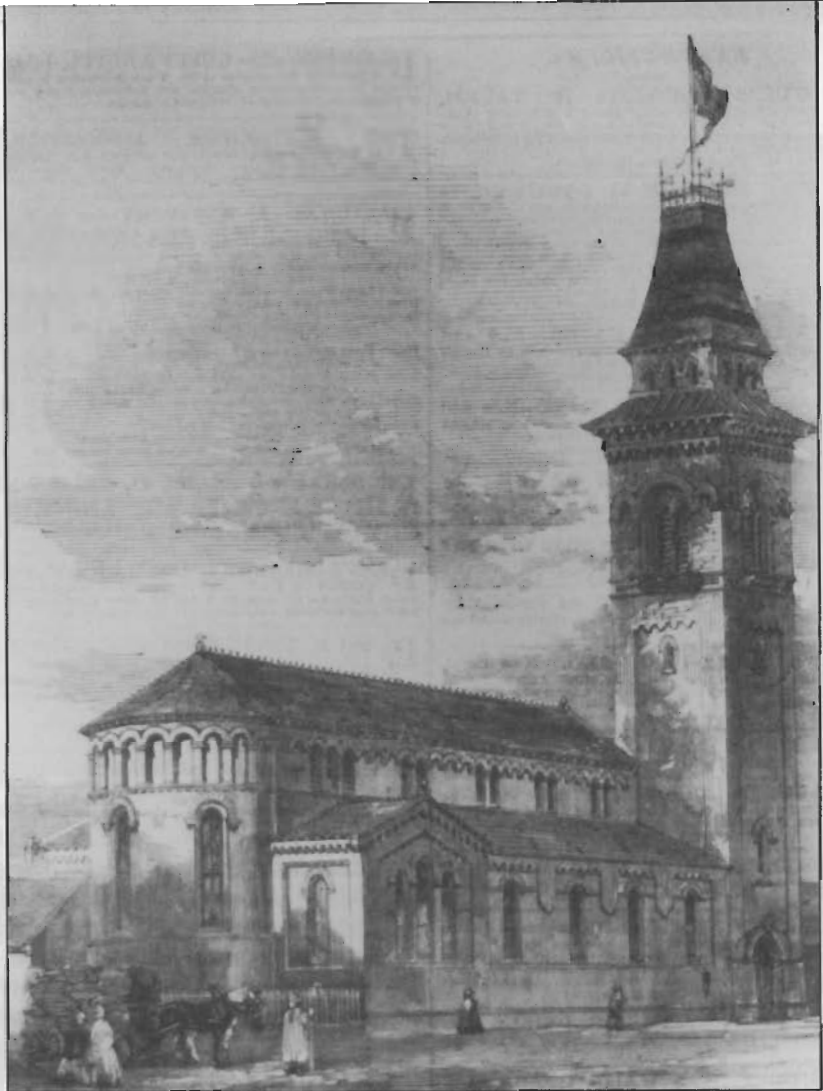
29 Great Ancoats Street, once a women's night shelter run by the Methodist Mission, now derelict.

which has had many uses since it was built about 1865; these included being used as a 'japanning shop', part of the extensive furniture industry that once existed in the area. Three pubs still contribute to the Great Ancoats Street facade. The 'Crown and Kettle', with its flamboyant decor and extravagant historic claims, the latter probably spurious. Although listed, this building now closed, may become a victim of redevelopment. The other two hostelries are the 'Dancing Weasel' (formerly the 'Kings Arms') now much altered, and further to the east the 'Cotton Tree', once renowned for the sale of 'fighting Chesters'.

There were once many public houses in the area, few are now still standing, fewer still are active. On Oldham Road the 'Cheshire Cheese', built about 1820, and the much altered 'Wheatsheaf' are still open as public houses. On the same road stood the 'O'Connell Arms' (now the Express Club); No. 26 was the 'Dog and Partridge'; at No. 28 was the 'Dargan Arms', named after an Irish railway pioneer, opened in 1836; at No. 122 was the 'Nelson' opened in 1811, and at No. 124 was the 'Wenlock Arms', originally a shop which became a beerhouse in 1850. There were one or two more on this stretch of the road, one that clearly retains its pub facade was the 'City Arms', it still has the Manchester coat of arms on its gable end. It was originally a pawnbrokers and became a public house in 1868. There are four other active pubs in the Conservation Area: the 'Edinburgh Castle', the 'Smith's Arms', the rebuilt 'Shamrock', and, on the corner of Jersey Street and Radium Street, the 'Cross Keys', which has a fine Edwardian facade.

Amongst the many other building of the area there are a number that have an importance to the integrity of the whole and are now at great risk. At 29 Great Ancoats Street stands what was once a Women's Night Shelter, designed by William Sharp in the Arts and Craft style in 1899. The Methodists originally established a night shelter on the site in 1895; the number of children born there prompted them to establish a maternity home in more salubrious surroundings at about the time they had the present building built. The building was taken over by the Daily Express about 1960 and was used as offices and a store; it is now derelict and its mock Tudor top floor and roof are in an extremely sorry state. Its vulnerability has been heightened by the recent demolition of No. 31, next door. This was for many years the home of Wilson Smith and Son, auctioneers, but records show that in the 1890s it was once the site of the 'People's Cafe'.

St Peter's Church on Blossom Street is another building greatly at risk. This Grade II listed building has been largely vandalised, the interior totally destroyed and the steeple has had at least one fire. This Romanesque Church was consecrated in 1860 and was known locally as 'Little Jimmies', after its amalgamation with St. James' the Less, that once stood on nearby Little Newton Street. The church when first conceived, with little prospect of an income from pew rents, was planned as an iron church but the Bishop of Manchester refused the consecration of such a building; a stone construction being too expensive, a compromise was made and it was built in brick.



St. Peter's Church in 1860.

Saddest of all these buildings at risk within the Conservation Area is the 'Green Dragon' public house on Jersey Street. It has had two fires recently and now has few slates on its roof. This pub had a licence in 1794 and for many years the nearby firm of McConnell and Kennedy paid the rates on the property and one can only assume the firm paid out the wages there. Although Kennedy later declared that he was always in favour of 'free labour', this may have been one way of partially tying the hands of his workers. The importance of the pub to the cotton spinners is further illustrated by the fact that when they built their 'Long Mill' on Henry Street it was built around the Green Dragon. The fire that destroyed the Long Mill in 1962 failed to destroy the pub, but recent years have been less kind to it.

The Manchester Early Dwellings Research Group (MEDReG) has done an important job of recording and trying to save some examples of early nineteenth-century housing in Ancoats, so that we have at least some visual record of the buildings that people once lived in. However, few domestic buildings survive, usually where a new use has been found for them as pubs, shops, or some having been converted into workshops. An example of 'back to back' housing can still be found in Portugal Street, although much 'knocked about' they are still recognisable as houses. This block has had a number of uses over the years, including recently as a beanshoot factory. Such buildings are always under threat through 'redevelopment'.

One unusual example of better housing still stands, occupied as a house, on Great Ancoats Street. It has a distinctive oriel window and good quality facing brick. This house was occupied by a druggist in 1888, later by a surgeon, Walter



St. Peter's Church, today: a listed building at risk.

Williams, and for many years it was a lodging house run by the Powner family. They occupied it until well into the 1950s.

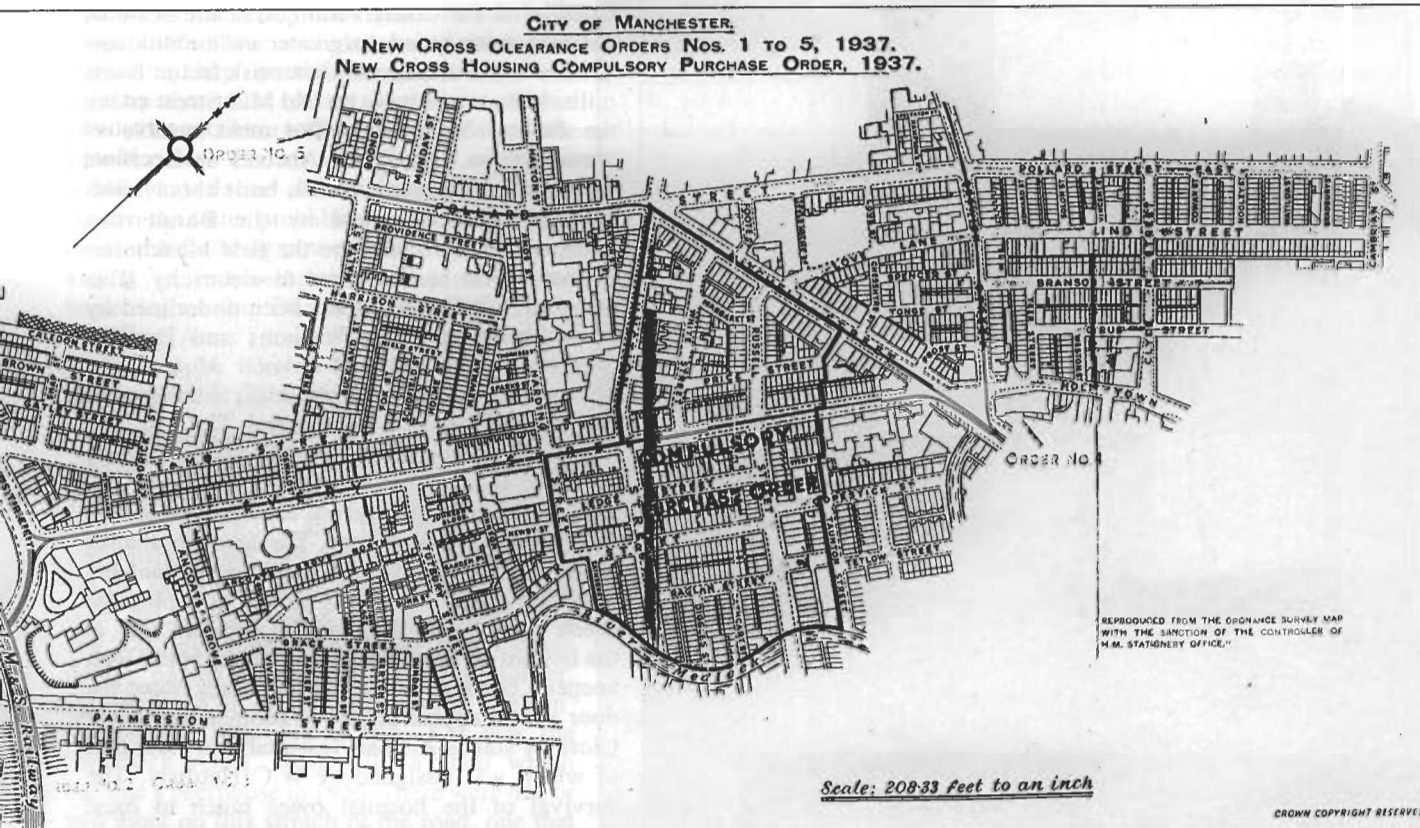
What could follow is a long list of the buildings of the Conservation Area, all more or less at risk, but one or two more examples will underline the diversity of the locality. The thin warehouse at No.5, Jersey Street was for many years of this century the premises of Kirkman and Platt, the printers. It is an unusual shape but has now lost some slates and stands looking rather forlorn. 'Jactin House' on nearby Hood Street was opened by the Methodists in 1903 as a lodging house for men; closed in 1951, it is now occupied by a number of small firms but it still retains many of its original features. Close to the 'Cross Keys' on Jersey Street is the partially demolished 'Phoenix Foundry', last used for the making of gas stoves. The parts of the building that survive on Jersey Street still bear the legend of Hill and Sons, one of the last firms that used it. On the opposite side of the road is a building that once housed one of the glass factories of Ancoats. The retort houses stood behind the Jersey Street facade, on the banks of the canal; the surviving building was the offices and finishing works. The risk to these building is well illustrated by the fate of the 'Church Inn' on Jersey Street. It was first recorded as a beerhouse in 1836 having been converted from two domestic houses. In February of last year it was demolished without any apparent reference to anyone, in spite of being in a Conservation Area.

Outside of the Conservation Area the scale of destruction has been even greater and the buildings that are left have an even higher risk factor. Some mills, however, survive on Old Mill Street and in the Pollard Street area. The most notable of these, just on the edge of Ancoats on Bradford Road, is the Brunswick Mill, built about 1840. This mill, once owned by the Bannerman Company, is reputed to be the first Manchester cotton mill to be converted to electricity. This large mill's importance has been underlined by its inclusion in Mike Williams and Douglas Farnie's *Cotton Mills of Greater Manchester*. This and most of the surviving mills in the locality lie on the line of the Ashton Canal. The main line of this canal appears to have an assured future, although all, but one very small section, of the arms of the canal that served the many industries of the area have now gone. The towpath, thanks to British Waterways and the many volunteers who first saved the canal, serves as a pleasant urban walk. On the banks of the Ashton Canal, at the bottom of Vesta Street, is a rather pretty lock keeper's cottage, the garden and roses round the door almost appear as part of another landscape. Close by stands Ancoats Hospital, the older part of which was designed by W.C. Hardisty. The survival of the hospital owes much to local sentiment and some direct action when it was threatened with closure. The Victorian building of the main block still bears the legend of the Ancoats and Ardwick Dispensary, a reminder of its Georgian links with the adjoining and more prosperous district of Ardwick.

Lost Buildings

The general situation in Ancoats however, is, one of building loss rather than of survival. Adjacent to Ancoats Hospital once stood a cotton waste works, the product of which helped to keep the wheels of the engineering industry going and an early example of a recycling industry. It was demolished about ten years ago. This small industrial site had been owned by three generations of the Tweedale family, who had moved there from a works close to Victoria Station about 1890. It had formerly been in the hands of a salt company, and J.A. Tweedale, whom I met on the site in 1984, said that the family memory was that the whole place was covered with salt when the family firm moved in. When I visited the site in 1984 the factory had been largely vandalised and had had at least one arson attack made against it. Mr Tweedale had hopes of reopening the works but it was demolished soon afterwards. The factory of the Hethrington Company, once famous for textile machinery, still stands on Pollard Street as does the nearby 'Bank of England' public house, but the mill of the same name that stood adjacent to the pub burnt down about fifteen years ago. It was said that the local population turned out to help save the pub but this help did not extend to the mill, a revealing case of social priorities! A number of nearby mills burnt down at this time, uninsured and uninsurable, in a rash of fires occurring at the rate of about one a month.

Little remains of old Ancoats in the area between the Rochdale Canal and the River Medlock, what has not burnt down has been pulled down. The huge Pollard's Mill, an iron framed 'T' shaped mill, once one of the largest mills in Manchester, standing on the corner of Pollard Street and Great Ancoats



A compulsory purchase order map from the 1930s.

Street, was demolished in the early 1980s. This mill was last in use as a depot for British Rail and had been used at one time as a grain store by the Midland Railway. The sites of two important engineering firms have also been lost in recent years. The premises of Peel, Williams and Peel, makers of steam engines amongst other things, on Pollard Street, were demolished piecemeal, the last part to go being their offices which had a set of gear wheels embedded in the gable end of the building. The most significant of these demolitions for the industrial archaeologist, was the site of Fairbairn Engineering. William Fairbairn was a pioneer of 'fire proof' mill construction and an advocate of the use of hydraulic power. The company had moved from a site on High Street to Ancoats in 1822, having started as Fairbairn and Lillie about 1811. On moving to Canal Street the firm expanded into many aspects of engineering from their original specialisation of the casting of mill shafting. Lillie does not appear to have favoured this expansion and left the company. Fairbairn's became famous for their mill construction, steam engines, water wheels, railway locomotives and, of course, for the construction of the Britannia Bridge over the Menai Straits. The firm did not long survive the death of Fairbairn in 1874 and the major part of the premises was taken over by Thomas and Parker, timber merchants, until it was compulsory purchased for demolition in 1966. However, parts of this diverse site were still standing in 1990, but it is now completely covered by the Ancoats Retail Park.

The list of buildings demolished since 1945 is a long one and we can but remind ourselves of some of them. The Jersey Street Mill was converted into dwellings, in a philanthropic venture in 1892 to house some of the poor of Ancoats. It originally had 141 'units' and once boasted its own youth club run by the University Settlement, but this later venture does not appear to have survived the selling of the building to a commercial landlord in 1906. By the interwar years the Jersey Street Mill had become very much part of the slums of the area — most of the tenants had moved out by 1940 —

and the building was demolished just after the war. Another late Victorian housing initiative was Walton House, a municipal lodging house for men; built on Pollard Street in 1899 it originally had 465 separate cubicles and in 1933 was charging one shilling per night. One former occupant told me, as the building was being demolished in 1989, sadly over a pint in the nearby aptly named 'Auld Lang Syne', that he missed the companionship of the lodging house, it having been his home for over 20 years: 'We used to fight sometimes but we were pals most of the time'.

Another historically important building was Ancoats Hall which did not long survive after the Corporation pulled out the remains of the Horsfall Collection in the mid-1950s. The site on the corner of Every Street is now occupied by some neat semi-detached houses. Just up the road also on Every Street, once stood the equally famous Round House. The Round House was originally a chapel founded by the Reverend James Scholfield, who lived in an adjoining house. These buildings were demolished in the early 1970s in spite of a vigorous campaign to save them. (It is not without some little irony that we note the rates of success and failure of campaigns to save buildings in Ancoats compared to similar campaigns in more prosperous areas). Scholfield was a supporter of the Chartist Movement and a prominent figure in the Manchester labour movement; his building was occupied for many years by the University Settlement which took up occupation in 1900. All that remains today is a green-field site, the outline of the walls and a few gravestones to remind us of the chapel and its small cemetery.

In 1954 local authorities were required to survey their housing needs, at the same time as new national criteria for unfitness was established. In these circumstance the death knell was sounded for the remaining nineteenth-century housing of Ancoats, although some will dispute that all the houses were in the official language 'unfit for human habitation'. Some Ancoats housing had gone in the slum clearance of the 1890s and 1930s but much remained. These

were now swept away, with a few exceptional survivors. The process of demolition started by the 1954 policy was, however, slow, too slow for some. Indeed some of these condemned houses remained bricked up or derelict until well into the 1980s. But hundreds of houses were demolished, few of them mourned, although many regretted the passing of the community. Amongst the housing pulled down in the 1970s was the Pott Street Dwellings, designed by the same firm as the Victoria Square Building, but rather less elaborate in execution.

This official demolition process was not without its dramas. Many of the houses went unmourned, although as in other inner-city working-class districts, the people who lived in them appear to have had mixed feelings about leaving Ancoats. The break up of the community caused distress; the moving away from workplaces with the resultant increase in expenditure on fares and rents gave rise to many concerns. The clearance orders, as already mentioned, swept away a number of local institutions, along with the houses. The CPO published in February, 1966 included the hundred-year-old Islington Baths and the Primitive Methodist Chapel next door, although this latter building was already derelict. This Order caused some controversy on its publication and gave rise to a number of newspaper articles. The City Council's offer of £60,000 per acre for the area around Cannell and Vesta Street rapidly rose to £72,000. One newspaper was moved to dub it 'The Golden 23 Acres', as the figure quoted was five times the average compensation price, and six times that being offered for a nearby site. The unusually high price appears to have been offered because of the number of commercial premises involved, these included two clothing

factories, a printworks, an engineering plant and some warehouses. Also included was the firm of Thomas and Parker (Ancoats) Ltd., the largest timber firm in the North West, who occupied part of the buildings once used by Fairbairn Engineering. The recently empowered Conservative majority on the City Council attempted to reverse the decision, and a public enquiry was held in September, 1967, but this did not save the area. Subsequently, new houses and the Ancoats Retail Park have been built on part of the site.

It would be naive to regret the passing of so many unfit houses or the attempts to give the area some open space by leaving green-field sites. Although this process of demolition, if continued in a piecemeal and unplanned fashion, will mean that the remaining fabric of this historic area must reach a point of no return.

The need to rejuvenate the area is, I believe, officially recognised and there have been a number of attempts at giving the place a face lift often at times against a background of continued vandalism, but resources have been limited and inevitably spread thinly. However, the longer the general neglect of Ancoats continues, especially in the Conservation Area, the greater the degree of risk to the remaining buildings. Refurbishment and re-use of old buildings makes economic and environmental sense and if there is any merit to the conservation of what remains of Ancoats then there is a need to do something now. St Peter's Church and its present derelict state is a reminder, if one is needed, that even listed buildings are not always protected against loss through neglect.

But, nevertheless, in spite of all these losses and setbacks,



Parker's the largest Timber firm in the Northwest, occupied part of the buildings once used by Fairbairn engineering.

sufficient of Ancoats remains for it to be developed and displayed as an historical site of world importance. Ancoats had an industrial past, it should have an industrial future. There is a great deal of scope to adapt old industrial buildings for new industrial uses. Tourism certainly can play a vital part in regeneration of the area. Manchester is in a unique position to attract a substantial number of tourists from what is a significant and growing world wide industry. A large number of these tourists are seeking something different to the conventional cultural tour of cathedrals, castles and galleries — Manchester should become an essential stop of any Grand Industrial Tour of Britain and Europe. The resuscitation of Castlefield since the late 1970s has shown what is possible. But Manchester unlike other cities has not just one but at least two areas of world significance in industrial history. Beginning with its mills Ancoats needs to be restored and rejuvenated. The decades of



The unprotectable?

neglect, and the more recent years of patching and piecemeal improvements, have to end. What is called for is some of the tenacity and vision which led the Murrays and McConnel to construct what was then the world's largest factories. Why, for the sake of an example, could not the Murray Mill be restored and fitted out to accommodate a much needed national centre for genealogical research? Such a facility would attract visitors not just from this country but from all

over the world. Family historians might even choose to spend their lunchbreaks in a restored and reopened Crown and Kettle. Neglected as Ancoats is in 1993 it still, just, holds the potential to be a site which can be handed over to the unborn generations of the Third Millennium as a reminder that in Manchester in general, and Ancoats in particular, there occurred the most profound events of the Second Millennium.

Burn's Commercial Glance

An annual broadsheet of commercial statistics of the cotton trade was published in Manchester by John Burn from 1832 to 1844 and then by his son, Richard Burn, from 1845 to c1856. To my knowledge only two copies of the January, 1845 number have been preserved (Bodleian and BL). Would anyone knowing the location of a number of *Burn's Commercial Glance* for any other year please inform John Lyons, Department of Economics, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio 45056 USA. I wish to obtain photocopies of any or all of these broadsheets, and will pay (in Sterling) for copying and postage.