

# MANCHESTER PERIODICALS: SOME NEW READINGS

## Charting the Manchester Tributary of the Golden Stream: Leary's History of the Manchester Periodical Press

*Michael Powell and Terry Wyke*

The final decades of the nineteenth century were marked by an unprecedented upsurge in interest into the history of Manchester. Never before had so many individuals been involved in researching, writing, lecturing and reading about the city's past. Books and pamphlets flowed from the offices of local and national publishers. Magazines and newspapers found regular space for articles on the city's past. The year 1887, for instance, saw the publication of the first complete modern history of the city, written by the literary scholar and historian, George Saintsbury.<sup>1</sup> In the same year the recreation of Old Manchester proved to be one of the star attractions at the Manchester Jubilee Exhibition.<sup>2</sup> In the previous year a revised edition of the *Annals of Manchester* provided readers with what was to become one of the most consulted reference works on the history of the city.<sup>3</sup> Historical societies such as the Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire (est. 1879) and the Lancashire Parish Register Society (est. 1898) gave further impetus to the study of original documents whilst the Manchester-based Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society (est. 1883) quickly established itself as an important forum for the discussion and publication of local historical research. Historically-inclined members of the Manchester Literary Club (est. 1869) showed a particular interest in the history of local publishers, printers and authors, embarking on an ambitious project of a biographical dictionary of Lancashire writers.<sup>4</sup> It was the bibliophile, Walter Copinger, who was responsible for establishing the Bibliographical Society in 1892.<sup>5</sup> Copinger's interests, like those of his friend and colleague in the Faculty of Law at Owens College, Richard Copley Christie, included archaeology and local history. This interest in the past extended into other areas of Manchester society: in a significant

act of municipal patronage the City Council supported the publication of the archives of both the Court Leet and the Constables.<sup>6</sup>

Manchester was taking an historical turn. At a time when the quintessential industrial city was beginning to struggle to maintain its hegemony, the study of its past offered both encouragement and consolation. The individuals involved comprised a relatively small group, their relationships traceable in the membership lists of local and regional societies, and in the acknowledgments of assistance declared in their many publications. Antiquarians corresponded with each other, meeting at lectures and soirées, and enjoying each others company on excursions to historic sites. It was an essentially masculine world, peopled by individuals whose names – Axon, Earwaker, Harrison, Nodal, Swindells, Sutton – will be familiar to anyone who has researched this period of Manchester's history. One name that would be missing, however, in any prosopographical study of this group is that of Frederick Leary.

Leary was an industrious and innovative researcher into Manchester's history yet, paradoxically, at a time when so much research was being undertaken and published, his own work remained largely unknown. His most important study, a 'History of the Manchester Periodical Press', took for its starting point the preparation of a catalogue of periodicals, magazines and newspapers published in Manchester. For Leary this was more than an exercise in enumerative bibliography, it opened up lines of historical enquiry that are recognizably modern. Indeed, in his methodology Leary pursued questions that would be familiar to readers of Michael Wolff's signpost essay on controlling and researching the loose sprawling colossus that is the Victorian periodical press. It is the purpose of this short article to discuss and draw attention to Leary's single-handed research journey, a journey which resulted in him charting the Manchester tributary of the 'Golden Stream'.<sup>7</sup> To begin with we need to provide some biographical details about this forgotten historian.

### **A Forgotten Historian**

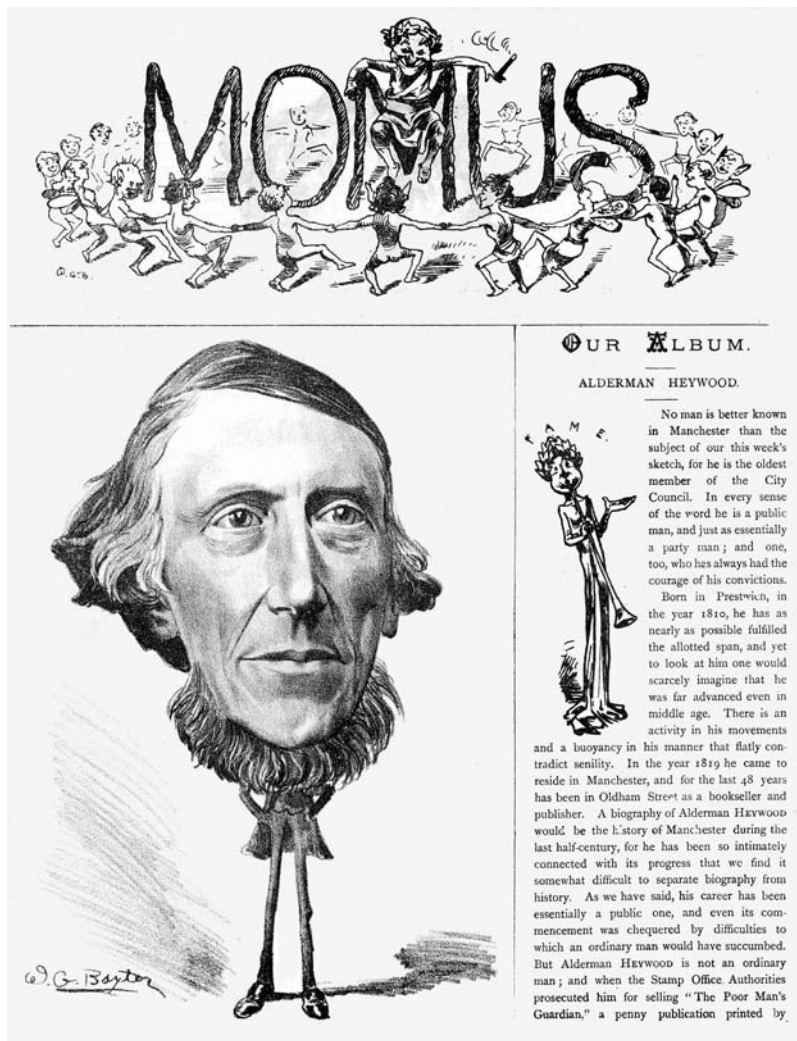
Biographical details of Frederick Leary are, to say the least, limited. He was born in Manchester on 30 May 1841, the son of John Leary, a warper, and Maria Leary and was baptized at the Collegiate Church on 14 July. We have no record whatsoever of his education for we next encounter him in the records on 17 August 1861, when the twenty-year-old married Hannah Brunton at Manchester Collegiate Church. Leary is recorded as a mercantile clerk, living at 10 York Street, Hulme and, interestingly, his father is now described as a brewer. In 1881 Leary is recorded in the census return as a tailor, employing four

women at 45 Emmet Street, Queen's Road. From 1884 until 1889 Leary had various addresses in London Road and later in Ardwick. In 1888 he featured for the first time in trade directories at Fairfield Street, London Road, first as a clothier and then subsequently as a tailor. The 1891 census indicates him residing in Ardwick, where he describes himself as a journalist and author. Following the death of his wife, he had remarried, his second wife was Mary Turner, a tailoress. The only other person in the household was his step-daughter, Eve Turner. His last place of residence is recorded in the directory for 1899 as 26 New York Street, Ardwick, where his profession is given as journalist and shopkeeper. Leary died in early March 1900, three days after his wife, and was buried in Southern Cemetery.<sup>8</sup> His death was barely noticed in the local press.

Fred Leary, as he preferred to be known, was the author of a handful of books and pamphlets, of which the earliest was a sixteen-page essay published in 1881 by Abel Heywood entitled *Facts and Figures for Working Men: an Analysis of the Drink Question in Relation to Commerce, Foreign Competition, Our Food Supply, Strikes, the Death Rate, and Prosperity of the Country, etc.* Three years later the same publisher brought out two pamphlets of Leary attacking the House of Lords. Both were anonymous: the first, *The Peers v. the People. What's the Use of the House of Lords?* was simply said to be written by a working man. The second work, *The Peers v. the People. What Course Ought Ministers to Take? With a Copy of the Petition Presented to the House of Lords in 1832*, listed Leary's other publications, including one work, *Anomalies of Representation*, which has not been identified. These publications were part of a general outpouring of anti-Lords sentiment produced in response to the Lords' holding up of the third Reform Act. Leary, though in favour of a second chamber, was clear as to the true purpose of the Lords: 'It is a body possessing a negative veto on everything done by the government for the good of the people, and its composition is such as to make it impossible that it should perform its functions in accordance with the interests of the people at large'.<sup>9</sup> His attack was controlled but still fierce in its criticism: 'Unmixed, then, is the evil which the House of Lords inflicts upon the nation, whether we view its members as legislators, as judges, or simply as an aristocracy'.<sup>10</sup>

In 1887 Leary brought out his *Life of Ernest Jones*, a 93-page work printed in London by the Democrat Publishing Office.<sup>11</sup> Leary's biography of the Chartist leader emphasised Jones's commitment to temperance and to Irish Home Rule. Jones had spent the final years of his life in Manchester and was buried in Ardwick Cemetery. Taken with his anti-Lords pamphlets, the *Life of Jones* suggests that Leary was a fairly radical liberal of the late-Victorian era. His final identifiable publication, however, *The Earl of Chester's Yeomanry Cavalry, its*

*Formation and Services to 1897* (Edinburgh, 1898) may point to more complex politics. As the preface made clear, Leary was commissioned to produce this history by the regiment, and was advised by Charles Sutton of the Manchester Public Library.<sup>12</sup> Leary's history was fairly conventional in both form and content, even going so far as to produce a defence of the Yeomanry's actions at Peterloo. 'We would ask him [the reader] whether it is possible to imagine a stronger proof of the extreme moderation of the military employed on this occasion, than that of such a numerous meeting being dispersed with so few casualties arising from the use of arms?'<sup>13</sup> It may be that Leary's principles went for a walk while this commissioned work was written, but possibly his stance on Peterloo might be explicable in terms of radical liberal hostility to trade unionism, which radical liberals saw as



Abel Heywood, Manchester publisher, newsagent and politician, from *Momus*, 4 September 1879



Masthead of the  
*Exchange Herald:*  
Aston's  
Manchester  
Commercial  
Advertiser, 12  
October 1813,  
one of the  
newspapers  
identified by  
Leary

promoting riot and disorder.<sup>14</sup> As well as these books and pamphlets, Leary was a regular but by no means prolific contributor to the *Manchester City News, Notes and Queries*, producing mainly corrections and notes on the Manchester newspaper and periodical press.<sup>15</sup>

Leary's historical interest focused on the recent history of Manchester. One of his main projects was based around one of the earliest of Manchester's commercial directories, *A Directory for the towns of Manchester and Salford for the year 1788*.<sup>16</sup> It was reprinted in 1888 by Manchester's newest and most entrepreneurial department store, Lewis's, whose advertising was quick to reflect cultural trends.<sup>17</sup> The directory was issued with a contemporary map. Whilst for many readers this was merely a quaint document, providing glimpses of a bygone world in which travel was slow and unpredictable and in which people were employed in occupations that had become anachronisms, for Leary it was a spur to discover more about Manchester at that crucial moment when the market town was transforming itself into the world's first industrial city. Leary turned to contemporary sources, especially the Manchester newspapers, to produce an annotated and extended version of the directory. He identified a further 1000 individuals living in the town, a reminder of the deficiencies of the first generation of provincial commercial directories.<sup>18</sup> In addition, he compiled information on different aspects of the town in the 1780s, including its transport system. Hundreds of hours of research were invested in collecting and arranging this material. The two-volume manuscript was never published.<sup>19</sup>

Two further manuscript collections illustrate the range of Leary's interests and the scope of his journalism. The first is a collection of Manchester ballads, copied by Leary from printed and manuscript sources.<sup>20</sup> In introducing the work, Leary suggested that county historians had focused too much on topographical surveys and on genealogical tables at the expense of the literature that the region produced. 'To glean for a district its appropriate ballads might, therefore, be an acceptable task, in redressing the balance'. The work built on the pioneering studies of local ballad literature produced by

John Harland in the 1860s, and attempted to relate local customs and practice to the London collection *Curiosities of Street Literature* made by Charles Hindley in 1871. Well over 100 ballads were copied, as well as a list of ballads produced by the Swindells family, Manchester's main printers of ballad and chapbook literature.<sup>21</sup>

The second work is described as Manchester articles by Fred Leary, and consists of about 30 items which appear to have been penned by Leary mainly for the *Manchester Evening News*.<sup>22</sup> It was a miscellany of short historical pieces, covering subjects such as the newspaper press, politics and government, Manchester buildings and families, and local social life and customs – the Blackley wakes, Knott Mill fair, and an old Manchester race calendar.

### Researching the Periodical Press

We do not know what sparked Leary's interest into the history of the Manchester periodical press but the intensity of his curiosity and his determination to provide a systematic record of both current and extinct publications indicates that this was no mere journalistic exercise. Such a history, in Leary's words, 'their muse, their literary associations, their success and their failure, cannot fail then to form an interesting chapter in the annals of the city'.<sup>23</sup> Although he did not discuss what in modern terms would be referred to as his research design and methodology, he conceptualised the periodical in broad terms. For Leary the periodical embraced newspapers in all their different forms, weekly, fortnightly and monthly magazines and journals, trade publications, commercial and trade directories and almanacs. In a city that had been home to George Bradshaw, the inclusion of what might be considered to be one of the archetypal Victorian periodical types, the railway guide, was both historically and conceptually appropriate. It was a generous boundary within which to research, one that was not far removed from John North's working definition of 'any publication which at its inception was intended to be published at regular intervals ...'.<sup>24</sup> Even so, Leary seemed conscious of its deficiencies, acknowledging the exclusion of publications such as the printed reports of local charities.

Leary appears to have made no moral judgment about the suitability of titles for inclusion: the ephemeral betting sheets of the sporting press followed the staid details of a temperance or friendly society magazine; the particulars of unstamped newspapers were listed alongside titles which carried the mark of the blood tax. Publications that would have been rejected by most public library committees were identified, examined and described. Leary was in pursuit of completeness. The chronological coverage was equally

ambitious. Leary's interest was not confined to the more recent times, those decades which Wilkie Collins had dubbed 'the age of the periodical'. His research started in the early eighteenth century – the first entries are for the *Manchester Weekly Journal* and the *Manchester Gazette*, published in 1719 and 1730 respectively<sup>25</sup> – and the opening chapters of the study are dominated by a discussion of often short-lived newspaper titles, a publishing feature that has its parallel in other small provincial market towns. The study concluded with entries for the *Manchester Sportsman* and *Ainsworth's North Manchester Directory*, 177 years later.<sup>26</sup> Defunct and long vanished titles outnumbered the surviving and thriving.

The breadth and originality of Leary's endeavour becomes even more evident when considering the information he collected on each periodical. He began, of course, with the title but wherever possible he provided information on later changes in the title, alterations that were usually due to mergers. Wherever possible, the exact dates of the first and last issue of the periodical were recorded. Leary went on to provide details on the physical size and the number of pages of the periodical, again noting changes in page numbers, particularly for newspapers. Information was also included on the cover price, again a feature that was subject to change, the most obvious being those associated with the imposition and subsequent relaxation and repeal of the infamous taxes on knowledge. The frequency of publication was also recorded. Again, in the case of newspapers it is possible to trace the emergence of the daily newspaper in Manchester from its weekly and bi-weekly origins. Leary provides, for example, detailed information on the crucial year of 1854 when Manchester saw the publication of what is claimed to have been its first daily newspaper and the response it prompted from the existing bi-weekly titles. Indeed, the *Manchester Examiner and Times's* decision to establish a daily news sheet – the *Manchester Daily Times* – provided it with the experience of publishing a daily newspaper some months before the repeal of the stamp duty in 1855 signaled the conventional start of the daily morning newspaper in the region and country.<sup>27</sup>

Leary also tried to identify the proprietors and printers of the periodicals. But his research went further, in that he presented considerable evidence on the editors and contributors to periodicals. The pages of the *History of the Manchester Periodical Press* are studded with numerous small biographies of editors and writers, usually anchored around an obituary that Leary had consulted. These range from individuals who were instantly recognisable on the pavements of Manchester's Grub Street, figures such as Ben Brierley, Ernest Jones and Alexander Ireland, to those whose footprints have been washed away, individuals such as Robert Rosa, Henry Snape and Matthew

<b>READING AND SPELLING LESSON SHEETS.</b>	
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<p style="font-size: small;">MANCHESTER: John Heywood, Excelsior Buildings, Ridgeland; and 11, Paternoster Buildings, London.</p>	

Advertisement for reading and spelling primers published by John Heywood, Manchester's most prolific publisher, 1881

Depair. The retirement, for example, of Edward Winterbottom, a reporter on the *Manchester City News*, is noted by Leary. In what may be considered to be a fairly representative entry, the reader is informed that the cause of Winterbottom's retirement was his defective eyesight, a sad occasion marked by an address and a purse of £200.<sup>28</sup>

Leary's interest in the press, however, stretched beyond recording what we may consider to be the elementary details of a periodical. Leary recognized the importance of readership. For those titles for which he could find data, he noted the number of copies printed/sold.

The relentless rise and diversity of the Manchester reading public is evident in every page of the manuscript. Leary also noted those periodicals that leavened their letterpress with illustrations. He took a particular interest in the libel laws, providing synopses of cases involving the proprietors and staff of Manchester newspapers. Libel was an important dynamic in the making of the press, most obviously when the state had used it as an instrument of control in the years of the unstamped press.<sup>29</sup> Leary however continued to record, often in detail, later cases such as the defamatory libel brought against the proprietors of *The Free Lance* by Boote and Rylands in 1869.<sup>30</sup>

This is not to suggest that the range and quality of the information assembled by Leary was the same for every periodical. There were titles for which he could provide only the most prosaic details. But for many titles the information, especially the supplementary details, was impressive. This year 1849, for example, saw the publication of a number of new titles including a new penny weekly, the *Manchester Temperance Reporter and Journal of Progress*. The first number was published in December. We are given the name and address of the printer – A. Weston, 3 Piccadilly – and informed that in the following September it was reconstituted as the *Manchester Temperance Reporter and Journal of Useful Information*, with a new publisher – Abel Heywood of Oldham Street and Joseph Johnson of Market Street – and a new printer – Grant and Co, Corporation Street. The editors of this short-lived periodical included Samuel Pope and Joseph Johnson, whilst numbered amongst its contributors were Alexander Somerville, John Critchley Prince, Elijah Ridings, Edwin Waugh and Fanny Eliza Lacy.<sup>31</sup> The *Manchester Temperance Reporter* was but one of a long list of temperance periodicals, mostly short-lived, that were published in and around Manchester.

Even for a generation of researchers who have the luxury of living in a post-Waterloo world, the collection, organization and presentation of such detailed information about not a handful but hundreds of periodicals is to be admired. We should remind ourselves that this was no collaborative research project, the product of a team of scholars and paid researchers, but the work of a single individual.

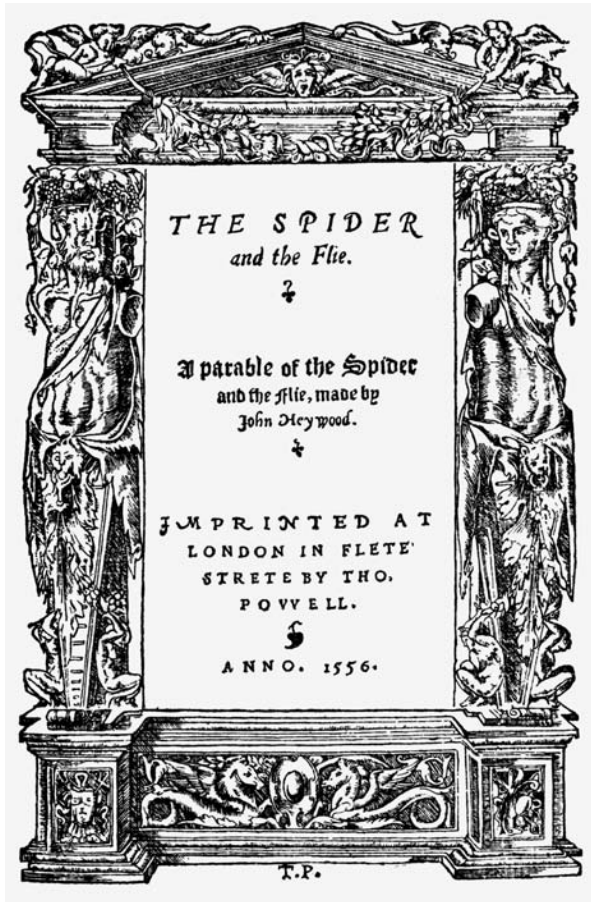
Leary's methods of research were to an extent predictable. He consulted existing published sources and the files of periodicals in Manchester. This was supplemented by research using local newspapers and journals. His account, particularly of eighteenth-century newspapers, drew upon the published researches of local historians such as Harland and Earwaker. A source for Victorian periodicals was the back volumes of *Mitchell's Newspaper Press Directory*. Leary recognized, as W. S. Stead was to point out some years later, that this reference work was of incalculable value to historians.<sup>32</sup> *Mitchell's*,

however, only began publication in 1846, and it took some time to develop the coverage that was to establish its reputation.<sup>33</sup> It provided Leary with a working list of Manchester titles but he could not rely solely upon it. In any case, he went further than simple desk research. He corresponded with the editor, Walter Wellsman, who had overseen the directory since his step-father's death in 1859 and who was chiefly responsible for establishing it as the leading newspaper directory. Wellsman took an interest in Leary's historical researches whilst also finding him to be an authoritative source of information about current periodical publishing in Manchester.

It is unclear where Leary consulted *Mitchell's* but it was probably in Manchester's main public library, which had moved from Tonman Street to the old Town Hall, King Street in 1877. The reference library's periodical holdings of local titles were already considerable, and under the direction of Charles Sutton, appointed chief librarian in 1879, they were to be further strengthened.<sup>34</sup> Defunct titles and the early issues of existing titles could be examined in the library by Leary, allowing details to be confirmed, corrected and supplemented. In addition, Leary may have been able to obtain access to periodicals still in the hands of publishers, institutions and societies.

But as Leary went further back in time he would have had to return to more time-consuming research in the public library. Original newspaper files could be consulted to gather information about when they were first published, to track changes in title, price and so forth. This was not as simple an exercise as it would be today, given the rather slender number of articles that had been published about the history of the Manchester press.<sup>35</sup> Leary also turned to other published histories to supplement his information. The *Annals of Manchester* – Axon's extended edition became available during the course of his research – was especially useful, directing Leary to, among other things, the obituaries of editors and writers. But it was a long process of searching, the turning of scraps of information into coherent accounts of individual newspapers and periodicals.

The research took Leary six years to complete, or, more accurately, to finish the main part of the project.<sup>36</sup> What appears to be the first draft, a text of some 120,000 words, has a preface dated 28 May 1889. It was organised chronologically in broad chapters. There were twelve chapters in total, the first three of which covered the years before 1821, the establishment of the *Manchester Guardian* having already established itself as a significant date in the history of the Manchester press. The text also included an appendix, which identified among other items, the publications of the county's historical societies and the reports of public institutions, associations and societies. An indication of Leary's commitment to the project and his



*The Spider and the Flie*, by John Heywood, reprinted from the edition of 1556 for the Spenser Society, one of Manchester's most distinguished publishing societies, 1894

secure a publisher are not known but we may surmise that the manuscript was turned down by established Manchester publishers such as Abel Heywood, John Heywood and J. E. Cornish. What we do know is that in 1898 the manuscript was in the hands of Sherratt and Hughes, who were then newcomers to the Manchester book trade, having recently opened a shop in the city centre. They were also embarking on publishing the occasional volume.<sup>38</sup> The manuscript had been passed to them by Charles Sutton. In August 1899 the publication of the first in a series of articles on old Manchester newspapers in the *Manchester Evening News* prompted Leary to write to Sutton, alarmed that particulars in the article appeared to have been taken from his own research.<sup>39</sup> He asked for news about the manuscript. Sutton contacted David Hughes to find out if they had decided to publish. The answer was to be another rejection. Hughes was clearly apprehensive about taking on Leary's massive compendium of information, judging that it would not prove a commercial success. In any case, the firm was already committed to a 'local' publication, having agreed to

sense of its importance as a reference work was a detailed supporting index. In the following years Leary was to extend the text to 1896, a further 50 pages of detailed and footnoted information.

Two manuscript copies of the work are known to exist. What appears to be the original text, in part written on the back of used paper, was given to Manchester Public Libraries in 1931. This text appears to have been incomplete at the time it was donated.<sup>37</sup> A neater and complete copy was also presented to the library. This may have been the copy that Leary prepared with a view to publication, the copy that is known to have been in the hands of Charles Sutton and at least one Manchester publisher in the late 1890s.

Leary had produced an immense and impressive piece of original research and one that he clearly intended for publication. The full details of his search to

bring out a book by the popular Judge Parry. Leary's manuscript was not to be taken up.

Leary contemplated another publication route, the newspapers. However, he confided in Sutton that 'Of course no publication through the newspapers would be half as interesting as in book form'.<sup>40</sup> Publication in the local press before being published as a book was a tried and tested method. Notable titles on Manchester history – Leo Grindon's *Manchester Banks and Bankers* (1877), William Axon's *Handbook of the Public Libraries of Manchester and Salford* (1877), Josiah Slugg's *Reminiscences of Manchester Fifty Years Ago* (1881) – had appeared in the pages of the

*Manchester City News* before being published as books, each by a different Manchester publisher. How seriously Leary pursued this particular route is unknown. In any case within a few months he was to be dead.

The failure to find a publisher was somewhat surprising. Leary could not have put the manuscript in better hands than those of Sutton. No individual had more connections with the Manchester book and publishing trade. The city's chief librarian had a deep interest in the history of Manchester in general, and all aspects of its literary and publishing history in particular.<sup>41</sup> It had fallen to Sutton to continue the dictionary of Lancashire authors, the project on which Nodal and Axon had carried out the preparatory work. Sutton had easy access to the local publishing societies, although bodies such as Chetham Society were unlikely to publish Leary's text, simply on the grounds that it was too modern. Leary was also, as we have suggested, an outsider in this world. To what extent this may have been connected to his political beliefs is unclear. He appears not to have participated in the flourishing historical and literary culture provided by the region's societies. His name does not appear in the membership lists of any of the principal societies. In particular, and most surprising, he does not appear to have embraced the fellowship of the Manchester Literary Club, whose members shared many of his interests. He was left reliant on Sutton who in this case was unable



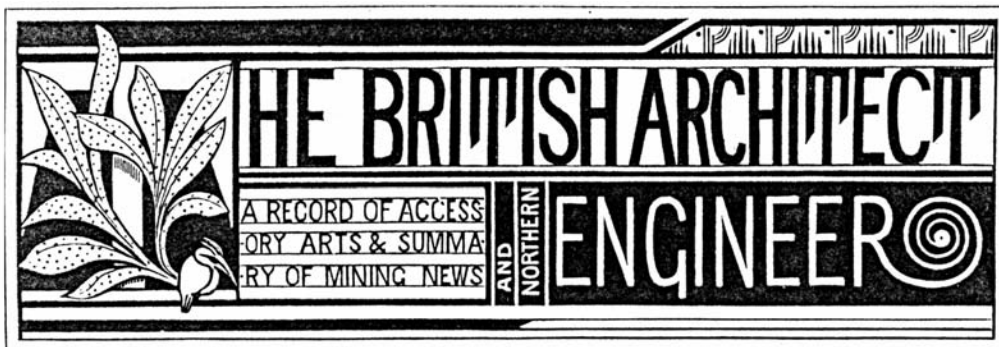
Sample page from John Heywood's *The Spider and the Flie* (1556)

to turn the manuscript in to print, even though he recognised its importance and originality.

It is not our intention to analyse Leary's researches in detail here, though modern students of the periodical press will immediately recognise that they are more than simply a mine of pertinent information. In order to present his work more clearly, Leary analysed the titles, condensing his researches into a single table (see below). He distinguished broad categories of periodical – the newspaper, journal and magazine – and then identified further types of publication within the categories. He identified, for example, 20 temperance journals, of which seven were still being published, and 35 athletic or sporting journals, of which ten were still in existence. It appears that none of the 20 satirical journals published in Manchester during the nineteenth century were on sale in 1888.<sup>42</sup>

Leary's researches confirmed Manchester as the centre of an extensive and diverse periodical press, underlining its role as the largest publishing centre outside London. However, in the absence of similar research in other provincial towns, it was, and still is, only possible to make the simplest of comparisons. The subject of the provincial periodical press was not neglected by Leary's contemporaries but most studies were mere sketches when compared with his mammoth researches.<sup>43</sup> In the years up to and including 1888, some 661 titles were identified by Leary of which 206 (31 per cent) were current. The titles included long established newspapers such as the *Manchester Guardian* and *Manchester Courier*, the many specialist journals and newspapers that served Cottonia's principal industry, to the ephemeral magazines of the day, educational, religious, radical and satirical. It is the sheer range that is astounding. There was reading for the bibliophile: Manchester published the volumes of the Holbein Society, beginning in 1869. Manchester was also in the forefront of providing reading for the masses: as Leary reminds us it was in Manchester that George Newnes first published *Tit Bits from all the most interesting books*,

Masthead of the  
*British Architect  
and Northern  
Engineer*, by  
artist Robert  
Langton  
(1825–1900),  
wood engraver  
of Manchester



*periodicals and newspapers in the world*, a weekly penny paper of snippets of information that social historians have long recognized as a seminal title in the rise of the popular press.<sup>44</sup>

#### Manchester Periodical Press 1720–1888<sup>45</sup>

<i>Numbers</i>	<i>In Progress</i>	<i>Published</i>
NEWSPAPERS	101	34
JOURNALS	94	27
Art	10	2
Athletic	8	2
Commercial and Technical	33	25
Satirical	20	0
Sporting	27	8
Temperance	20	7
Theatrical	16	0
Working Men and Co-operative	20	4
Volunteer	3	2
	251	77
MAGAZINES	50	6
Anti-Religious	2	0
Religious and Parish	58	23
School	13	5
	123	34
Literary and Scientific Societies	27	13
Literary, Scientific and Educational	20	2
Medical	5	1
	52	16
MISCELLANEOUS	29	7
Bazaars	9	0
Gratuitous	7	2
Societies	7	4
	52	13
Annuals	13	6
Calendars and Almanacs	42	17
Directories	10	2
Railway Guides	17	7
TOTAL	661	206

Later scholarship simply confirms the thoroughness and accuracy of Leary's research. Comparison of the entries in Leary with those in *Waterloo Directory of English Newspapers and Periodicals 1800–1900* indicate that Leary missed but a small number of titles, mainly confined to those periodicals that were published in both London and Manchester.<sup>46</sup> None of the titles included in the most reliable listing of Manchester newspapers have been omitted by Leary.<sup>47</sup> Examination of the titles identified in the more specialist subject periodical research undertaken by scholars such as Josef Altholz, Brian Harrison and Donald Gray suggest that Leary's net was of a fine mesh.<sup>48</sup> Even in those slippery areas in which bibliographers find it difficult to impose control, Leary is reassuringly strong. Nine of the twelve unstamped Manchester periodicals identified by Joel Wiener are listed in Leary.<sup>49</sup>

But no simple statistical comparison of titles can do justice to Leary's research journey. At one level it is the relentless detail about titles, their proprietors, printers, editors, changes in their size, publication dates, price and the rest that make Leary's *History of the Manchester Periodical Press* a truly remarkable study. It is, however, far more than a quarry for data, a time-saving finding list for the researcher in a hurry. Leary's wide-ranging conception of the periodical, including categories such as parish magazines, challenges our own conception of what constituted the eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century periodical and newspaper press. In drawing attention to the importance of Manchester as a publishing centre, Leary reminds us how little we know about that world. At the micro level our understanding goes little further than being able to provide thumbnail sketches for many of the city's principal publishers, proprietors and printers. The same is also true of those men and women who were its common writers. The role played, for example, by Manchester men in associations such as the Institute of Journalists and the National Union of Journalists awaits serious study. Outside of a handful of titles, our historical understanding of the majority of Manchester periodicals and newspapers is embarrassingly patchy. Manchester's role in the development of the sporting press, for example, awaits serious study.<sup>50</sup> At the macro level we do not have a study of the interconnected worlds of Manchester publishing, of the ways in which they contributed to the creation of the different representations and identities of Cottonopolis in the nineteenth century.

This is not to suggest that Leary's manuscript has not been consulted by historians. A number of scholars have made use of it but this important and original history of the major publishing centre outside London is not a work widely known outside Manchester.<sup>51</sup> One can only surmise what might have been the current state of our

understanding of the economic and cultural dynamics of the multi-various world of Manchester newspapers, journals and magazines and their readership had Leary's manuscript been published during his lifetime. An awareness of the Manchester tributary of the golden steam might have encouraged literary researchers to provide a less metropolitan-centred reading of the Victorian periodical press. At the very least, political and economic historians might have been weaned away from their reliance on the *Manchester Guardian* as the omniscient voice of Manchester liberalism.

Readers will be pleased to note that plans are now in hand to finally publish a complete version of the *History of the Manchester Periodical Press*. It is long overdue. Regrettably, in an academic world in which bibliographical projects have a marginal status, it seems unlikely that historians will take on the task of extending Leary's work from 1897 to the present day. The closure of bibliographical projects within public libraries, most notably the Bibliography of North West England, has removed another possible supporter. One is left to conclude that if this generation is to provide a companion study covering the not unimportant world of twentieth-century periodicals and newspapers, it may well have to await an individual who displays those qualities of determination and dedication that characterised Frederick Leary.

## Notes

1. *Manchester* (London, 1887). Saintsbury had direct knowledge of the city having been employed as a teacher at Manchester Grammar School and a journalist on the *Manchester Guardian*. See D. R. Jones, "King of Critics" *George Saintsbury, 1845–1933, Critic, Journalist, Historian, Professor* (Ann Arbor, 1992).
2. A. Kidd, 'The Industrial City and its Pre-Industrial Past: the Manchester Royal Jubilee Exhibition of 1887', *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society*, 89 (1993), pp. 54–73.
3. T. Wyke, 'Useful and Useless Knowledge: The Making of the Annals of Manchester', *Manchester Memoirs*, 137 (1998–1999), pp. 115–36.
4. C. W. Sutton (ed.), *A List of Lancashire Authors, with brief biographical and bibliographical notes* (Manchester, 1876). The larger biographical dictionary was never realized but the checklist, identifying some 1,250 individuals, was an impressive reconnaissance exercise.
5. F. C. Francis, 'The Bibliographical Society: a sketch of the first fifty years', in *The Bibliographical Society 1892–1942: Studies in Retrospect* (London, 1945), pp. 1–22. The need for a national society devoted to bibliography had been expressed as early as 1868 in an article in *Notes and Queries* by W. E. A. Axon.

6. J. P. Earwaker (ed.), *The Court Leet Records of the Manor of Manchester*, 12 vols (Manchester, 1884–90); J. P. Earwaker (ed.), *The Constables' Accounts of the Manor of Manchester*, 3 vols (Manchester, 1892).
7. M. Wolff, 'Charting the Golden Stream: thoughts on a directory of Victorian periodicals', in J. M. Robson (ed.), *Editing Nineteenth Century Texts* (Toronto, 1967), pp. 37–59. He later published this as M. Wolff, 'The Victorian Periodicals Project', *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter*, 2 (1968), p. 15.
8. Information from Collegiate Church registers, census, commercial directories and death certificate.
9. *What's the Use?*, p. 6.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
11. It is noted but not discussed in M. Taylor, *Ernest Jones, Chartism, and the Romance of Politics 1819–1869* (Oxford, 2003), p. 12.
12. *Earl of Chester's Yeomanry Cavalry*, p. vi.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 77.
14. The early Labour Party was very keen on appropriating the memory of Peterloo from liberalism causing all kinds of tensions over these traditional radical episodes. We are grateful to Dr Tony Taylor of Sheffield Hallam University for this observation.
15. For example articles in *Manchester Notes and Queries*, vol. 6 on Henry Whitworth (4435); *The Manchester Mercury* (3763), Old Manchester newspapers (pages 189–190), and The first Manchester daily paper (4004), vol. 7: Early Manchester printers (4984, 5000, 5007, 5014, 5018, 5038, 5044), and the editor of the *Gazette* [Mr Aston] (4766), vol. 8: Manchester Exchange (5295), James Perry (5482), Bradshaw's Guide (5691), St Ann's Square (5836), John Wesley (5852), and De Quincey's birthplace (5867).
16. J. Harland, *Collectanea Relating to Manchester and its Neighbourhood at Various Periods* (Manchester, Chetham Society, o. s. 68, 1866), pp. 137–42.
17. *Lewis's Directory for the Towns of Manchester and Salford for the year 1788* (Manchester). A. Briggs, *Friends of the People. Centenary History of Lewis's* (London, 1956), p. 74.
18. J. Norton, *Guide to the National and Provincial Directories of England and Wales, excluding London, published before 1856* (London, 1950).
19. F. Leary, *Manchester Directory*, 2 vols, Manchester Central Reference Library, 942.738 L4.
20. Manchester Central Reference Library, MS 821.04 M51.
21. For Manchester ballads see H. Boardman and R. Palmer (selected and edited), *Manchester Ballads: Thirty-five Facsimile Street Ballads* (Manchester, 1983), and especially the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society's G. R. Axon ballad collection at Chetham's Library, published on CD-Rom as *Manchester Street Ballads: High Quality Images of 280 Victorian Manchester-printed Ballads* (Manchester, 2003).
22. Manchester Central Reference Library, MS 942.738 M91.

23. Leary, *History of the Manchester Periodical Press*, Manchester Central Reference Library MSf052 L161, p. 1.
24. J. S. North (ed.), *Waterloo Directory of English Newspapers and Periodicals, 1800–1900*, series 2 (Ontario, 2003), introduction.
25. Leary, *Periodical Press*, pp. 13–14.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 537.
27. See A. E. Musson, 'The first daily newspapers in Lancashire', *TLCAS*, 65 (1955), pp. 104–31.
28. Leary, *Periodical Press*, p. 485.
29. For studies of libel in this period see James Curran, especially the numerous editions of *Power Without Responsibility: The Press and Broadcasting in Britain*, with Jean Seaton, first published Glasgow, 1981.
30. *Manchester Guardian*, 15 Dec. 1869.
31. Leary, *Periodical Press*, pp. 253–54.
32. C. Mitchell, *The Newspaper Press Directory (and Advertisers' Guide)* [later *Benn's Press Directory*] Press (London, 1846–1985). See Stead's introduction to the Diamond Jubilee edition of the directory (1905), pp. 5–9.
33. Charles Mitchell had begun his career as an apprentice to Thomas Sowler on the *Manchester Courier*. The directory was published irregularly until 1856: D. Linton, 'Mr Mitchell's "National Work"', *Journal of Advertising History*, 2 (1979).
34. See the lists of newspapers (including back files) and periodical holdings in W. R. Credland, *The Manchester Public Free Libraries* (Manchester, 1899), pp. 241–6.
35. In addition to John Harland's pioneering studies, published in *Collectanea*, Leary used the items on the newspaper press in the Notes and Queries and Local Gleanings columns of the local press. C. H. Timperley's *A Dictionary of Printers and Printing: With the Progress of Literature; Ancient and Modern* (London, 1839) was also consulted.
36. Note by Nodal appended to Leary, 'The Manchester periodical press', *Manchester Notes and Queries*, 22 June 1889.
37. The original manuscript was presented by J. F. Moseley to Manchester Central Library in 1931 but it is incomplete. The second volume of the manuscript, covering pages 130–398, appears not to have been deposited.
38. The firm of Sherratt and Hughes was established in 1896 in premises in St. Ann's Street by John Sherratt and David Hughes, two booksellers from Cornish's shop in Piccadilly. Judge Parry's *The Scarlet Herring and other stories* (1899) and T. A. Coward and C. Oldham, *The Birds of Cheshire* (1900) were among the first titles of local interest to be published.
39. Letters from Leary on 'Some Old Manchester Newspapers', *Manchester Evening News*, 2 Aug. 1899, 29 Aug. 1899. Leary corrected and clarified points made in the articles.
40. Letter in front of bound manuscript volume of *Periodical Press*, dated August 1899.

41. Obituary in *Manchester City News*, 1 May 1920.
42. Significantly, Leary does include an entry for *Spy*, a comic paper produced in 1891. Leary, *Periodical Press*, pp. 501–2.
43. For example, J. C. Morley, *The Newspaper Press and Periodical Literature of Liverpool* (Liverpool, 1887). An exception could be made for James Macbain's *Bibliography of Arbroath periodical literature and political broadsides* (Arbroath, 1889), although a comparison between a small town on the East coast of Scotland and England's second city for printing is difficult to make.
44. Published in 1881, Leary, *Periodical Press*, pp. 97–9. For the impact and significance of *Tit Bits* see K. Jackson, *George Newnes and the New Journalism in Britain, 1880–1910: Culture and Profit* (Aldershot, 2001).
45. The table was published in an article by Leary on the Manchester periodical press in *Manchester Notes and Queries* (5415) on 22 June 1889. Leary claimed that having completed his investigations and having gathered particulars of 661 periodicals, he remained sensible of the fact that they did not represent the total number published in the city and neighbourhood and that the names of many were lost past all recovery.
46. We have used the online version of the directory: [www.victorianperiodicals.com](http://www.victorianperiodicals.com).
47. R. Cowley, *Newsplan: Report of the Newsplan Project in the North Western Region September 1986-January 1990* (London, 1990). A convenient online version of the newspaper titles identified in the Report, produced by Nigel Rudyard of the North West Regional Library System, was removed from the World Wide Web following the closure of the NWRLS.
48. J. Altholz, *The Religious Press in Britain, 1760–1900* (New York, 1990); B. Harrison, 'A world of which we had no conception: Liberalism and the English temperance press, 1830–1872', *Victorian Studies*, 13 (1969), pp. 125–58; D. J. Gray, 'A list of comic periodicals in Great Britain, 1800–1900, with a prefatory essay', *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter*, No. 15 (1972), pp. 2–39.
49. J. Wiener, *A Descriptive Finding List of Unstamped British Periodicals 1830–1836* (London, 1970).
50. As with many such studies the region rather than the city may be the more appropriate frame of reference. Tillotson's of Bolton were among the first to publish a Saturday evening football special. See T. Mason, 'Sporting news', in M. Harris and A. Lee (eds), *The Press in English Society from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Centuries* (London, 1986).
51. Leary's research informs a number of studies of the newspaper press, notably Musson, 'First daily newspapers'; D. Read, *Press and People, 1790–1850: Opinion in three English Cities* (London, 1961); the same author's 'North of England newspapers (c. 1700–c. 1900) and their value to historians', *Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical Society (Literary and Historical Section)*, 8:3 (1957), pp. 200–15; and I. Rogerson, *The development of the*

*English provincial newspaper, 1700–1760, with reference to the situation in Manchester* (Manchester, 1978). Similarly, the manuscript has been used in studies such as M. Beetham, ‘‘Healthy Reading’’: the Periodical Press in Late Victorian Manchester’, in A. J. Kidd and K. W. Roberts (eds), *City, Class and Culture: Studies of Social Policy and Cultural Production in Victorian Manchester* (Manchester, 1985), pp. 167–92. That notwithstanding, there have been few attempts to analyse Leary’s information and his account of trade journals, parish magazines and sporting literature, to name but three areas of research, has generally been overlooked. Moreover the manuscript has also been ignored in surveys of the printing trade in the North West. See, for example, B. Scragg, ‘Some sources for Manchester printing in the nineteenth century’, in P. Isaac and B. McKay (eds), *Images and Texts: Their Production and Distribution in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Winchester, 1997), pp. 113–19.