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Front cover:

A cyclist in Moss Side, c.1910, from Chris Makepeace, *Looking back at Hulme, Moss Side Chorlton on Medlock & Ardwick* (Altrincham: Willow, 1995), p. 65.

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Editorial

It's going back twenty-odd years, but I recall the Touchet family featuring large in my studies of eighteenth-century Manchester society. They were very much part of the self-selecting clique of 'principal inhabitants' who had key roles as jurors on Manchester's governing court leet, along with many other prestigious offices. Manchester's rise was very much built on the reach of their textile empires. Historians now though are starting to re-evaluate the business models of such international merchants, and here Alan Kidd provides evidence of the immersion by Manchester merchants in the slave trade, and considers how we might reconcile that with their reputations for philanthropy and as the town's guiding lights.

Vikki Garlick's article takes a closer look at the Hulme Hippodrome, a survival, just, of the late-Victorian era. She notes how the Broadheads, father and son, avoided the convention of placing their new theatre on the Oxford Road and instead built it amongst the very communities it was intended to serve: the working classes of Hulme. The fate and possible future of the building is discussed here.

The Irish radical and journalist Peter Finnerty has been little discussed so far in histories of Peterloo and its aftermath. Here Andrew Shields explores Finnerty's connection with the inquest into John Lees, a cotton spinner from Oldham who died at the hands of the militia charged with dispersing the Peterloo crowd. It is shown how Finnerty's attempts to record the proceedings were challenged by the coroner and we learn how Finnerty was able to overcome this and publish accounts which have helped reshape the narrative of Peterloo away from the one-sided version intended by the authorities.

The county magazine remains a constant on newsagents' shelves, but (as Andrew Hobbs explains) the genre has much to do with the model created by the publisher who had just taken on the struggling *Cheshire Life* in the 1930s. Because of his new direction, the content benefited from the fascination with the county set, in terms of editorial and advertising. We see how the magazine charts the displacement of the old social world of the county gentry by a new middle class, reflected by subject matter still with us today.

The middle classes had also taken to cycling in the 1890s, as Rosemary Sharples explains. By the early twentieth century the cycling movement was much more egalitarian, though, and we learn just how significant the clubs and the rides were for so many people in Manchester, through an analysis of regular newspaper columns on cycling. Moss Side is used as a point of reference to show how its local clubs and cycling schools reacted to the new mobility.

Craig Horner

Manchester, May 2023

