North West in Maps

Ordnance Survey 25 inch maps: Rochdale (South), 1908

Paul Hindle
Manchester Geographical Society

The Ordnance Survey’s 25 inch maps emerged after the ‘Battle of the Scales’ during the 1840s and 50s. In fact they were published at the metric scale of 1:2500. The first maps were surveyed in 1854, and smaller scale 6 inch maps were made from them. Lancashire had already been surveyed at 6 inch scale in 1841-54, and thus had to wait until last to be surveyed at 25 inch scale. The maps were revised twice before the Second World War, providing a sequence of maps showing great detail of immense use to local historians and historical geographers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Westmorland</td>
<td>1856-60</td>
<td>1895-98</td>
<td>1921-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumberland</td>
<td>1859-65</td>
<td>1887-1900</td>
<td>1922-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheshire</td>
<td>1870-75</td>
<td>1886-98</td>
<td>1904-09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lancashire</td>
<td>1888-93</td>
<td>1904-12</td>
<td>1924-38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This extract is taken from the Godfrey Edition reprint (reduced to about 15 inches to the mile), which currently has over 1300 sheets (the full catalogue can be seen at www.alangodfreymaps.co.uk; a site well worth a visit).

Rochdale

This map extract was originally surveyed in 1889-91; it covers the area to the south of Rochdale town centre, around Oldham Road. Until the nineteenth century, Rochdale was a major centre of woollen manufacture, based on domestic production in the surrounding area, with clothiers and dyers in the town. Wool was overtaken by cotton in the early nineteenth century, and Rochdale became one of the ring of cotton manufacturing towns surrounding Manchester. By 1911 it had a total population of 91,000.

Canal

One of the oldest features on the map is the Rochdale Canal. The Act was passed by parliament in 1794, and construction proceeded apace; it was open eastwards across the Pennines to Sowerby Bridge in 1798, and through to Manchester by 1804. It was the last of the three trans-Pennine canals to receive an Act of Parliament, but the first to be completed. In Rochdale there was branch leading north towards the town centre, whilst a shorter arm served mills near Royds Street. There are two locks near these branches (numbers 49 and 50 of the 92 locks on the canal).

Above the higher lock the canal is some 475 ft above sea level; the summit reaches a height of almost 600 ft. The canal was leased to four railway companies in 1855, and despite the railway being close and parallel to the canal, traffic continued to grow, reaching a peak in the 1840s, and not declining until the late 1880s. The decline continued, and the canal was closed in 1952. Both canal arms in Rochdale have been filled in, though both bridges on the town arm still stand. A restoration scheme aims to reopen the canal in 2002.

Mills

The canal had a clear impact on the cotton industry in Rochdale, with many cotton mills adjacent to the canal. Most of the mills were built after the arrival of the railway in 1839, but still preferred a canal-side location. Crossfield Mill, for example was built in 1843, Norwich Street Mills in 1867, and Grove Mills in c.1870. This concentration of mills alongside a canal must be one of the heaviest in the country. The cotton industry was booming in the first decade of the nineteenth century, reaching peak production in 1913; then came the steady decline which has seen the almost total demise of cotton production in Lancashire. Only a handful of these mills survives today; their tall chimneys (marked on the map as Chy.) have all gone. The map shows a few woolen mills still surviving. Other mills and industries shown include sawmills, a corn mill, works producing iron, leather, soap, ‘Grecian Emery’, ‘Walrus Fibre Cans’, plus a bakery and jam manufactory.

Railway

The Manchester and Leeds Railway was first proposed in 1830 along a line surveyed by George Stephenson and James Walker. The 1831 bill was opposed by the canal company, but an Act was obtained in 1836. The line was opened as far as Littleborough in 1839, and through to Leeds in 1841. The line was noted for its gentle gradients and its long sweeping curves. In 1847 the company became the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway. The original Rochdale Station was ¼ mile to the north-east; the present station was built in 1889.
Trams
The line along Oldham Street (to Buersill, Summit, Royton and Oldham) was originally built by the Manchester, Bury, Rochdale and Oldham Steam Tramways Company Ltd in 1883. It was built at 3ft 6inch gauge, but later converted to standard gauge (4ft 8½”). The tramways were taken over by Rochdale Corporation in 1904, and closed in 1931.

Housing
Most of the housing is terraced, though there are quite a few back-to-back houses notably north of Crawford Street, for example in the rather inappropriately named Cobden and Bright Streets [Cobden and Bright were both reforming politicians of the mid-nineteenth century; Bright was born in Rochdale, the son of a mill owner]. Much of the terraced housing still stands.

Directory
The map can be complemented by the entries in a local commercial directory, even though they date from eight years after the map revision. Some weekly rents for housing are given; along Oldham Road they are from 3/6 (17p) to 5/6 (27p), rising to 6/6 (32p) near St Mary’s Church (quarter of a mile south of this extract). On Royds Street they rise to 7/- (35p), giving an immediate impression of the status and wealth of each part of the town. There is an interesting mixture of food and other retailing outlets amongst the housing.

References
Ashmore O 1982 The Industrial Archaeology of North west England
Fishwick H 1889 The History of the Parish of Rochdale
Hadfield C and Biddle G 1970 The Canals of North West England
Hindle P 1998 Maps for Historians
Hyde W S n.d. The Manchester Bury Rochdale and Oldham Steam Tramway
Marshall J D 1969-70 The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway

The Directory entries are taken from Clegg’s Commercial Directory of Rochdale, 1916
151. Wrigley, Mrs.
153. Isherwood & Greenwood, plumbers
159–161. Nurrah, John
163–173. Gossop, W. F. & Son, sheet metal workers. Tel. 809
175–177. Horsfall, John E., restaurant

Adineworth street
179. Ogden, Sarah, wardrobe dealer
181. Aspinall, Gibson
183. Schofield, Mrs. A. E.
185. Whitehead (S.) & Son, sheet metal workers. Tel. 809
187. Gregory, John R., fish dealer
189–193. Wild, James A., pawnbroker and jeweller
195. Middleton, Edgar, grocer and baker
197. Gibson, Alfred, tobacconist
199. Standing, Frank, saddler
201. Turner, Robert, fent warehouse
203. Matthew, Fred, fruiterer, fishmonger

Lee street
217. Gardner, O., hairdresser & tobacconist
219. Sorrell, J., glass and china dealer
221. Fletcher, W. R., colonial butchers
223. Standish, Fred, newsagent, stationer
225. Heap, John, chip and tripe dealer
227. Maypole Dairy Co. Ltd., grocers, etc.
229. Graham, Mrs. Mary, confectioner
231. Ogden, Fred, Capron and dealer
233. Morning Star, W. Nottall, beer dealer
235–237. Bannister, Mrs. W., drapery and baby linen

Simon street
239. Kay, John Henry
241. Lord, Neville, fruiterer
243. Howarth, Mrs. Mary
245. Barker, Miss E.
247. Kerrish, Henry
249–251. Ashworth, David, draper

Finestreet
Bridge Inn Sick and Burial Society. Richard Cavanagh, secretary
253–257. Equitable Pioneers' Society. No. 1 Grocery, boots and shoes
259. Lefay, Patrick, egg and butter stores
259a. Cloves, B. S., watchmaker & jeweller
276. Rhodes, M. A., milkman, fancy sales
263. Ashworth, John, boot & shoe dealer
265. Mercers Ltd., chemists, druggists and opticians

Crawford street
267. Rochdale Coffee House Co., restaurant
269. Wilkinson Wm., beef & pork butcher
271. Cockcroft, H., tobacco and sweets
273. Wood, Frank, draper and clothes
275. Duckworth (James) Ltd. No. 4 Bridge Inn yard

Bridge Inn. Hannah Rothwell, licensed victualler
277. Walton, J., hosier & stocking knitter
291. Higginson, Mrs. A., tripe dealer
283. Butterworth, W. H., tobacconist
285. White Rose Inn. James Howarth, beer retailer
287. Daleman & Crabtree, tailors. Tel. 393
289. Fielding, Miss S.
291. Harris, Herbert, M.D. Tel. 394

Woodbine street
293. Wilson, S., M.A., M.B. Tel. 644
293a. Thickett, Frank, butcher
295. Crabtree, J. & J., Wellfield Old Mill, motor body builders and engineers
295a. Bond, J. E., butcher
295c. Healey, Frank, furniture broker
295. Fenton, Miss A., fruiterer
299. Platt, James, draper
303. Grimshaw, W., painter and decorator
305. Thompson, Eli, general dealer
309. Lincoln Inn. James Dean, licensed victualler

Royds street
311. Duckworth (James) Ltd. No. 5
313. Fielden, James, chemist
315. Southcote, Tom, printer and stationer
317. Ashton, Mrs. Joseph, plumber
319. Meadowcroft, T. E., fishmonger
321. Smithson, Mrs. A. C., pawnbroker
323. Atkinson, Mrs. S. A., fruiterer
325. Crabtree, Miss E., baker, confectioner
327. Collinge, J. T., butcher
329. Lord, Fred, draper

Oldham Road mill
Wearing (Thos.) & Co., Grecian Emery Works, Emery rollers, etc. Tel. 1535
Rochdale Slipper Co., Venetian slippers
Greenwood & Lister, cap winderers
Preston, A. & W., picture framers. Tel. 674

Halfpenny bridge
Duckworth (James) Ltd., grocers. Registered office. Tel. 38
Tominsons (Rochdale) Ltd., Soho Iron-works, textile machinists. Tel. 54
Victoria Mill
52. Bunting, John, hairdresser

Durham street
Red Rose Inn. A. Pearson, beer retailer
56. Saunders, Geo., clogger & cycle agent
58. Kitchin, F. R., saddler
60. Cooke, J., hairdresser
62. Smith, T. B., clogger, shoemaker
64. Loe, Frank, watchmaker & jeweller
66. Law, Mrs. Phoebe, artificial teeth
68. Sharples, William, herbalist
70. Marriott, Sarah, diners rooms
72–74. Green, Robert, baker & confectioner
92. Dusty Miller Inn. George E. Porter, licensed victualler

Woodbine place
76–94. 3/6 to 5/6 per week

Norbury, Thos., grocer & tobacconist
100. Kershaw, Thomas, chimney sweep

Dixy street
Dixon (R.) & Co., soap manufacturers
Fethney Bros., machinists

Rochdale Slipper Co., slip manufacturers

Kershaw, Thomas, chimney sweep

Prince Albert Inn. John Taylor, beer retailer
104. Smith, T. B., clogger, shoemaker
108. Field, Charles, fried fish and chips
110–112. Coupe, Mrs. E., milliner
114. Lord, Frank, confectioner, off-license

Fletcher street
122. Mahony, M. J., L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., branch surgery. Also at 189 Drake street

Weifield street
124. Riggs, Mary, shop assistant
126. Daedon, Edward
128. Schofield & Ratcliffe, confectioners

Royds street
13. Borough Police Branch Station
Rochdale Corporation yard for stores
Victoria Spinning Co. Ltd., cotton spinners. Tel. 235

Elder street
101–105. 4/- to 7/- per week
111. Hill, M., baker and confectioner

Miss will street
Ashworth's dining rooms

Sandfield road
Oxford place
2.10–5/- to 5/- per week

Hamilton, James, sheet metal worker
Tel. 439
12.52–5/- to 5/- per week

Franklin street
Metcalf & Co., hair & chain makers
54. Provident Co-operative Society
Elder street
76. Meadowcroft, John, grocer
78–104. 6/- to 7/- per week

Heaworth, James, butcher
106. Catonach, George, fried fish & chips

Sandfield road