

International Sport and Leisure History Cluster (SpLeisH)



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The significance of Manchester's first major footballing success

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October 2015

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Background

Manchester's development provides an example of regional football emergence & growth

This research is part of a study aiming to:

- Interpret the early development of the game
- Understand its significance to Manchester.
- Identify how the game developed in the region; who the early pioneers were; the influence of the sport on the locality and on identity; the relationship with other sports and leisure activities; the people who participated and spectated; and what the motives were of those who encouraged the development of clubs.
- The culmination of the research will map the emergence, development and establishment of association football in Manchester

For example, previous research has analysed the affordability of football. These tables were published in *Soccer & Society* paper

Table 2. Mancunian ticket prices, house rental and other expenses, 1904–1908.^a

Item	Price	
	Shillings	Pence
Single ticket	Boy standing ticket	3
	Standing ticket	6
	Covered standing ticket	1
	Cheapest seat ticket	2
	Most expensive reserved seat ticket	5
	Thomas Cook FA Cup final excursion	19
Season ticket	Female unreserved seated season ticket (19 games, 1908)	7
	Standing season ticket (19 games, 1908)	8
	Covered standing season ticket (19 games, 1908)	12
	Female reserved seated season ticket (19 games, 1908)	12
	Unreserved seated season ticket (17 games)	15
	Reserved seated season ticket (17 games)	18
Living costs	White granulated sugar	2
	Scrag end (mutton neck)	5–6
	Cheese	7
	Back bacon	7–9
	Pork chops	8–10
	Beef rump steak	1
	Tenement weekly rent	4–7
	Two-up Two-down terraced house in Gorton weekly rent	5
	Three-up Three-down in Hulme weekly rent	8
	Five roomed house with bathroom and a small garden in Trafford	8
		6

^aUnless otherwise stated, all match prices are for Manchester City in 1904 and food prices are for a pound (454 g) in weight. Manchester United did have a cheaper individual match seat ticket at one shilling and sixpence at this time. *Daily Dispatch*, January 15, 1904, 6; *Manchester Evening News*, December 23, 1902, 1; *Manchester Guardian*, July 14, 1904, 3; United Kingdom Board of Trade, *Cost of Living*, 294–304; *Daily Dispatch*, April 22, 1904, 6.

Table 3. Comparison of weekly wage to match ticket cost.

Occupation ^a	Early twentieth century			Early twenty-first century			
	Wage ^b	% of cheapest ticket cost to wage	% of highest ticket cost to wage	Occupation	Wage ^c	% of cheapest ticket cost to wage	% of highest ticket cost to wage
<i>Cotton Winder (female)</i>	11/- to 17/-	2.3–1.5	6.0–3.9	<i>Minimum wage (3.5 h week) 18–20 years</i>	£176	14.8	33.0
<i>piecework</i>	–	–	–	<i>Retailing</i>	£296	8.8	19.6
<i>Engineering</i>	18/-	2.8	27.8	<i>Service industry</i>	£432	6.0	13.4
<i>Labourer</i>	–	–	–	<i>Construction/manufacturing industries</i>	£529	4.9*	11.0*
<i>Building Labourer</i>	22/8	2.2	22.1			4.9*cheapest match ticket in 2013	11.0*most expensive regular match ticket £58
<i>Bricklayer</i>	45/5	1.1	11.0				

^aFigures are calculated for a weekly wage in pence for 1904–1908 and pounds for 2013. Lowest and highest female seated season ticket prices have been utilized to calculate an average ticket price for the cotton winder. Percentage figures have been rounded to one decimal point. United Kingdom Board of Trade, *Cost of Living*, 806; ^bLabour Market Statistics: EARN01: Average Weekly Earning, *Office for National Statistics*, November 2013.

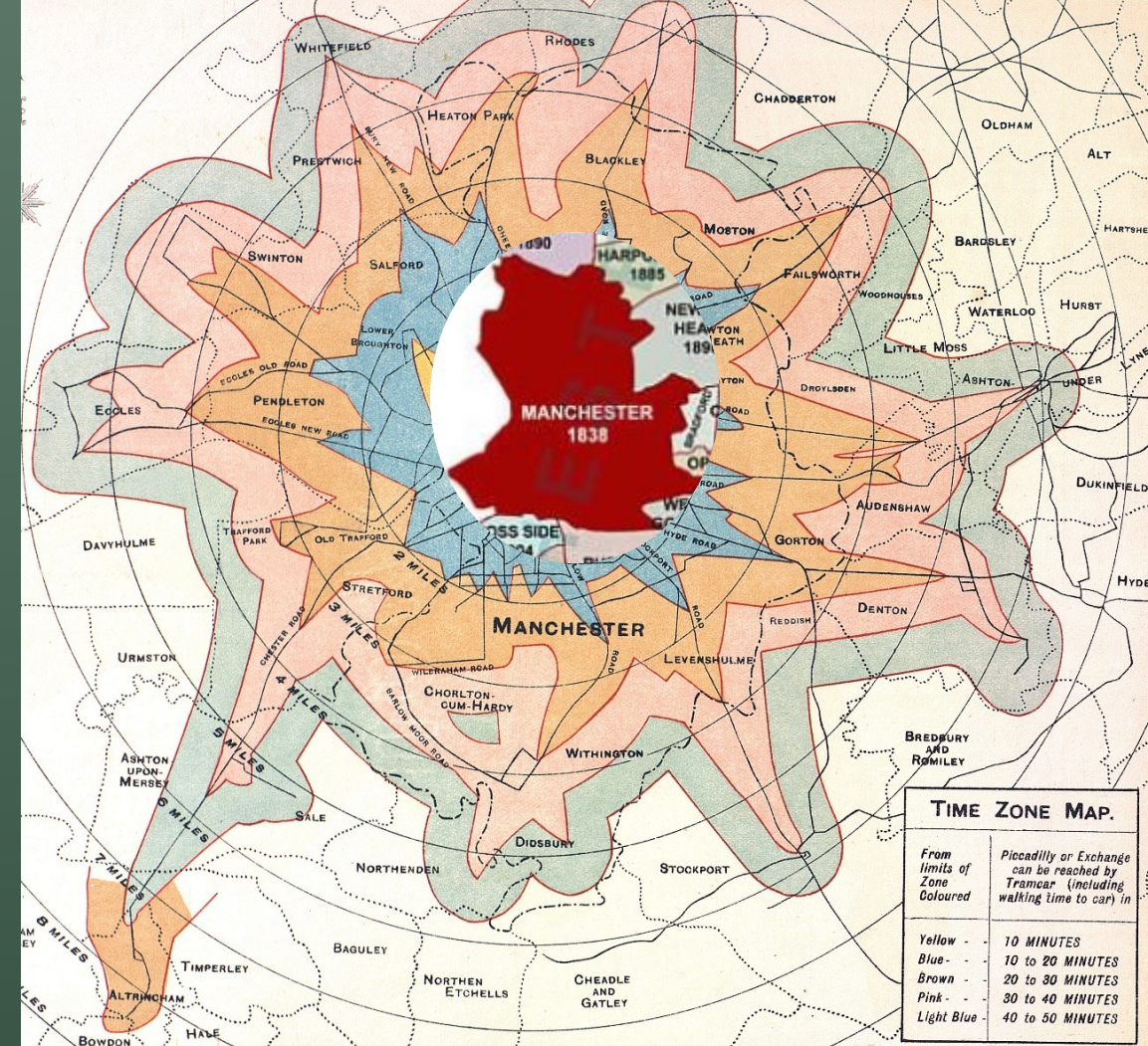
^cPre-1971 values are in written in pre-decimal format where 45/5 would represent 45 shillings and five pence, 18/- would represent eighteen shillings. ^d2013 income figures are based on a national average.



Manchester's eight miles



The city of Manchester and its expansion 1838 to 1931 (left); approx. 8 miles from centre modern map (above) and time by tram/distance from central Manchester 1914 map (1838 city of Manchester superimposed)



Manchester's Football Achievements up to 1934

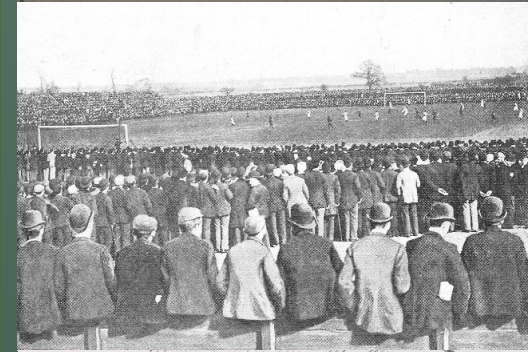
- Manchester grew rapidly with little to unify the population
- FA Cup established 1872 with Manchester's first entrants 1877
- FA Cup semi-final staged in Manchester 1882 & 1883
- Manchester staged FAC Final 1893
- 1892 both Manchester's prominent sides join the League
- 1899 Manchester City win Second Division title & become first Manchester side to win promotion

Top:
Manchester Association enter the FA Cup, 1877;
Middle: 1893 FAC final at Fallowfield, Manchester;
Bottom:
Christmas 1898 and MCFC 'climb the golden stairs' ahead of Newton Heath (MUFC) as they head for promotion

FOOTBALL.

THE ENGLISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION CUP.

Appended is a list of the entries for the above competition for the forthcoming season:—Wanderers, Ramblers, Old Harrovians, Leyton, Royal Engineers, Union, Old Foresters, Clapham Rovers, Minerva, Southill Park, Queen's Park (Glasgow), Forest School, Old Wykehamists, Upton Park, Cambridge University, Oxford University, Hendon, South Norwood, St. Stephen's (Westminster), Wood Grange, Great Marlow, Panthers, Druids (Wales), High Wycombe, 105th Regiment, Sheffield Club, Barnes, Reading, Reading Hornets, Manchester Association, Shropshire Wanderers, Maidenhead, Swifts, First Surrey Rifles, Pilgrims, St. Mark's, Remnants, Rochester, Grantham, Darwen (Lancashire), and Nottingham.



Manchester's Football Achievements up to 1934

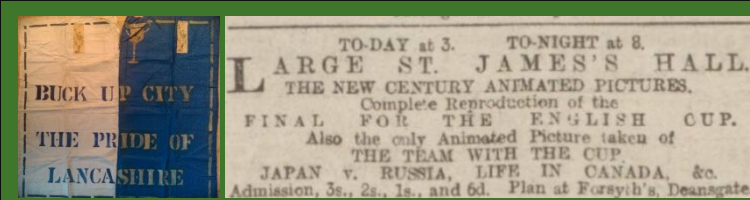
- 1904 City win FA Cup & runners up in League
- 1906 United promoted for first time
- 1908 United League champions
- 1909 United FA Cup winners
- 1911 United League champions
- 1926 City FA Cup finalists
- 1933 City FA Cup finalists
- 1934 City FA Cup winners



Significance of first success in 1904

- The 1903-04 FA Cup success inspired many
- The subsequent homecoming united Mancunians in celebration for first time
- The social character of the parade was commented on by observers: 'from the juveniles who had swarmed the convenient lamp posts in order to obtain a glimpse of all there was to be seen, to the corpulent old dames who encroached on to the tram lines and vigorously clapped their hands.'

Manchester Courier, column 6 "City's" Home-coming: Enthusiastic Reception Of Meredith And His Men, p.6, Tuesday 26 April 1904



There is nothing in the annals of football that will compare with the magnificent reception...

*Notwithstanding the lateness of their arrival, the **whole population** of the city turned out to do them honour.*

Daily Dispatch

There were fully five times as many people along the route of the triumphal procession as were in the streets on the occasion of the visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales. Not even on the occasion of the rejoicings which followed the news of the relief of Mafeking was the enthusiasm greater than it was last night, and certainly the demonstration did the City infinitely more credit than did the wild saturnalia which was the outcome of General Baden Powell's successful resistance to the Boers

Manchester Evening News

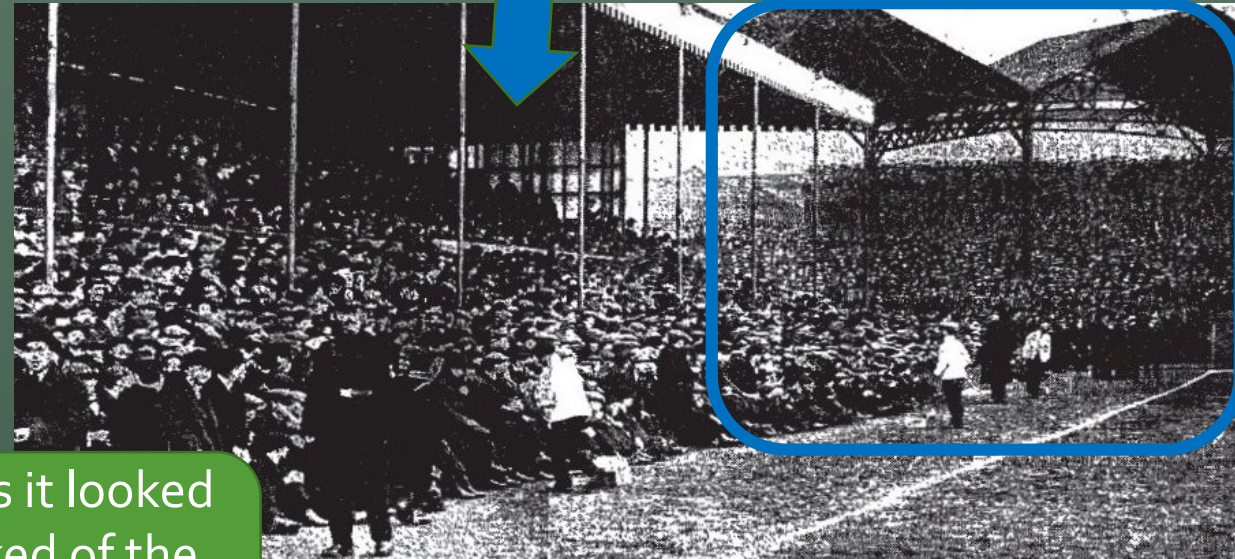
THE WINNERS OF THE ENGLISH CUP.
Reception of the City Team.
UNPRECEDENTED SCENE.

The Boys Stand

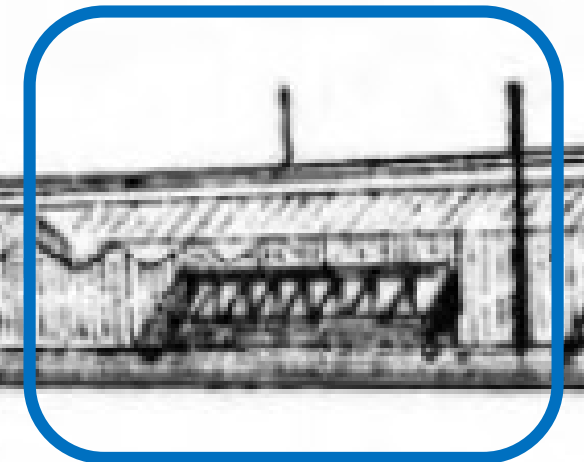
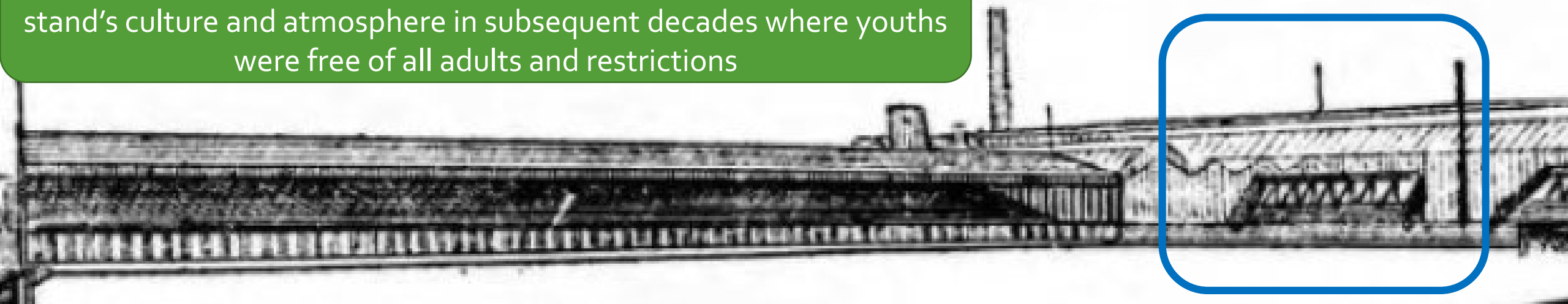
- 1904 success came at a time when an identifiable youth sub culture had developed
- Manchester City capitalised on this
- Boys Stand became 'their' space



Boys in uniform (school, band?) looking out of Main Stand towards the Boys Stand c.1904



The Boys Stand at Manchester City's Hyde Road ground, as it looked in 1907 (below) and roofed in 1910 (above). Attendees talked of the stand's culture and atmosphere in subsequent decades where youths were free of all adults and restrictions

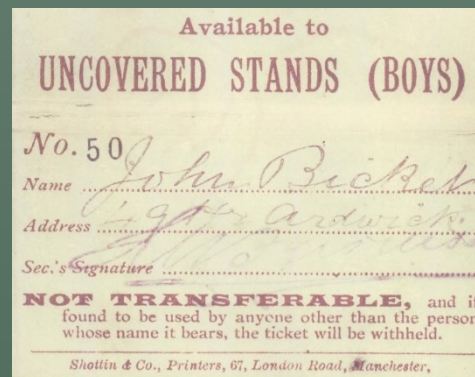


The Boys Stand

In 1905 an analysis of the leisure activities of Manchester's young males highlighted the importance of football in their lives:

If a stranger in Manchester should happen on a winter's Saturday afternoon to spend an hour or two in watching one of the great football matches on the Manchester City ground in Hyde Road, he would be most surprised by the very large number of young lads gathered together to watch the game.

Charles EB Russell, *Manchester Boys: Sketches of Manchester Lads at Work and Play* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1905), 67.



A Boy's season ticket and boys' band watching Meredith (above), more boys at City's Hyde Road 1905 (below)



Progressive attendance records 1895 to 1934

Club	Opponent	Date	Attendance	Capacity	Venue
City	Newton Heath	7 December 1895	20,000	25,000	Hyde Road
City	Liverpool	3 April 1896	30,000	30,000	Hyde Road
United	City	25 December 1902	40,000	40,000	Bank Street
United	Liverpool	19 February 1910	50,000	70,000	Old Trafford
United	City	17 September 1910	60,000	70,000	Old Trafford
United	City	20 November 1920	63,000	70,000	Old Trafford
City	Cardiff City	8 March 1924	76,166	82,000	Maine Road
City	Stoke City	3 March 1934	84,569	85,000	Maine Road



Men, women and children at Hyde Road, 1913 (above) - All female fans offered season tickets & match tickets at boys prices in every part of stadium
 United's Old Trafford 1910 (left) and City's Maine Road 1934 (right)



Grey Beards



'grey beards', boys, men and women - Manchester City's Hyde Road 1905 (left and top) and gates closed 45 minutes before kick off 1913 (below)

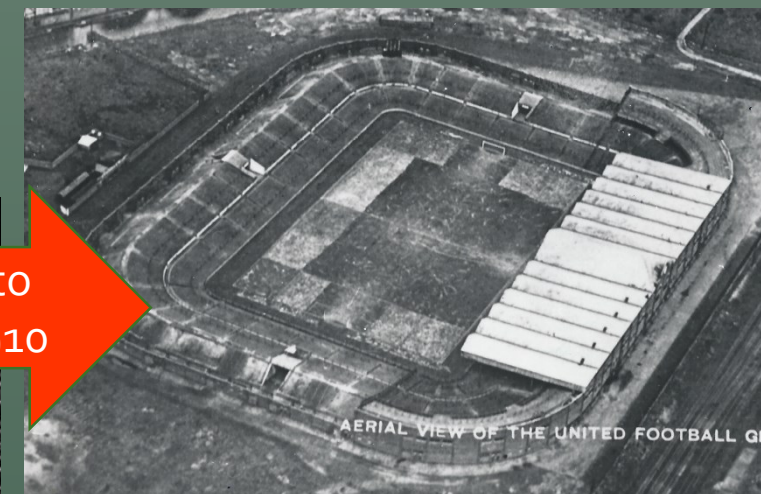


Geographical Moves

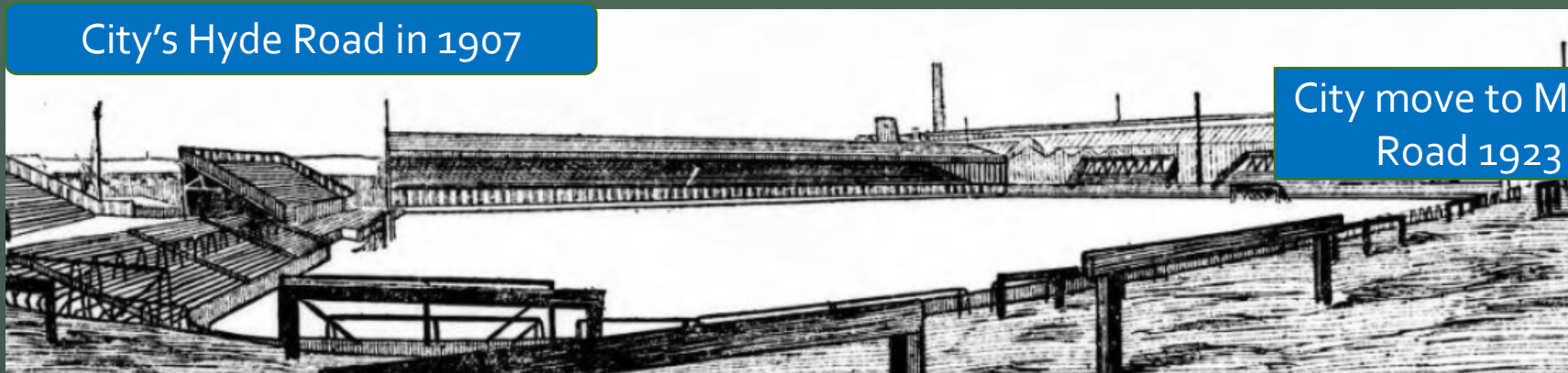
United's Bank Street in 1907



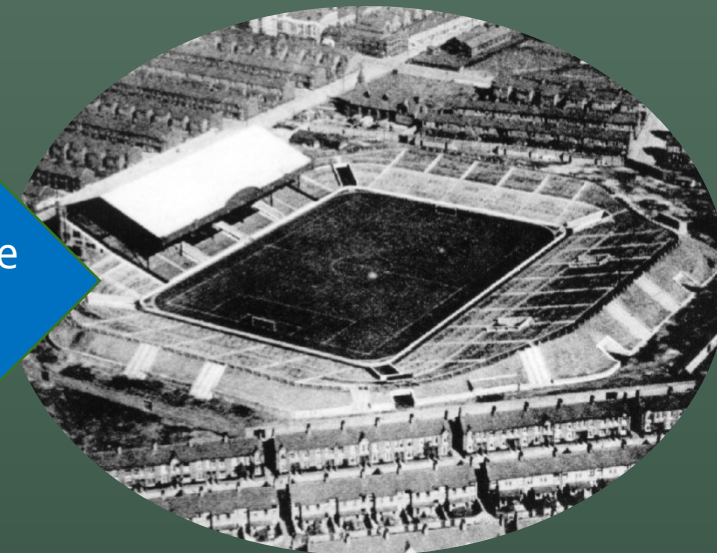
United move to Old Trafford 1910



City's Hyde Road in 1907



City move to Maine Road 1923



"I always felt Hyde Road was homely. [However] we were always confined. Everyone looked after you but there wasn't enough room. Maine Road, on the other hand, was massive and I enjoyed standing on the Popular Side for many years. I thought Maine Road was a wonderful place and worthy of such a great team." *95 year old Randell Cockshoot, interviewed in October 2003.*

“It was a beautiful and, at the same time, powerful sight... it was amazing; there were so many people on the terracing that I froze. Prior to then I’d only seen crowds of a couple of hundred, so the sight of 60,000 made me think the whole world had come to the bottom of my street!”

Manchester resident Margaret Baker, interviewed in September 2002 at Maine Road



Business Benefits

“Matchdays were always something special. It wasn't so much the football, but the entertainment around the ground... there were artists performing... the 'meat-pie man', the American Indian and the Houdini character in a strait jacket! They were wonderful days”

Moss Side resident Marjorie Cooper

Shopkeepers around Maine Road benefited enormously... Shops seemed to spring up on almost every corner... it was a real bonus for local trade... Every type of shop seemed to benefit.

Margaret Baker



Other Developments

Stadium developments by City and United encouraged others:

- Belle Vue complex considered other sports:

Greyhound racing

Speedway

Rugby League

Also established a prominent non-league football team Manchester Central FC



- Local non-league sides increased within the Manchester conurbation

Mid-1920s Belle Vue
(right) Greyhound
stadium top, athletics
ground bottom



Mid-1930s
Belle Vue
(left)
Greyhound
stadium top,
Soccer/speed
way ground
bottom



Within a year of 1904 success:

- Campaign to match potential pitches with teams
- 60 teams matched with new pitches
- Enabled approximately 1,000 boys in working class districts to play organised games
- These were not teams connected with churches, schools, lads clubs – the boys' own teams!
- Platt Fields park had 13 pitches with 26 teams sharing them by 1915



Playing Fields

- Manchester & Salford Playing Fields Society established 1907
- First field purchased was 'Melland' in Gorton, £9,865
- By 1915 the Society owned 5 playing fields (Gorton, Crumpsall, Newton Heath, Pendleton and Didsbury) with 2,000 present every Saturday afternoon (playing & watching) for independent teams
- By 1915 similar organisations existed in Stockport & Rochdale
- By 1929 the Society had established 7 major playing fields on 115 acres, allowing 2,000 to play every Saturday plus 182 football-specific grounds in public parks
- Manchester City Council developed 201 football pitches by 1938 (plus 76 cricket pitches & a variety of other sports)

The Playing Fields Society was inaugurated in the year 1907, and its objects are threefold:—

To increase the existing supply of public and private playing fields and other open spaces, and particularly to purchase, take on lease, or otherwise to acquire land suitable for this purpose.

To arrange for the use of such playing fields by clubs and others, either gratuitously or otherwise, as may from time to time be deemed advisable.

To endeavour to influence public and private bodies, with a view to the provision of sufficient playing fields to meet the requirements of the various districts.

Above: the formation of the society, as documented in "Manchester in 1915". Below: Melland Playing Fields, first grounds bought by Playing Fields Society



Spread of Competition

The number of football leagues in Manchester increased rapidly after 1904:

- 8 in 1903
- 18 under Manchester FA jurisdiction by 1908-09 season
- 22 Leagues & 2 Charity Competitions by 1931 under Manchester FA jurisdiction, plus 4 Manchester FA cup competitions
- Majority of these leagues had multiple divisions for age 14 upwards
- Several had 7 divisions
- Teams represented churches, boys clubs, street teams, community teams and factory/workers teams such as Manchester Dairymen, Denton Tramways and Manchester Welsh

Research suggests that modern day participation rates are higher in Manchester than rest of UK because of a 'cultural affinity within Manchester for football'.

Analysing the value of football to Greater Manchester (2013)



Participation and Support

By mid 1930s there were approximately 400 football teams in the city of Manchester's parks

There was also several in-company leagues, such as the Co-operative Society, and church/school competitions

During the 1930s street football (and other sports) remained popular

In 1932 Manchester's chief constable recommended five streets in densely populated Hulme be closed to traffic and become children's 'Play Streets'

200 Manchester & Salford Play Streets were established during the 1930s, with legislation following in 1938

However, local bye-laws prevented sports in many streets, leading to 129 offences on Manchester's streets in 1936 (Street Playground Act, 1938).



Summary & Future Directions

Interpretation of Manchester football's *longue durée* continues. Manchester's football history – or indeed its sporting life – cannot be focused on studies of Manchester City, Manchester United or any of the other individual surviving clubs. They are a part of the story but they are not the story.

There is still much work to be done to understand the origins of association football and its social & economic impact on our regions.





Comments?
Feedback?
Advice?
Questions?



“The Emergence of an Association Football Culture in Manchester 1840-1884” by Gary James & Dave Day, published in *Sport in History*.
“FA Cup success, football infrastructure and the establishment of Manchester’s footballing identity” by Gary James & Dave Day, published in *Soccer & Society*.
“Manchester's Footballing Pioneers, 1863–1904: A Collective Biography” by Gary James, published in the *International Journal of the History of Sport* Facebook.com/garyjames4 Twitter: @garyjameswriter

