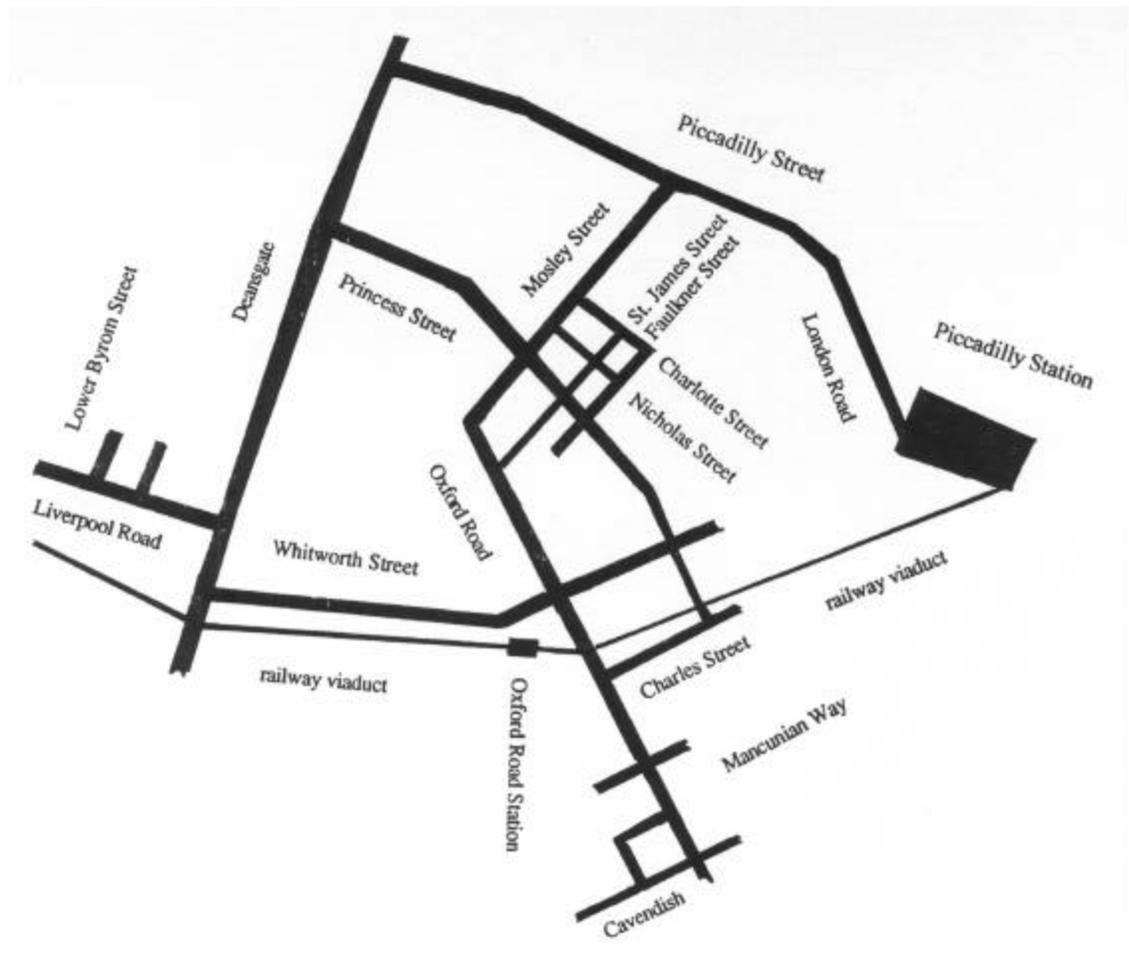


## CHAPTER 7

### A BELLHOUSE WALKING TOUR OF MANCHESTER

Although none of the Bellhouse businesses exist in Manchester today, there are several buildings, and some bridges and machinery, connected to the Bellhouse family, that have survived. These may be seen on a walking tour through central Manchester that takes a morning or an afternoon of time. To start the tour I will assume that one arrives, as I have done, in Manchester by train at Piccadilly Station.



When you come out of the station, head north on London Road. After two cross streets London Road runs into Piccadilly. Follow Piccadilly until you reach Mosley Street and turn left. Walk down Mosley Street until you reach Charlotte Street. The neoclassical building on the corner on your left is the Portico Library, built by David Bellhouse senior in 1803. He was also one of the original subscribers to the Library. The entrance to the Library is in Charlotte Street. If you wish to go inside, you must ring for admittance.

Continue on down Mosley Street until it crosses Princess Street. The Greek Revival building at the corner, now the City Art Gallery, was the Royal Manchester Institution. David Bellhouse junior laid the foundation for the building and rented rooms in it on behalf of the Manchester Choral Society. Several Bellhouses each contributed 40 guineas toward the construction of the building. These include David Bellhouse senior, David Bellhouse junior, James, Wainwright and John Bellhouse.

Remain on Mosley Street until you reach St. Peter's Square. The Manchester Central Library is in the square. Turn into Oxford Road and head south. If you want a side excursion, turn left off Oxford Road on to St. James Street. Follow St. James Street to Nicholas Street. This is the area where David Bellhouse first began to build his business empire. It is now Manchester's Chinatown. As you approach Nicholas Street, the former Bellhouse property will be on the far side of Nicholas Street and on the right side of St. James Street after crossing Nicholas. The entire Bellhouse property is now a playground. It is the L-shaped plot of land that appears on Laurent's 1793 map of Manchester shown in Chapter 2. Return to Oxford Road and turn left. Just after you pass Bridgewater Street, you will cross a bridge over the Rochdale Canal and then pass Whitworth Street. The Bellhouse timber and building businesses as well as the iron foundry were to the left on Whitworth Street. No trace of these businesses remains in this street.

As you continue down Oxford Road, you will pass under a railway viaduct. This viaduct was part of the South Junction Railway built by David Bellhouse junior beginning in 1845. Another side excursion is to turn left after the viaduct on Charles Street and continue to Pritchard Street. The location where the cotton mills stood is on the left as you walk down Pritchard Street toward the Medlock River. Not much farther down Charles Street, the street crosses the Medlock River. The small bridge over the river was built originally by E.T. Bellhouse. It was substantially rebuilt in the mid 1990s.

Return to Oxford Road and turn left. After you pass under an elevated roadway, the buildings of Manchester Metropolitan University will be on your right. Immediately beyond this is a park area where All Saints Church used to stand. Turn right and walk by or across the park to Lower Ormond Street. On the corner, at the end of the street is the Bellhouse Building of Manchester Metropolitan University. This former residence, built in the Georgian style probably by David Bellhouse junior, was the home of Wainwright Bellhouse in the 1830s. As you are facing the building, turn left up Lower Ormond Street and walk around the square along Cavendish Street back to Oxford Road. The neoclassical building on Cavendish Street with the portico and Doric columns is the facade of the Chorlton on Medlock Town Hall and Dispensary. David Bellhouse junior was the contractor for this building.

Walk back to Oxford Road, turn left, and walk along Oxford Road back to the railway viaduct. Walk under the viaduct and turn left at Whitworth Street. The viaduct can be followed along Whitworth Street to Deansgate. At either Albion Street or at Deansgate you can turn left under the viaduct and get a panoramic view of it since many of the buildings on the south side of the viaduct have been torn down. Return to Deansgate. As you passed along the viaduct near Deansgate, you will have seen some cast iron bridges with castellated piers that span the Rochdale Canal. These were built for the South Junction Railway by Edward Taylor Bellhouse. Head north up Deansgate and turn left at Liverpool Road. Just up this street on the right are two iron frame buildings called the Campfield Market. They were built by Edward Taylor Bellhouse. The company name is on some of the original iron pedestal supports; the more modern replacement beams have a different manufacturer's name on them. The further market building at Lower Byrom Street houses the Manchester Air and Space Museum. Just across Lower Byrom Street on Liverpool Road is the Power Hall of the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry. One of the machines in the Power Hall is a hydraulic pump manufactured by E.T. Bellhouse and Co. If you continue out the back of the Power Hall following the railway tracks, you will see Liverpool Road Station, the world's first passenger railway station, on the left and a series of five red brick warehouses on the right. The warehouses were built by David Bellhouse junior in 1830.

Return to Liverpool Road and walk back to Deansgate where you may end the tour. If you have any energy left, turn left at Deansgate and take a lengthy walk past several streets until you reach Manchester Cathedral. Inside the cathedral on the north side of the choir (or the left

side as you face the chancel), there is a memorial plaque to Ernest Bellhouse who died in 1910. The choir stalls on the north side were given in his memory.

If you were able to finish your tour in the morning and want to fill an afternoon with more Bellhouse touring, then turn right at Deansgate when you return from the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry. Return to Whitworth Street and follow it back toward Oxford Road. Catch a train for Warrington at Oxford Road Railway Station. It will be necessary to buy a map of Warrington either in Manchester or when you get to Warrington. There are two Bellhouse Lanes on the Warrington map. The one that is of interest is the Bellhouse Lane in Grappenhall. The first part of the train ride to Warrington will take you over the arched viaduct built by David Bellhouse junior in the 1840s. At Warrington take a bus that goes to Knutsford Road or to Chester Road. Bellhouse Lane is off Knutsford Road. Church Lane, off Chester Road, runs into Bellhouse Lane after crossing the Bridgewater Canal. The Bellhouses used this canal to carry timber from Liverpool to Manchester. David Bellhouse senior's farmhouse and barn are in Bellhouse Lane. The house is now known as the Bellhouse Club and the barn has been turned into the Grappenhall Community Centre.

Another tour that could be taken is to visit the Bellhouse mansions in Victoria Park. That requires boarding a bus heading south on Oxford Road. It is a fairly long walk. I have visited parts of Victoria Park and have found that many of the original houses, although some are altered, are still standing. Unfortunately, in the brief trip that I took to this area, I was unable to identify any of the Bellhouse mansions. The house numbering has changed in the last hundred years or so.