

## Archaeological excavations at 74-88 Great Ancoats Street

The works you can see have been undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd on behalf of Mulbury City in advance of redevelopment.

The remains are those of the structures which occupied the site from the early 19th to the 20th centuries.

The foundations and cellars which you can see are the remains of warehouse structures and houses, the sort of which were occupied by multiple families in near-squalid conditions. This manner of dwelling was occupied by the workers who spear-headed Manchester's industrial boom. They often lived within the cellars beneath the warehouses of the type which we are currently recording, with family units separated from others only by thin brick partitions. These conditions prompted Friedrich Engels to write, in 1844, his famous *The Condition of the Working Class in England*.



There was little legislative control over new dwellings that were built during this period, and most workers' houses were erected without any form of water supply or sanitation; at best, an open drain from a privy might have been installed down the middle of the street or court. A survey of dwellings for the working classes carried out by the Manchester Statistical Society in 1835 recorded that 18,295 people were living in cellars - approximately 12% of the working-class population in Manchester.

The work has revealed an exciting assemblage of finds which give insight into the people who lived upon and worked at the site. These include numerous bottles and ceramic items which are stamped with peoples' names, including customers of the former Astley Arms, the pub which stood upon the site from the 1820s and which was later named the Paganini Tavern from around the 1840s. The location of the pub was at the frontage of the site to Great Ancoats Street, however a recent trial-trench excavated in this location has demonstrated that modern renovations to the pub's cellar had removed the vast majority of the original structure. A similar story applied to the frontage of the site to Port Street, hence the reason why the archaeological works are focussed on this frontage of the site with Houldsworth Street.



1849 Ordnance Survey map



1893 Ordnance Survey map



1969 Ordnance Survey map

