

A SHORT ACCOUNT
OF THE
VICTORIA PARK,
MANCHESTER.

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Committee in Commemoration
of the Centenary of the Opening
of the Park on July 31st, 1837.

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I. Introductory.

The Victoria Park, Manchester, had its beginnings, partly in a town-planning scheme, which was far ahead of its time, and for which the City may now well be thankful, and partly as a gamble. Of the gamble more will be said shortly. The name was chosen in the reign of William IV, while the Princess Victoria was heiress presumptive to the throne and evidently in honour of the future Queen. The Park arose out of the desire of certain wealthy inhabitants to reside in a quiet area well away from the bustle of their business in Manchester itself. Buildings that had been dwelling houses in the town were being converted into warehouses, so that new residences had to be found, and the area of the Park seemed sufficiently remote to ensure the quietness desired.

The Centenary of the official opening of the Park, which took place on July 31st, 1837, seems to offer a suitable occasion for this short history. It may be noted here that this Centenary anticipates by one year that of the incorporation of Manchester itself.

2. Formation of the Victoria Park Company.

The project of the formation of a Park had probably been on foot for one or more years before May 23rd, 1836, which is the date of the first entry in the Company's Minute Book, for already conditional purchase had been made of land which could be bought at three pence a yard. At the meeting of this date Directors were appointed and the Company began its existence. The general plan was that, with money subscribed by shareholders, the land of the Park, which lay in Rusholme, Chorlton-on-Medlock and Moss Side, should be bought from the owners, in part on lease, should be developed as regards roads and drainage, laid out in plots and then sold to those who wished to live in the area. This Sale would carry with it certain conditions, the laws of the Park, in fact, which would protect its amenities. Some of the land was to be sold with houses already built, the rest in plots fit for building.

Though the Company was not yet a corporate body, application for so many shares had already been made that these were issued in June 1836 ; various plots were purchased and the Architect, Richard Lane, was directed to complete contracts for the making of roads and for the building of a park wall and of lodges at the entrances. The lodges were commenced in August 1836 and land was offered, first to the shareholders and later,

in September of 1836, to the Public. Notice of the land offered was sent to the various solicitors of the town.

In November of the same year it was decided that an Act of Parliament should be obtained to consolidate the Company. The draft of it was considered shortly after this, and on May 7th, 1837, still in the reign of William IV, the Victoria Park Act received the Royal Assent.

3. The Victoria Park Act of 1837.

By this Act the Company received very definite powers and it is from it that we learn much that we know of the early objects and history of the Park. We learn that the Company was formed on the Tontine Principle, a form of gambling which had been introduced by a Neapolitan banker, Tonti, about 1653. According to this part of the Act the holder of each £100 share could nominate a "Life"; if the person so nominated died within the first three years, then another "Life" could be chosen. As the persons so nominated died off, the shareholders were to lose their shares in the Company. When, however, only fifty "Lives" remained the whole assets were to be divided among those shareholders who had nominated them, in proportion to the shares they each held. These shareholders might then wind up the Company or might

continue it on ordinary lines. This interesting gamble came to nothing for, as will be seen, the Company did not survive for a long enough period.

The object of the Company was stated to be to erect a number of dwelling houses of respectable appearance and condition, with gardens and pleasure grounds attached, with proper rules and regulations for the due management thereof and for the protection of the same against damage and nuisances. This, it was stated, would greatly tend to the accommodation, health and comfort of the occupiers of the said houses and of the Public generally, and be to the benefit and improvement of the Town of Manchester and its vicinity. The Company had the power to lay out and embellish part of its property as an ornamental park with a wall, to lay out streets, squares, crescents, and to erect private dwelling houses, but not buildings that were applicable for purposes of trade. A penalty was enacted on persons making, selling or using keys for opening the gates of the Park without permission from the Directors.

Power was granted for raising £500,000, in 5,000 shares of £100 each for the payment for land and for maintaining the Park. The original directors were to be Thomas Harbottle, Joseph Adshead, Henry Byrom, John Westhead and

Richard Bealey. In addition to these the following are named as originators of the scheme, Joseph Denison, Joseph Ablett, Jesse John Dickenson, Frederick William Cobden, and Richard Crook.

4. The Preparation of the Park.

What the Company actually did was to arrange for the purchase of the land of the Park, even though it did not, in the long run actually pay for it all. The total area taken over was 708,667 square yards or about 146 acres. The largest sellers were Leicester (236,827 yds.), Adshead (117,231 yds.) and Alderson (47,366 yds.). Much of the land included in the Park had belonged to John Dickenson, the owner of the Birch Estate, from whom Dickenson Road receives its name. Before the Company was formed he sold some of this land on chief to others, who in their turn sold it to the Company, and who, in some cases, bought it back with the restrictions and the advantages which became attached to land in the Park.

Further work of the Company was to lay the main sewers of the Park and to build roads. The main roads are still, apart from patching, much in the state they were when first made. It is likely, too, that the sewers are but little changed. Lodges and gates were erected and several houses



South West Lodge
RUSHOLMS GREEN

were built, some of which still exist and are in use. The plan on which the Park was to be developed (Plate 2) and which was much more elaborate than that which was later found practicable, was the work of Richard Lane, the Architect, to whom were also entrusted the contracts for roads, sewers and houses. The early houses were built according to purchasers' specifications at a price agreed. The following letter dated August 11th, 1837 from Joseph Adshead, and which refers to houses, one of which still survives,* may be quoted. "I am desirous of purchasing from the Company four houses now erecting, situate near Park Crescent, together with the land on which they are erected, price £11,000, subject to chiefs which the Company have to pay for them."

From the early accounts it seems that £7,500 was spent on roads, £21,000 on buildings and £15,000 on directors' fees. The actual amount of capital paid in seems to have been only £24,000, this apparently being 20% of the total applied for and allotted. If this is so, then the amount subscribed cannot have been more than £120,000, instead of the £500,000 anticipated and for which tentative applications are said to have been made before any shares were issued.

* This house, No. 5 The Crescent, is in process of actual demolition whilst this History is in the press.

5. The Opening Ceremony.

The Park was evidently well advanced by July 31st, 1837, for on that day a formal opening took place and this was a grand affair. It is well and picturesquely reported in Wheeler's Chronicle of Saturday, August 5th. A procession of thirteen carriages was formed at the York Hotel. In these were, among others, the recently returned Members of Parliament for Manchester. The Cortège proceeded to the handsome Entrance Lodge at Longsight and was there met by a band which, amid the acclamations of a considerable assembly, performed the National Anthem in superb style. It next passed across the Park to the Rusholme (Crescent) Entrance, past the house of Mr. Richard Lane, by whom the gentlemen were most courteously invited to inspect the grounds and partake his hospitality. The weather was threatening at first but later proved remarkably propitious. The numerous groups of ladies dispersed about the Park, who honoured the occasion with their presence, completed the animation of the scene.

The account goes on to state that nine mansions were already complete or nearly so and that draining and soughing of several miles had already been done. There is mention, too, in it of ornamental plantations and a note that, in a twelve month, a comparative wilderness had been con-

verted to a promising public undertaking. The Church that is mentioned in the Chronicle as likely to be built on the ground allotted for the purpose, does now exist, but the intended Observatory, which was to combine with its higher astronomical purposes others of a more generally attractive and amusing character has never eventuated.

After the procession had passed out of the Park by the Rusholme gate, an elegant cold collation at the Birch Villa Inn was partaken of by fifty people. Thomas Harbottle Esquire was in the Chair; Joseph Westhead and Richard Lane filled the Vice-chairs. The local Members of Parliament, the Rt. Hon. C. P. Thomson (later Lord Sydenham), Joseph Brotherton and Mark Philips were present. There were very many speeches and at least ten toasts. It seems that every one interested was toasted in turn. In the toast of "The Towns and Trade of Manchester and Salford," Peter Clare stated that the Park was free from the atmospheric objection so common in Manchester, namely its smoke.

After the dinner the procession formed up and went through the Park again, passing out of the new Entrance in Oxford Place. The reporter notes that in all the proceedings there was no single untoward event to mar the retrospect of this most harmonious and gratifying ceremonial.

6. The Breakdown of the Victoria Park Company and the Formation of the Victoria Park Trust.

In December, 1839, however, the enterprise was found to be impracticable, for trade was bad, and so the Company ceased to exist. It does not seem to have been formally wound up; it just faded away, after disposing of its property on the best terms it could. This meant that, in most cases, it reconveyed, to the original owners, the land which it still held and had not been able to sell. This reconveyance, with the stipulation that the Company was exonerated from its engagements and arrears of chief rents, appears in the deeds of some of the Park's older buildings.

Then, for a time, the Park suffered an interregnum. It was no man's land. Rusholme, in which it mainly lay, was in no way organised to maintain such an estate. The lodges and roads fell into disrepair. On February 19th, 1845, a meeting of landowners was held and it was decided to form a Victoria Park Trust with the object of carrying out the original plan for its preservation as a private park. The formation of a new Company was considered, but the proposition came to nothing; in fact no trust deeds were ever made. But from that time to the present the Committee then formed, appointed annually by owners and residents, has managed the Park's

affairs. Its position, strengthened by the City of Manchester's and Parliament's recognition in 1885, was not assailed in any way for fifty years.

7. General Survey of the Trust's Work, including Minutes, Accounts, Tolls, Buildings and Rates.

Before considering the later history and troubles of the Park, it may be well, here, to speak of its general constitution and management. It is unfortunate that the Minutes both of the Company and Trust have disappeared so that none are available before 1895. Possibly this short history may be seen by someone who can help by saying whether they still exist, for they would afford valuable local history. We have, however, many extracts from them and we do possess account books of the Company and of the early days of the Trust. These last show that tolls have been paid at the gates from 1845 when the Trust began its existence. At first they seem to have been levied as a protective measure to prevent vehicles, proceeding towards Manchester, from coming in at the Rusholme (Crescent) Entrance and passing out by the Oxford Lodge Gate so as to avoid the toll levied on those using Wilmslow Road. Such a free passage through the Park would involve loss to the Trustees of that Turnpike road and would also cut up the Park roads. The Trustees

even threatened to move their toll gate nearer to Manchester to prevent this evasion and make the Park inhabitants themselves pay toll. It should be remembered that in these early days there was no call for traffic along Anson Road and that the Dickenson Road entrance was kept permanently closed.

The early Trust accounts show that, in 1847, £20 5s. 4d. was raised altogether by tolls. In 1848 these were increased to £29 15s. 0d. collected approximately, £14 at the Oxford Place Entrance, £11 at the Rusholme Entrance and £4 at Longsight. In 1887 they totalled £214 and in 1936 £1,039. The accounts show, too, that even in these early days a special voluntary Rate was levied, and, as stated in one place, *cheerfully* paid; in fact, it should be remembered that, throughout its history, the Park has made and maintained its own roads, though the inhabitants have paid the full local and town rate. The money obtained from rates and tolls seems to have been spent largely in road repairs and what is called "Police Constables" pay. For a time the Park did its own police work.

The 708,667 square yards of the Park have been diminished somewhat by the cutting off of a portion at the Longsight end. Plymouth Grove did not extend, at first, to meet Stockport Road at Birch Lane, but was deflected to meet it nearer to Manchester by means of the road now called

Plymouth Grove West. In the late sixties, the straight line of the Grove was prolonged to Birch Lane, the new part being at first called Albert Road. Only later did the full length receive the name of Plymouth Grove. The formation of Albert Road cut off a portion of the Park; the handsome Lodges built on Stockport Road were demolished in 1870 and the present Longsight gateway was erected as well as that, pulled down in the last two years, in Clarence Road. An interesting reminder of the former boundary of the Park may still be seen in the words "Victoria Park" graven on the wall of the small road which leads from Birch Lane to Clarence Road. All this area lay originally in the Park. The curtailment necessitated the opening of a Lodge, in the shape of a toll-keeper's hut, at the corner of Victoria Road and Greville Street. A smaller change took place in 1918, when the Rusholme Gate was set back from the main road to its more retired position by the Crescent. In the Minutes of 1876 there is a record of £75 being voted for new gates to be erected at the Clarence Street Entrance. Clarence Street (not to be confounded with Clarence Road) is the old name for Upper Brook Street.



North-east Lodges
LONGSIGHT

8. Absorption of Rusholme by Manchester, 1885.

When the Trust had been in existence some forty years an event took place, which, for the first time since the days of the Company, gave the Park, and therewith the Trust which managed it, a definite standing. Rusholme, in which the greater part of the Park lay, had, up to this point, been outside Manchester and had been governed by a Local Board. In 1885 a bill called "The Manchester City Extension Bill" was promoted in Parliament for the absorption of Rusholme and other places. The landowners of the Park threatened to resist the inclusion but were won over to vote in favour of it when the following clause was inserted. "Section 48: Nothing herein contained shall affect Victoria Park, which shall remain and be a private park to the same extent as at present. The public shall be entitled to no right of way over the roads therein except on foot; nevertheless the occupiers shall be liable to be rated to the City rate and the occupiers of houses therein shall be supplied with gas and water at the same rate as the occupiers of houses within the City of Manchester and to have all the privileges of Rusholme ratepayers residing outside the Park." This was the first official recognition of the Park and a valuable aid in its future entity and welfare.

9. Troubles over Tolls and Building.

With the year 1898 began a series of troubles which, for some time, upset the quiet tenor of the Park's history. These arose both from tolls and building; but it is impossible to separate these entirely as they were interdependent.

Sir William Anson of All Souls College, Oxford, had inherited from the Dickenson family, Birch Hall (which lay on the site of the present Grammar School) and the Birch Estate, which in the early days had included part of the land of the Park, namely that part lying round Anson Road. Some of this Park land had been sold by the Dickenson family to Joseph Denison, some to John Westhead, both active members of the original Company, while another portion, being unsold, had descended to Sir William Anson himself. It was now announced that some of the land lying in the triangle between Anson Road and Daisy Bank Road had been bought from these three sets of owners and was to be used for building cottages. The front land along these two roads was already covered with large houses and for these the land had been bought with a building tie of not less than forty pounds. The owners immediately looked to their deeds but found that, though their predecessors had tied themselves, they had in most cases received no tie for the land which bordered on that which they had bought.

Counsels' opinion was obtained by the Trust Committee but was generally adverse to the idea that this Committee could claim the privileges granted to the original Company in its Act. On the other hand it was pointed out that Dickenson, Denison and Westhead, who had dealt in the land, had been active members of the Company, and in being so, had intended that the land should not be used for cottage property. The matter was further complicated by the fact that Anson claimed right of passage through the Dickenson Road Gate. The gate had up to this point been kept locked, certain owners alone having keys, for there was then no through traffic along Anson Road.

Long conferences took place, which were complicated by other would-be builders. At one time the Woodhead Trustees, who owned the property on the eastern side of the Dickenson Road entrance, pulled down the posts on their side of the road and in doing so removed, perforce, the whole of the gate which was in one piece. The gate was, however, half on the land of the owner of the estate on the western side and apparently his property. This owner was a supporter of the Trust, and as such denied the right of the others to remove his half of the gate. One outcome of these troubles was the formation of a Company, "The Victoria Park, Manchester, Land Company,"

which acquired the land in question and thus prevented the cottages being built, and an agreement was made on September 19th, 1899 between the Trust, this Company and the Woodhead Trustees which settled the question. The cottages were not built but a number of new streets and small houses were built in the eastern portion of the Park according to road plans prepared by the Land Company. The question of building tie was solved largely by the depreciation of money which meant an increase of the rents. The useful Victoria Park Land Company went out of existence about 1914.

A compromise was arrived at with Sir William Anson with regard to the Dickenson Road gate, which was kept open, with a toll keeper in charge. Later, on one occasion, in 1905, the Committee questioned the right of a resident of the district to pass through, on the ground that his motor car did not come under the term "vehicle"! It seems to have saved itself from an untenable position by giving way and consoling itself that it was not likely that more than two or three of the inhabitants of the district would ever use motor cars. A false prophesy, indeed!

On July 24th, 1914 a case was tried in the Manchester County Court which has important bearing on the standing of the Park. Dr. R. A. Burditt had for some time been accustomed to

drive his car through the Park without paying tolls. On April 25th and May 2nd the gate-keeper demanded toll and on May 9th, when he saw the Doctor's car approaching the Oxford Place gate, shut this in front of him. The car ran into the gate and was damaged. Action and counter-action were brought, Dr. Burditt claiming fifteen guineas for damage to the car, the Park Committee claiming £1 4s. 10d. for damage to the gate and one shilling and six pence for three days toll. Judge Mellor awarded the fifteen guineas to the Doctor and the one and six pence to the Park and ordered the Doctor to be perpetually restrained from using the roads in Victoria Park with a motor car or other vehicle or vehicles of any and every description except in accordance with notices and regulations. The case was well worth the expense to the Park, for it confirmed the Committee in the rights it had claimed and exercised for some seventy years of collecting tolls.

10. Development of the Park ; Roads and later Building.

William Royle records that, in 1836, before the Park was developed, one house alone stood in this area, namely an old black and white farmhouse, exactly in the centre of the Circular Walk, with a strip of road across the Village Green leading up to it. By the Circular Walk he probably means

the Crescent. This house was occupied by Richard Warburton. Apparently, however, he is not quite correct, for Addison House in Daisy Bank Road, or at any rate portions of it are said to be older than this. It is interesting that this house, as well as Addison Terrace, owes its name to the combination of the names of two former owners, Adshead and Denison. As we have seen, there were in 1837, at the opening, nine excellent mansions completed in the Park. In 1840 the same number is recorded. In 1850 it is stated that sixty-five houses had been built and that 390 persons were already living in it. In 1899 the houses numbered 128 and at the present day there are 738 houses with approximately 3,000 residents.

Up to 1898 all the houses were of the larger type. Since then many smaller houses have been built and new streets have sprung up. The new areas are chiefly those of Park Range at the south-west corner, the one around Scarsdale Road, and the Longford Place end. The chief builders were John Edwards, William Boardley and A. Allen. The growth of smaller houses has raised new problems. While the old roads had a fairly good foundation, some of the new roads have been of lighter construction and have soon gone out of repair. The owners and residents have looked to the Trust to repair them, but the Committee has had to point out that, till they had been

taken over, it could not be responsible for them, or that if it did, somewhat unwillingly, take them over, it could not be expected to remake them from the foundation. It is only natural that, in these circumstances, new inhabitants have hesitated to pay the Park Rate, cheerfully at any rate. Thus a vicious circle has been started, which has, of course, resulted from people buying houses without ascertaining that the road in front was sufficiently made and was under the charge of some authority for repairs. However, under the energetic management of Mr. Max Kay, the roads have been much improved in recent years. It is only by property owners, large and small, and inhabitants paying the rate that the roads will be further improved. It is not for each to think of himself and to nourish grievances but to work for the Park as a whole. The inhabitants have, generally, enjoyed quietness. Dust, at one time the bane of the area, has been overcome by tarring of the roads ; and if holes still exist in places, even these have some compensatory advantage, for they prevent the roads being used as thoroughfares and for speed trials.

II. Tramway Controversies, 1902 and 1920.

On two occasions the inhabitants have been faced with the proposition of the City to run tramways through the Park. The first was in

1902, shortly after the electric system had replaced the old horse trams. The Trust Committee organised a vote of the residents on the matter in which 187 voted for opposing the Corporation Bill and 34 against doing so. Organised opposition carried the day, and at a Town's Meeting this part of the Bill was condemned and dropped. It is only fair to say that R. D. Darbishire, one of the inhabitants of the Park and one of the town's most worthy citizens, wholeheartedly condemned the policy of opposition and, calling the governing body "The alleged Victoria Park Trust," spoke of the owners keeping gardens for their own selfish ends with "Purse-proud Walls." In 1920 the matter came up again. The Committee still felt that the very life of the Park depended on Anson Road not being thrown open as a public thoroughfare. After discussion the City altered its Bill so that, if allowed to run trams through the Park, it would leave the Anson Road gates standing and would pay the Park £100 a year to be expended on the maintenance and repair of the other existing roads. The Committee felt that, for the sake of those living beyond the Park, these terms should be accepted, even though it realised that the noise of the trams would seriously disturb the quietude of Anson Road and a zone around it.

12. Manchester Corporation Act of 1935.

Owing to the somewhat anomalous position of the Park in regard to the City, the Police frequently hesitated to act in cases affecting the area. It was even stated that one could commit any crime except murder within its precincts. In 1935 therefore, with the full concurrence of the Trust Committee, a definite declaration was introduced into a City's Parliamentary Act which removed any doubt and placed the Park under the same police supervision as the rest of the town. This ought to put an end to the obnoxious habit of firing chimneys.

The Road Act of 1933 also terminated the alleged and dangerous right, which had been claimed and often exercised, of leaving unlighted cars at night on the roads and in the passages.

13. Houses, Institutions and Former Residents.

Quite a number of well-known Manchester citizens have occupied houses in the Park in the past, these including Members of Parliament, famous surgeons and doctors, merchants, artists and many others in various paths of life.

Among these may be cited Sir Henry Roscoe, chemist and Member of Parliament, who lived in Lower Park Road, Tom Jones, the eminent

surgeon, Sir William Thorburn, Dr. David Little, Dr. Henry Ashby, the friend of the children, Dr. Frederick Melland, famed as a general practitioner and for his longevity, whose daughter was the first wife of H. H. Asquith, Sir Alfred Hopkinson, Vice-Chancellor of the Manchester University, Professor A. S. Wilkins, Max Mayer of Concert fame, the Rev. W. Rigby Murray for 39 years Minister of the Brunswick Street Presbyterian Church.

The house in Oxford Place, now known as Egerton Hall, the Diocesan Theological College, was formerly Ashburne House, (the predecessor of the Women's Hall of Residence, Ashburne Hall, in Fallowfield), and at one time the home of W. R. Callender, M.P. Here in 1872 he entertained Disraeli, at the time of his memorable political visit to Manchester, when he spoke for three hours in the Free Trade Hall. Next to this house has stood for nearly a hundred years in Conyngham Road one which has the distinction of never having had a name, or, till recent years, a number. It was simply "Mr. Hadfield's in the Park," for as such it had always been known. Westerfield, a semi-detached house on the Crescent, recently demolished to make room for smaller houses, was from 1845 to 1848 the home of Richard Cobden, it was in fact his last residence in Manchester. Summerville, in Daisy Bank Road,

since 1904 the Unitarian College, and before that time the home of the Kesslers, was at one time the house of Sir Harry Smith, the hero of the Aliwal battle (1846) in the Sikh wars, being in command of the troops in Manchester. It was after him and his wife that the two towns of Harri-smith and Ladysmith, which came so much into prominence in the South African War, were called. The tale of how he won his Spanish wife at the siege of Badajoz in 1812 has been told by Sir John Kincaid in his "Random Shots of a Rifleman" and by Sir Harry himself (see Oxford Book of English Prose).

Addison Terrace, Number 3, was once the home of Ford Madox Brown, who painted the frescoes in the Town Hall; Number 4, Buckingham Crescent was that of Mrs. Pankhurst of Suffragette fame. The site of the Blackstock Hotel, which is not in the Park, it is true, but near it, is shown on old maps as the Blackstake Farm.

The list of inhabitants also contains the names of many well-known Cotton Shipping Merchants who helped to bring prosperity to the town. A few of these are: Bernard Alexander, O. H. Behrens, Sir Edward Donner, William Gaddum, Harvey Goodwin, George Hahlo, William Hertz, Julius Heynssen, Otto Hoffmann, William Kessler, E. R. Langworthy, Walter Laverton, S. Nord-

linger, John Samson, Louis Schwabe and Philip Ziegler.

So much does the future of the Park depend on the Halls of Residence, connected more or less closely with the University, that these deserve mention together. Dalton Hall (1881) was the first of these to come into being. Hulme Hall, formerly in Plymouth Grove, came here in 1907, taking over the Sowers' House, Oak Bank, and extending itself with new buildings and with the absorption of neighbouring houses. The histories of Egerton Hall, to which the present name was given when the Theological College came to the Park in 1910, and of the Unitarian College (Summerville) have been noted. Langdale Hall (1903), St. Anselm's (1914) and St. Gabriel's (1920) are other Halls, each with a nucleus of a former dwelling house. St. Hilda's, near the Upper Brook Street Entrance, is now the Diocesan Deaconess House. There have also been many schools, that owned by Dr. Ernest Adams and later by Joseph Thornton at Eaglesfield, that of Mr. N. Notman, which was in turn in Clarendon Road, Anson Road and at Addison House, the girls' school, Ellerslie, in Upper Park Road, which numbers among its former pupils many famous women, and the Xaverian College, which took over T. R. Hetherington's house in Lower Park Road. Another school was that at Daisy Bank,

commonly known, from its previous home in Chorlton-on-Medlock, as the Chorlton Hall School. In 1869 it migrated to Blackpool. For the sake of all these Halls and Schools, as well as for the numerous Nursing Homes (Elmfield, High Elms, Windlehurst and Denison House), the quiet of the Park has been, and still is, worth preserving.

The foundation stone of S. Chrysostom's Church, for which a site had been allotted as far back as the original Park plans of 1836, was laid on September 21st, 1874, but the Church was not consecrated till 1877. On October 1st, 1904, it was burnt down by a disastrous fire, but it was soon rebuilt and was rededicated on October 1st, 1906. The parish, which includes the greater part of the Park, was originally formed out of the neighbouring parishes of S. James', Birch, S. Saviour's, Chorlton-on-Medlock, and S. John's, Longsight. Some of the Park is still in the last named parish.

A note may be made here of the origin of the names of a few of the houses and roads of the Park. Neuburg (now Newbury) and Elbe Villa tell the tale of the large part which German merchants formerly played in the business development of Manchester. Kent Road, Clarence Road, Hanover Crescent and Adelaide House tell of the Royal Family in the days when the Park was first opened. Daisy Bank Road, always spelt "Daisey" in its

earlier days, is derived from the above named house, Daisy Bank, which stood near the Longsight Entrance, not far from the spot where the present road crosses Plymouth Grove. Anson Road and Denison Road perpetuate the names of early owners; Scarsdale, Curzon and Kedleston are all of later date.

14. Present Situation. Conclusion.

The position of the Park may be summarised as follows. It is an area belonging to private owners with certain definite ties against the carrying on of business and as to what buildings may be placed on the land, the roads themselves not having been taken over by the City. It is managed by a Trust Committee, elected by the residents and landowners, which has existed since 1845 and which has received status from certain Acts and legal decisions, especially the Act of 1885 and the County Court decision of 1914. Tolls have been collected at the gates since the beginning of the Trust from vehicles passing through, and from those entering for professional and business purposes, but not from inhabitants or those visiting residents for social purposes. The Committee has also collected a voluntary rate from the inhabitants. With the tolls and rates the Committee has kept the old roads in repair as well as certain new roads which it has

gradually taken over. These roads, then, in the hundred years of the Park's existence have been no charge on the district and town generally, though, be it remembered, the inhabitants have paid the full local and town rate. The gas, electricity, water and sewage, as well as the police organisation, are all managed by the town.

The Committee meets quarterly and once each year there is a general meeting of residents and landowners. In the earlier days these meetings were at the Blackstock Hotel; since 1927, by kind permission of the Warden, they have been at Hulme Hall.

The character of the Park has changed entirely in one respect. Formerly it was the home of a few rich inhabitants; now many people, and practically none of them rich, live in it. The large houses have been taken over by Institutions, Halls of Residence and Nursing Homes, to all of which the quietness of the Park is an inestimable benefit. But in another respect it has not altered. Its trees still remain. The town owes much to the planting energy of the old Company and to the architect Lane. It is to be hoped that the present inhabitants and owners will preserve them as far as possible.

It is only fair, here, to say how much the Park owes to certain inhabitants; the names of some

of the earlier workers are lost ; it is possible to mention a few of the later ones : Noah Kolp, Salomonson, Kessler, Dunderdale, Stubbs, H. T. Crofton, the Fox Family and, last though not least, Kay, for whom the Park has long been a strenuous hobby.



OXFORD PLACE LODGE

[This is the only original Lodge still standing]

15. Former and Present Officers of the Park.

	<i>Chairmen:</i>	<i>Hon. Treasurers:</i>	<i>Hon. Secretaries:</i>	<i>Executive Officers :</i>
Company.	Thomas Harbottle 1836-			
Trust.	Edwin Guthrie • (1894)-1900	Noah Kolp (1894)-1911	Charles Dunderdale (1894)-1899	John Smith -1905
	P. W. Kessler 1900-1909	E. W. Grommé 1911-1930	G. W. Fox 1899-1918	F. J. Almond 1905-1919
	Joseph H. Stubbs 1909-1932	Max M. Kay 1930-	James T. Fox 1918-1925	James S. Williamson 1919-1930
	Robert Bell 1933-		F. Gilbert Womersley 1925-1928	Max M. Kay 1930-
			Geoffrey Tweedale 1928-	

• Figures in brackets denote that the date given is not necessarily that at which office was first undertaken.

16. Victoria Park Trust Committee, 1937.

- Chairman* : Robert Bell, Ventnor, Park Range.
Deputy-Chairman : Rev. T. Nicklin, Hulme Hall.
Hon. Treasurer : Max M. Kay, 58 Daisy Bank Road.
Hon. Secretary : G. Tweedale, 47 Mosley St., Manchester, 2.

S. H. Appleby, Representative of the Rusholme Conservative Club, Antwerp House.

Rev. Canon F. P. Cheetham, Egerton Hall.

J. E. Downes, Silverdale, Daisy Bank Road.

Mrs. A. M. H. Dunkerly, 108 Daisy Bank Road.

E. W. Grommé, Regent House, Lower Park Road.

R. Hind, Stafford House, Daisy Bank Road.

Dr. O. R. Howell, 14 Kent Road West.

Coun. W. P. Jackson, Thorncliffe, Kent Road West.

G. W. Kaye, The University, Manchester, 13.

Dr. E. B. Leech, Chadlington House, Daisy Bank Road.

Rev. Dr. H. McLachlan, Summerville, Daisy Bank Road.

Rev. Bro. Martin, Xaverian College.

T. H. Moffatt, 3 Addison Terrace, Daisy Bank Road.

Miss D. M. Newcomen, Langdale Hall.

T. Ritchie, 61 Daisy Bank Road.

J. Salt, 2 Upper Kent Road.

W. T. Sharrock, 110 Daisy Bank Road.

W. W. Skelton, 12 Langdale Road.

G. A. Sutherland, Dalton Hall.

W. J. Tippet, 56 Daisy Bank Road.

R. A. Westrope, 456 Kingsway, East Didsbury.

E. Wilkins, 7 Langdale Road.

Executive Committee : Robert Bell, O. R. Howell, W. P. Jackson, Max M. Kay, E. B. Leech, T. Nicklin, J. Salt.



PLAN OF
VICTORIA
PARK
1937

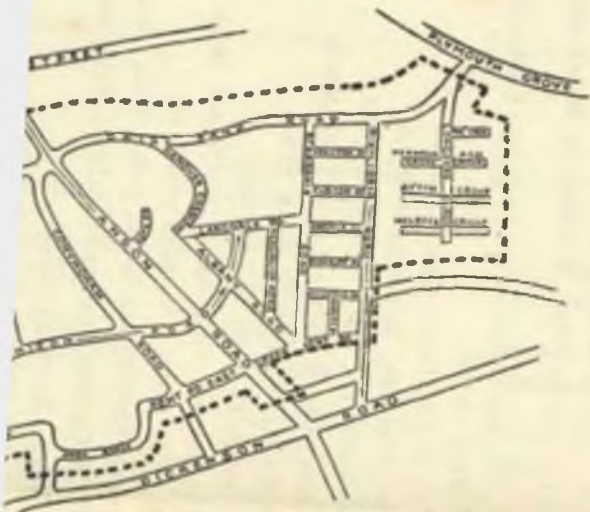


PLATE I

PLAN
OF THE
VICTORIA PARK
in the Townships of
Rusholme & Moss Side
MANCHESTER
TO BE SOLD IN PLOTS
FOR BUILDING UPON.

*Applications to be made at the Office of the Company 24
St James St or to Mr Lewis Architects, St James Street
or Mr Sandring Architects, Brown St, Manchester*

*Boundary of Park adjacent to
Plot already built upon and occupied*

