

# INDEX.

	PAGE
Evolution of Name... ..	7
Platt Hall and the Worsleys .....	8
Lieutenant Colonel Worsley .....	10
Birch Hall and the Birches ... ..	14
Birch Chapel ... ..	17
Platt Chapel ... ..	19
Population of Rusholme .....	21
Rusholme 100 years ago .....	22
Rusholme Green ... ..	25
Heald House and Heald Grove ... ..	27
Oldest House in Rusholme ... ..	27
Nico Ditch' ... ..	28
Birch Hall Houses ... ..	29
Rusholme Notabilities ... ..	30
Rusholme Public Hall ... ..	31
Rusholme Worthies ... ..	35
Archdeacon Anson... ..	36
Modern History ... ..	38
Street Names ... ..	43
Epilogue ... ..	44
Appendix ... ..	47

## ILLUSTRATIONS.

Map of Rusholme—facing Title.

Major-General Worsley ... ..	facing 8
The Archdeacon ... ..	11
Birch and Old Wesleyan Chapels ... ..	15
Oldest House and Ruggles' Cottage ... ..	19
Gilbody's Cottage—Ancient Chalices ... ..	23
Rev. T. C. Finlayson, D.D.... ..	27
Thomas Lowe—Rev. W. H. Finney ... ..	31
A. Wilson—Red Rover—Old Lady ... ..	35
Rusholme Group ... ..	39
Brighton Grove Scheme ... ..	43
Melland—Twist—Lecturer ... ..	45

"And strange enchantments of the past,  
And memories of the days of old."



# **Rusholme: Past and Present.**

**Being a Gossipy Talk  
of Men and things.**



**By WILLIAM ROYLE.**



MANCHESTER  
WM. HOUGH & SONS, 2, Swan Court, Market Street.  
1905.



## PREFACE.

---

THE sketch of *Rusholme*, as it has been, and as it is, has arisen from a short lecture which I gave in the Rusholme Public Hall (my good friend, Rev. W. H. FINNEY, Rector of Platt, in the chair). My chief object has been to afford some passing glimpses into the village life, as it is partly remembered yet by some of the older generation, and to collect all stray bits of information still floating in their memory from the early days of childhood.

No pretensions are made, and no finality has been attempted. Unfortunately, we possess no illustrations of the old Platt Hall, and of the old village, as it appeared in its more ancient garb. The tenants were mostly given to the pursuit of agriculture, and led a very simple mode of life; their amusements were but few. The cottages were timber-built, thatched, with a bit of garden in front, and its adjacent stack of peat. They used to gather on the Green to commemorate their sports and celebrate all public events.

In the 16th and 17th centuries large tracts of turfy moss characterized the locality, further accentuated by some extensive pools, or *laches*, thickly grown with reeds and aquatic plants. Bird-life was then more intense and varied. Except the few rows of cottages scattered along the high road, and the few farms to be seen here and there, the place was lost in comparative isolation.

The women carried their market produce—such as butter, eggs, fowl, geese, pigs, vegetables—to the weekly Manchester market, and sometimes suffered fine for breaking the assize. We have no tradition left of boggart, ghost, or fairy, but no doubt superstition was here as ripe as in the neighbourhood.

Their great day for decking themselves out was Sunday, when they went to chapel to see the lord of the manor and listen to the solemn sermon.

The families were few in number. Some of the tenants held their leases under the Collegiate Church.

For those who cherish the past, a few items have been appended, illustrating some aspects of its former history.

Finally, I ask the reader to recollect that the lecture was a gossipy talk to my friends and neighbours in Rusholme, hence so much evidence of the personal element. There is much which I have been compelled to omit. If future years bring leisure, I may, however, take up the thread again. In taking leave, I wish all success and prosperity to our beloved Rusholme and its people, and thank again all the many friends who have assisted me with advice and information, and specially my friend, Mr. C. ROEDER, for the Appendix.

WILLIAM ROYLE.

ELMWOOD, RUSHOLME,  
*March, 1905.*









## FIFTY YEARS IN RUSHOLME.



**A Gossipy Talk of Men and things, with a short sketch of the History of Rusholme.**



### EVOLUTION OF NAME.

We may appropriately begin this evening by considering the name "Rusholme." In all probability, the first part of the word is derived from rush, a reed\*. The second part of it is the Anglo-Saxon word "holme," and signifies a piece of flat low-lying ground by a river or stream, submerged or surrounded in the time of flood.

There are at least seven spellings of the name, and these, with the dates, are as follows :—

- 1307—Russum.
- 1400—Risshulm.
- 1473—Ryssum.
- 1563—Rysshome.
- 1586—Ryssheholm.
- 1588—Riseholme.
- 1649—Rusholme.

---

\* Compare also such place names as Rush—brook, ford (also Rushyford), lake, mere, wick, &c. The *dialect form* for rush is—rush, rash, rish, rus, rusk (*see Wright's English Dialect Dictionary*).

Little less than a century ago the name was spelt "Rush-Holme." Many present will remember the house at the corner of Rusholme Place opposite Moss Lane, and the stone slab that had on it "Rushulme Place." This house was built about the year 1830, but we know that at that time the name was also spelt as at present, and this may therefore have been the transition period. In 1837, when the Chorlton Poor Law Union was formed, the name was officially spelt Rushulme.

The ancient history of Rusholme centres very much round three spots :

- (1) Platt Hall and the Worsleys,
- (2) Birch Hall and the Birches,
- (3) Birch Church.

#### PLATT HALL AND THE WORSLEYS.

The first mention of the Platt Estate, and therefore the first reference to Rusholme in any way, is in the 12th century. We are informed that in the year 1150 a certain Mathew, son of William, conveyed the lands of Platt to the Knights of St. John, that celebrated military religious Order, established at the commencement of the Crusades to the Holy Land. The pilgrims or crusaders who went to Jerusalem were received with such kindness and hospitality by the Order of St. John that on their return much religious fervour was excited, and numerous lands in various parts of the country were bequeathed to the Order, which rapidly increased in wealth. Amongst the lands so bequeathed was the estate of Platt, and its income went to the support of the Order. The boundaries of this gift on record are only of interest to us, as they refer for the first time to "Gore Brook," an "institution" which looms largely in the history of Rusholme to-day, and also in the olfactory organs of its inhabitants. Forty years later, in 1190, the Knights of St. John transferred the estate to a Richard de la More. The grand-daughter of this man and



MAJOR GENERAL WORSLEY.

*Born 1622, died 1656.*



her husband took to themselves the name of Platt, which name has remained with the estate until this day. For 400 years their descendants continued to live on the Platt estate. There are only one or two references in history to any member of the Platt family, and these are of little importance, and the family does not appear to have distinguished itself in civil, military, or religious life. It was in the year 1625 that the Platt family, after occupying the hall for four centuries, finally severed their connection with it.

Edmund Platt was the last of that name to occupy the estate, and in the year 1625 he sold the land to Ralph Worsley, a friend of Humphry Chetham, for £550, which family has been connected with the estate until the present day. At the date of transfer, portions of the estate were under lease to George Travis and Thomas Shelmerdine. The Worsley family claim a pedigree dating back to the days of William the Conqueror. Dr. Halley, in his "Lancashire, its Puritanism and Nonconformity," has a deeply interesting chapter dealing with the Worsley family. I wish time permitted reading the whole of this, but I must summarize. The Worsleys claim their descent from Elias, Lord of Worsley, an adherent of Robert, Duke of Normandy, who as the young people present well know, was the son of William the Conqueror. Of this ancient and honourable house, proud of its knights and crusaders, one member "soiled" the escutcheon of his house, but greatly augmented his wealth by engaging in trade, and making money from the handloom weavers of Manchester and the neighbourhood. This man was Charles Worsley, who by trade became much richer than his relatives and bought, in 1614, certain lands in Rusholme from Oswald Mosley, Hough End, Withington, and on his death he left his property to his son, Ralph. Ralph Worsley continued in this lucrative business until he was able to purchase the land of Platt from the afore mentioned Edmund Platt. This man, the first of the Worsleys of Platt, was of high principle and

integrity, and greatly respected by his neighbours. Some years ago I spoke with an inhabitant who well remembered handloom weavers living in Rusholme, and hearing the click of the shuttle as he passed the cottage doors, and it is, I should say, very probable that the industry was first introduced into the village by this Ralph Worsley, whom, we know, dealt largely in yarn and cloth. He bought the yarn and gave it out among his weavers, for the purpose of having it made into cloth and then sold it from his store rooms in Manchester. He was a man of decided Puritan sympathies and a warm supporter of Cromwell and the Parliamentary cause. He did not himself, like his son, go to fight for Cromwell, but he sent a substitute, for it is on record that he agreed with John Burdsell, of the Millgate, Manchester, to "carry my arms during the service, and for his pain I have given him in hand thirty shillings, one green coat, and am to pay him daily one shilling. When he, with the rest of his company, is trained, and when he is to go forth of the country upon service, I am to pay him thirty shillings more." And now to :

#### LIEUTENANT-COLONEL WORSLEY.

It is, however, of Charles Worsley, son of this Ralph Worsley, that I wish more especially to speak. He was the most famous of this celebrated family, and a man of whom every Rusholmite may well be proud. Like his father, he was a keen Parliamentarian, and very early in life entered the army. We notice that in the year 1646, there came, as minister to Birch Chapel, a certain Rev. John Wigan, who began to preach Independency with much zeal, as will be well understood when I say that he himself joined Cromwell's army and fought for his creed with sword as well as tongue. No doubt young Worsley was stirred by the ministration of this stalwart preacher. He was then married and living at Platt and threw himself on the side of Cromwell and the Parliamentary forces. There were in Manchester strong forces on the Royalist side,



THE ARCHDEACON.

but the Commonwealth had also many friends, and none were more active than Charles Worsley. His bravery and conscientiousness secured the young soldier's rapid advancement. By the year 1650, when only 28 years of age, he had already risen to the position of Lieutenant-Colonel. Cromwell was then on his northern march to Scotland, and Lieut.-Colonel Worsley raised in this neighbourhood a regiment of soldiers, the first muster of these being at Cheetham Hill. On August 19th, 1650, Worsley marched at the head of his men through Skipton, Durham, Newcastle, Berwick and Edinburgh, but to his great regret, and especially to his father's regret, was too late to take part in the Battle of Dunbar. We hear little of Worsley for a period of three years, but then we meet with him on a great historic occasion. Lieut.-Colonel Worsley was a great favourite with Cromwell, who gave him command of his own regiment of foot. It was in this capacity that he accompanied Cromwell when, on April 20th, 1653, he dissolved the famous Long Parliament. We are told that commanded by Cromwell to meet him, Worsley "with his wife did set off to ride from Platt to London." On the day when Cromwell dissolved the Long Parliament, Worsley was desired to wait outside the house with a band of 300 soldiers until he should be ordered to enter the house. Presently Cromwell stamped his foot, which was the appointed sign, and Worsley and his 300 men went in. They first displaced the speaker, next struggled with other members, then Cromwell went to the table where the mace lay, and pointing to it, he cried in the now historic phrase "Take away that bauble." From the fact that Worsley was the captain of the force, and that the bauble was kept in Worsley's custody and brought from his house when wanted in the next Parliament, it is fair to conclude that he himself carried it away. Therefore, says the historian of this period, "the immediate instrument of Oliver Cromwell's famous deed turns out to have been a Manchester man"—pardon me, a Rusholme man. Shortly after this he



was appointed Colonel, and nominated by Cromwell, in 1654, as the first M.P. for Manchester. Oliver Cromwell dismissed the first Protectorate Parliament soon after it was formed, and for one year and nine months there was no Parliamentary Government. Cromwell divided the country into ten districts over which he placed a Vice-Gerent or Viceroy. Worsley was one of the ten and his district was Lancashire, Cheshire and Staffordshire. It is quite certain that Colonel Worsley was a hard working public man. His correspondence is preserved in the archives of the State Paper Office, Westminster, and a portion of it has been published by the Chetham Society. In fulfilling the duties of his office he met commissions, set a day for ejecting scandalous ministers and schoolmasters, he sequestered estates, disarmed Papists and evil-affected persons, put into execution all laws against drunkenness, swearing, profaning the Lord's Day, and other wickedness. For months this kind of work went on, entailing on him great strain and anxiety and much correspondence. In a letter addressed to the Government, in 1656, he says: "I have one thing to remind you about which I once spoke to you, and that is about the postage of my letters. There is such a multitude comes upon me out of all parts that it puts me to a very great charge, and not one of them but what is about public business."

Colonel Worsley was the first of a long line of temperance workers in Rusholme, for in connection with his work we find him writing in January, 1656 :—" Finds it a difficult business to observe instructions about ale-houses and not to weaken the revenue, though it is visible they are the bane of the country. We have ordered 200 to be thrown down at Blackburn, and we are catching up all loose and vile persons."

Never, apparently, a very strong man, Worsley felt much the strain of his arduous work. On the 10th of May, 1656, he received a command from Cromwell to proceed to London. He wrote, however, complaining of feeling ill, but promised to come with all possible speed. Soon after his arrival at

St. James's Palace, which had been assigned to himself and his wife and child as a residence, he died at the early age of 34. He was honoured with burial in Henry VII's Chapel, Westminster Abbey, and his military funeral was such as befitted his rank. Thus Worsley sleeps among the Kings and Queens of England, and many of the illustrious dead of past ages.

In the book to which I have already referred, Dr. Halley pays a fine tribute to this good man :—" His premature death was an irreparable loss to the Commonwealth. Of all the great officers of Cromwell, he had more than any other the unerring foresight, the calm judgment, the wise decision, the dauntless courage, the quick movement, the unwearied energy and the unswerving perseverance of the great Commander, and he had what his great commander had not—a most gentle, insinuating, gracious, and conciliatory manner. He firmly trusted in God. Of the military circles round the Protector's chair no one appeared so fit to succeed to the Protectorate as Major-General Worsley."

From the "Public Intelligencer" for June 19th, 1656, we extract the following account of the funeral :—Westminster, June 13th, in the evening, was solemnized the funeral of Major-General Worsley, which was performed with much honour, according to his merit, his hearse being attended by the rest of the Major-Generals and divers other persons of honour, and many coaches. Before him marched four regiments of foot, ten troops of horse, and the Life Guards of his Highness, drums being covered with mourning, pikes trailed on the ground, trumpets mourning, sounding after the military manner used in such solemnities, who conducted his body to Westminster Abbey, where it was interred near Sir William Constable, in the Chapel of Henry VII., three grand volleys being discharged at the interment." It is interesting to note that some years ago, when Dean Stanley was Dean of Westminster, and search was being made for the body of James I., what was considered by Dean Stanley to be the

body of Worsley was found. Thus ends our story of Major-General Worsley. We make no apology for our lengthy reference to this man, of whom, as I before said, every Rusholme man may well be proud. A portrait of him is preserved in Platt Hall, an engraving of which is in the reading-room below. His sword is also preserved.

The old Platt Hall was a timbered black and white house, and stood at right angles to the present hall, and fronting the high road. The present hall was built just 140 years ago. Alas, that the historic hall and grounds are so soon to disappear!

#### BIRCH HALL AND THE BIRCHES.

There is much of interest in the history of Birch Hall and the Birches. The name of the estate was formerly Hindley Birch, and the earliest mention of it we can trace is about the year 1190. It was at this time that the hall passed into the possession of the Birch family, the first of the name being Matthew del Birch. Copy of the deed shows that part of the estate consisted of woods, in which swine were allowed to feed, and a large mill for the grinding of corn. During the several centuries that followed only scattered references are made to the members of this family. One fought at the battle of Agincourt, whilst another chose the Church as his profession, and later founded Birch Chapel. This man, the Rev. Wm. Birch, was evidently a man of delightful character. He was ordained by Ridley, the martyred Bishop of London. He died in the year 1575, and I wish time permitted me to read his will, which is still preserved. He was Rector of Stanhope, in Weardale, Durham, and was a man with wide philanthropic sympathies. He left money—

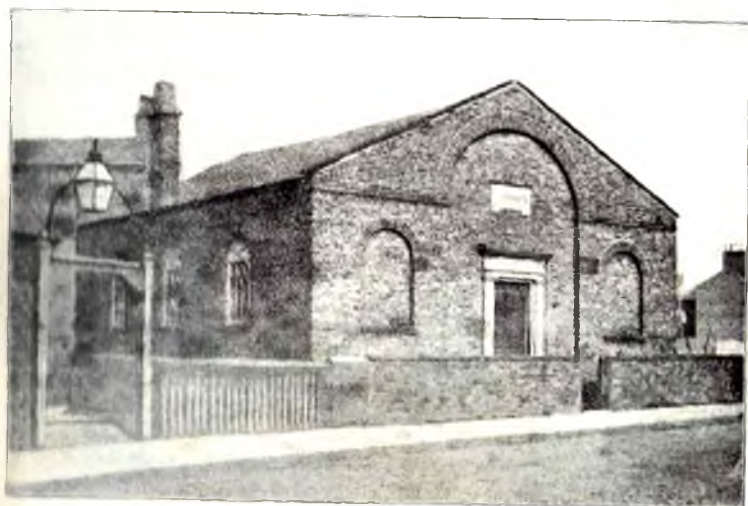
To the poor of Gateshead,

To the poorest prisoners in Newcastle Gaol, and also  
in Durham Gaol,

To the poor in Stanhope parish.



BIRCH CHAPEL.  
*Erected about 1596; demolished 1816.*



OLD WESLEYAN CHAPEL, DICKENSON ROAD.  
*Erected 1829; demolished 1863.*



He then brings his sympathies nearer home, and leaves money--

To 20 poor widows of Manchester,  
To 20 poor maidens of Manchester on their marriage.  
To build needful bridges within 3 miles of Birch Hall,  
To the poorest people in Rusholme, Didsbury, and  
Withington.

Thus we had poor in the village even in those days.

Mrs. Williamson says truly—"One would almost think Ridley had spread his own mantle over this favourite disciple, and that this mantle, with even more large-hearted, more tender benevolence, has descended upon the much loved Archdeacon Anson."

The most celebrated man, however, of this family was Thomas Birch, born in 1608. At the commencement of the Civil War, he offered his services to the Parliament, and like his neighbour, General Worsley, was the means of raising a regiment of soldiers in support of Cromwell in 1642. On 15th January, 1643, a circumstance occurred which brought him into collision with Lord Strange, afterwards Earl of Derby, leader of the Royalists in Lancashire, and laid the foundation, so says Seacombe, the historian of the house of Stanley, of a personal hostility which was never extinguished, and which appears to have resulted in the execution of the Earl of Derby, at Bolton. On the occasion of a banquet given to the Earl of Derby, at Manchester, a number of prominent Royalists accompanied him thither. They were met by an armed band, headed by Captain Birch, who disputed their passage, and gave orders to his men to fire on them. This the rain which was falling heavily at the time prevented them doing, and the Royalists, taking courage, repelled the attack, and Birch and his men fled. After the disastrous battle of Worcester the Earl, retracing his steps towards Lancashire, on his way encountered a troop of Cromwell's horse, by whom he was taken prisoner. The terms on which he surrendered

were that he should have quarter given for his life and condition of honourable usage. But being now in the enemy's hands, Bradshaw, Rigby, and Birch designed him to be a victim of their envy. These three represented to Cromwell how unsafe it would be to the whole nation to allow him to live, got a commission to try him by courtmartial, and the result was that the Earl was beheaded at Bolton on October 15th, 1651. History tells us that Colonel Birch passed through the crowd rubbing his hands, with a satisfied smile.

The succeeding years in Colonel Birch's life were full of activity, but time forbids us to dwell upon the distinction he gained in Cromwell's army. He attacked Preston and carried it by storm—Lancaster surrendered to his troops. He was appointed Governor of Liverpool, for which place he was afterwards Member of Parliament. He was a man of vigorous personality and had a sharp tussle with Humphrey Chetham, who was then founding the charity which exists to-day, which dispute nearly cost this city the benefit of this splendid foundation. He retired from active life about the year 1674, when he came to live at Birch Hall, where he died in 1678, in the 71st year of his age.

Birch Hall, as it now is, if not altogether modern, is so modernised as to present no special feature of interest to the antiquarian. The only portion of the old Hall at present remaining is at the back of the present structure and shows that the old building was a black and white half-timbered house, so common in those days. The Birches held Birch Hall until the year 1744, when it was sold to Mr. John Dickenson, a Manchester merchant, whose name is present with us in Dickenson Road. His town residence was in Market Street Lane. Here Mr. Dickenson lodged and entertained Prince Charlie, the pretender, when he visited Manchester, in 1745. The house from this circumstance took the name of "The Palace," and some years ago was re-built and is now the well-known Palace Buildings in Market Street.

It is interesting to remember that Archdeacon Anson, about whom we shall have something to say later, was a descendant of this John Dickenson.

### BIRCH CHAPEL.

No history of Rusholme would be complete without some notice of what is termed "Ancient Chapel of Birch," the oldest, and for more than a century the only place of worship in the village. Birch Chapel (dedicated to St. James), as the original structure was called, was built during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The exact date is not known, but was between the years 1579 and 1598. I have had many a chat with Archdeacon Anson as to the exact date, and he always said that in his opinion it was in the year 1596, because in the Visitation Returns of 1598 the reference to Birch Chapel is as follows:—

"Birche Chapel, in Rusholme, latelie erected and now void of a Curate."

Hence, the 300th Anniversary was celebrated in the year 1896. Like most other chapels in the parish of Manchester, its early use was limited to the family on whose estate it was built, and their immediate dependants. Birch Chapel was built of brick covered with grey slates. It was filled with oaken pews and had accommodation for 350 worshippers. The chapel at first was unendowed, and for nearly a century was not fully used. We find that in 1636 the income from what was termed the "Chapel Wage" was £17 2s. 7d. In 1640 an endowment fund was started, the number of contributors being 67, and the amount raised being £40 8s. 4d., among the subscribers being:—"Old Mrs. Birche, £5; Ralph Worsley, £4; Thomas Shelmerdine, £2 (we wonder whether the Shelmerdine family in Rusholme to-day are descendants of this Thomas Shelmerdine); Mr. Syddall, of Slade, £1 6s. 8d." It is interesting to go through the list of those who, in these centuries ago, contributed towards the work of God in Rusholme. We read

of the village blacksmith contributing 2s., and of several who contributed 1s. each.

The money raised by this endowment fund was expended in purchasing two acres of ground in Longsight, and Colonel Birch added one acre from his own estate in Gorton, which three acres were ultimately vested in trustees, the income being used for the maintenance of the fabric of Birch Chapel and the payment of 10s. per Sunday to the appointed minister. In 1679, after the Rev. Henry Finch had received his stipend, there remained a sum of £1 5s. 2d. out of which he received a further sum of 10s. "because he had been sick," a sum of 7s. 6d. was spent in the repair of the chapel, and 8s. 6d. was lost in bad and broken money a distinct reflection on the church-goers of that day. I think I am correct in saying that this estate, which was founded in 1640, remained in possession of Birch Chapel until the year 1850 when portion was sold and from the proceeds the present rectory was built. The remainder of this old estate at present produces £75 per annum. There is a plan of Birch Chapel in existence, dated 1640, and a list of families attending which comprises in all 70 persons (see appendix). In the chapel book of Birch Chapel of the same time there is the amount given by each family for the support of the ministrations in Birch Chapel. It gives the list of families in Birch, Slade, Rushford, Levenshulme, Fallowfield, Ladybarn and Rusholme. In the 23 families representing Rusholme are the names of Shelmerdine, Travis, Wilkinson, Hartley, Parkinson, Baguley and Bowker, etc., and it would be interesting to know whether they are the ancestors of those now living in Rusholme of the same name. In 1646, the Rev. John Wigan, leaving Gorton, came to Birch Chapel, where he "set up Congregationalism," this being about the time when the Independents or Congregationalists first prominently opposed the Presbyterian form of church government. As previously mentioned, he gave up the church for the army. He was followed in 1659 by the Rev. Robert





THE OLDEST HOUSE IN RUSHDENE



RUGGLES' COTTAGE IN MONMOUTH STREET

Birch, who was probably a member of the family possessing the patronage of the living. Refusing to conform, he was silenced on the passing of the Act of Uniformity in 1662.

When you enter Birch Chapel Graveyard by the Lych gate you notice the old gravestones on your right. This was the site of the old chapel. Here we read on the stone in the old-fashioned quaint language, "Deborah, the affectionate, prudent, and pious wife of Ralph Worsley, of Platt, gentleman, who deceased May 8th, 1681." This Ralph Worsley mentioned was the son of General Worsley. We have no time this evening to trace during succeeding centuries the history of Birch Chapel. It is profoundly interesting to those who care for such things and those who have a love for the Church. We can only say, however, that on May 13th, 1845, the foundation of the new church was laid a few yards to the east of the ancient chapel, and the building was finished just a year later. Shortly afterwards the old building, so rich in historical associations, was taken down.

#### PLATT CHAPEL.

It is not generally known that a very interesting history is attached to Platt Chapel on Wilmslow Road. As this is somewhat mixed up with the history of Birch Chapel may I begin by saying that in the year 1672 the Rev. Henry Finch was appointed as minister to Birch Chapel. The entry concerning his appointment states—"Henry Finch, of Manchester, General Presbyterian Minister, a private oratory belonging to Thomas Birch, of Birch Hall, licence for a Congregational meeting place." This appears to prove that Thomas Birch, who was a Nonconformist, had service for a time conducted in some outbuilding of Birch Hall. The Conventicle Act\* was pressed with the utmost rigour against

\* The Conventicle Act adjudged that "every person above 16 years of age present at any meeting under pretence of any exercise of religion in other manner than as the preacher of the Church of England, where there are five persons more than the household, shall for the first offence be sent to gaol for three months, or pay £5; for the second offence double; and for the third transportation for seven years, or a fine of £100."

Nonconformity, and these services in Birch Hall buildings were held by stealth. The following incident is worth recording: On Sunday, November 18th, 1666, Colonel Birch, in contravention of this Act, permitted two wandering ministers from Germany to preach at Birch Hall. Booker says they were preaching and singing from nine o'clock to three o'clock, denouncing all manner of woe to England, and exhorting the people to fly and take refuge in Germany. They sang two German hymns with well-tuned voices, the purport of one, being sung in the house of an old Commonwealth officer, beginning "Hark how the trumpet sounds," might well excite alarm in the minds of neighbouring Royalists. They supposed this to be a military hymn, and thought a conspiracy was being fomented. The Conventicle Act was put in force against Colonel Birch and some of those present at the meeting. They were brought before the magistrates, and among those fined was Deborah, the affectionate and prudent wife of Ralph Worsley, of Platt, who is buried in Birch Churchyard as just mentioned. I went last Sunday morning to Birch Church to get a few dates for this lecture. I stood by the grave of this good woman, and I heard the voice of the Rector and the congregation worshipping in the church. My mind went back through the centuries, and I thought of that Sunday when our ancestors in the village valued so much their own faith that they were willing to risk fine and imprisonment. Though avowedly dissenting from the Established Church, the Rev. Henry Finch was appointed by Colonel Thomas Birch to the charge of Birch Chapel, and continued with more or less interruption to officiate there until the death of Colonel Birch, in the year 1697. The next heir having no sympathy with Mr. Finch's Nonconformist views, secured his dismissal. For several years Rev. Henry Finch was without a preaching place, but in 1699 Mr. Ralph Worsley gave a plot of land, on which Platt Chapel now stands. The cost of the building was £95, and among the items of expenditure were:—For

pulpit cushion, £1 3s. 3d.; meat, drink, ale, pipes, and tobacco, 10s. Mr. Grimshaw, who preached the opening service, received the large sum of 5s. This chapel was taken down in 1790, and in the same year the present chapel was built, being therefore 114 years old. The ancient Communion chalices, dated 1640-41 and 1661-62, transferred from Birch Chapel, are still in use at Platt Chapel. It is of interest to know that in 1650 the distance from Birch Hall by the nearest way to the Collegiate Church, Manchester, was four miles.\* The way then was past Birch Fold Cottage, down Old Hall Lane and Wilmslow Road to the city. Many have wondered why Rusholme Road is so called. The explanation is, anyone coming from Manchester to Rusholme 100 years ago, would come *via* London Road, Ardwick Green, Rusholme Road, to Wilmslow Road. Oxford Road from Rusholme Road to town was not then made.

I fear to many of you here this evening the details that I have already given will be considered dry and uninteresting, and to others they are no doubt very familiar. I hope, however, you will not consider the time mis-spent. It is good, I venture to think, occasionally to recall the days and incidents of the past of our village, and to think of the men who walked our lanes and streets, and who took a share in the religious and secular work of the village and of the great city adjoining.

#### POPULATION.

As regards the population of Rusholme in the years we have been considering, very little reliable information has been obtained. In 1655 Rusholme had only 14 ratepayers, but no separate return is made of the amount of the rate collected, it being included in the return for Withington.

---

\* See also *Wilmslow Road*, by H. T. Crofton; *City News*, 23rd April, 1887; *Notes and Queries*, No. 4629.



Amongst the names of the Rusholme ratepayers at this period are Mr. Worsley, Mr. Worsley, of Heild House, Lieutenant Worsley and George Worsley. In Birch Hall House we have Thomas Birch, Esq., Mr. Siddall, of Slade, and Captain Edge. In 1692 the annual value of real property in Rusholme was assessed to the land tax at £146 13s. 4d. The earliest return of the population is in the year 1714, at which time it contained but 40 families, representing probably 200 persons. Of these, five families were dissenters. In 1744 there were 67 families, representing 351 persons, and there were 63 houses. In 1801 the population was 726; in 1811, 796; in 1821, 913; in 1831, 1,708; in 1841, 1,868; in 1851, 3,679; and in 1861, 4,945, whilst to-day for the same area as represented by these figures, we have about 12,000 of a population.

#### RUSHOLME 100 YEARS AGO.

I propose that we shall now take an imaginary walk through Rusholme, along Wilmslow Road, in the early years of last century. I have conversed with more than one man who was familiar with Rusholme a century ago. We will start at the other side of Wilmslow Road, at High Street. Rusholme House was built by Richard Entwistle in 1810 and remained in the family until 1872, when it was sold to Mr. Crompton Potter, but in 1888 it was acquired and pulled down by the Whitworth Trustees, who included it in the park and who in these and other respects have done so much for Manchester. At the corner of Clock House Lane, now Moss Lane East, was a low thatched cottage, called Moss Cottage, pulled down about the year 1880. A little further where Carter's Repository begins there was a toll bar, the toll being 9d. for a four-wheeled vehicle. I am just able to remember this Rusholme toll bar, and the family of the name of Hargreaves who kept it. When the Withington bar was put up, near the Red Lion, the toll at Rusholme was reduced to 4½d. Continuing on the other side of the road there was a row of thatched



GILBODY'S COTTAGE, WILMSLOW ROAD.



ANCIENT COMMUNION CHALICES.

1—1640-41. 2—1661-62.

cottages, built where the Carriage Company's premises now stand. Two of these cottages were used as almshouses for the poor of Rusholme, under overseers, who had such powers as Poor Law Unions now possess. Passing these almshouses we have nothing but open fields until we come to Poplar House and Cottages, standing right opposite what is now Thurloe Street. These were quaint, old-fashioned buildings, and I may mention that one of them was the country house of the Behrens family. Outside this house, as a relic of other days and other modes of conveyance, was an old-fashioned horse block. This was removed many years ago and placed in front of Platt Cottage, Wilmslow Road, where it still remains. Poplar House, a very old building, and one of the Poplar Cottages with its plastered front, are still standing. Proceeding we have open fields, as Regent House, better known as "Knoops House," was not then built, until we come to a narrow winding lane, called "Granny Lane," now Monmouth Street. At the top of Granny Lane was a cluster of cottages in one of which the first Sunday School in Rusholme was established by the Wesleyans, in 1826. We next come to Moor Street, which obtained its name from the fact that at the corner was a nursery kept by a man named Moor. This nursery extended half way down Moor Street on the left. I well remember the cottages in Moor Street having lovely gardens in front of them, filled with choice flowers. Nearly a century ago there lived at the bottom of Moor Street an old soldier who owned a lot of land down there. This was the time when Lord Nelson's triumphs were stirring the country from end to end. This old soldier, like Nelson himself, had only one arm, and to show his admiration for the great naval hero he called the streets after him, hence Nelson Street and Nelson Place. What memories are called up by the recital of these two names! Nelson Square, by the irreverent, was called "Hell Square." In past years I have taken part in all sorts of functions with my friends down in that delightful spot. We

have sung, prayed and preached, we have separated brawlers and preserved peace. Things, however, are now quite changed. I well remember one night being sent for down there to see a man, who for some days had been drinking heavily. I talked to him for a long time and told him of the great gain there would be to himself and his wife and family if he would only sign the total abstinence pledge. The poor fellow was evidently impressed with what I said, and turning to me he said "Mr. Royle, I believe every word you say and I have determined to turn over a new leaf and sign the pledge, but I want you to promise to do me a favour." Expressing the desire I had of doing what I could to help him, my friend continued: "Will you please let me have but another wee drink now," and (noticing my surprise), he earnestly avowed "I will start to be teetotal immediately after."

We continue our walk, and notice three thatched cottages at the corner of Pill Row on the land now occupied by the Congregational Church. Later in the century these houses were occupied by Messrs, Upton, Dyson, Solomon Turner, and Edward Mottram. Just beyond was Gilbody's thatched cottage, adjoining the two low plastered houses now standing. There was a field at the corner of Platt Lane, as Melbourne Cottage and the others adjoining were not then built. We cross Wilmslow Road. Norman Road in those days was a narrow winding road which terminated in a footpath about 150 yards from the turnpike road. Funerals to Birch Chapel came this way, but the body required to be carried from the point mentioned. I remember my father telling me that on the day of the Peterloo massacre in 1819 he was standing at the corner of Norman Road, and saw crowds of people coming from Manchester, many with marks of blood on them received in that murderous affray. Where the Birch Villa Hotel now stands was an old thatched cottage, where lived a woman who sold cakes, and the house was at the corner of what was then called Sharp's Lane, afterwards Lomas's Lane, now



called Dickenson Road. Near where the Wesleyan Chapel stands was a farm house, and the road diverged sharply to the right (*see map*). Many here remember Rudd's Farm and shippin. Lomas's Lane, or Dickenson Road, terminated where Cunningham Road now is, and there was only a footpath which led into Birch Lane. At the corner of Birch Lane and what is now Dickenson Road there was an old schoolhouse, known as Chadwick's School, kept by an old man of that name. It was a Day as well as a Sunday School. I remember my old friend Mr. Lowe telling me that he often saw, over 60 years ago, the children walking down Birch Lane to Sunday service at the old Birch Chapel. This was in the days when the Rev. G. Dugard was Rector. There was a path from Lomas's Lane to Victoria Park called Strawberry Lane, on account of the strawberries which grew on the hedge banks.

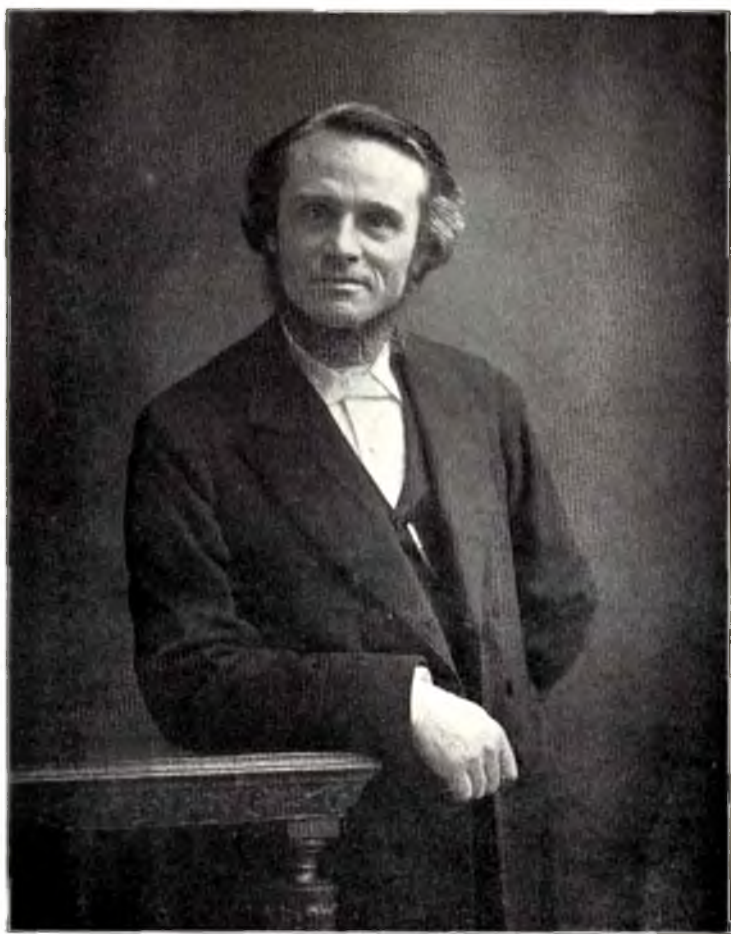
#### RUSHOLME GREEN.

We must now notice what was one of the chief characteristics of the village in the days we are considering. Some present may have heard the expression from an old inhabitant, "Down the Green." This implies that the person in question is going down the village towards the city. The village Green was a wedge-shaped plot of land with the broad end of the wedge at Dickenson Road, the ground terminating where Seymour Mead's shop now stands. At its broadest it was 30 yards wide. In the chronicles of the village, Rusholme Green is mentioned as early as the year 1548. This Green was a splendid playing-ground for children, and the housewives of that day used it as a drying-ground. Across the Green, a few yards this side Thurloe Street, ran a silvery bubbling stream, and this stream was crossed by a bridge, which was the great resort for the weavers, men and women. and other workers for gossip after the day's work was done. A lumbering omnibus started from this bridge when it felt inclined for Manchester, the fare being 6d. One of the great

excitements of the day, especially to the juvenile portion, was the passing of the London coach, with its echoing horn. What a vast change between these days of long ago, with their easy-going life, and the bustle in the village to-day, with the crowds of people and the fast-rushing electric cars! The Green finished just beyond Thurloe Street, and no doubt many here remember the three old black and white thatched cottages which stood at a distance from the road near Thurloe Street, where Mr. Hamer's shop now stands. One of the cottages was occupied by Archie Wilson, a well-known Rusholme character. I dare say there are many here who remember Archie. He belonged to a race of Lancashire cobblers now almost extinct. He was fond of a glass, and in his way a bit of a philosopher. He always wore a top hat. In wet or dry, sunshine or shadow, ebriate or inebriate, Archie always wore this "topper." As a lad I used to think it would make a good concertina. He had a brother, called Red Rover, well known to all the children of that day by his red hair and by his stopping in the street, when carrying clothes, and delivering to them speeches of the Pecksniffian order. These cottages where the Wilson's lived were called "Carter's Lache," or lake. There is a reference to this plot of land in the *Manchester Mercury*, April 21st, 1752:—

"To be sold—A freehold estate, lying in Rusholme, commonly called Carter's Lake, belonging to George Booth, now in occupation of Samuel Burrough, consisting of thirty-seven acres of land and upwards, with housing and out-housing convenient for the same, and let at forty-three pounds per annum, with a quantity of ready growing timber. Enquire for George Booth, at Thomas Booth's, the lower end of King Street, Manchester."

Just beyond Carter's Lache there were three low shops extending to Lloyd Street, one of which was occupied by



REV. T. C. FINLAYSON, D.D.

an old dame, and where we used to buy bull's eyes and marbles. The village Green was bought and enclosed about the year 1832, the purchase money being vested in three trustees. I cannot ascertain what became of the money except that £139 18s. 8d. was handed over by the last surviving trustee, Mr. Carill Worsley, to the building fund of the Rusbolme Public Hall. Passing down the village we came to the Horse and Jockey Inn, now the Clarence. It stood many yards back, with a swinging sign, and a horse block in front of it. Just beyond was the large house occupied by Mr. Denison, and later by Mrs. Turner.

So ends our walk, which we trust has enabled you to understand a little what our village was like 100 years ago.

#### HEALD HOUSE AND HEALD GROVE.

We must spare a moment for what is possibly one of the oldest parts of Rusholme. We are all familiar with Heald Place, Heald Grove, Heald House. In the distant ages of the past there was a considerable plot of land, called the *Gyldehousys*, bounded, so far as we can trace, by Moss Lane and Wilmslow Road on two sides, which had some connection with an ancient religious guild. We gather something as to the nature of the land there in the 13th century when a right to dig turf on the Yhildhouse Moor was granted. Later, the estate became the property of the Warden and Fellows of Manchester, and we know that in 1665 George Worsley, a descendant of the Worsleys of Platt, lived there.

#### OLDEST HOUSE IN RUSHOLME.

No mention of Old Rusholme would be complete without a reference to Birch Fold Cottage, a black and white building, in Old Hall Lane. It is a fine relic of olden days, and in the present day is the delight of many artists, it having been photographed probably more than any other house in the neighbourhood. This is no doubt the oldest house in



Rusholme. Its age is unknown, but it has stood for many centuries. There are distinct traces of it having been surrounded by a moat. I remember how in my younger days this house was pointed to as the one "where Oliver Cromwell once slept." I have often been told of an underground passage from this cottage under the Nico Ditch to Birch Hall. As I mention this house memory goes back to many pleasant afternoons spent there, and many cups of tea partaken with my old friend Miss Cottrell. Her old world courtesy is a pleasant memory. Whilst speaking of this lovely cottage I wonder whether any present remember an old Quaker gentleman—Gravelly Woolston, who lived there for many years. He was a cheery soul, had a pleasant word for all he met, and was a striking figure with his broad brimmed hat, as he passed through the village. He was accustomed to go on Sunday mornings to the Friends' Meeting House, and I recollect him returning one morning and saying in his breezy way, "We have had a glorious meeting this morning, not one spoke."

#### NICO DITCH.

Probably the most ancient feature in Rusholme is the Nico, Nicker, or Mickle Ditch, which runs at the back of Birch Hall rectory and school, and formerly had a waterfall just behind Birch Schools. It takes its source in Audenshaw, and continues through Droylsden, crossing Ashton New Road, and winds through Fairfield and part of Openshaw and Gorton, to Kirkmanshulme and Rusholme. Booker points out the remarkable fact that from its source the brook is the *boundary of ancient parishes*. Dim tradition has it that the raising of the embankment was the work of the Saxons, to protect themselves against their invaders, the Danes, being made in one night; that some battles took place about the years 870 to 900 A.D., and one of the fiercest raged in the vicinity of Nico Ditch and Gore Brook. In

our own neighbourhood there is a reverberation of this legend in the names of Danes Road and Norman Road. Talking of battles and the dead we naturally follow with a reference to the Dead Entry—that narrow passage with high walls leading into Norman Road. In our childhood days we were told of “the hundreds of dead bodies lying beneath that noted passage slain in the fight between the Normans and the Danes.” How we used to run down the dark entry at night, frightened by the echo of our feet. In latter days we took our sweethearts down. We gave up going down the entry together when we got incorporated—I mean when the Corporation put a light in.

#### BIRCH HALL HOUSES.

We must not omit to mention that old-fashioned building in Old Hall Lane, standing back from the road, and now occupied by my friend Mr. Green. Part of the house is very old, having been built over 300 years, but in more recent years has received additions. It was formerly called Birch Hall Houses, and was the residence of a family named Edge, who like most of his neighbours was a supporter of Cromwell. There is an incident worthy of record in connection with the capture of Lord Derby, previously mentioned, which speaks well for Captain Oliver Edge, son of Oliver Edge, of Birch Hall Houses. Of his capture the earl gives the following account: “I escaped,” he wrote afterwards to the Countess, “one great danger at Wigan, and I met with a greater at Worcester. I was not so fortunate as to meet with anybody that would kill me, for the Lord Lauderdale and I, having tired horses, we were not thought worthy of killing, for we had quarter given by one Captain Edge, a Lancashire man, and one that was so civil to me that I and all that love me are beholden to him.” When Rev. Henry Finch retired from Birch Chapel, as mentioned in an earlier page, he began to preach in private houses. One of the houses, in addition to

Platt Hall, so licensed, was this present house, and it is on record that on 14th day of October, 1697, the house was used as a "meeting place for an assembly of Protestants dissenting from the Church of England." The Edges appear to have left the house early in the 18th century.

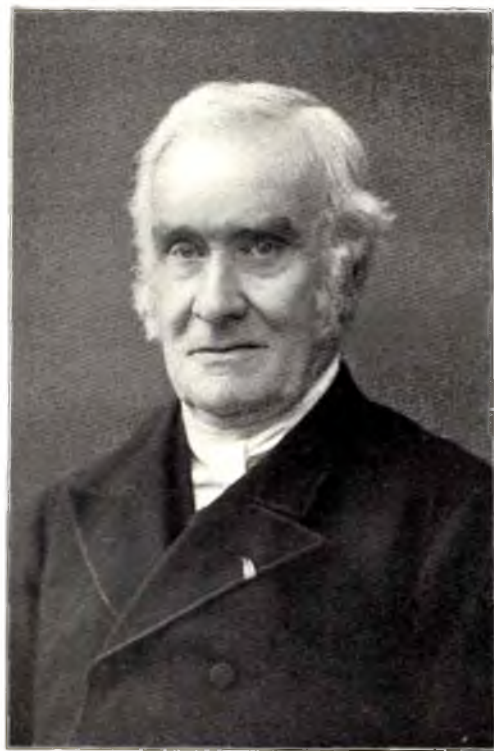
I have now finished what I may term the historical part of my lecture, if I may be allowed to dignify these scattered remarks by such an ambitious title. I propose now to deal with more personal matters, and of such affairs that come within the memory of many present.

#### RUSHOLME NOTABILITES.

Victoria Park has had a considerable influence on the fortunes of Rusholme. In the year 1836 there stood an old black and white farm house exactly in the centre of the present circular walk, a strip of a road across the village Green leading up to it. This farm was occupied by a Richard Warburton, the father of Thomas Warburton who later kept a grocers shop "Down the Green." At that time there was not a house on what is now Victoria Park. The Victoria Park Company was formed in 1836, but early met with financial disaster. These after a time it survived, and no one can deny that the park has been an immense benefit to the people of Rusholme. Some of Manchester's best citizens resided in the park, and amongst them many Members of Parliament :—E. R. Langworthy, M.P. for Salford. George Hadfield, M.P. for Sheffield. James Kershaw, M.P. for Stockport. W. Entwistle, M.P., W. R. Callender, M.P. for Manchester, John Slagg, M.P. for Burnley, and many other names could be mentioned. No reference to Rusholme Notabilities would be complete without particular mention of one whose residence here has conferred lasting distinction on the village. I refer to *Richard Cobden* who laboured unceasingly for the repeal of the iniquitous Corn Laws. Cobden, who was in every sense a Manchester man, made in



REV. W. H. FINNEY.



THOMAS LOWE.



1835 speculative purchases of land in Rusholme and also in other parts of Manchester. He bought land in Victoria Park, in Dickinson Road, and in Wilmslow Road. Portion of the land used for Birch Park was purchased from the Cobden Trustees, which Trust even to-day owns land in Rusholme. Cobden lived in Rusholme during the years 1846-8 when his great work was just accomplished and the Corn Laws repealed. His house was in Victoria Park on the other side of the Crescent as you enter from Wilmslow Road. It is called *Westerfield*, and now occupied by Mr. Holmes. *Should it not deserve a commemorative tablet?*

Amongst other names to be mentioned are those of Sir *Harry and Lady Smith*, who lived at Summerfield, Victoria Park. Sir Harry was Commander of Her Majesty's Forces in South Africa. I remember his erect military figure as he used to ride about the village. Two towns that played a notable part in the recent South African War were named after this worthy pair—I refer to Ladysmith and Harrismith. Another Rusholme worthy was *Robert Barnes*. Who does not remember, long years ago, as we went to business in the morning, marking time by Barnes's clock, corner of High Street? That was the time when people walked to town. Robert Barnes lived in Rusholme for nearly 30 years, and left his large fortune for building *Barnes's Convalescent Home*, *Barnes's Boys' Home*, at Heaton Mersey, and endowing *Barnes's Samaritan Charity*, with £80,000 for the poor of this city. "The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon him and he caused the widow's heart to sing for joy." I still remember him, he was a very quiet unassuming man. Thousands have, and will bless the name of Robert Barnes.

#### PUBLIC HALL.

The history of Rusholme, during the last 50 years, centres round the building in which we are gathered to-night. The Rusholme Public Library was started in some hired

rooms over what is now the Coffee Tavern, Wilmslow Road, in the year 1850. A few years later larger premises being required, a Public Meeting was held in the Independent Chapel in Moor Street, to advocate the building of a Hall. Mr. W. Entwistle was in the Chair, and the speakers included Mr. Thomas Brittain, Rev. G. H. G. Anson and Mr. Thomas Lowe. Ultimately the present building was erected at a cost of nearly £3,000, being opened on January 14th, 1860. The object was the moral and intellectual improvement of the people of Rusholme, and the subscription was 2s. per quarter, which included the use of the Reading Room and Library. This building in those days, and after years, was the common meeting ground of men of all parties and creeds, and so we were able to understand each other better and all unite for the common good. In the early days of this institution Lectures were given by the first scientific and literary men of that day. On December 6th, 1864, *John Ruskin* gave a Lecture in this Hall where we are met to-night. I stood outside, and well remember the long line of carriages in front of the building. The first Lecture was on "*Kings Treasuries*," and the second delivered shortly afterwards on "*Queens Gardens*." The Archdeacon, I remember, telling me that when he requested Ruskin to lecture, Ruskin asked what he was to lecture about, and in reply to a suggestion from the Archdeacon said he wanted to talk about books and the value of libraries. Afterwards Ruskin sent his own titles and they were as mentioned above, two of the most delightful of the productions of this great writer, now incorporated in "*Sesame and Lilies*."

Professor Bowman, the Astronomer, who lived in Victoria Park, gave several Lectures here, one especially on the great Comet of 1858. I recollect being carried out one night to see this wonderful sight in the heavens.

In addition to the lectures, I have just mentioned, for the more educated and cultured portion of the community, an

attempt was made to cater for the working classes. This took the form of entertainments, made up of songs, readings, recitations, &c. They went under the name of "Penny Readings," and soon every village and town had them. I have before me, as I write, the programmes of these entertainments. Some of the readings and songs then given would not be listened to to-day. Edwin Waugh's "Come whoam to thi childer and me" and "Besom Ben" were great favourites. Such now are rarely heard at popular entertainments. We want the Pierrots nowadays. These Penny Readings were organised by Mr. Edward Wilde, then Hon. Secretary of this institution. He worked unceasingly to make them a success, and in many other ways did much to improve the moral and intellectual condition of the people of Rusholme. These readings of 40 years ago had their day. For some years they flourished, and I have seen this hall crowded—they were stopped partly by the unruly conduct of a portion of the audience, and several times the police had to be brought in to eject the noisy ones.

My first connection with politics in Rusholme was in the year 1866. Gladstone had been rejected by Oxford University, and, being invited to stand for South Lancashire, came down to Manchester, and in the Free Trade Hall made the famous speech beginning "I am come among you unmuzzled." Rusholme was then part of South Lancashire, and was greatly excited during this election. The Conservatives had their headquarters at the "Birch Villa," and the Liberals in this hall. I remember attending the Liberal meeting in this room addressed by some of the candidates, but I am not sure whether Mr. Gladstone was one who spoke here. The leaders of the Liberal party in Rusholme in those days were Mr. Wood, of Princess Street, and Mr. Furniss, of Kingthorpe Grove. The polling resulted in the return of Egerton and Turner, Conservatives, and Gladstone as the only Liberal. He represented Rusholme in Parliament for

two years, until the village became part of South East Lancashire.

The following is a bit of weird history:—As mentioned, the Wesleyan Sunday School was started in 1826 in Granny Lane, by Charles Beswick, a working man, living in Ardwick, who passed through Rusholme every Sunday on his way to Fallowfield and Ladybarn, where he did some lay preaching. A few years later, about 1830, a school for children was opened at Platt Chapel. In the records of the Wesleyan Sunday School we find in the year 1833 about 30 new scholars came one Sunday. On asking Mr. Beswick, who died in 1878, the reason of this he said it was owing to *body snatching* taking place, and the children were afraid to attend school. I got no further information on this matter until a few days ago, when in speaking to an old resident in Rusholme he told me that his father was a watchman and apprehended the man when in the act of taking the body away from Platt Chapel yard, it having been dug out of the grave. Other cases of body snatching took place about this time and there was a great scare amongst the youngsters in the village.

Many here remember the old Local Board of Health. It was formed in the year 1849. The preliminary meetings to its establishment were held in Dr. Melland's house, in Wilmslow Road. They were attended by Thomas Lowe, Mr. E. R. Langworthy, Rev. G. H. G. Anson, and Dr. Melland. All honour to these men, the pioneers of public work, in Rusholme. We are delighted to have Dr. Melland with us to-day. Prior to this time many of the streets of Rusholme were undrained and unpaved, and the sides of them were almost open sewers. Monmouth Street and Walmer Street were then in wet weather ankle-deep in mud, but the Board of Health brought many improvements. It was in 1853 that for the first time Corporation water and gas were introduced. Streets were paved and sewered, and the foundations were then laid for the excellent system of drainage





ARCHIE WILSON.



RED ROVER.



AN OLD RUSHOLMITE.

we now enjoy, for I venture to say that Rusholme is one of the healthiest spots in Manchester—this in spite of its clay soil.

### RUSHOLME WORTHIES.

It has been my pleasure and great privilege to know most of the men, who during the last 30 or 35 years have been engaged in religious work in this village. *Rev. J. J. Twist*, for many years Curate of Birch, and the first Rector of Fallowfield, was one whose name is not forgotten. He was assiduous in his visitation of the sick, and it mattered not whether they belong to Church or Dissent, if he knew there was trouble or mourning in the house, there he went.

*Thomas Lowe*, my best friend, was known to many people here to-night. He came to Rusholme in 1836, and took part in most of the public affairs of the village. He was one of the founders of the Rusholme Public Hall in 1850, and also of the Working Men's Club in Nelson Street. He was the pioneer of Temperance work, and established the first Teetotal Society in the village in 1845, which held its meetings in the Chapel in Moor Street. He was an unflinching advocate of total abstinence, and some who to-day hold aloft the banner of temperance in Rusholme owe their inspiration to him. His public work in connection with the village was fitly recognised when he was unanimously invited to occupy the Chair at the Jubilee celebration in this Hall in 1887, and presided over a splendid meeting. A well read and cultured man he was never tired of talking about his favourite science, Astronomy. As is well known he was the father of Wesleyan Methodism in Rusholme. He passed away in 1892, at the ripe age of 78, having lived in Rusholme 56 years.

*Dr. Finlayson* is a name of pleasant remembrance. For 27 years he was the Pastor of the Congregational Church here, and maintained a powerful and effective ministry. He was a man of wide and deep sympathies, but held with a

tenacious grip, his religious and political principles. His preaching was not for the multitude.

“Unskilful he to fawn or seek for power,  
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour.”

By the books which he published, more especially by the volumes of his Sermons, and his standard work on the Book of Ecclesiastes, he preached to a wider circle. He had a quiet power of attraction, a charming personality, and he was loved most by those who knew him best. There are those who still come to Rusholme to see the place where Dr. Finlayson lived and preached.

*James Hounsfield* was known to a smaller circle of friends. The distinctive feature of his character was that he was a man of great method. For 23 years he never, from any cause whatever, failed to attend the Wesleyan Church and Sunday School close by, four times each Sunday. He was the founder of the Penny Bank in this building, and for nearly 30 years attended to receive the money every Monday night. He was from the very beginning on the directorate of this Public Hall. In the best sense of the word he was a “good man.”

#### ARCHDEACON ANSON

I have left until the last the name of one who more than all others was associated with the village of Rusholme, I refer to Archdeacon Anson. I have already pointed out how he was historically connected with Rusholme through being related to John Dickenson of Birch Hall. George Henry Greville Anson was the son of General Sir William Anson. He was for some years Curate of the Parish Church of Leeds, but in June, 1846, on the resignation of Rev George Dugard, was presented by his brother with the living of Birch. For 53 years he was Rector, and from the very first took the greatest interest in all that concerned the people of Rusholme. Soon after his arrival he helped to originate the Local Board

of Health, and he was one of the founders of this building. He was the first to assist in all local celebrations of national events. The Archdeacon was said in politics to have Liberal sympathies, but I always found him difficult to fathom. When canvassed for his vote he used to say, "My father was a Whig and my grandfather a Tory and I follow the politics of my ancestors," so we came away no wiser than we went. He founded and attended regularly the Philharmonic Society, held in Birch Infant School 23 years ago.

He was a strong Churchman, but he was willing on occasions to co-operate with other Christian workers.

No doubt many present will remember the alarm excited in the mind of the juvenile portion of the inhabitants of the village, over 20 years ago, by the appearance on the walls of huge placards: "Siege of Rusholme," to take place on a certain Saturday afternoon. When the appointed time arrived it was found to be nothing more serious than the advent of the Salvation Army, taking its place among the religious organisations of the village. It was some time after this that the Archdeacon, desirous of showing his sympathy with all who were working for the common good, invited the Army to a service in his mission room "down the Green." When I say that my friend William Day was leader of the Army at that time you will believe there was plenty of life and noise in the service. The concertinas and tambourines did their best, and helped in making a meeting—to which you will all agree with me, when I say the Archdeacon's habit of mind and mode of worship was hardly accustomed. I remember when the time came for him to give the sermon, he announced the text in the tone of voice to which those of us who knew him were so accustomed, as from I. Kings, 19 chapter, verse 12—

"And after the earthquake a still small voice."

It was a little time before the humour of the text was appreciated by my many friends in the Army.

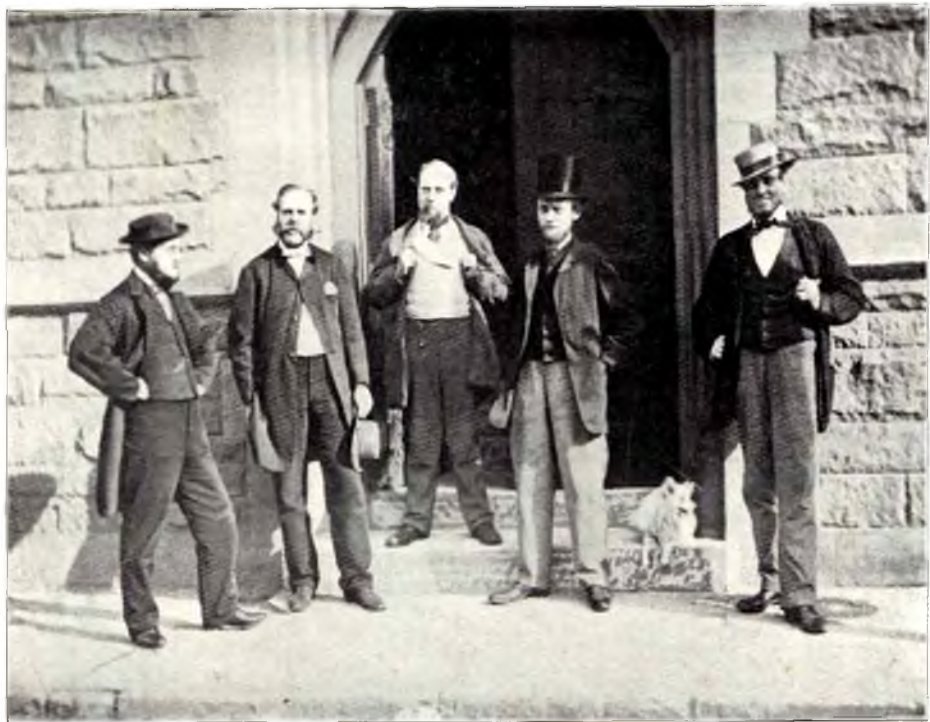


Poor people knew the way to the rectory, and none ever appealed to the Archdeacon in vain. He was a true friend to all in distress. He rejoiced with those who rejoiced, and wept with those who wept. I know no man who so fully exemplified Goldsmith's "Village Preacher"—

His house was known to all the vagrant train,  
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain ;  
At church with meek and unaffected grace  
His looks adorned the venerable place ;  
The service past around the pious man,  
With ready zeal each honest rustic ran,  
Even children following with endearing wile,  
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile ;  
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,  
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.  
As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,  
Sweils from the vale and midway leaves the storm,  
Though round its breasts the rolling clouds are spread,  
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

#### MODERN HISTORY.

I remember when our village was known as being the great place for pigeon fliers and washerwomen, the latter one the noblest of occupations, but alas, the race is disappearing, their place being taken by steam laundries. One day a candidate for a public position spoke disrespectfully of these ladies, with the result that when the election day came he was at the bottom of the poll. Rusholme men have always been noted for their love of sport. Roger Iddison, one of the best all round cricketers Yorkshire ever had, was born in Platt Lane, and lived there for many years, so Yorkshire need not throw stones at Lancashire for importing players. Then we had Jack Shanks, the pedestrian, and Charlie Jones, the boxer. Noted athletes were turned out by the Rusholme Gymnastic Club held in this building. Ben Greg, Lionel



A RESHELME GROUP OF 40 YEARS AGO.  
MESSRS. ALTON, STRINGER, MAPLESTON, ULPH, CLARK.

Adams, Tom Noble, and Tom Hamnett had much more than a local reputation. Then George Boswell, whose death a few weeks ago was so much deplored, was in his day the best man in the North of England for long distance running, and won scores of prizes at athletic festivals. If my remarks to-night concerned the living, I should have spoken of my friend Richard Watson, who made the name of Rusholme famous in the athletic world for steeplechase running—Dick could run like a hare. I reflect with pleasure on the many happy days spent in the Gymnasium below, long years ago, which culminated in the annual "Assault-at-Arms." Our comrades of those days, where are they? Some are not, and others are scattered all over the world.

The first of May was always a great day for the youngsters of Rusholme. Up early in the morning to see the milkmen and maids dressed up, and if any man, "Dicky Broom" especially, was so regardless of custom as to come without being decorated, woe be to him, he had a stormy reception. But of all the days of the year for true enjoyment and real happiness for the youngsters Rush Cart day easily surpassed all others. A kind providence, centuries ago, arranged for this to be on 5th of August, which was when school holidays were on. When we were young we never knew the enchanted spot where the Rush Cart came from, but it appeared on this sphere at Fallowfield—we went to meet it there. Later we knew it was made up at Withington, for there would be found, as we might expect from the name, plenty of "withs," or "rushes." The Rush Cart has a great pedigree and an interesting connection, centuries old, with churches, but we children, of course, knew nothing of these things. It was a grand sight to see the waggon, laden high with rushes, orderly arranged, surmounted by every coloured flowers. Then came the farm labourers carrying the garlands—honoured men; and with them the Morris Dancers, all decorated from head to foot with ribbons and flowers. The band struck up, and

how they danced as they went along the high road. Round and round the Rush Cart they went, with their ruddy, healthy faces and hob-nailed boots, singing as they danced :—

Every lad shall have a lass,

But I'll have four and twenty.

They passed through the village in the afternoon, again returning home, and then I fear their steps were not so steady. It was altogether a glorious time. I am sorry for the children of the present day—they have many privileges which we had not, but they have no Rush Cart.

In the year 1834 a private company was formed to build some substantial houses and pleasure gardens on three sides of a quadrangle where Brighton Grove now stands. There was a lodge for entrance and another for exit, and these stand to-day. I have before me, as I speak, a drawing of the proposed palatial residences, showing Birch Brook as a clear stream of water running through the grounds in front of the houses, there being terraces and rustic bridges. It was an ambitious scheme to beautify Rusholme. After the four houses now standing on the left hand side had been built the company came to grief, and the scheme abandoned.

A word as to some of the religious and other institutions and workers in Rusholme. Platt Church was opened in 1846. I can recall the second Rector, the Rev. Aubrey C. Price, who often came into Moor Street, in his surplice, to conduct open air preaching. H. T. Veness, who had a rough exterior but a tender heart, was his successor. Platt Day Schools were started in that old barn-like structure, now standing in Platt Lane, and the Schools now standing were opened in 1861. I attended on the first day. The first Masters were, Messrs. Turnbull, Foden, Watling, and Mr. Parkinson, the latter being now Rector of a Parish in Broughton. The Wesleyans started in 1826 in a house in "Granny Lane," and in 1829 removed to a larger building in Dickenson Road. In 1863 this Chapel was taken down and the present building took its place.

The Congregational Church was first commenced in Kingthorpe Grove, bottom of Moor Street, in May, 1839. It began as a Sunday School, and soon after was removed to Holfords Row, now John Street. Later, in 1853, the Chapel in Moor Street, now Chapel Cottages, was opened, and on November 23rd, just 50 years ago, last Tuesday, the Congregational Church was formerly constituted. We congratulate our friends on attaining their Jubilee. The Roman Catholic Church, in Thurloe Street, was erected in 1862, and Father Croskell has been Rector for many years.

Birch Infant School was erected in the year 1846, and before the Public Hall was built, was used for all public gatherings. It was for many years the only Infant School in the village, and along with many I see here to-night I received my earliest teaching in that School. As I speak, memory recalls Miss Rawlinson, who was kindness itself and richly gifted with that patience she so much needed.

The People's Institute was built in 1872, the entire cost being paid by Mr James Ryder. The Working Men's Club in Nelson Street was erected in 1884 at a cost of £1,000.

The 10th March, 1863, was a great day in Rusholme. Our present King and Queen were married. About 800 of the inhabitants were invited to a feast in this Hall, and part also went to Platt Schools. After the banquet Mr. Lawson, an Elocutionist, then living in Rusholme, gave an entertainment, and there was music and singing, and altogether such a day as Rusholme had never known before.

It was about this time when Rusholme was much excited and crowds came out to see Tom Sayers, the Pugilist. Prizefighting was then very popular, and Sayers had just fought Heenan the American. He came to lay a brick in the new porch of the Birch Villa Hotel. We live in better days, when such brutal sport is not encouraged.

Alderman Goldschmidt was for many years President of this Hall, chairman of the old Local Board, and for two years



the honoured Mayor of this City. At the 1887 Jubilee, he defrayed the cost of the celebration treat to the old and the young people of Rusholme. He was ever ready to help the poor of the village, and gave cheerfully, begging of you to come again, if necessary. He gave much of his time to municipal and philanthropic work in the City.

Mrs. Langworthy bore a revered name in Rusholme, and in her lifetime gave freely to the public institutions of Rusholme, as did her husband, Mr. E. R. Langworthy. The members of the old Local Board should not be forgotten :— Frederick Appleby (Civil Engineer, who gave freely of his ability to the public good), Thomas Bridgen, Charles Jones, Henry Wren, Thomas W. Ulph, Henry Salomonson, James Ramsay, and last but not least, Samuel Royle. All these men did their best for the public long years ago.

But in connection with this Hall there are names to be mentioned. John Edwards and Isaac Dutch, both Treasurers for many years. Then there was that firebrand, William James, who has been for over 20 years in Queensland. He was the Norbury Williams of that day—the enemy of extravagance, he was against everybody that was in office, very fond of a “row,” and also did not believe in Aldermen.

Then there was William Roberts, the village photographer, who was a genial soul and a very general favourite. He was the local historian and collected all the facts and traditions concerning the ancient history of Rusholme. Almost every person in the village was known by him, and some of the pleasantest hours of my youth were spent in his company.

Then there was my old friend Robert Atkinson. I see him yet officiating as preacher in the little Baptist Mission Room, corner of Rusholme Grove. He was a member of this Hall for many years, and was one of a cheery band of members who used to play nightly in the skittle alley in the basement. Another constant player was James Tunnicliffe and also old Clarke. This bowling alley below was



BRIGHTON GROVE SCHEME OF 1834.

a great rendezvous for these and other old "cronies" of Rusholme. Whenever you saw our friend Tunnicliffe, he was smoking, and always with the pipe upside down. One of the great mysteries of my youthful days was neither the law of gravitation, nor of evolution, but how the tobacco kept in James Tunnicliffe's pipe. I might speak of Edward Marsland, conductor, Rusholme Choral Union, patient and genial; and of Alfred Bates, who taught us all Tonic Sol Fa.

### STREET NAMES.

There is some little interest attached to the street names of Rusholme. Dickenson Road, 120 years ago, was called Lomas's Lane, but 25 years later was called Sharpe's Lane, after a man who lived in a house where St. Mary's Home now stands. Victoria Park was founded about the time when Queen Victoria came to the Throne. Lloyd Street was called after the man who built the houses at the bottom and who lived in one of them. Denison Street and Denison Place are called after John Denison, who lived in the large house opposite the Carriage Company's Stables, later occupied by Mrs. Turner, for so many years. Victoria, Queen, Albert, Brunswick, Streets were built in the early forties, about the time of the marriage of Queen Victoria with Prince Albert, hence the names. Princes Street was built later, about the time when the present King was born. John Street was called after John Holford, who built the property, and afterwards resided at Rusholme Hall. Wiggin Street was called after a tenant of Platt Hall. Moor Street and Nelson Street we have already mentioned. Taylor Street was called after Mr. Taylor, who was steward for the Platt Estate, and built some of the property. Pill Row, that narrow passage by the Congregational Church, has a little amusing history attached to it. Long years ago there lived at one of the two houses forming the Avenue in Platt Lane, a doctor, named Stein. He was celebrated for the making and prescribing of

certain pills, and he made such a substantial profit that he was able to build the row of houses at the bottom of the street. The street then ran through to the houses forming the Avenue. Seeing the property was built out of pills, the people naturally called it Pill Row. This, however, touched the dignity of some of the residents in the houses and they insisted upon another name. It was then called Stein Place, after the prosperous doctor. The houses in this neighbourhood were built in pre-Local Board days, when building bye-laws were either non-existent or lax, and many are what is known as "back to back." Sanitary and other authorities are now rapidly changing these, and people are living under better conditions. Quaint names were given to some of the streets in Rusholme, and "Axon's Fowt," "Own Neds," and "Slutchy Alley" are unknown to the present generation.

The village "wakes" was held last week in July, roundabouts, greasy pole climbing, fat women, and travelling showmen, appearing on the vacant ground in Moor Street, caused much innocent enjoyment. We take our pleasures seriously nowadays.

#### EPILOGUE.

I have done now. My valedictory words are :—Born in humble circumstances, I have all my life had deep sympathy with the poor. There has always been much poverty in the village. Rusholme never had any manufactories to employ its inhabitants, and it is not situated far enough in the country for them to be employed on the land. There is much unskilled labour, and with many life has been a keen struggle for existence. I should be unfaithful to my conviction if I did not testify to the kindness, the patience, and the quiet heroism of the poor.

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,  
 Their homely joys and destiny obscure,  
 Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,  
 The short and simple annals of the poor.



DR. MELLAND



REV. J. J. TWIST, M.A.



THE LECTURER.



Hundreds of times in visiting the poor, the sick, and the dying my heart has been warmed and my faith cheered by seeing the kindness of the poor one for another.

And let me say, if you have had as much pleasure in listening to these scattered and gossipy remarks, as I have had in preparing them, you will be amply repaid for your trouble in coming here to-night. I have spoken of the men who in other days gave their time and energies for the good of this village. We enjoy the fruits of their labour. May we prove worthy of them and not ungrateful. May Rusholme prosper by becoming rich in those higher qualities which make for the greatness of a people. This audience reminds me of other days and I have before me in this large gathering a picture of old Rusholme.

Should auld acquaintance be forgot  
And never brought to mind?  
Should auld acquaintance be forgot  
And the days of Auld Lang Syne?

THE END.



## APPENDIX.

---

The beginnings of Rusholme are wrapped in a haze. No flint, stone, or bronze implements have been found within its immediate boundaries, but during a long occupation in Manchester, the Romans seemed to have strayed occasionally into its scrubby and turfy heathery wastes, following and fishing its little rivulets and deep pools. In one of these, towards its western side, now occupied by Alexandra Park, two stone net-sinkers were discovered, some twenty years ago; and in Birch Brook, not so long ago, an oaken box, filled with Roman coins—perhaps lost by some straggling fugitive. To the north a Roman road passed along the banks of the Medlock, crossing Oxford Road and the Garrett, and at its eastern site another road stretched in the direction of Stockport. No doubt, then, that the district must have been more or less familiar to the squatters of the vicinity.

Tradition connects the Nico (or Mickle Ditch), with the inroads of the Danes, who, in the 9th century, burned and ransacked Manchester. It is said that the ditch was thrown up by the Mercians against these ruthless invaders, but whatever may be its origin, no discoveries or excavations, along its line, have been made to solve the question.

Light, at last, breaks upon the district, during the 13th century.

Rusholme, in early times, formed part of the manor of Withington, and the Trafford family became connected with the same as far back as the 13th century.

The Grelles, Lords of Manchester, granted the Withington Manor to the Hathersage family, by whom, probably before 1224, some land was granted in Rusholme to Richard de Trafford. It consisted of—

Twenty acres, bordering on *Tollache*, beginning at the *Great Moss* in the going up to *Goslache* as far as the boundary of Platt, and so crossing from the bound of Platt towards *Grenclow-lache*, together with the common pasture in Wyddine.

In 1317, Nicholas de Longford, lord of Withington, confirms to Henry de Trafford the grant of his predecessor, in a more definite manner. It is described as—

A certain tract of waste land, beginning at the Goslache to the *Hunt Lane* in *Platt*, following the *King's highway* towards the north as far as Grenlow-lache, and so descending Grenlow-lache towards the west as far as *Kemlache*, and from Kemlache crossing towards the south by the *wells* and *ditch* as far as the *Yhildhouse Ditch*, thence going up as far as Goslache, and along Goslache as far as the aforesaid Hunt Lane, and he likewise grants him and his heirs a right for himself and tenants to dig turves on the *Yhildhouse Moor*.

Another early name was Henry de Rusholme, who held his lands of Matthew de Hathersage, described in 1260—

One messuage, etc., situate at the end of his meadow towards the north, near to the *Hutte* (Hunt) Lane; 15 perches long; 4 perches wide; one acre of land, one end of which contiguous to his messuage and the other toward his orchard; one acre of meadow in Rusholme meadow, one acre, one end adjoining this meadow and the other extending westward to *Le Menegate*,  $\frac{1}{2}$  an acre between this parcel and the Goslache, a ridge or narrow slip of land called *Le Qwicke haggel-londe*, lying between the Goslache and *Le Menegate*;  $\frac{1}{2}$  an acre of land between the *Hutte Lane* and Goslache; six acres of land adjoining the land of Hugh de Asselum (Haslam), bounded at either end by Goslache and the old ditch.

In another grant in the reign of Henry III. to Henry de Trafford it speaks of *Le Gyldehouysys*. The bounds are defined—

From Goslache as far as the saplings where a ditch was formed to convey the water to a mill, and so alongside that ditch to the moss, and from the moss again to the Goslache.

In 1300, in a grant to Jordan, son of William de Fallowfield, the lands conveyed consist in—

All his part of one ploughland called Grenclowe-field, lying between the land of Henry de Trafford on the one side and that of William, the son of Henry de Manchester, on the other side, of which said ploughland one end reaches to the King's highway

leading to Ince (!); the other end reaches to a ploughland called *Le Somer Werkeddefield*, and also  $\frac{1}{2}$  an acre of meadow called *Le Brode Meadow*, bounded on both sides by the land of Henry de Trafford, one end of which extends to the bank or boundary of the wood called *Le Birchene Wode* and the other end extends to *Clayffeld*.

There is no need, in a popular account of Rusholme, to extend into further details with regard to the early territorial occupation of the township, which can be more closely studied in Booker's *Ancient Chapel of Birch*.

We glean from it the existence of a large moss, on which the grantee and his tenants had a right to dig turves, this was the *Yhildhouse Moor*, which was ditched. The character of the locality is further indicated by the name *Tollache*, *Goslache*, *Grenlowlache*, *Kemlache*, and what was in the 18th century called *Carter's Lache*, the word *lache* signifying a marshy pool.

Then we have the mention of *Hunt Lane* in *Platt*, and *Le Menegate*; the messuage of Henry de Rusholme, with his orchard and meadow land; we have reference made to *Grenclowe-field*, the *Somer Werkeddefield*, the *Brode-meadow*, the *Clayffeld*, and certain ploughlands, and a mill connected with the *Gyldehousys*. The growth of the birch on the moor is shown by the wood, called the *Birchenwode*. We thus gain some slight insight into the appearance of Rusholme in the 14th century.

It also speaks of the King's high road, at Rusholme, which must have run on the same track as the present high road. As pointed out already, access from Manchester was *via* Rusholme Road; the other King's high road alluded to passed Rushford, on the eastern side of the township.

It is difficult to identify at present the exact situation of the various places. The *Goslache* (*Gorselache*), *Gooseacre* (*Gorse-acre*), and *Gorsecroft* were in all probability at the further end of *Platt Lane* and south of the *Gyldehousys* (*Heald House*), where we find yet on Slater's map of 1852 a large and extended sheet of water.

The *Gyldehousys*, *Yieldhouses*, or *Guildhouse*, are frequently mentioned among the Trafford deeds. They passed from that family into the possession of the Collegiate Church towards the end of the 16th century.

The Court Leet Records inform us that in—

- 1588 Edward Siddall, of Slade Hall ;
- 1590 Thos. Strangwaies, of Strangwaies ;
- 1629 Edmund Prestwich, of Hulme :

were seised of lands and tenements in Rusholme. The latter seems to have owned the land indicated in the map of the township as *Hulme Detached*.

### *The Yieldhouses.*

According to an indenture, in the possession of the Warden and Fellows of Manchester, dated 1645, this estate (consisting in 1859 of farm buildings, two detached houses, six cottages, and also twenty-two acres of land, and two closes of land called the *Gorse Croft*, containing three acres of land) was leased by Richard Heyrick (Warden) and the Fellows to Ralph Worsley, of Platt. It was held in 1647 (*see C. L. Records*) by his tenant, George Travis, senior, described "of the Yieldhouses."

The Owens MSS. gives us a list of some of the successive tenants, who held their lease from the Collegiate Church, which I subjoin for its local interest—

- 1678 Thomas Travis, husbandman, one cottage or dwelling-house and two closes of land called the Gorse Croft, containing three acres of land, parcel of Yieldhouse. Rent, 5s.
- 1682 Ralph Worsley, of Platt, gent., messuage and tenement late in the tenure of George Travis, the elder, deceased. Rent, 35s.
- 1689 Ralph Worsley, now or late in the tenure of Thomas Travis, Rent, 32s.
- 1709 Ralph Worsley, gent., now or late in the tenure of Edward Hulme. Rent, 40s.
- 1728 Charles Worsley, gent. Rent, 40s.
- 1735 Charles Worsley, demised to Thomas Travis. 40s.
- 1771 Richard Wroe, of Manchester, tallow-chandler, surrender of messuage and tenements in Rusholme, called the Yieldhouse, now in the tenure of John Lees, Esq., also a cottage and two closes formerly in the tenure of Edward Hulme and the said John Lees. 40s.
- 1785 Richard Wroe, surrender of Yieldhouse, also a cottage, Gorse Croft, formerly demised to Thomas Travis. £2 10s.



*Joshua Marriott's House in Rusholme.*

The *Manchester Mercury* of 1783 also alludes to Joshua Marriott (already mentioned, 1765, as a resident of Rusholme), who was a yarn merchant and thread maker, trading under the name of Marriott & Hill. He failed in 1783, and his assignees offer, to be let for 3, 5, or 7 years—

All that messuage or dwelling-house, with the pleasure grounds, outhouses, offices, and gardens thereto belonging, and about ten acres of meadow and pasture land, in rich condition, situate at Rusholme, about two miles from Manchester, late in the occupation of the said Mr. Marriott.

At the end of Platt Lane we still see a piece of land laid out in the fashion of pleasure grounds, having some avenues of trees bounding it. May this have been part of the estate occupied by him?

I give now a list of the residents in Rusholme who attended *Birch Chapel*, as given in the *Chapel Book* of 1636 (see *Booker's Ancient Chapel of Birch*, p. 143), together with the amount paid by each in support of the ministrations.

*Rusholme.*

Ralph Worsley, 28s.

Thomas Shelmerdine, 13s. 4d. Yoeman; had a brick-kiln near the high road.

Thomas Travis, 10s.

William Shelmerdine, 8s. (Houson Green.)

Richard Traviſſe, 6s. 8d. (1624, Richard Travis de Rusholme, lynen webster, Mosley MSS.)

Charles Worsley, 4s.

John Davie, of Manchester, 4s.

John Wilkinson, whelewrit, 4s.

Thomas Janney, 4s.

Edmund Smith, 4s.

Thomas Shelmerdine, sen., 3s. 4d.

Robert Bowker, 3s. 4d.

Edward Baguley, 3s. 4d. (lived near the middle of the Green).

Renoud Parkinson, 3s.

John Davie, 2s. 8d.

Adam Sidall, 2s. 4d.

Thomas Bamford, 2s.  
 Edward Worsley, 2s.  
 Marie Davie, 1s. 4d. Alehouse-keeper, already  
 mentioned in 1620.  
 Margaret Dickonson, 1s. 4d.  
 William Birch, 1s. 4d.

*Birche and Birch Hall Houses.*

Mrs. Anne Birche, 25s.  
 Mr. Oliver Edge, 25s.  
 Mr. Thomas Birche, 20s.  
 Thomas Greaves, 4s.  
 Henry Hughes, 4s.  
 John Ridinges, 2s.  
 Tho. Birch, blacksmith, 2s.  
 Edmund Whitticar, 2s.

The Act of Uniformity was passed August 2nd, 1662, and by this enactment two thousand ministers were deprived of their livings. Manchester and its neighbourhood was tinged with a numerous Nonconformist population, and consequently the Act came as a heavy visitation on men of the stamp of Henry Newcome. The Mosley MSS., (now in possession of the Reference Library), throw an unexpected ray of light on the struggle which was fought out both in Manchester and Birch Chapel in which some of the best local families were involved. It forms a stirring episode in the contention for spiritual liberty, and no doubt the annexed list of the champions who rose in defiance of "the powers that are," will be read with uncommon interest. The authorities in Manchester set a simultaneous watch on the persons attending Birch Chapel, and those who abstained repairing to the Collegiate Church. A James Clough acted as informer against the people who entered Birch Chapel, amongst whom many were from the town and various townships; and a R. L. of G., (who diplomatically preserved an incognito) undertook similar duties at the Collegiate Church, beginning their work on December 7th, 1662. The offenders were eventually summoned by the Constables of Withington and Manchester to appear before the court to show cause of their absence from Church, and to take the oath of obedience, or in default, to take the consequence, and undergo either distrain, or pay a levy of fine of "twelve pence a Sunday" for absence from their parish church, or other usual place appointed for common prayer, according to the statute.

The fight was continued to May 27th, 1663. A careful examination of the list will show the degree of weakness or strength displayed by the sundry actors during the strife. In some, apparently, the flesh was very weak, and James Bowker, a minister, of Blackley, lost heart at the very beginning of the contest. The statement runs :

1662. James Clough, of Manchester aforesaid, informeth upon oath that upon Sunday, *the 14th December*, these persons hereunder named *did not resort nor repair to their parish church, nor did heare Divine Service at any church, chappell, or other usuall place appointed for common prayer, according to the statute in that behalf,* and hee rather knowes the same, for that hee saw them at *Birch Chappell* on the day aforesaid :

Edward Gathorne,	}	of Manchester.
Richard Ellor,		
Samuel Ellor,		
Edward Mather,		
Thomas Leeds,		
John Baguley, of Ardwick.		
Miles Gathorne, of Salford.		
Oliver Edge,	}	of Rusholme.
William Jackson,		

*Upon the 21th of December—*

Mr. Thomas Birch, the elder, and his wife.	
Mr. Thomas Birch, the younger.	
Alice Birch.	
James Hulme.	
Oliver Edge.	
Edward Gathorne,	} of Manchester.
James Johnson,	
William Jackson and his wife.	
Robert Birch, of Grinlaw.	
John Baguley, of Ardwick.	
William Birch, of Grinlaw.	
Richard Ellor,	} all of Manchester.
Ralph Soundiford and his wife,	
The wife of Edmund Mather,	
Thomas Worrall and his wife,	
Rich. Hunt,	
Thomas Strickland,	
James Strickland,	
James Bowker, of Blakeley.	
This 21st day Mr. Wiggans preached at Birch Chappell.	

*The 28th day of December, 1662—*

Mr. Thomas Birch, the elder.  
 William Jackson, of Rusholme.  
 Samuel Ellor, of Manchester.  
 James Hulme, of Birch.  
 Thomas Wilkinson, of Rusholme.  
 John Baguley, of Ardwick.  
 James Reddich, of Fallowfield.  
 Oliver Edge, of Birch Hall fould.  
 Edward Gathorne, }  
 John Maddock,        } of Manchester.  
 James Johnson,       }

This 28th day one James Fitton, of —, preached at Birch.

R. L. de G. informeth ut supra that these undernamed  
*did not resort to the Church nor heare ut supra the 7th day*  
*of December, 1662—*

Thomas Birch, senior, et uxor.  
 Thomas Birch, junior, et uxor.  
 Mrs. Alice Birch.  
 Mrs. Holcroft.  
 James Hulme.  
 Oliver Edge.  
 William Grantham, et uxor.  
 James Reddich.  
 Raphe Cooper.  
 John Hughes.  
 William Jackson, et uxor.  
 Thomas Jannie.  
 Thomas Wilkinson.  
 Reginald Parkinson.  
 Edward Mather.  
 Samuel Ellor.  
 Richard Ellor.  
 Edward Gaythorne.  
 John Leeds.  
 Thomas Leeds.  
 John Baguley.  
 Henry Tailer.

Who preached, I suppose, James Bowker.

R. L. de G. informeth ut supra and these persons undernamed that they were *absent the 14th December*—

Thomas Birch, junior, et uxor.

Mr. Holcroft, et uxor.

Mrs. Alice Birch.

Thomas Gilbody.

Oliver Edge, et uxor.

William Grantham.

Raphe Cooper.

William Jackson.

Henry Tailer.

Thomas Jannis.

Reginald Parkinson.

And James Fitton then and there preached.

R. L. de G. informeth, etc., that they were *absent from their parish church, and were at Birche Chappell the 4th January, 1662-3*—

Thomas Birch, senior.

Thomas Birch, junior.

Oliver Edge.

James Reddich.

Raphe Cooper.

William Grantham.

Edward Gaythorne.

Thomas Leeds.

John Leeds.

Richard Ellor.

Ralphe Sondiforth, et uxor.

Jeremiah Marsdeu then and there preached.

*December 6, 1662—*

A warrant from J. L., N. M., J. H., to the *Constable of Withington* to bring before us—

Oliver Edge, of Birch Hall fould,	} to take the oath of obedience.
William Jackson, of Risholme,	
Robert Birch, of Grindlowe,	
Thomas Robinson, of the same,	
Mark Heape, of the same,	
Reginald Parkinson, of Rusholme,	
James Redditch, of Fallowfield,	
Raphe Cooper, of Cringle brooke,	



December 9, 1662—

The names of those persons who came this day before J. L., N. M., and J. H., and took the oath of obedience :

Oliver Edge.  
William Jackson.  
Reginald Parkinson.  
James Reddich.  
Raphe Cooper.  
James Bowker, of Blakely, *minister*.

The persons not appearing and are yet to take the said oath are—

Robert Birch, of Grindlow.  
Thomas Robinson, } of the same  
Mark Heape, }

December 22, 1662—

A warrant to the *Constables of Withington* to summon these persons undernamed to appear before us to give some reasonable excuse for their absence from Church :

Thomas Birch,	} M <sup>d</sup> these persons none of them
senior, esq <sup>r</sup> , et uxor,	
Thomas Birch,	
junior, esq <sup>r</sup> ,	
Alice Birch,	} appeared at the time and
James Hulme,	
Oliver Edge, hee appeared but gave noe satisfactory	} place appointed saveing
reason of his absence.	
	} Oliver Edge.

A like warrant to the *Constable of Manchester* to summon the persons (to be seen from the list of 21st December\*). Some of them still abstained from Church, and were summoned May 23rd, 1663; to be distrained *twelve pence a Sunday* for absence from Church (May 27th, 1663).

Names of residents in Rusholme mentioned in the *Manchester Court Leet Records* for breaking the assize, etc.

In the *Manchester Quarter Sessions*, 1616-1623—

1619-20 Thomas Shelmerdyne de Risholme, yeoman,  
for fighting and breaking the peace.  
1620 John Wilkinson, ditto, husbandman.  
1620 Marie Davie, breaking the assize of ale measure.

---

\* The full list of the absentees are not reproduced here, not to lengthen the account

*In the Mosley MSS.—*

- 1624 Richard Travis de Rusholme, *lynen weaver*, for fighting and breaking the peace.
- 1624 John Bowker de Rusholme, husbandman, for fighting and breaking the peace.
- 1667 Thomas Boardman de Rusholme, husbandman, for fighting and breaking the peace.
- 1669 Reginald Parkinson de Rusholme, *webster*, refuses payment of tythe.

*In the Court Leet Records—*

- 1663 John Bayley, of Rusholme, yeoman (bond taken for security of inhabitants).
- 1664 John Bowker de Rusholme, husbandman (bond taken for security of inhabitants).
- 1672 George Worsley, of Rusholme, 1 hyde faulty, 5d.
- 1681 Ralph Worsley, of Rusholme, 1 pint 1 gill too little, 6d.
- 1681 Ralph Worsley, of Rusholme, for two point dishes and refuseth to sell by sealed measure, 18d.
- 1685 Mr. Ralph Worsley, of the Platt, for not keeping their causes (causeways) in good repair for the dwelling-house of Joseph Orme, 3s. 4d.
- 1685 Mr. Worsley, of the Platt, for not mending his land near *ye pinffold*, itt being out of repaire, 2s. 6d.
- 1756 John Worsley, of Rusholme, for exposing butter short of weight, 5s.
- 1753 Martha Burgess, of *Carter's Leach*, near Rusholme *Green*, for exposing two half-pounds of butter short of weight, 5s.

*List of residents in Rusholme in 1824-5.\*—**Gentry :*

- Ainsworth, Mrs., gentlewoman.
- Aldred, Jas., Holt's domain.
- Bayley, Sam, gent., Yieldhouse.
- Bower, Alex., drysalter, Oaks.
- Dale, John, warehouseman.
- Dickinson, Mrs. Sarah, Birch Villa.
- Edge, John, cotton manufacturer.
- Entwistle, Rich., Esq., Rusholme-house.
- Gleave, Mrs. Frances.

---

\* See *Pigot's and Dean's Manchester Directory*.

Hill, Mrs. gentlewoman.  
Jackson, John, gent.  
Little, Thomas, calenderer.  
Marsland, John, Esq., Birch-hall.  
Pilling, Charles, manufacturer.  
Robinson, Will<sup>m</sup> wine merchant, Platt Cottage.  
Rothwell, John, calenderer.  
Sharp, Thomas, iron merchant, Birch Cottage.  
Smith, Robert, gentleman, Moss Cottage.  
Wiggin, Timothy, merchant, Platt hall.  
Wood, G. W., Esq.

*Overseer and Collector of Taxes :*

Bower, Thomas, Moon-croft.

*Tradesmen :*

Brickhill, John, shopkeeper.  
Calvert, George, whipmaker, Draper's lodge.  
Fletcher, James, blacksmith.  
Giles, John, shopkeeper.  
Harrison, Sarah, confectioner.  
——— Thomas, shopkeeper.  
Holehouse, William, butcher.  
Kearsley, James, shopkeeper.  
Langford, Edward, joiner and cabinetmaker.  
Mellor, Jos., hosier  
Moore, John, gardener and seedsman.  
Taylor, Jos., gardener.



