

1846

Centenary
Souvenir

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH
(PLATT)
RUSHOLME

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of

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(PLATT) RUSHOLME



1846 — 1946

Foreword

by the Rector



THIS small brochure has been prepared as a souvenir of the Centenary of Holy Trinity Church, Rusholme. It may also serve to remind us that Rusholme is an ancient and interesting spot, of which history from time to time takes note.

The changes of the centuries have passed over it, but for the past hundred years it has had a faithful Christian witness at its centre. We may write the history of the past, but it is more important that we should make the history of the future. In serving our day and generation by the will of God, this will best be accomplished.

T. DARLINGTON.

RUSHOLME IN EARLIER DAYS

THE City of Manchester has not as many items of ancient historical interest as some of our English cathedral cities. It is regarded as more modern, taking its rise as a place of importance from the days of the industrial revolution of the Eighteenth Century.

The parish of Rusholme, as its name suggests, is no merely modern spot. It goes back to Anglo-Saxon times, when this "low lying swampy level between the Medlock and the Mersey" was vastly different from what it is to-day. It must, however, have been a favourable spot in the time of the Normans, for one of them, John de Plett, became the owner of an estate upon which the church now stands. It was an estate which throughout the centuries has memorialised his name and been known as Platt. For an estate to have survived for nine hundred years of our history is a testimony to the days when death duties were unknown.

This spot appears once more in history, when it came into the hands and under the ownership of the Knights of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem. This was an Order which established itself in England about 1110 A.D. Large and valuable tracts of land in London and elsewhere were donated to it, so that by 1271 A.D. it had become fabulously wealthy, and increasingly feared and disliked, as a proud military-religious fraternity. Evil days began to come upon it in 1381 A.D. when men began to rise against despotism. It was against these particular landlords, among others, that Wat Tyler's rebellion was directed. Fortunately, perhaps, for us to-day, this property was too far removed from its owners to admit of their ruthless interference. In any case it survived, and by the year 1625—the year that Charles I came to the throne—the estate of Platt came into the hands of the Worsley family. This family appears to have had a keen interest in the political doings of that lively period. Manchester was no more behind in those days than she has been since. History records how, even before the outbreak of the Civil War, there had been collisions between the friends of the King and those of Parliament at Manchester and Hull.

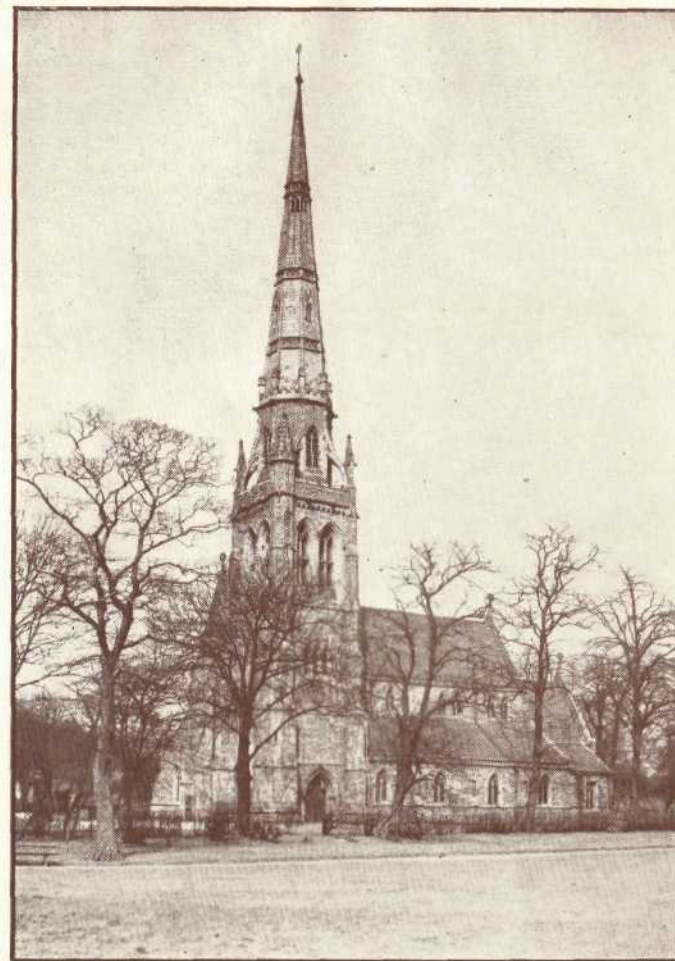
Charles Worsley must have been one of Manchester's outstanding men. He was a strong Parliamentarian, and when little more than a youth held the rank of Lieut.-Colonel in the Parliamentary Army. Those rugged Puritans were made of wonderful stuff. They were tired of the effeminate and dissolute ways of

life which were sapping the strength of the nation. Young Worsley raised a local regiment for action in the wars against the King, and eventually became Minister in Attendance to Oliver Cromwell (who, by the way, was a descendent of a Welsh nephew of Thomas Cromwell) and Member of Parliament for Cambridge. When Cromwell dissolved the Rump Parliament in 1653 A.D. he ordered the Speaker's Mace, or "Bauble" as he called it, to be taken away. This historic emblem was deposited in the old Platt Hall, a fine old building, replaced in 1764 A.D. by the present Georgian Hall.

THE BENEFACTOR

At this later date, somewhere in the Eighteenth Century, the family of the Worsleys, by inter-marriage, took the name of Carill-Worsley. They were Presbyterians, and were accustomed to worship in the little Platt Chapel on Wilmslow Road. After an absence abroad, Mr. Carill-Worsley discovered on his return that the former orthodox chapel in which his family had worshipped had ceased to be Christian and had become Unitarian. He was not able to enforce a return to orthodoxy, and so resolved to build another place of worship on his own estate, and in order to prevent as far as possible any lapse into Unitarianism, the name of "Holy Trinity" was given to it. Thus it happened that on the 22nd day of June in the year 1846 A.D. this church was consecrated by that revered man of God, the Right Reverend J. B. Sumner, Bishop of Chester—the Diocese of Manchester was not formed until the following year. This gracious benefactor, Mr. Carill-Worsley, passed away two years later, on August 3rd, 1848. There do not appear to be any available details of the actual consecration ceremony. There is no doubt, however, that the church was founded on a good evangelical basis.

The members of the Carill-Worsley family seem to have taken a very lively interest in the material welfare of the church, though the cost of most of the installations and upkeep had to be borne by the parishioners themselves. At a later date the patronage was transferred to the "Church Pastoral-Aid Society Board of Patronage Trust." This Trust has been consistent throughout in its appointment of men faithful to the evangelical character of our national church. It bears a heavy responsibility in similar parishes throughout the country. It holds in trust some 138 benefices; eight of them being in the Diocese of Manchester.



Holy Trinity (Platt) — South Side.

THE CHURCH

THE church is built of terra cotta. It has been described as "refined in detail and scholarly in design." It is a revival of the early Gothic style. The tower is situated at the south-west corner, and has a magnificent spire, rising to a height of 150 ft. This spire is a replica of the spire of Coventry Cathedral, and is exceedingly graceful and richly decorated. The interior setting of the church is simple. The lovely East Window was erected to the memory of the founder of the church, Mr. Thomas Carill-Worsley. There is nothing ornate in the church, for it has consistently throughout its history stood for the true evangelical position laid down in the Thirty-nine Articles and in the Book of Common Prayer.

The Lord's Table is an exquisite Jacobean one, dated 1650. In the chancel there are also two Jacobean chairs. The main body of the church covers 75 ft. by 50 ft. and has a seating accommodation for approximately 600 people. The organ was originally situated in the West end of the church.

Holy Trinity, Platt, is essentially a People's Church. It has never received endowments, nor the benefactions of wealthy men. All along its upkeep has been the responsibility of the parishioners, and during the 100 years of its existence they have obviously never failed to support it. It stands, therefore, to-day as a testimony to the power of true Christianity and as a witness to parochial generosity.

The church has had the faithful ministrations of eight previous Rectors :—

Rev. James Currie ..	..	1846-1856
Rev. Aubrey C. Price ..	..	1856-1860
Rev. H. T. Veness ..	..	1860-1878
Rev. J. Garforth ..	..	1878-1881
Rev. W. H. Finney ..	..	1881-1901
Rev. H. Weston Wright ..	..	1901-1925
Rev. R. G. McAlpine ..	..	1925-1936
Rev. F. Sykes ..	..	1936-1940

THESE HUNDRED YEARS

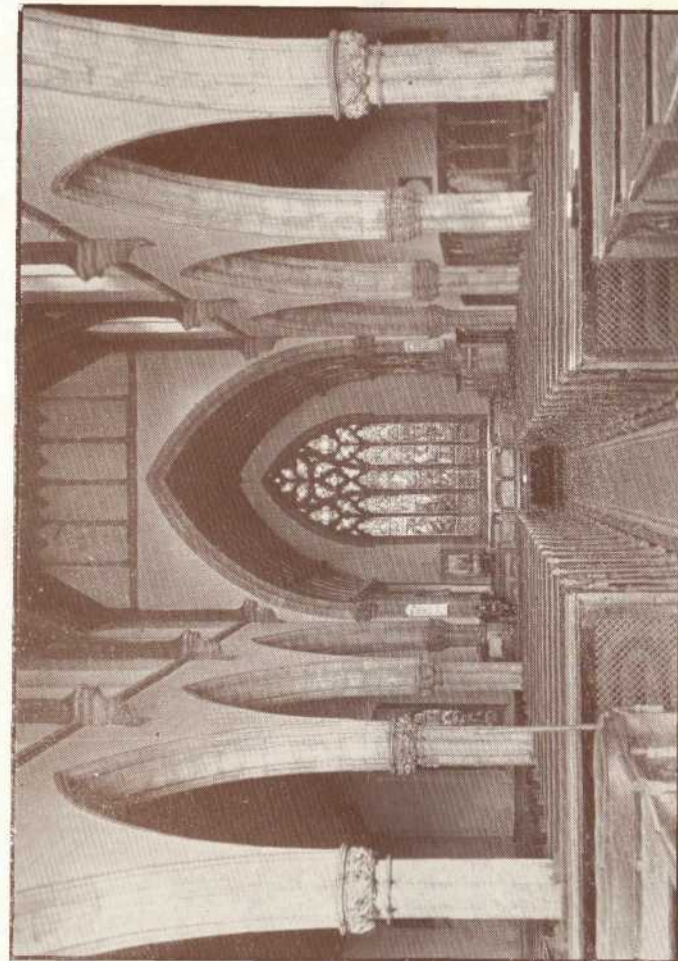
HOLY Trinity Church, Rusholme, like the walls of Jerusalem, was built in troublous times. Disraeli wrote about "The 'two nations,' rich and poor, with a hostile gap between them." This condition of society did not begin to exist in 1845, but the rapid industrialisation of the country widened that gulf, and aggravated the bitterness between them. Little was done to mend it, because sympathy with the poor was thought to imply revolutionary opinions. Information was kept from the lower classes; no newspaper was allowed to be sold for less than fourpence. Ignorant and desperate protests were treated ruthlessly. That was the condition in England 100 years ago. Just prior to this time the town of Manchester with its 110,000 inhabitants had no representative in Parliament.

This church was built in the "Hungry Forties," an era of much suffering, much bitterness, and to the Government and all serious persons, much perplexity. The hopes entertained in 1832 had faded. Economic and social conditions were very bad. Men in the villages were starving, men in the towns were living in cellars. Engels, a friend of Marx, in 1844 penned a dreadful picture of housing conditions in Manchester: "This chaos of small, one-storied, one-roomed huts, in most of which was no artificial floor; kitchen, living-room, and sleeping-room all in one . . . everywhere before the doors refuse and ofal, and any sort of pavement which lay underneath could not be seen, but only felt here and there by the feet." But the devil does not get the only innings. It was at this very time that the growing power of Church-consciousness, with its desire to make the religious life of the people in such parishes stronger, took shape.

In 1843, by an Order in Council, it became possible to combat this neglect, and to establish new ecclesiastical parishes, and Manchester was one of the cities of the North to benefit greatly by the Order. It was in that period of gloom, ignorance, perplexity and selfish stalemate that the Church sprang into action again, and with its faith in God and assurance for the betterment of men came to the rescue. It was the Gospel which brought life and hope to thousands of homes. People found solace and hope in the House of God. It may be that in these somewhat similar days we may yet, as a nation, be driven back to the same recourse. It was in those days that Holy Trinity Platt was built.

During the century many serious developments have taken shape in matters of religion. Serious attempts have been made to utterly undermine the principles of the Church of England—Romeward movement, which has filled the land with priests and sacerdotalists and turned thousands of churches into mediæval mass houses. The modernist movement which has been an intellectual attempt to discredit the veracity and supernatural character of the Bible. The rise of cults which have perverted and dispelled the sincere faith of multitudes. These forces of antagonism, together with the alliance of low morality and religious worldliness, have tested the strength of all the churches. We can bear testimony by the grace of God that this church stands to-day for the principles to uphold which it was built. Times may change but the need of man persists, and the only remedy for man's ills is in the saving power of Jesus Christ. So that, after 100 years, we say: "The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth."

This Gospel we must carry into the future. It is the charter of true and individual liberty. It is the one emancipating force in a world in bondage. I quote some words by a Christian statesman—the Hon. L. W. Joynson Hicks, M. P.: "We are now passing from the Industrial and Material Age to the Organized Age. Organization has become a national habit, and the habit has begun to attack our national character, and to undermine our independence. Man is becoming daily more dependent. Less and less is he being called upon by the needs of his own life . . . to exercise his initiative." In this stream of drift and tendency to sacrifice personal independence, the Church as ever stands like a rock above the engulfing tide. She must continue to be dependent only upon God, her members and her own resources. Her message and ministry demand this. She must rebuke evil, call men and women to repentance, uplift the Redeemer, and demand a higher and nobler standard of life all round. Nothing must hamper this Divinely-given responsibility. The future will need the Church. That Church must be free and self-supporting.



Holy Trinity (Platt) — Interior View.

OUR DAY SCHOOLS

THE education of the children was the vision of the Church. She believed that every child should have the benefit of an elementary education as a minimum. That vision became a burden, and Bishop Blomfield and other clergy blazed the trail. The National Society was formed in 1811. These pioneers regarded the Church as the natural educator of the nation. Those early years were fraught with trials and hardship, but the Church Schools struggled gamely. The clergy acted as correspondents, collected subscriptions, and gave of their own money to the schools; whilst the parents of the children provided no less than one-third of the total cost.

Platt Day School in Grove Street was opened in the year 1863 for both Sunday School and Day School work; seventeen years before the law was passed which made elementary education compulsory. Our Infants' Department appears to have been started first; the Senior Department a few weeks later. In 1864 the Boys' and Girls' Department was separated from the Infants', and continued so until January, 1938, when the two Departments were again combined under one Head Teacher.

It was during the Incumbency of Mr. Veness that the Schools were built, and the old log book reveals what a lively interest he took in the scheme. We to-day owe to such men as he a debt of gratitude for the foundation they laid for the education of the children.

Platt Day School has faithfully served the little township of Rusholme continuously for over eighty years, and during the earlier period, provided the only teaching that the children of the district could obtain. A continuous succession of children have passed through the school, and have received both secular and religious instruction.

The only break in this long period was that of the "evacuation" in 1939 and 1940. Like other Church Schools of that early period, this school was the financial responsibility of the Managers. To-day much of the burden of the maintenance costs has been shared by the Education Committee; nevertheless, the upkeep and repairs to the building are still the responsibility of the Managers.

So, by the help of God, we continue to this day with a thankful remembrance of all those who have gone before in this good work.

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