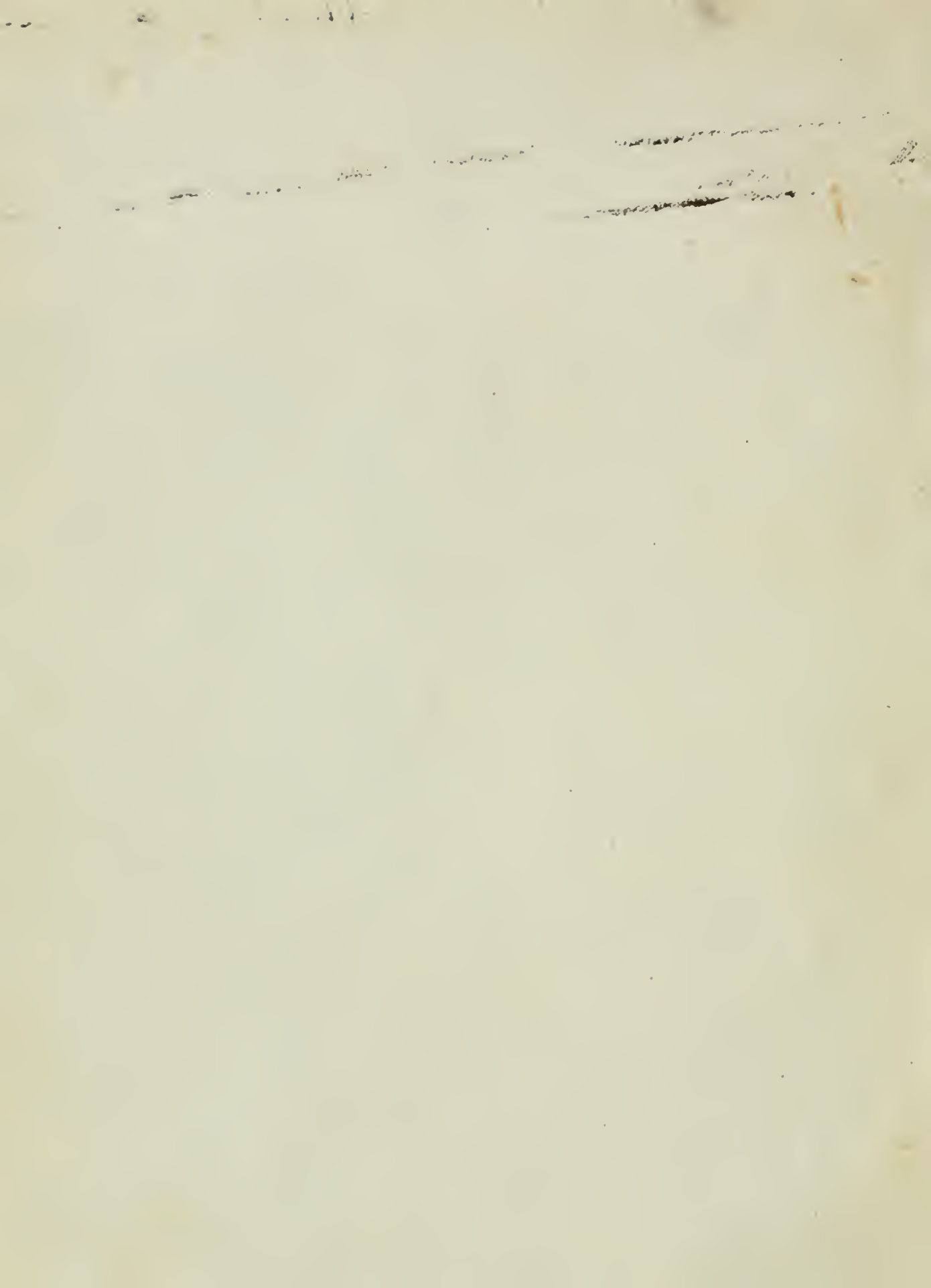






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A HISTORY
OF
ALTRINCHAM & BOWDON.

W E L L E

A
HISTORY
OF
ALTRINCHAM AND BOWDON,

WITH AN

Account of the Barony and House of Dunham.

BY
ALFRED INGHAM.

" Jumping o'er times,
Turning th' accomplishment of many years
Into an hour-glass."—SHAKESPEARE.



Altrincham:
MACKIE, BREWTONALL AND CO., GUARDIAN OFFICE.
1879.

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TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

George Garry,

EARL OF STAMFORD AND WARRINGTON,
LORD OF THE MANOR OF ALTRINCHAM,

THIS VOLUME IS
(BY HIS LORDSHIP'S PERMISSION)

Respectfully Dedicated,

BY THE AUTHOR.



P R E F A C E .

IN accordance with ancient custom, the author indites a few lines by way of preface. This work has been the outcome of that little leisure which falls to the lot of those connected with the press, and as such has occupied him for a period of over three years.

His hearty acknowledgments are due to many gentlemen for the perusal of valuable books and documents, and also for the kindly encouragement he has received during the compilation of its pages. His earnest endeavour has been to make everything so plain that even "he who runs may read." There has been no display of learning, and there are no footnotes or other aids to bewilderment and confusion.

It is an honest attempt to set forth the facts connected with a district singularly rich in historical associations. In this respect it appeals to a much wider constituency than that for which it is intended. While the description of Bowdon Parish Church, and its numerous monuments, will be only valuable locally, the House of Dunham, many of whose members have been conspicuous

at various critical periods of our country's history, will possess an almost national interest.

Altrincham, too, as one of the oldest towns in the kingdom, is well deserving of a permanent record. It is amongst the few which have preserved intact their ancient charters of incorporation under the feudal system. Its customs were embalmed only in the memories of one or two old inhabitants, and they are now reproduced for the first time.

The fac simile of the Altrincham charter which appears in the following pages is a reproduction in photo-lithography. It therefore gives the document as it actually appears, with its age-worn blots and creases.

As a whole, the work is intended not only to form a book of reference, but also a local history in which the progress of the district is depicted from the earliest period to the present day.



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HISTORY OF
ALTRINCHAM & BOWDON.

CHAPTER I.

*Bowdon, a peep at the past, geological, historical, and romantic
—Boaden Downs—Watling Street, signs of Roman occupation
—The tumulus in the Park—An old Saxon coin—The Barons of
Dunham, their position and power—The Crusader's Cedar—The
legend of the Seven Sisters—“The last of the barons.”*

BOWDON, eight centuries ago, was spelled Bogedon, or the *hill* or *down* by a bog. It was so written in the Domesday Book, and was comprised in the ancient hundred of Bochelau, whence our modern Bucklow, in the eastern division of which it is still included. It has also been written Bodon, Bodeon, Bawdon, Boaden, Bauden, Boden, and Bowden; but the modernized spelling of Bowdon now prevails. This is derived from two Anglo-Saxon words signifying Bode, a dwelling, and Don or Dun, a plain upon a rising hill or down.

Geologists tell us, with the charming uncertainty they always attach to their “periods,” that Bowdon has little interest for them,—that it was once an enormous sand-bank, left by the receding waves of a restless ocean, to be at a subsequent time transformed by the God of Nature into a lovely garden, the loveliness of which was to be heightened and enhanced by the ingenuity and art of man.

It may be very safely assumed that it was not then the pleasant place of residence it has since become. It had not the same delightful prospects of pastoral scenery, of grassy plain and lovely woodland, hemmed in by masses of billowy vegetation. The pre-historic Bogedonian—if there was such a creature—looking southwards from the hill side, would have seen the waves beating at the foot of the vale, where the shingle of the sea beach was quite recently uncovered; later still, he might have viewed what is now called Alderley Edge, and the more distant Mow Cop, looking out on a vast expanse of moor and morass, studded here and there with a consumptive dwarf oak; but he could have formed no conception of the changes to be wrought, as if by fairy wand, in future ages. The “proud hill’s crest” had not become dotted with those stately homes which in so marked a degree contribute to set off Nature’s beauties. It had not even those prim ivy-covered quaint old houses which peep out at the passer-by from their nests of umbrageous foliage and overhanging trees, as if very modesty prevented their coming to the front in all the boldness of modern paint and stucco. “Sleepy hollow,” as Altrincham has been termed, was unknown, and that almost universal edible, the potato, did not flourish in unchecked luxuriance on the Downs, and form a special cry in the adjacent market of Cottonopolis. All that can, with any degree of confidence, be relied upon as giving Bowdon a place in early English history is the mention of it which occurs in the Domesday Book, of which more hereafter, and when among other things, there was a Church and a Priest, with his half-a-hide of land, a hide being as much as one plough would cultivate in a year, 60 to 120 acres according to the peculiar reckoning of the times, and which said Priest lived contentedly amongst his meagre and widely-scattered flock, and was passing rich on the forty pounds a year of the period.

There are, however, evidences of this portion of the district having been inhabited long before the Conquest. The British Road, well known by the name of Watling

Street, runs through it, and was adapted by the Romans to suit their own purposes. The ancient Roman Road, as traced by that eminent authority, Whitaker, commences at the ford of the Mersey called Stretford, continues to Broadheath, where the Roman Road keeps the middle of the heath, and was discovered on the cutting of the Bridge-water Canal which crosses its line. It is then seen in the enclosures about Oldfield Hall, and in crossing the Moss is known by the name of Upcast. It afterwards ascends the hill, enters (skirts) Dunham Park, passes on to Street head, and crossing the Bollin falls into the modern road at Newbridge. It was comprised in the Roman province of Flavia Cæsariensis; and subsequently, in the sixth century, by a course of events in which Britain had passed through the fiery ordeal of Saxon subjugation and civil war, it became included in the Kingdom of Mercia. No doubt, the army of Danes, who are said to have taken possession of Chester in the latter end of the year 894, (according to the Saxon chronicle,) marched through it from Northumberland. There are still most conclusive evidences of Roman or Danish occupation in the tumuli or barrows which are to be seen in Dunham New Park. One of them is marked on the Ordnance Survey Map, and there are also others at Bollington and Baguley, but both these are either more level, or considerably reduced in size. These tumuli are the most ancient form of burial places known, and were in extensive use amongst the Romans and Danes, who probably derived it in their turn from the Greeks, for the custom is mentioned by Homer. Some of these tumuli, as at Marathon, are very large, and it is said that the higher they are the greater must the deceased have been held in esteem by their fellows. The tumulus marked on the Ordnance Survey Map exists on the north side of the New Park, and is known more generally by the name of Beech Mount, being marked by a clump of these noble trees, some of which are beginning to exhibit signs of decrepitude and old age. In his work, "*Britannia Romana*," published by Horsley in

1732, he refers to this, when discussing the place where the Roman station, Condate,—the exact site of which has been the subject of much controversy amongst antiquarians—shall be placed. He says:—"The urns which have been found, and the barrows that are in Dunham Park, belonging to the Earl of Warrington, and the military way near it, render it highly probable that the Roman Road has gone directly from Manchester to Chester through or near to Northwich, the piece of Roman Road by Altrincham pointing directly towards Chester and Manchester, and not at all towards Congleton. It is in the middle of a field near the road which now leads from Manchester to Chester and is called the Street. This leaves little room to doubt that the military road, and consequently, the iter (way) has proceeded this way to Chester, which is also further confirmed by the name of Stretford on the Mersey."

Thus, in a somewhat interesting manner, is related an important fact. It is in this road that the Romans have left a mark of their enduring greatness, when all appearances of ancient Saxon power have been completely effaced. These urns speak to us of Rome in her palmy days; but the mounds tell a story which may extend beyond. Imagination pictures a somewhat rugged country, studded with the kraals or mud dwellings of the aboriginal inhabitants,—a time when, according to Lucian, the monk, the county exported *slaves and horses*. Near the great highroad would be the dwelling of the hardy chieftain. At his death, guided by those æsthetic tastes instinct even in savage nations, the nearest spot on which nature had greatly lavished her beauties would be selected for his burial place, and at what would then be the head of a mossy dell would his remains be laid. There would be the long procession of bearded warriors and slaves, headed by weirdly robed priests, who, amidst moanings and lamentations, would perform, with mysterious and perhaps ghastly rites, the last offices for the dead. The huge tumulus would be raised, with nothing but its height

to remind the people that buried greatness there reposed in its last long sleep; with no image or legendary scroll to record, for the information of succeeding generations, the names and deeds of the mighty dead; his very remembrance would in time be blotted out. But he would have a grand burial place, not perhaps graced with the virtues of consecration, except in the sense in which nature reflects Nature's Deity. There, we may leave him in nature's presence-chamber itself,—and, if we could have seen it then, standing out like the refreshing greenery of the desert oasis, in “the forest primeval,” where

The murmuring pines and the hemlocks
Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in the twilight,
Stand like Druids of old, with voices sad and prophetic;
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosoms.

Another interesting memento of the ancient associations of Bowdon may here be mentioned. Not very many years ago, a bystander, who was watching the sexton of the Parish Church open out a grave, observed in one of the shovels full of earth thrown out something black and round. This, on rubbing, gave out a bright appearance, and, on being placed in the hands of an antiquarian, proved to be a silver penny of Eadmund, one of the early Saxon Kings, and grandson of Alfred the Great. On the obverse was *Eadmund Rex*, in the centre being a small cross. On the reverse, amongst other things, was the word *Ingel | Gar*, M. T., or really, Ingelgar, Moneyer. Probably the sandy soil into which the coin had been dropped prevented corrosion, as it was in an admirable state of preservation. The capital letters were well formed, and differed very little from our modern ones, except the G, which was very square in form, and the M, which consisted of two outer stems like capital I's connected not by an inner acute angle like a V, but by a slight curve or festoon at the top. This Ingelgar was, during the years 941-945, a moneyer to Anlaf, at that period King of Northumbria, who, in the latter year, was expelled by Eadmund. Ingelgar,

in addition to Anlaf, was moneyer to three other Kings; Eric, also a King of Northumbria, and to Eadmund, and his brother and successor Eadred. The coin was thought to have been struck at Manchester, on account of its proximity to Bowdon; but as there was also a Mint at Chester, there is no conclusive evidence on this point.

We now leave for the present speculation behind, and proceed to the consideration of authentic records. With the advent of William the Conqueror, and the consolidation of his power in England, we see the establishment of a feudalism which was to leave its mark and impress on the people to our own time. The County of Chester, which was then looked upon in the light of a little kingdom, was amongst the last in England to yield to his army, and the city did not fall into his hands until 1070. Shortly afterwards the Earldom of Chester was given by the King to his nephew, Hugh D'Avaranches, son of Richard Gosse, and surnamed Hugh la Loup, or Hugh Lupus, on account of his bearing a wolf's head on his shield. The Earl had his Council of Barons spiritual and temporal, with all the usual officers of the Court and a reigning Sovereign. The county was parted amongst the Normans, and the old Saxon possessors turned out. Amongst the Normans in the Roll of Battle Abbey, quoted by Hollinshed, appears the name of Hamund. This again is given in ancient charters as Hamund; and as he was a most important personage, it is beyond doubt that he is the same Hamunde or Hamo who held the Barony of Doneham or Dunham, at the time of the Domesday Survey, in 1086, and who dwelt at the Castle, which in all probability was founded by a Saxon predecessor. These barons held their Lordships from the Earl of Chester, and the tenants of the farms from the barons. In an old poem written about 300 years ago, it is said of the first Earl of Chester, that

On Hamon Massy he did bestow
 The Dunham Massy barony;
 To whom there did succeed in rowe
 Five heires of his successively.

From henceforth 'mongst the female heires
It scattered was for many years ;
Yet most part, after ages passed,
To Fitton of Bollin came at last.

Another version gives it :—

Vpon Hughe Massey he did bestow
the Dunham Massey barronye,
to whom their did succeed in row
8 (5) heyres of his successivelye ;
from thenceforth mongst the femall heyres
it scattered was for many yeeres,
yet most part after ages past
a Boothe of Du[n]ham came at last.

The entry in Domesday Book says that “Hamo holds Doneham; Elward held it, and was a freeman; there is one hide of land rateable to the gelt; the land is three carucates; one is demesne; and there are two neatherds, two villeins, and one bordar; and one acre of wood, and one house in the city (of Chester); in the time of King Edward it was worth 12s.; now 10s. It was waste.”

It also states that the same Hamo “holds Bogedone; Elward held it and was a free man; there is one hide rateable to the gelt; the land is two carucates; there are two foreigners having one carucate; there is a priest and a church to which half this hide belongs; also a grinding mill rendering 16 pence; it was waste, and so [the Earl] found it.”

It may be well to explain the meaning of one or two of these terms. The quantity of a hide, as has been already mentioned, appears to have varied considerably. The land rateable to the gelt was that which was taxed for the purpose of subsidizing the invading Danes, and a carucate, or carve, or ploughland, was generally eight oxgangs, or bovates—224 acres. There do not seem to have been any radmen or roadmen in either township, although there was one in Hale; but those of a lower order, viz., neatherds, &c., are noted. Radmen were those who served their superior lords on horseback, and

were freemen in a certain sense. Villeins were those whose state of vassallage almost amounted to slavery; neatherds or bovarii were employed in attending to the cattle, and in other servile work; and bordars, or boors, held small portions of land, and were probably bound to supply the table of the Lord of the Manor with eggs, poultry, &c.

That historian and antiquarian *par excellence*, Sir Peter Leycester, shrewdly guesses that Hamon the Norman dispossessed Elward the Saxon of his lands in this neighbourhood, after having had them "given" to him by the Earl; but in addition to these he held Hale, Ashley, half of Owlerton—now Ollerbarrow—Bromhale, Puddington in Wirrall, and other lands, by military service; he being bound to attend the King in time of war with a certain number of horse and foot, and immediately repair to the King's summons with his whole posse should an enemy's army come into Cheshire, or should Chester Castle be besieged. An engraving in King's "Vale Royal" represents the Earl of Chester in Parliament assembled, his eight barons seated on each side of him, and amongst them, the first on his left-hand side, distinguished by his arms—quarterly, gules and or, in the first quarter a lion passant, argent,—is to be seen Hamo of Dunham. At the barrier which divides the room into two portions, are a number of adherents, who appear to be pressing their claims to lands, which, having been won by the sword, will be so held and esteemed good title to them in the future.

The Castle of Dunham was greatly strengthened by Hamon, so as to resist successfully the marauding propensities of avaricious neighbours. He was one of the most influential of the barons, and from the fact of his Castle being situated near the great Roman road, it formed a powerful position of defence in case of invasion. The Counties Palatine, says one writer, were judged to be in greater danger than the others, and greater attention was therefore paid to their defences. The adjoining County

Palatine of Lancaster was surrounded by a chain of forts, one of which was at Widnes, where a baron was stationed to protect that side from the incursions of the Cheshire people; and the jealousy being mutual, opposite to this on the Cheshire side was Halton Castle, placed in such a manner as to guard the county from any surprise either from Warrington, another Lancashire barony, or Runcorn Ferry. The next barony was Newton, erected as well to strengthen Warrington as to oppose any passage out of Cheshire, and opposite to this was placed Hamon at Dunham. Hamon in his lifetime gave to St. Werburgh's at Chester, the village of Northerden (Northenden), in the Maxfield or Macclesfield Hundred. He had a son and heir, named after him, Hamon, and also Robert Massey, who was a witness to the first Randle's charter of confirmation to the Abbey of St. Werburgh in Chester, about A.D. 1124.

The second Hamon had issue Hamon, a son and heir, and Robert Massey, from whom sprang the Masseys of Sale. This is probably the Hamon Massey who is noticed in one of the ancient chronicles as having held the Castle of Dunham against Henry II. in 1173, during the rebellion of which Hugh Earl of Chester was principal leader. He gave the lands of Bramhall, or Bromale, to Matthew de Bromale by charter, of which the following is a translation:—

Hamo de Masci to all his friends, both clerical and lay, as well present as to come, sends greeting. Know ye all that I have granted, &c., to Matthew de Bromale, Bromale and Dokenfeld and two parts of Baguley, which his father held of me and my heirs in fee [by the service] of a breastplate [meaning that he should render or pay for his lands a man armed with a breastplate for military defence, or its equivalent in money, at a later period, every year] to him and his heirs, to hold of me and my heirs freely and quietly, &c., making to me and my heirs the free service in fee of one breastplate; and know ye that I have quit claimed the said Matthew and his heirs

and the aforesaid lands, to me and my heirs, of the service and custom which I, the said Hamo, used to demand from them, namely, of ploughing, mucking, and sowing corn, and of making hay, and doing homage of estovers [providing food], pannage, and of all other services except the service of the fee of one breastplate. These being witnesses: Roger de Massie, William de Carington, Robert de Massie, and Richard de Fitton, and very many others, both seeing and hearing the same.

The third Hamon married Agatha de Theray, and had several children, the eldest of whom was a son named after his father. He died about the end of the reign of King John, or the beginning of that of Henry III., and his wife Agatha survived him. He is said to have given to his brother John Massey all the land of Moreton. He also confirmed to Robert, son of Waltheof or Fitz Waltheof, all his father's lands in Bredbury, Brinnington, and Etchells, by a very interesting charter, which has been translated as follows:—

Hamo de Masci to all his men, whether French or English, clerical or lay, as well in the future as now living, sendeth greeting. Be it known to you all that I have regranted to Robert, the son of Waltheof, all the land which Waltheof, his father, held of me and my ancestors for his inheritance, that is to say Hecheles (Etchells) with all that appertains to it, to him and his heirs, holding of me and my heirs freely, quietly, and peaceably, by the service of half a knight's fee. And I [the said] Hamo reserve to my own use, stag, hind and boar in Hulreswood, and the other liberties shall remain to Robert, the son of Waltheof, and his heirs. And I [the said] Hamo regrant to Robert, the son of Waltheof, Bredburie and Brinintone, with their appurtenances, as his inheritance to him and his heirs, to hold of me and my heirs, by the service of carrying my bed, my arms or my clothing, whenever the Earl [of Chester] in his own proper person shall go into Wales. And I [the said] Hamo will fully furnish [the said] Robert, the son of

Waltheof, and his heirs, with a sumpter beast, and a man and a sack, and we will find estovers [sufficient food] for the man and the sumpter beast aforesaid whilst he is with us in the field, until he shall be returned to the said Robert or his heirs. And Robert, the son of Waltheof, shall pay aid to ransom my body from captivity and detention, and to make my eldest son a knight, and to give my eldest daughter a marriage portion, in consideration of which [the said] Robert has given me a gold ring.

The conditions named in this charter were usual under the feudal system, when the kingdom was really the encampment of a great army and military ideas predominated. While the vassal was thus bound to render service to his lord, and to attend as assessor in his court of justice, the lord in his turn was bound to afford him protection in case of his fief being attacked; but the defence of each other's person was reciprocal.

As freedom broadens down, we frequently find in subsequent writings the Barons of Dunham conceding to their squires the right that neither they nor their heirs or tenants shall be impleaded or brought to trial for any offence in the Court at Dunham, which was a most valuable right, as the barons had most extraordinary privileges, on their own estates, and in their hands was reposed the power of life and death. So late as the year 1597 this right was exercised in the Baronial Court of Kinderton, where Hugh Stringer was tried for murder, convicted and executed.

It was probably about this period that Roger de Masci, of Hale, son of Geoffrey Masci (being possessed of one half the lands in "Bodeon"), sold them unto Agatha de Massey for the sum of £4 7s. in money, and two robes, one for himself and the other for his wife, "rending there for yearly one pound of cumming seed at the feast of Saint Martin." These lands, Agatha, by another deed, in which she styles herself de Theray, gave to Robert her younger son, whom she made heir thereof by the consent of Hamon, her eldest son.

Hamon, the fourth baron, was, like his father, liberally

disposed towards the Church, and gave to the Priory of Birkenhead, which was founded by his father, the advowson and donation of the church of Bowdon, as also half an acre of land in Dunham, to wit, "that which lieth between the land of the church of Bowdon and the land of John Provost of Dunham, and one acre of land in at the head of the croft of John Villar and Thomas Criar." He subsequently by charter, addressed to "all the children of the holy Church, chiefly to my heirs and friends, and all my tenants, clarkes, and laymen," gave liberty to the monks to elect their own prior "for their quiet and assurance for me and my heirs according to Pope Alexander's Bull and privilege confirmed unto them." He had issue a son and heir (Hamon), and William Massey, from whom descended the Masseys of Tatton. He had also a daughter Margery, to whom he gave the whole town of Stretford about the year 1250, but she afterwards released her right in such town unto Henry de Trafford. Of the fifth Hamon, but little is said. He married Alice, daughter and heiress of Sir Eustace Whitney, and had issue a son and heir, viz., Hamon, the sixth and last Baron of Dunham Massey. In the reign of Edward I., 1288, the barony of Dunham Massey, says Leycester, was found to be held of the King, in capite, by the service of five knights' fees, or the value of 1,000 acres of land, showing it to be of great importance. The last Hamon appears to have been very unfortunate, not only in his domestic, but also in his public relations. He espoused Isabel, daughter of Homfrey de Beauchamp; but their honeymoon was of the briefest possible character. They were married, but on their wedding day, ere the midnight hour chimed, the bride had gone to her eternal rest! Afterwards he married her sister Alice, and had issue by her four daughters, and a son, who received the family name of Hamon, but who died young. From Alice it is said he was divorced, and then married Joan Clinton, sister to the Earl of Huntingdon. An action at law was instituted against this Hamon, at Chester, in

the reign of Edward II., by Peter Dutton, styled also sometimes Peter de Warburton, an ancestor of the Warburtons of Arley, concerning a parcel of waste ground conceived by him to lie in Warburton. The said Hamon pleaded that Hamon Massey, his father, was seized of the same, and that the land in question lay in Dunham, and not in Warburton; and moreover that he the said Hamon was one of the king's barons, and held his land *in capite* as Earl of Chester in barony immediately, and that they ought not to proceed to trial without a jury of knights and discreet men of the county. In the same reign, William, the second son of Hugh de Dutton, of Dutton, was indicted at Chester for taking away Matilda de Stokeport by force, and in a state almost of nudity, from Dunham, she being then in the custody of Hamo de Masci. This is probably only a specimen of the rough and ready style of winning and wooing which prevailed in those days, as William and Matilda were married about the time of the abduction.

Hamon sold the reversion of Dunham Massey and other estates to Oliver Ingham, then justice of Chester, for 1,000 marks (about £500), and 40 marks (about £20) annual rent for his life, and, according to Leycester, died about the 15th year of the reign of Edward III. (1342) only possessed of the manors of Dunham, Kelsall, Altrincham, Bidston, Salghall or Saughall, and Moreton. With him became extinct the Barons of Dunham, after the Masseys had had a continuance there of 260 years. It is said by Leycester that this Sir Hamon, upon receiving his charter from Edward I. in 1290, made a charter to his burgesses of Altrincham of a guild mercatory, or society for free traffic, whereby Altrincham was erected into one of the market towns of Cheshire, and its burgesses made a brotherhood of merchants. If it were only for this his memory is well worthy of being held in respect by the people of Altrincham; for the privileges then conferred were almost invaluable, and were what most towns at that period might well envy.

Of the Castle, of which so much has been said, there are no visible remains. A large circular mound near the Hall is supposed to be the last relic; and tradition affirms that the fine old cedar, long, long ago killed by the ivy, was brought a sapling from the Holy Land by one of the old crusading Barons of Dunham, and that it died out with the last of the race! Probably, too, the fact of the last baron dying without leaving a lawful son to succeed him, gave rise to the romantic legend of the "Seven Sisters," in connection with the park at Dunham, where there is a clump of trees which is known by this name. Many people are acquainted with it, and, no doubt, lament the tragic end of the youthful heir, who was struck dead by lightning just as he was passing the "Seven Sisters."

And each fatal tree was stained with gore;
And so was the bloody earth;
And the same night saw his dreadful death
That first beheld his birth.

And the legend closes:—

The seven sister trees may still be seen,
Though the mortal ones are fled;—
And none of that fated house were left,
When the squire himself was dead.

Hamon also reminds us in a most striking manner of Longfellow's melodious poem, "The Norman Baron." We can well picture to ourselves the stately Castle of Dunham. In his chamber on Christmas Eve, lies the dying baron. The King of Terrors has already laid his relentless hand upon him; and the humble monk, seated by the bed side, mutters the "prayer and paternoster" which shall usher the fast fleeting soul into eternity. Outside, the tempest thunders, and shakes the Castle turret, but the sufferer is unmindful of it. Within the precincts serf and vassal are holding their Christmas festival. As their lays they chaunt, the sound rises above that of the tempest, and the dying baron turns his weary head to listen to the carol, in which is heralded the birth of the manger-cradled

stranger, Christ, who was born to set us free. In an instant, the spirit of repentance appears. He thinks of the justice, long withheld, due to those under his iron rule, and they are by him freed again. As on the sacred missal he inscribes their freedom, death relaxes his iron features, and the monk repeats a deep Amen.

Many centuries have been numbered
Since in death the baron slumbered,
By the convent's sculptured portal,
Mingling with the common dust:
But the good deed, through the ages
Living in historic pages,
Brighter grows and gleams immortal,
Unconsumed by moth or rust.

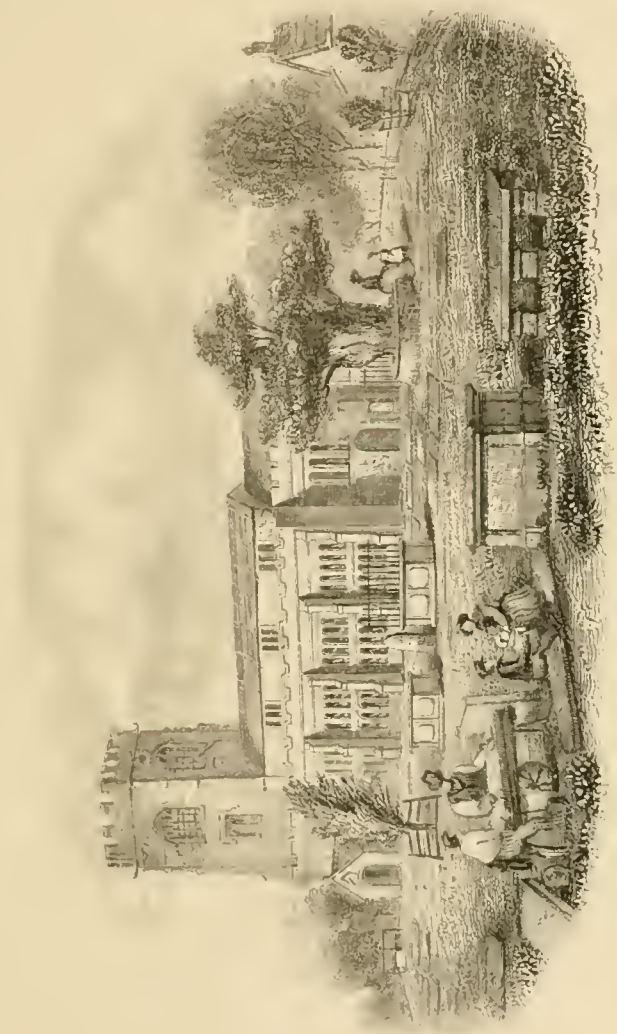




CHAPTER II.

The Parish Church, its claims to antiquity—The yew trees, a relic of Saxon Christianity—The wakes, their origin and use—An old bead roll and its record—Description of the old church—Value of the living six centuries ago—The ringers' orders—A law suit—Another bead roll and its record—Memorials of old families—The Brereton monument—The Dunham Chapel, &c.

IT is not stated precisely when the Church of Bowdon was originally founded. It cannot boast a date like that at Rostherne, of 1188, although, there is no doubt, Bowdon is much older; neither is it recorded that it had "a priory of regular canons of the Order of St. Augustine," like its relation at Mobberley, or any of the Præmonstatensians, such as dwelt at Warburton, anciently spelled Wurburgetone; but it is certain that at the Domesday Survey, as already noticed, there was a priest attached to the church, munificently endowed probably with many "fat fallows." It is also certain that the church existed a very long time prior to the Conquest. The planting of yew trees in churchyards, on account of their sombre and funereal aspect, is a relic of the Saxon Christianity which had spread over the land, and the custom prevailed at Bowdon. There are several growing now in the churchyard, and one in particular is, judging from calculations made of the growth of such trees, upwards of 800 years old. According to one authority, it is even said to have been planted in the seventh



1. view of farm
1853

century. It is a gnarled sturdy-looking veteran, but much the worse for its thousand years' (supposed) exposure on the hilltop.

The view from the churchyard is the finest in the district. It embraces a vast expanse of lovely scenery, including the beautiful valley of the Bollin, backed in the distance by Alderley Edge, the hills of Derbyshire and Staffordshire, and many other features of interest. The church is dedicated to St. Mary, whose "feast" is kept annually by wakes held in the month of September. This feast was formerly celebrated on the 8th September, being the nativity of the Virgin, but it is now held on the 1st Sunday after the full moon succeeding the 14th September. Those who are familiar with the manner in which it is kept in modern times feel that it has fallen from its high estate. Leycester says that the word Wakes or fast day is derived from the Latin *Vigilæ à Vigilando*, because at such times people prayed most on the night before such fast day in the churches: "yet we find this primitive custom abused in the reign of King Edgar, A.D. 967, and at last it turned into a feasting and merriment of neighbours." Who will say after this that history does not repeat itself?

From extracts taken from the Bead Roll, A.D. 1298, it is shown that "Robertus de Masci, by ye consent of his wife and heirs male of his body, gave and devised unto Adam de Bodon, two oxganges (56 acres) of land in Bodon, rending yearly one penny upon the Altar of St. Mary the Virgin at Bodon on the nativity of St. Mary the Virgin, which is the eighth day of September in perpetual alms for the Salvation of the Souls of Robertus de Masci, his wife, ancestors and heirs, and for the souls of Mathew de Bodon and Hale." Baron Masci, son and heir to the fourth Hamon de Masci, gave to God, the blessed Virgin Mary, and St. James, and to the Prior and Convent of Birkenhead half-an-acre of land in Doneham Masci, together with the advowson of the church of our good lady Saint Mary in Bowdon, A.D. 1278; "for in that year was Richard Masci,

one of the witnesses, Sheriff of Chester." After the dissolution of the abbeys in the reign of Henry VIII., a new Bishopric was created at Chester, whereunto was given amongst other things the church of Bowdon.

The advowson of the Vicarage continues attached to the See of Chester. The latter is held by lease of lives by the Earl of Stamford and Warrington. The church was valued in the tax roll of Pope Nicholas in the thirteenth century at £11 6s. 8d., and at £24 per annum in the King's book. In 1666, according to Sir Peter Leycester, it was £120 per annum; two hundred years or so later it is given at £900 in the Clergy List.

A description of the church as it anciently stood will not be found uninteresting. The exterior was chiefly in the Norman style of architecture, introducing at the eastern termination, or at the Carrington and Dunham Chancels, the pointed and more fanciful Gothic. The tower was also in the Norman style, embattled and quadrangular, and contained a peal of sonorous bells. In the belfry is the following :—

THE RINGERS' ORDERS.

You ringers all, observe these orders well—
 He pays his sixpence that o'erturns a bell,
 And he that rings with either spur or hat
 Must pay his sixpence certainly for that ;
 And he that rings and does disturb the peal
 Must pay his sixpence or a gun of ale.
 These laws elsewhere in every church are used.
 That bells and ringers may not be abused.

James Millatt, Ferdinand Laughton, George Wright,
 and James Fletcher, *Churchwardens*; Joseph Drink-
 water, John Pickering, Aaron Eccles, Peter Picker-
 ing, John Dean, John Hobbert, *Parish Ringers*.

Formerly, the sixth bell was tolled for a funeral, and after being tolled (if for a male) the whole six bells were tolled thrice each; (if for a female) only twice each. The curfew was rung on the fifth bell, and the practice is still continued, although the day of the month is not tolled as it was up to 1864 or 1865.

The interior of the church consisted of a nave, chancel, and side aisles, with spacious galleries ending in two private chancels, appropriated and belonging to the Lords of Dunham Massey. Regarding these chancels, it appears that a dispute arose at the death of John Carrington, between his executors and the Brereton family, as to the right of legal possession of Carrington chapel. The Breretons claimed it by reason of being possessed of one-fourth of the lands in Bowdon, and the Booth family by heirship. The enquiry in 1557 by the Court of Chancery resulted in the claim of the latter family being confirmed. These chapels were divided from the rest of the church, the Dunham one by two pointed arches, and the Carrington one by three, resting on short octagonal pillars. Connected with them were originally two chantry priests, John Percivall and Henry Tipping.

There was also a bead roll belonging to the chantry to the following effect:—

Pray for ye good estate of me, Sr. Wm. Booth, Maude my wife, Lawrence Bishope, George sonne and heir apparent of me, ye said Wm., Katherine his wife, Wm. sonne of the said George Bouthe, Richard Bouthe, John Bouthe, and Wm. Bouthe, sonnes of me yt said Wm. Geffrey Bouthe and Hamnett Bouthe, Clerkes, brethren of yt sd Sr. Wm. Bouthe, Lucy late wife of John Chantrill, Ellen wife of Robert Leigh, and Allison wife of Robert Hesketh, sisters of me yt said Wm. Thomas Duncalfe and James Hall, p'sones of Northen, for ye souls late of my father and mother, that is to say, Robert Bouthe, Knt, Jane his wife, Wm. Bouthe late Archbishop of York, Rafe Bouthe my sonne, Jonet, late wife of Will. Holte, my daughter Kate Bouthe, Mr. Edmond Bouthe Clarke, Piers Bouthe Clerk, and Robert Bouthe brethren of me, ye said Wm., Jonet late wife of Will., Mainwaringe, and Margaret late wife of James Scaresbrooke, my susters, and especially for all the

There was formerly an inscription over this chapel:—

This is Dunham Chapel, repaired by and belonging to the Lords of Dunham Massey.

The arms of the Booths, surmounting with the motto, "Quod ero spero"; and on the other:—

This is Carrington Chapel, repaired by and belonging to the Lords of Dunham and Carrington.

In the chapel belonging to Sir George Bouthe, "on a faire stone of marble with beasts about it," was "the picture

of a man and woman engraven in brass." The "two recumbent figures had clasped hands: the male figure in plate armour, under his feet six kneeling figures (infants), and seven under those of his wife; in three angles of the tomb, the arms of Massy of Doneham, quartering those of the Bouthes, and the fourth, those of Butler, Baron of Warrington." The inscription translated read:—

Of your charity pray for the souls of George Bouthe, Esquire, and Elizabeth his wife, and of the said Thomas Butler of Bewsey, Knt, which George and Elizabeth, had together at the time of the death of the said George Bouthe, three sons, George, Jo, and Robert.

The Booths, at this time, appear to have used the arms of the Norman founder of the Barony.

In the east window, were the words:—

Wch chapelle and chamber was erected by Sr Wm. Booth, about Edward IV. raigne.

And in Latin the following:—

Pray for the souls of Will Booth Knt, and Matilda his wife, daughter of John Dutton Esqr., and for the soul of George Booth, son and heir, who it is said built this chapel.

There were other memorials existing in the same chapel in the 16th and 17th centuries. Upon an "alabaster stone" this monument, engraven with an inscription, about the stone: A knight in plate armour, recumbent, his head resting on a helmet, the crest of which is a lion passant, on each side a recumbent female; over his head the coat of Mascy of Dunham; over the dexter lady, argent, an eagle, displayed azure; at her feet four children. Over the sinister lady the coat of Fitton, and at her feet four children. In Latin were the words:—

Here lies the body of Sir William Booth, knight, who died on 9th Nov., 1519, and Margarete and Helena, wives of the said William; upon whose souls God be merciful. Amen.

There was a little monument to two of the children of Sir George Bouthe, Francis and George, who died in infancy. There were no arms upon it, but two little children with two torches turned downwards.

In the Carrington Chapel were many similar inscriptions

and arms of the Vawdreys, Baguleys, Leghs of Baguley, the Lords of Carrington, &c. On the Carrington side of the chancel there was an ancient monument of the Brereton family, erected in the years 1627 to 1637. It is now on the north side near the Communion table. Although bearing marks of great exposure, sufficient of it is still to be seen to show that it is a real work of art. The husband and wife are recumbent, arrayed in robes and ruffles, peculiar to the time; and underneath, in bas-relief, are their eight children in surcoats. The third holds a skull in its hands; and between the sixth and seventh is an infant in swaddling clothes. There is impaled beneath a canopy of frieze in the arabesque, two escutcheons, Brereton and Warburton arms conjoined. The family arms are charged with 27 quarterings (18 Breretons and 9 Warburtons) impaling Hugh Lupus, Cholmondeley, Booth, Warburton, Egerton, and others: and there is a beautiful Latin inscription, of which the following is a translation:—

Under this monument (?) lie interred the bodies of Wm. Brereton, of Ashley, in the county of Chester, Esq., and Jane his wife; the former of whom derived origin and descent from the ancient and illustrious family of Lord William Brereton, of Brereton, in the aforesaid county; the latter was one of the daughters and co-heiresses of Peter Warburton, of Arley, in the said county, Esquire, lately deceased. They bore male children, Richard, Thomas, William (peacefully sleeping in the Lord) and Peter; females, Frances, Maria, (also overcome by the bonds of death,) Ann and Catherine. They enjoyed themselves in conjugal and chaste love; they adhered strictly to and exercised the principles of the true and orthodox religion (as Christians ought to do); and having walked this life righteously and holy, are now awaiting the joyful and glorious resurrection by the body of Christ to be conveyed to the heavenly abode of rest, unto which they were called. Jane, his wife, died March 2nd, 1627, aged 63 years; William died August 29th, 1630, also aged 63.

There is a tradition concerning this couple that the wife, Jane Brereton, was murdered, and that her hands were cut off. There are no hands on the female effigy; but it is just possible that it may have been an act of vandalism on the part of some evil-disposed persons in former times.

While on the subject of the chancel, it may be mentioned that in the window in or about the year 1600 were five coats of arms. In the first, Tatton impaling Davenport;

2, Tatton impaling Booth; 3, the Bishopric of Chester; 4, Tatton impaling Fitton; 5, Tatton, with a label, impaling Warren.

In the floor of the chancel, within the rails of the altar, was a somewhat curious inscription, in Latin:—

In this place is interred the remains of — Gerrard, of Riddings the first and last of that name—on the day in the year of our Lord 1672.

In the body of the church, on the south side, there was a monument of Sir William Baguley, Knight. It was a full-length effigy, cut in free stone, and represented a warrior in mail. The surcoat and shield were emblazoned with the arms of Baguley, or Bagleigh. As it appeared to be in the way, it was taken out of the church, and for several years graced the grotto in a gentleman's garden at Partington. It attracted some attention at a later period, and through the instrumentality of T. W. Tatton, Esq., of Wythenshawe, it ultimately found a more appropriate resting place at Baguley Old Hall, from whence the original had sprung.

There must have been many representations on painted glass, for which Cheshire churches are famous, at Bowdon. In the head of the south aisle was a very ancient coat of arms of the Baguleys; under which was a memorial of the Leghs of Baguley; underneath was a kneeling male figure with one son and four daughters kneeling behind him. In the second window on the south side, Sir Thomas Butler, in coat armour, with two sons and eight daughters kneeling behind him. In the west window were the arms of the Barony of Dunham Massey. In a higher window on the south side were certain coats of arms, and an inscription in Latin, desiring prayers for James Hall, Rector of Northen, who bequeathed the window. On the north side, in the second window from the "bell house," as it is quaintly termed, were two kneeling figures, the man habited in a surcoat emblazoned with the arms of Ashley, with five sons and four daughters, ranged severally behind them. Over them were the arms of Ashley, an

ashbranch with ash keys dependant. In Latin there was a request to pray for the souls of John Ashley and Alice, his wife, who caused the window to be erected A.D. 1530. In the next window on the north side, were the arms of the Carringtons, quartering the same coat with a helmet and crest over. In the compartment on the dexter side of the shield was a man in armour kneeling, his surcoat emblazoned with the arms of Carrington, one son behind him in this compartment and another in the next. In the compartment on the other side were two kneeling females, their arms severally emblazoned with those of Brereton and Warburton. Behind the first was one daughter, and four behind the other. This was erected in 1530 by the Carringtons. In another window on the north side were two figures kneeling on cushions. The male figure's surcoat was emblazoned with the arms of Ashton, and the dress of the female with that of Butler. Over them were the arms of Masey of Dunham, quartering Aslton, Stayley, Fitton, and Thornton. Four sons and nine daughters knelt severally behind them: and an inscription requested prayers for the good estate of George Bouthe and Elizabeth his wife, who erected the window in 1530.

In another light of the same window were the arms of Masey of Dunham, surmounted with a crosier; this window being presented by John Sharpe, Prior of Birkenhead, in the same year. The same coat of arms was repeated in the roof of the north aisle, but it has been obliterated, and the marks of the chisel which has been used may still be seen.

In the lowermost window on the north side was another memorial to a Prior of Birkenhead, Robert Millington, or Millenton. There were the arms of Millington and an ecclesiastic kneeling, holding a cup in his left hand.

In the east window of the north aisle, over against the chancel, was a window bequeathed by Hamonis Carrington, and surmounted by the Carrington arms.

On a flag in the middle aisle was a memorial to the Rev. P. Lancaster, A.M., who died March 7th, 1763; but prior to the restoration, there was a large number of inscriptions on

stones in the interior to the servants of the Dunham family.

In the Dunham Chapel are two large mural monuments. One has a shield of 60 quarterings of the Booth family placed against a pyramid, and resting on a sarcophagus. At the sides of the pyramids are two medallions to the memory of Langham and Henry Booth, younger sons of the then Earl of Warrington, who died in 1724, and in 1727. The other is divided into two tablets; the first to the memory of Henry Booth, Earl of Warrington and Baron Delamer, who died in 1693-4; the second to the memory of his Countess, sole daughter and heiress of Sir James Langham. In the charging of the surcoat, Booth has nine quarterings impaling six of Langhams. The inscription regarding the Earl is as follows:—

Beneath
lieth the body of
the Right Honourable Henry Booth,
Earl of Warrington and Baron Delamer,
of Dunham Massey;
a person of
unblemished honor,
impartial justice,
strict integrity,
an illustrious example of
steady and unalterable adherence to
the liberties and properties of his country,
in the worst of times
rejecting all offers to allure
and
despising all dangers to deter
him therefrom,
for which he was
thrice committed close prisoner to the tower of
London,
and, at length
tried for his life
upon a false accusation of high treason, from which he was
unanimously acquitted
by his peers, on the 14th January, MDCLXXXV-VI. (1685-6),
which day
he afterwards annually commemorated
by acts of devotion and charity.

In the year
MDCLXXXVIII (1688)
he greatly signalised himself at the
REVOLUTION
on behalf of
the Protestant religion and the rights of the Nation,
without mixture of self interest,
preferring the good of his country
to the favor of the prince
who then ascended the throne,
and
having served his generation according to the will of God,
was gathered to his fathers in peace,
on the second day of January, 1693^d (1693-4),
in the XLII. (forty-second) year of his age,
whose mortal remains were here entombed
on the same memorable day on which, eight years before,
his trial had been.

The companion inscription sets forth the many virtues and good qualities of Mary Countess of Warrington, his wife, as follows:—

Also rest by him the earthly remains of the Rt. Honble. Mary, Countess of Warrington, his wife, sole daughter and heir of Sir James Langham, of Cottersbrooke, in the county of Northampton, Knt. and Bart.; a Lady of ingenuous parts, singular discretion, consummate judgement, great humility, meek and compassionate temper, extensive charity, exemplary and unaffected piety, perfect resignation to God's will; lowly in prosperity and patient in adversity, prudent in her affairs, and endowed with all other virtuous qualities; a conscientious discharger of her duty in all relations, being a faithful, affectionate, obliging, and observant Wife, alleviating the cares and afflictions of her husband, by willingly sharing with him therein; a tender, indulgent, and careful Mother, a dutiful and respectful Daughter, gentle and kind to her servants; courteous and beneficent to her neighbours, a sincere friend, a lover and valuer of all good people, justly beloved and admired by all who knew her, who having perfected holiness in the fear of God was by Him received to an early and eternal Rest from her labours on the 23rd of March, 1693^d, in the xxxvii year of her age, calmly, composedly meeting and desiring death, with joyful hope and steadfastness of faith, a lively draught of real worth and goodness.

A pattern deserving an imitation,
Of whom the world was not worthy.

Heb. xi. 38.

Underneath are the words—

To perpetuate the remembrance of so much virtue till that great day come, wherein it shall be openly rewarded, this monument is erected as a

mark of dutiful respect and affection by the care of their son George Earl of Warrington, who reveres their memory.

Mottoes: *Ero quod spero* (Let me be what I wish or profess to be); and *A ma puissance* (According to my power).

On the second monument is the following:—

This monument is
erected
to the ever valuable memory of the Honorable
Langham and Henry Booth,
younger sons of the
Right Honorable Henry late Earl of
Warrington.
Both of them began their earthly pilgrimage on the
Lord's Day
and,
after having fought a good fight
cheerfully resigned their souls into the mercifull
hands of their God and Saviour
JESUS CHRIST,
finishing their course in ye XL year of their respective ages,
the former on the XII of May MDCCXIV (1714)
the latter on the II Febr. MDCCLXXVII, do now rest in hope to receive
their bodies
immortal and glorious
in the great day of the Lord.

In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, but they are in peace and their hope full of Immortality, for God proved them and found them Worthy of Himself; for Hnble. age is not measured by Number of years, but they being made perfect in a short time, fulfilled a long time, and pleasing God were beloved of Him, so that living among sinners they were TRANSLATED.
Wis. iii. and iv.

On a brass which was formerly fixed in a stone at the descent to the family vault of the Earls of Stamford and Warrington, &c., was an inscription of which the following is a translation. It was not replaced at the restoration of the church:—

Under this monument are interred the remains of George, Lord Delamer, Baron of the ancient and noble house of Dunham Massey, who was distinguished by his piety, fidelity, and affection to God, King, and Country, and who in the sixty-second year of his age exchanged an earthly coronet for a

celestial crown, and died on the 10th day of August, in the year of our Salvation 1684. William Andrews, deploring the death of his most honourable Lord (in whose service he had continued for upwards of 30 years, faithfully emulating and partaking in the loyalty which his master showed to his King), this monument to his ever-blessed and happy memory has been erected, consecrated, and preserved, and a hope added that when his life at the same time with his official duty to that noble family came to an end, at the entrance to this tomb his ashes might rest, until the day when they might rise, together with those of his master, into the new and eternal life. Died 25th day of July, 1685.

In the south-east angle of this chapel is a portion of a piscina, much defaced, formerly used for holy water.





CHAPTER III.

Description of the old church, continued—The tales told by the tombstones and the tablets—A curious old stone.

THERE still remains something to be said about the old structure, and having described the Dunham and Carrington Chapels, we pass on to the other parts of the church. The vestry was situated under the belfry, and occupied the ancient western entrance, and at the north entrance were the font and the gallery stairs and near the south porch the organ gallery stairs. The galleries were of fair dimensions. The organ gallery was built under a faculty from the Bishop of Chester, and the organ was presented by the Earl of Stamford and Warrington in 1822. This was afterwards pulled down, and a new one built in the Carrington Chapel, which in its turn gave place in 1876 to a noble instrument built by Messrs. Jardine and Co., of Manchester. The galleries on the north side were enlarged and re-built in the year 1841, at the sole expense of the Vicar, the Rev. W. H. G. Mann, M.A. The side aisles of the church had handsome carved oak roofs. On the south side the roof had remained unfinished for centuries, and had become so dilapidated as to render its restoration necessary. This was undertaken by Mr. Kay, of Manchester, and was executed by him with such exactness as to preserve its pristine effect. There was some exquisite carving, and the cluster points all

varied in pattern. The ceilings were divided from the nave by five pointed arches on each side, resting on short octagonal pillars with capitals. The roof appears to have been taken down about 1778, and the walls raised; at which time John Coe, Richard Leather, Thomas Ashley, and John Slater were Churchwardens.

There are several monuments in various parts of the church which have not been hitherto mentioned. Prominent amongst them is a fine mural one to the memory of Thomas and Harriet Assheton, of Ashley, and their son, Thomas Assheton Smith, descendants of the ancient family of the Breretons of Bowdon:—

In a vault near this place were interred
the remains of Thomas Assheton, of Assheley, Esq.,
on the 9th day of July, 1759, aged 64.

Also in the same vault, Harriet Assheton,
who died at Manchester, Jan., 1773, aged 74 ;
also, the remains

of Thomas Assheton Smith, of Asheley, Esq.,
son of the above Thomas and Harriet,
who died April 16th, 1774, aged 49 years,
to whose memory Wm. Henry Assheton Smith, Esq.,
erects this monument.

Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus
Tam cari capitis.

Also the remains of
William Henry Assheton Smith, Esq.,
younger son of the above,
Thomas Assheton Smith Esq.,
who died at Hailey, in the county of Oxford,
March 4th, 1839, aged 82 years.

Sacred
to the memory of
Hugh Fitz-Patrick Hall, Esq.,
of Jamaica, and late of Ashley, in this county,
who died on the 27th day of June, 1788,
in the 38th year of his age ;
also, Martha his wife,
the second daughter of
Marsden Kenyon, Esq.,
of Manchester,
who died on the 14th day of Jan., 1780,
in the 26th year of her age.

In a recess at the south entrance to the organ gallery was a tablet, the inscription of which, although somewhat defaced, is worth quotation:—

Reader, stop while thou perusest this inscription, reflect on mortal frailty, dust to dust, the decree of the great 'I am,' and thinkest not thou at that great day of reckoning, when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, when the grand eruption and disorganization of nature shall be, the gates of hell burst open, the torrents and mighty sweeping cataracts composed of the dam'd disgorging their injurious declamations, flooding in; all which lamentations will be drowned in the grand hallelujah chanted by myriads of saints in voices blending in harmony; this man formed of clay shall be metamorphised to angelic form, admitted a chorister in that sacred band, and be welcomed by seraphs and archangels into the presence of his Maker. Go thou and tread in his steps.

Underneath this thrilling prelude is a dedication to the memory of a most unostentatious man, the Rev. Thomas Whittaker, sometime perpetual curate of Ringway:—

What he was as a scholar he desired not to have recorded,
 what he was as a minister of Christ
 ought ever to be had in remembrance;
 and when those who revered him as a guide,
 a counsellor, and a friend are seen no more,
 let this humble memorial testify
 how diligently he instructed the young,
 warned the careless, sought out the neglected,
 comforted the afflicted, and preached to all
 the doctrine of his God and Saviour,
 which he cordially embraced,
 which his life adorned, and whose consolations
 he enjoyed in his last hours.
 he died May VII, MDCCLXVIII (1818),
 aged LXIII (63) years.
 God forbid that I should glory save in
 the Cross of Christ my Lord.—*Gal.* vi. 5.

In the middle aisle was a tablet with a Latin inscription to the memory of John Baldwin, LL.B. :—

Who was placed over the parish of Bowdon as Vicar more than forty-three years. To him was entrusted the joyful gift of the ministry, which he diligently performed; and at length, having concluded his labours, peacefully returned his soul to God in the year of safety, on the 3rd day of July, 1815, aged 69.

On the same stone is also an inscription to—

John Baldwin, junior, his only and much beloved son, who had scarcely

entered into the sacred office, in which he dutifully pointed out the way of the blessed, when he expired, having fulfilled the task imposed, on the 16th January, in the year of safety, 1817, aged 25 years. Wife, husband, mother, son, bewailing.

There are the following inscriptions, in other parts of the church:—

This humble tablet
in conformity with the unassuming tenor of his mind
records the death of
William Harle Nicholls, M.D.,
a native of the city of Durham,
whose character as a man
reflects honour upon human nature ;
visiting at Altrincham upon a tour of observation,
he was arrested by a call from his Creator
May 28th, 1830, in the 69th year of his age,
and was interred in the cemetery
of this church.

Sacred
to the memory of
the Reverend Daniel Whittle, A.M.,
late of Hollingworth Hall, in this county,
who after a ministry, short but faithful and approved,
at Saint George's Chapel, in Altrincham,
in the prime of life, in the midst of usefulness
was by his Master summoned away from his work,
with him to rest, with him to reign,
on 22nd April, A.D. 1834 ;
born 26th Jan., A.D. 1800.
Looking for that * * * *Titus ii. 13.*

To the memory of
Edward Jeremiah Lloyd,
of Oldfield Hall,
a magistrate for the counties of
Chester and Lancaster,
and a Captain in the Earl of Chester's Yeomanry Cavalry,
who closed an exemplary and useful life
on the 3rd day of July, 1850,
in the 61st year of his age.
Distinguished by the urbanity of his manners
and the kindness of his disposition
no less than by his undeviating honor
and exact sense of justice :
accessible and benevolent to the poor,

considerate and attentive to all,
 he engaged in a remarkable degree the affections,
 while he commanded the respect
 of every class of society.
 to testify their appreciation of his worth
 and to record so eminent an example of excellence:
 the inhabitants of this neighbourhood
 and the members of the corps to which he belonged,
 have caused this tablet
 to be erected.

+

I.H.S.

Sacred to the Memory of Thomas Bagshaw, of Altrincham, late of Manchester, who died October 15th, 1843, in the 70th year of his age. His loss was deeply lamented by all who knew him, for through a long and peaceful life he worthily sustained the character of a faithful and sincere friend, a truly honorable man, and a benefactor of mankind. As a grateful tribute to his departed worth, and as a mark of the deep esteem with which his memory is cherished, this tablet is erected by his sole surviving Niece, S. B.

“The praise of Man is fluctuating and perisheth,
 The testimony of a good conscience endureth for ever.”

Passing from the interior to the exterior, we enter the churchyard to note many points of interest to be discerned there. Some of the old inscriptions are rather curious.

On a stone, on the north side, is the following:—

The body that this stone doth here embrace,
 So like to Leah, with a Rachael's face,
 Sarah's obedience, likewise Lydia's heart,
 With Martha's care, and Mary's better part.

This was formerly to be seen under the chancel window:—

Here lie the bodies of a daughter of John Cooke, of Altrincham, an attorney at law, and Sarah his wife, who, though full grown (and a while before alive), was born dead the 16th and was buried 17th March, 1749.

Near the old yew tree is:—

Here lieth the body of John Pixton, of Altrincham, who died 27th Sepr., 1843, in the 96th year of his age; Mary, wife of John Pixton, of Altrincham, who died 21st February, 1841, in the 93rd year of her age.

Twenty years they lived a single life,
 Seventy-two they lived a married life,
 Three years he lived a widower chaste,
 And now hath left the world and gone to rest.

On one of the stones is an old heading in Roman letters I.B. 1633, enclosed in a square; but the oldest inscription to be found in the yard is on a long narrow stone, also not far from the old yew tree. Owing to the way in which the words are divided, it is somewhat difficult to decipher at first sight, but it reads as follows:—

Here lyeth the bodie of William Artinstall, de Ringey, deceased November xxvii, Ao. Do. 1617; also the bodie of Laurence Artinstall, of Ringey, who departed this life August 4th, Anno. Dom. 1684.

On the grave of Francis Booth, who was Clerk of the church 40 years (it is a remarkable fact that there have only been three clerks during 120 years, Mr. H. Service being the last, who served forty), is an inscription at once unique and suggestive. It reads:—

I oft have viewed the gloomy place
Which claims the relics of the human race,
And read on the insculptured stone
Here lies the body of
. . . . but now my own
Dissolves to native dust, and as you see
Another here has done the same for me.

Our life is but a winter's day,
Some only breakfast and away,
Others to dinner stay and are full fed,
The oldest man but sups and goes to bed;
Large is his debt who lingers out the day.
Who goes the soonest has the least to pay.

On the tombstone of John Bray, of Dunham, who was 81 at the time of his death, and his wife Martha aged 91, are the following lines:—

Our term of life is 70 years—an age that few survive,
But if we've more than common strength, to 80 we arrive;
And then our boasted strength decays, to sorrow turned and pain,
And soon the slender thread is cut, and we no longer reign.

Near the tower is another stone, inscribed to the memory of Peter Shaw, of Bowdon, who died in 1825, aged 74

years. He was the faithful servant of Mr. Thomas Davenport, of Oldfield, "for 24 years and upwards":—

Farewell, vain world, I've seen enough of thee,
 And now am careless what thou sayest of me,
 Thy smiles I court not, nor thy frowns I fear,
 My cares are past, my head lies quiet here.
 What faults you saw in me take care to shun,
 And look at home—enough there's to be done.—
 Where'er I lived or died, it matters not,
 To whom related or by whom begot.
 I was, now am not, ask no more of me,
 'Tis all I am, and all that you shall be.

There are references on some of the stones to the ancient family of Vawdrey, frequently alluded to in the annals of the parish. There are two such references which may be quoted as possessing great interest:—

William Vawdrey, of Owlbarrow, gent., sonne to John Vawdrey of Banke, gent, was borne the 20th day of Nov. Anno Dom. 1606. He married Mary, the daughter and hærotrix of John Massey, gent, and after, Alice, sister to Sir Edward Moore of Thelewell, baronet, and had by them sixteen sonnes and daughters. Departed this life and was buried the 12th day of May, Anno Dom. 1665.

On the stone are the arms of the Vawdreys. Also:—

The mortalitie and death of the sonnes and daughters of William Vawdrey of Owlbarrow, gent., by Alice his wife:

Alice, second November, 1650.

Richard, 17th December, 1650.

John, 23rd January, 1651.

Thomas, 16th July, 1654.

Henry, 3rd December, 1654.

and William, seventh sonne, likewise departed this life 22nd day of January, 1664.



CHAPTER IV.

The Parish Church, its restoration—Reminders and relics of antiquity—Description of restored edifice—Tablets to the Ven. Archdeacon Pollock, and to the first Vicar of St. Margaret's—The stained glass windows and their donors—A run through the registers—Curious and interesting extracts—the Bowdon Proverb—Notices of Vicars, with list—The ancient rating valuation, or mize, list of benefactions, &c.

THE hoary pile which had served the spiritual wants of the parish for so many centuries at length fell into irreparable decay, and the substitution of an edifice more calculated to meet the increased requirements of the age was rendered necessary. It is a matter for thankfulness that Bowdon has escaped that spirit of vandalism which demolishes while it does not reproduce, and that the restoration of its parish church is essentially so both in spirit and in fact. As nearly as possible the old type has been adhered to.

In 1854 attention was drawn to the state of the church, and two years afterwards plans were prepared; but these were objected to for many reasons, and ultimately after some competition Mr. W. H. Brakspear was entrusted with the important work. In the demolition of the ancient structure the remains of two churches formerly existing on the site were discovered. These were unmistakably portions of the ancient Norman church,

probably of the twelfth century, and a decorated church of the fourteenth century. The traces of Norman work were, indeed, very numerous. A piscina, cusped-headed, having marks of four crockets and a finial, was also found; but whether this was from the high altar or not is uncertain. Another feature of interest was the stone figure of a recumbent Knight, in armour, greatly worn, found in the foundations of the nave pier.

The first, or foundation stone was laid on Wednesday, 18th August, 1858, in the presence of a large concourse of spectators, by the Bishop of Chester. The Vicar (Rev. W. Pollock) on that occasion announced that there had been received from various sources, the sum of £6,000. The Nonconformists had responded to his appeal in a way which called forth his warmest gratitude. The silver trowel which he presented to the Bishop bore the following inscription:—

To John, Lord Bishop of the diocese, and patron of the living, on his laying the first stone, in the restoration of their ancient Parish Church, by the Vicar and Building Committee, on behalf of the parishioners of Bowdon, 18th August, 1858. Reverend William Pollock, M.A., Vicar, John Mort, A. W. Mills, John Reid, and John Warburton, Churchwardens.

It has been erected on a more extended scale, but occupies the same site, and to some extent rests on the old foundation. By the introduction of north and south transepts, the increase in size has been made principally towards the east, which consequently required a greater height than before existed. Thus the aisles, walls, clerestory, and tower have been considerably increased in size. All the architectural features of any value have been reproduced, and the north and south aisle ceilings of carved oak remain entire, and have been carefully restored. Those portions of the old church that had been preserved from an earlier building have also been utilized, which will explain why the architecture of the middle and third pointed periods are found side by side. The general character of the architecture, however, is that of the perpendicular, or third pointed period.

The arcades of the nave have been somewhat extended in their span, and transept arches introduced, otherwise they may be considered a restoration. The aisles and chapels being of unusual width, they have been spanned by two arches of similar design to those of the nave. There are also two arches on either side of the chancel, opening out of the chapel. The chancel has a massive arch of separation from the nave, in the deep hollow moulding of which is arranged, at certain distances, carved flowers and foliage, which also with the mouldings to some extent return down the pier. There is a lofty arch and stone carved screen opening out of the tower and inner porch, which has a rich continuous carved hollow mould in the arch and piers. Over this arch is a circular traceried opening for ventilation, connected with an exhauster in the tower above. The whole of the interior is lined with finely worked ashlar, with the exception of the Vestry.

The two chapels, as is well known, were formerly the mortuary chapels of the ancestors of the present Earl of Stamford and Warrington, and under the South or Dunham Chapel is the present family vault. To give the true character to these chapels, monumental arches and copestones have been introduced externally immediately above the base mould, and above each is a circular window with tracery arranged as a cross.

The tower, which was only intended to be taken partly down, was found too dilapidated, and had to be wholly rebuilt. The restored one is certainly a striking conception. Its height from the ground to the top of the parapet is 91 feet 6 inches, being 31 feet 6 inches higher than the old one. It is surmounted by eight richly crocketed pinnacles, the four corner ones being terminated with gilt copper vanes.

The interior is lighted with gas. Four polished brass coronæ, of eight lights each, are in the nave; one in each of the transepts; one in the chancel; three in each aisle, and one in the Dunham Chapel, of six lights each.

Most of the tablets formerly in the old church

are to be found in the restored edifice. There are also additional ones, of which it becomes necessary to speak. First and foremost is the following:—

This tablet and the monument over his grave, were erected by the parishioners in loving memory of William Pollock, D.D., who, after much and varied pastoral work, diligently and faithfully done, in the diocese of Stockport, Macclesfield, St. Helens, and Liverpool, was appointed Vicar of this parish in 1856, and subsequently Rural Dean of Frodsham East, honorary Canon of Chester Cathedral and Archdeacon of Chester. The complete reconstruction of this church, the building of St. Mark's Church at Dunham, and the Bowdon and Ashley Parochial Schools are among the memorials of the great influence which the love and respect he inspired enabled him to exercise. Born 12th April, 1812; died 11th October, 1873. 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.'

Also:—

This tablet is placed by grateful friends of the Rev. John Kingsley, M.A., Vicar of St. Margaret's, Dunham Massey, to record his faithful services while curate of the parish church during a period of twenty years. He died in the sixty-first year of his age, and was buried in this churchyard on the 18th day of November, 1869. 'Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'—*St. Matthew xxv. 40.*

The following is the inscription on a brass at the west end of the south aisle wall:—

This church of St. Mary, at first erected in Saxon times, and afterwards thrice restored, viz., about the years of grace 1100, 1320, and 1510, was rebuilt and enlarged by voluntary subscriptions, the good work being completed according to the good hand of our God upon us, A.D. 1860. William Pollock, M.A., Vicar; John Mort, Alexander W. Mills, D. A. Clarke, John Reid, M. E. Lycett, Churchwardens; W. H. Brakspear, Architect. "'The place whereon thou standest is holy ground.'

There are several stained glass windows of great beauty. The large east window has for its subject the crucifixion, the centre light containing the figure of Our Saviour, and on each side are the malefactors, which, however, are not made too prominent. The other lights and tracery are filled with pictures of the Ascension, the scene on the morning of the resurrection, the Marys going to the sepulchre with angels, Abraham offering up his son Isaac, and Moses

lifting up the brazen serpent, both events being typical of the Crucifixion. Underneath are the words:—

In memory of Mary, the Wife of William Neild, Esquire, of High Lawn, who died March 16th, 1859.

The north and south transept windows are the gifts of Lady Murray, a descendant of the ancient family of Rigby, of Oldfield Hall, and of E. Joynson, Esq., J.P., of Bowdon. One represents the Miracles; the other the Parables of Our Lord. The window of the west end is the gift of John Clegg, Esq., J.P., of Altrincham. There is a small chancel window erected by W. D. Nicholls, Esq., and his sisters, to the memory of their father.

The font is a massive octagonal one, richly cut, of Painswick stone, and the basin rests on a shaft of Devonshire marble. It was the gift of Miss Joynson. The oak lectern was the gift of Miss Pollock.

The restored church contains 1,164 sittings, exclusive of those for the private accommodation of the Earl of Stamford and Warrington, being an increase of 359 sittings on the former number. The entire cost of the building and works in connection therewith was £12,371 16s. 7d., exclusive of the sum of £1,748 10s., which was allowed by the contractor on account of old materials. Of this amount £11,447 was contributed by resident parishioners, or persons owning property in the parish; £521 by strangers; £210 by the Incorporated Society for the building and enlarging of Churches; and £150 by the Diocesan Church Building Society.

The Registers of the baptisms, marriages, and burials date from the year 1628; but there are incomplete copies preserved at Chester from the beginning of 1600. Not the least interesting feature connected with those at Bowdon is an index which was compiled several years ago by Mr. Rushton, a son of the Ven. Archdeacon Rushton, formerly of Manchester. The work of reference is thus rendered remarkably easy, and ample testimony to his painstaking endeavours is borne by the fact that

not a single error has yet been discovered. The first volume contains records under all three divisions, from 1628 to 1653. It is headed:—

A Register Book of all Weddings, Christenings, and Burials, in the Parish Church of Bowdon, in the year of our Lord, 1628.

The first entry states that:—

Robert Tatton, of Withenshaw, Esquire, and Anne Brereton, daughter of the Right Worshipful William Brereton, of Ashley, Esquire, were married the eight day of January, Anno Dom. 1628.

This is an important event, and is more elaborately set forth than the rest. The parchment on which the entries are made is very stout; but it is obvious that little care has been bestowed on its preservation in former years, as damp, the arch-enemy of ancient documents, has been at work and succeeded in effectually obliterating some of the written characters. In 1646, the marriages are entered at greater length, as are also the baptisms. One of the clerks, Thomas Sanderson, was most particular. We find that—

Alexander Sanderson, sonne to Thomas Sanderson, clarke of Bowdon, was born upon Saint Michael and All Angels daye, between the hours of five and six of the clock in the morninge, being the 28th day of September, in anno 1636.

At the foot of the volume it is announced that—

George Booth, Knit and Barronett, is one of his Matie's justices of peace within the County of Chester, as attested by Peter Drinkwater, clerk.

The first name amongst the burials is that of "Henry Arstall de Ringey, January 19th, 1628."

A stranger yt (that) plaid on a tabret and whistle.

There is nothing to indicate where this wandering minstrel of some accomplishment died; but that he found a stranger's grave at Bowdon, and went down to it apparently "unwept, unhonoured, and unsung," is clear.

Alexander Owen, clerk of Bowdon, was buryed ye third day of February, Anno Domini 1628.

Margaret Pagett, wife of Mr. Thomas Pagett minister and preacher at Bowdon, Aug. ultimo, 1628.

Robert Janny, Vicar of Bowdon, departed this life the 8th day of January, and was buried the 9th in anno 1636.

A poore boy out of the Woodhouses was buried 8th day of November, 1640.

Dorrity Smith, daughter to George Smith, being a stranger, and another a child that was not baptised of his, March 18th, 1640.

Two infants of one Sarah May.

A poor child of a stranger, 1647.

Amongst the concluding entries in the first volume is the following:—

Sir George Booth, of Dunham Massey, Knight and Baronett, departed this lyfe the 24th day of October, and was buried the 28th day of November, in the year of our Lord God, one thousand six hundred and fiftie two, 1652.

The second volume contains baptisms and burials from 1653 to 1681, and marriages from 1653 to 1664, and from 1673 to 1681, nine years being missing. The latter are, however, to be found at Chester for the years 1666, 1668 to 1673, but for 1665 and 1667 there are no records. On a kind of rider attached to the ordinary register is a list of stillborn children; thus:—

A man child of John Deane's of Altrincham was still born 29th October 1653.

A man child of Robert Arstall of Hale fields was born dead January 26th 1653, &c.

In 1653, during the Commonwealth period, there was a very stringent Act of Parliament passed requiring marriages to take place before a Justice of the Peace. The form usually adopted was the following:—

Publication of banns of marriage was made in our parish church of Bowdon three several Lords days between John Yeates of Lime parish and Margaret Baxter of this parish, wh. days of publication were the 4th, the 11th and the 18th dayes of December in the year 1653, and were married the 23rd day of December within the same year before me,

Peter Brookes Esquire.

The following contains the first reference to any trade pursued in the district:—

Publication of banns of marriage was made in our parish church of Bowdon three several Lords days betwixt Wm. Tippinge, of Hale, woollin webster (woollen weaver), and Katheren Hall, of Ashley, both of this parish of Bowdon, wch. dayes of publication were the 22nd, 29th dayes of January. and first day

of February, and noe objection being made but that they might lawfully proceed in marriage : and were married by me, Thomas Standley (Stanley), of Alderley, Esquire, one of the Justices of Peace for this County, the 6th day of February, 1653.

Proclamation was in some instances made, generally by the bellman, at the Cross in the Market Place. These proclamations usually read as follows:—

Publication of banns was made in the Altrincham Market, within our parish of Bowdon, three severall market dayes betwixt Edward Woodall, of the parish of Ashton upon Mercey Bancke, and Anne Carrington, of this parish, which dayes of publication were the 15th, 22th, and 29th dayes of August, in the year of our Lord God 1654, and were marryed the 16th day of September, in the year of our Lord God 1654, before

Tho. Brereton, Esquire.

Some of the entries state that publication was made between the hours of eleven and two in the Market Place, but this does not appear prior to the year 1656 to have been a popular mode, as three fourths of the proclamations were made in "our parish church." The majority of the marriages took place before Thomas Brereton, Esquire; but it is interesting to note that on one or two occasions Colonel Henry Bradshaw, of Marple, brother to President Bradshaw, also officiated. In 1656 and 1657, the publications were, with few exceptions, made in the Altrincham Market Place, "at the close of the morning," or 12 o'clock. In 1658 they were made in solitary instances, but they are solemnized by the Vicar, James Watmough, "in the presence of numerous people." This elaborate style of entering marriages then ceases, except in the instances of the principal families of the district, when the details are given with some minuteness. The births at this period partake of the same character as the marriages in the extent and preciseness of the entries. The wife of the Vicar presented him with three or four interesting "olive branches," to all of whom due honour is accorded in the matter of registering. That the schoolmaster was also a married man and similarly situated, is proved by the following amongst the baptisms:—

Hanna, daughter of Peter Hurdes, schoolmaister, (August 24th, 1667.)

The ages are not given, and very seldom the trades, but occasionally they crop up. Husbandmen are the most numerous, yeomen coming next in order. There were several websters or weavers in Bowdon (1657), and at a somewhat later date, blacksmiths, saddlers, gardeners, "joyners," shoemakers, in Altrincham and the neighbourhood.

John Higginson, of Bowdon, innkeeper, was buried 24th day of Novr. 1657.

A poore woman wch. was a stranger came by pass, buryed ye 9th day of November.

A poore ould wooman whose name was thought to be Steenson, January 12th, 1658.

A child that was born dead of Tho. Kinge, was buried 15th March, 1658.

Roger Shuttleworth, schoolmaister, buried 7th day of February (1659).

Thomas Brereton, Esquire, of Ashley, departed this life the 10th day of July, and was buried the 19th day of July, in the year of our Lord God 1660.

Jane Drinkwater, of Hale, a poore woman, buryed 22th October (1661).

Edward Leigh, of Altringham, a poore man, buried 23th November (1661).

Mr. John Lightfoote, vicar of Bowdon, departed this lyfe ye 22th day of December, in ye yr. of our Lord 1661.

Mrs. Margrett Vaudrey, of ye Bancke (Bank Hall), widow, was buryed in Carrington Chapel by leave and lycense of George Lord Delamer, by the interest of Samuel Vaudry, the son, June ye 24th, 1662.

Charles, son of John Houghton, Schoolmaister, Decr. ye 8th, 1662.

Robert Tippinge, of Bowdon, gent and steward to George, Lord Delamer, was buryed ye 21th day of ffebruary, 1662.

Isaac Tipping, son of Edward Tipping, of Hale, Dec. 22th, (1665).

William, son of John Royle, of Hale, was buryed Dec. ye 28th.

The two last mentioned Isaac Tipping and William Royle had not xtian buriall, theire friendes contemninge it. Tho: Weston, Vic.

Wm. Tippinge, of Dunham, bayliffe to Lord Delamer, buryed March 23th, (1670).

Raphe Thomas, of Altringham, piper, buried September 12th, (1672).

Thomas Sanderson, clark of the church, buryed March ye 13th, (1672).

William Shuttleworth, servant to Francis Mosley, vicar, April 17th, (1673).

The two succeeding volumes of Registers are very small, volume III. containing baptisms from 1682 to 1702, and volume IV. marriages from 1683 to 1719. On the title

page of volume III. there is a memorandum, dated August 29th, 1697, setting forth that:—

Richard Rogers, Wm. Coppock, Robert Leather and Isaac Eccles, churchwardens for the p'sh (parish) of Bowdon in the yeare 1690, did pay unto John Lawrinson, Wm. Simpson, Robert Leather and Isaac Eccles, churchwardens for the p'sh of Bowdon for the yeare 1693 the summe of six pounds eighteen shillings and sixpence (which they had in their hands) towards reimbursing them, wch was in full for all moneys they were out of purse in the yeare 1693.

Witness my hand,

Jo: Hyde, Vic. of Bowdon.

The "baptizings," as they are now called, continue until the year 1683 in a most orderly manner, when there is a record of "John, son of ffrancis Newton, of Altringham, March ye 22th." Underneath this is written: "A brave boy; long may hee live to God's glory." It is to be hoped that this pious wish was fulfilled. In July 1696 the handwriting changes, and Altringham is spelled Althringham, just as though the clerk was a native of the sister isle. Almost simultaneously we have the first indication of dissent in an aggressive form in the parish.

1696.—Deborah, daughter of Robert Hankinson, of Ashley, was born July 13th and baptised July 28th, 1696, by Mr. Dernily, as is said by a note sent thereof to ye vicar.

John, son of George Warburton, of Hale, born Dec. 3th, 1696 and baptised Dec. 23th, 1696, by whom I don't know. Aron Warburton told mee of it.

1698.—Henry, son of Richard Green, of Altringham, apothecary, born November 27th, baptised Dec. 13th (1698).

William, s. of John Taylor, of Timpley, mason.

John, s. of Richard Millington, of Althringham, carpenter.

John, s. of James Whitehead, Baguley, weaver.

A female child of Wm. Norman, of Altrincham, saddler.

1699.—Josiah, s. of Robert Hankinson, of Ashley, born May 21th, and baptized June 1st; Timothy, s. of Robert Hankinson, of Ashley, born May 21th, and baptized June 1st. They were twins. Both the aforesaid children were baptized at Robert Hankinson's house, by one Dernily, a dissenter, contrary to law, the house not being lycensed. He preaches at Ringey chappell, a chappell anciently belonging to the Church of England and under Bowdon Church.

Mary, d. of James Mosse, of Dunham, horn July 12th, baptized July 19th by Mr. (Mr. this time) Dernily, the Nonconformist, contrary to law.

Wm., s. of Tho. Heald, of Ashley, baptized at Heald's house by Dernily, the dissenter, contrary to law.

Geo., s. of James Hardie, of Altringham, born Dec. 3th, and baptized Dec. 11th by Mr. Dernily, the dissenting minister, at Ringey.

These would be the "separatists" who were said to be about this time so numerous and troublesome in the parish.

Mr. Dernily's name then drops out of the Register, and so far as he is concerned the breast ecclesiastical ceases from troubling, and its conscience is at rest. How it fares from others later on will be seen. We proceed with more interesting extracts.

1699.—March 2nd, baptized John, s. of John Lupton, grocer, Altringham.

1700.—James s. of James Hardy, alderman, of Altrincham.

This is the first reference to any one holding any official position in connection with the Corporation of the town.

1700.—Ann, d. of John Worsley, glacier; Nathaniel s. of Wm. Brownhill, of Dunham, born December 23th, baptized January 6th, 1700; the father did not acquaint me with the birth or baptism till June 8th, 1701, being Whit Sunday. Mr. Yates baptized it unknown to me.—Jo. Hyde.

We now hark back to the burials in the same volume, several of which refer to the Booth family. There are one or two references to trades then being pursued in the district, notably that of malting at Altrincham. At the end of the volume, amongst the list of the stillborn children, is Margaret Hardey, Quaker, probably the same Margaret Hardey, widow, of Bowdon, who is referred to in the volume as having been "buryd at the Quaker's burying place in Mobberley p'sb." Many of the people dying at Carrington and Partington were buried at Flixton, probably on account of its being more convenient than Bowdon.

We now take volume IV, which contains marriages from the year 1683 to 1719. There are one or two entries on the title page, amongst them one to the effect that:—

Peter Barber, of Agden, was married in Cartwright's land, beyond Limme.

The marriages begin to be noted as being solemnized by banns or by licence. The one following, however, was not in "either of these fashions."

Joseph Peirson and Sarah Hurlbut, of Ashley, married by Mr. Gooden (clandestinely), January 1th, 1697.

James Coe, of Ashley, married to a woman in Lanc (Lancashire), sells meal at a meal house in Manchester, his father lives at Ashley, not married at Bowdon, but at Manchester as I am told.

A reticent individual was

Thomas Ogden, keeper, at Dunham, and Ann Moulston, married about Christmas, 1698, but he will not tell where nor by whom.

This reticency appears to become epidemic at this time, as subsequent entries show.

Isaac Rylands, of Hale, and Elizabeth Hankinson, married in July, in the year 1698, he will not tell when, where, or by whom; by Mr. Gooden.

This latter name looks as if it had been tacked on at a venture. Both the Hankinsons and the Rylands were rather troublesome dissenters at this period.

John Newton, of Hale, and Elizabeth Drinkwater, married in August 19th, 1699, at Sandbage (Sandbach), as I am told.

Ellin Warburton, of Dunham, and James Pauden, of Brownley Green, in Northenden parish, were married Sepr., 1699, I know not wn., where, or by whom.

Roger Simpson, of Altringham, smith, and Mary Harrison, of Altringham, married (as is said) about Novr. 21, 1699, but do not tell when, where, or by whom. They were married, 'tis said, by Mr. John Brown, not in holy orders.

This Mr. Brown was a sort of Gretna Green gentleman who lived at Ashton-on-Mersey, and he united several couples in the bonds of holy matrimony "contrary to the statute in that case made and provided." These storms subsided, and for a long time marrying and giving in marriage proceeded in the orthodox fashion. Even the Rylands and the Hankinsons saw the error of their ways, and went to the Parish Church as in duty bound. There is also not the same loose style of entering, but it is

difficult to withstand the conviction that this is rather un gallant :—

Richard Ardern and ye whoman from Prestbury parish, married Octr. 25th (1708).

Probably she had the same objection to giving her name as ladies are said to have to stating their age.

The most important entry we come to for many years then is the record of the marriage of the Vicar :—

August 28th, 1717.—Mr. Peter Lancaster, vicar of Bowdon, and Mrs. Mary Edmonds, of this parish, were married at Bowdon Church, by Mr. Spencer, curate at Lymme, by licence from Mr. Allen, of Peover.

At the end of the volume is the following :—

October ye 20th, 1709.—At a parish meeting in Bowdon Church it was granted and agreed that Augustin Rawlins, parish clerk, instead of gathering his wages wh. is one lay (rate) he is to have it gathered by ye church wardens and collectors from henceforth.

This is signed by Matthew Wood, vicar, the churchwardens, and others present at the meeting, including Alderman John Higginson, who makes his mark, the said mark resembling the figure four made very awkwardly.

Volume v., which we take next in order, contains baptisms from 1702 to 1720, and burials from 1702 to 1717. It was provided at the charge of the parish as testified to by “ John Millatt, de Dains, of Carrington, George Timperley, of Timperley, George Leicester, of Hale, and Aaron Warburton, of Bowdon, churchwardens.” The children baptised are those of a tanner at Hale, a flaxman, gunsmith, horse-jockey, mercer, glover, clothier, apothecary, brickmoulder, bricklayer, barber, basketmaker, butcher, cooper, flaxseller, baker, a whitesmith, at Carrington, and a miller at Dunham, which tend to show that 200 years ago this was a district of some importance.

There are several baptisms of illegitimate children, one of which must have been the offspring of a man of consequence, and must have held even the powers that be in awe. After the words detailing the usual particulars there is—“ Wch. she fathered upon Mr. G
C”

There are some children baptised by Mr. Waterhouse, who, like Mr. Dernily, was a dissenting thorn in the ecclesiastical side, and the fact is always precisely stated. In some cases he is "dissenting minister," in others "dissenting teacher," and he appears to have been in business in a large way. At Carrington, "Mr. Orrill," another dissenting teacher, was busy at this period.

Amongst the burials in June, 1703, there is that of—

Mr. Robert Whitehead, Curate of Bowdon.
April, 1708.—Ann Johnson, servant for 40 years at Dunham House.

In the year 1667, an Act of Parliament was passed for the encouragement of the woollen and paper manufactures in the kingdom. It enacted that no corpse should be buried in "shirt, sheet, shroud, or shift," but in woollen, and an affidavit made within eight days of interment that the dead was not shrouded in linen. A penalty of £5 was incurred if the law was broken. These affidavits are regularly entered in the Bowdon Parish Registers as having been made, except in solitary instances which were at once notified to the churchwardens. No specific entry of the enforcement of the Act appears until June, 1709, when there was—

Alice, wife of Thomas Warburton, of Hale, buried in linnen contrary to Act of Parliament. He paid ye fine to ye churchwardens of Bowdon for ye use of ye poore.

Not many years afterwards, the fine of £5 was enforced in the case of—

Mary Leigh, widow, Bowdon, buried in linnen. £2 10s. whereof went to the poor.

In 1728, Nicholas Waterhouse, of Bowdon, a dissenting teacher, "was buried in linnen," but there is no note made as to whether any fine was enforced. This famous Act was not repealed until 1814, and then not without some opposition.

Amongst other burials are :—

1709, Dec.—Mary, wife of George Leicester, gouldsmith, of Altringham.
1710, March.—James, son of Hen. Smith, of Altringham Alderman.

1710, March 11th.—A still born child of William Coppock, of Hale, clandestinely buried about this time, notice given to ye churchwardens, and then Wm. Coppock pd. ye buriall fees and 2d. churching.—Wit : THO. BIRCH.

1711, Dec.—Wm. Hesketh, of Altringham, Alderman.

1712, Dec.—John Pritchard, servant to Mr. Robert Orrell, Ashley, who drown'd himself.

1714.—Wm., son of John Royle, of Altringham, flaxman.

1716, May 9th.—Mr. Matthew Wood, Vicker of Bowdon.

Volume VI. contains baptisms from 1720 to 1738; weddings from 1719 to 1731; and burials from 1717 to 1738. We here find the first reference to another trade or calling in Altrincham and the vicinity not mentioned before, in the baptism of—

Wm., son of Wm. Garner, *fustian man*, and of Elizabeth, his wife, of Hale.

1722, Jan. 20th.—Mary, d. of Robert Leather, Alderman, of Altrincham, and of Hanna, his wife.

1722, Jan. 24th.—Richard, son of Richard Leigh, ale seller, Altrincham, and Elizabeth, his wife.

1723, Aug. 3.—Elizabeth, d. of John Swindells, turner, and Elizabeth, his wife, of Baguley.

1723, Aug. 10th.—Mary, d. of John Yates, bricklayer, and Deborah, his wife, of Baguley.

1723.—Henry, son of John Kinsey (barber), and of his wife, Elizabeth, of Altrincham.

1723, Aug. 30.—George, s. of Joseph Harding, *fustian man*, and of Elizabeth, his wife, at Altrincham.

There were several ale sellers in Altrincham at this period, and we once more notice that the dissenters began again to trouble their brethren in the church. Baptisms by dissenting teachers are often recorded—notably by Mr. Fletcher. There is also a Mr. Robinson mentioned as at Ringey or Ringway chapel. The practice of recording trades appears to have been most capricious. Sinderland too is for a great number of years spelled Sunderland.

Amongst the burials at this period was—

Joseph, son of Peter Melann, a Grecian, and of Mary, his wife.

One still more noteworthy occurred in 1727 in respect of Hannah, wife of Robert Orrill, of Hale,—

She was buried at her own desire without being brought into ye church or having prayer said over her at ye grave, being a most rigid dissenter.

On June 16th, in the same year,—

Robert Prasmore, a wayfaring man, from the Bishopric of Durham.

And—

On the same day, Farmery, son of Mr. Lawton and of Ann, his wife. "This child was buried in the church without leave from me," says the vicar of that period, "or leave ask'd. Agt. wch. I protested at ye grave, tho. I did not refuse to bury ye corpse."

In 1734 there was interred "a travelling woman of the kingdom of Ireland, who died at Bollington." The marriages in the volume present few features of interest, one excepted, viz., that on Feb. 22nd, 1725-6:—

James Hardey, teacher of a seperate (dissenting) congregation at Stockport, and Elizabeth Bentley, of Bowdon, spinster, by licence from Mr. Giles.

Volume VII. contains marriages from 1731 to 1754, and it is pleasing to observe that about the first-named period Bowdon was apparently a place to which those from a distance wishful to enter into the estate of holy matrimony resorted. At the end of the volume there is a list of the "briefs" collected in the year of our Lord, 1751:—

	£	s.	d.
June 2nd, Shipston Church in com. Worcester Ch.	£1,487,	00:	06: 06.
June 23rd, Knighton Church in com. Radnor Ch.	£1,436	00:	05: 11.
July 21st, Netherseal Church, com. Leicester Ch.	£2,158	00:	04: 11.
September 1st, Upton on Severn Ch. com. Worcest. Ch.	£2,015	00:	04: 08.
Oct. 10th, Stamford Bridge Mill in com. Ebor (York)			
lost by fire, collected from house to house, Ch.	£2,884	1:	1: 7½.

These "briefs" were letters patent issued by the Crown for various charitable objects, such as the rebuilding of churches destroyed by fire, or places desolated by a plague. They were usually read in the church during morning service, and a collection made; but, as in one of the instances, it was sometimes collected from house to house. Volume VIII. is a book of stupendous proportions, and brings down baptisms and burials to a comparatively recent period—1769. They are most uninteresting entries, but about this time Peggy, Betty, Kitty, and Molly were favourite names.

There are other volumes of Registers which are to a

great extent similar to the preceding ones. One point only remains, and that is as to centenarians. Owing to the ages not being mentioned in the earlier records, it is impossible to say whether there were any or not. Altogether it cannot be said that the registers form a very useful study, but from preceding extracts it will be seen that they are not entirely devoid of interest.

It would not do to overlook the famous proverb, "Every man is not born to be Vicar of Bowdon." Sir Peter Leycester, who quoted it, appeared somewhat puzzled to account for its true meaning, although it is very much on a par with a great many other proverbs — self-evident. There are two reasons assigned for the proverb. The first is that in olden as well as in modern times, it was an appointment that might be sought for. It had a good stipend attached, was placed in the midst of a fertile and lovely country, and was as a rule fairly free from the interference of schismatic controversy such as existed among the neighbouring churches. The second is that Charles Jones, son of the then Vicar, was intended by his father, who had secured the Bishop's patronage, to succeed him on his decease, thus debarring anyone else from any chance of the appointment.

A short notice of some of the Vicars of Bowdon may be interesting. Of one, we cannot speak with the credit which may have been deservedly due to both his predecessors and successors. This was Ralph Hough, who, according to a note in the new edition of Ormerod, edited by Charles Helsby, Esq., "married Blanche, a widow in Peever or Peover about 1585." "He lived with her about a year, then fled away from her after selling her goods, came back to her again, sold her goods, and ran away for good." A Vicar of Bowdon not mentioned in the list usually given, is — Smith. Walker, in his "Sufferings of the Clergy," states that he was sequestered on account of not complying with the solemn league and covenant, and he was turned out by a committee of Parliament without ever being heard.

During the temporary ascendancy of Presbyterianism in Cheshire in 1648, the ministers of the county, after the example of their brethren in London and other places, adopted and signed an attestation which had been drawn up by Mr. John Ley, "the present preacher at Astbury." It was entitled "An attestation to the testimony of our Reverend Brethren of the Province of London to the truth of Jesus Christ, and to our solemn league and covenant;" and was signed by "James Watmough, pastor of Bowdon," amongst others. The very air, however, seemed thick with controversy, and disturbances arose in his parish between Presbyterians and Independents or Separatists. The Act of Uniformity was passed in the year 1662, and it would appear that the Vicar of Bowdon conformed, thus saving himself from the fate of numerous other brethren. In 1689-90, John Peake, for refusing to take the oaths of allegiance to King William III., was deprived of his living as a Non-juror. Many of the Vicars of Bowdon have been men of talent and erudition, and two or three have figured as authors of learned works.

It may not be inappropriate to give a brief notice of one whose memory will be long revered by the inhabitants, —we refer to the late Venerable Archdeacon Pollock, who died at Claughton, Birkenhead, on the 11th October, 1873; but whose mortal remains are laid under the shadow of the sacred edifice the restoration of which was due to his indefatigable efforts. He was appointed to the Vicarage of Bowdon in 1856, having previously, as the reader will have gathered already, laboured hard in the county, and also at Liverpool. On his appointment he set to work to make his parish what it ought to be. After organizing ample machinery for the immediate wants of his flock, his next endeavour was to get a school built at Hale Barns. He then undertook the much needed and truly Herculean work of rebuilding the Parish Church, and he had the pleasure, within four years of his appointment, of seeing a dilapidated edifice replaced by an entirely new fabric. He gave much active help and warm

sympathy in the erection of St. John's Church, Ashley-road. Another work was the building of a new Vicarage, the old one being at a distance from the Church at the foot of the hill in the vale. He was also the means of erecting the School Church, at Ashley, and through his instrumentality, the adjacent village of Dunham was accommodated with the pretty church dedicated to St. Mark. His next great undertaking was the building of new national schools, the old ones having become inadequate for the purpose intended. He was subsequently appointed Honorary Canon of Chester Cathedral, Rural Dean of Frodsham East, Archdeacon of Chester, and was presented by his University with the degree of D.D., in recognition of his early and distinguished scholarship. In both local and general work he was unwearied: he was mindful of all things great and small, and thought of all other interests before his own. He was also conspicuous, as is well known, for his eloquence and learning. His arduous labours had the effect of undermining his constitution; and, disregarding urgent warnings to take rest, he was struck down by paralysis on 1st August, 1870, having preached his last sermon, on the re-opening of St. George's, Altrincham, in the month previous. A little more than three years afterwards he breathed his last. His funeral took place at Bowdon, on Thursday, 16th October, 1873, when the choir sang a hymn which he had himself composed, on the subject of "Lazarus." It is sublime and affecting in its simple pathos, and opens with the words:—

Lord, if he sleep
He shall do well!
Why should we weep?
Why should a knell,
Dirging and deep,
Over him swell?
He shall do well.

An appropriate address was delivered by the Rev. Canon Falloon, of Liverpool. The funeral was attended by the

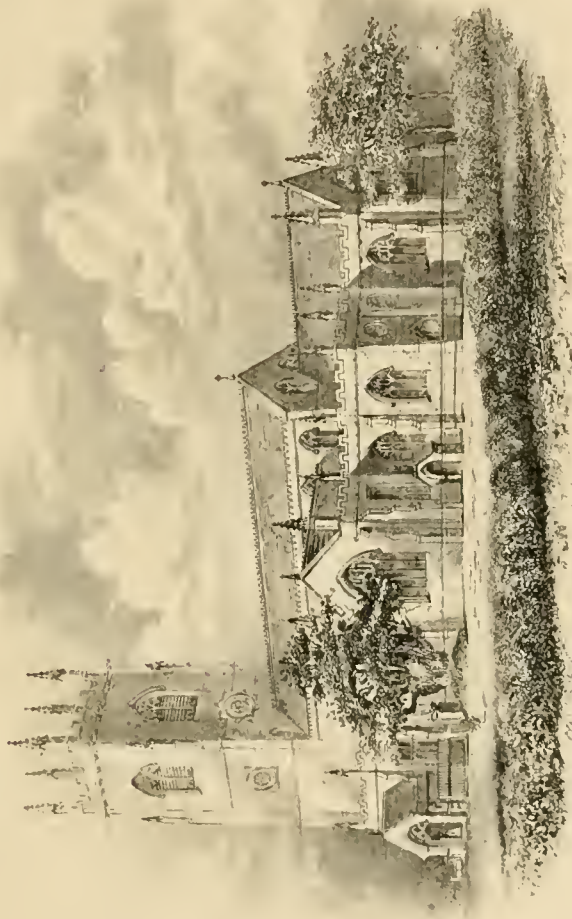
clergy and ministers of other denominations, and the laity was largely and influentially represented.

The vacancy caused by his death was filled by the preferment to the living of the Rev. Arthur Gore, M.A., who is an Honorary Canon of Chester Cathedral. He is a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, and was ordained in 1855. He was appointed to the Incumbency of Saint Luke's, Liverpool, in 1862, and to Bowdon, in 1873. He is most devoted and attentive to the discharge of his parochial duties, and there is none who will not join in wishing that he may long be spared to carry on those works of usefulness inseparable from his high calling.

LIST OF THE VICARS OF BOWDON.

[COMPILED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.]

Presented	Presented
1210 Gillebt or Gilbert, Sacdos.	1648 James Watmough.
... Ricardus de Aldcroft.	1660 John Lightfoote.
1309 Ranulphus de Torrald.	1667 Thomas Weston.
1362 Ricardus de Wever.	1669-70 Francis Mosley.
1369 Ricardus More.	1676 Charles Jones.
1411 Thomas Spencer.	1681 (ante) Richard Wroe.
1441 John Urmeston.	1689-90 James Peake.
1473 William Minshall.	1690 (16th Jan.) John Hyde, on pri- vation of Jas. Peake.
1535 Mr. Thomas Runcorne.	1708 Mathew Wood.
1556 Johes Hanson, M.A.	1716 Peter Lancaster.
1558 Adam Wood.	1763 Thomas Hopper.
1562 Robert Vawdrey.	1772 John Baldwin, LL.B.
1582 Ralph Hough.	1815 James Thomas Law, A.M.
1587 Thomas Warburton.	1820 W. H. Galfridus Mann, A.M., exchanged with Jas. T. Law for Lichfield.
1597 Henry Starkey.	1856 William Pollock, D.D.
1614 George Byrom.	1873 Arthur Gore, M.A.
1616 Robert Janny.	
1628 Thomas Pagett (minister and preacher).	
1647 — Joanes or Jones.	



London Irish Church - Exterior

THE MIZE, OR OLD RATE AND ACREAGE.

Chapelries and Townships in the Parish of Bowdon.				Value in 33rd year Henry VIII. reign.			
	A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.	
Agden (one half) T	670	0	0	..	0	2	0
Altrincham C	520	0	0	..	0	10	9
Bollington (one half) T	400	0	0	..	0	3	0
Bowdon T	690	0	0	..	0	10	0
Baguley T	2070	0	0	..	0	16	0
Carrington C	2070	0	0	..	0	10	9
Dunham Massey T	3710	0	0	..	0	8	0
Ashley T	2390	0	0	..	1	7	4
Hale T	3540	0	0	..	1	12	10
Ashton-upon-Mersey (one half) T	670	0	0	..	0	7	0
Partington T	1220	0	0	..	0	6	8
Timperley T	1380	0	0	..	0	10	9

From the above townships there were formerly four churchwardens elected annually to manage the affairs of the church and to collect the rates, and as remuneration about £20 was allowed them to defray any little expenses that might occur during the execution of their office. The churchwardens are now appointed by the Earl of Stamford and Warrington.

The following is the table in the church of “Benefactions to the poor of Bowdon Parish, in lands per annum or sums of money, the interest for ever” :—

1619, Dame Elizabeth Booth, relict of Sir William Booth, of Dunham Massey, Knt., £100. 1691, Edward Leigh, of Baguley, Esquire, £100; Mrs. Mary Booth, £5. 1714, William Chapman, of Hale, 2 acres of land; Thomas Brereton left to the poor of Ashley £20; Mrs. Francis Barlow, £10; Dame Meredith, £2. 1722, Rectr. de Croxden in com. Staff. left to the poor of Altrincham, £2. 1744, Oliver Bellefontaine gave to buy gilt plate for ye Communion-table £105, also, for ye use of ye poor £11. 1766, Mr. Joseph Walton, £40. 1761, the Right Honorable Harry, Earl of Stamford, £52 : 10s. 1773, George Norman left to the poor of Altrincham £40; to the School, William Tipping, of Dunham, Gent., £10. 1722, Rev. John Ashton, £2. 1807, John Cooper, Esquire, conveyed to Trustees, a messuage and lands in Partington, containing altogether, Cheshire measure, in trust, 3a. or. 12p., for poor householders in Altrincham, of the age of 50 years and upwards. 1816, Mrs. Elizabeth Cooke, of Altrincham, left £50; Mrs. Sarah Cooke, of Altrincham, left £50. 1827, Mr. Robert Twamlow, of Altrincham, left £100.



CHAPTER V.

Altrincham 600 years ago—The ancient charter—Sanjam fair—Election of Mayor, form of an oath and proclamation—The Court of Pye Powder—Importance of the bellman—A Mayor's wisdom—The Earl's Christmas box—Sayings regarding the Mayor—Election of burgesses—Progress of the trust and its disposal—List of Mayors.

WITH the granting of a charter by the Baron of Dunham, nearly 600 years ago, the town of Altrincham commenced its constitutional existence. At that time it was described as being nothing more than a small cluster of chimneyless cottages, whose occupants were bound to use the Lord's bakehouse of the place, with a wooden shed for its town hall.

The Cheshire people appear to have been greatly behind in the matter of architecture down to a comparatively recent period. Smith, in a Treatise on Cheshire, written about the year 1609, remarks that "In building and furniture of their houses, till of late years, they used the old manner of the Saxons. For they had their fire in the midst of the house, against a hob of clay, and their oxen under the same roof; but, within these forty years it is altogether altered, so that they have builded chimneys and furnished other parts of their house accordingly." This it may be readily inferred was a picture of the primitive state of the Altrincham people. Such were the comforts of "the good old times!"

Of the derivation of the name there does not appear to be any exposition. In ancient documents it is spelled "Altringham," and it is so pronounced to the present day, although by many of the inhabitants, old ones particularly, the "ing" is given as the sound in hinge, which is in all probability the truest pronunciation. As a fee of the barony of Dunham, Altrincham derived great privileges on receiving its charter. Serfdom was got rid of to a great extent, and freedom dawned for the burgesses of the place. The arbitrary power of the Lord, giving him complete control over the movements of his dependents was relaxed, and since that time Altrincham has possessed the oldest known form of justice in the land, namely, that of the Saxon Court Leet. The Hamon, of which we have already heard, received a concession from Edward the First, in the year 1290, of a market at Altrincham on Tuesdays, and a fair of three days' duration, upon which he granted a charter to his burgesses, of which a copy will be given hereafter. This charter is still preserved, and is the most historical and valuable document the town possesses. It is enclosed in a peculiarly shaped oak casket or box, two or three inches in diameter, fitted with an oval lid. The charter itself is a piece of parchment, about ten inches by eight, yellow with age, and written in the quaint but beautiful monkish Latin of that period. Appended to it is the seal of Hamon de Massey, or Macy, as it is there spelled, which has, however, been broken. Subsequently, Edward II., in the 12th year of his reign (1319), by letters patent erased the grant of Edward the First, of the fair named therein, and, in lieu thereof granted to Sir Hamon another fair, on the eve, feast, and morrow of St. James's day, yearly—which latter continues to be held under the well-known appellation of "Sanjam" fair—as also another in the month of April. This is a comparatively modern one, as in 1734 there is an entry in the books of the Leet, "that the first new fair that ever was kept, or held in the spring in Altrincham, was upon Thursday, 18th April, to which fair came very great choice of cattle."

It is believed to have been the practice since the

charter of Hamon de Massey was granted, to elect a mayor annually under it; but papers and documents proving the fact are only to be had for about 200 years past. The Mayor is elected at the autumnal Court Leet of the present Lord of the Manor, the Earl of Stamford and Warrington, and a jury of the Leet of the borough, which consists of burgesses only, return by their verdict three persons for the Mayor, out of whom the Steward of the Court selects one, who is thereupon sworn by such Steward in this wise:—

You shall swear, well and truly to serve our sovereign lord the King (or Queen) and the lord of this franchise, in the office of Mayor of this boro', for one whole year, now next ensuing, or until another be sworn in your room; you shall administer equal justice to all persons to the best of your judgment and power; you shall diligently procure such things to be done as may lawfully and justly tend to the profit and commodity of this corporation, and shall support, uphold, and maintain the lawful customs, rights, liberties, and franchises thereof; you shall, to the utmost of your power, endeavour to preserve the King's (or Queen's) peace within this borough, and that all misdemeanours and offences committed therein be duly punished; and in all other things you shall faithfully and uprightly behave yourself, to the utmost quietness, benefit, worship, and credit of this borough and the inhabitants thereof. So help you God.

In former years, on each fair day in July and November, it was customary for a Court of "Pye Powder" to be held before the Steward and the Lord of the Leet and the Mayor in the Court House, which was styled the Court of Pye Powder of the Right Hon. the Earl, &c., holden for the Boro' of Altrincham before the Steward and the Mayor. At this Court none of the freeholders or their tenants attended, but the leasehold tenants of the Lord of the Leet, and their sub-tenants, and also the rack tenants were called to do suit and service. This pye powder, or pie poudre, in English law is the Court of Dusty Foot, and its jurisdiction was established for cases arising at fairs and markets to do justice to the buyer and seller immediately on the spot. After the holding of the Court the Mayor and the Steward proceeded to the Market Place, where the Bailiff (Crier of the Court) proclaimed the fair, in the following terms:—

Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh yes! Draw near and hear the King's (or Queen's) proclamation! I, A—— B——, gentleman, Mayor of the Boro' and Corpora-

tion of Altrincham, in the name and on behalf of our Sovereign Lord the King (or Queen), and in the name and on behalf of the Right Honorable the Earl, &c., Lord of this boro' and the liberties thereof, strictly chargeth and commandeth all manner of persons resorting to this fair that they do keep the peace during the continuance thereof, upon pain of forfeiting for every assault or affray five pounds, and their bodies to prison;

And that all manner of persons do forbear to carry any unlawful weapon or weapons, but that they leave the same at their respective lodgings upon pain of forfeiting the same weapons;

And that all manner of persons do forbear to buy, sell, or exchange any horses, mares, geldings, cows or other cattle in any stable or back yard, or any other place except in the open fair or market;

And that all persons who bring any goods or cattle to sell above the price or value of 4¹d. do pay the accustomed toll for the same upon pain of forfeiting the same goods;

And that no town dweller do keep in or about their houses any goods or cattle to defraud the Lord of his toll upon pain of forfeiting for every such offence 6s. 8d.;

And lastly, the said Mayor strictly commandeth all rogues, vagabonds, and other idle wandering persons who can give no just account of their repair hither, that they forthwith depart this fair and the liberties thereof, upon pain of such punishment as is by law appointed for such offenders. God bless the King (or Queen), the Lord of this borough, the Mayor, and all his (or her) Majesty's loyal subjects.

The officers of the borough formerly accompanied the Mayor and the Steward in a parade of the streets of the town, and these perambulations were supposed to extend to the boundaries of the borough. Some old verdicts contain orders of the Jury for all householders to attend the Mayor with halberts under fine for not so doing. The procession then must have had a formidable, as well as imposing appearance, and would, no doubt, embrace all sorts and conditions of men, from the Mayor, with the constables, market lookers, dog muzzlers, and ale tasters, down to the humble bellman.

The latter was a very important personage. The town books from an early period bear the stamp and impress of his valuable services; for at a town's meeting held at the Court House, March 1st, 1796, it was ordered—

That it has been found by experience to be inconvenient to hold town's meetings without notice by the bell (bellman); therefore, in future, it is ordered that notice by the bell shall be given.

In the year 1699 a most important change took place in connection with the Mayoralty of the town, which was destined subsequently to render that office one of some responsibility to its occupants. Most people are acquainted with the story, which is to the effect that the then Earl offered to grant to the Mayor of Altrincham a yearly payment of £5, or land of the same yearly value, at his option, making at the same time a similar offer to the Mayor of Ashton-under-Lyne. The Mayor of the latter place took the money; but his brother of Altrincham thought, and thought rightly, that the property could not possibly deteriorate, and chose the land. The wisdom of the choice has been fully vindicated in modern times. The true version of the matter, however, is this:—

By an indenture, dated the 25th November, 1699, made between the Right Hon. George Harry, the Earl of Warrington on the one part, and John Eccles, of Altrincham, shoemaker, then Mayor of the said boro' of Altrincham aforesaid on the other part, the said Earl, as well for the goodwill which he had and bore "to the then Mayor, aldermen (these, it is supposed, referred to the burgesses who had served the office of Mayor, the title being frequently recognized in the old verdicts) and burgesses of his boro' of Altrincham, and for the further and better defraying of the charges and expenses, which the Mayor of the boro' aforesaid, and his successors for the time being was and were likely to be at during his and their Mayoralty, as for divers other good causes and considerations moving him thereunto, did give, grant, bargain, and sell unto the said John Eccles, his executors, &c., certain lands, with liberty to take and hedge in and improve the same, for the term of 5,000 years, yielding and paying during the said term a rent of twelvecence upon Christmas Day in full"—a very handsome Christmas box certainly for an Earl! The deed further recites that this is to be only for the proper use and behoof of John Eccles and his successors in the office, subject to certain provisoes, amongst them being neglecting or refusing to pay their rent, or

neglecting to pay their proportionate shares of enclosing the lands; also for the re-entry of the Earl if the rent should be unpaid for ten days after it became due, being lawfully demanded, or if John Eccles should grant, bargain, or sell or convert the said premises, or any part thereof or profits thereof, in any wise contrary to the use and trust aforesaid.

Seventeen years afterwards, viz., in November, 1716, another grant of land was made in the same form from the said Earl to Charles Cresswell, then Mayor of the borough.

The Mayor's land, as it is called, was formerly waste, and was 13a. 1r. 26p., statute measure, and consisted of

	a.	r.	p.
Farther Moss Mayor Field	2	0	14
Nearer Moss Mayor Field	1	1	32
Thorley Moor	2	0	33
Higher Thorley Moor	1	1	29
Seamon's Moss Mayor Field	6	0	38
	13	1	26

It evidently formed a subject of notice at no very recent period, as at a public town's meeting held at the Court House, June 7th, 1796, it was ordered that Messrs. Worthington be authorized "to take such measures as they may think proper to procure an administration to be granted to Mr. James Gratrix, to empower him to take such legal acts as may be thought necessary, respecting the fields belonging to the Mayor." No record of any such proceedings having been taken appears; but in 1803 there is a "Memorandum," dated 8th October, which gives us some idea of the income then. It is as follows:—

Mayors field let to Mr. Rigby, at the yearly rent, of £18,—who held it two years, and gave up possession (not willing to hold it longer), in the year 1796; holding it from February 1794. It was in 1796 by public auction, at Bowling Green, let for 12 years to Mr. Gratrix, at the rent of £18 4s., which lease expires 1808; as, also, Mr. George Lupton's lease of Mr. Taylor's Townsfield Garden, for 12 years, from 1796, expires year 1808, rent £3 3s. yearly. Then follows in a somewhat tremulous hand, the signature, "Aaron Brundrett, Auctioneer."

Of the office and dignity of Mayor of this borough much has been said; and Webb, in his "Itinerary" written in 1621, speaks of Altrincham, "with its fine little market, and a town of no meaner government than the Mayor of an ancient institution to her principal officer;" while King, in describing the market towns of Cheshire, says, somewhat enviously, that although "Altrincham be none of the chiefest market towns, yet it hath a Mayor (which he, good old soul, in his innocence of heart, prints Major), a weekly market, and yearly on St. James' a fair."

As there is a proverb attached to the Vicarage of Bowdon, there are one or two sayings which have contributed in no lesser degree to make the Mayoralty of Altrincham famous. In former times, the "honour" was much ridiculed, and it was said in an old rhyme:—

The Mayor of Altrincham and the Mayor of Over,
The one is a thatcher and the other a dauber.

Sir Walter Scott, too, in the forty-fifth chapter of his novel, "The Heart of Mid-Lothian," puts a peculiar apology into the mouth of a worthy dame mentioned therein. She has come down late to breakfast, and Sir Walter writes:—

The dame apologised to Captain Knockunder, as she was pleased to term their entertainer; "but as we say in Cheshire," she added, "'I was like the Mayor of Altrincham, who lies in bed while his breeches are mending,'" for the girl did not bring up the right bundle to my room, till she had brought up all the others by mistake one after t'other. . . . Pray, may I be so bold as to ask if it is the fashion for you North country gentlemen to go to church in your petticoats, Captain Knockunder?"

"Captain of Knockdunder, Madam, if you please, for I knock under to no man; and in respect of my garb, I shall go to church as I am, at your service, Madam; for if I were to lie in bed like your Major what-d'ye-callum, till my breeches were mended, I might be there all my life, seeing I never had a pair of them on my person but twice in my life, which I am bound to remember, it being when the Duke brought his Duchess here, so I e'en borrowed the Minister's trows for the twa days his grace was pleased to stay, &c."

That this delicate Cheshire damsel and the ascetic rhymer somewhat libelled both the office and the many worthy gentlemen who have filled it there can be no doubt; for

there is a long and goodly list of the best names in the place, amongst them those of Massey, and in 1758-9, that of the Honourable Booth Grey, son of the then Earl of Stamford. It was in removing the effects of the present Earl from Dunham Hall, some years ago, that a silver medal was found, which had evidently been struck in honour of his election. On one side is the inscription, "The Honorable Booth Grey, Mayor of Altrincham, 1759;" on the other, the coat of arms, with the motto, "A Ma Puissance" (According to my power). This was presented to the Mayor, Mr. John Astle Kelsall, in 1867-8.

One of its Mayors, so runs the tradition, was gifted with the grace of repartee excellent well. The Mayor of Over—for he and the Mayor of Altrincham are often coupled,—journeyed once upon a time to Manchester. He was somewhat proud, though he went on foot, and on arriving at Altrincham felt he would be all the better for a shave. The knight of steel and strop performed the operation most satisfactorily; and as his worship rose to depart he said, rather grandiloquently, "You may tell your customers that you have had the honour of shaving the Mayor of Over." "And you," retorted the ready-witted fellow, "may tell yours that you have had the honour of being shaved by the Mayor of Altrincham." The rest can be better imagined than described.

It is singular that, while anciently the two were on such an unenviable footing of equality, the Mayor of Over, by prescriptive right, takes his seat as a magistrate both in his own borough and at Quarter Sessions, the Mayor of Altrincham does not appear either to have been invested with or exercised magisterial functions. That Mayors of the town when the charter was first granted did so is very probable indeed, but any active administration of justice by any of them has not been known.

The Court Leet was formerly all powerful in regulating and administering the affairs of the town. In order to do this with efficiency there were various officials appointed to assist the Mayor; the principal being—the constables,

bailiffs, market lookers, burley or byelaw men, assessors, leather sealers, scavengers, swine lookers, common lookers, ale tasters, pump lookers, overseers, dog muzzlers, chimney lookers, and the bellman. These offices were not then sinecures, and all of them can be traced at work except the ale tasters—a feature greatly to the credit of the Altrincham publican one or two centuries ago. The chimney lookers on one occasion had George Twyford and Edward Cooke each amerced in 1s. for neglecting to sweep their chimneys, which occasioned Edward Cooke's to take fire; and a worthy Alderman, whose name is honourably associated with Altrincham (Alderman Cresswell) was ordered to "mussel" his dog in pain of 6s. 8d., which he, neglecting to do, had to pay, and was further fined 10s. The Overseer had Ann Grantham amerced in 10s. for entertaining vagrants contrary to Act of Parliament. The pump lookers saw that "no person washed potatoes at ye town's pump, or fetched water to degg straw, or set any barrel to be ledgined, or watered horses, or fetched water to make daub or mortar." The common lookers prevented persons gathering dung there, or "fleaing" the common, or "surcharging" it, or turning diseased animals on it. The swine lookers had Faith Brown amerced in 1s. for turning out one swine. The leather sealers had John Worthington, jun., fined in 3s. 4d., and William Ellam, of Lymm, in 6s. 8d., for selling leather not sufficiently tanned. The market lookers saw that butchers did not bring unmarketable meat, or the bakers give short weight in bread. In fact, the Court took care that the officers did their duty, or "pained" (fined) them for any omission. Thus the well-looker was amerced in 3s. 4d. "for neglecting his office about cleaning the town's well;" and the dog muzzlers in 12d., for not doing as they ought to have done. Concerning the Overseers, there is an entry 150 years ago, which states:—

We find heretofore yt ye Overseers of ye poor have been very neglectful in getting certificates from the interlopers, and for that reason wee doe order the succeeding officers to take care for the future to get certificates of those that are in town yt have not given them, or those that may come in, if ye deny to remove them, on pain of 6s. 8d.

The previous Overseers had been fined 12d. each for their neglect. But if the Court saw the officers did their duty it also protected them in the doing of it, as we find James Berry "amerced in 3s. 4d. for insulting the market-lookers in the execution of their duty." Some particular persons gave a good deal of trouble, just as they do in the present day. Thus Faith (Ffaith) Brown was twice fined 1s. for gathering dung on the common, 2s. for twice turning out her pig, and another shilling for not paying or cleaning the well. Robert Leather, too, was well known at court: he was ordered to repair his oven's, to make a new and sufficient gate leading into the Town Field, to open his part of Timperley brook, was amerced in sixpence for ledginning his barrels at the town's pump, and lastly was fined 6s. 8d. for neglecting to brush his hedge and slance his ditch at Timperley. Hedges and ditches were the occasion of a variety of orders, parties being required to scour, ditch, slance, breast, and cleanse their ditches, and to fall, brush, fence, and back beat their hedges. "Muck," as it is always called, gave no small amount of employment to the Court. Widow Norman was told not to bring hers any further than the stumps from her stable on pain of 6s. 8d., James Robinson was twice told to keep his within his wall in his fold, while everybody was forbidden to lay "swine muck," or "little house muck" in the bank for the future. Mary Janson, for committing a great nuisance in this respect, was fined 10s., and was ordered to lay no more in the public street on pain of £01 00s. 0d. The houses were mostly thatched with straw, and there were sundry regulations respecting "straw for thatching." Such straw was not to be wet in the highway, and great danger arising from the thatch taking fire, many persons were fined for not having their chimneys duly cleaned. George Twyford was ordered to make up a dangerous hole in the end of his brewhouse, on pain of 6s. 8d., and the smith was to prevent sparks passing out of his smithy under the comparatively heavy penalty of 20s. The bakers were ordered not to lay their heath, gorse, or other fuel, within

sixty yards of any house, barn, or outbuilding, and to quench their hot ashes under similarly heavy "pains." The public bakehouse was an important institution, which was maintained until a recent period. The Court regulated the time of "setting in" and "drawing," the former at seven o'clock in the morning from May to Michaelmas, and eight o'clock from Michaelmas to May, also at such other times as "that the inhabitants may have their puddings, pyes, and other eatables out of the oven precisely at 12 o'clock," and "draw for supper by six o'clock in the evening," an hour which will be considered rather early in these days. James Tipping, the baker, repeatedly kept the lieges of Altrincham waiting for their dinners, and no doubt this was the case in reference to suppers—for he was frequently fined. The pecuniary affairs of the town were well guarded, the officers being often amerced for not producing their accounts to the assessor for inspection. A most important feature of the work of the Court was the preservation of footpaths and the repairing of highways, as several of the entries at different periods show.

Whereas the styles have lately been took up and the footway stopt leading from Charles Cresswell's, Wellfield at Sandiway Head, and so from thence leading through the upper end of John Smith's higher field, purchased of Mr. John Eccles, which has been an *immemorial footroad*. We agree and order that the several owners of the fields through which the footroad did heretofore lead, to fix good and sufficient styles through their several closes or fields in pain of each £1.

In 1738, it was agreed and ordered:—

That George Norman and William Royle do take down their several styles leading from Altrincham to Bowdon Church, and in lieu thereof do place stumps and rails for the better ease and convenience of Churchpeople and other passengers, and that within one month from this time on pain of 6s. 8d.

This is quite sufficient to show that the Court was a most important one, and fulfilled duties very much after the fashion of a Corporation in modern times.

The ancient custom in regard to the election of burgesses is still carried out. These burgesses are all freeholders within the borough, but must be elected by the Jury of

the Court Leet before they can be said to be fully qualified. For many years the Jury returned one freeholder as burgess at each Court Leet, who thereupon usually paid a fine towards the expenses of the dinner of the Mayor, Steward, Jury, Constables, &c., partaken of after the Court had discharged the very onerous duties devolving upon it. This habit of inflicting a fine was not an ancient custom, as this election of burgesses was not carried out with such regularity 100 or 120 years ago; and the Jury only elected one or two as they thought proper, and no mention of a fine or other expenses to be paid is shown by them. It is certain, however, that it was long the custom for the Lord of the leet to present to the company at the dinner, a certain sum towards the expenses of the same, and the fines paid by new burgesses were added, the remainder being paid equally by the persons present, with the exception of the constables, for whom the Mayor paid, as well as for himself. No one can possibly remember when the custom originated, not even "the oldest inhabitant."

Occasions have been known when a newly-elected burgess has declined to pay the customary fine; and no persuasion, not even that of the "ballivo" of the ancient charter, which is supposed to mean the bailiff returned by the Jury, who executed their precepts, and the warrants of the steward for levying all fines and amercements imposed by them, could induce him to part; consequently, this money has been lost to the company. It is said that in the year 1820, and for several years afterwards, the Mayor gave no dinners, but only a certain sum towards the expenses of the Court Leet dinners, the rest of the funds being expended in lighting and watching the town. The practice of the Mayor giving these dinners is, however, an institution which cannot have existed from the granting of the charter, as he had no public funds to meet the expenses prior to the grants already mentioned, nor indeed until the lands comprised in the lease became productive. The date at which they are fixed as having commenced is

1749 or 1759, and about that time each burgess gave one shilling towards the expenses of such dinner.

With the progress of the town, the value of the Mayor's land correspondingly increased. Up to 1863, it had for many years been vested in a trustee, upon trust for the Mayors for the time being of the borough, during their respective mayoralties, and was leased for farming purposes; the rents, then amounting to £70 10s., being received and expended by the Mayor at his discretion. This discretion for a long time was not wisely exercised, and public opinion was on more than one occasion strongly expressed. It was alluded to many years previously at the Government Inquiry prior to the formation of the Local Board of Health; and Mr. Rawlinson, who held it, states in his appendix that he fully concurred in the recommendations relative to the Mayor's property. Mr. Joynson and others named the subject, and expressed an opinion that if the rental obtained from the land could be laid out for public purposes, much good might result to the inhabitants and the ratepayers generally. Mr. E. Joynson stated "they had reason to believe that Lord Stamford, whose ancestors left the property in question, to the Mayor and Burgesses would have no objection to its being made available for the improvement of the town;" and Mr. I. Turton added that "the income from the land was at present of no use whatever, for it was spent in eating and drinking." Some remarks on the improvement of Altrincham, which were then drawn up for local use and information, pointed out that the town was suffering, as Manchester did for at least a century, from having outgrown the feudal usages and regulations under which it had hitherto been governed, and also that the main qualification which the Jurors of the Leet sought for in a Mayor-elect was that he should be disposed to disburse largely of this fund in the shape of good dinners and drinking bouts. Some of the Burgesses who did not approve of this mode of spending the money, did not attend the Court Leet or its dinners. It is pleasant to have to

record that of late years there has been an absence of that license which formerly prevailed, and Mayors have vied with each other in publicly and privately helping on local objects, by subscriptions from the funds at their disposal. Efforts have also been made to add greater dignity to the transactions of the Leet, and perhaps by none more so than Mr. Edward Neild, who held the office in 1875-6. During his term he presented two splendid chairs for the use of the Court. They are from the establishment of which he is the enterprising head, and are constructed out of solid oak grown in Dunham Park. They are in the Jacobean style of the 16th century, from designs by Bernard Smith, of London, and therefore harmonize to some extent with the antiquity of the Court to which they are presented. The principal chair stands about seven feet high, and the other, which is not quite so elaborate, though not less tasteful in its design, is six feet. The principals of both are splendid specimens of turnery, and the carving is not less massive and imposing. In the back of the chairs is a shield artistically placed on a green ground, bearing the coat of arms of the town, with the motto in gilt letters "Altrincham en avant." Underneath, on a brass plate, is the inscription: "Presented to the Court Leet of the Borough of Altrincham, by Edward Neild, Mayor, 1875-6." They are upholstered in leather in olive and gold of antique pattern, and the panels are also decorated in the same manner. The back of the second chair is ornamented with the coat of arms of the Earl of Stamford and Warrington, in silver and blue, surmounted with a coronet, and the motto in gilt letters "A ma puissance."

Returning once more to the economic consideration of the subject, it was mainly owing to the efforts of Mr. W. Devereux Nicholls, a former Mayor, that this trust was put on a satisfactory footing, legally speaking. He spent the whole of his mayoral income in accomplishing the object; and in his representation he pointed out that it was obvious that some parts of the land were eligible for building purposes, and that the income would be much

increased if they could be leased for long terms. It had also been for many years considered that the rents might be much more advantageously applied than in the manner before detailed, and that the inclination of the Burgesses was very strong towards such an appropriation. This, Mr. Nicholls did not do with a view to decreasing the dignity of the office; and suggestions were made that the Mayor for the time being should receive a definite and sufficient sum for the due maintenance of his office, and the remainder be applied for some public purpose, as the Mayor for the time being and a committee of Burgesses to be chosen by themselves might determine.

There were, however, many difficulties raised to this course; but the object Mr. Nicholls had in view was ultimately gained, and with the consent of the Lord of the Manor and the Charity Commissioners, the following gentlemen were elected by the burgesses trustees of what has since been legally termed "The Mayor's Land Charity":— Messrs. James Street (Mayor), J. Howard, James Southern, Mark Pierson, C. Balshaw, S. Barratt, J. Renshaw, and J. A. Kelsall. Since that time, the income of the Mayor has gone on rapidly increasing, and at the present time (1878) it is nearly £250 per annum. It cannot, however, rise much higher, as the land is now nearly all fixed on long leases. It is to be hoped that the funds will continue to be properly and judiciously spent, and some suitable memorial, useful to the people and advantageous to the town, will be seen in connection with the carrying out of this ancient trust.

TRANSLATION OF CHARTER OF HAMON MASSEY.

TO ALL FAITHFUL PEOPLE OF CHRIST, that shall see or hear this present CHARTER, HAMON MASSEY, LORD OF DUNHAM, SENDS GREETING everlasting in the Lord: KNOW YE, that I have given, and by this my present Charter for me and my heirs confirm, to my Burgesses of Altrincham, that my Town of Altrincham be a Free Borough, and that my Burgesses of the same Borough shall have a *Guild Mercatory* in the same Borough, with all liberties and free customs unto such manner of Guild belonging, according to the custom of the Borough of Macclesfield; and that they shall be quit through all my lands, as well by water as by land, of toll, passage, frontage, stallage, lastage, and all other servile customs. Also I have granted unto my said Burgesses, common of pasture, turbary

and bruary, within the limits of Dunham, Altrincham, and Timperley, saving unto me and my heirs our improvements, and saving to me and my heirs the inclosure of Sunderland, at our free will without the contradiction of any person, whensoever we shall think fit, to enclose the same, so that my aforesaid Burgesses may have common of pasture always and everywhere for all their cattle within the bounds of Sunderland, so long as the aforesaid place of Sunderland shall not be enclosed; saving to me and my heirs in all the time of pannage in the aforesaid Sunderland, so that in that time we may have power at our will to fence in Sunderland aforesaid, without the contradiction of any persons. And when Sunderland aforesaid shall be enclosed, my said Burgesses shall have their common up to the Hay of Sunderland aforesaid, and not beyond. It is also my will that all my Burgesses who shall have hogs in the time of pannage in my said Borough either after the feast of St. James and the time of pannage, shall give a right toll when they pasture within the aforesaid commons, and they shall not go from the said Borough with their hogs in the time of pannage. Also, I have granted to my aforesaid Burgesses housebote and haybote in all the woods of the aforesaid places (except my hays and enclosed woods). And also I do grant to my aforesaid Burgesses that they shall not be impleaded out of the portmote of the aforesaid Borough, nor shall they be interfered with out of their Borough on account of trespasses done within the Borough, and if any of them becomes liable for any offence he shall be amerced by his peers, and that according to the degree of his offence. I will also that my Burgesses shall grind all their corn growing upon the land of Altrincham, or expended in the same town, at my mills, for the eighteenth of the full measure. I grant it also that my said Burgesses may make unto themselves Presidents and Bailiffs by the Common Council of me or of my Bailiffs and of themselves; and that no plea shall be holden or determined in the said Borough but before me or my Bailiff; and that every Burgess shall hold his several burgage of two perches of land in breadth and five in length, with one whole acre of land in the field, for twelve pence, to be paid to me and my heirs yearly, at three times of the year by equal portions. that is to say: at the Nativity of St. John the Baptist, the Feast of All Saints, and the Annunciation of the Blessed Mary; freely, quietly, peaceably, and wholly, with all the liberties aforesaid; and that every Burgess may give a lien, sell, or assign by will, his burgage to any person or persons whomsoever he will (except to the officers of our lord the King and religious men) without the contradiction of any person or persons, saving to me and my heirs our free bakehouse in the same Borough. I truly, the aforesaid Hamon, and my heirs, will for ever covenant the aforesaid Burgages and the acres of land thereunto adjoining, and all the liberties above written, unto my said Burgesses and their heirs and assigns against all people. In witness whereof I have set my seal to this present Charter, these being witnesses:

Sir Reginald de Grey (then Justice of Chester);
Humphrey of Beauchamp, Richard of Massey, Knights;
Gilbert of Aston; Thomas of Actone (or Agden); Hugh
of Baggelegh; Matthew of Hale; Henry of Dunham;
John of Bowdon; and others.

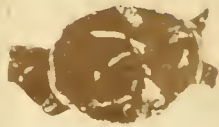
The above is the best translation of the charter which has been made, but it must be remembered that there are numerous others in existence. In some instances it is addressed to all "Shriften people," and charter is called pax, and wrytynge, the expression varying with the period at which such translation was made. Passage is egress and regress; tollage is toll paid for standing in the markets and fairs; lastage is liberty to set out standings in the markets and fairs; turbary is liberty to get turf or turves; bruary, heath, furze, or briars; pannage, which is sometimes given as farmage, pession, and passion, is the time when hogs feed on acorns and stubble; housebote is the necessary timber for repairing houses and out-houses; haybote or hayhold, wood for hedges; heyas, glades and places for game; the free bakehouse was a place to which the inhabitants were bound to resort. In some instances president has been translated borough reeve, and there is an expression in one regarding the grain grown at Altrincham, or expended in the town, "or sold at an inn in the same town."

The exact date of the granting of the charter has not been ascertained, but authorities concur in fixing the year 1290. The Justice of Chester at that period was Sir Reginald de Grey, who continued to hold that important office until 1300; but as one Ricardus de Massey acted in his absence for some years, 1290 may be safely assumed to be the year in which the Altrincham Charter was granted.

There are many differences in the wording of the translations in addition to those already mentioned. The name of Massey is given on both seal and charter as Macy. It has since been rendered in various ways—Macie, Macey, Mascie, Mascy, Massie, Massy, &c. No doubt, in connection with other old Cheshire names and the numerous changes in orthography connected therewith, it suggested the somewhat ill-natured though celebrated rhyme that in this county—

Leghs are as numerous as fleas,
And Masseys as asses.

[The text on this page is extremely faint and largely illegible due to the quality of the scan. It appears to be a dense block of Latin script, likely a portion of a medieval charter or legal document.]



Facsimile Altrincham Charter 1290,

Slightly reduced from the Original Document.

LIST OF MAYORS OF THE BOROUGH OF ALTRINCHAM
FROM 1452 TO 1878.

1452 Edward Massey	1643 Henry Cartwright	1683 James Brookes
1483 Richard Massey	1644 Henry Cartwright	1684 John Burgess
1547 Roger Booth	1645 George Parker	1685 James Ashley
1552 John Ryle	1646 John Bent	1686 Thomas Hesketh
1555 John Morris	1647 George Birch	1687 Joseph Pierson
1556 John Ryle	1648 William Leicester	1688 George Hardey
1557 John Ryle	1649 George Vaudrey	1689 John Leather
1558 Ralph Massey	1650 Richard Brereton	1690 George Parker
1559 Ralph Massey	1651 Richard Brereton	1691 Jeffrey Stockley
1560 William Ardron	1652 Richard Brereton	1692 Robert Lingard
1561 George Newton	1653 Henry Bradshaw	1693 Robert Leicester
1562 George Newton	1654 Richard Wright	1694 Timothy Taylor
1563 George Newton	1655 Peter Parker	1695 William Hesketh
1565 Ralph Massey, senior	1656 John Ashley	1696 Henry Smith
1614 William Rawlinson	1657 Robert Hesketh	1697 James Hardey
1616 Alexander Vaudrey	1658 Thomas Hesketh	1698 George Aldcroft
1618 Robert Lingard	1659 Henry Smith	1699 John Eccles
1619 Richard Brereton	1660 Robert Lingard	1700 Jeremiah Brundrett
1620 Edward Bent	1661 John Paulden	1701 George Birch
1621 Randle Wright	1662 William Rowlinson	1702 George Leicester
1622 George Birch	1663 James Doe	1703 William Grantham
1623 William Rowlandson	1664 George Birch	1704 John Bent
1624 William Hesketh	1665 George Parker	1705 William Higginson
1626 William Hesketh	1666 John Coe	1706 John Higginson
1627 Robert Parker	1667 James Brookes	1707 Robert Ashley
1628 Robert Lingard	1668 George Aldcroft	1708 George Smith
1629 James Leycester	1669 George Hardey	1709 James Warburton
1630 Randle Wright	1670 William Leicester	1710 John Smith
1631 Peter Rowlinson	1671 George Vaudrey	1711 Edward Garnett
1632 George Birch	1672 Richard Wright	1712 John Cooke
1633 Richard Brereton	1673 George Cook	1713 Thomas Royle
1634 Richard Brereton	1674 Robert Lingard	1714 Robert Lupton
1635 Jeffery Coe	1675 George Parker	1715 Robert Frith
1636 George Vaudrey	1676 Thomas Doe	1716 Charles Cresswell
1637 Lawrence Leicester	1677 John Ashley	1717 Robert Leather
1638 Richard Wright	1678 Henry Hesketh	1718 John Ashley
1639 George Ashton	1679 William Delves	1719 James Hardey
1640 Robert Lingard	1680 Richard Wright	1720 Richard Royle
1641 William Hesketh	1681 George Birch	1721 James Robinson
1642 William Rowlinson	1682 Henry Smith	1722 Samuel Holt

LIST OF MAYORS.—Continued.

1723 John Smith	1764 John Birch	1803 William Ashley
1724 George Hardey	1765 Thomas Moore	1804 William Smith
1725 Joshua Grantham	1766 William Rigby	1805 Thomas Royle
1726 William Leicester	1767 Thomas Warburton	1806 John Postles
1727 Fernando Laughton	1768 William Leicester	1807 Thomas Carter
1728 Richard Berry	1769 John Walthew	1808 Abner Partington
1729 William Taylor	1770 William Parkinson,	1809 William Royle
1730 William Royle	junr.	1810 Thomas Darbyshire
1731 Richard Leigh	1771 William Taylor	1811 John Mitchell
1732 John Birch	1772 George Cooke	1812 Samuel Hope
1733 James Fletcher	1773 Isaac Worthington,	1813 John Austin
1734 George Smith	junr.	1814 Isaac Davenport
1735 George Warburton	1774 John Ratcliffe	1815 John Mitchell
1736 George Royle	1775 John Derbyshire	1816 John Barratt
1737 Henry Smith	1776 George Lupton	1817 William Ashley
1738 John Worthington	1777 William Howard	1818 John Drinkwater
1739 Aaron Eccles	1778 Thomas Duncalf	1819 Joshua Ashcroft
1740 Joshua Grantham	1779 Edward Darbyshire	1820 Samuel Bruckshaw
1741 Thomas Royle	1780 John Austin	1821 Samuel Renshaw
1742 John Smith	1781 William Pooks	1822 Timothy Brownell
1743 Richard Neild	1782 Vernon Poole	1823 Samuel Street
1744 Robert Frith	1783 Oswald Leicester	1824 Samuel Clarke
1745 George Ashton	1784 John Clough	1825 John Faulkner
1746 George Burgess	1785 Charles Poole	1826 John Hope
1747 Benjamin Irlam	1786 Robert Mills	1827 Richard Irlam Grant-
1748 John Leigh	1787 John Eccles	ham
1749 Richard Royle	1788 Robert Leicester	1828 John Clarke
1750 George Twyford	1789 James Staples	1829 John Adshead
1751 Joseph Grantham	1790 Aaron Brundrett	1830 Nathaniel Pass
1752 George Robinson	1791 Thomas Howard	1831 Robert Shelmerdine
1753 Peter Bailey	1792 James Walthew	1832 John Lupton
1754 Thomas Royle	1793 Timothy Brownell,	1833 Charles Poole
1755 James Wainwright	junr.	1834 Richard Poole
1756 Samuel Lamb	1794 James Gratrix	1835 Isaac Harrop
1757 Richard Crouchley	1795 William Parkinson	1836 Isaac Harrop
1758 The Honble. Booth	1796 John Atherton	1837 William Hamilton
Grey	1797 Samuel Howard	1838 Isaac Gaskarth
1759 Isaac Shaw	1798 Samuel Hardey	1839 Joseph Arstall
1760 Nathaniel Priestner	1799 George Burgess	1840 Isaac Gaskarth
1761 Charles Cresswell	1800 George Worthington	1841 Joseph Bruckshaw
1762 Robert Ashley	1801 Peter Leicester	1842 William Collier
1763 Edward Cooke	1802 Samuel Walker	1843 William Collier

LIST OF MAYORS.—Continued.

1844 William Renshaw	1856 William D. Nicholls	1868 James Southern
1845 James Royle	1857 William D. Nicholls	1869 Humphrey Davies
1846 James Matthews	1858 John Mort	1870 Joseph Gaskarth
1847 Joseph Hall	1859 John Mort	1871 Joseph Gaskarth
1848 George Massey	1860 John Howard	1872 Matthew Fowden
1849 Richard Broadbent	1861 Charles Balshaw	1873 John Shelmerdine
1850 Richard Broadbent	1862 James Street	Mort
1851 Mark Pierson	1863 Thomas Balshaw	1874 Samuel Burgess
1852 Mark Pierson	1864 Samuel Delves	1875 Edward Neild
1853 George Berry	1865 Samuel Delves	1876 William Greenwood
1854 Samuel Barratt	1866 Samuel Delves	1877 William Greenwood
1855 John Davenport	1867 James Astle Kelsall	1878 John Siddeley





CHAPTER VI.

A retrospect—Sundry lawsuits—The first Booth of Dunham Massey; his supposed death at the Battle of Blore Heath—A Booth knighted by Queen Elizabeth—Interesting wills—Dame Booth's Charity—Contributions to the defence of the Kingdom—Dr. Dee's reference to Sir George Booth—Purchase of the town of Warrington; the instructions thereon—Death of William Booth.

A BRIEF resumé is necessary before proceeding further. It will be in the recollection of the reader that the last Baron of Dunham sold the reversion of his estates in this neighbourhood to Oliver Ingham, Justice of Chester. At the time of Hamon's death, however, Oliver was abroad, having been appointed Steward of Gascony by the King. As has often been the case in modern times, the death of an individual, even of mean degree, has given rise to much legal contention. In this respect history only repeats itself; for it was about the year 1341 that "great suits" took place concerning the Barony of Dunham. It was only natural that the descendants of the barons on the female side should think that they were, in the absence of such a notable individual as the aforesaid Oliver, entitled to those broad acres, which constituted a most enviable possession. Richard Fitton, and the heirs of the other sisters, says Leicester, entered into the Manor of Dunham; but, by the King's command, Hamon Masci, of

Tatton (afterwards the first Masci of Rixton) came and turned them out. The dispute was not settled until Henry, Duke of Lancaster, bought out the rights of all concerned, and with princely liberality gave it to Roger Lestraunge, or Strange, Lord of Knocking, who was descended from Oliver Ingham by marriage, and by whose descendants it was held for some time afterwards.

Up to this period, no mention was made of the Booths in connection with Dunham Massey, and it was not until the reign of Henry V. that they acquired a footing in this district. The name Booth is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word Both, a seat, or chief mansion-house, more usually a village. In the year 1402, Richard de Venables, heir to the estate of Le Bolyne, was drowned accidentally in the river Bollin, and by this event, his two sisters, Alice and Dulcia, or Douce, became co-heiresses. These lands were held in trust until Dulcia came of age. She was married to Robert del Bothe, or Booth, a younger son of Sir John del Bothe, Barton, near Manchester, "the Monday after the invention of the Holy Cross," in the tenth year of the reign of Henry IV. (1409), at which time she was only nine years of age. Twelve years afterwards the whole of the manors and estates were divided, Styal and Dean Row, and the mills on the river Bollin, with other lands in the county, principally in West Cheshire falling to her share. By what has been described as a complicated series of events, this Robert del Bothe seated himself ultimately at Dunham Massey. He challenged his right to a portion of the land in this manor, which he contended ought to descend to him as one of the heirs by marriage through the Fittons and Venables from the last Baron of Dunham. Once having put his hand to the plough he did not look back, and ultimately it was agreed in the year 1433 between the holders of the barony, viz., Sir Thomas Stanley and William Chauntrell, serjeant-at-law, that one-half of the lands, rents, and services in Dunham, Hale, and Altrincham, should be given him. Thus, in brief, was laid the founda-

tion of a family which is generally agreed to have been one of the most distinguished and influential in Cheshire.

This Sir Robert had a goodly number of sons and daughters, amongst them John Booth, afterwards Bishop of Exeter, and Warden of Manchester College. He and his eldest son, William, were made Sheriffs of Cheshire for both their lives in the year 1443; and *Leycester* remarks that this is all the more noteworthy, "as being the first patent for life which he could meet with in the county." That he took a prominent part in public affairs is often noticed in contemporary documents, and for his services he had an annuity of £10 per annum granted by Henry VI. The time of his death, however, appears to be involved in much obscurity. *Leycester* says he lived in the reign of Henry IV., Henry V., and seems to have died about the 29th year of the reign of Henry VI. Another authority (*Dr. Ormerod*) suggests that he was on the King's side in the battle of *Blore Heath* in 1459,—which battle is well known to have been singularly calamitous to the gentry of Cheshire. It has remained for another antiquarian, *Mr. Earwaker*, by his painstaking research, to throw a great deal of additional light on the subject. *Dr. Ormerod* gives as his authority the monument in *Wilmslow Church* to the memory of Sir Robert and *Douce*, his wife; but his rendering of the inscription is shown to have been caused by a misreading, and his remark that "it possesses considerable interest, and is the only inscription now remaining in the county relating to any of the warriors who fell at *Blore Heath*," threatens, says *Mr. Earwaker* "to become a popular local error," from its having been so frequently repeated. The description which he gives of the brass is also much more complete, and possesses the utmost interest for this district. This handsome brass still exists, but in a much worn state, and has lost the greater part of its inscription, and one of its canopies. It is, however, the finest yet left in Cheshire. Sir Robert is represented in the plate armour worn in the

middle of the 15th century, his head uncovered, showing the short cut hair, his feet adorned with the knightly spurs, resting on a greyhound, and his sword lying across his body. In his right hand, he grasps that of his wife Douce, who lies on his left side. She is habited in a tightly fitting dress, seen beneath a long heavy mantle, which is fastened by two brooches across the chest. Her flowing hair reaches down nearly to her waist, and is confined at the top of the head by a narrow fillet or circlet, probably enriched with jewels. Her little pet dog is represented at her feet lying on the folds of the mantle. Over each of these figures was a handsome canopy, that over the lady now only remaining. There were the shields on which the arms of Booth, Fitton, Masey, and Thornton were quartered, and round the edges of the tomb, in Latin, was the following inscription:—

Here lies the body of Sir Robert del Bouthe Knight, formerly lord of Bolyn, Thorneton and Dunham, who died in the feast of Saint Edith the Virgin (Sepr. 16) in the year of our Lord 1460; and the body of Douce, wife of the said Robert del Bouthe, who died on the morrow of the feast of St. Tecla the Virgin (Sepr. 23) in the year of our Lord 1453, on whose souls may God be merciful. Amen.

This account receives corroboration to some extent from another source. The Rev. Charles Boutell, in his work on "Monumental Brasses," gives a written description, as also an engraving of the tomb in question. He says that the height of the effigy in the original was three feet. The double canopy is entirely destroyed, as also the greater part of the border legend.

In the absence of the document recording the inquisition post mortem, this must now be regarded as conclusive testimony as to the date of his death.

Sir Robert was succeeded by his son William, who, in the year 1442, married Matilda, daughter of John Dutton, of Dutton, Esquire, and had issue, George, son and heir, and also other sons and daughters. He died on April 6th, 1477, leaving certain lands in trust to provide a chaplain to pray for the health of his soul and that of his ancestors and

descendants, in a Chantry Chapel which he desired to be built in Bowdon Church for that purpose: this was afterwards built, and was said from its spaciousness "to be a faire Chappelle." In his inquisition post mortem, or inquest after death, which was taken at "Knottesford," before Thomas Wolton, Escheator, and a local jury, it is stated that he died seised of certain lands, and that he had conceded to him lands in Altryncham, &c. His wife, Matilda, married for her second husband Sir William Brereton, Knight.

George Booth, Esquire, was 32 years of age when he was declared his father's heir. He married Catherine, daughter and heiress of Robert de Montfort, lord of Bescote, Staffordshire. It has been stated that his illustrious father-in-law was descended from Charlemagne, Emperor of the Romans, and David, King of Scotland, and that he was heir by his great grandmother to the ancient family of Clinton, of Colchester. By this marriage large estates were brought to the family. By her he had issue two sons and three daughters. He died the Sunday before the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, March 25th, 1484. In his will he desired that his body should be buried "in the new Chapel of St. Mary of Bawdon." Katherine, who survived her husband, re-married. She died on the 7th December, 1498.

At the time of his father's death, William, the next heir, was 10 years of age. On attaining his majority in 1494, the necessary proof of age was made. In about four years afterwards he was knighted. He was twice married, his first wife being Margaret, daughter and co-heiress of Sir Thomas Ashton, of Ashton-under-Lyne; by her he had two sons, the heir being named George. The manor of Ashton-under-Lyne and other large inheritances in Lancashire passed by this marriage into the Booth family. His second wife was Ellen, the daughter of Sir John Montgomery, of Throwley, Staffordshire, and by her he had issue seven sons and daughters. In one of the windows of Wilmslow Church there was formerly heraldic stained glass, representing Sir William Booth, wearing a tabard

of arms, and kneeling with six sons behind him, and his wife Ellen, also kneeling, with five daughters behind her. There was an inscription in Latin, desiring prayers for the souls of Sir William, and Ellen his wife, and for the souls of their children, who caused a window to be made in the year 1526.

The inquest after death, taken at Altrincham, before Sir Ralph Egerton, Knight, November 30th, 1519, recites the lands he was possessed of and that he died the Wednesday before the Feast of St. Martin the Bishop (November 11), last past (1519), and that George Bothe was son and next heir, and of the age of 29 years.

George, the fifth owner of Dunham, married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Thomas Boteler or Butler, of Bewsey, the scene of a tragedy the remembrance of which is preserved by tradition, when a Butler was ruthlessly murdered by a relative. By her he was blessed with several "olive branches"; and one of his daughters, Ellen, was married to John Carrington, of Carrington, Esquire; and another, Dorothy, to Robert Tatton, of Wythenshawe, Esquire. He died on the 25th October, 1531, his eldest son, George, being then 15 years of age. In his will he states—

I, George Bothe, of Donnham Massie, Esquire, &c., bequeath my body to be buried in Jhesus Chappell at Bowdon church, among myn ancestors. Alsoe, I give to ye prior of Birkenhed my best horse to praye for me; also at Birkenhed aforesayd ten shillings to say a trentall of masses for my soule; also I give to ye prior and ye freires at Warington ten shillings to say a trentall of masses for my soule. Item to ye same prior of Warington towards ye gildying of our Ladie iij^s iiij^d (3s. 4d.) Also I will that my best gown of velvet and my best dublet shall be made in two vestiments, and ye one of ye sayd vestements to be given to ye said chappell of Jhesus at Bowdon church, and ye other vestement to remene in ye chappell of Dunnham for ever. Also I give unto George Bothe, my son and heire apparent, my cheine of gold and my signet of gold as heire lomes.

Also it is my will that my chaplen, Sir John Percivall, or some other discrete prist, shall say masse, praye, and do devyn service for my soule and myn ancestors and all Xten (Christian) souls by ye space of vij (7) yeres nexte after my decease, and he to have for his salarie yerely iij^l xiiij^s iiij^d (£3 13s. 4d.) And whereas I by my dede indented beryng date ye xviiijth day of Julie ye xxiiij yere of Kyng Henre ye viijth have infeoffed my brother in law John Massie of Podington esquire, John Carryngton of Carryngton esquire, William

Mayre of Meyre esquire, Richard Legh of High Legh esquire &c. in my manor of Dunham Massie and in all my messuages, lands, tenements, rents and services in Dunham Massie, Stayley, Bolyn, Deyn Roe, Stiall and Wilmeslowe, in trust &c. as by the same dede indented more pleny doth appear.

Also I bequeth for ye makyng of ye side ile of ye Church of Bowdon at such time as it shall be taken down five marks of money.

His son George, who succeeded him, also contracted an early marriage, having at the age of 16 espoused Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Edmund Trafford, of Trafford, Lancashire, by whom he had issue William, son and heir, and three daughters. He was one of the gentlemen who received a letter from the Queen (Jane Seymour) dispersing the joyful news through the kingdom of the birth of Edward VI. in 1537.

The letter was in these words:—

By the Quene.

Trusty and wel-biloved, we grete youe well. And for asmuche as by the inestimable goodness and grace of Almighty God, we be delivered and brought in childbed of a Prince, conceyved in most lawful matrimonic between my Lord the King's Majestye and us, doubting not but that for the love and affection which ye beare unto us, and to the commyn wealthe [common wealthe] of this realme, the knowledge thereof shuld be joyeous and glad tydings unto youe, we have thought good to certiffie to you of the same. To thintent [the intent] ye might not only rendre unto God condigne thanks and praise for soo gret a benefit, but also pray for the long continuance and preservation of the same here in this lief, to the honor of God, joye and pleasor of my lord the king, and us, and the universall weale, quiet and tranquillity of this hole realm. Gevyn under our signet, at my Lord's manor of Hampton cort, the xii day of October, [1537.]

To our trusty and welbiloved

GEORGE BOTH, ESQ.

He died in 1543, aged 28 years. His widow Elizabeth survived him and was twice re-married, firstly, to James Done, of Utkinton, and secondly to Thomas Fitton, of Siddington. He appears to have made Wilmslow his place of residence, and in his will he desired to be buried there. His raised altar tomb, bearing his arms and initials, with those of his wife, remained in the Booth Chapel for a long period, but was destroyed at the restoration of the church in 1863.

His son and heir, William Booth, Esquire, was but three years of age on succeeding to his father's ample estates in 1546, and was ward to Henry VIII. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Warburton, of Arley, and had a family of seven sons and six daughters. One of his sons, Robert, distinguished himself as a soldier in Holland. In 1571 he was made Sheriff of Chester, and seven years afterwards had the honour of knighthood conferred upon him by the virgin Queen. He died on the 28th November, 1579, and was buried at Bowdon on December 8th following, so that he does not appear to have long survived the honours bestowed upon him. His will is a most interesting one. He bequeaths to his wife "the chain of gold," which he last brought with him from London, weighing about xxx li., another small chain, a carcanet of gold, one pair of bracelets of gold, two suits of borders of gold, one single border of gold, one tablet of gold, with all the rings she was accustomed to wear, and certain small buttons of gold, enamelled black and white, three little gilt bowls, with his third salt cellar, and all the husbandry stuff at Stayley Hall. To his son George (his heir) he leaves all the rest of his plate (reserving one dozen of spoons "of the worser sort," which he gave to his wife), his best chain of gold with his signet, and all his apparel, with all his gold buttons except those before given to his wife. "To William Duncalf, my cast of ffawcons (falcons), my baie trotting nagge and my setting spaniells." To his well-beloved mother "my sealinge ring, usuallie wore on my little finger;" to his brother-in-law, Davenport, all his hounds; to his cousin, William Tatton, George Brereton (Ashley), and Edmund Joddrell, all his fighting cocks and hens; to his sisters Davenport, Chauntrell, and Done, each a gold ring; and to his brother-in-law, Mr. John Done, his best baie nagge and his pied horse, then at Stayley Hall; to his daughter-in-law, Jane Bothe (married to his son George, then a minor), a black ambling nag that was Mr. Carrington's, and also a gold

brooch; to his brother-in-law Mr. Peter Warburton, his best gray nag that he himself was accustomed to ride upon, and also his lute; to his brother-in-law, Mr. George Warburton, a young coal-black nag; to Mr. Vicar, of Rochdale, *iiij* ^{li.}; to William Leigh, his long black cloak; to George Holme, his best pair of virginalls, &c.

His wife, dame Elizabeth, survived him for the long period of 49 years, and appears to have distinguished herself by her widely diffused charity. In 1620 she granted to the Mayor and citizens of Chester the sum of £400 upon trust for ever, the interest of which at five per cent. per annum, is to be annually paid out by them in certain sums, £5 of which is handed over to the overseers of Bowdon parish, amongst others, to be expended in weekly instalments in purchasing loaves of bread to be distributed weekly, on every Sunday, for ever, immediately after morning prayer in the Parish Church, to 24 poor aged people. It is divided over several parishes, and the distribution continues to be made.

George Booth, the second surviving son of the preceding, lived in those critical times when the Protestantism of this country first rested on a firm foundation; when, as one writer has eloquently put it, Englishmen performed those brilliant and glorious naval exploits, especially the destruction of the Spanish Armada, which are unsurpassed in our naval annals; when the majesty of English prose was formed by the hand of Hooker; when the harmony of English verse flowed from the lips of Spenser; when the drama, the surest proof of advanced civilization, had its first beginnings, and was perfected by the immortal genius of Shakespeare; while Bacon opened up a new method of philosophy, whose practical fruits we may be said even now to gather. Born on October 20th, 1566, Sir George was, on the death of his father, still a minor, and was made a ward of Queen Elizabeth. He was married in 1577 to Jane, daughter and heiress of John Carrington, he being 11 and his wife 15 years old at the time. She was an

orphan, her father having died only the month previously. She died without issue, and he obtained, by suit, possession of the land of Carrington. His second wife was Catherine, daughter of Sir Edmund Anderson, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, and by her he had a large family. He was, like all Englishmen of the period, seized with the contagion of patriotism, and contributed liberally, as also did his mother, towards the armaments which were raised for the defence of the kingdom. He was Sheriff of Chester for the first time in 1597, and he is referred to by the gifted, but eccentric Dr. Dee, the then Warden of Manchester College, who records in his diary that he received a "viset" from Sir George, who had no doubt just been knighted by the Queen, and that "after some few words of discourse," he agreed to stand by the arbitrement of Mr. Homfrey Dampport or Davenport, "a Cownsaylor of Gray's Inne," concerning two or three tenements in his occupying in Dunham Massey. He also mentions a second "viset" he had from Sir George, who "sayed he wold yeld to me what he wold not yeld to the bisshop nor any other," thereby showing that the worthy doctor stood high in his estimation. Sir George was created a baronet by patent bearing date May 22nd, 1611, in the ninth year of the reign of James I., being the tenth person who was created a baronet after the institution of that order. To entitle him to this honour he was amply possessed of all material requisites. Webb, in his "Itinerary," speaks of the beautiful seat of Dunham, at that time "never more graced than in the present possessor, upon whom, and his most worthy son, William Booth, Esquire, the world hath deservedly set great love and affection, himself bearing a chief sway in the great commands of regiments in the country, and his son already giving proof of that wisdom and moderation in government which have adorned his ancestors before him."

Of the eldest son William, mentioned above, it becomes necessary to speak more at length, as his opening acts, conspicuous for great ability, gave promise of a brilliant future. It was by his efforts that the family acquired posses-

sion of Warrington. The instructions which he gave to his stewards on that occasion are remarkable, as being probably the last instance of an appeal being made on the old principle of feudal benevolence to the tenantry for pecuniary aid. The sum which was to be paid for Warrington to Thomas Ireland, Esquire, of Bewsey, was £7,000, and in his instructions William wishes the tenantry to be called together, the amount to be paid signified to them, in order that by their assistance he and his father might be enabled to finish the purchase. It was an opportunity for the tenants to show their loves, such as might never probably occur again, and the "desire" was for three years' rent, which, if they would give, neither he nor his father would require any more rents or gifts of them for their two lives. Failing this, "they might provoke him to 'sharpe courses.'" Other landlords in Cheshire and Lancashire, he reminded them, had recently demanded three years' rent only for spending money which had been readily granted, and from the fact of the purchase being rumoured about the country if the tenantry forsook them in this extremity it would cause much disgrace. The purchase was afterwards completed. William did not live more than seven or eight years after this great event, but died on the 26th April, 1636, in the lifetime of his father. He had married Vere, second daughter and coheirress of Sir Thomas Egerton, eldest son of Lord Chancellor Egerton, and she bore him five sons and two daughters. Thomas, the eldest, died at Chester at the age of 12. Consequently, George Booth, the second son, succeeded to the baronetage on the death of his grandfather, who attained the ripe age of 86, October 24th, 1652.

This Sir George was conspicuous in the political theatre during the civil disturbances of the seventeenth century, and a sketch of his life and actions may well form the subject of a separate chapter.



CHAPTER VII.

Birth of Sir George Booth, first Lord Delamer—Description of Sir William Brereton—Indictment against Sir George; his part in attempting to pacify the county—Its failure—The siege of Nantwich—Spirited defence—Defeat of the Royalists—Sir George elected member for Cheshire; his exclusion by Colonel Pride's purge—Royalist attempts at a Restoration—Sir George's celebrated rising—The battle of Winnington—His betrayal and arrest; his committal to the Tower—Release and re-election—His improvements at Dunham—Description of the old mansion—His death.

AT the period of the birth of Sir George Booth, in 1622, those aspirations for constitutional liberty inherent in a commercial nation were beginning to animate the mass of the people, and find vent in the House of Commons. Those aspirations, repressed for the nonce by an untoward display of regal prerogative, only burst out with greater violence at a subsequent period. It is not to be wondered at that the Booth family ranged themselves on the side of the people, and from this fact the grandfather of Sir George was looked upon as the chief corner stone of the Puritan or Presbyterian party in Cheshire. The word Puritan must not, however, be misunderstood. There were Puritans of various political complexions in those days, and ranked deservedly in the first grade were those who were in favour of maintaining the highest principles of civil liberty, apart from religious doctrine—not those sour, narrow-minded bigots usually

associated with the word, and which are popularly thought to be such in the present day. The part which the Booths of Dunham Massey were called upon to take was one fraught with danger and perplexity, but one which few have succeeded in carrying out with greater honour, and this at a time, too, when England had never before showed so many instances of courage, ability, and virtue.

In illustration of this, there appears the following quaint notice of Sir George's grandfather in Ricraft's Worthies:—

And next to this religious and faithful Lesley, is Sir George Booth, the leader of Cheshire, who, when the troubles first began, stood up for his country, exciting his tenants so to do, promising them that had leases of their lands from him that if any such did suffer in person or goods he would make them recompense, and if any had lease by life and should be slaine, the life of his wife, child, or friend, should be put in his stead, a brave religious resolution, which, if all the gentry that had adhered to the Parliament had done the like, the warres could never have lasted so long. But this religious brave Booth thought it not enough so to doe, but took a place of command himself, and was very active and courageous for the preservation of his country, did many gallant exploits which I hope hereafter to mention at large, and at present give him this character—free, brave, godly brave Booth, the flower of Cheshire.

When the signal of open discord and civil strife was given in August, 1642, Sir George Booth, and Sir William Brereton, who was described by his enemies "as a notable man at a thanksgiving dinner, having long teeth and a prodigious stomach," were the only two Cheshire gentlemen mentioned by name in the first order for arming the county, and securing the magazines and equipments of the Royalists. The battle of Edge Hill took place in October of the same year, and soon after a great Session or Assizes was held at Chester, where bills of indictment were preferred before the Judges against Sir George Booth and hundreds of others for high treason in taking up arms and adhering to Parliament in the war; but this indictment they would not see fit to appear in person to answer. In the following year (1643), that internal peace was necessary for the good of the county was greatly felt; and in July a meeting of the principal persons in the county was held at Bunbury. They appeared to be pretty equally divided between King

and Parliament, and a treaty of pacification was then drawn up, which was signed by Sir George, on behalf of the Parliamentarians, and by Lord Kilmorey, Sir Harry Mainwaring and others, for the Royalists. This measure, however, appears to have been particularly distasteful to Parliament, who considered it of such importance as to immediately render it null and void, so far as they were concerned, by a special ordinance.

Military preparations were on this rupture pushed on vigorously by both sides, and Nantwich, which was esteemed an important garrison, was taken possession of by Parliament. The Royalists, whose head quarters were at Chester, made several unsuccessful attempts to get possession of the town, and in the severe siege by Lord Byron in January, 1644, Sir George acted a most prominent part. The privations endured by the garrison were extreme; and when the town was greatly harassed, Lord Byron sent a message asking him to yield the town into his hands, as they were in a low and desperate condition. To this Sir George sent a spirited refusal, in which he said that though they might be termed traitors and hypocrites, God in His own good time would show their unstained and unspotted loyalty towards His Majesty as well as their sincerity in all their privations.

There is a prophetic ring about these words. Sir George was evidently animated by the highest feelings of love of country; and events in the latter part of his life strongly confirm this. Other papers were also sent to the commander by various parties, amongst them one from Captain Sandford or Handford, a man "very lavish of ink and big words."

The suspense in which Sir George and his companions in arms were kept was soon to be removed by very unexpected means. The rising of the Weaver caused the Royalists to withdraw, and the "plat" which they had placed over the river was swept away. This was taken advantage of by the townsmen and soldiers; and on the same day the Royalists were defeated by the combined

forces of Sir William Brereton and General Fairfax, and they retreated to Chester.

In 1646 the celebrated fortress of Beeston was ordered to be dismantled, and Sir George was on the commission which sat at Warrington for this purpose. Two years afterwards, years pregnant with eventful history, Parliament was invaded, and the celebrated Pride's purge was applied. Sir George was one of those members excluded on that occasion; and at a subsequent meeting in Westminster Hall he headed a deputation to the House demanding equal liberty to sit. This, however, as is well known, was not granted.

In 1650 he was on the commission of the peace for the county, and instructions were afterwards issued when the Commonwealth was fully assured, directing the Sheriff, in conjunction with Peter Warburton, Sir George, and others, to meet on certain days to enquire into conspiracies and secret meetings, to disarm Papists or disaffected persons that had appeared such by their actions and words, or corresponded with Charles Stuart, son of the late King, and to "observe" strangers resorting to the County of Chester. By this tribunal ten persons were condemned, and five executed. He was again elected a member for the county in 1654, and it was this Parliament which showed such little sign of submission to Cromwell's commands that they were dismissed in January, 1655. In the succeeding Parliament of 1656, the county again honoured him with a renewal of well-merited confidence.

His views appeared for some time past to have been undergoing a vital change. The reasons which caused Sir George to become as active a partisan of the exiled Stuart as he had formerly been of Parliament are, no doubt, to be found in the disgust engendered by the high-handed proceedings of Cromwell, the position taken by the Independents, who now regarded their former superiors, the Presbyterians, with contempt, and his exclusion from the House by Pride's purge. The Royalists made many attempts at Restoration, and in some of them Sir George does not

appear to have been at all backward in asserting his changed principles. An old Royalist song of the period says:—

Young Mainwaring fell by the side of hys sire,
Stout Booth was revenged for him there;
For the foe left his grim trunkless head in the myre,
By the sword of old Dunham's young heir.

The union between the Presbyterians and the Royalists gave additional impetus to the cause in which Sir George was embarked. In July, 1659, Sir George proceeded to Manchester, and after holding a conference with the Presbyterians and the Cavaliers returned to Warrington and fixed a rising for the 1st of August. Sir George also entered into correspondence with the Earl of Derby and Lord Kilmorey, and such of the gentry of Lancashire and Cheshire as desired to assist in the deliberations for restoring the monarchy were allowed to do so. These plans were, however, revealed to the prevailing powers, and the risings in other counties were suppressed. That of Sir George was only destined for a feeble continuance. A few of his followers in their jubilation plundered some of the houses of the Cromwellians; but this action, on their part, was strongly condemned by Sir George. As showing the great affection still felt for him by many of his old acquaintances, one of those who had suffered from the exuberant handling of his followers, a relative of President Bradshaw, wrote, warning him that all the other counties in England were quiet but Cheshire. Still he persisted in his enterprise, notwithstanding that he complained that he had been falsely deserted by a large number of the "best in England" who had promised him assistance.

Pushing on to Chester, which city he took, though the Castle held out, he and his forces rendezvoused at Rowton Heath. An old tract of the period says that Sir George invited the gentry of those parts to meet him, when he declared "he was for a free parliament and *a single person*, which proved effectual with the malecontented party, and divers sparks appearing in this great flame." It appears they had above 3,000 horse and foot, well mounted and armed,

“with drums beating, and colours flying, and trumpets sounding;” and after they were drawn up on the Heath, Col. Brooke and Col. Blackburne divided the horse and foot into several bodies, “placing them in sundry warlike figures and postures, after which Sir George made a speech showing the grounds and reasons of their present engagements and undertakings.”

This speech or declaration had great effect in rousing the drooping spirits of his party. Not being able to get possession of the Castle, he set off with a portion of his forces in the direction of York; but the rapid approach of Lambert from Ireland compelled him to return to his former position at Chester, Clarendon remarking that Sir George went to meet him with his natural impetuosity.

His misfortunes now appeared to be at their height. On the 19th August the decisive battle of Winnington was fought, resulting in the complete defeat of Sir George's troops, and his own ultimate capture. The troops of the Royalists were quartered at Northwich, while Lambert's were at Weaverham. The two armies, on this eventful day, came into action amongst the enclosures at Hartford. The horse were unable to act, and the Royalists “retired uninjured from hedge to hedge, and passed the bridge without any other loss,” says Lambert, “than that of reputation, and discouragement in meeting with those whom they found of equal courage, but engaged in a better (?) cause.” The Royalists now endeavoured to secure the bridge, which would have given them a great advantage, seeing that at this point the river was unfordable, the bridge narrow, and flanked with a strong ditch at the far end, and a high hill which no horse could pass otherwise than along the side in a narrow path. Those who are familiar with the present magnificent picturesque road which approaches Winnington Bridge will be fully able to realize the disadvantages our ancestors stood at in the way of locomotion, compared with our steam and telegraphic times.

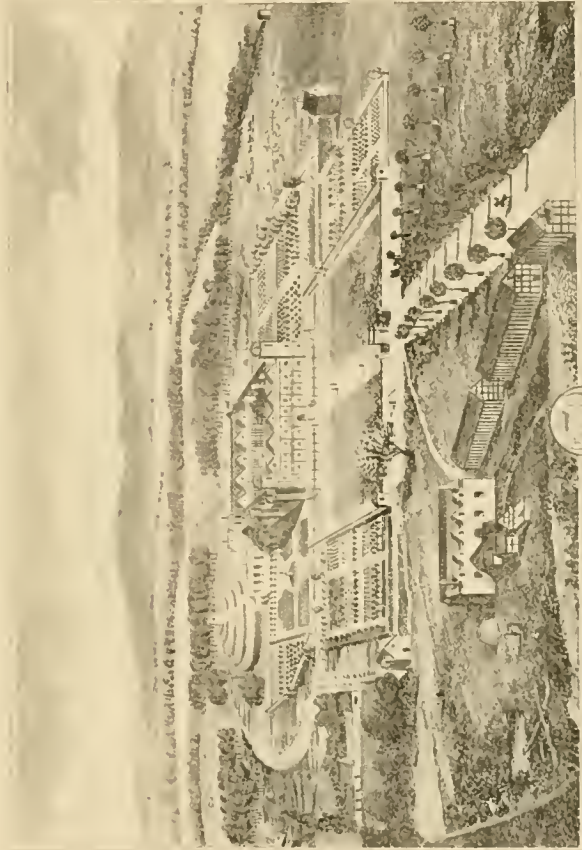
This coign of vantage was not long held by the flagging Royalists. "After three good volleys," says Lambert, "the horse passing the bridge together with the foot, charged the horse of the Royalists, which advanced to cover the retreat." Sir George Booth's infantry retired in good order, following their colours up the hill, and protected by the gallantry of the cavalry. Lambert gives due praise and honour to the English valour of his adversaries, and states that within a quarter of a mile the Royalists halted to give battle, but were a second time routed, although disputing "the place very gallantly, both parties showing themselves like Englishmen." Such is the description of the battle of Winnington, taken from an old tract of the period; and contemporary historians agree in describing it as very decisive. Sir George escaped with great difficulty, and disguising himself as a gentlewoman, left the scene of action. He was, however, betrayed, having acted his part very badly; and was taken at Newport Pagnell, in Buckinghamshire, where he was riding on a pillion in the disguise mentioned. He was committed to the Tower. The proceedings of this period awakened national comment, and several tracts were published relative thereto. One of them, in particular, purports to give a dialogue which occurred in the Tower between Sir George and an imaginary individual named Sir John Presbyter, in the course of which Sir George expresses his great repentance at having been connected with the parsons in any way, and uses strong language concerning them.

His confinement in the Tower was not of long duration, General Monk having declared for a full and free Parliament in which the nation would be thoroughly represented, the excluded members and Sir George were released from the sequestration under which they had laboured. In 1660, the Long Parliament was dissolved; and what was called the Convention Parliament, from its not being regularly summoned, was held. Of this Parliament Sir George was elected a member, and the commission for

the Restoration having been made, and carried amidst general acclamation, he had the happiness of being the first of the twelve members elected to carry to King Charles the Second the answer of the House to His Majesty's celebrated declaration of Breda.

Honours were now showered upon Sir George. In the same year, the sum of £20,000 was on the point of being voted to him as a reward for his services and great sufferings, when he in his place in the House requested, with a high-souled patriotism, which only those acquainted with the manners of the time can fully appreciate, that it should not be more than half that amount; which was accordingly granted by the Commons on August 2nd, and confirmed by the Lords the day following. As a reward from the Crown, he was ennobled by the title of Baron Delamer, of Dunham Massey, the patent bearing date April 20th, 1661, and at the same time he had the liberty to propose six gentlemen to receive the honour of Knighthood, and two others for the dignity of Baronet.

During his eventful life, Sir George appears to have found ample time to devote to domestic matters. According to one old writer he greatly improved the Manor house of Dunham Massey by building the north side thereof answerable to the opposite part, surrounded it with "a large outward court, with brick wall and a faire gate of stone," and made a domestic chapel on the south side of the house. It was then, as shown on the illustration, what Dr. Ormerod has described as "a large quadrangular pile, with gables within and without. The gables within the court were indented and scalloped, and large transome windows introduced. The exterior front appears to have been finished at a later period, with pilasters and ornaments in imitation of the Italian style of architecture, and large octagonal turrets were placed at the corners. It stood within gardens laid out in the stiff taste of the time, and surrounded by an ample moat, in one angle of which is drawn a large circular mound, with a summer house on the top of it, supposed to be the site of the Norman keep tower." The noble avenue of



Durham Fall, N.C.



beeches was in its swaddling clothes, so to speak, being surrounded with large wooden guards, while the landscape is destitute of that sylvan beauty which is the admiration, and justly so, of modern times. He was twice married; firstly, to Catherine, the daughter of Theophilus Fiennes, Earl of Lincoln, who died in childbirth, leaving an only daughter, Vere Booth; and secondly, to Elizabeth, daughter of Henry Grey, Earl of Stamford, by whom he had seven sons and six daughters, and who died in 1690 at Oldfield Hall.

Sir George died August 10th, 1684, and was buried at Bowdon on the 9th September with great solemnity; on which occasion Mr. Cawdrey, a Presbyterian minister, preached. The Latin inscription to his memory was written by William Andrews, who had been for thirty years his faithful domestic servant, and whose remains were deposited, at his own request, in the same tomb as his master. Clarendon describes Sir George as being of one of the best fortunes and interests in Cheshire, then said to be the "seed plot of gentilitie;" but his deeds, more than all, entitle his memory to be held in veneration and esteem by his fellow-countrymen.





CHAPTER VIII.

The second Lord Delamer; his popularity; his advocacy of the people's rights—Court jealousy—His committal to the Tower on three occasions; his remarkable trial at Westminster Hall; his eloquent defence and justification; his retirement to his seat in Cheshire; his support of the Prince of Orange; his subsequent honourable career and death.

HENRY, Lord Delamer, second son and heir of the preceding nobleman, was born on the 13th January 1651, and succeeded to the peerage on the death of his father. He had been elected member of parliament for the County during the father's lifetime, and was appointed to the high office of Custos Rotulorum in 1673. He married Mary, daughter and sole heiress of Sir James Langham, Bart., of Cotters Brook, Northamptonshire. She died in 1690-1, leaving him with four sons and two daughters. He was distinguished at an early period of his career by his ardent advocacy of those liberties which were overshadowed and threatened with extinction by the curse of popery. He was particularly anxious for the passing of the famous bill of exclusion, for which Lord Russell, on the morning of his execution, sent him a kindly message of respect and thanks.

He also made great exertions for securing the purity of Parliaments; in instituting inquiries into the corruption of the judges, and in recommending the punishment of such

as might be guilty. For his part in promoting the Bill of Exclusion he incurred the animosity of the Duke of York, and the Duke's influence on the facile King was no doubt increased by the fact of the sympathy of this nobleman with the Duke of Monmouth. In fact, his name had been returned by the Court spies as one of the Cheshire gentlemen who attended Monmouth when he visited Dunham in 1682. He was deposed from his public positions of trust, and just before the death of Charles II. committed a prisoner to the Tower. He was released, after an incarceration of several months, without any formal accusation being made against him. Soon after the accession of the Duke of York, as King James II., to the throne, he was committed to the Tower under somewhat similar circumstances, but was released on bail. This system of petty persecution was still further carried out, and a third time he was committed. It was the last straw which broke the camel's back. The Lords, anxious for the consolidation of those ancient safeguards which had received such severe shocks in previous reigns, interfered, on his remonstrance, or rather petition, by a demand from the Sovereign why he was absent from his attendance in the House. Newcome, in his diary, speaks of the unexpected prorogations of Parliament which took place at this period, and tremblingly awaited the issue of these things, if possible, to rescue Lord Delamer. Matters were thus brought to a crisis, and he was put on his trial on a charge of high treason, "the violent and inhuman" Jefferies being appointed Judge. Fortunately, he had the right of being tried by a jury of his peers, and although Parliament was then existing by prorogation, he was not tried by the whole House, but by 27 specially summoned for that purpose.

This remarkable trial took place in Westminster Hall, on January 14th, 1685, his Lordship the previous day having only completed his 34th year. The formalities of the opening of the Court were gone through with much solemnity. Sir Edward Lutwich, one of His Majesty's Serjeants-at-law, and Chief Justice, put in his writ and

return, which were read *in hæc verba*, and the Lieutenant of the Tower delivered in his precept, and also brought his prisoner to the bar.

The following Peers then answered to their names, each making a reverence to the Lord High Steward:—Laurence, Earl of Rochester, Lord High Treasurer of England; Robert, Earl of Sunderland, Lord President of His Majesty's Privy Council; Henry, Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshal of England; Charles, Duke of Somerset; Henry, Duke of Grafton; Henry, Duke of Beaufort, Lord President of Wales; John, Earl of Mulgrave, Lord Chamberlain of His Majesty's Household; Aubrey, Earl of Oxford; Charles, Earl of Shrewsbury; Theophilus, Earl of Huntingdon; Thomas, Earl of Pembroke; John, Earl of Bridgewater; Henry, Earl of Peterborough; Robert, Earl of Scarsdale; William, Earl of Craven; Lewis, Earl of Faversham; George, Earl of Berkeley; Daniel, Earl of Nottingham; Thomas, Earl of Plymouth; Thomas, Viscount Falconberge; Francis, Viscount Newport, Treasurer of His Majesty's Household; Robert, Lord Ferrars; Vere Essex, Lord Cromwell; William, Lord Maynard, Comptroller of His Majesty's Household; George, Lord Dartmouth, Master General of His Majesty's Ordnance; Sidney, Lord Godolphin; John, Lord Churchill.

Three of the Peers called, viz., James, Duke of Ormond, Lord Steward of His Majesty's Household; Christopher, Duke of Albemarle; and Richard, Earl of Burlington, did not answer to their names.

Then the Lord High Steward addressed himself to the Lord Delamer, the prisoner at the bar, in this manner: My Lord Delamer, the King being acquainted that you stand accused of high treason, not by common report or hearsay, but by a bill of indictment found against you by gentlemen of great quality and known integrity within the County Palatine of Chester, the place of your residence, has thought it necessary, in tenderness to you, as well as justice to himself, to order you a speedy trial. My Lord, if you know yourself innocent, in the name of God do not despond, for you may be assured of fair and patient hearing, and in proper time free liberty to make your full defence; and I am sure you cannot but be well convinced that my noble lords that are here your peers to try you will be as desirous and ready to acquit you, if you appear to be innocent, as they will to convict you if you be guilty; but, my Lord, if you are conscious to yourself that you are guilty of this heinous crime, give glory to God and make amends to His vicegerent, the King, by a plain and full discovery of your guilt, and do not by any obstinate persisting in the denial of it provoke the just indignation of your Prince, who has made it appear to the world that his inclinations are rather to show mercy than to inflict punishment. My Lord, attend with patience and hear the bill of indictment which has been found against you read. Read the bill of indictment to my Lord.

Clerk of Court.—Henry, Baron of Delamer, hold up thy hand.

Lord Delamer.—My Lord, I humbly beg your Grace would please to answer me one question, whether a peer of England be obliged by the laws of this land to hold his hand up at the bar as a commoner must do; and I ask your Grace the rather, because in my Lord Stafford's case it was allowed to be a privilege of the peers not to hold up their hands.

Lord High Steward.—My Lords, this being a matter of the privilege of the peerage, it is not fit for me to determine it one way or the other; but I think I may acquaint your lordships that in point of law, if you are satisfied this is the person indicted the holding or not holding up of the hand is but a formality that does not signify much either way.

Lord Delamer.—I humbly pray your Grace's direction in one thing farther; whether I must address myself to your Grace when I would speak, or to your Grace with the rest of these noble lords, my peers.

Lord High Steward.—You must direct what you have to say to me, my Lord.

Lord Delamer.—I beg your Grace would please to satisfy me whether your Grace be one of my judges in concurrence with the rest of the Lords.

Lord High Steward.—No, my Lord, I am Judge of the Court, but none of your triers. Go on!

The Clerk of Court then read a formidable indictment to the effect that Henry, Baron Delamer, stood indicted in the County Palatine of Chester, by the name of Henry, Baron of De la Mer of Mere, in the City and County of Chester, for that he, as a false traitor against the most illustrious and most excellent Prince James the Second, by the grace of God, of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, King; his natural lord, not having the fear of God in his heart, nor weighing the duty of his allegiance, but being moved and seduced by the instigation of the devil, the cordial love and true duty and natural obedience which a true and faithful subject of our said Lord the King ought of right to bear; did plot against the tranquillity of the kingdom, &c., &c.

At the request of his Lordship, the indictment was read a second time, whereupon he raised the point that his cause was one which should be wholly determined in the House of Peers, but not elsewhere, as in cases formerly brought; and that as he could not be tried during the continuance of Parliament, except in the said House of Peers, he pleaded that he was not bound to make any further answer. He disclaimed any distrust of their Lordships, and added, "I cannot hope to stand before any more just or noble, nor can I wish to stand before any others; but you will pardon me if I insist upon it, because I apprehend it a right and a privilege due to the peerage of England, which as it is against the duty of every peer to betray or forego, so it is not in the power of anyone or more to waive it or give it up without the consent of the whole body of peers, every one of them being equally interested."

Attorney-General Sawyer urged that there was very little in the plea under the circumstances, whereupon Lord Delamer asked to have counsel to put his plea into form and argue it.

Judge Jefferies ruled against him, and after some further legal wrangling on the question of privilege, he was formally charged and pleaded "not guilty," agreeing at the same time to be tried by "God and his peers."

The Serjeant-at-Arms having made proclamation, the Judge gave his charge to the Peers. The indictment was opened by Sir Thomas Jenner, one of His Majesty's Serjeants-at-law and Recorder of the City of London.

The Attorney-General, in the course a long speech, explained that the prisoner stood indicted for conspiring the death of His Majesty, and in order thereunto to raise rebellion in the Kingdom. Cheshire was one of the stages

where the rebellion was principally to be acted, that preparatory to it great riotous assemblies and tumultuous gatherings were set on foot by the conspirators, and that the late Duke of Monmouth looked upon Cheshire as one of his chief supports, and my Lord Delamer as his principal assistant there.

Lord Howard of Eskrigge was first called, but he gave no evidence concerning the prisoner. Lord Grey, who said he had been subpoenaed by both sides, also did not know anything of his own knowledge against him, but said that Lord Delamer was to be applied to in connection with Monmouth's rising. This was confirmed by Nathaniel Wade, Richard Goodenough, Jones, and Story. Jones was sent to give notice to Lord Delamer (amongst other persons) of this rising, the latter stating that he heard the Duke of Monmouth say that his great dependence was upon Lord Delamer and his friends in Cheshire; but that he was afraid he had failed him or betrayed him, or some such word, and that he could have been supplied otherwise but placed his dependency upon them. Vaux and Edlin swore that Lord Delamer left town under the name of Brown, and that he went into Cheshire to see a sick child. Tracey, Paunceford, and Thomas Babington deposed to the fact that Lord Delamer was constantly known as Brown in that business by his party. One of these, however, admitted in cross-examination there was "a discourse" about a Mr. Vermuyden going in the name of Brown. Hope was called to prove the frequent journeys into Cheshire to stir up the people there, and that Lord Delamer had said "he feared there would be many bloody noses before the business was at an end."

The most formidable witness, and one on whom the prosecution relied, was Thomas Saxon, a tradesman of Middlewich, who sought to persuade the Jury that he had been specially sent for to the house of Lord Delamer, at Mere (Dunham); and in the presence of two or three gentlemen whom he named, the question of Monmouth's rebellion was discussed, and Saxon was selected, he being acquainted with the common people, to spread insurrection amongst them. He equivocated grossly in his evidence, and was asked by the noble prisoner the name of the messenger who came for him; but this he said he did not know.

As a great deal had been said, Lord Delamer asked for an adjournment, but this the Judge would not permit. He then proceeded with his defence, and in the course of an eloquent address said he could with great comfort and satisfaction say that those crimes wherewith he was charged were not only strangers to his thoughts, but also to what had been his constant principle and practice. He also said that few had more heartily conformed to the practices of the Church, and urged, (and it must be admitted with some truth) that there was little or no legal evidence affecting him, and ridiculed the idea that the particulars of such an important adventure should be communicated by him to a perfect stranger. He called several witnesses to speak to the ill-repute of Saxon. A witness named Hall said that Saxon had forged a note to obtain money from him.

The Lord High Steward acknowledged that the objection carried a great deal of weight, and if fully made out would prove him to be "a very ill man indeed."

Francis Ling said that Saxon had received money in the name of Mrs. Wilbraham, and Richard Shaw also said he had been guilty of receiving money which

was not his own. Peter Hough said he should have given him a bond for £7, but by trusting him he found it was only made out for £6. Edward Wilkinson had been more illused still. He said Saxon hired a horse from him for three days at twelvepence a day, but he had neither seen horse nor money since Saxon took it.

William Wright said he had had some dealings with him, and never found him to perfect his word in anything. He added, "I met him one evening, after evening prayer, and said to him, Thomas Saxon, if I cared no more for keeping my word than thou dost, it were no matter if I were hanged, for to be sure if thy mouth open thy tongue lyes; and he turned away from me and would not answer me a word; and since that he owed me some money, and when I asked him for it he told me if I did trouble him for money it should be worse for me, whereof all the town knows as well as I that I cannot set him forth in words as bad as he is."

Lord Delamer called several other witnesses in this way, and also to prove that he was not at Mere at the time deposed to by witnesses for the prosecution.

Mr. John Edmonds, sworn, said: On the 5th of May my Lord Delamer did me the honour to come to my house, and he stayed there a little while and desired me to be a witness of his taking possession upon a lease of my Lord Bishop of Chester, and we went into the house which is next to mine, and there he took possession.

The Lord High Steward.—Where is your house?

Mr. Edmonds.—At Boden, in Cheshire.

Mr. Henry was called and sworn.

Lord Delamer.—Pray, will you give his Grace and my Lords an account whether you were not an attorney and delivered me possession upon the lease of my Lord Bishop of Chester?

Mr. Henry.—My Lord, I was attorney by appointment, and the 5th May last I delivered possession to my Lord Delamer at one of the most remarkable places of the land that belonged to that lease of the Bishop.

Lord Delamer hoped that this was a satisfactory reason for his going down at the time, the Bishop being ill, and the lease worth £6,000 or £7,000. The next occasion he had to speak to was the 27th May. He said, "I had taken up the resolution before to go and see my child which was not well, but I had not taken my journey so soon nor with such privacy but that I had notice that there was a warrant out to apprehend me, and knowing the inconvenience of lying in prison I was very willing to keep as long out of custody as I could and therefore I went out of the way and under a borrowed name."

At his request his Lordship's mother, who sat by him at the bar during the trial was examined. She said that this child of his was more than ordinarily "pretious" (precious) to him in regard it was born to him at that time "when he was an innocent honest man (as he was then a prisoner in the Tower for high treason) above two years ago, and she thought it had increased his affection to that child that God had given to him when he was in that affliction." While he was at Dunham, her daughter sent word that it had pleased God to visit his eldest son in London with a grievous distemper, and thereupon he made all the haste he could back.

Witnesses were called to prove that persons said by Saxon to have been present on a given date were in London at the time, and, altogether, conclusive evidence was forthcoming to show that his testimony was not at all of a reliable character. Amongst these witnesses were two brothers of the noble prisoner. In the course of some further remarks he denied that he ever wrote or sent any message, or had had any correspondence for three years past with the Duke of Monmouth. He pointed out circumstances in the evidence for the prosecution not borne out by facts, and concluded by reminding their Lordships that the eyes of the nation were upon their proceedings that day. "Your Lordships are now judging the cause of every man in England that shall happen to come under like circumstances with myself hereafter: for accordingly as you judge me now, just so will inferior courts be directed to give their judgments in like cases in time to come. Your Lordships know very well that blood once spilled can never be gathered up again, and therefore, unless the case be very clear against me, you will not, I am sure, hazard the shedding of my blood upon doubtful evidence. God Almighty is a God of mercy and equity. Our law, the law of England, is a law of equity and mercy, and both God and the law require from your Lordships tenderness in all cases of life and death; and if it should be indifferent or doubtful to your Lordships (which upon proofs that I have made I cannot believe it can be) whether I am innocent or guilty, both God and the law require you to acquit me. My Lords, I leave myself, my case, and the consequences of it with your Lordships, and I pray the All-wise, the Almighty God, to direct you in your determination."

No wonder after such an eloquent appeal, Lord Churchill, the spokesman of the Jury, should declare upon his honour, with uncovered head, and hand upon his breast, that the noble prisoner was not guilty. Lord Delamer retired to his seat at Dunham, and abstained for the time being from any active participation in public affairs. The proceedings of a papistical Court were soon, however, to call him from his voluntary seclusion. Scarcely three years passed away ere the Prince of Orange, afterwards William III., "of glorious and immortal memory," arrived in England. Lord Delamer then expressed himself as feeling that the deliverance of the nation must be worked by force or miracle, and that as it would be presumption to expect the latter, he very wisely levied a large force of men. On the 16th December, 1688, he took up arms in Cheshire. He convoked his tenants, called upon them to stand by him, and promised that if they fell in the cause their leases should be renewed to their children, and exhorted everyone who had

a good horse either to take field, or to provide a substitute. He appeared at Manchester with 50 men armed and mounted, and his force had trebled before he reached Bowdon Downs. So says Macaulay. He soon afterwards joined the Prince of Orange, and his forces. On the arrival of the Prince at Windsor, he despatched Lord Delamer, the Marquis of Halifax, and the Earl of Shrewsbury, with a message to King James, commanding him to quit the Palace. His Majesty was in bed at the time of their arrival, it being one o'clock in the morning, but they were introduced to him by the Earl of Middleton, then Secretary of State. This has been justly described as a remarkable instance of the vicissitudes of fortune. By one writer it is spoken of as an instance of Divine retribution. Here was a subject whom he had seen arraigned, not three years before as a culprit at the bar, appearing now with an order, which would have the effect of virtually dethroning him. To his honour it is recorded that the generous conduct he displayed on that occasion made such an impression on the fallen Sovereign that after his retreat into France he said the Lord Delamer, whom he had illused, had treated him with much more respect than the other two Lords to whom he had been kind, and from whom he might better have expected it.

With this reign ended that great crisis in English history—the struggle between King and people; and the people, led by those whose patriotism was above reproach, triumphed.

Amongst the leaders was Lord Delamer, and as a result, he was now very fully rewarded. He was made a Privy Councillor in February, 1689, which office he held for life; in the following April he was made Chancellor and Under Treasurer of the Exchequer, and subsequently Lord-Lieutenant of the County of Chester, and Custos Rotulorum. In 1690, he was created Earl of Warrington, in acknowledgment of his peculiar services, and a pension of £2,000 per annum was settled upon him.

This was only paid for the first half-year, and the arrears are stated in a list of King William's debts, drawn up by Queen Anne. Many minor honours were also conferred upon him, amongst them the Mayoralty of the ancient City of Chester, in 1691.

His Lordship's works were published in the year 1694, being edited from his own MS., by J. Dela Heuze, tutor to his son, afterwards Earl of Warrington.

A review of his writings would absorb too much of our space. It may, therefore, be sufficient to record some of his sayings and opinions. His language, particularly against the Papists, as they were termed, is marked in some places by great extravagance and warmth of tone, perhaps permissible by the circumstances in which he had been placed. The country too was unsettled, and although not out of place then, it would sound oddly now to hear a justice of Chester haranguing the Grand Jury to give information of any plot, if they were acquainted with it, for dethroning the reigning monarch. Most of the charges take a strong political tinge, but in others are suggested a consideration of domestic matters. We are admitted by them to a peep at the manners and customs of that age. In one of his speeches, when Earl of Warrington, he encourages the magistrates to strictly inform themselves of such as offend in the matter of swearing, "the horrible prophanation of God's name," and give them the punishment which their offence deserved. He also harangues at length against the sin of drunkenness, that till then this vice was not grown to considerable size.

He was as a patriot proud of the Government of his country under William III., and praised it as beyond all others. He shows that while all manner of taxes and impositions are laid upon the people at the will and pleasure of the King, in England they could not be taxed but by their own consent in Parliament. Although the King had the sole power of making peace and war, "the sinews of war," meaning the money, were with the people, and the people were not bound to support every

war that the King might engage in; “for methinks
“it’s all the reason in the world that a man should be
“satisfied with the *cause* before he part with his money;
“and I think that man is very unworthy of honour to
“serve his country in Parliament who shall give away
“the people’s money for any other thing, but what shall
“be effectually for the *good* and *advantage* of the people
“and nation.” There are few who will not admit that
his Lordship’s words, spoken nearly 200 years ago, hold
good in the present day.

The prayers which his Lordship used in his family
bear the marks of close application, and breathe a truly
devotional and earnest spirit throughout. Although he
did not die “in a good old age, full of days,” he possessed
“both riches and honour.” His death took place in London
on January 2nd, 1693, on the same memorable day on
which eight years before his trial had been. His funeral
sermon was preached in Bowdon Parish church by the
Rev. Richard Wroe, Warden of Manchester Cathedral.
On his monument in the same Church is inscribed a
record of his life in brief, which is well worthy the
attentive perusal of all interested “in perpetuating the
remembrance of so much virtue till that great day come
wherein it shall be openly rewarded.” For in these words
concludes the epitaph which a reverent son inscribed to a
noble father.





CHAPTER IX.

The House of Dunham, continued—The Second Earl of Warrington; his character and literary attainments—The union of the House of Dunham with that of Stamford—The Honorable Booth Grey—"Domestic happiness, a family picture"—The revival of the lapsed titles of Baron Delamer and Earl of Warrington—Biography of the present Earl.

AFTER the great political crisis through which the house of Dunham had passed, it may easily be imagined that the quiet repose of a country gentleman's life would be most compatible with the feelings of the heir succeeding to its now consolidated honours. It is, therefore, to his many literary works, completed in periods of uninterrupted leisure, that we are most indebted for the character of George, the second Earl of Warrington. He was the second son of the first Lord Delamer, and was born on the second of May, 1675. He was married in 1702, to Mary, eldest daughter and co-heiress of John Oldbury, of London, merchant, by his second wife Mary, daughter and co-heiress of Thomas Bohun, Esq., of Dartmouth, and descended from the ancient Earls of Hereford. The issue of this marriage was an only daughter named Mary, who was born about the year 1703. His Lordship died August 2nd, 1758, and was laid in the tomb of his ancestors at Bowdon, having passed the allotted "span" of life by 13 years. Amongst his contributions to contemporary litera-

ture, was "Considerations on the Institution of Marriage;" a letter to the writer on "The present State of the Republic of Letters," in which he vindicated his father from some of the reflections cast upon him by Burnet in the "History of his Own Times," and which seem to have been copied more or less by the great historian, Macaulay. With his decease, the Earldom of Warrington became extinct, and the barony of Delamer descended to his first cousin, Nathaniel Booth, of Hampstead, Esquire.

An event had, however, occurred before this, which had marked an epoch in the history of this noble house. Mary, the only daughter and sole heiress to the estates of her father, had married in 1736, the Right Honorable Harry Grey, Earl of Stamford. This family, according to Collins, "has been the most ancient, the most widespread, and most illustrious in the English peerage, the house of Stamford being derived from the most illustrious branch of it." Lord Stamford was thus descended from the first Lord Grey of Groby, the grandfather of the first Earl of Stamford, who was distinguished in 1628 by his efforts in the ranks of the Parliamentarians, and who was nephew of the great Duke of Suffolk, the father of Lady Jane Grey. There are few who have not noticed the prominent part the Greys have played in history; and what schoolboy has not melted at the touching recital of the execution of the unfortunate lady, whose little attempt at Queendom was attended with such fatal results? He was thus placed at the head of the younger branch of the house of Tudor, whose claim to the throne of England rested rather on the despotic will of Henry VIII., than on the inherent right which belonged in failure of direct inheritance to the Scottish branch of the same Royal line. To this may be added the fact that the family, on both sides, is of Norman origin, and was first summoned to Parliament in 1446 in the person of Lord Ferrars of Groby, whose elder daughter-in-law, Elizabeth, became the wife of Edward IV.

Lord and Lady Stamford had a family of three sons and two daughters. The eldest, George Harry, succeeded

to the earldom; the second, Lady Mary, who assisted the Princess Augusta in supporting Queen Charlotte's train at her coronation in 1761, and who married, 24th February 1761, the Honourable George West, second son of the Earl Delawar, died March 1st, 1783. The third son, the Hon. Booth Grey, was born August 15th, 1740: he was admitted a nobleman of Queens' College, Cambridge. He was one of the Mayors of Altrincham, and was member for Leicester 1768-1774. He died on the 4th March, 1802. His Lordship died at Enville Hall, June 24th, 1768, and was succeeded by his eldest son, George Harry, the fifth Earl of Stamford, born October 1st, 1737.

In a curious work published about the latter end of 1700, entitled "Characteristic Strictures or Remarks," is a sketch of the family of this Earl. It is headed "Domestic happiness, a family picture," and proceeds: "What satisfaction must a sentimental artist experience when he has only one unhappy countenance to copy in so numerous a family, especially as the varied features which express felicity will free his performance from the imputation of sameness? The piece not only comprehends the parents and their posterity, but the brother and sister of the principal figure. The junior members of the family are of too tender an age to be distinguished by features that prognosticate either tempers or manners, except the eldest youth (Lord Grey) who is the very picture of his father, and in neither of whose features is there a fault. The father is a perfect example of integrity, filial affection, and tender husband; and the mother, from her prudent, virtuous and sweet tempered disposition, every way worthy of so honourable a mate. Two brothers make up the group (the Hon. Booth Grey and the Hon. John Grey). The elder on a distant view seems of a morose and sour temper; but when you examine the features more closely you are agreeably disappointed to find those of sullenness not only expand with freeness, but discover themselves to be the strongest signification of a solid

understanding. The younger is in every point of view a pleasant, lively, generous figure, that seems to give spirit to the whole society." This quaint picture is only a reflex of a certain school of criticism which obtained at that period. The "unhappy countenance" referred to is that of Lady Mary West, and is probably an allusion to her death, which would have taken place a short time previously. The fifth Earl was elected Knight of the Shire for the county of Stafford, 1761, and at the coronation of George III., was one of the six eldest sons of peers who supported the King's train. His lordship, on the 20th May, 1763, married Lady Henrietta Cavendish Bentinck, second daughter to William, the late Duke of Portland, and had issue four sons and six daughters. He was created Baron Delamer and Earl of Warrington, thus reviving the lapsed titles of his ancestors; and in addition to his other offices, was Lord Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum of the County of Chester. He died in 1819 at Dunham, and was buried at Bowdon. He was succeeded by his eldest son, George Harry Grey, Earl of Stamford and Warrington, born October 31st, 1765, married December 23rd, 1797, to Henrietta Charlotte Elizabeth Charteris, eldest daughter of Francis, Lord Elcho, and had issue two sons and three daughters. He died at Enville Hall, Staffordshire, April 27th, 1845, and was buried at Bowdon. George Harry, Lord Grey, his eldest son, died November, 1837, in the lifetime of his father.

We now come to the biography of the seventh and present Earl of Stamford. At his father's death he was only ten years of age, and he then succeeded to the Barony of Groby. In 1845, upon the death of his grandfather, he became the possessor of the princely inheritance he continues to enjoy, and the representative of one of the most distinguished families in the county. His lordship's education has differed in no respect from that of most gentlemen of his rank. He was educated at Eton and at Cambridge, with an interval between the public school and University life passed under the care of a private tutor of distinguished ability

and character, Dr. Augustus Short, then Vicar of Ravens-thorpe, in Northamptonshire, and subsequently Bishop of Adelaide. During those early years he was remarkable for his love of athletic exercises, and in cricket matches in the different counties in which he lived, and at Lord's, he was one of the fastest and most effective bowlers and hardest hitters amongst the gentlemen of England. His love of this truly national game has clung to him through life, and many of the celebrities of the cricketing world have had his patronage, and enjoyed his hospitality.

Lord Stamford's Cambridge career was a short one; for his grandfather dying, his prospects, which, as Lord Grey of Groby, pointed to a military opening in one of the household regiments, were suddenly changed, and he was thus early called upon to assume his present position. At this period (1845), he was still a minor, but he attained his majority, January 7th, 1848, and in the same year he graduated as M.A., of Trinity College. The coming of age was celebrated with every demonstration of joy on his lordship's estates.

As a British sportsman no name is more celebrated than that of Lord Stamford. In 1857 he undertook the Mastership of the Quorn hounds, and his establishment there was on a scale of great magnificence. He succeeded in bringing it to a state of efficiency never excelled before, which is saying a great deal for the first hunting county in England. In fact, it is said that Lord Stamford spoiled the Quornites for any other mastership. His lordship had in 1862 an establishment at Newmarket; and at this time he resided during the winter months at Bradgate Park, one of the most beautiful places in the Midland Counties, and specially noteworthy as being the birthplace of the unfortunate Lady Jane Grey. With the gun, his lordship has distinguished himself not only on his own moors, but also in Scotland.

Lord Stamford began his turf career about the end of 1859, and was for some time prominently connected with it; but of late years his interest in racing seems to have diminished.

In private life his lordship possesses a charm of manner and a courteousness of bearing which endears him to all with whom he is brought in contact. For some years he has not resided at Dunham Massey. He has on several occasions paid flying visits to the district, and the manifest enthusiasm with which he was welcomed in one instance some years ago, amply demonstrated the joy with which the tenantry of all classes would have hailed his return to the home of his ancestors. Enville Hall, Staffordshire, has been his chief place of residence, and on this he has lavished everything that great expenditure and taste can effect. For a long period he has generously afforded the immense population of Wolverhampton and its surrounding neighbourhood an opportunity of visiting the park and grounds on certain days in every week. Dunham Parks are always open, and in holiday times form the resort of thousands from Cottonopolis, anxious to spend "a day in the country."

In politics, Lord Stamford is ardently attached to the principles of the great Conservative party; but he has on few occasions publicly appeared to advocate them, and his most prominent act of late years was his emphatic disapproval by his vote in the House of Lords of Mr. Gladstone's measure for the disestablishment of the Irish Church. He has, when opportunity has offered, shown that Conservatism is not incompatible with true progress; and while in former times it was difficult to obtain land on which to build a dissenting chapel or meeting house, on his estates there is now no difficulty whatever. His lordship's liberality is of course more marked towards the Church of England; and St. Margaret's, Dunham Massey, which he erected and endowed at his sole cost, will long remain a monument of his zeal in this respect. In regard to secular objects, having for their end the good of the people, he is ever willing, when they are properly put before him, to lend a helping hand. The town of Ashton-under-Lyne may be quoted as an example; and his offer of twelve acres of land on Hale Moss, for a recreation ground for the inhabitants of Altrincham, will be fresh in the memory of our readers.

With the increased facilities consequent on the opening of the Manchester, South Junction and Altrincham Railway, Altrincham rose from the dimensions of an ordinary village to those of a thriving country town; and his lordship, in striking contrast to many lords of the soil similarly circumstanced, brought into the market a quantity of land for building purposes, care being taken in its disposal that no works or noxious trades should be carried on which would be prejudicial to the health of the inhabitants. The result is that Bowdon, with its beautiful situation and its salubrious atmosphere has come to be looked upon as one of the most pleasant places of residence round Manchester.

His Lordship's relations with his tenantry have always been of the most satisfactory character, and this was evidenced by the fact that when the Agricultural Holdings Act came into operation, with one consent they elected to remain as they were, quite satisfied that that justice with which his lordship had always treated them would continue still to be meted out.

It would exhaust too much space to catalogue the numerous institutions and associations of which his lordship is president or patron. In an ecclesiastical sense, he is patron of nearly a dozen livings in different parts of the country; and the manner in which the vacancies have been filled point to a sincere desire to maintain that Protestantism with which the annals of the Church of England are inextricably interwoven. He is a Deputy Lieutenant for Staffordshire, and honorary Colonel of the 7th A. B. Lancashire Rifle Volunteers, and the 23rd Lancashire Rifle Volunteers.

His Lordship has been twice married. First to Elizabeth, daughter of John Billige, Esq.; and second to Katherine, daughter of Henry Cocks, Esq.

Genealogical Table of the House of Duntun.

ROBERT DEL BOOTH or BOTHE, yr Son of John Booth of Barton, Lancashire; d. 1469, m. Dances, yr dau. and coheiress of Sir Wm. Venables, d. 1453.

1 WILLIAM BOOTH, Son and Heir, d. 1477, m. 1443 Maud, dau. of John Dutton, of Dutton, Esquire.

2 Raufe m. Margaret, dau. of Thomas Shelli, Sandwiche, Co. Kent.

3 Gethery, Clerk, LL.D.

4 Hamon or Hamon, Clerk, LL.D.

5 Lary, m. to John Chandler, of Bach.

6 Ellen, m. to John Legh, of Adlington.

7 Alice, m. to Robt. Heselth, of Kinton.

8 Joan, m. to Hamon Masey, of Oxton.

9 Margery, m. to James Scatchell.

10 John Bishop, of Exeter, warden of Manchester College, d. 1475.

11 Robert, Dean of York.

12 Edward or Edmund, Archdeacon of Peter.

13 Peter.

1 GEORGE BOOTH, Son and Heir, b. 1445, d. Mar. 25th, 1488, Mar. Katherine, dau. of Kibb, Montfort, Lord of Boscote, Staff. and Monkspath, Warwickshire.

2 Richard.

3 Lawrence.

4 Wm.

5 William.

6 Dorce, m. to Thomas Legh, Westhall, High Legh, 1461.

7 Anne, m. to John Legh, of Booths, after to Gethery Shakerney, of Shakerney, Lanc.

8 Ellen, m. to Sir John Legh, of Bagley, 1466.

9 Margery, m. to John Hyde, of Haghton, Lanc.

10 Alice, m. to John Ashley, of Ashley.

11 Elizabeth, m. to Thomas Fitton, of Pownall.

12 Joan, m. to William Holt, of Lanc.

1 WILLIAM, Son and Heir, b. 1473, d. 1510, Mar. first, Margaret, coheiress of Sir Thomas Ashton, Ashton under-Lyne.

Mar. second, Ellen, dau. of Sir John Montgomery, Throley, Staff.

2 Lawrence.

3 Roger.

4 Alice, otherwise Anna, m. William Masey, of Denfield, Renshens.

5 Ellen, m. Thomas Vawdrey, afterwards Traiford, of Bridge Traiford, in Cheshire.

1 GEORGE, Son and Heir, b. 1490, d. 1531, Mar. Elizabeth, dau. of Sir Thomas Butler, of Bewsey, Mr. Warrington.

2 John Booth.

1 William.

2 Hamon.

3 Edward, from whom the Booths of Twanlow, Cheshire.

4 Henry.

5 Andrew.

6 Jane, m. to Hugh Dutton, son and heir of Sir Piers Dutton, of Hatton and Dutton (1530), afterwards to Thos. Halford, of Halford, Mr. Nether Talley, esq.

7 Dorothy, m. to Edward Warren, son and heir of Laurence Warren, of Peinton, esquire 1519).

8 Anne, m. to Sir William Breerton, of Breerton.

GEORGE, Son and Heir, b. 1516, d. 1543, m. Elizabeth, dau. of Sir Edmund Traiford, of Traiford, esquire.

2 John.

3 Robert.

4 Ellen, m. to John, son and heir of John Carrington, of Carrington, esquire (1537).

5 Anne, m. to Wm. Masey, of Podington, Wyrall, esquire.

6 Margery, m. to Sir Wm. Davenport, of Bramhall.

7 Elizabeth, m. Richard Sutton, of Sutton, esq. (1501).

8 Dorothy, m. Robert Faxon, of Wythenshaws, esquire.

9 Alice, m. Peter Daniel, of Over Talley, 1550.

10 Cecily died without issue.

WILLIAM, Son and Heir, b. 1540, d. 1579, m. Elizabeth, d. of Sir John Warburton, of Arley.

2 Elizabeth, m. Sir William Chantrell, of Bach.

3 Mary, m. Randle Davenport, of Henbury.

4 Anne, m. — Wentworth, of Yorkshire.

GEORGE, Son and Heir, b. 1556, d. 1632, m. firstly Jane, daughter of John Carrington — (no issue) m. secondly Katherine, daughter of Sir Edmund Anderson, d. 1638.

Edmund, second son, a lawyer, died without issue.

John, m. a daughter of — Freshvyn, of Hulme, Manchester, d. 1644.

Robert, b. 1579, was a soldier to Holland.

Peter, b. April, 1570, d. September 1573.

Richard, b. 1578, m. — Masey, of Cogshall.

William, d. 1572.

Mary, eldest daughter.

Elizabeth, second daughter, twice married.

Dorothy, m. Kate Hunningham, of Barrowcock, Derbyshire.

Alice, m. one Faxon.

Edmund or Edward, b. 1573.

Susan, b. 1577, twice married.

WILLIAM, d. 1636, m. Vere, d. and coheiress of Sir Thomas Egerton.

Francis, b. 1603, d. 1616.

Thomas, b. 1604, d. 1632.

Edmund, b. 1608, d. 1617.

John, knighted 1600.

Mary died unmarried.

Alice m. George Vernon, of Haslington, esquire, d. 1633.

Francis d. 1609.

Susan m. Sir William Breerton, of Houndford or Handford, died 1637.

Katherine unmarried.

Peter died young.

Elizabeth, second wife of Richard, Lord Byron, of Newstead. (No issue.)

Thomas, b. 1620, d. 1632.

GEORGE BOOTH, Knt. and Barr., b. 1621, d. Aug. 1681, m. Elizabeth, dau. of Thos. Egerton.



CHAPTER X.

The Maceys of Altrincham—A rebellious subject—The Bowdon family—Disposal of lands—Some old district names—Bowdon free school—Bull and bear baiting—Guy Faux at Altrincham—A witty Bowdon Curate—The Unicorn Hotel three hundred years ago—An Altrincham landlord and landlady of the olden time—Sir Peter Leycester's description of the town in 1666—The story of the "Bloody field"—Adam Martindale at Dunham; his duties there—Bowdon Dissenters troublesome—Dick Turpin; his exploits at Newbridge Hollow and Hoo Green.

THE house of Macey, or Massey, which settled at Dunham, in course of time had numerous branches, so much so as to give rise to the uncomplimentary proverb already quoted in these pages. There is no doubt, however, that their connection with Altrincham is as ancient as it is honourable. We find them coming into prominence in the troublous times of Richard II., and they appear to have held the town by military service for a long period. In 1397 it is recorded that William Massey was the lessee of the King of the beadlery of the Hundred of Bucklow, for the year, at the sum of £7 6s. 8d., he taking by his lease all the pleas and profits of all the townships within the aforesaid hundred, and in that year he also received a grant from the King of an annuity during pleasure of one hundred shillings. He was evidently a favourite with the

King; and as a zealous supporter must have made his power felt, for in the General Act of Pardon which Henry IV. issued in the opening portion of his reign, he was specially exempted on account of his adherence to the fallen monarch. His offence was not probably very severely visited; as in the year 1399, a William Macey, probably one and the same person, was given a protection on his departure for Ireland to do service for the King.

About the year 1400, for reasons best known to himself, a Massey assumed the local name of Bowdon, and the Bowdon family has been traced by the Lysons down to the reign of Elizabeth. It held a fourth part of the lands in the township until Urian Bowdon, in 1565, sold to William Booth, of Dunham Massey, Esquire, certain portions of land in Bowdon, as also in Hale and Dunham. In 1569, Thomas Vawdrey, of Bowdon, and George his son, sold several parcels of land to Hugh Crosby, of Over Whitley, who, in turn, sold them to Sir George Booth at a later period for £220. These parcels were in the several holdings of Thomas Vawdrey, Robert Massie, Thos. Nelde (or Neild), and Alice Hardey. William Brereton, in the reign of James I., became, by purchase from Sir Thomas Holcroft, owner of one fourth of the lands in the township; but these, as also all the others, have long since passed by gift, sale or lease to the present Earl of Stamford and Warrington.

The foregoing reference to names prevalent three or four centuries ago will make the reader curious to know more. There are allusions to a family of Oldfield, no doubt a branch of the Massey family, who assumed that name, and from plea rolls relating to a few of the lesser holdings in Altrincham, it is shown that in the 22nd year of Edward III., Emma, wife of John Howell, was against Robert Drake, of Altrincham, for a dower of three messuages and three acres of land; that in the 19th of Henry VII., Edward Walker conveyed to Thomas Deyne, and Margery his wife, the fee simple of three burgages of land, "of which one was situated between the burgage of Edward Massey, and that late of Richard Chadurton, of Tympyrly, called Flax-

yarde, and two burgages called Tayntre Crofts in the same town;" that in the 13th year of Henry VIII., Stephen Atkynson was against Thomas Massy, son and heir of Robert Massy, for the recovery of two messuages, five burgages, ten acres of land, one meadow, and one dove cote. The names of Birche, Coppok, Royle, Bekke or Beck, Neuton or Newton, Kyncy, &c., are also to be found. In Dunham Massey there were Heskeths, Ashtons, Hazlehursts, Johnsons, &c., and we believe their descendants are still to be found there. The allusion to the Flaxyarde shows that the manufacture of linen was an old Altrincham industry, quite as much as woollen was at a later period.

A Free School was founded at Bowdon about the beginning of the year 1600. In 1640 a "presentment" was made to the Commissioners for Pious Uses, against Mr. Richard Vawdrey, of the Banck, gentleman, for denying to pay £4 per annum, left by his grandfather, for the schoolmaster of Bowdon. It is said, in Gastrell's *Notitia Cestriensis*, that although he may have been presented, the endowment was not made by his grandfather, but by Edward Janny, of Manchester, merchant, who, in 1553, devised certain lands to his "kynseman, Robert Vawdrey, to keep a ffre scole at Bowdon, to instruct youthe in vertue and lernynge." This Robert Vawdrey was one of the executors, and it may probably have led to his being spoken of as the founder. Janny, the testator, had the advowson and lease of the vicarage of Bowdon, for a term, and this he also devised to Robert Vawdrey, whose family held it for several years. The schoolhouse was rebuilt at the expense of the parish in 1670, again in 1806, and up to a recent period served for the purpose of teaching the young ideas of the neighbourhood, when, on the new National Schools being built, it was converted into a showroom for furniture, &c.

We read in one of Harrison Ainsworth's novels that Guy Fawkes was carried through Altrincham, on his way to Ordsall Hall, after having been wounded in "a little affair" at Malpas. This was not long before he attempted

that horrible enterprise which will ever make his name memorable to the small boys of the land. If the enterprise was horrible it has been embalmed in still more horrible verse. It was done by a worthy parish clerk, who had an insatiable desire to distinguish himself; and on one occasion, when service was being celebrated for providential deliverance from this plot of plots, he fairly electrified the congregation by giving out the following verse:—

This is the day that *was* the night,
When wicked men *conspire*,
To blow the Houses of Parliament up,
With g-u-n-pow-*dire*.

It is unnecessary to say that this parish clerk was not connected with Bowdon; but it may be mentioned that a witty curate once gave a most remarkable certificate of publication of banns. A worthy couple had been “asked,” as the local phrase has it; and the Vicar of Wilmslow, where the woman lived, had the following addressed to him:—

John — and Jane Cooper were,
Thrice in my church announced this year
To tie the knot of beauty.
So John and Jane I trust hereby,
May without shame together lye,
When you have done your duty.

Jenks, Curate of Bowdon Church.

It is to be hoped that the Wilmslow Vicar did his duty, as well as Mr. Jenks, and that this worthy couple lived a long and happy life in the married state.

In May, 1644, Prince Rupert had a rendezvous for his army on Bowdon Downs. According to a Royalist, William Davenport, of Bramhall, “he marcht up to Cheadle, where the parliaments forces ran away.” In May, 1648, at a meeting of the Lieutenancy, held at Bowdon, “it was resolved that three regiments, consisting each of 600 men strong, should be raised;” but the country people as a rule refused to join. With the Downs is associated the story

of the "bloody field," the scene of a combat between Sir Samuel Daniel, of Tabley, and Captain Robert Ratcliffe, of Ordsall Hall. A brawl had ensued at a party; and, according to an old rhyme:—

The next day Robert out a shooting went,
And still his mind upon revenge was bent;
By accident he met Sir Samuel
On Bowdon Downs, for so the people tell;
And fight he would, and one of them should die,
Ere they did part, and that immediately.
Sir Samuel says, "I see how discord ends,
I never thought but sleep had made us friends."
"No parley, now," says Robert, "fight I will,
Or with my gun I here now will you kill."
"Well," says Sir Samuel, "if to fight I must,
My sword is not the sword I wish to trust."
Then fight they did, and on the sandy Downs
Rash Robert fell, covered with blood and wounds.

He was buried at Northenden, and the inscription on his gravestone states that he was "of illustrious descent, of comely appearance, pious towards God, and unfailing in His worship; loyal to the King, faithful to his friends, courteous to all, and a vigorous combatant. But the age being unworthy of such a hero, and heaven permitting it, he perished, strange to say, in a sword fight in the presence of a few spectators, . . . on the 20th of February, in the year of our Lord, 1685, in the 30th year of his age."

It is a matter for surmise whether Guy Fawkes, after having been wounded in the "little affair" at Malpas, stopped at that ancient and still celebrated hostelry, the Unicorn, to refresh the inner man. Most probably he did, and drowned the sense of his injuries in libations of choicest canary. At all events, the Unicorn stood at Altrincham for centuries on very nearly the same site; but if we are to believe the traditions which have come down to us, it was then a very different place to what it is now. It was a delightfully rural roadside "public," environed with a profusion of vegetation; and a purling stream, of which there is now only a mere trace, flowed past until it joined the brook which has its rise on Hale Moss, and which fed the

lake and moat at the Hall of Dunham. Subsequently, this stream turned the water wheel by which the landlord of the old original Unicorn eked out his livelihood; but the wheel is hushed, the stream has long since disappeared, and an advancing civilization has caused a structure more in accordance with the wants of the age to be erected in its place.

It is also believed that Sir Walter Scott, in his "Peveril of the Peak," has given the name of the Cat and the Fiddle to the Unicorn, when he speaks of Julian Peveril's journey from Liverpool to his ancestral home in Derbyshire. The picture which the great novelist draws of that period is an excellent one. Sir Walter says:—

At length near Altringham, a halt became unavoidable, and a place of refreshment presented itself in the shape of a small cluster of cottages, the best of which united the characters of an alehouse and a mill, where the sign of the Cat (the landlord's faithful ally in defence of his meal sacks), booted high as Grimalkin in the fairy tale, and playing on the fiddle for the more grace, announced that John Whitecraft united the two honest occupations of landlord and miller; and, doubtless, took toll from the public in both capacities. Such a place promised a traveller who journeyed incognito, safer, if not better accommodation than he was likely to meet with in more frequented inns; and at the door of the Cat and Fiddle, Julian halted accordingly.

In the succeeding chapter, the narrative is continued, and the manner in which the jolly miller and his wife manage the business is humorously depicted.

If the great Scotch novelist had read the quaint description given of the town by Sir Peter Leycester, who says in 1666, "there are so many cottages erected here by permission of the Lords of Dunham Massey that it has now become a nest of beggars;" he could not have been nearer the mark. While this character is given to Altrincham, Bowdon bore a very different one; and at a somewhat later period, it is spoken of as "one of the most remarkable places in the land." Sir Peter mentions that in the rental of Dunham Massey in 1402, there were about forty freeholders or charterers in Altrincham, the rest of the tenants not above eighteen in number being tenants at will. He also speaks of the increasing value of land and other commodities; and adds

that at the period at which he wrote there were above twenty charterers, which would tend to show that the number of tenants at will had increased, while the number of freeholders had diminished. Of these holdings, Robert Parker's, of Oldfield Hall, Altrincham, gentleman, was of the greatest value; next to which was that belonging to William Leycester, of Hale Lowe, gentleman. The rest were very small parcels, "not worth the reckoning up."

Adam Martindale, one of the many puritan divines who experienced the sad effects of the long political tempest of the seventeenth century, found an asylum at Dunham on his ejection from the living of Rostherne, under the Act of Uniformity of 1662. He was a prominent character of that period, and his avowed hatred of superstitious customs, as he thought, brought him into most unpleasant collision with his parishioners. In his autobiography, he gives us one or two glimpses of Bowdon, which show that it was not entirely free from the religious bickerings and theological hair-splittings of the period. The Quakers, as they were then called, really had sound reason for "quaking" sometimes. The "Separatists," as the Dissenters were termed, were numerous and troublesome in the parish, and being a fierce ecclesiastical champion, Martindale informs us that he was engaged in "a paper scuffle" with their teacher, much in the same way no doubt that newspaper controversialists cut each other up now-a-days. He tells us also that in 1663, the Bishop of Chester, Dr. Hall, "preached fiercely against non-conformists at Bowdon, and as one that had a notable faculty of extracting salt water out of pumice upon the words, *We are not ignorant of his devices*, 2 Corinthians ii. 11, made even the most harmless practices of the non-conformists, devices of Sathan, soe farre as his Episcopall authoritie would authenticate such doctrine." At Dunham he devoted himself to study, in which he was greatly assisted by Lord Delamer, who gave him many excellent books, lent him his choicest manuscripts, and "imparted freely any knowledge he had, which was as useful as anything else."

While chaplain here his salary was £40 per annum, and his employment, "besides accompanying my Lord abroad, was family duty twice a day, which after dinner was a short prayer, a chapter and a more solemn prayer, and before supper, the like; only a psalm or part of one after a chapter. When it was my Lord's pleasure that the Lord's day or any of the King's days should be kept at home, I officiated, and when on the Lord's day we went to Bowdon, I catechised in the evening, and expounded the catechism in a doctrinal and practical way, so as it was of as much pains for me, and as profitable to the auditors as though I had preached." A pleasant picture truly of family life at Dunham, two centuries ago.

From "pulpit to prig" is a great step downwards, but it is the one we now take. Knutsford can boast of a highwayman of some celebrity "born and bred" within its limits. Altrincham cannot; at all events, there has not been one of the "gentlemen of the road" who was proud of the place of his nativity, and who has made for himself name and fame in history by his so-called exploits. As a very efficient substitute we find the renowned Turpin—for he has got "renown" in "Rookwood" (though his life shows him to have been both blackleg and coward)—often taking up his quarters in the neighbourhood and levying illegal toll on travellers. The scene of his adventures was principally New Bridge hollow. "What!" no doubt exclaim readers acquainted with the magnificent road to Chester, "how could a man pounce out on anyone and rob him there?" Wait a little, my impetuous friend. There was no wide road then. It was an apology for one, in fact, a mere bridle-path, and then, as now, primroses and wild flowers bloomed in bewildering profusion around. The river was not spanned by a bridge, but forded at a convenient and shallow point. Flanked on each side by tall trees and umbrageous foliage, the poet of to-day can draw inspiration therefrom for his glowing pages; but then, when dangers were thought to be hidden behind every tree, the aspect of the road to most travellers would be stripped of its picturesqueness. On one occasion the daring Dick had a narrow escape from paying the extreme penalty of the law for a robbery committed in the hollow, and this escape was attributable, it is said, to the legendary speed of "Black Bess." A lawyer was travelling from Chester to Manchester, when he was

attacked by Dick, and relieved of his cash. Turning the head of Black Bess, he put her to her extreme speed, and on arriving at the Kilton, Hoo Green, he accosted the hostler with, "Holloa! what o'clock is it, my cockorum, eh?" With a view to receiving a speedy reply, he accompanied the question with a sharp blow on the shoulder, and, singular to say, he got the required answer. We use the word "singular," because a modern knight, "of more breeches than brains," would have replied with a torrent of well-selected Billingsgate, and summoned him before a magistrate, with a view to having him fined. As it was, Dick strolled calmly on to the green, where a number of country gentlemen were playing bowls, taking care, of course, to remark about the time. An investigation into the circumstances took place, and Dick found out the advantages to be derived from what Samuel Weller's "paternal parient" in "Pickwick," chose to call a "halibi." The groom was called, and as the difference between the time of the robbery and Dick's appearance in the inn yard was so small, only a few minutes, although the distance from the place was over three miles, the magistrates discharged him, under the impression that no horse could carry him in the time that Black Bess did. Turpin appears to have gloried in the feat that he then accomplished, for it is made the subject of a song, which is given in "Rookwood."





CHAPTER XI.

Indications of growth and enterprise—The cutting of the Bridgewater Canal—A few figures—Manufacture of woollen and cotton yarn—Obsolete punishments : penance, cucking stool, scold's bridle, public whippings in the Altrincham Market-place—Executions for burglaries at Bowdon—A man hanged for poaching near Altrincham—The ancient custom of souling—The entertaining play of St. George and the Dragon—Wassailing and Christmas carols—The barley hump and Dunham ale—The lions of Dunham—Altrincham races—Dunham Parks and the Hall—De Quincey's description of Altrincham.

THE first indication of an era of enterprise in this district was the cutting of the Bridgewater Canal, which commenced about the year 1760, and its opening six years or so afterwards gave a great impetus to the town of Altrincham. In 1778 there were in the town 185 houses, which taken at the usual average of five persons to a house would give 925 inhabitants. In 1801, this number had increased to 340 houses, occupied by 346 families, numbering 1,692 souls. There were then three large factories for the manufacture of woollen and cotton yarn, as also a mill for bobbin turning, which were worked by water power. Two of these mills were situated on the north-west side of the town, near the present Altrincham station. The dam or reservoir was only a few yards down Stamford-road, and was fed by a stream which flowed hard by. Up to a recent period this dam

remained ; but it is now filled up, and streets, notably Mill-street, occupy its site. An old map of the town shows that at this time the houses were clustered about the Market-place and the Unicorn. Within fifty or sixty yards on the Dunham side were hedgerows and trees of the most approved agricultural type. Dunham-lane, as it was then called, was scarcely a cow road, and had not even the semblance of a footpath. The social customs of the inhabitants were quite as primitive as its appearance.

Readers of history are familiar with the penance which the unfortunate Jane Shore did in St. Paul's, before the people, three or four centuries ago. They would be surprised to hear that this form of doing penance—not so much from a religious as from a legal point of view—was carried out at Bowdon not 150 years since. Women of light character, or those who had been guilty of spreading scandal, were the subjects. A white sheet was kept at the Parish Church, the condemned woman was enveloped in it, marched along the aisles of the sacred edifice ; after which she had purged her offence. One of the last, or about the last who did penance, was clever enough to make a witty, though very indecent rhyme of the circumstance. A much more ancient and common form of punishment was the cucking stool—a field formerly existing in Altrincham called Cuckstool field. This instrument is described in Domesday Book as *cathedra stercoris*. Scolds, cheating bakers or brewers, and other petty offenders, were led to this stool and immersed over head and ears *in stercore*, or stinking water. The “brydle for a curste queane” was fixed in the mouth of the delinquent, and tied behind with ribbons. When the punishment of the cucking stool was relaxed, the scold's bridle appears only to have been used, and the Altrincham Corporation is credited with being possessed of a “branck,” or iron bridle, of the most simple form known. Brushfield, who has written a work on the Obsolete Punishments of this county, says :—

It is the most rudely constructed, primitive-looking, scold's bridle I have yet seen ; the workmanship is so rough as to lead one to suppose it must

have been made by some very ordinary blacksmith; in form it is somewhat similar to the Oxford example; the gag is a plain flat piece of iron, the hook is fastened at the back by a plain hook and staple, and there is a separate hook for the leading chain. (Fancy, ye gods! leading a woman with a chain, like a bear!)

Listen, again:—

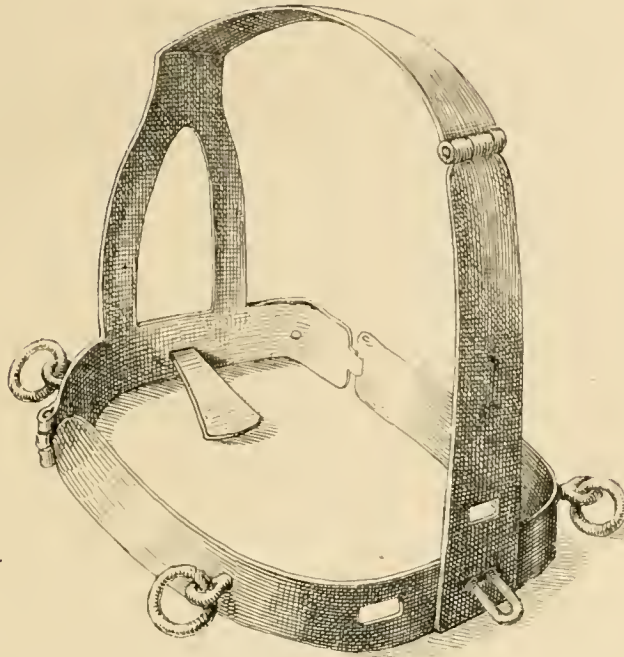
No compensation whatever exists for the adaptation of the instrument to heads of different sizes, and, as the bridle is a very small one, a great deal of additional "scolding" must have been caused during the endeavour to fix it to any large head. The ascending portion terminated in an enlarged flat extremity, the base of which appears as if constructed for the purpose of attaching a cord to secure it more firmly to the head. The gentleman to whom I am indebted for the loan of this specimen (Mr. Mort, of Altrincham) informs me that he saw it used upon an old (?) woman, about 35 years ago, who appears to have been a regular virago, and who, apparently, abused her more peaceable neighbours, more particularly two very inoffensive people on each side of her own dwelling. All means were tried in vain, and as a last resource she was ordered to be bridled and led through the town. When the instrument was fixed to her head, she refused to walk; the authorities were, however, so determined to make her a public example, and carry out the punishment, that they ordered her to be wheeled through the town. She was accordingly placed in a barrow, and, escorted by a great mob, was wheeled through the principal streets round the market place, and thence to her own home. It may be as well to mention that this punishment was attended with the most salutary results, as she ever afterwards kept a civil and respectful tongue in her head.

Our country cousins at Carrington were far ahead of us in this respect. Their "branck," which is now in the Warrington Museum, is designed with greater attention to mechanical details. Its "gag" is much more neatly formed; it has three rings to which the hook or chain may be attached, and it is made with an adjustment for the difference in the sizes of people's heads. Probably it was in greater request at Carrington, and therefore greater anxiety was manifested lest it should produce needless "scolding," and thus increase the ill it was intended to cure.

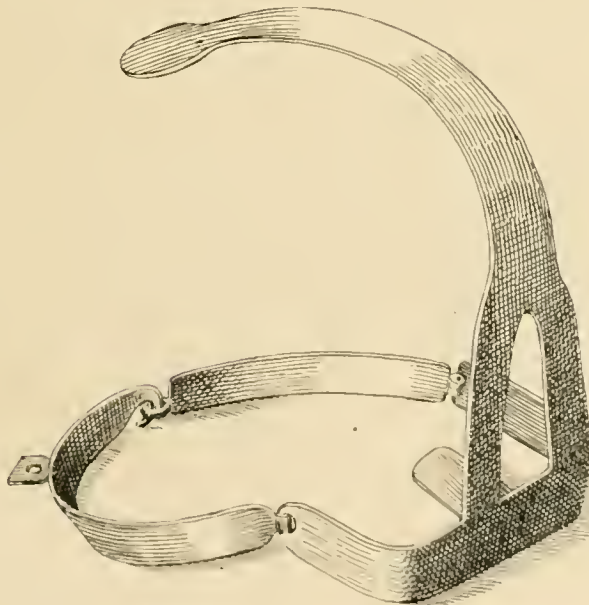
The spectacle of men being publicly whipped for trivial offences was common, and, generally, the punishment was inflicted on the unfortunate culprits on market days.

In April, 1801, the town was thrown into a state of ex-

CARRINGTON AND ALTRINCHAM SCOLDS' BRIDLES.



FORMERLY AT CARRINGTON, AND NOW IN THE WARRINGTON MUSEUM.



FORMERLY AT ALTRINCHAM (LOST.)

citement in consequence of some opposition to the public whipping of one Thomas Owen. The subject was discussed at a town's meeting in July, "convened by publick advertizement and by the bellman, by order of the constables," when it was—

Resolved unanimously, that the constables be and are directed at the expense of the town, to prosecute William Coppock, and such other person or persons as can be discovered to have beaten the horse in the cart when Thos. Owen was to have been whipped, in Altrincham, on the 28th day of April last, pursuant to the sentence of the Court of Quarter Sessions, held at Chester in and for this county, on the 21st day of April last.

It may be inferred from this that Mr. Owen had a large number of friends, who were bent on preventing the infliction of the prescribed punishment; as on that occasion the horse block at the Unicorn was so seriously damaged that upwards of thirteen shillings had to be spent by the town on its repair.

On one occasion, probably the last, two men were whipped, one after the other. One of them, after having received his portion, begged, with a self-abnegation and gallantry worthy of all praise, that he might receive his companion's lashes, as he was sure he was unable to bear the punishment. No wonder, that with men made of such sterling stuff, Wellington won Waterloo. No wonder that their descendants conquered at Inkermann, and clove through the Russian hosts at Balaclava! The old spirit still lives. It is manifested daily in thousands of humble homes in our land; but its humbleness is its truest nobility, and there are numbers who are unconsciously saying by their actions, to that angel who is inscribing it in a book of gold,

I pray thee, then,

Write me as one who loves his fellow-men.

The dark record of this portion of "the good old times" is not yet complete. Executions were common, and it is not unusual to read in the papers of the period blood-curdling narratives of the wholesale way in which our fellow creatures were launched into eternity. For instance, on September 25th, 1819, there were executed at Chester, Samuel Hooley

and John Johnson (a man of colour), for burglary at Bowdon. In April, 1820, Thomas Miller was executed for burglary at Bowdon. Some ten or fifteen years after, a man named Henshaw was executed for poaching near Altrincham. This caused an intense sensation throughout the whole district, and is still remembered by a large number of the older inhabitants.

A much pleasanter theme is afforded by an examination of some of the old amusements, such, for instance, as "souling" on All Souls' Eve, which is not, however, kept up as it used to be forty years ago. The observance is referred to Catholic times, and is undoubtedly one of great antiquity. Some of the songs which are sung by the "soulers," are peculiar, and there is an unaccountable play upon words. One of them opens :—

Soul day, Soul day, Saul,
 One for Peter, two for Paul,
 Three for Him that made us all.
 An apple, a pear, a plum or a cherry,
 Anything that will make us all merry.
 Put your hand into your pocket and pull out your keys,
 Go down into the cellar and bring up what you please ;
 A glass of your wine, or a cup of your beer,
 And we'll never come souling till this time next year.
 We are a pack of merry boys all of one mind,
 We have come souling for what we can find.
 Soul, Soul, sole of my shoe,
 If you have no apples money will do ;
 Up with your kettle, and down with your pan,
 Give us an answer and let us begone.

Of course this is all very well, and no doubt very laudable so far as the men and boys of a single village go ; but when it comes to providing for those of a large town, split-up into numerous gangs, it must be admitted that souling is a custom "more honoured in the breach than the observance." A more enjoyable and artistic amusement is the "Peace Egg," or "St. George's annual play for the amusement of youth," which is supposed to have an entirely Cheshire origin, St. George, representing in some people's ideas, the Baron of Chester. If this be

the case, it now obtains little in the county of its nativity; but in Yorkshire it flourishes amazingly.

The practice of "wassailing amongst the leaves so green" has almost died out; but the singing of carols at Christmas time flourishes in its pristine power, and oftentimes unfortunate Christians are called upon to awake at most unseasonable hours.

Who in this neighbourhood does not remember or has not heard of the "barley hump" and Dunham ale? The latter was given on stated occasions to all comers, and its potency was often evidenced in those who partook too freely of it. But round the "barley hump" cling the tenderest memories, and men and women, whose locks are now silvered with age, remember the time, when as rosy-faced boys and girls they scampered over the breezy downs to Dunham Hall, for this hump, which was a piece of barley bread a few inches square, good and wholesome, hard nearly as a board, but not proof against the assaults of a vigorous appetite. The schools of the neighbourhood were turned out at a given hour, and an exciting race for the Hall began. It was first come, first served. The boys were ranged on one side, and the girls on the other, and down this human avenue, a barrow filled with these "humps," was wheeled, and a piece given to each child. Sometimes, the number of little visitors was so great that the supply ran short, and those who had not yet eaten theirs had to divide with their less fortunate brethren. Having had their treat—for such it was always looked upon—they betook themselves to their homes, joyful with anticipation of another turn at the "barley hump." The "Lions" of Dunham, have even a "tradition" associated with them. They are well known to visitors, and were once looked upon with awe by the juvenile natives. In fact, it is implicitly believed, by lovers especially, that at the hour of midnight, when the spirits of the departed are attacked with restlessness, these "lions" raise up one paw, and put down the other, remaining in this position for twenty-four hours, until a change is again considered desirable!

Racemeetings formerly flourished at Altrincham, but were many years since discontinued, except at rare intervals, and then they were stripped of their ancient glory. Racefield, now covered with stately mansions, serves to perpetuate the fact, but the principal races were held on Hale Moss. An old newspaper, published in 1753, contains an advertisement announcing that the races would be held on the 11th day of July in that year, "on a good course," and that no person would be allowed to sell liquor on the Common who had not subscribed two-and-sixpence to the said races. In this respect the old does not appear to differ from the new, however much people may be inclined to lament the decadence of modern horseracing.

A word may now be said of the Parks at Dunham, both of which have formed appropriate subjects alike for the brush of the painter, and the pen of the poet. In what is called the Old Park, the beech avenue, which leads to the Hall, is a most imposing object. Of the present mansion, which replaced its predecessor, a description of which has already appeared in these pages, little need be said, except that it is a large quadrangular brick building, and was built in 1730. The collection of family plate was of a most extensive and valuable character, and there was also a number of family and other portraits by various eminent masters.

A fitting conclusion to this chapter may be found in the reference to Altrincham made by Thomas De Quincey, whose fame in connection with every department of literature is well known. In his autobiographical sketches, he describes the circumstances under which he left Manchester to travel to Chester, and he says that on his route (this would be about the year 1814), the first town that he reached, to the best of his remembrance, was Altrincham, colloquially *Awtrigem*. He goes on:—

"When a child, three years old, and suffering from whooping cough, I had been carried for a change of air to different places on the Lancashire coast; and in order to benefit by as large a compass as possible of varying atmospheres, I and my nurse had been made to rest for the first night of our tour, at this

cheerful little town of Altrincham. On the next morning, which ushered in a most dazzling day in July, I rose earlier than my nurse fully approved; but in no long time she had found it advisable to follow my example; and, after putting me through my morning's drill of ablutions and the Lord's prayer, no sooner had she fully arranged my petticoats than she lifted me up in her arms, threw open the window, and let me suddenly look down upon the gayest scene I ever beheld, viz., the little market-place of Altrincham at eight o'clock in the morning. It happened to be the market day; and I, who till then had never consciously been in any town whatever, was equally astonished and delighted by the novel gaiety of the scene. Fruits, such as can be had in July, and flowers were scattered about in profusion; even the stalls of the butchers from their brilliant cleanliness appeared attractive; and the bonny young women of Altrincham were all trooping about in caps and aprons coquettishly disposed. The general hilarity of the scene at this early hour, with the low murmurings of pleasurable conversation and laughter that rose up like a fountain to the open window left so profound an impression upon me that I never lost it. All this occurred, as I have said, about eight o'clock on a superb July morning. Exactly at that time in the morning, exactly such another heavenly day in July, did I leave Manchester, at six a.m., naturally enough finding myself in the centre of the Altrincham market place. There were the same fruits and flowers; the same bonny young women trooping up and down in the same (no, not the same) coquettish bonnets; everything was apparently the same; perhaps the window of my bedroom was still open, only my nurse and I were not looking out; for, alas! on recollection, fourteen years precisely had passed since then. Breakfast time, however, is always a cheerful stage in the day; if a man can forget his cares at any season it is then—and after a walk of seven miles it is doubly so. I felt it at the time, and have therefore stopped to notice it as a singular coincidence, that twice, and by the merest accident, I should find myself precisely as the clocks on a July morning were all striking eight, drawing inspiration and pleasurable feelings from the sights and sounds in the little market place of Altrincham."

The "bonny young women" were not, however, sufficiently attractive to keep the youthful De Quincey from pursuing his journey. Most of them will by this time have passed away; but their descendants will read with interest of the manners of their grandmothers and great-grandmothers in days gone by.





CHAPTER XII.

Ecclesiastical Altrincham: The Wesleyan Methodist Churches—Wesley's visits to Altrincham—St. George's Church; its Schools, &c.—An Altrincham Centenarian—The Unitarians; their early history; description of the new Chapel in Dunham Road—The Methodist New Connexion—The Independents or Congregationalists, with some notices of their Pastors and Work—St. Margaret's, Dunham Massey—St. John's—The Old Downs Chapel—The Primitive Methodists.

WHEN John Wesley, with a lofty enthusiasm which made the whole world his parish, introduced a new leaven of religious fervour throughout the land, Altrincham was among the many towns he visited. It is one of the first places mentioned in his famous Journal; and it would appear that the date of his first visit was 1738, which is prior to the formation of the first Wesleyan Society in London. In 1751 he again came to the town, and preached under a pear-tree in Mr. Priestner's garden on Oldfield Brow. He also preached in Church-street, near the site of St. George's, and in other parts of the town. The nucleus of a "church" was thus formed; but it was not until the 17th February, 1788, that the old chapel in Chapel-walk, or Chapel-road, was opened by the Rev. Thomas Taylor, even then an eminent Methodist minister. The Church of England Service was read on that occasion; Abner Partington, a name well known in the annals of Altrincham, and who

was probably one of its Mayors subsequently, officiating as clerk. It is also interesting to state that Altrincham was one of the first chapels settled under the celebrated deed poll, in which they are legally specified to be "The conference of the people called Methodists." It was more than two years after the chapel was opened that Mr. Wesley preached in Altrincham, about twelve months before his death. In his Journal he describes the devout and earnest demeanour of the crowd both inside and outside the chapel, and expresses a hope that henceforth the Altrincham people will be less "furious" than they have been. Mr. Wesley, when he preached at Altrincham for the last time, called the building a chapel, and not a "house," as was his wont. Nearly eighty years afterwards the elegant structure in Bank-street was built, and many were the regrets felt, especially amongst the old supporters of the Methodist cause, at leaving what had been their spiritual home for so long a period. This chapel is in the Byzantine style of architecture, and was erected from the plans of Mr. C. O. Ellison, of Liverpool. Liberal aid for its erection was given by both Churchmen and Dissenters, and to some extent it was looked upon as a town movement. The foundation stone was laid on the 22nd March, 1865, and it was opened on the 10th of May, in the year following. Its main frontage is to Bank-street, and is of freestone with a campanile at one of the angles. Its interior is of majestic proportions, and the moulding of the arches is most imposing. There is accommodation on the ground floor for 600 people, and 200 in a good gallery across the end of the building. This gallery is so arranged that it can be continued, if found necessary hereafter, along the sides of the chapel, giving accommodation to 260 additional or in all over 1,000 persons. The organ was removed from the old chapel, and built into the new, with additions and improvements; the cost of this, over £100, being raised by Mr. John Balshaw, who for a long period acted as organist. The total cost of the chapel was above £5,000.

An offshoot of the old chapel was made in the erection of

the rather cramped edifice off Stamford-road, Bowdon, which, although no doubt quite adequate at the time for the wants of the congregation, is not at all calculated to meet the Bowdon of the future. Its arrangements, including its high-backed pews, do not at all accord with modern ideas of religious worship, and strenuous efforts were made years ago to provide increased accommodation of another character. It cannot be said that these efforts have been crowned with the success they deserve, and in this respect the Wesleyans of Bowdon will have the sincere sympathy of all classes. So far back as May, 1874, the foundation of memorial stones of the new chapel were laid by Mrs. William Billing, Mrs. John L. Barker, and Miss Mewburn. The position selected is on the brow of the gently sloping hill, which may be said to constitute Bowdon proper, and is close to an ancient footpath leading from the Downs to Stamford Road. The designs are by Mr. W. H. Brakspear, of Manchester, and the style is the pure English Gothic of the 13th century. It will have accommodation for 700 persons on the ground floor, and for 200 more by the erection of galleries in the transepts. The services of the Wesleyan body are, as can well be imagined, remarkably simple. There is, however, a grafting on of the Church service, which undoubtedly adds to their beauty and dignity. Their Sunday schools are well attended, and their efforts to found a day school in Altrincham on the national system have been attended with considerable success.

We now come to St. George's Church, of which, so far as its architecture is concerned, not even its warmest friends can boast. By one writer it has been styled the ugliest church within seven miles of Manchester Exchange; but probably he did not look at home, as within a stone's throw of the place are to be found two churches (St. Ann's and St. Mary's) which might be placed in the same category as the one he so mercilessly criticizes. Moreover, we must remember that the period at which it was built was not one in which the fine arts were fostered or the æsthetic tastes of

the people developed to the extent they are now-a-days. Public taste in matters of church architecture was at a very low ebb indeed. The clustering ivy with which it is now overgrown gives it to some degree an appearance of beauty; but apart from this outward advantage it commends itself for being, so far as its acoustic properties are concerned, all that can be desired.

It was built as a Chapel of Ease to Bowdon, in 1799, by subscription, and in 1809 it is stated in the returns of the Bishop of Chester to the Governor of Queen Anne's Bounty to be a curacy, not augmented or charged, of the annual value of £91 13s. 6d., arising from dividends of stock, seat rents, and surplice fees. Its first minister was the Rev. Oswald Leicester, an Altrincham man, and he continued in the office for upwards of thirty years. He was the son of a well-to-do shopkeeper in the town, and from his childhood was very religiously disposed. He attended the Wesleyan Chapel, and was greatly influenced by a Mr. Samuel Bradburn, then stationed here. He would in all probability have joined this body, had not his father taken the matter into his own hands, and had him educated and trained as a clergyman. The church has been twice enlarged, first in 1858, when 198 additional sittings were obtained at the west end; and again in 1871, when 268 sittings were added at the east end, at a cost of £1,000; thus providing accommodation for 1,180 persons. There is a beautiful stained glass window in the east end, and several tablets in various parts of the interior.

In the window referred to we read that it was erected "to the memory of Samuel and Ann Hardey, her parents, George Hardey, her brother, and James Holland, her husband, by Sarah Holland, A.D. 1861."

On a brass let into the wall underneath is an inscription:

This memorial window was accompanied by an offering of £1,000 for the additional endowment of this church, and £200 to be invested, and the interest given in bread to the poor attending Divine worship therein.

The inscriptions on the gravestones do not present many novel features; but one on the first clerk of the church,

George Samuel Drinkwater, who filled the post for 33 years, thus records the virtues of his wife :—

She was—
But words are wanting to say what,
Think what a wife should be, and she was that.

She left him, so it is said, an annuity of £50 a year ; hence this extraordinary eulogy.

St. George's remained a chapel of ease from 1799 to 1860, when it was made into a district church. In 1868, it was formed into a separate parish, of which the Rev. George London, who was presented in 1859, was made vicar. It has been endowed by a Parliamentary grant of £1,000, and up to 1859 had an income of £150 per annum. This was increased in 1861 by a gift of £1,000 from Mrs. Holland, of Sandiway House, as already indicated. Connected with the church are flourishing day and Sunday schools, the latter being established in 1783, before the church was built. The first day or national school was erected to commemorate the fiftieth year of the reign of George III., and from this circumstance received the name of the Jubilee school. It was cramped and ill adapted for the required purpose ; but, singular to say, it continued to be used for 50 years, and thus celebrated its own as well as King George's jubilee. The present spacious schools were erected in 1860, and have since had to be enlarged to meet the increasing requirements of the neighbourhood. There are branches at Oakfield-road and Broadheath ; in both of which Divine service can be held.

The register, which begins with the present century, contains the name of one centenarian, Catherine Holt, of Altrincham, who was buried June 30th, 1813, aged 103.

LIST OF THE MINISTERS OR CLERGY OF ST. GEORGE'S
CHURCH :—

1799.	The Rev.	Oswald Leicester.
1832.	„ „	George Ranking.
1834.	„ „	Wilmot Cave Brown Cave.
1843.	„ „	Francis Orton, D.C.L.
1856.	„ „	John B. Honnywill.
1859.	„ „	George London.

Not one of the Dissenting bodies in Altrincham possesses a history so eventful or interesting as the Unitarians. The Altrincham chapel is an offshoot of the old congregation at Hale, which at irregular intervals for a long period had possession of the church at Ringway or Ringey. Ringway was then the "debateable ground" of dissent, and the battles ecclesiastical which were waged upon it were both fast and furious.

"In Hale," writes Sir Peter Leycester in 1666, "is an hamlet called Ringey, wherein is situated a chappel of ease (far from being an easy one to hold, by the way), called Ringey chappel; within the parish of Bowdon, of which I have little to say save that it was much frequented in the late wars by schismatical ministers, and as it were a receptacle for non-conformists, in which dissolute times every pragmatial and illiterate person, as the humour served, stepped into the pulpit without any lawful calling thereunto, or licence of authority."

For a very long period this chapel remained in the hands of the Dissenters, and from certain notices which have been made of it in various documents, would appear to have been under the protection of the powerful families of Booth and Crewe, who were at that time strongly favourable to the Presbyterian cause. It was here that William Dearnily, who is so disrespectfully alluded to in the Bowdon Parish Register, ministered. He was ordained at Knutsford in 1692, on which occasion Mathew Henry was present. He died in May 1701, and in the Cheshire Minute Book he is described "as a person of great worth, of very good natural parts, a considerable scholar, of sober and moderate principles, and a blameless and exemplary conversation." The present Hale chapel was erected in 1723, during the ministry of Mr. Waterhouse, who being dispossessed of Ringway chapel, took along with him the bulk of the congregation. There is a tradition that Mr. Waterhouse was forcibly expelled from Ringway by a Mr. Assheton, then resident at Ashley Hall. The version given is that about the year 1721, John Crewe, Esq., of Crewe Hall, inherited the Lordship of Ringway, and declared his intention of restoring it to the established Church. The scene which followed savours more of a

public-house than a place of worship. Presuming upon Mr. Crewe's connivance, this resident at Ashley Hall, who seldom went to a place of worship, and who was reputed to have been a man of very dissolute habits, went to the chapel one Sunday, attended by a number of servants, seized Mr. Waterhouse by the collar, pulled him from the pulpit, and bundled out both him and the congregation, "bag and baggage." Having accomplished this operation to his own satisfaction, he locked the doors, and no doubt on his way to Ashley Hall was jubilant over this gentlemanly (?) action. The dissenters, however, entered again the week following, and continued in it without molestation until a clergyman licensed by the Bishop of Chester took possession of it. His behaviour on going to his new cure was in striking contrast to that of his lay brother of Ashley Hall. On the Sunday when he first came, the dissenters had begun their worship, but instead of displaying his muscular Christianity, he bade them proceed with the service and remained a devout hearer to the end. He took possession of the place in form in the afternoon. Mr. Waterhouse afterwards preached in a barn at the Ashes farm, near the chapel, till a dissenting meeting house was erected; but he did not live long to enjoy it, as he died in 1754. Canon Raines, in his notes to *Gastrell's Notitia* states that there is a bell at Ringway, with G. B. upon it; the initials of Sir George Booth. In 1747, the minister of this chapel was the Rev. Hugh Worthington, jun., and from a diary of Mr. Isaac Worthington, of Altrincham, it appears he was minister of Hale chapel from 1748 to 1767. Mr. Isaac Worthington took great interest in the affairs of this chapel, and in 1769 he went to Stockport and engaged Mr. Harrop to come to Hale. Mr. Harrop continued in it for forty-six years, during thirty-seven of which he held the chapel at Sale, conjointly with that at Hale. He resigned his charge in 1816, at the age of seventy. He lived for twenty-one years after, and went down to the grave at the venerable age of ninety-one, beloved and honoured by all who knew him. In 1816, the Rev. William

Jevons was invited to undertake the pastoral charge of the united Presbyterian societies in Hale and Altrincham, but he only held the position for about three years. The old chapel in Shaws-lane, Altrincham, which was built about this period, has long been given up; and on the closing of the burial ground, the remains of the "rude forefathers of the hamlet" were taken up and removed to Hale. In the pretty chapel in Dunham-road, there is a good congregation, and the descendants of Mr. Isaac Worthington, one of whom is a flourishing Manchester merchant, still take a deep interest in the cause. It was opened on Wednesday, December, 18th, 1872, on which occasion the Rev. Charles Beard, of Liverpool, preached. It is enclosed on two sides by a stone wall, in which a handsome covered stone gateway leads by a flight of steps to the porch on the south side, which forms the principal entrance to the chapel. The interior consists of a nave fifty-seven feet long, and one aisle to the north, separated from it by five arches with granite shafts, making a total width of thirty-seven feet. The east end is apsidal, with carved wood pulpit and reading desk, and communion table, all upon a raised dais.

The exterior of the building is plain, but substantial, being faced with brick, and stone dressings round the entrance doorway and windows, the heads of which are filled with geometric tracery. The west end has two gables, and the roof is carried round the east end, having a large cross at the apex of the apse. The chapel is fitted with pitch pine seats for about 225 adults and 40 children. An aisle 4ft. 6in. in width leads down the centre of the nave, and a passage 3ft. 6in. in width along the north side of the chapel.

The cover of the communion table, beautifully embroidered in needlework, was presented to the chapel by Miss Nicholson, daughter of Mr. Robert Nicholson, of Bowdon. The three apse windows are filled with stained glass, illustrating by means of flowers, the emblems of Faith, Hope and Charity. They are the gift of Mr. and

Mrs. James Worthington, of Sale Hall. The large west window of three lights and the double lights, which extend along both sides of the chapel, are filled with plain diamond quarries. The edifice was erected from the designs of Mr. Thomas Worthington, of Manchester.

The Methodist New Connexion erected a fairly sized chapel in George-street about the year 1821. At one time it was very well attended, and the congregation was a most important one. The exterior is not prepossessing, but the interior is cheerful and cosy. A disagreeable rupture occurred amongst the congregation some years ago, and it has not made the progress it should have done. The members have, however, paid off the debt with which the place was for a long time encumbered.

In point of wealth and numbers, the Congregationalists or Independents occupy one of the foremost positions. They had a most humble origin, and it appears from the Church Book, of the Bowdon Downs Church, that, in the year 1803, the Rev. James Turner, of Knutsford, began occasionally to pass through Bowdon in travelling to Manchester. During these journeys, states Mr. Joseph Thompson, in his contribution to "Non-Conformity in Cheshire," it occurred to him that some measures might be adopted, and ought not to be delayed, for the introduction into Altrincham or the neighbourhood of the doctrines and government of Independent Churches. The usefulness and propriety of this course appeared the more unquestionable on account of the frequency with which the members of churches in Manchester, even then, were observed to visit and reside in the district. Mr. Turner, fully possessed with his project, applied to an aged and poor widow of the name of Cox, or Coe, a member of the Independent church at Gatley, but resident in Altrincham, and obtained her permission to preach at intervals in her little thatched cottage near the Market Place. The humble building has long since disappeared; but there, with very slender encouragement, this self-denying servant of the Gospel first regularly preached the truth professed by the denomination to which

he belonged. It should, however, be recorded that other excellent ministers pursuing a similar "labour of love," were also received into the house by this same poor woman. These efforts of Mr. Turner were afterwards discontinued for lack of local sympathy and support; and some time appears to have elapsed before a zealous person from Manchester, named Whitworth, began to visit the district, with the like object in view, but with hardly more success; although the assistance of the Chester County Union had been enlisted for the benefit of the neighbourhood.

A few years again passed away before anything permanent or regular was attempted towards the establishment of Independency at Bowdon. But owing to the liberality of some Christian friends, the little chapel at the foot of the Downs, formerly occupied by the followers of a clergyman who had seceded from the Church of England, was purchased on the 6th May, 1839, for £465. The cost of alteration, deed of settlement, &c., raised this amount to £588. The Revs. Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool; S. Luke, of Chester; and J. Turner, of Knutsford, preached at the dedication of the building on July 4th, 1839. In April, 1840, the Rev. John Earnshaw became the first minister of the church,—the first Christian society consisting of ten members. We believe that his appointment was the result of the exertions of Mr. Ibbotson Walker, to whom also belongs the honour of founding and carrying on the Sunday school connected with the church. It was then held in a room in New-street, and only about 40 children attended. In 1844 the Rev. Flavel Stenner became the second minister; and the first deacons were chosen in August of that year. Mr. Stenner subsequently resigned the charge, when it devolved on the Rev. John Wilkinson, who in the May of the following year "in the youth of his days" was summoned away by death.

The increase of the population and the growing importance of the neighbourhood having rendered needful a larger and more commodious place of worship, many generous friends aided in the erection of a new church, which is the

one now used by the Bowdon Downs Congregation, and which was opened in June, 1848. In 1868 it was proposed to build another chapel at an outlay of £7,000 : but insuperable difficulties arising in the acquisition of a site, it was determined to increase the accommodation with the means then at their disposal, which was done at a cost of about £3,000. The architecture of the enlargement was Gothic, of the early perpendicular period, in conformity with the style which prevailed in the rest of the building. The internal fittings are of stained wood, the pews are open, and altogether it is an exceedingly comfortable place of worship. The new pulpit, which was put in at the time of the enlargement, is most elaborately and richly carved, and the book rest is supported by the figure of an angel with outspread wings. A new organ by Jardine of Manchester was opened in the same year, 1868, by the honorary organist, Mr. J. Mills. Referring once more to the pastors, in April, 1849, the office was accepted by the Rev. Henry Christopherson, from Newcastle-upon-Tyne. During Mr. Christopherson's pastorate the church increased both in numbers and energy, and it was therefore with regret that the church and congregation learnt from him that he had accepted the invitation to take the oversight of New College Chapel, London. Mr. Christopherson bade farewell to his people at Christmas, 1856. In May, 1857, the Rev. H. T. Robjohns, B.A., Western College, Plymouth, accepted the pastorate. In March, 1861, Mr. Robjohns resigned his charge, proceeding to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. In the autumn of the year the choice of the church was unanimously in favour of the Rev. A. J. Morris, of Holloway; and it determined to welcome Mr. Morris by clearing off the debt on the chapel and schools, which was accordingly done. The pastorate of Mr. Morris was, unfortunately, of brief duration. He was succeeded by the Rev. H. Griffith, a man of sound learning and erudition, who resigned in 1875, after a pastorate of nearly 11 years. The Rev. A. Mackennal, B.A., received a most unanimous call and commenced his labours the first week in February, 1877. His ministry has hitherto received general acceptance.

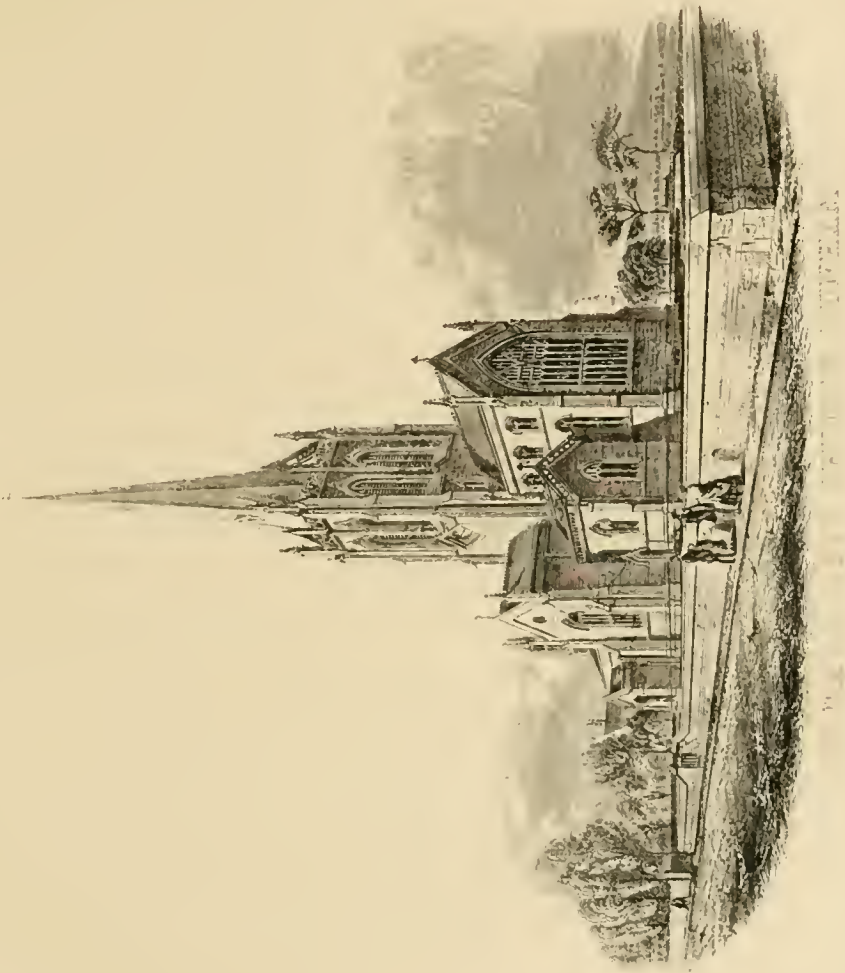
The day and Sunday school had been carried on for nearly a dozen years in the old chapel at the foot of the Downs, which was long felt to be most unsuitable for the purpose, the accommodation being wholly inadequate to the growth of the population, and the room badly ventilated, small and without class-rooms. It was therefore determined that new schools should be built. After great difficulty a site was secured in Oxford-road, Altrincham, which was then well-nigh inaccessible ; and the splendid structure known as the British School, in Oxford-road, was erected in 1860, at a cost of £2,600, and was opened free of debt in January, 1861. For a long time the road to it was known as British School-road. In June, 1868, the large class-room was added, with benches for 250 men ; and a class for adults, quite unique in its proportions, has for some years been admirably conducted by Mr. George Wood. Connected with this church, formerly only partially, but now entirely, is the North Cheshire Rural Mission, which, as its name implies, is carried on in the country districts. It has branches at Broadheath, Baguley, Heyhead, Mobberley, Partington, &c., and does good work in places where spiritual destitution is found to prevail.

The British Schools were at first opened for preaching, but this was discontinued, when the Rev. A. Dewar opened the old chapel at the foot of the Downs. This may, strictly speaking, be called the commencement of the Altrincham Congregational Chapel. He was succeeded by the Rev. W. B. MacWilliam. The desire for a more comfortable edifice was soon felt. The old Wesleyan Chapel in Chapel-walk was accordingly purchased from the Wesleyan body ; and on April 10th, 1868, the Rev. C. Aylard was ordained to the pastorate, which he still holds. Services have been recommenced in the British Schools, conducted by the Rev. J. Adamson.

“ Beautiful for situation ” wrote the Psalmist of one of the most sacred spots on earth. “ Beautiful for situation,” too, are many of our own sacred places. Who can contemplate, without admiration, the beautiful setting which many a little village spire, peeping modestly out from the tufted trees,

gives to the English landscape? This may be appropriately applied to St. Margaret's. Few travellers as they are whirled through the valley on the Dunham side, in that reminder of an advanced civilization, the railway train, but turn for a moment to look at that clear cut spire, which appears to be embosomed in a forest of vegetation. Few there are, as they have passed along the Dunham-road, who have not had their progress arrested for even a brief space by one of the most lovely pictures with which nature has so lavishly blessed this beautiful land. It is one in which pastoral and sylvan scenery are intermingled in one huge panorama. Right before us, buried in the valley, is Oldfield Hall, formerly the abode of perhaps one of the oldest Altrincham families, and under whose roof more than one of the members of the noble house of Booth have breathed their last. A little to the right we try to make out the ancient hall of Riddings, with its moated grange, supposed to have existed prior to the Conquest. Further away we see the spire of St. John the Divine at Brooklands peering above the surrounding trees,—again to the left, the villas of Ashton-on-Mersey stud the ground, and the pretty church of St. Mary Magdalene is distinctly seen. Away again, and the Lancashire hills form a massive and appropriate background. Seen on a summer's day, when the meadows are pied with daisies, and nature has put on her loveliest apparel, when the sun shines down, and by a concentration of his rays produces those beautiful tints which throw a glamour over hill and dale, it is one which a lover of the picturesque dwells upon, and in its contemplation discovers new beauties.

St. Margaret's church is certainly the most beautiful, both as regards exterior and interior, to be found in the district. Thirty years ago or more the Earl of Stamford and Warrington was desirous of having a church erected at Dunham Massey. We believe the site originally chosen was in Racefield, but this was subsequently changed and its present position decided upon. It was contemplated at that time that the church should be built of white brick, with ashlar



dressings, but before half the length of the foundations had been put in the design was abandoned. Afterwards competitive designs were furnished by three London and three Manchester architects. Mr. William Hayley, of Manchester, proved successful.

The church, which is estimated to have cost £20,000, adjoins the turnpike-road leading from Altrincham to Knutsford, and was consecrated on the 13th June, 1855, by the Lord Bishop of Chester. The style is the perpendicular, and prevailed in the fifteenth and the early part of the sixteenth century. The extreme length is 130 feet, and the width, exclusive of transepts, 60 feet, and accommodation is provided for about 700 persons. The plan is cruciform, and comprises a lofty nave lighted from clerestory windows; the north and south aisles are lighted by three-light windows, the tracery of which is of different designs; and the chancel is lighted by nine windows, varying in size and design. The exterior is of Yorkshire stone, from the neighbourhood of Sheffield, with ashlar stone dressings from Hollington, and the stone used in the interior is also from the same place. The roof of the nave is of oak open framed, with carved ribs and hammer beams, dependent from which are carved figures of angels. The spandrils are filled in with tracery. The whole of the internal fittings are of oak, and the pews have open ends. The Stamford chapel is on the south side, and it is lighted by two two-light windows, and entered by a private door. A lofty tower and spire rise at the intersection of the nave, transepts and chancel, from four moulded stone piers, to an altitude of 210 feet. The spire has enriched flying buttresses, and is surmounted by a cross. At the east end there is a large seven-light window, with embattled transoms and bold mullions. This window, which is filled with stained glass, is 30 feet by 14 feet, and contains beautifully executed representations. In the upper division is the Saviour, in the centre of a group of which St. John the Baptist, St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, St. John the Evangelist, and St. Peter are the chief figures. In the lower division St. Paul is the centre figure, and round him are to be seen some of the principal characters of the old dispensation—Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, and Malachi. The west window is divided into five compartments, filled in with tracery, and on the stained glass are depicted many of the prominent female characters of both Old and New Testaments. In the upper division are figured Mary Magdalene, Mary mother of James, Mary mother of Jesus, Salome, and Elizabeth. In the lower division St. Margaret is in the centre, surrounded by Deborah, Ruth, Esther, and Dorcas. Under this window is a large doorway, with square head over a moulded arch. The spandrils are filled in with tracery, and finished with crockets, and finial. The other entrance is by means of a porch on the south side. The pulpit, reading desk, font, and reredos are of Caen stone, and the tracery and carving of all of them are finished in a most exquisite manner. The lectern is of fine proportions, standing on four lions of iron. It has a massive twisted shaft of brass, with a boss of iron, illuminated with vine leaves of polished brass; the head or desk part is of stained oak. The reredos is divided into seven parts, answering to the seven light window above, each part has an enriched canopy, and

three of the centre compartments project from and rise above the others, and are supported by richly traceried buttresses, with crockets and finials, the whole being surmounted by an enriched cornice, and Tudor flower battlement. At each end of this recess is a niche, with rich canopies, crocketed pinnacles and finials, in which are placed splendidly carved figures on pedestals. The panels of the communion table are filled in with diapered carving in relief, consisting of crosses, Tudor rose, fleur-de-lys, &c. The ceilings of the chancel and the Stamford chapel are divided into panels, with moulded ribs, and the tracery in the chancel is elaborately characteristic of the style, having a large boss in the centre compartment and pateræ at the intersection of the ribs. In the chancel are stained glass windows in memory of the Rev. John Kingsley, first vicar of the parish of St. Margaret's, which were placed there by the subscriptions of the congregation; and with the surplus, augmented to the necessary amount, the architectural beauties of the chancel were enhanced by permanent decorations of a costly character. The aisles and the chancel floors are laid with polished stone and black marble diamond dots; and the floor in front of the altar is paved with encaustic tiles of a chaste design. The arrangements for lighting are novel, and have been perfected with strict regard to the requirements of the style of the church. The standards for the nave rise from the floor, with illuminated stems; from these twisted shafts of wrought polished brass support four branches enriched with hammered foliage; the branches again support groups of lights; and above these round a central stem is a corona of metal work, having a circlet of stars of lights. The standards are arranged on each side of the nave, in advance of the piers, and all are visible, so that they produce a vista of light of singularly beautiful effect, in harmony with that architectural vista of nave and aisles for which the mediæval buildings are so remarkable. From the nave the eye is carried on to the chancel, in which are two standards of larger proportion and richer detail, rising from solid stone bases. The shafts have interlacing fretwork, picked out with colour, and the branches are entwined with leaves of the passion flower and buds formed of crystallines. When lighted, each standard presents a group of 20 brilliant stars. In addition to the memorial windows already noticed, others have been put in by Mr. Sidebotham, of Bowdon, in memory of his father and mother; by the Rev. R. Hodgson, in memory of his mother, Susan Ann Hodgson; and a third by Charles Heaton Hinde, Esq., in gratitude to God for restoration from a serious illness.

The tower contains a peal of ten bells, weighing upwards of six tons. The tenor bell weighs nearly 28 cwt., and bears the following inscription:—

As Queen of queens, Victoria reigns;
I sit as Queen o'er music's strains,
And may her subjects loyal be
As mine! we dwell in harmony.

The Earl of Stamford and Warrington, who is the patron of the living, for the purpose of endowing the church with a permanent provision, in addition to the pew rents, by an indenture dated March 30th, 1855, and made between him of the first part, Her Majesty's Commissioners for building new churches of the second part, and the Rev. George Heron, of Carrington, Samuel Holker Norris,

David Reynolds Davies, Legh Richmond, of Guilsborough Park, Northamptonshire, and the Rev. John Kingsley, of Dunham, of the third part, declared his intention to provide £80 per annum, to be secured upon a competent part of the Earl's freehold estate in Cheshire; and in satisfaction thereof, with the consent of the Commissioners, he had granted to those of the third part two several clear rent charges or annual sums of £43 15s. and £45, making together £88 15s; and to provide for the repairs of the church a yearly sum of £20, he had by the same indenture conveyed a clear yearly rent charge of £21 18s. 2d. to the said persons. It was directed by the Commissioners that 200 sittings in the church should continue for ever to be free sittings, subject to the appropriation of any part thereof, as the Lord Bishop, for the time being, should legally direct.

The first Vicar of St. Margaret's, the Rev. John Kingsley, died on the 13th Nov., 1869, at the age of 60. He came to Bowdon in 1833 as curate to the Rev. W. H. G. Mann, Vicar of Bowdon, which position he held for about 20 years. On resigning in 1854 the parishioners, as a mark of well-deserved respect, presented him with the handsome sum of £1,500. The Earl of Stamford presented him with the living on the consecration of St. Margaret's, and for a period of over 14 years he occupied this sphere. Through his efforts the schools attached to St. Margaret's were established, while he kept an immediate and vigilant supervision over the Albert-street school, and that at Oldfield. He was one of the leading spirits in connection with the Newtown night school, and one of his last acts was to write a form of prayer to be used in that school. His death was greatly lamented, as in the course of a long and active life he had been greatly beloved by all classes of society, to whom he had endeared himself by his many good qualities. The Rev. R. Hodgson, his successor, entered upon his duties in January, 1870, and he has proved himself in an eminent degree well fitted to discharge them satisfactorily to all concerned. His style of preaching is at once clear and convincing. No one can fail to be impressed by his sincerity and singleness of purpose. There is a manliness about all he says and does which gains for him universal respect. His private hospitality is only exceeded by his open-handed charity in the poorer portions of his parish; and in this he is ably supported by his good lady and a noble band of workers, who feel they have present

misery to deal with, and practical philanthropy to display.

St. John's Church, which is situated in Ashley Road, was built for the working classes, and justly claims the title of "the Poor Man's Church." The movement for its erection took an active form in April, 1864, when an influential committee of clergy and laity was appointed for the purpose of carrying out the object in view. The site was given by the Earl of Stamford and Warrington, and had previously been a farmstead. The Senior Curate of the Parish Church of Bowdon, the Rev. F. Wainwright, M.A., was appointed its incumbent; and in 1865, while the church was being built, services were held in the British School, so as to collect a congregation from the district around. The school was kindly lent by the trustees, and was specially licensed by the Bishop of Chester for the purpose.

The church, which was designed by Mr. Medland Taylor, of Manchester, is in the early English style of architecture. It has a broad nave of five bays, with north and south aisles, and north and south transepts. The seats are of stained pitch pine, and there are 940 sittings, of which 470 in the body of the church are free. There is a large gallery over the west entrance for the accommodation of the Sunday scholars. The edifice externally is of free stone, and the spire is a very handsome one. The total cost, including the endowment, was about £7,500. Near the church are erected National schools, and a substantial parsonage; and in Islington-street, Newtown, is an Infant School, in which mission services are also conducted.

The boundaries of the parish are as follow:—Taking Bowdon Station, which is entirely within the parish, as a starting point, the boundary line travels up the middle of the Downs for some distance, when it turns down St. John's Road, and then up Delamer Road, and round by a new road into Ashley Road, thus surrounding Albert Square and Culcheth New Hall. It then follows the middle of Ashley Road right through Peel Causeway and

over the Railway, till it turns aside at a stile and crosses the fields into Dob Lane, which it follows up to Hale Road. Then from the top of the hill it comes back by the way of Hale Road, till it turns to the right by a road and footpath leading to Hale Moss, opposite the end of Broomfield Lane. On the Moss there are two stones set up on purpose to mark the boundary line, which travels through the middle of the Moss along the bank of a brook which formerly ran into Moss Lane. From this last point the line goes up Denmark-street, and arrives again at the back of the station, where it began, by crossing the Goose Green Bridge. The circuit thus traced includes about 330 acres.

The antiquated structure, nearly facing the Ashley Road, which had in the first place given the Congregationalists a local habitation, if not a name, was destined in 1867, after the removal of the Altrincham congregation, to become the temporary home of Presbyterianism, for which good cause was shown by the residence of many Presbyterian families at Bowdon. On the 25th January, 1869, the Rev. W. T. Johnston, B.A., was ordained the first minister. In the following year (1870) his congregation began to look about for a site for a new church, which they secured in Delamer road, and which is known to old Altrinchamites as the "Radish field." The site was in every respect an eligible one; and the work of building, which was forthwith begun, was completed in 1872. The church, which is an ornament to the neighbourhood, is in the Gothic style of architecture, without any of the defects which are usually associated with that style. There is a tower at the north-west corner, 120 feet high. The interior has a most comfortable appearance, and is well suited to the wants of a congregation, which has assumed important dimensions in the course of a few years. The total cost of the church, with a spacious lecture hall adjoining, was between £6,000 and £7,000.

In 1872, this old chapel was taken in hand by another religious denomination (Baptist), which was introduced by the Manchester and Salford Baptist Union. The first

pastor was the Rev. H. J. Betts, and 26 persons formed the Church spiritual. Its constitution is "Baptist, with open Communion," and the seats are free. Its present minister is the Rev. W. S. Llewellyn, who is distinguished by great earnestness and practical piety. In 1878, the number of members having increased to nearly 100, the foundation stones of a new chapel and schools, to be erected in Hale-road from the designs of Mr. William Owen, a rising young architect, were laid. The building will be Italian in character, and will afford accommodation for nearly 500 persons.

The Roman Catholic Chapel of St. Vincent de Paul is a small Gothic building, in New-street, and will seat nearly 400 people. There are day schools in connection with it. For many years the Rev. H. Alcock laboured most assiduously, but ultimately had to retire in consequence of failing health. He was succeeded by the Rev. James O'Brien.

The only other important dissenting body is that of the Primitive Methodists, who for several years worshipped in the loft over a stable in Newtown. By the exercise of much self-denial and energy, they erected the neat little chapel in Oxford-road, and have now a resident minister, the Rev. J. Collins.





CHAPTER XIII.

More looks into old books—Visit of strolling players—Disappearance of town documents—Appointment of town's attorney—Wages a century ago—Disturbances in Altrincham—Another Altrincham industry—The fire engine—The old handcuffs—A jury list—The expenses of the great well—Altrincham highways indicted—Hard times; a display of public spirit—The select vestry—Extracts from the books; a stray parcel of gloves—How the town got a sun dial—Substitutes for the Militia—Disrespect for proclamations—A worthy overseer—Dread of hydrophobia, &c.

WE have looked at Altrincham in nearly all its aspects—social, historical, and romantic. We will now deal briefly with some of the more domestic phases of its existence as a country town. The general minute book available for this purpose commences in June, 1795. This appears to be the first kept by the authorities, but there is some little doubt existing owing to the fact that a company of strolling players once visited the town. They were allowed to place the boxes containing their “properties” in the little building which then served as a courthouse. When they departed they took along with them a few of the boxes containing the town accounts, to the extreme regret of those who had been entrusted with their safe keeping. That the minute book is the first may be inferred from the fact that one of the entries at the opening meeting, records “that a town’s meeting be held

in the Court house till further orders, at ten o'clock in the forenoon of the first Tuesday in every month, without any further or any notice." At the succeeding monthly meeting, the town resolved to indulge in the luxury of a lawyer, or rather firm of lawyers; but it appeared afraid of showing its full blown dignity in perfection, for it states "that when an attorney is necessary to be employed by the overseer, that Messrs. Isaac and George Worthington be employed for Altrincham, when they will undertake to be so employed." There was then no resident magistrate, and the overseer had often to journey to Toft and Knutsford in order to lay informations, ask advice, and get confirmation of rates; or as they are invariably called in the books, "leys." Soon afterwards, we find a prospect of employment for the Messrs. Worthington. It was "ordered that as Matthew Davies, though he receives *eight shillings* a week wages, refuses to pay one and sixpence towards his wife and child's support, that the overseer do apply to the magistrates to compel him to pay the above weekly sum, or that he be dealt with according to law." At the same meeting, it was "ordered that ten shillings be paid to Thomas Slater, for his loss of rent by the house late held by Wm. Holt standing empty." Those must, indeed, have been halcyon days for the landlords, and no doubt a few in our degenerate age will, in this respect, sigh for a return of "the good old times."

Riots, as minor disturbances were termed, were not frequent, but the manner in which Saturday night was sometimes spent is illustrated by the fact that informations were ordered to be lodged before "John Leigh, Esq., of Oughtrington, against William Johnson, of Altrincham, turner, Charles Rowbottom, of Altrincham, shoemaker, William Royle, of Altrincham, gardener, Joseph Warburton, of Timperley, labourer, Newton Coppock, of Altrincham, labourer, and John Ogden, of Boilington, woolcomber, for rioting and fighting in ye public street in Altrincham, on Saturday, the 30th day of April last, (1796) and that the constables do proceed accordingly."

In the minute book the word "chairmaker" is crossed out after Johnson's name, and it may be inferred from this that chairmaking probably formed an Altrincham industry at that period. The prosecution of these men was not undertaken without due deliberation; and Mr. Leigh, of Oughtrington, advised that they be proceeded against, and the constables were directed to take steps accordingly. As a further warning, it was ordered that "advertisements be printed making public this resolution, that others may be deterred from offending in like manner." The handcuffs, however, do not appear to have been called into frequent requisition, but with a view to eventualities, the constables were instructed to have them examined "by a whitesmith, and if they can be properly repaired to get them so repaired—if not the constables are ordered to purchase a new pair of handcuffs." The overseers had not then an assistant who could relieve them of the drudgery of their duties, and at times much difficulty was experienced in securing a proper audit of the accounts. The salary usually allowed was £20, but in some instances as much as £25 was paid. There was a fire engine in the town in 1798, but no regular brigade of firemen. It was ordered to be worked four times a year, and five shillings was allowed each time to get men to assist in working it. At this period we come across a list (the only one given) of persons qualified to serve on juries in the township of Altrincham, October 1st, 1798, as returned by Joshua Ashcroft and Walter Watson, constables. It will form an interesting matter for comparison at the present time :—

William Rigby, Esq.
John Clough
Thomas Hancock
Peter Adshead
J. Brundrett
Wm. Pearson
John Darbyshire
Is. Grantham
John Atherton

Robert Twamlow
Samuel Haslam
Josiah Garner
John Burgess
Oswd. Leicester
Joseph Goulden
Samuel Hardy
Wm. Pownall
Jos. Burgess

John Brierley	George Lupton
Willm. Ashley	Wm. Grantham
Jams. Brownell	Aaron Brundrett
Jams. Cluloe	Thomas Ashley
John Austin	John Newall
Wm. Smith	Isaac Birch
Vernon Poole	Michl. Lupton
Robt. Mills	Jams. Walthew
Timothy Brownell	Frederick Boardman
Thos. Royle	John Holden
Wm. Howard	James Gratrix
Samuel Howard	Peter Bayley
Geo. Eccles	Samuel Lucas
Thomas Slater	David Gatley
James Broom	Willm. Seddon
Samuel Royle	James Potter

For a long period subsequently there appears to have been nothing but routine business transacted at the town's meetings; but in the year 1800 the constables were ordered to "cause three painted boards to deter vagrants from harbouring in the town, to be fixed upon John Burgess's house, John Pickstone's house, and the Unicorn Stables, and that the constables do search and examine the lodging-houses, and use their best endeavours to prevent their harbouring in the town." This had only a temporary effect, and on several occasions various measures were devised for ridding the town of the vagrant nuisance, and lodging-house keepers were threatened with indictment if they offended. The deputy constables were empowered where necessary to relieve vagrants provided with passes, prevent them acquiring settlement, or take them before the magistrates as they might deem necessary. At a later period, watchmen paraded the streets in the day time to prevent these unwelcome strangers from coming into the town. The meetings were convened by the various officials. For instance, if the constables required any authority to take proceedings, they requested the bellman to convene a meeting, and so with the overseers. It is seldom we find the surveyors of highways doing this, but it was obvious that at times the inhabitants were required to "mend their ways." At a town's meeting held in July,

1802, it was "resolved that the surveyors be desired to purchase stones to pave the road to Ashley and the Long Lane as far as lies in Altrincham division, and that they procure a ley of sixpence in the pound to be allowed at a privy sessions, and to be assessed on ye inhabitants and owners and occupiers of land in Altrincham for the purchasing stones for such paving, and that when the said ley is expended, a further ley of threepence in the pound be assessed and got allowed, and that the remainder of the money wanted for the above purpose be borrowed on a note, to be signed by some of the principal inhabitants of Altrincham, which shall be repaid out of the next money raised for the repairs of the highways." It took upwards of four years to do the work, and it must have been much more expensive than at first contemplated, several rates having to be obtained for that purpose. The accounts of the surveyor at this period contain a list of payments "respecting the great well." This was situated in Well Lane, (now Victoria Street), at the corner of Springfield Road, and was a spring of running water, clear as crystal, and from this the inhabitants derived the greatest portion of their supply, although there were two or three other wells in different parts of the town. The "great well" was, however, of some importance, as the amount paid for its repairs to various parties at one time was £13 os. 4d.

The lands of the poor house were at this time productive; and Mr. Leicester, as trustee, having a balance in his hands "of £16, or thereabouts," it was resolved that he be desired to pay the same to Mr. Robert Twemlow, the overseer, for the use of the poor of Altrincham.

In the course of the next few years the entries of disturbances in the town are more frequent, and in some cases the constables were assaulted. The offenders were invariably ordered to be indicted, after the advice of a magistrate had been sought thereon. Several cases were compromised on their paying certain amounts; entering into recognizances to keep the peace for stated periods, and signing acknowledgments to be "advertised in the

public papers," the latter fact indicating that nearly ninety years ago, the press was beginning to be looked upon as a power in the land. Something out of the ordinary course of things occurred in June, 1814, when a public meeting was summoned in hot haste, with the following result :—

"Whereas, several persons made a great noise and disturbance in the town last night, and in several instances did considerable mischief, ordered that the constables do use their best exertions to discover who the parties were, and that they do prosecute them at the expense of the town in case sufficient evidence can be obtained; and the constables are hereby authorized to give a reward of five guineas to any person or persons who will come forward to give evidence that shall lead to a conviction of the offenders—it being understood that such reward shall be in lieu of that which has been offered by Mr. Salmon and Mr. Lupton this day."

It was just probable that this was the outcome of a drunken frolic in which the participators went much further than they intended. There does not appear to be any payment of any reward made, so that the perpetrators of the mischief escaped scot free.

In 1815 a presentment was made at the Quarter Sessions on the shocking state of the roads in Altrincham. A largely attended town's meeting directed the Surveyor to appear and submit to the presentment, and "that he request the attendance of two of the magistrates to view the roads and to approve of the mode to be taken for their amendment, and that Mr. Barratt, Mr. Hardey, Mr. Gratrix, Mr. Hugo Worthington, and Mr. Isaac Harrop, with the surveyor, be appointed a committee to meet the magistrates and to advise on the best mode to be taken for the repair of the said roads," &c. This would seem to imply an exhaustion on the part of the town which it has not probably experienced since. Taxes of all descriptions were oppressive, as also were the rates levied for the relief of the poor. The succeeding winter was "a hard one," and a meeting

was specially called in December, 1816, to consider the position of affairs. Occasionally it had been found necessary to subscribe for periods of scarcity. The Rev. Oswald Leicester, minister of St. George's Chapel, as it was then termed, presided, and the first resolution affirmed "that the pressure of the times renders it necessary that relief should be extended to the resident poor within the township of Altrincham, in addition to the usual payments from the poor rates." The second resolution gave it as the opinion of the meeting that the best mode of affording such relief would be to provide as much work as possible for such of the poor as were out of employ, "and also by purchasing provisions out of a fund to be raised by public subscription, and selling the same to the aforesaid poor at a reduced price, care being taken in avoiding as much as may be those articles of food which are the dearest." Other resolutions provided for the appointment of a committee to superintend the raising and distribution of subscriptions, for the employment of the poor "in opening the drains and making good the roads on Hale Moss," and in the repairing of the highways, and each individual in the town was recommended "to create as much employment for the labouring poor as possible." Four years afterwards the canal was frozen over, and on that occasion, as the poor could not pay the high price at which coals were sold which were carted from the pits, the Overseer was authorized to purchase such coals as might be necessary, and to sell them to the poor "at the price of eightpence per hundredweight, taking care that no family do have more than two hundred at one time or within the same week, unless under special circumstances." It will be seen from this that there was no lack of public spirit in the town.

Although at times the authorities having the management of affairs had to be indicted, or threatened with indictment, for not having the footpaths kept in proper repair, there are evidences all through the book of a desire for progress and improvement. Considering the diffi-

culties under which they laboured, it is not be wondered at that progress was slow. With a small population the burthen thrown on the few was heavy, and often the funds raised by the leys proved inadequate for attaining the object in view. The discretion allowed the officials was such as could not always admit of being wisely exercised, and for some years prior to the formation of a Select Vestry for dealing with the poor, a special committee was appointed to superintend the overseer, investigate his accounts, and to regulate the relief given to the poor. The overseers were ordered to make up their accounts quarterly and lay them before the committee, which was empowered to publish the names of all persons receiving relief in such manner as might be deemed proper. This was only the prelude to a more regularly constituted body, a Select Vestry, alluded to in the next chapter, which was formed in 1822. Their accounts were settled at different town's meetings. The town progressed to such a degree in the course of a few years that it was enabled to engage a qualified man as surveyor, and the salary of the deputy constable was made up to £30, out of which he had to pay an assistant. The latter portion of the book is taken up almost entirely by records of the proceedings of the Select Vestry, but there are scattered up and down characteristic entries which will be read with interest:—

“7th June, 1796. Ordered that the overseer of the poor with John Burgess's assistance do immediately take an exact inventory of a parcel of gloves, &c., directed for the Overseer of Altrincham, and this day produced to the meeting, and that the overseer do take care thereof until he receives further directions from a town's meeting.”

“6th December, 1796. Ordered that the overseer do advertise the parcel of gloves in his hands suppos'd to be the property of Mr. Thomas Taylor, and if not owned, that he dispose of them for the town's use.”

“23rd July, 1797. Ordered that Aaron Brundrett be directed to sell a quantity of gloves now in his hands, supposed to belong to Thomas Taylor, now in the poor house, and

that he place the produce to the credit of ye town in his accounts."

"29th April, 1802. Ordered that James Potter having in his hands as a former constable 16s. 1d., he do pay over ye same to the overseer of the poor.—Ordered that as the late constables have applied to John Leigh, Esq., respecting their accounts, that Mr. Leicester, Mr. Hardey and Mr. Burgess be requested to wait on Mr. Leigh to state what they know respecting their accounts, and do get Mr. Leigh to settle the same.—Ordered that in future the constables do not collect money by a ley, but that orders be made at town's meetings upon the overseer for what money may be proper for the constables."

"7th June, 1803. Resolved that the constables be directed to take the necessary steps to apprehend any person who may be guilty of tearing or pulling from the Court House any proclamations or papers affixed thereto by or by order of the constables."

"21st April, 1807. Resolved that the thanks of the meeting be given to Mr. Robert Twemlow for his essential services to the township as overseer of the poor for four years past, and that he be requested to instruct Thomas Bradbury in the said office, and that Thomas Bradbury be allowed for the ensuing year the salary of ten pounds, and that it shall depend upon his activity and good conduct in his office, whether he shall be allowed a further sum of five pounds or not, and that Mr. Twemlow is not to have any salary."

"8th June, 1813. The overseers having laid before this meeting the accounts of the expenses of providing two substitutes in the Cheshire militia in the place of Ballantine and Parker, to whose families large sums were payable weekly by this township, which expenses and the bounty paid to the substitutes amount to ninety-one pounds and eightpence, towards which Mr. Twemlow has advanced the sum of £79 2s. 8d., ordered that the overseers be allowed the said expenses in his accounts, and that he do repay to Mr. Twemlow the money ad-

vanced by him with interest thereon until the same shall be repaid."

"15th July, 1813. John Boardman having proposed to make a new sundial on the Court House upon a mahogany inchboard for two pounds ten shillings, and to be inspected when done by any competent judge, and if defective in any respect, nothing to be paid for it, ordered that John Boardman's proposal be accepted."

"31st January, 1814. It appearing that one man is wanted for this town in the Royal Congleton Regiment of Local Militia, ordered that the constable do provide a substitute, provided one can be obtained, for two guineas, which the overseer is hereby directed to pay."

"1816. Agreed at a public town's meeting held this ninth day of December, 1816, in the Court House, Altrincham . . . that such persons within the said township, who are liable to be balloted for to-morrow, to serve in the militia, and who shall subscribe ten shillings a piece, to be deposited in the hands of Mr. William Ashley, to be applied by him, with the assistance of Mr. Nathaniel Pass, in hiring substitutes for such of the said subscribers of ten shillings a piece, as may then be balloted, shall be freed from any further sums on that account; and that the surplus money, if any, wanted to hire such substitutes of ten shillings a piece shall be paid by the overseers of the poor, and be allowed by them in their accounts."

"5th February, 1822. It having been stated to this meeting that the surveyors of the highways are repairing with hard material the back lane leading from the Navigation Inn to Jeremy's o' th' Brook, ordered that the surveyors are hereby instructed not to proceed in repairing that road with hard materials."

"23rd April, 1822. It is the unanimous opinion of this meeting that it is expedient to appoint a select vestry for managing the concerns of the poor of this township, pursuant to the provisions of the 59th George the Third, chapter 12."

“18th May, 1824. At a public meeting of the inhabitants of the township of Altrincham, held in the Court House, for the purpose of considering the best means of putting a stop to the alarming increase of mad dogs in this neighbourhood, and which meeting was convened by public notices affixed upon public places within the town, and also by proclamation by the bellman resolved that in the opinion of this meeting that all dogs kept by the inhabitants of Altrincham should not be permitted to go at large, but kept confined within the buildings or yards of the owners until the first September next, and that all dogs found at large after due notice subsequent to this day and until first September next should be destroyed.

There are two other volumes of minute books, one of which is taken up entirely by the proceedings of the Select Vestry, and the other by the operations of the Inspectors under the Lighting and Watching Act, both of which will be found referred to in the next, and concluding chapter.





CHAPTER XIV.

Description of Altrincham and Bowdon 50 years ago—The old Market Place; its ancient cross, lock-ups, and star chamber—Higher Town boys v. those of Lower Town—The town field—An Altrincham Carnival—The loyalty of the town—The first Altrincham undertaker—Altrincham woolcombers and their Bishop Blaize festival—Bowdon bull baiters, and Altrincham cockfighters—Salt works at Dunham—The destruction of small birds—The churchwardens and their duties—Formation of the Altrincham Poor Law Union; the old workhouse and its management—Cutting of the Bowdon line—Lloyd's Hospital—Introduction of coal gas into Altrincham—Formation of the Gas Company; negotiations for the purchase of the works and their results—Altrincham and Bowdon Literary Institution; the Altrincham and Bowdon Local Boards—Concluding remarks.

THIS chapter, as it brings us down to the present time, may be appropriately opened with a sketch of Altrincham and Bowdon half a century ago. The reader will therefore take a walk with us in imagination, while some of their peculiarities are described. Meeting, say, in the old Market Place, we find that it is called the Market Place still, though most of its landmarks have disappeared. In the centre formerly stood a small "public," known to posterity as the Roundabout House; and almost under its shadow were the old lockups, or dungeon, through the barred windows of which the prisoners confined therein could be seen. These unfortunates were objects of great curiosity to the children, who, with bated breath and



Market Place, Alexandria

1854

timid mien, peered in at them on their way to school; while to their intimate friends they were the objects of much tender solicitude, as they frequently received, through the medium of pipes and straws, surreptitious supplies of beverages, which were supposed to lighten the gloom of their prison house, and raise their spirits for the hour of trial. Those more favoured by wealth and position, who might by mischance come within the clutches of the local Dogberry, could, by the judicious bestowal of a small sum, avail themselves of the privileges of the "star chamber," which was an upstairs room in an adjacent public-house, and where they could have the creature comforts they required. Usually, the zealous constable removed the clothes of the prisoners while confined in the "star chamber;" but they in some cases have been known to effect their escape in the garb which nature provided for man in his state of innocency, to the great consternation of the not overwatchful gaoler. Near the lockups were the stocks, an old form of punishment which might be revived to advantage in some cases in the present day; and near this again was the ancient Market Cross, which was approached by five or six stone steps, similar to those in the other market towns of Cheshire. This cross stood for about 100 years after having been rebuilt and made new in 1730, by order of the Right Hon. George, Earl of Warrington, who gave five pounds towards this object. On pain of a fine of 3s. 4d., all sellers of cheese and butter were compelled to bring their produce to the Cross before selling, and no shopkeeper or forestaller was, in any instance, to buy any in his or her shop, and not at the Cross before two o'clock in the day, when the townsfolk had supplied their wants. Shopkeepers have been fined for breaches of this regulation, and others ordered to be indicted at the sessions. But roundabout house, lockups, stocks, and cross are all gone. The old lockups were succeeded by a more secure building, in George-street (now used as a meeting house) which, in its turn, gave place to the more convenient and conspicuous edifice in Dunham-road.

Church-street took its name from the fact of St. George's Church being built in the vicinity; and a little way down were the Town Fields. These fields were then more appropriately named, as they were used for a variety of purposes. Here the youthful sons of Altrincham met to settle their little differences. They were divided into two factions—Higher Town boys and Lower Town boys—and they were animated with deadly animosity, the battles royal which often ensued being long and loudly contested. It was in the immediate neighbourhood, too, some 60 or 70 years ago, that an outburst of loyalty worthy of the good old town took place. It occurred at a time when Wellington had driven the French out of the Peninsula, and Napoleon had been overthrown by the allies at the battle of Leipsic. A town's meeting was called, and it was the unanimous opinion that a—

General rejoicing should take place in consequence of the recent glorious news and the present state of public affairs, and at the adjournment of this meeting it be considered what mode shall be adopted for that purpose, so as to give the most general joy and satisfaction.

At the adjournment it was decided that—

A subscription be opened for a bon-fire and fireworks, on the evening of Monday next, in the Bowling Green field; and that Mr. Race, Mr. Collier, Mr. Reddish, and Mr. Barratt be requested to undertake the management of them, with the assistance of the constables; and that the bon-fire be lighted at five o'clock in the evening and be extinguished at ten o'clock, and that the fireworks begin at seven o'clock.

That a public dinner be held at the Bowling Green Inn, on Monday next, at two o'clock, for which tickets shall be taken at 12s. each, on or before Saturday next, and that Mr. Race, Mr. Collier, Mr. Reddish, and Mr. Barratt, be requested to undertake the management of the dinner.

That a subscription be now opened for the purposes aforesaid (exclusive of the dinner), and be paid to Mr. Barratt, with whom the paper shall be left for further subscriptions.

That the Rev. Oswald Leicester be requested to take the chair at the dinner.

The town was justly entitled to celebrate this red-letter epoch in our country's history in a manner befitting the occasion. It had always done its duty loyally. So early as 1796 we find the inhabitants meeting in pursuance of an Act of Parliament for "raising a certain number of

men in the several counties in England for the service of His Majesty's army and navy." Altrincham had to provide, jointly with Agden, three men; and it was decided that a general subscription should be entered into for the relief of any poor man who might be drawn in the ballot, the balance required being paid out of the town's rates. Any person not entering the subscription was not entitled to any relief. In 1803, seven men were required, "five and a half" from Altrincham and "one and a half" from Ashley. Five men were hired at a cost of £25 18s. 6d. each, and two by John Mills and John Barratt at a cost of £21 10s. each. Towards the total amount, Ashley paid £36 19s. 10½d., John Mills and John Barratt £43, and Altrincham the balance. In some towns each person had to find a substitute out of his own purse, or go to the wars himself; so that in this town a very sensible course was adopted whereby the rich came to the aid of their less favoured brethren. The lieges of Altrincham thoroughly enjoyed themselves on the occasion. An old inhabitant now, but a boy then, remembers the ends of several barrels being knocked in, in order that the beer might the more readily be got at, and become the means of diffusing "general joy and satisfaction." The Bowling Green has long since been converted into a private dwelling.

Returning to the town proper, the visitor would have looked for Stamford-street in vain. The site was covered with gardens. A short cut into Lower Town was effected by means of a narrow roadway near, known as the "Hollow Bonk" or Bank; but the thoroughfare was by Windy harbour, (afterwards called King-street, then High-street, finally Market-street,) and down Shaw's-lane. In those days news had to be carried by post chaise, and it was no uncommon thing for the shafts of some rapidly driven vehicle to be sent into the door of one of the large mansions in Market-street in the attempt to get into Church-street. It was not until a fatal accident occurred that the more direct route into Dunham-road was made by Brooks's Bank. Pursuing our way through the "narrows" and down Shaw's-

lane we arrive in George-street, then a cobble or kidney paved length, containing a number of thatched cottages and two or three farm houses. What is now Moss-lane was then styled Ham-lane. Lower down was Well-street, so called from a large well which was situated near the Literary Institution, and from which the inhabitants pumped a portion of their daily supply of water. The Malt Shovels Inn was a barn, and the not very salubrious region of Police-street is still familiarly known as back o'th' barn.

Retracing our steps into George-street, we pass Beggar's Square, which consisted of one or two neat-looking white-washed cottages. A little higher up was a farm house, the occupier of which has some claim to the notice of posterity. He was named Michael Drinkwater, and may fairly be set on a pedestal of his own as the first Altrincham undertaker! He had three horses—Bobby, Mettle, and Boxer, and he very generously gave the services, when required, of one of these valuable quadrupeds to draw the parish hearse, the only one which the town possessed—to Bowdon. "Goose Green," as the name will imply, was formerly the assembling place for numerous flocks of these toothsome creatures, which were allowed to roam at large on Hale Moss, and the feeding of which formed a very profitable branch of business to several of the inhabitants.

The mention of business leads us to digress a little to describe a custom once kept up in Altrincham, but which, like many others, has long since died out. This is the festival of St. Blaise, or more properly Blasius, and it will enable us to realize to some extent the meaning of the phrase we meet with in directories that "Altrincham formerly enjoyed a considerable trade in woollen yarn." St. Blasius was a bishop of Sebaste, in Armenia, and suffered martyrdom A.D. 316. He is the patron saint of the craft of woolcombers, and his name was once considered potent in curing sore throats. There were a large number of woolcombers in Altrincham, some of the masters employing as many as 30 men, and the Bishop Blaise festival was often celebrated with great splendour. The procession was headed by a band of music, and,

surrounded by guards, were a King and Queen, Jason, and the princess Medea, the principal figure being the Bishop himself, furnished with a pastoral crook, and attended by his chaplain. Following these were shepherds, shepherdesses, swains attired in bright green, and woolcombers wearing old-fashioned and full-flowing wigs of combed wool. At some convenient point, a piece written for the occasion was recited to the following effect:—

Hail to the day, whose kind auspicious rays,
Deigned first to smile on famous Bishop Blaize!
To the great author of our combing trade
This day's devoted and due honours paid
To him whose fame Britain's isle resounds,—
To him whose goodness to the poor abounds.
Long shall his name in British annals shine,
And grateful ages offer at his shrine!
By this, our trade, are thousands daily fed,
By it supplied with means to earn their bread.
In various forms our trade its work imparts;
In different methods and by different arts
Prevents from starving, indigents distressed;
As combers, spinners, weavers and the rest.
We boast no gems, nor costly garments vain,
Borrowed from India or the coast of Spain;
Our native soil with wool our trade supplies,
While foreign countries envy us the prize.
No foreign broil our common good annoys,
Our country's product all our art employs;
Our fleecy flocks abound in every vale,
Our bleating lambs proclaim the joyful tale.
So let not Spain with us attempt to vie,
Nor India's wealth pretend to soar so high;
Nor Jason pride him in his Colchian spoil,
By hardship gain'd and enterprising toil;
Since Britons all with ease attain the prize,
And every hill resounds with golden cries.
To celebrate our founder's great renown
Our shepherd and our shepherdess we crown;
For England's commerce, and for George's sway,
Each loyal subject give a loud Huzza!

Bishop Blaize is remembered by few, and machinery has superseded hand combing, and has long had the best of the race.

Having disposed of our friends the woolcombers, we pass on,

and leaving Goose Green come to the Cock Ring near to Denmark-street, where on Shrove Tuesday and at Easter the people of Altrincham "enjoyed" the game of cock fighting. Pinfold Brow is now Lloyd-street; and Ashley-road was but a lane from which an uninterrupted view of the country to Hale Carr could be obtained. At the foot of the Downs was an old white house surrounded by a large garden, called the Dog Kennels, where a pack of harriers was kept. By way of the Downs, where the first houses were built (near the entrance to New-street,) by Manchester merchants, who were not slow to discover the advantages of this suburban retreat, we pass Turf-lane, now St. Margaret's-road, and reach the aristocratic Firs, then familiarly known as "Burying-lane," with its projecting trees forming an umbrageous avenue on either side, through which the old church of Bowdon could be seen in the distance. Up this roadway, which a cart could scarcely pass over, once rumbled the old stage coach, the sand trickled down its sides, and the children from the town resorted thither for the purpose of gathering the blackberries, which grew in tempting profusion in the thick hedgerows. One or two of its splendid fir trees still remain, but their gradual disappearance and the more modernised style which prevails has robbed what was once a lovely picture of its arcadian simplicity.

In a field near the Firs races were held at Wakes time, in which women took an active part. A common prize was a smock or shift, and in a programme of Bowdon Wakes published in the early part of the century there occurred the following:—"The same day a race for a good holland smock by ladies of all ages, the second best to have a handsome satin ribbon. No lady will be allowed to strip any further than the smock before starting." There must surely have been a good deal of competition to have rendered such a rule necessary, to say the least of it. While cock fighting was congenial to Altrincham, bull baiting was the recognized pastime at Bowdon. The noble tree which up to a few years ago stood in front of the Griffin Inn, has at times had its branches crowded with venturesome spectators, who gazed with great delight on the

scene below. There, tied to a stake, was the poor animal, and forming a circle round it were men with ferocious bulldogs, which were let loose upon it. The dog which oftenest "pinned" the bull, that is gripped it until it went down on its knees bellowing with agony, was awarded the palm of victory—a brass collar. It was owing to the efforts of one of Bowdon's good Vicars, the Rev. Jas. T. Law, that the brutal custom was abolished.

There will be little difficulty in distinguishing Higher from Lower Bowdon; and Stamford-road is still well known as Sandy-lane; but few will remember Heald or Yeald Common, near Heald-road, with a sheet of water in the centre, while fewer still will recognize Bowdon Moss, as being only a stone's throw of the splendid College near Langham-road, and where within a few years many specimens of bog oak have been found. These specimens are in an excellent state of preservation, and the possessor of a quantity, Mr. Eli Morgan, of Stamford Cottage, had it made up into two neat hall chairs, which were shown at one of the exhibitions of works of art, &c. held in Altrincham. Rose Hill was then a play-ground for the Bowdon children, and Richmond Hill was unknown. Having made a fair circuit, which will enable the reader to form an idea of the rustic appearance of the place at that period, we proceed to deal with other matters associated with its rise and progress.

Salt works once existed at Dunham Massey, where there is probably one of those isolated springs of brine which are to be found in some formations in different parts of the country, and which, so far as the brine is concerned, is as strong as that at Northwich or Winsford. Those who know the dreary aspect imparted to the face of nature by the establishment of these works, leaving out of the question the damage to property by subsidence, will scarcely crave for active operations in this district.

This period, too, was the one when farmers looked upon small birds as determined enemies to their crops; and the small boys of the place received a large amount in the way of head money, the constable awarding certain sums for

sparrows and for eggs. Sometimes this was done by proxy, as at one of the public town's meetings,—

It was ordered that the constables do pay out of the constable rates, such sums of money as may be paid by Mr. Leicester for sparrows killed and brought to him, and that he be allowed to pay such sums for sparrows as he may think proper and necessary.

While the small boys were busy with the birds, the churchwardens on Sundays were busy with the boys, or rather with the loiterers, who preferred the public-house to the church. These functionaries were often seen with their staves of office to issue from the sacred fold, and drive any wandering sheep in. For this purpose they scrupulously searched the public-houses, and there are cynics in the present day mean enough to insinuate that this was not their only object.

The Altrincham Union for Poor Law purposes was formed in 1835. For a long time prior to this attempts had been made to deal with the constantly increasing pauperism of the country. The system of out-door relief had led to oppressive poor rates. For Altrincham the workhouse was situated at Broadheath, having been built in 1756. This was carried on for a great number of years under the direction of trustees, although the inhabitants in public meeting appeared to influence their course of procedure to a great extent. At times there were sinister rumours as to its management, and on one occasion several gentlemen were appointed to make an investigation. They reported "that the woman who acts as governess says she is well acquainted with every article received into the house. She says all in the house have great plenty of what is good and useful, they have butchers' meat three times a week; that which was in the house was very good, and so also was the butter. The bread is very good, and the gentlemen so appointed are fully satisfied that the provisions are good and sufficient." In 1822 a Select Vestry was formed in Altrincham, and the administration of the Poor Law progressed another stage. In their first report the members express considerable satisfaction that they have reduced the amount paid in relief. They

indulge in a hope that a still further reduction will be made, and that the sentiments of honest independence by which the poor of this country were once characterized will gradually revive amongst them; and "that their own exertions, aided by the occasional advice and assistance of their richer neighbours" (a nice way of putting a pauperizing principle) "will always remain their surest support in the hour of distress and sickness." This pleasant piece of moonshine is concluded by an appeal to the members of the Select Vestry to attend in large numbers for the future. In the course of the following year the business of manufacturing was commenced at the workhouse at Broadheath, when five looms were started, and the net earnings which accrued in this way and the labour of one of the inmates reached the sum of £20 15s. in about five months. "In a word," continues the report (this was the second issued), "the workhouse promises under good management to be a source of profit to the township; and as none of the inmates who are capable of work are suffered to be idle, but, on the contrary, are encouraged to be industrious, the hope may be entertained, that should the number of them increase the advantage will be augmented in the same proportion." The accounts for this period, therefore, show an indiscriminate mixture of warps and weft, of healds, and shafts and shuttles, with buttermilk, salt, smocks and frocks, and crockery; but in spite of these glowing accounts, there was, not many years afterwards, a rate of three shillings in the pound laid for Poor Law purposes, the assessment of the town at this time being £3,500. Probably the expenditure was greatly reduced in subsequent years; for in an abstract of the receipts and payments concerning the workhouse of the township of Altrincham, in 1831, the expenditure for 30 weeks is given at £52 1s. 4d. Another entry shows the average number of inmates to have been 14 1-15, the cost of victualling per week 1s. 6½d., clothing 1s. 8½d.; and these with other incidental expenses, made a total of 3s. 5½d. per head per week. For this amount, as we have already seen, the paupers were allowed the luxury of "flesh mate," as

butcher's meat is spoiled in the accounts, three times a week. Speaking of "flesh mate" reminds us that on one occasion the visitors appointed by the Vestry were directed to purchase a piece of beef, not exceeding 12 pounds, to be sent down to the workhouse for a feast on New Year's day, "and that a glass of ale be allowed to such of the inmates as the governor may think fit to allow such an indulgence."

For some time, however, matters did not work smoothly in local bumbledom. The governor, notwithstanding his numerous privileges and handsome salary (£10 a year) was a man of hasty temper, as governors of the old stamp are said by tradition to have been. At one of the meetings of the select vestry, Mr. John Lupton informed his fellow members that he had been grossly insulted by the governor, who had threatened to strike him! Such conduct could not of course be permitted. He was ordered to appear before them, and produced Mr. John Warren, who, he said, was fully acquainted with the circumstances. Mr. Warren, however, knew nothing of the matter, beyond that the governor was in a state of "extreme intoxication" at the time. The tables being thus unexpectedly turned, the governor admitted what was said to be correct, and added that "he did not know how the thing began or ended," and having apologized his offence was overlooked.

But this governor was soon in greater difficulties than ever. At a meeting held on the 21st May, 1828, the overseer of the poor intimated that the governess of the workhouse had fled, "taking her clothes with her, that her husband does not know where she is gone, or whether she means to return." The vestry was very accommodating. The overseer was directed "to keep an eye to the workhouse," the governor in the meantime to go in search of his runaway spouse,—if he should so feel inclined. Whether he departed on this mission or not does not appear; but a week afterwards it is reported that the governess has not yet returned, "nor is there any probability she will return." This was more than the vestry could submit to. The governor was instantly discharged, and when

appointing a successor great cautiousness was evinced, inasmuch as it was stipulated that if the new governor and governess did not come up to expectation, they would be expected to quit the house and give up the situation in a month. They gave satisfaction; for soon afterwards it was "Resolv'd that this meeting is of opinion that the governor of the workhouse be allowed to occupy and use one of the looms in the weaving shop for the purpose of weaving in himself, and that he be allow'd to take to his own the earnings therefrom, he having requested that such liberty should be allow'd to him." This governor was Mr. George Dean, for many years a postman, and is still living.

We will now draw a veil over the difficulties of the Select Vestry in respect of workhouse management; and on turning to the outdoor system, we find it was not distinguished by that economy which is usually looked for. The rents of different parties were paid, and to such an extent was this carried, that on several occasions it became a question of compounding with the landlords in a body. This was not, however, confined to the town. The overseers had often to go great distances to extricate Altrincham men and women, who were unable to meet their engagements. The entries, too, are sometimes mysterious. For instance, the Government Auditor now-a-days would probably require to have the meaning of the following fully explained:—

Resolved, upon the application of (name given) that a donation of £3 be made to him to enable him to liberate himself from some difficulty under which it appears to this meeting he is at present labouring.

For some time after the formation of the Union, the meetings of the Guardians were held at Altrincham, which place was considered the most central and convenient, and from this circumstance the Union obtained its name. Difficulties, however, arose, more particularly in the acquisition of a proper site for the Union Workhouse which was ultimately built at Knutsford. Altrincham is represented by three Guardians; Bowdon and Dunham Massey by two

each. There are 39 townships in the Union, returning 45 Guardians.

In July, 1845, the Act for making the Manchester, South Junction, and Altrincham Railway was passed. It authorized the raising of £400,000 (£133,333 by loans) for a length of nine miles thirty chains. By this Act the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company were authorized to subscribe £175,000, and subsequently the same Company, in conjunction with the London and North-Western Railway Company, purchased the Earl of Ellesmere's original share in the South Junction and Altrincham line—the Earl undertaking to stop the plying of the “swift” passenger boat on the Bridgewater Canal, when the railway was opened. Hitherto this packet boat had formed the only means of “swift”—as it was certainly thought then—communication with Manchester, and judging from the remarks made at that time concerning the canal, which was described as “black and filthy,” winding like some huge snake amongst the meadows, emitting an exceedingly offensive and noisome stench, the formation of the new line would no doubt be hailed with joy and gladness. The railway is divided into two portions, the South Junction line and the Altrincham line. The first-named is one and three quarter miles in length, commencing at London-road Station, curving from west to east along the south side of the town, and connects every railway, having its terminus in Manchester, the one with the other. Ground for the construction of both lines was broken near Knott Mill, about six months after the passing of the Act, but for a period of a year and a half the works were paralysed, chiefly owing to want of funds, the commercial crisis, and the state of the money market. The line was, however, opened on July 20th, 1849, for both goods and passenger traffic. The Altrincham line proper, with which we are more immediately concerned, commences in Castle Field, about 200 or 300 yards from the Knott Mill Station. Here it diverges from the South Junction line, passing through Castle Field close to the canal, and goes under the Altrincham turnpike-road

to Old Trafford by a slightly curved tunnel, the only one on the line of 1,144 yards in length. After leaving Old Trafford, which is just two miles from Oxford-road, the line pursues a straight and nearly level course until Edge-lane, or what is now better known as Stretford Station, is reached. Hence the line is carried through the level vale of the Mersey; and Sale, Brooklands and Timperley Stations appear in succession. At that time, Altrincham, just eight miles distant from Oxford Road, was the terminal station of the line. It was afterwards carried on to near the foot of the Downs, and although the station is called Bowdon Station, it is really in the Township of Altrincham, and nearly one mile distant from Bowdon Church. The first train from Altrincham left the station at eight o'clock, July 20th, 1849, with 65 passengers, and notwithstanding a delay of several minutes at Stretford, reached Oxford Road Station before nine o'clock! The next train, which was the express, left Altrincham at 8-40, contained 15 passengers, all first-class, and accomplished the eight miles in 18 minutes. The next train at nine a.m., reached Oxford Road within the half-hour with 40 passengers. This was all done in face of the formidable competition of a number of omnibuses. Since then, considerable modifications have been made; and the Bowdon line, as it is now familiarly called, ranks as one of the best managed in the kingdom.

Prominent among the charities of the town, and probably the most beneficial to the inhabitants, although not the most ancient, is Lloyd's Fever Hospital. The poor and afflicted we have with us always, and there is a large amount of human suffering which has to be dealt with promptly, or the common weal might suffer. Mr. Edward Jeremiah Lloyd, of Oldfield Hall, was a practical philanthropist. He left by will a certain sum for the purpose of erecting and endowing a hospital for the reception and benefit of the poor inhabitants of Altrincham and Bowdon afflicted with fever or other diseases of an infectious or contagious nature. This hospital was erected on a site on Hale Moss given by the Earl of Stamford and Warrington,

the total cost being £600. The land and buildings were invested in 12 trustees, of which the Earl of Stamford, for the time being, is one, new trustees being appointed as occasion requires. After doing excellent work for a long period, it was in 1878 handed over to the Altrincham Local Board for a term of 21 years, at a rent of £50 a year. The trustees bound themselves to contribute a sum not exceeding one half the clear income of the said charity in aid of the funds of the hospital, this, however, being conditional on the hospital being carried on by the Local Board to their satisfaction. The residue of the income was to be applied, under conditions, in aid of the funds of any well-established Infirmary, Hospital, or Institution, including the Altrincham Provident Dispensary, treating cases of accident, or receiving convalescent patients.

The Altrincham Provident Dispensary, of which notice is taken in the preceding paragraph, is a valuable auxiliary to the Fever Hospital. It was erected out of funds accruing from the Altrincham Workhouse Charity. This charity arose out of an indenture of grant dated 22nd December, 1755, between the Right Honourable George, Earl of Warrington, on the one part, and various residents of the town on the other part, which recites that a certain piece of ground (being part of the waste in Altrincham) called Broadheath, belonging to the said Earl of Warrington, as Lord of the Manor of Altrincham, and containing $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land, Cheshire measure, or $8\frac{1}{2}$ acres, statute measure, had, with the consent of the said Earl, been enclosed, in order that a workhouse for the said borough or manor might be built on part thereof, by voluntary contributions or otherwise, the residue of the said ground being improved for the benefit of the said poor. The Earl consented to vest this land in certain parties for ever, paying a yearly rent of 5s., upon trust; the workhouse or poorhouse as soon as built to be used by the overseers of the poor, for the poor of the town of Altrincham. In 1831 these premises became by deed vested in John Mort, Edward Jeremiah Lloyd, Isaac Harrop, Hugo Worthington, Charles

Poole, John Barratt, and John Mort, junior; and a portion of the land, about two acres in extent, was sold to the Warrington and Stockport Railway Co. for £2,243 10s. 10d., which was invested under an order in Chancery in the purchase of £2,343 2s. 8d. Three per Cent. Consols. A building had been constructed on the land, and was for a long period used as a workhouse for the poor of Altrincham, and the rents and profits of the residue of the waste ground were applied in accordance with the trust. The premises were subsequently converted into cottages, and occupied by the workmen employed by the Bridgewater Trustees. Great public apathy existed in reference to this Charity and its application, but in 1858 a committee of the Altrincham Ratepayers' Association, of which Mr. Thomas Partington was the honorary secretary, addressed certain communications to the overseers, and after a long correspondence, in which the assistance of the Charity Commissioners was invoked, in July, 1860 a scheme was drawn up for the application of the income, or a sufficient part thereof, to the establishment and maintenance of baths and washhouses; the remainder of the annual income not required for these purposes to be given for the benefit of *deserving resident* poor of the parish. The Vice Chancellor approved of the establishment of baths and washhouses; but no such buildings were erected, owing to legal difficulties arising, which need not be discussed here. Most of the Trustees having in the meantime retired or died, new trustees were appointed, who set to work with determination, and the result was the erection of the Provident Dispensary as being most likely to be of the greatest use to the poorer inhabitants of the township. The foundation stone of the new building was laid in September, 1869; in a cavity being deposited a document, of which the following is a copy:—

The corner stone of this Dispensary and Hospital, erected by the Trustees of the Altrincham Workhouse Charity, under the sanction of the High Court of Chancery was laid by Henry Hall, Esquire, the agent of the Right Honourable the Earl of Stamford and Warrington, the Lord of the Manor of Altrincham,

on Tuesday, the 28th day of September, A.D., 1869, in the year of the Mayoralty of James Southern, Esquire; trustees, Samuel Barratt (chairman), Joseph Gaskarth, John Davenport, Matthew Fowden, William Greenwood, John Astle Kelsall, William Hill Parkes, John Balshaw, John Shelmerdine Mort; treasurer, Thomas Riley Knight; secretary, Charles Heaton Hinde; law clerks, Nicholls, Sudlow and Hinde; architect, Peter Pons; chief contractor, John Douglas; sub-contractors, Humphry Davies, brickwork, Isaac Drinkwater, stone work, and Charles Walton, plumbing, glazing, &c.

The institution has its main front to Bowdon Road or Market Street, and has a most imposing appearance.

The yearly allowance of £5 from Dame Elizabeth Booth's charity has been already noticed. There are two or three other bread charities in the district: John Barratt, Esquire, left, by will, £200 to be invested, and the dividend to be given in bread to such of the poor people of Altrincham as attended Divine service at St. George's Church; and William Chapman of Hale in 1714, charged an estate in Hale with a yearly rent charge of £2, payable to the churchwardens at Christmas, to be laid out in the purchase of bread for the poor of Bowdon parish, for ever, respect being had to the poor of Hale especially, to be given to the poor every Sunday for ever. Robert Twemlow, of Altrincham, in 1826, left £100 to the Vicar and churchwardens in rather a different way. He directed that the interest should be "laid out in the purchase of threepenny loaves, to be made of sound household flour, and to be distributed on each Sacrament Sunday." The sum of £267, left by George Norman (£40), Edward Leigh, Esq. (£100), Mrs. Mary Booth (£5), River Bellfontaine (£11), Joseph Walton (£40), the Earl of Stamford £52 10s., and others (£19), was invested in Three Per Cents., and the annual income is expended in the purchase of bread and distributed weekly, on every Sunday, among the poor of the parish of Bowdon, by the churchwardens for the time being. Mrs. Holland also gave a certain sum for bread to be distributed amongst the poor attending St. George's Church. Cooper's charity arises out of a house and land at Partington, given in 1807, the clear rent being distributed, on every Christmas day, yearly amongst such of the poor householders or inhabitants of Altrincham, 50 years

old and upwards, as the Vicar of Bowdon, the Minister of St. George's, the warden or wardens of the said chapel, and the owner of Délahey's farm in Timperley for the time being, should appoint. Each poor person was not to have more than 40s. and not less than 20s., and it is generally distributed in money to the recipients. The Earl of Warrington left in 1754 the sum of £5,000, the annual proceeds to be yearly for ever applied in placing out poor children, in the parish of Bowdon, apprentices, or for sending them to school, or for the clothing of them, or for the clothing or other relief of aged or infirm poor inhabitants of the said parish. The application is restricted to these charitable purposes only, particular regard being had to the township of Dunham, and to such chiefly as do not receive relief from the overseers of the poor. The sum of £5,610 2s. belonging to this charity has for a long period been invested in the Three per Cent. Reduced Bank Annuities, and the interest received is distributed by such Trustees as the possessor of Dunham Massey from time to time appoints. In the years 1813 and 1816, Sarah and Elizabeth Cooke, of Altrincham, by will, gave £200 to the officiating clergyman and wardens of St. George's, and to the Vicar and churchwardens of Bowdon, to be invested, and the dividends applied half to the poor, and half to the education of poor children in the Sunday schools upon a Sunday. If the Sunday schools in Bowdon or Altrincham are discontinued, then the whole goes to the poor. The sum of £2 per annum, left by the Rev. John Ashton, of Calton Green, Staffordshire, in 1722, is payable to and is distributed by the overseers of the poor of Altrincham amongst the poorest inhabitants of that township. A like rent charge of £2 per annum is paid in aid as a subscription by the overseers to Bowdon Parish schools for the teaching of so many poor children, inhabitants of Altrincham, as the Vicar of Bowdon shall think fit. A rather peculiar charity is that by which the interest on the sum of £110 is applied as follows:—£1 10s. to the Sunday school at Altrincham; £1 to the Sunday school at Carrington; £1 to be distributed in religious books in Carrington and Partington.

and the remainder in Bibles and Common Prayer Books to be given among the poor of Bowdon parish as the owner of Dunham Massey may think proper, pursuant to the will of George Cooke dated 9th Nov. 1790. Further information regarding other charities will be found in the Appendix.

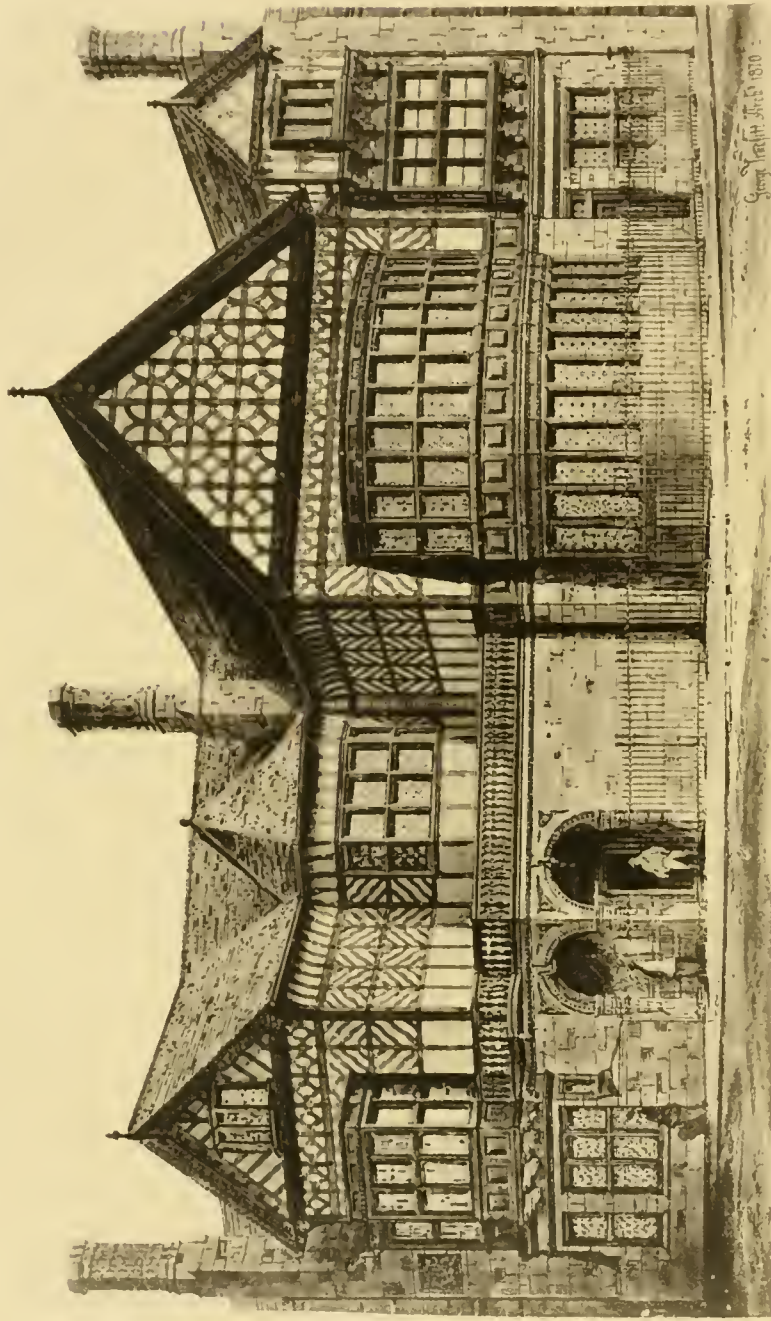
An important epoch in the town's history was the introduction of coal gas, in the year 1844, by Mr. George Massey, the then landlord of the Unicorn Hotel, who put down a small works near the present bowling green. It must not be inferred, however, that there had been no previous attempt at lighting the town. In 1832 the Lighting and Watching Act was adopted, and what has been derisively called the "Charlie" system came into vogue. There had been watchmen before, no doubt, as there had been great men before Agamemnon; but henceforth they were to be invested with more official dignity. They were to be provided with large "blue coats, with red collars;" they were to carry "lanthorns," and were ordered to call the hours of the night when on duty. A public subscription set up oil lamps, and watch boxes, in the latter of which it is no fiction to state—for the minutes oft record it—the watchmen enjoyed many a comfortable sleep. At times the calling of the hours was voted a nuisance. It appears to have been finally dispensed with in 1852, the watch boxes having been removed four years previously. The first public gas lamp was put up outside the Unicorn Hotel; and Mr. Walton, then a town's constable, but for many years past the respected station master at Bowdon, lighted it amid the most intense excitement on the part of the towns people. The superiority of the new light being made manifest, measures were taken for supplying gas on a more extended scale; and in March, 1846, the Altrincham Gas Co. was registered with a capital of £4,000, in 800 shares of £5 each. This Company purchased the existing establishment; but as it was totally inadequate to their requirements, the Directors chose the present site on Hale Moss, then nearly half a mile from the nearest inhabited part of the town, as being the least objectionable. The

new works were opened on the 29th May, 1847: and the price of gas at that time was ten shillings per thousand feet. Three years afterwards it was reduced to 8s. 4d., which was said by the Local Government Inspector, at an enquiry concerning a Local Board, to be much above the average charge for gas in other towns; and his report embodied a suggestion that the Local Board, when formed, should treat for the purchase of the Gas Works in order that they might be managed for the benefit of the ratepayers generally. Efforts were made from time to time with this object in view; but in each instance have they proved futile. In 1871 there appeared to be some probability of a successful issue, the price named being £57,000; but at a town's meeting held in July 1871, a resolution was passed by a large majority that no further action be taken. In 1872, several interviews took place between the Local Board and the Gas Company's directors, and an offer was made to them of £52,000 or £13 per share for 4,000 shares; the directors offering to sell at £55,000. They had, in the first instance, named £60,000 as the sum, but subsequently they reduced this to £54,000. The difference of £2,000 was the rock upon which the affair collapsed. Firmness to their limits was maintained by both parties; and ultimately the Company intimated that they did not consider themselves bound by their offer, having left it open for a certain time for the Local Board's acceptance or rejection. The Company afterwards obtained an Act of Incorporation, which received the Royal assent June 3rd, 1872. By this Act they are placed under certain restrictions in regard to the supply of gas to the inhabitants of the district; they are amongst other things bound to keep up the quality to a certain illuminating power, and the maximum price is fixed by the Act, as is also the maximum amount of dividend to be paid.

The Altrincham and Bowdon Literary Institution has the honour of a mention in the new edition of Ormerod's Cheshire, of which it is in every respect deserving. It was established in the year 1847 in most humble premises at the top of Victoria-street. The promoters intended by "means

of a well-selected Library, a Reading or News-room, Lectures and Evening Classes, to supply, to the young men of the neighbourhood, opportunities of mental cultivation and improvement, at a cheap rate, at the same time that it affords to the adult inhabitants a rational and agreeable mode of spending their leisure hours." It was well supported, and was so successful that in 1852 the present institution was erected by subscription, at a cost, including fittings, of about £800. There was then a large news-room, and three good class-rooms, land adjoining being left for the future growth of the institution ; this was taken up by the splendid lecture hall, which was opened in November, 1866, at a cost of £800. It promises soon to become a most important educational centre. For some years past, Art classes have been very successfully conducted by Mr. H. Meadows ; and others have been established from time to time for the spread of technical education. Its management is vested in a Board of Trustees and Directors, a certain number of the latter retiring annually, whose election is in the hands of the members. The Lecture Hall was destroyed by fire in November, 1878, and measures are now being taken for its re-erection.

With an increasing population the adoption of the provisions of the Public Health Act of 1848 was rendered absolutely necessary. A Government Inquiry held in 1850 disclosed the fact that the sanitary condition of the town was exceedingly defective—typhus fever, dysentery, and other complaints of the bowels prevailing more or less every year ; and that the death rate was exceedingly high— $29\frac{1}{2}$ per thousand per annum of the population. The geographical position and contour of the town were favourable to the highest degree of longevity attainable ; but natural advantages were counteracted by the want of an efficient system of drainage, and complete sanitary regulation. The want of a proper water supply also contributed to it. A Local Board was formed consisting of nine members, which held its first meeting on the 4th April, 1851. Loans were subsequently obtained for drainage purposes, and a complete system of sewerage laid down. The sewage



BROOKS'S BANK, ALTRINCHAM.

is disposed of by irrigation at the Sinderland farm, at a cost of about 5½d. per head of the population. In some towns it is or has been as high as 5s. per head. There is no doubt that the plan is admirably adapted for such places as Altrincham. With the water supply the Board did not deal so successfully, but private enterprise stepped in to fill the gap. The North Cheshire Water Company, which was formed in 1857, and incorporated in 1864, conferred upon the district the priceless boon of a supply of pure water from the reservoirs of the Manchester Corporation. In 1878 the Board purchased the market tolls from the Earl of Stamford and Warrington for the sum of £1,000; and in the latter part of the same year the erection of a new Market House in Market-street was commenced, the sum of £4,500 being borrowed to cover the cost of the tolls, building, and other charges incidental thereto. The building is being erected from designs by Maxwell Roscoe, Esq., Mr. M. Stone being the contractor.

In February, 1864, the Bowdon Local Board held its first meeting. Its principal work has been the sewerage of the township, which was executed under the superintendence of John Newton, Esq., C.E., at a cost of £2,493 16s. 3d. In December, 1865, the lighting by public gas lamps was carried out.

We have now brought the history of the district down to the present time. Ample statistics as to its progress are given in the Appendix. For Parliamentary election purposes Altrincham, Bowdon, and Dunham Massey are embraced in the division of Mid-Cheshire, which returns two members. In respect of societies having for their object the moral and social advancement of the inhabitants, Altrincham may be said to be exceptionally favoured. Its banking accommodation is ample,—and one of its banks, which is one of the finest specimens of the old Cheshire style of architecture to be found in the county, and which was erected from the designs of George Truefitt, Esq., of London, forms the subject of an illustration in these pages. It has its newspaper published twice a week, the *Altrincham and Bowdon*

Guardian, of whose substantial progress all connected with it have good reason to be proud. Altogether, the town justifies the motto which has been selected for it, "Altrincham en Avant." The reader will no doubt have observed this, and will probably feel thankful, as its ancient landmarks disappear, that many of its traditions and associations have been brought to light, which might otherwise, to quote Sir Peter Leycester once more, have "lain covered and buried in the rubbish of devouring time."



APPENDIX.

MEMBERS OF THE ALTRINCHAM LOCAL BOARD SINCE ITS FORMATION IN 1851.

1851.

R. Broadbent (Chairman)	Samuel Barratt	Edward Joynson
Thomas Marsden.	William Warren	Robert William Bennett
John Mort	W. Milnes Millington	Jesse Blew

Officials :

Isaac Turton, Surveyor ; Nicholls and Worthington, Legal Advisers.

1852.

R. Broadbent (Chairman)	E. Joynson	S. Barratt
Jas. Grange	R. W. Bennett	W. Warren
T. Marsden	J. Mort	W. M. Millington

1853.

R. Broadbent (Chairman)	John Davenport	R. W. Bennett
E. Joynson	S. Barratt	J. Grange
W. Warren	T. Marsden	J. Mort

1854.

R. Broadbent (Chairman)	John Mort	Wm. Warren
Alexander H. Paterson	S. Barratt	Jas. Grange
J. Davenport	T. Marsden	R. W. Bennett

1855.

R. Broadbent (Chairman)	Thomas Knight.	George Bowden
Samuel Barratt	J. Davenport	W. Warren
A. H. Paterson	R. W. Bennett	J. Mort

1856.

R. Broadbent (Chairman)	J. Davenport	R. W. Bennett
A. H. Paterson	J. Mort	Geo. Bowden
Thos. Knight	W. Warren	S. Barratt

1857.		
R. Broadbent (Chairman)	John Mort	William Warren
John Hethorn	R. W. Bennett	J. Davenport
G. Bowden	T. Knight	S. Barratt
1858.		
R. Broadbent (Chairman)	Samuel Barratt	Thomas Knight
George Bowden	Isaac Gaskarth	J. Hethorn
W. Warren	R. W. Bennett	J. Mort
1859.		
R. Broadbent (Chairman)	R. W. Bennett	James Street
J. Mort	J. Hethorn	Thomas Knight
S. Barratt	G. Bowden	W. Warren
1860.		
R. Broadbent (Chairman)	John Mort	John Hethorn
John Astle Kelsall	Thos. Knight	G. Bowden
Jas. Street	S. Barratt	R. W. Bennett
1861.		
R. Broadbent (Chairman)	Thomas Knight	Samuel Barratt
J. Hethorn	G. Bowden	J. Street
J. Mort	J. A. Kelsall	R. W. Bennett
1862.		
Thos. Knight (Chairman)	James Street	John Davenport
James Southern	G. Bowden	J. A. Kelsall
J. Mort	J. Hethorn	S. Barratt
1863.		
Thomas Knight (Chairman)	John Mort	John Astle Kelsall
John Hethorn	John Davenport	James Southern
S. Barratt	James Street	G. Bowden
1864.		
Thomas Knight (Chairman)	Geo. Bowden	*Samuel Holker Norris
John Davenport	James Street	James Southern
J. A. Kelsall	S. Barratt	J. Hethorn
1865.		
Thomas Knight (Chairman)	S. Barratt	S. H. Norris
Joseph Gaskarth	Robert Burgess	Geo. Bowden
Jas. Southern	J. A. Kelsall	J. Hethorn
1866.		
Samuel Barratt (Chairman)	Thomas Dyson	J. A. Kelsall
J. Gaskarth	William Armitage	†M. Fowden
G. Bowden	Jas. Southern	R. Burgess

* In place of the late J. Mort. † Solely nominated in place of Thomas Knight, resigned.

1867.		
S. Barratt (Chairman)	J. Southern	T. Dyson
R. Burgess	W. Armitage	J. Gaskarth
G. Bowden	J. A. Kelsall	M. Fowden
1868.		
S. Barratt (Chairman)	J. Southern	T. Dyson
M. Fowden	J. Gaskarth	J. A. Kelsall
John Shelmerdine Mort	W. Armitage	G. Bowden
1869.		
S. Barratt (Chairman)	W. Armitage	J. A. Kelsall
Robert Burgess	J. Southern	G. Bowden
J. Gaskarth	M. Fowden	J. S. Mort
1870.		
W. Armitage (Chairman)	R. Burgess	J. Gaskarth
J. A. Kelsall	J. Ambler	H. Davies
S. Barratt	J. S. Mort	J. Southern
1871.		
J. Gaskarth (Chairman)	S. Barratt	W. Armitage
R. Burgess	J. Ambler	W. H. Holt
P. Pons	J. Byrom	J. A. Kelsall
1872.		
(Number increased to Twelve.)		
J. Gaskarth (Chairman)	S. Barratt	W. Armitage
R. Burgess	J. Ambler	P. Pons
W. H. Holt	J. Byrom	Thos. Warrington
H. Balshaw	J. S. Mort	J. Davenport
1873.		
J. Gaskarth (Chairman)	S. Barratt	W. Armitage
R. Burgess	J. Ambler	W. H. Holt
J. Byrom	H. Balshaw	Thos. Warrington
J. S. Mort	S. Delves	Thos. Timperley
1874.		
J. Gaskarth (Chairman)	W. Armitage	S. Barratt
J. Ambler	J. Byrom	J. S. Mort
H. Balshaw	T. Timperley	T. Warrington
S. Delves	J. Davenport	P. Kinsey
1875.		
J. Gaskarth (Chairman)	S. Barratt	J. Ambler
J. Davenport	J. Byrom	T. Warrington
H. Balshaw	P. Kinsey	S. Delves
T. Timperley	W. Armitage	J. S. Mort

1876.		
J. Gaskarth (Chairman)	J. Ambler	R. Burgess
J. Byrom	J. Davenport	P. Kinsey
T. Timperley	H. Balshaw	G. Smith
H. Kenyon	S. Barratt	* S. Delves
1877.		
J. Gaskarth (Chairman)	J. Davenport	J. Ambler
R. Burgess	P. Kinsey	H. Kenyon
J. Byrom	G. Smith	H. Balshaw
G. Wood	J. Hamilton	Wm. Smith
1878.		
John Ambler (Chairman)	J. Davenport	P. Kinsey
R. Burgess	J. Hamilton	J. Byrom
G. Smith	G. Wood	W. Smith
H. Kenyon	W. Armitage, jun.,	H. Balshaw

(* Jas. Cowsill from September, 1876, vice Delves deceased.)

CONTESTED ELECTIONS,
WITH NUMBER OF VOTES RECORDED FOR EACH
CANDIDATE.

(Those marked with an asterisk (*) declared elected; those marked (†)
refused to serve.)

1851.		
*Samuel Barratt .. 482	*Edward Joynson .. 466	*Thomas Marsden .. 419
*William Warren .. 414	*Robert Wm. Bennett 351	*Richard Broadbent 332
†John Mort .. 270	*W. Milnes Millington 185	*Jesse Blew .. 171
James Grange .. 150	John Davenport .. 135	John Barrow .. 124
George Bowden .. 98	†John Woollam .. 36	
1852.		
*Edward Joynson .. 169	*Thomas Marsden.. 119	*Samuel Barratt .. 135
Jesse Blew 114	*James Grange .. 122	Charles Balshaw
1853.		
*Richard Broadbent .. 180	*John Davenport .. 170	Charles Houtt .. 120
*Robert Wm. Bennett 151	Wm. Davies .. 137	Henry Service .. 137
	†Wm. Badcock.	
1854.		
William Davies .. 110	Henry Service .. 110	*William Warren .. 196
John Bradford .. 114	*John Mort .. 205	*Alexr. Hy. Paterson 171

1855.

Henry Service	.. 81	*Samuel Barratt	.. 230	*George Bowden	.. 193
John Bradford	.. 70	*Thomas Knight	.. 210		

1856.

Henry Service	.. 72	*Richard Broadbent	247	*Robt. Wm. Bennett	215
Joseph Smith	.. 34	*John Davenport	.. 242		

1857.

(No Contest.)

1858.

(No Contest.)

1859.

(No Contest, Mark Pierson refusing to serve.)

1860.

(No Contest.)

1861.

(No Contest.)

1862.

*James Street	.. 287	†Humphry Davies		William Armitage	213
*John Davenport	.. 219			*James Southern	.. 214

1863.

(No Contest.)

1864.

(No Contest.)

1865.

*James Southern	.. 322	James Street	.. 206	John Davenport	.. 221
*Joseph Gaskarth	.. 242	*Robert Burgess	.. 229		

1866.

John Hethorn	.. 204	*John Astle Kelsall	242	°Thomas Dyson	.. 378
James Street	.. 121	*William Armitage	341	a*Matthew Fowden	241

a Nominated solely in the place of Mr. Thomas Knight, resigned.

1867.

*Samuel Barratt	.. 315	°George Bowden	247	*Matthew Fowden	260
William Paulden	.. 103	John Ambler	.. 239	Henry Hough	151
		Thomas Partington	.. 202		

1868.

*James Southern	.. 420	°Joseph Gaskarth	.. 407	*J. Shelmerdine Mort	314
		Robert Burgess	.. 310		

1869.

*William Armitage .. 605	Thomas Dyson .. 371	John Newton .. 237
*John Astle Kelsall .. 398	*Robert Burgess .. 413	

1870.

*Samuel Barratt .. 386	Matthew Fowden 375	*John Ambler .. 411
Samuel Delves .. 375	James Byrom .. 279	*Humphry Davies.. 433

1871.

Thomas Partington .. 328	Samuel Delves .. 455	Thomas Davison .. 263
*Joseph Gaskarth .. 679	*James Byrom .. 573	*Wm. Henry Holt 619
*Peter Pons .. 676	James Pearson .. 307	

1872.

*John Davenport .. 895	*J. Shelmerdine Mort 957	John Siddeley .. 842
*Henry Balshaw .. 960	*Thos. Warrington 966	Samuel Arnold .. 792
*Wm. Armitage .. 990	John Astle Kelsall 522	*Robert Burgess .. 932
†Wm. Tudor Mabley 5	Samuel Delves .. 862	Peter Colliver .. 700
	George Hodgkinson 635	

1873.

*John Ambler 984	*Samuel Barratt .. 850	*Samuel Delves .. 984
John Davenport .. 808	Henry Dean, jun. 826	Peter Kinsey .. 739
Peter Pons 688	*Thomas Timperley 856	

1874.

*Joseph Gaskarth .. 970	*James Byrom .. 963	*John Davenport .. 830
*Peter Kinsey .. 927	Robert Burgess .. 700	James Pearson .. 659
	Wm. Hill Parkes .. 602	

1875.

No Election, owing to the passing of a new Act of Parliament relating to Local Boards.

1876.

*H. Balshaw .. 803	*Robert Burgess .. 1175	James Cowsill .. 714
†Thomas Davison .. 3	Enoch Farr .. 366	Thomas Jackson .. 617
*Henry Kenyon .. 719	James Percival .. 429	*George Smith .. 938

1877.

*John Ambler .. 1143	James Cowsill .. 686	Thomas Davison .. 492
*James Hamilton .. 1001	*William Smith .. 795	*George Wood .. 1129

1878.

*Wm. Armitage, jun... 968	*James Byrom .. 958	Wm. Clegg .. 720
*John Davenport .. 947	Joseph Gaskarth .. 857	*Peter Kinsey .. 895

ACTING MAGISTRATES,
FOR THE ALTRINCHAM PETTY SESSIONAL DIVISION.

Name.	Address.	When Qualified
Egerton, The Hon. Wilbraham, M.P.	Rostherne Manor, Knutsford,	6th April, 1857
Allen, John, Esq.,	Oldfield Hall, Altrincham,	19th Feb., 1867
Armitage, William, Esq.,	Townfield House, Altrincham,	3rd April, 1876
Barton, John, Esq.,	Lymm, Warrington,	15th Oct., 1866
Carlisle, John, Esq.,	High Lawn, Bowdon,	19th Feb., 1867
Dewhurst, George Charnley, Esq.,	Lymm,	2nd Feb., 1861
Dewhurst, George Bakewell, Esq.,	Oughtrington Hall, Lymm,	18th Feb., 1868
Davies, David Reynolds, Esq.,	Agden Hall, Lymm,	1st July, 1868
Fox, John Wilson, Esq.,	Lymm,	22nd Feb., 1870
Joynson, Edward, Esq.,	Park Road, Bowdon,	1st Jan., 1851
Joynson, William, Esq.,	Sale,	30th Nov., 1863
Joynson, Richard Hampson, Esq.,	Bowdon,	6th Jan., 1875
Leigh, Egerton, Esq., West Hall,	High Leigh,	18th Oct., 1875
Norris, Samuel Holker, Esq.,	Altrincham,	19th Feb., 1867
Norris, Thomas Potter, Esq.,	Eagle Brow House, Lymm,	16th Feb., 1875
Platt, Robert, Esq., Dunham Park,	Altrincham,	14th Feb., 1858
Stubs, Peter, Esq., Statham Lodge,	Lymm,	1st Jan., 1872
Tatton, Thomas Egerton, Esq.,	Wythenshawe, Northenden,	13th Aug., 1868
Tatton, Thomas William, Esq.,	Wythenshawe, Northenden,	17th Oct., 1842
Worthington, James, Esq.,	Sale Hall, Sale,	21st Feb., 1871



LIST OF TOWNS AND VILLAGES

IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD; ALSO

POPULATION, ACREAGE, DISTANCES FROM CHESTER AND ALTRINCHAM,

AND

RATEABLE VALUE OF EACH TOWNSHIP.

TOWNSHIPS.	POPULATION.						In-crease. 1831 to 1871.	Acreage (Statute Measure)	Distance in Miles from Chester.	Distance from Altrincham.	RATEABLE VALUE.					In-crease. 1841 to 1877.
	1831.	1841.	1851.	1861.	1871.	1841.					1871.	1872.	1873.	1877.		
	Argden	99	113	76	98	109					10	572	26	2	984	
Altrincham (a)	2,708	3,372	4,488	6,628	8,478	5,770	657	30		4,932	31,308	34,326	36,044	49,024	44,292	
Ashley	379	377	379	375	380	1	2,173	20	2	2,340	3,894	3,894	3,804	4,186	1,840	
Ashton	974	1,105	1,174	1,476	2,359	1,385	1,611	33	4	3,743	15,998	16,975	17,333	20,531	16,788	
Baguley	468	500	570	611	634	166	1,769	33	3	2,456	5,366	5,420	5,498	6,890	4,434	
Bollington (b)	268	297	300	277	233	233	597	27	3	1,245	1,639	1,639	1,639	1,774	529	
Bowdon (a)	458	549	1,164	1,827	2,262	1,804	828	30	1	1,823	21,317	21,184	22,231	25,253	23,430	
Carrington (b)	552	559	536	521	469	469	2,266	30	5	2,271	3,645	3,645	3,710	4,058	1,787	
Dunham Massey (a)	1,105	1,253	1,255	1,535	1,790	685	3,470	30	2	5,674	17,462	17,963	18,768	24,108	18,434	
Hale	942	974	995	1,160	1,711	769	3,679	31	2	3,767	11,602	11,602	11,600	12,883	9,116	
Parlington	466	457	485	445	511	45	754	28	4	1,393	2,955	2,949	2,957	3,346	1,953	
Rostherne	376	386	388	393	391	15	1,512	26	4	1,845	2,658	2,658	2,646	2,897	1,052	
Sale	1,104	1,307	1,720	3,031	5,573	4,469	1,981	33	3	5,954	34,652	36,033	37,405	46,293	40,339	
Timperley	752	943	1,008	1,571	2,112	1,360	1,628	31	2	3,259	13,581	13,666	13,837	15,921	12,662	

(a) — The estimated Population of Altrincham is now 11,000; of Bowdon, 2,693; and of Dunham, 2,040.

(b) — There was a decrease of 82 in Carrington and 18 in Bollington from 1831 to 1871.

LOANS TAKEN UP BY THE ALTRINCHAM LOCAL BOARD,

UNDER THE SANITARY AND PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS.

Date of Application.	Amount Sanctioned.	Amount Borrowed.	Period Sanctioned.	Object of Loan.	Date of Borrowing.	Interest per cent.
February 18th, 1853	£ 8,000	£ 2,000	30 years	Sewerage	June 3rd, 1853	Four
February 18th, 1853	—	1,000	30 years	Sewerage	May 3rd, 1854	Four
March 26th, 1861	400	300	30 years	Sewerage	March 26th, 1861	Five
February 5th, 1863	300	300	30 years	Purchase of offices	August 28th, 1863	Five
November 2nd, 1870	5,000	4,000	30 years	Sewerage	May 5th, 1871	Five
November 7th, 1871	1,500	2,500	30 years	Sewerage	December 1st, 1871	Five
July 20th, 1874	2,300	2,300	30 years	Sewerage	October 2nd, 1874	Three and a half
October 29th, 1877	1,300	1,300	30 years	Sewerage	January 4th, 1878	Three and a half
December 1878	4,500	4,500	30 years	Market purposes	December, 1878	Four and a quarter
	23,300	18,200				

Of this amount there had been repaid up to the end of the year 1878, £3,808, leaving principal owing of £14,392.

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CORRECTIONS.


- Page 30, for metamorphised, *read* "metamorphosed."
,, 75, in list of Mayors, *read* "1867, John Astle
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,, 95, line 11, for August 10th, *read* "August 8th."
,, 113, for bull, &c., baiting, *see* pages 166, 167.

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