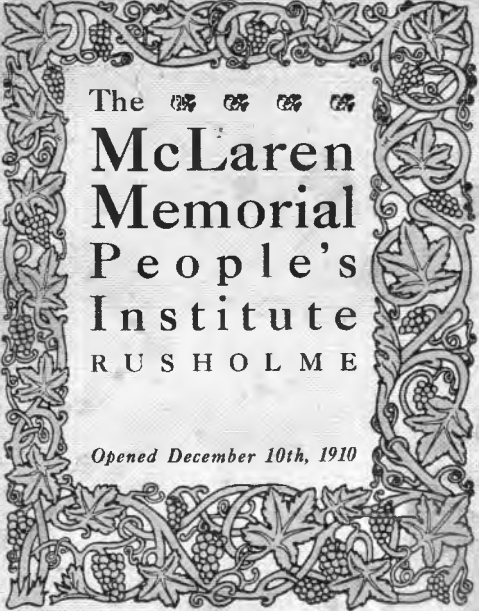



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OLD INSTITUTE

The People's Institute

NELSON STREET RUSHOLME



“RUSHOLME” is a name conveying very different ideas to different people. Situated on one of the most frequented roads out of Manchester, it is well known to all the residents on the south side of the city. But what is known? The name is familiar. The old “village” street is occupied for the most part with excellent shops, though a few older buildings testify to its evolution. Between the city and the “village” lie Victoria Park and the district surrounding Whitworth Park and Moss Lane East. Beyond it has been a succession of fine houses. These surroundings have made people think of Rusholme as a well-to-do suburb.

But there is a “Back Rusholme,” as well as the Rusholme that every traveller by ’bus or tram has known for years; and probably “Back Rusholme” has been practically an unknown land to the vast majority of people passing along the main road. It is a compact district; but it is a compact district of congested poverty. It would not be too much to say that a bad Manchester slum has lain hidden behind the handsome shops on Wilmslow Road, and almost under the shadow of the big houses of the wealthy.

Two extracts from Reports of the Institute call attention to this fact. Writing in 1889, the Committee said: “It may be well to point out here, and to *emphasize*, what is in danger of being overlooked, that in Back Rusholme, in the immediate vicinity of the Institute, and almost within touch of the residences of the refined and wealthy, there are people whose surroundings and lives need as much the active Christian work of those who are trying to help the lapsed masses as do the people in the slums of

the city, where it is customary to think such effort is alone required."

Again, in 1894, the Report says:—

" We want to emphasize the grave fact that here, close to a wealthy neighbourhood, there are back streets and courts, the houses of which violate all the conditions of healthy and decent living, and the inmates of which need all the ministry of help, in every form, just as much as in any of the slums of the city ; and we here ask if it is not time, while making the Gospel of Christ our sheet anchor, to take note of the social and sanitary side of the question in regard to the district ? "

The origin of

The People's Institute

reflects this state of things. The soul of a young man named James Lancashire Carnelley was stirred by the needs of the children.



MR. J. L. CARNELLEY

Their roughness and poverty disqualified them from meeting in the Sunday Schools of neighbouring churches. Many of them were ignorant, for Mr. Forster's great Act was not a year old ; all of them were very, very poor ; and their objectionable habits repelled those who might desire to help them. But Mr. Carnelley refused to be repelled. He

hired a room in a cottage and gathered a group of rough lads about him there. This was 1870.

The following year an important change in Mr. Carnelley's life led to considerable developments of the work he had begun single-handed. He became a member of the church at Union Chapel, being baptised by Rev. Dr. McLaren on July 5th, 1871. Helped by one of the members there whom he knew in business, Mr. Thomas Wallace, he gained the sympathy of some of Dr. McLaren's congregation.

Mr. Rider promised a site and a building on it, where work could be carried on more adequately. Other friends rallied to Mr. Carnelley's assistance ; on Sunday, September

22nd, 1872, a Hall was formally opened by a public Prayer Meeting, and the first scholars of the Sunday School were enrolled. This Hall has had to serve the main purpose of the Institute ever since, and is still standing as part of the buildings. It fronts on Nelson Street.

The name—"People's Institute"—indicates the broad sympathies of those who initiated the work. Central to all was the preaching of the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ, both in direct Sunday



THOS. WALLACE

School effort, and at Sunday Evening Services for Adults, which were started at once, and have been continued ever since. But the Hall was intended to be a "home" for the People. It was opened every day. There was a Night School on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, where efforts were made to teach the older young people, many of whom had received scarcely any schooling, a Sewing Class on Monday, a Singing Class on Wednesday, a Good Templars' Lodge on Friday. The Penny Bank and Library on Saturday aimed at enriching the people's ideals of daily life through habits of thrift and reading, by improved housework, by higher recreations than they knew, and by wisely-directed Temperance reform. It may be claimed with assurance that these early aims have been pursued steadily throughout the forty years of the Institute's existence.

Aim and Achievement

The achievements of the Institute have been of a solid character. Anyone knowing Rusholme would bear glad testimony that "The People's Institute" has been one of the foremost forces making for righteousness. Many hundreds of lives in Rusholme owe more than can ever be told to its helpful influences.

Most of the original agencies have continued to this day, though with developments or modifications to suit the changing times. Also new agencies of considerable importance have been added. The "Night School" was



MOTHERS' MEETING

discontinued after six years' excellent work, because the new generation was being educated in the Public Schools. The Good Templars' Lodge was also discontinued; but in its place a Rusholme Working Men's Club was initiated by the workers, and was housed in suitable premises close by, where it has had a successful career ever since.

In place of these, new agencies were started.

A Mothers' Meeting was begun by Mrs. Beith in 1873. A Clothing Club was attached to this meeting; and the services of a Biblewoman brought the Gospel to many homes. This meeting is still going strong.

A Boys' Club was started in 1878, as the Night School was no longer needed. This was the first Lads' Club in Manchester, though the example set by the Institute was soon followed by many splendid clubs for the lads of the city. The cramped space in the Institute has hindered this work; but it is intended to start with fresh energy in the new building.

A Children's Service has been held on Sunday Mornings for many years, and is attended by many little ones.

In connection with the Sunday Services, a well-trained Choir renders excellent service; this is a fruit of the Singing Class.

During the 38 years of its existence, very many other notable people have helped on the Institute. One of its most generous supporters was Mrs. Langworthy, who built the additional rooms for the Lads' Club, and whose sister, Miss Heaven, carried on her work. The Rev. W. H. Finney, Rector of Platt Church, was always a warm friend of the work, and was President of the Gospel Temperance Association for some years. Rev. Dr. Finlayson, of Rusholme Congregational Church, also manifested a deep interest in the success of the Institute. Nor should the names of Mr. James Parlane, J.P., Alderman Goldschmidt, and Mr. William Carnelley be forgotten.





Workers

The Rusholme Institute has proved its worth by the quality of the men and women whom it has attracted

as workers. Formed on undenominational lines, it has been the happy meeting place of members of all churches, though most of the workers have always come from Dr. McLaren's congregation. The early colleagues of Mr. Carnelley included Mr. Jas. Ryder, who gave the site and the building; Mr. Thomas Wallace, who served as Treasurer for 30



MR. J. A. BEITH

years; Mr. J. A. Beith, J.P., who was the first Vice-President and a constant supporter; Mrs. Beith, who founded the Mothers' Meeting, and is still a warm friend and generous supporter of the work; and Mr. Richard Dain, to whose faithful service a commemorative tablet was erected after his death in 1884.

There are many more recent workers, whose names cannot be recorded; but no summary could be complete that omitted to mention Mr.

William Royle, Mr. James Scott, Mr. John Wilson, and Mr. Wilfred Ashton, all of whom have had much to do with building up and maintaining the work.



MRS. J. A. BEITH



CHOIR

The McLaren Memorial

One of the outstanding features of the Institute has been its close connection all through its history with Dr.



MR. R. D. DAIN

McLaren's congregation, and the personal interest taken in its welfare by Dr. McLaren himself. Therefore, when, in 1891, the difficulty of maintaining the Institute on strictly unsectarian lines was threatening to hamper the work seriously, the Trustees, with the full consent of the workers, decided to ask the church at Union Chapel to take over the entire man-

agement of the Institute. Since then it has been numbered amongst the mission stations of that church. But the interdenominational traditions have been loyally respected. Workers are welcomed from other congregations; the people are encouraged to attend the churches of their own faith; and the subscribers still include residents in the district who recognise the unsectarian nature of the service rendered.

The Penny Savings Bank has proved itself one of the most useful institutions in the district. The deposits amount now to about £400 per annum; and the transactions to between 3,000 and 4,000. Probably a sum of £10,000 has been deposited in this Bank's care during its existence; and the people still use it freely.



MR. JAMES SCOTT



FOOTBALL CLUB

Temperance work has not been forgotten, though the forms it has taken have varied. The Band of Hope and Occasional Meetings for Adults have been regular features of the work.



MR. WM. ROYLE

Pleasant Social Evenings for the People and the Children's Play-Hour have been practical efforts to supply some better place of meeting than the public-house and the street.

One very successful branch of the work in recent years has been the Girls' Guild, with

a considerable membership. It has not only brightened the drab lives of many girls, but has done something to prepare them for their future duties as wives and mothers.

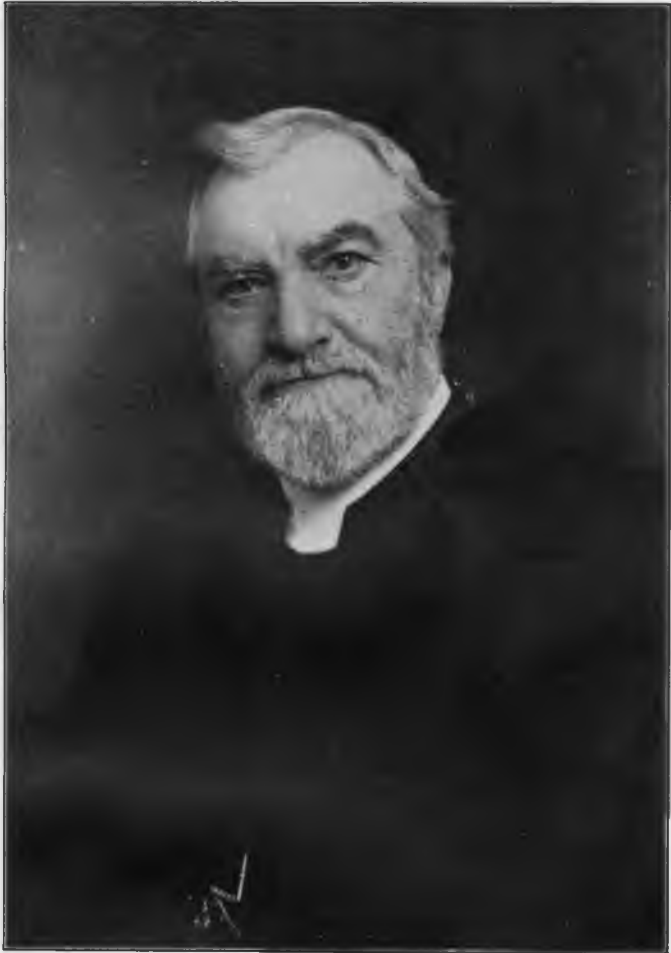
But the chief emphasis has been laid always on the Sunday work.

The Services for Adults have been conducted by voluntary workers from various churches. No effort has been spared to make these services bright and helpful. But the unattractive building has hindered advance. In our new and beautiful Hall, a notable increase is confidently expected.

The Sunday School has never ceased to be the pivot of the work. For years past the rooms have been uncomfortably crowded, and scholars have had to be refused for lack of suitable accommodation. The present statistics show 24 officers and teachers, with 390 scholars. Of these, 120 are infants, that department of the school being very successful.

Baptist Missionary Society

The scholars contribute systematically to the Baptist Missionary Society so far as their limited means will permit. It is with pleasure and pride they remember that Dr. Mercier Gamble and Mrs. Gamble, who were for many years devoted teachers and workers at the Institute, offered themselves and were accepted by the Baptist Missionary Society as Medical Missionaries two years ago, where they are now doing a splendid work on the Congo.



REV. W. H. FINNEY

Whilst this statement of facts suggests to the workers many failures, and much falling short of ideals, it is a record of some noble work achieved under grave difficulties.



DR. MERCIER GAMBLE

These facts have had an important bearing upon the present position. In 1908, Rev. Alexander McLaren, D.D., Litt. D., completed 50 years of ministerial life in Manchester. Many suggestions were made for a suitable memorial to this unique and famous ministry.

The one that was ultimately adopted was to build a

McLaren Jubilee Memorial

as a new home for the Mission Work at the People's Institute, Rusholme. The Mission always had his deep interest, and the scheme commended itself to him unreservedly. To connect his name with such a Mission would both carry on his own church work and satisfy the broad unsectarian instincts that always appealed to him. The need for a new building had become very urgent. The old place was utterly inadequate for existing needs. Meanwhile



MRS. MERCIER GAMBLE

A New Rusholme

had suddenly appeared. The land between Moss Lane East and Wilbraham Road, Fallowfield, had been one of the few "beauty spots" near Manchester. Within a brief



TEACHERS

space of half-a-dozen years the big stretch of land between Moss Lane East and Platt Lane has been changed utterly. It is now almost covered with small houses. A population of several thousands has gathered here in an incredibly short space of time. The timely purchase of Platt Fields for the city has saved a situation that was becoming full of menace for the future. But as it is many hundreds of new houses have created an entirely new district, which has enveloped and is rapidly getting rid of "Back Rusholme." The Institute is at one corner of this new district. The call of God for some provision for its religious needs was irresistible. Here, then, it was decided to build

The McLaren Memorial

A Representative Committee was formed, the Vice-Presidents being Bishop Welldon, D.D., Dean of Manchester; Vice-Chancellor Sir Alfred Hopkinson, K.C., LL.D.; Sir W. J. Crossley, M.P.; A. A. Howarth, Esq., M.P.; Sir G. W. Macalpine, J.P.; E. J. Broadfield, Esq., LL.D.; T. C. Horsfall, Esq., J.P.; and Councillor J. H. Thewlis, J.P. The President was Rev. J. E. Roberts, M.A., B.D., Pastor of Union Chapel. Mr. William Royle was Chairman of Committee; and Mr. T. B. Shimwell, Treasurer; Messrs. G. Deane and A. D. McLaren became Hon. Secs.; and the Committee consisted of Messrs. A. W. Dodd, Sam Gamble, William Gaunt, H. Goodwin, H. Knott, M.A., E. Leah, H. Livesey, G. Macfarlane, J.P., J. Moodie, B.A., J. W. Pickstone, P. H. Schill, J. L. Smart, W. Sunderland, Councillor R. Turner, A. T. Waddell, and S. N. Williams, J.P.

Plans for a new Institute were prepared free of all cost by Mr. J. L. Smart, one of the workers. After competition, the contract for the work was let to Messrs. Macfarlane and Son, of Manchester; and early in 1910 the work was commenced.

By a pathetic coincidence, the death of Dr. McLaren occurred just as preparations were being made to lay the foundation stone of the new building. This sad fact widened the scope of the project. The new Institute became not merely the Jubilee Memorial but the Manchester McLaren Memorial.

Therefore, it was felt to be pre-eminently fitting that the first foundation stone of the Memorial to one of Manchester's foremost citizens should be laid by the city's chief magistrate. The Right Hon. The Lord Mayor of



SENIOR SCHOLARS

Manchester, Charles Behrens, Esq., readily consented to this suggestion.

Saturday, July 9th, 1910, was a festive day in Rusholme. A long procession met the Lord Mayor and Miss Behrens (who acted for the Lady Mayoress, absent through illness), and conducted them through gaily-decorated streets to the site. After the Lord Mayor had laid the first stone, other stones were laid by Mrs. Samuel Armitage, Miss Mary Hadfield, George D. Dawson, Esq., of Blackpool (on behalf of Wilmott Street Mission), Frederick Womersley, Esq. (Treasurer of Union Chapel), and Rev. J. E. Roberts (Pastor of Union Chapel). A. A. Howarth, Esq., M.P., and T. C. Horsfall, Esq., J.P., and Councillor Turner also took part. At the Public Meeting, Revs. Weston Wright, M.A., Rector of Platt Church, C. Carlyon (Rusholme Wesleyan Church), A. Streuli (Moss Side Baptist Church), and Councillor G. K. Ashton spoke of the value of the Institute, and of the esteem felt for Dr. McLaren. The festivities were continued on July 16th, when about 55 children who had collected guineas laid bricks, being afterwards entertained, together with the scholars, at tea and sports.

The McLaren Memorial People's Institute includes a fine Hall, capable of seating nearly 400 adults; a suite of excellent classrooms; and two large rooms for Bible classes and club work. Part of the old building is left standing until sufficient funds are secured to replace it by a more modern erection. The new portion fronts Eileen Grove, one of the new streets, and has a commanding corner situation. The cost already incurred is about £2,500. Towards this, £1,700 has been collected in donations, and £300 was received at the Stone Laying. The Committee are most anxious to avoid a debt on a Memorial Building, and appeal very earnestly to all who remember gratefully Dr. McLaren's life and work to make some contribution towards raising the £500 still required.

When the whole of the old Institute has been replaced by new buildings, the district will be furnished with a really worthy centre of religious and social activities. But the existing block is not unworthy of the great name it bears. The duty that remains to us is to clear off all the debt, and to initiate and carry on successfully, work adequate to the needs of the district, and to our God-given opportunity of serving the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.





MR. JOHN WILSON, SUPERINTENDENT FROM 1879 TO 1896



SUPERINTENDENT (MR. WM. GAUNT)



CHILDREN'S BRICKLAYING CEREMONY



REV. J. E. ROBERTS, M.A., B.D.



NEW INSTITUTE