

A TOWN IN CRISIS



ALTRINCHAM IN THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY

By Don Bayliss

**A TOWN IN CRISIS:
ALTRINCHAM IN THE MID-
NINETEENTH CENTURY**

The 1852 Board of Health Maps and Other Evidence

By Don Bayliss

[Original book]

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When the book was written, the original and unique watercolour version of the 1852 'Detail Plans of the Township of Altrincham' was not made accessible to the author, who instead referred to the hand-coloured lithographic version which has the same depiction and content.

In this PDF, the black and white photocopies of the lithographic version of the Plans used to illustrate the original book have been replaced with better quality colour images of the original watercolour Plans. The text has been changed to reflect this, but otherwise remains the same.

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INTRODUCTION

In the early 19th century Altrincham near Manchester was an important local market town and a coaching and canal town with factory industries. It was noted as a salubrious place to live and was administered by a Court Leet of great antiquity which provided court facilities also for some of the surrounding townships. It lay adjacent to Dunham Hall in rural Dunham Massey township, the home of the Earl of Stamford the chief landowner, and was surrounded by three other rural townships, Timperley, Hale, and Bowdon.

The mid-19th century was a momentous period in the history of the small borough. Its economic fortunes changed abruptly when it lost its factories in the 1840s. However, it subsequently became a railway town after the building of the railway line from Manchester in 1849 which benefited Altrincham because it increased its role as a commuter town and allowed more trade with the metropolis and elsewhere.

In social terms, the inhabitants were experiencing a deterioration in the quality of life by a transition to cramped urban conditions, similar in a small way to that being experienced in industrial towns of Lancashire further north. There were also many in-migrants and the balance of its social classes was changing rapidly with more working class people.

Three major crises had arisen: a lack of adequate housing for the poor, a high death rate, and a lack of efficient local government to handle the situation.

To remedy the crises a new form of administration was created in 1851, a Local Board of Health. To identify the town's problems so they could be rectified, the new Board ordered a set of 15 large plans completed in 1852 showing parts of the town, called the 'Detail Plans of the Township of Altrincham.'¹ These showed each road and building. On the plans the officers of the Local Board could design their improvements, such as routes for new sewers. The set was a fine example of hand drawn cartography of the time.

In this book, a résumé of the critical conditions in the town in the mid-19th century will be given first, following which the fifteen sheets will be displayed and described in turn with additional information from the 1851 census, directories, books, papers and reports from central and local government. The reader will find a magnifying glass useful. Finally conclusions will be drawn about life in the town and the extent to which the crises were tackled and resolved.

Altrincham's ancient township of 657 acres (266 hect.) was created a chartered borough in 1290,² the area enclosing just over one square mile, this remaining the same for centuries. The road map opposite shows by dashed lines, how small the borough was, extending from north to south, in modern terms, from just north of Broadheath to Spring Bank on Ashley Road and from west to east from John Leigh Park to King George V Pool. Starting in the north where Manchester Road crossed the Timperley Brook by a bridge three hundred yards north of Sinderland Road, the borough limits followed the natural boundary of that brook upstream south-eastwards. The boundary then crossed Stockport Road and continued upstream across a peaty waste-land, Hale Moss.³ In the south part of the Moss (bottom right) the boundary left Timperley Brook near King George V Pool and the gas works, and cut south-westwards across Stamford Park, separating Altrincham from Hale township. It then passed between Altrincham and Bowdon townships⁴ to round the Spring Bank estate. Along its western and north-western limits, Altrincham shared a boundary with Dunham Massey township. From Dunham Road near the site of St Margaret's Church (not built until 1855), the boundary ran approximately north and then turned northeast along part of the Roman road from Chester to Manchester crossing the Bridgewater Canal back to the bridge over Timperley Brook. After 1852, the borough boundary remained the same for another 70 years until Timperley and parts of Dunham Massey were added in the 1920s.

The built-up area in 1852, shown enclosed by dots, was even smaller, occupying only one fifth of the area of the borough. The main part extended, north to south, from the Sandiway area, past St George's Church to the end of Lyme Grove, and, west to east, from High Street to George Street (there were no buildings on lower Market Street and no Stamford New Road then). The land between the built-up area and the borough boundaries in the mid-19th century was farmland and market gardens. Within the next forty years after 1852 all this agricultural land disappeared under factories and housing. The recent map shows one railway station in the town but in 1852 there were two railway stations in Altrincham, not at the location of the present one shown, but one at the former 'crossings' by Stockport Road and the other at Lloyd Street. They were replaced by the present station in 1881.

SOME FEATURES OF ALTRINCHAM IN THE MID-19TH CENTURY

In 1852 the small borough of Altrincham was a self-governing entity lying geographically in north Cheshire, eight miles (13km.) southwest of Manchester. The 1851 census recorded it had a population of 4488 inhabitants. Administratively today it is part of Trafford Metropolitan Borough and in contrast the same area of the former borough has a population of about 40,000, and greater Altrincham (including Timperley and parts of Dunham Massey added in the 20th century, about 60,000.

The mid-19th century was a critical period. In 1849 a new town hall had been built, *Fig.1*. The railway from Manchester, which had reached the town in the same year, altered the town's apparent position as it now lay within a half-hour's commuting distance of the city, instead of an hour by omnibus or fast passenger canal boat and so was suddenly placed within that city's immediate sphere of influence. 1851 was also a critical year because it was governed for the first time in its five and a half hundred years' history by a new elected body, a Local Board of Health. In economic terms the town's trade and service boundaries were far wider than its administrative boundaries; the borough provided market, retail, and professional services for other local townships.



Fig. 1 The new Town Hall of 1849 next to the Unicorn (DGB)

SITE

The solid rocks underlying the borough are Keuper Sandstones of the Mercia Mudstone Group of Triassic date (Phillips and Phillips, 5), about 200 million years old, useful for building, but these only appear at the surface in nearby Timperley; salt-bearing beds of this geological period, once workable, outcrop to the west in Dunham Massey and Bowdon but not in the town. The surface site of the town consists of the

remnants of the last glacial onset and decay of ice of the Weichsel Period: glacial boulder clay and fluvio-glacial sands, gravels and light clays⁵ from about 25000-12000 years old. These superficial deposits lie in a series of terraces, one of which gave a gently rising site for the town. Other terraces in the slightly hilly district made cultivation easy, important in early times when Altrincham borough land was mainly agricultural. Useful springs for water for the inhabitants emerged from the superficial deposits. Numbers on the houses drawn on the 'Detail Plans' show the altitude of the area above sea level in feet. The north side of the borough at Broadheath and Timperley Moss lay at a low altitude of about 60 feet (19m) while Hale Moss to the east lay at about 70 feet (23 m) above sea-level. Broadheath was formerly a waste-land owing its origin to aeolian post-glacial sand (Shirdley Hill Sand) blown eastwards from the coastlands of south Lancashire. The low eastern mossland, Hale Moss, provided grazing for cattle and horses, a source of peat, a site for a gasworks, and patches of clay on which brickworks were built. These last two enterprises were omitted from the plans, the former because it was just at the edge of Hale township. Though there was much new building in the town, for some reason brickworks were not shown though several must have existed. West of the town the land rose to about 200 feet (61 m).

STREETS AND PLAN

In 1852 the basic plan of the central area had not changed fundamentally from the time when it had been laid out as a borough by the seignorial charter of Hamo de Maci (or Masci) V, lord of the barony of Dunham Massey in 1290. It was a speculative planned borough designed probably for 120 free merchant burgesses, though whether this high number was ever achieved is not known, and 14th century documents suggest only a third of that number existed a few decades after the borough's foundation. Each burgess rented, for 12d a year, a plot of land called a burgage in the town and an acre strip in the area of farmland around the town to the north, west and south. The population, at probably five or more to a household might have been about 750 including burgess households and those of a few skilled and non-free people. The burgages were laid out around a market place and Church Street and along the sides of a new rectangle of streets made by High Street (present Market Street), Chapel

Walk (Regent Road), Shaws Road and George Street (Bayliss, 1992a, Figs. 2.2, 2.3).

SHAPES OF PLOTS OF LAND AND FIELDS

In ancient times each burgess lived with his household in a house (messuage) on a burgage plot two perches in width by five in length. The burgage behind could be used for vegetable growing, pig-rearing or a craft. A perch was $16\frac{1}{2}$ feet long giving a sizeable plot, 33 feet by $82\frac{1}{2}$ feet, narrow end to the road⁶ (Bayliss, 2004) so in later times two or three houses could occupy the 33 feet front of a burgage (Fig. 2, the former houses are now offices). There were also other properties housing workers such as smiths, wheelwrights, bakers, and a few tenants-at-will (villeins) probably labourers helping with farming. The outlines of burgages can be seen on the sheets showing central properties of the town, Fig.3, and a few boundaries of the plots can still be seen or have been revealed by excavation; in early times they were possibly divided from each other by shallow ditches (Craig and Nevell, 2004, 15).

A wide cordon of dozens of small rectangular fields developed from the 18th century immediately around the built-up area. These were market gardens and orchards, still important to the borough's economy in 1852 though none are there to-day having been built over as the town spread and market gardening increased in importance on Carrington Moss and at Timperley. A wide zone of more than a hundred long thin agricultural strip fields lay beyond the market garden belt outside the town, and the strips dated possibly from the time of a feudal village, or very small town on the site, pre-dating the laying out of the medieval borough. They had been probably part of the Town Field, a one-field 'open field' system (usual in some of the villages of the district) divided into unenclosed strips and were perhaps originally worked together by the former score of village inhabitants before 1290, who had each possessed probably half-a-dozen scattered arable strips to feed a family (see Note 27). The strips were one Cheshire-acre in size (2.1 statute acres), and in 1290 would have been allocated (as well as a burgage) one to each of the assumed 120 burgesses, who would be expected to make their main income from trade in the town. The Town Field area was therefore a unique display of medieval strips fossilized by clear boundaries, probably ancient in 1290 when each was turned into a part of a burgess's holding. There was no formal 17th-19th century enclosure of the open field, as happened in many other places in the country, because the strips had long been enclosed and held in severalty.

Outside this belt of strip fields stretching as far as the borough boundary there was a zone of large patch-shaped fields. In the 19th century grain was grown in a four-year rotation (Scard, 1981, 71) followed by clover, with marling (from clay pits) and the addition of bone meal and muck. There was permanent grazing land to produce milk, butter and cheese – with a market at hand and another huge market eight miles to the northeast; also mosses, heath and a little woodland.



Fig. 2. The first two buildings from the left occupy one burgage and the next three occupy another burgage in the market place



Fig. 3. Arrangement of burgages round the Market Place. Plots on Fig. 2 were Nos. 358 & 360, 363, 364 and 365 in the Book of Reference accompanying the plans, 'A' is the furthest away in the picture looking south (DGB)

THE TOWN PLAN AND PROPERTIES

From medieval times the town suffered three catastrophes, which reduced its population numbers and changed its morphology, the results of which could still be seen on the 1852 sheets. The first occurred immediately after the foundation of the borough in 1290 when as an enterprise it was close to failure, perhaps due to a famine which may have reduced the population by two-thirds⁷ (Bayliss, 1992b, Haworth, 2001). The Black Death of 1348-1349 was the second calamity but this seems to have affected the district round the borough more than Altrincham which remained with forty burgess households but only half its tenants-at-will. A third severe event which affected population numbers, lasted from about 1500 to 1750 when, it is argued, the countryside was prosperous with yeoman farming thriving outside the towns, and people left to work in rural areas (Briggs, 1994, 105; Rigby, 1986). In this period, Leland, just after 1500, referred to Altrincham as 'a pore thing with a mayre' and we may infer it was far from booming in economic terms.⁸

Because of the fall in numbers of people in the town in these events some house sites on Market Street, Shaw's Road, George Street and Regent Road (modern names), occupied in 1290, would not have been needed. They were apparently abandoned and the urban population consolidated round the old market place and along George Street.

Even with fewer houses, as time passed these had to be replaced and so a first rebuilding of the town seems to have taken place from about 1600. However, the plans of 1852 show that some parts of 'Bowden' Lane (lower Market Street), Shaw's 'Lane' and Chapel Walk (Regent Road) had not been filled with buildings again by the mid-19th century. Some early burgages had disappeared and their land had been absorbed into farmland or market gardens.

By 1852 there was clear segregation of social classes in the town. Traditionally Altrincham was divided in people's mental maps into two distinct parts, Higher Town and Lower Town⁹ (Nickson, 1979, 36). Higher Town was socially higher as well as higher in altitude than Lower Town. It included the market place and High Street (the northern part of modern Market Street) with perhaps a tenuous extension to The Downs area, which were economically thriving and socially of good quality with some imposing buildings. Traders in the town had profited by the building of the Bridgewater Canal in 1765 and this extra wealth had led to the Second Great Rebuilding of the town in Georgian times when Higher Town properties were either rebuilt or re-fronted (see

Note 28 and Groves, 1994, 7, for details of the First Great Rebuilding from about 1600). In early drawings the market place had included a butter market with courthouse over, and the town cross and had maintained its status by becoming a base for important people and merchants. The Earl of Stamford demolished the ruinous courthouse in 1848 and replaced it by a building next to the Unicorn Inn called a 'town hall' in 1849 marking a significant change in administrative thinking. The demolished buttermarket was not replaced (the Earl gave up his general market rights in 1878 and the present market hall was built in 1879).

Before the railway to Manchester was built in 1849 several suburbs had emerged. There were areas of very good quality buildings where wealthy people lived other than Higher Town: three small suburbs outside the town, at Mount Pleasant (The Mount) to the north, Groby Place-Dunham Road to the west, and Norman's Place-Lyme Grove to the south. Middle class suburbs had emerged at Sandiway in the north and The Downs-New Street in the south, where there were terraced, semi- and detached villas.

There were areas of great social contrast to those mentioned. Lower Town was traditionally George Street, not only altitudinally but socially lower than Higher Town. By 1852 an extended Lower Town had developed which included the small suburb of Goose Green to the east, the larger suburb of Chapel Street-Albert Street to the south, and the new suburb of Newtown to the southeast. The sheets show houses in these areas were small and, in the last two suburbs, mostly rows of small terraced cottages, rectangular in plan.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Bridgewater Canal is shown on the sheets cutting across the north of the town. It had been built as far as Altrincham by 1765 and eventually linked Worsley, Manchester and Altrincham with Runcorn on the Mersey estuary, and with the canal systems of the Midlands. A port was built at Broadheath with several warehouses, one of the later ones being the 1833 state-of-the art 'Bridge Works' (Champness and Bayliss, 2003). There were wharves, sawmills, a lime kiln, a passenger-boarding and parcels point at the Packet House, and an inn, the Navigation Inn. Passengers, some of the first commuters to the metropolis, could be carried to Manchester by fast flyboats capable of up to ten miles per hour (with a change of horses halfway). Altrincham imported coal, timber (wharves for these are shown on the sheets), salt, stone, slate, lime (for use in the building and other industries, in homes, in some burials and as a soil-conditioner), raw cotton (for the town and Greg's

mill at Styal), silk and wool, and Manchester's night soil excrement for fertilizer. Exports by canal may have included local vegetables, dairy products, footwear, leather, spun cotton and wool yarn, woven cotton, fustians, and clothing.

The main roads of the borough to the north, east, and southwest had been improved by turnpiking and are so identified. The rectangularity of the road layout in the town in 1852 reflected a medieval pattern, showing a 'lost' street called 'Old Street' parallel to and north of Shaw's Road.

In those days Dunham Road did not enter the market place directly as it does today but turned first down what is now High Street and then north-eastwards up what is now the northern end of Market Street (then called High Street) into the market place.

The turnpike toll roads to Manchester (1765 and 1785), Chester (before 1760) and Stockport (1820) had led to faster coach and private carriage communication. The coaching inns in the market place were indicated on the sheets but they must have lost a lot of coaching trade to the railway of 1849 after a century of this work. Their activity changed from coaching apart from traffic into north Cheshire beyond the railway terminus shown at 'Bowden' Station, to catering for the increased number of drinking clients from new small properties in the middle of the town, turning the inns into proto-public houses. Horse omnibuses plied the streets.

On the plan sheets, the Manchester South Junction and Altrincham Railway built in 1849 (Macfarlane in Bayliss, 1992a, 88; Dore, 1983, 4) was clearly indicated with its track, two stations and a goods yard south of the former level crossings. There was a shed for engines such as Fig. 4, and turntable north of this crossing. The building of the railway, at the same time as the Earl built a new town hall, was an intriguing coincidence.

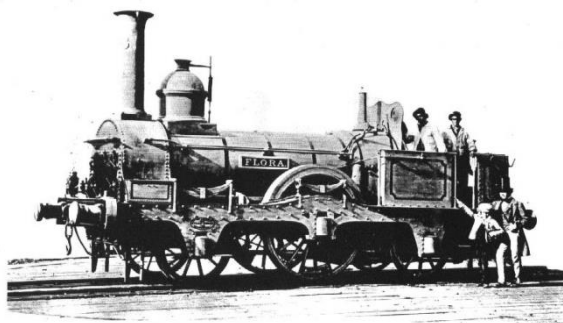


Fig. 4. Locomotives such as 'Flora,' built by Sharp Stewart of Manchester, revolutionised travel from 1849 (TLS)

It precipitated a drive to find land on which homes could be built for commuters. Work was provided for lawyers, land agents, clerks, builders and labourers. The railway also provided jobs.

Though one station was called 'Altrincham Station' and the other 'Bowden Station,' both were in Altrincham but were distinct architecturally and socially. The inhabitants had to adjust to the new mode of transport but could now reach Manchester in half an hour instead of one hour by horse omnibus or canal, and this increased Altrincham's role as a commuter-residential town with a fast passenger, goods and post facility. The Earl withdrew his flyboats from the canal by agreement (Ingham, 202), though these returned later and ran for several decades.

The farmers, gardeners and those who produced small manufactured goods for sale were now able to take advantage of links by railway as well as by canal and road with Manchester, the metropolis, 'Cottonopolis' (Manchester - Kidd, 1996, 23), which had a population of 316,213 by 1851 and was a growing market for Altrincham products.

INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATIONS

There had been a thriving factory industry in the late- 18th and early-19th centuries¹⁰ following the conversion of a water-powered corn mill to a cotton spinning factory, later powered by steam, and possibly two other mills. There was also home and shed industry (Aiken, 1795, 425; Bayliss 1992a, 36; Hill, 2002, 16; Pryor, 2003b, 8) in cotton, wool (Cox, 2003, 2), flax and silk. 72 people had been involved in textiles in 1841 but cotton spinning finally failed as a factory industry in the late 1840s. By the time of the 1851 census a former cotton 'steam factory' had been converted back to corn grinding and the few workers in cotton and silk in the town were bobbin makers, or hand spinners; there were also wool combers and weavers, and processors of fustians with small-scale equipment in their cottages and sheds (Bayliss, H. E, 1996, xii, Hill, 2002, Cox, 2003). Altrincham was no longer a cotton factory town in 1852, but large buildings were shown on the plans, one the corn mill, another perhaps occupied by workshops so the plans show clearly the site of the earliest factory area, with its former water lodges, at Woodside, north of Altrincham Station.

Not much direct information about the work of the people was shown on the sheets except where a place such as a timber yard or inn, stable, chapel or school was identified but much can be inferred from the presence of the canal, railway and new housing. The census of 1851 only tabulated total figures for large Registration Districts but not for small towns such as Altrincham,¹¹ so total figures for the town have been taken from personal entries in the census of 1851 by Hardman (1989) and reclassified here using, for comparison, the categories in Altrincham History Society's '1841'

book (Bayliss, Ed., 1944). Figures for particular streets in 1851 used below in this present book have been calculated from personal entries in that census. Hardman's categories refer confusingly both to industries such as 'textiles' and to occupations such as 'labourers.' The economic activities of people employed in the town as a whole in 1851, 1986 persons in number, by industries, were:

Farming and gardening	183
Textiles	38
Clothing and footwear	159
Food and drink	26
Metals (e.g. blacksmiths, whitesmiths)	37
Other manufactures	47
Construction	200
Retailing	194
Professional services	45
Miscellaneous services (e.g. teachers, nurses)	125
Labourers and apprentices	402
Servants	262
Independents	89
Misc. workers (e.g. carters, grooms, railway and canal workers, gasmen and 33 'non-workers' on relief)	179

Ignoring 'miscellaneous workers', the chief employment for the people was surprisingly as labourers; the second in order of employment was as servants; third in order were those in construction and fourth, those in retailing. A very interesting list because it might be thought that retailing would be the biggest employer in a trading borough. No doubt many classifying themselves as labourers could be added to the totals in the construction or agriculture categories. The second occupation in number in 1851, as servants, had been the chief employer in 1841. The high number of servants reveals there was a large number of affluent people who could afford to employ people to clean, wash and cook for them, especially the middle class including independents, annuitants, professional people (such as solicitors and land agents), property holders, and managers in manufacturing and retailing. The figure for servants also reflects the number of people, mostly girls, for whom there was no better work.

The numbers in the third industry, construction, reflected the urgent need to build new homes for a growing population. The location of brickworks supplying one of the items used in house construction, if any still existed in Altrincham,

does not seem to have been the concern of the cartographers, none were shown on the plans.

The fourth employer, retailing, was almost wholly confined to the centre of the town round the market place and at the north end of George Street. There were also offices here but far fewer professional services than might be expected in the central area of a commercial borough.

Another high employer was farming and gardening, hand work of no great social standing (Pryor and Hitchings, 2003a, 2). It was mentioned above that the sheets show large irregular fields around the edge of the borough, probably used to grow corn or for grazing. These outer areas with the strip fields nearer the town, and the small rectangular market garden plots actually adjacent to the town in total occupied about four-fifths of the 657 acres of the borough. According to the figures, these large extra-urban areas gave work to only a tenth of the workforce. The main farm crops were oats, barley, potatoes and turnips; meat, milk, cheese and fruit were also produced. Animals included many pigs, beef cattle, dairy herds, and a few sheep; there was much poultry rearing, including geese. Vegetables grown included the Bowdon potato, the long Altrincham carrot (Pryor and Hitchings 2003a, 2) and Timperley rhubarb.¹² Marling from clay pits and the addition of human and animal dung, peat, bones, lime, and ash from the hundreds of domestic fires were important to improve the light soils (Hill, 2002, 13).

From the census, the number of labourers, those in the construction industry, servants, farm workers, gardeners and miscellaneous workers show that manual workers were approximately two-thirds of those in work. The conclusion is that in 1852 Altrincham was a working class town.

There were, indeed, many types of skilled and unskilled manual work available. Those identified from the sheets include farming, market gardening, labour on the canal such as for boatmen and in wharfage, and in canal-side buildings such as warehousing. There was work in the production of lime and timber and in stabling, coaching, cartage, in the inns and taverns. There was employment in house construction, on the railway, in the postal services, food and drink production including abattoir work, market work, the gas industry and midden clearing. From other sources we find there was hand cotton spinning, wool-combing, bobbin turning, weaving, stonemasonry, brick-making, tanning and leather work including footwear, and in clothing, whitesmithing and blacksmithing, surveying, retailing and servantry. But there was not enough work to match the

exploding numbers of the working class. Many of the jobs above must have been poorly paid and those without work were paupers who lived in an abject state of poverty. There was no state dole but some local poor relief and charity.

At the other end of the socio-economic scale there was work in land transactions, as managers in industry and trade, as solicitors and attorneys, banking, work in medicine, in the church and chapels, and in education, in denominational establishments, those of national bodies or private schools. Only in education, servantry or nursing was there scope or hope of work for women.

UTILITIES

Gas was first used in the town in 1844 when it was made at the back of the Unicorn Inn by George Massey the innkeeper (Nickson, 66)¹³ but later a small private gasworks was built on Hale Moss in 1846 with an investment of £4000.¹⁴ This was not shown on the plan sheets because the sheets did not extend into the Moss area; the Gas office in George Street was shown. No gas lamps were mentioned in a survey of 1849 (Appendix 1) though this does not mean there were none, because sixty were noted in a survey of 1851 (Appendix 2) and had replaced the previous flickering oil lamps in some streets. No doubt there was gas in a few homes, and if so it is not difficult to imagine in which districts these were. Altrincham never owned its own gasworks. There would be no electricity for another thirty years.

No piped drinking water facilities were shown on the sheets; if any existed they were not public utilities.¹⁵ There were a couple of public hand pumps, mentioned in documents and a well-managed by the Court Leet, serving the needs of the poor. The Court had a 'pump looker' to oversee the use of the pumps (Nixon, 1979, 15) but these public facilities are not clear to see on the sheets. There were also scores of pumps erected in the common yards behind terraced property by the house-builders in order to be able to rent out their property, one pump to several homes, to sometimes more than fifty people. In contrast there were many individual private pumps shown in yards and gardens behind the houses of the middle and higher classes. Altrincham was fortunate in its geological site, pump shafts could be driven easily into the bounteous aquifers in the glacial and fluvio-glacial sands held up by lenses of clay. There were also many springs, which could be tapped.

For waste disposal, the dry privy, or 'necessary,' and midden were the rule for most people. The basic privy was a hole in a wooden seat directly over a hole in the ground, with sometimes a 'long

drop' facility, five feet or more deep. They could be cleansed by buckets of water and lime, if this could be afforded. Some privies were of the 'tippler' type where water dropping on to a basin caused that receptacle to tip its contents into the hole. This was useful where a stream or drain could be diverted into the toilet area to provide a mechanism for the tipping and also take away the contents. Some private privies tended to be as far away from the house as possible because of the atrocious smell associated with multiple use and the need to empty them from the rear of a property. Downspouts from roofs were shown because of the importance of collecting rainwater in butts where there was no piped supply.

In the wealthier homes where there were w.c.s (Plumbing and Mechanical Mag., 1994)¹⁶ they were near or in the houses because there was the need to guarantee a supply of water from the roofs or by pump if there were no piped supply. Hence there was often a large cistern (water tank) behind the house. The map sheets show the type of cistern ('above' or 'below' the toilet level) involved in the new technology. The frequency of fixed baths was not recorded and will not often be referred to in this book but might be associated with the term 'w.c.' wherever mentioned in descriptions of better-class areas.

The growing number of better quality dwellings with w.c.s increased the drainage problem because the basic narrow drains constructed only for rainwater disposal could not cope when they were also used to carry sewage. Also, effluent from the necessities of the poor found its way through street grids into the rainwater drains resulting in clogging them up, causing a backflow of effluent into houses and cottages and into the cellars of the wealthy and poor alike. It must have been particularly horrendous to live in homes in cellars among effluent seeping through the floor and walls.

The poor, (and better-off people with privies for gardeners or other servants) relied on middens for the disposal of kitchen and human waste. These were usually square containers made of wood or brick a few feet high. They were emptied when people could pay for the service. Behind some homes the privies could be moved and new holes dug periodically, avoiding immediate use of a midden. If clearance was not affordable, excrement was left piled against a wall, sometimes the house wall, or left in piles in the street, the effluvia spreading into houses. Some better homes were without middens, where privies adjacent to a back wall of a yard or garden

could be reached through a door in the wall from a back lane without entering the property.

The poor lived in another world. Some were paupers, without work, without hope, living without adequate clean water, or drains, in inadequate housing, lacking good facilities, fixtures or decent hangings. The poorest lived in filth and many were unclean, their best facilities a shallow hand-filled pottery sink and a 'tin' bath. Wohl (1983) tells us they accepted this condition as normal. Insanitary housing conditions in the poor houses of Lower Town¹⁷ contrasted with those in Higher Town, Norman's Place, The Downs and Mount Pleasant where middle class people, merchants, professionals, and annuitants lived, the sheets showing that their properties had private water (hand) pumps, often w.c.s (and possibly fixed baths), or even if w.c.s were not directly shown, other evidence for them was indicated on the sheets such as the presence of cisterns or just the absence of privies outside. However, even people with the highest quality of facilities had to live in an odorous atmosphere from all the privies and piles of muck lying in the streets in the lower class parts of the town because many of the poor could not pay for the removal of such 'nuisances.'

POPULATION NUMBERS AND CHARACTER

The growth of Altrincham's population from 1692 in 1801 to 4488 in 1851 was nearly three times (271%) over the half century, due both to natural increase and in-migration;¹⁸ the latter factor was important as time went on. The population in 1841 had been 3399; in 1849, Isaac Turton, the Overseer of the Poor, estimated 165 new houses had been built by the later date giving an increase, at 5.5 persons per house, of 907 people, 26%. He also noted the numbers of people in the 'existing' houses (of 1841) had gone up by one-sixth, signifying increased densities in the same properties. Population pressure was high in the poorer districts, Lower Town, such as in the Chapel Street area and Newtown where there was a substantial lodger population. The ancient population and property structure had been based round the concept of the property-owning burgesses free to dispose of their land¹⁹ but that concept was becoming out-of-date with the rise of the general population and the landless renting poor. Even the term 'burgess' did not mean much outside the ceremonies of the administering Court Leet. In 1834 the number of burgesses was 25 (Wilkinson, 1834); by mid-19th century it was probably little more, a fraction of the population.

As well as increasing in number, the population was becoming more weighted towards the lower middle class and skilled and unskilled working classes, due to in-migration and the flight of the better-off to Bowdon and other local places.

The Irish

A surprising fractional figure is that, in 1851, nearly half the population of Bowdon parish, which occupied most of modern Trafford south of the Mersey at the time, had not been born in that parish (according to Hardman, 1989). With the exception of one group, the source of the in-migrants, as expected, tailed off rapidly in number with distance from the parish. The exception was a large number of immigrants from Ireland, part of the two million who emigrated at this time. The 224 Irish immigrants into Altrincham formed one ninth of the inhabitants not born in the parish of Bowdon (Hardman, p.15) and with their households between a tenth and twentieth of the total population of Altrincham. The cause was the Irish potato famine from 1845, when the staple crop of the western Irish peasants was destroyed, leaving them unable to pay rent, resulting in eviction from their cottages and the starvation of many.

Altrincham had a cultural problem with the Irish, an immigrant group with a rather different culture of life but from only three hundred miles away. The plan sheets are silent on it but there were adverse comments about these newcomers by the government inspector, Robert Rawlinson in his report of 1851 (Appendix 2). The Irish were part of the brotherhood of man, the same colour as the Cheshire people, many Catholic, but not foreigners per se, being British (all Ireland was British at that time) but some spoke what seemed a different language and most were competing for jobs. The numbers needing homes fuelled the building frenzy for the poor - the rapid building of cottages in Newtown, Chapel Street and in the burgrave plots of the town centre. There was no central government welfare aid for the Irish immigrant poor here nor for the native inhabitants except through a system of parish poor relief managed by Isaac Turton, Overseer of the Poor, himself an incomer, and there was the recently built workhouse at Knutsford. There was rent from a few fields administered by Turton called the Poor's Lands, and additionally rent from fields managed by the Court Leet, known as the Mayor's Lands (Groves, 2000). There were also six charities, and until the late 1840s, aid from the Earl of Stamford.

An example of reference to Irish people is shown in the census extract transcript of 1851, Fig. 13. Irish names stand out in the census and the

incomers' place of origin had to be not only written but noted in the census with a special single letter, capital 'I' (not shown on the section of this transcript) so the Irish were positively discriminated against. At this time the Irish were regarded as foreigners, dangerous politically, with dirty habits, who, Rawlinson unfortunately stated, allowed pigs into their cottages, though no doubt others also did so. To poor people, pigs were useful scavengers as well as providing food, and lard, skin and bones for sale. The common surname 'Callaghan' might have given Newtown its nickname 'Cally' or 'Little Cally,' (or 'Calais'), implying a large proportion of Irish origin.

The increasing proportion of social classes 4 and 5 partly resulted from the fall in numbers in social classes 1 and 2, the professional and upper middle class (Daber in Bayliss 1992a 52) due to their moving out to townships such as Bowdon. This move may have been partly due to the social effect of the scale of in-migration by poor people. Population was growing but not evenly across all social classes, Altrincham was clearly a working-class town with two-thirds of its workers in manual trades. It was also multi-cultural, but its communities were not yet integrated (as in Britain today).

Religious Affiliation

St George's had been built in Higher Town as a chapel-of-ease of St Mary's Bowdon in 1799, *Fig.5*, in the post-canal period of Georgian prosperity. However, parish status was not achieved till 1868. Roman Catholics did not have a purpose-built presence until 1860. But Methodism was well established with the sheets showing, by 1852, a chapel in Chapel Walk near the Grapes Hotel, and one in George Street (M&S site) each with schools, this denomination serving the people of Lower Town. There was also a floating chapel on the canal at Broadheath. The Unitarians were established on Shaw's Lane and the Congregationalists in a chapel on The Downs.

Children

There were 1564 children under the age of 15 in 1851 (Hardman, 1989, 15). This is an arbitrary census quinquennial age-figure and has no relevance to education as very few boys and girls received education to 15 and many were working at little over half that age. The figure only informs us that about one-third of the population of Altrincham was under 15. The British and Foreign School and National School societies and the chapels provided schools for the poor. Apprentice teachers had to be at least 13 years old. Better-off children could attend a number of small private or local schools, some proving ephemeral but a

long-standing important one was at Oldfield House for boys aged 8-11 (later Seamon's Moss school), founded with money left by Thomas Walton, a saltmaster (Bayliss, H.E., 1996, xiv).

HOUSING

Early pictures show most of the poorer properties were two-up and two-down, i.e. a front room with a door and one window, and a second room behind on the ground floor, with two rooms (one front and one back) each with one window, *Figs.14, 15 and 18*, or, in better properties, two windows on the first floor. Instances of more than one family living in one-up and one down or even in one-room properties, were mentioned in the literature. There was little information about roofs, stone, slated or thatched, but some are shown with gutters and downspouts for collecting rainwater. In George Street and the market place there were still thatched properties in early photographs. Many cottages had outside kitchen sinks (K.S. on the sheets), no drains but stone pit soakaways (S.). The terraced houses in the two-up two-down category showed a high density of domestic building. Houses with three storeys were useful as lodging houses. One step up the social scale were small terraced, and semi- or detached properties of box-shape with their own yard, their own private necessary and individual midden. Another step up the social scale was to have a small garden, front or rear, or both, with a private outdoor privy and midden.

It is not surprising to-day with adequate sewerage, to think of people living below ground level, some in sumptuous accommodation. For households living in cellar dwellings in only one or two rooms in Victorian times, sometimes with one small window, sometimes with a pig, with no drains and no mechanical means of raising effluent above ground level and nowhere to put it except in a midden or pile outside, life must have been terrible. The job of trying to keep a cellar dwelling with no drains liveable, sickness-, insect- and stench-free must have been almost impossible. Such netherworld dwellings were the unfortunate receptacles for foetid matter which 'saturated much of...the urban sub-strata' (Wohl, 296). Vagrants and destitutes lived in rags in squalid conditions of filth, brutality and moral corruption. Food might be begged or where there were accessible sewers nearby some food for the worst-off might be gleaned. Homes in cellars had been built under good quality properties, as well as under hovels. The 1852 sheets, showing buildings 'from above,' are silent on this underworld. However the Book of Reference accompanying the plans lists 31 cellar dwellings, one room or two. A couple more were found in

excavation by Nevell and Hradil (2002), who considered these could possibly date later than mid-century. No doubt there were many more not recorded by the clerks assembling the Book of Reference accompanying the maps and plans, their existence easily concealed and undeclared to the cartographers by landlords because they knew the survey was for rating purposes. Using the average figure of 5.5 persons for a household the underground cellar population was possibly a couple of hundred people, 5% of the townsfolk, one in twenty persons in the town. What can be interpreted from the sheets as middle-class houses in modern terms, such as in New Street, or The Downs, *Fig. 10*, were modest-sized properties, semi- or detached or in short terraces, usually with a yard and/or sizeable back garden. The smaller were two-up and two-down but others were double-fronted with a privy at the end of the walled garden or yard and occasionally a w.c. at the rear of the house or inside. Occasionally there was a front garden. The houses were sometimes rectangular but frequently had a rear extension including a separate kitchen and a dining room, morning room or washhouse. Middle class houses were built at a lower density per acre than those of the poor.

Upper class houses were much larger in plan, semi- or detached or in short terraces, not often plain geometrical rectangles in shape. Their plans, from above, showed bow or bay windows, extensions and porches. They had large grounds to the front, rear, or both. Some lay in a whole patch-shaped field or even a one-acre strip field or more than one, so were at a very low density. Many had their own stables and carriage houses. If there were necessities or w.c.s at the rear it is likely they were for garden staff. However, in Higher Town, such properties were closer together, e.g. in Groby Place, *Fig. 21*. The largest and highest class property was Oldfield Hall, *Fig. 28*, in its own grounds (now John Leigh Park) with stables and other outhouses nearby. Its occupants were the Lloyd family, of great importance in the town. Another property in this class was Spring Bank, to the south, the home of the Leycesters.

There was little sign of new large houses having been built in the town in the decade, 1841-51 (Bamford, 1991b, 32). When lower-class operatives, in-migrant labourers and servants moved into lodgings and squalid cottages in the centre of the town, better-off people moved out to villas outside Altrincham (Daber in Bayliss, 1992a) and some of their abandoned large properties could then be used by middle class incomers, or they could be used for lodging houses. This had happened to a few properties in The Downs in

1851, according to the census. The street must have thereby declined in social status but no doubt, through enforcement of byelaws after 1851 legislating against the number and poor condition of lodging houses, these eventually closed and the street regained its social status.

Tenure

The role of tenure was important (Bayliss, 2000, 16). The chief landowner, the 7th Earl of Stamford owned half the land, let mainly leasehold. The other half was owned by private landholders including the 19th century burgesses (people owning land in the town area), perhaps fewer than forty in number at this time. The burgesses had held their political and social position by tenure of a burgage and an acre strip in the Townfield, paying an annual rent of 12d to the Earl at Dunham Massey. The whole or parts of these holdings could be sold¹⁹ and even if a new proprietor acquired only a fraction of a burgage (enough for perhaps an eleven-foot house front, a third of a burgage width) he or she was by tenure, a burgess. This status was an important measure as only burgesses could belong to the ruling Court Leet, and claim administrative status and various trading and social rights. Several men who held only a half-burgage were able to be mayors in the town.

The burgesses could also build on, or sell or rent off, their arable strips outside the town and these were used for a variety of quality of buildings. Some former strip fields accommodated high class villas: e.g. in Mount Pleasant, Groby Place, Norman's Place, Lyme Grove and along Dunham Road. Middle class housing was built along strips in New Street, Wellington Place and on the curved ends of strips in The Downs. Lower class housing was built for rent along agricultural strips held formerly by burgesses in Albert Street (1840s) and Chapel Street (1820-40).

The role of the Earl of Stamford

The Earl was not only the chief landholder but exercised control over the town's ancient governing body, the Court Leet, sometimes in a benign way but interfering at other times. He also controlled the architecture of wealthy tenants' properties on his land. The Earl, through his agents, created areas of quality buildings in large grounds. This new middle class housing, controlled in terms of architecture and facilities, was mainly leasehold. The Stamfords' interests were widespread including manors such as Ashton-under-Lyne and properties in Enville, Staffordshire, Bradgate, Leicestershire, Newmarket (for the racing) and London and they

did not concern themselves to make sure the Altrincham poor had adequate standards of housing. They had no control over standards of building on the strips, burgages and other lands held or sold by the burgesses or other private owners.

Early in the 1800s there had been notable and well-documented charitable assistance from the Stamford family adding support to the poor and there is reference to continued help into the 1840s. There is a tailing-off of evidence of aid later, which may be due to a lack of documentary record, but more likely to be for another reason. After 1848 the Cheshire gentry and others showed their distaste for the 'playboy' seventh earl's first marriage to the daughter of his Cambridge college bootman (Squires, 2002, 145; Champness, 2004).

Different perceptions of the town

In the half century from 1801 the town had turned from being a market, coaching and factory textile producing town, with market gardens and orchards, into a non-factory commuter-residential railway town producing a range of hand-made and farm products. It was described in 1858 as situated in a 'salubrious' part of the county (Balshaw, 3). It was a (market) garden suburb of Manchester with no smoky factories, attractive to commuters as a place of residence, with easy travel daily to the metropolis to work. The site and ambience of much of the place, apart from the drawbacks of the sanitary arrangements (and presence of run-down areas) were a great contrast to the smoky industrial areas of Manchester. For the better-off therefore, the term 'salubrious' characterised the site, much of the town, and, for the better-off, the life. In 1860 White's Directory commented on the increased prosperity the town had enjoyed in the previous 20 years 'by causing numbers of merchants and manufacturers of Manchester to fix their abode in this pleasant and salubrious locality' (Daber, in Bayliss, 1992a, 53). Eleven years ago Altrincham History Society published a study of the town in 1841 (Bayliss et al., 1994). This concluded Altrincham was a 'stylish, residential and retirement town.' By 1852, whilst this was still partly true, there were some stark differences from this picture. For the very poor, who made up possibly a third of the population, the salubrious life was not their experience.

THREE CRISES

In the period from 1849 to 1852, the people of Altrincham experienced three crises. The first crisis was the difficulty of housing satisfactorily an increase of its population of more than a

quarter (26%) in the decade 1841-51, resulting particularly in overcrowding of poor properties. The second crisis, that of ill health arose from the conditions not only of poverty and poor housing, but the lack of good water supply and sewage disposal, and living alongside a dung-based intensive agriculture and market gardening industry. The merit of the last was that it ensured the livelihood of a couple of hundred poverty-stricken gardeners and labourers and their families, nearly a third of the working population. The third crisis arose from the ineffectiveness of the town's ancient form of local government to deal with these problems.

Crisis 1: Housing for the poor

A crisis resulted from the growing population, especially of the poor, which caused a housing problem. The main difficulty was that most poor people could not afford to buy property. The traditional burgage 33' by 82½' was generally more than adequate for one household and one outcome was that several cottages could be built on one of these behind the house of the owner who could let such property in the land-grab of the period. This had the effect of introducing many working class people into both Higher Town and Lower Town. A number of such rented cottages were built at the back of burgages in the market place and George Street resulting in a congested urban scene of crammed houses and ten courts. To serve these properties there were winding narrow, invasive passages and tunnels for access from the front or rear. Remnants of such cottages today show they had rough brick walls and few windows. The tithe map shows that in 1838 not many houses had been built behind the main buildings on the burgages whereas by 1852 many burgages were almost replete with buildings. Burgages could also be split two or three ways along their width or length to let or sell to developers who wanted an investment by building houses for letting.

The cheapest way for developers to house the poor was in terraces on the long individually owned strip fields. This was a ready-made solution for building a succession of straight boxes in a straight line on a straight street. Some burgesses were only too willing to sell because one individually held strip was useless for agriculture. The builders were not constrained by any rules applying to land belonging to the Earl and the provision of facilities needed to be only minimal. There was no problem about connecting up to water pipes or sewers or gas because these did not exist in most areas. The poor needed roofs over their heads quickly and had to take poor

quality rented building. The numbers requiring housing led to multi-occupancy, overcrowding and appalling sanitary conditions. The smaller domestic properties, shops and taverns of George Street, the southern suburbs of Chapel Street-Albert Street, Goose Green and Newtown formed an extending Lower Town. This area housed the labourers and market gardeners, the mainstay of the economy in terms of hand labour who were among the least well-off.

An example of the problems faced by the less well-off concerned the people living in an outlying terrace along a lane leading onto Hale Moss now called Oakfield Street who lived in a particularly noxious situation. They had been cut off from the rest of Lower Town by the adjacent railway and its sidings. Nearby there were tanning pits, an industry requiring copious amounts of heated dog urine, and Hale Moss with its gasworks and brickworks. At the southern end of the terrace was an abattoir, important not only for supplying fresh meat to the town but also for the supply of bones and rotten meat for fertilizer, and hides for the tanning industry. A surveyor's report complained that this enterprise was a 'nuisance,' discharging its untreated waste directly into an adjacent ditch leading to Timperley Brook. There was a single neighbourhood pump for the 18 cottages (say nearly 100 people) located at the side of the abattoir, sunk into the few feet of ground between the abattoir and the foul ditch into which its untreated waste was being discharged.

On the sheets of the plans, buildings were shown as seen from above, so the dwellings of the very poor were shown on the sheets as small rectangles, usually in long terraces where their common shape suggests blocks of properties of the same size, style, construction and (lack of) facilities. People did not have gardens and many not even their own yards, but behind the rows of houses were long shared areas, communal yards, where there were a few necessities, say five privies to ten houses and a few middens into which to dump their excrement and other waste. At 5.5 persons to a household as an average for the town, there would be eleven persons using each communal privy.

Most of the poorer property was for rent and as rents had to be low the price of land had to be low. Newtown was built in the 1840s on previously ill-drained land, which must have been cheap. Even though the houses were new, they did not have piped water supply, a w.c. or piped drains (and still had no bathroom when demolished in the 1970s).

History is written by the educated and literate and so we do not have the personal memoirs of

the uneducated and illiterate poor. The best we can do to understand their desperate situation is to interpret this from the size and patterns of housing on the plans, and to infer their condition and way of life from a few written sources e.g. the census, and essays by Wohl (1983) and others about the work of the reformers of the period. Marjorie Cox's study of the work of Bowdon reformer William Wood which led to a gradual improvement of the work of 'climbing boy' chimney sweeps is an informed account (Cox, 1995).

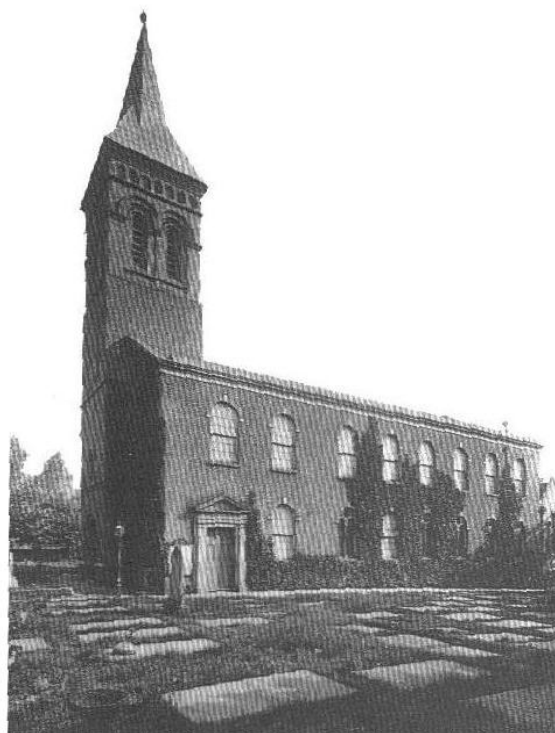


Fig. 5. St George's church before it was altered in the late-19th century (GF)

Crisis 2: Ill health

'These Diseases they find to originate almost always in the vicinity of low lodging houses, and in the dirty and ill-ventilated squares and alleys inhabited by the Working Classes from which Typhus Fever, often of a very malignant character spreads to the better Parts (as a pestilential air), & affects the Shop Keepers & others,' from a report of the town's two medical officers, 1849.

The horrors of life in the industrial environment of the large cities were matched in a smaller way in Altrincham partly by the direct dangers of disease through a lack of a system for disposing of human waste, liquid and solid, so that the very soil under the people was charged with dangerous bacilli. The incidence of diseases in the mid-19th century was also not helped by the lack

of cleanliness among the poor. Cleanliness was difficult without quantities of clean water coming readily into a house and being easily discharged. There was an absence of internal and individual fixed kitchen sinks (many were shared outside poorer homes) and baths; bathing was difficult where all water had to be carried. Dirtiness became accepted.

The environment was full of health risks. Without muck removal, and adequate road drains, pavements and roads were foul with effluent. Even a schoolmaster complained about a pile of ordure against the school wall which had not been cleared. In Hope Square, off New Street, in 1851 the brick middens, nine feet deep, had not been emptied for twelve months. The market gardening industry, reliant on raw effluent for fertilizer, also carried the discomfort of parasitical diseases, such as a variety of worms, problems which would carry on even when infectious and contagious diseases were almost eradicated.

Sickness was regarded as a function of social class, believed to start among the poor and to spread to well-to-do persons by contagion or infection. There was, for example, a nightly roll of 546 vagrants and others who could bring disease into the town, in 26 lodging houses (over 20 per house). Other continuing discomforts were due to a variety of insects such as fleas, lice and cockroaches, encouraged by a lack of personal and household cleanliness due to poor house construction (thatched roofs, rotten wood, cracked walls and earth floors), elaborate clothing with many folds, fancy hats and hair-arrangements, straw-stuffed bedding, a lack of money for cleansing agents, a poor water supply and drainage and a general lack of a culture of personal health, a milieu accepted at the time as normal. The poor accepted a world of squalor, dirt, insects, faeces, urine and stench, an environment they did not know was conducive to disease.²⁰ Lime was one cheap commodity to help counter some of the worst environmental features. We can understand the need for the town lime kiln shown on a map sheet at Broadheath.

Dozens of square (and one or two round) middens of brick or wood are shown on the sheets. The night-time must have resounded to the spades of midden clearers moving along back passages through the town and the rumbling wheels of their carts as they took away the refuse (from those who could afford the service) to be put on fields and market gardens. No doubt for an additional consideration, the privy or midden would be given a dusting of lime. Midden

clearers seem to have been reluctant to disclose their work to the census clerks.

Raw faeces fed Altrincham's farming and market gardening industries which supplied corn, milk, butter, cheese, meat and vegetables from land improved by it. For fertilizer, human waste, liquid and solid, was supplemented by animal dung, putrid meat, and bones from the eight farms, many stables, forty piggeries and two slaughterhouses shown on the sheets or recorded in the Book of Reference. Urine was used for bleaching and finishing cloth, as an insecticide, as a fertilizer, for medicine and, as mentioned, mixed with dog droppings and heated, was used in the nauseous tanning industry in the east part of the town. Human urine was collected, differentiating male and female contributions for specific uses.

Ill health is a feature about which the sheets did not inform, because they were for planning and rating purposes. In fact the sheets did not even name the two hospitals, both on Hale Moss off Pinfold Brow (Lloyd Street): the 1840 Smallpox and Cholera Hospital and the site for the 1853 Lloyd's Fever Hospital. The stark conditions and incidence of disease resulted in a death rate approaching thirty per thousand (Appendix 2) over treble what it is now and a life expectancy of forty-one years, less than half of to-day's (Phillips and Phillips, 2002, 49). The incidence of disease in Altrincham was high with dysentery, smallpox, diphtheria and typhoid fever affecting all social classes. There had been cases of cholera in the town (Hill, 2002, 11), recorded as spasmodic in the minutes of the Town's Meeting of the 5th of April 1832 (information from R.G.Higginbottom). These cases were put down to visiting vagrants, and were fortunately nothing to compare with the national epidemics of 1847-48 which killed 55000 people (Bamford, 1991b, 8).

Edwin Chadwick was a Manchester lawyer and reformer who was Commissioner of the government's General Board of Health for improving the water supply and drainage of towns and he drove through Parliament the bill for the 1848 Public Health Act²¹ to create more Local Boards of Health. He also campaigned for a piped water supply and a sewerage system for the poor. Piped water would keep the poor cleaner and save them carrying water from a pump; waste water in a sewerage system would carry away dirt and faeces from their houses.

'Miasma theory'

In an age when the population was increasing by 25% or more per decade, the amount of untreated sewage was increasing similarly and was

becoming more difficult to dispose of. There were no sewage farms. Masses of sewage from 'necessaries' filled cesspits and middens, or fouled open drains and streams or simply lay about, as mentioned, piled against a house wall. Untreated excrement seeped into the water-bearing sands and gravels and contaminated the aquifers and groundwater feeding wells and pumps. In the poorer areas, the piles of human body waste, animal and domestic refuse were left about due to people being unable to pay for their removal, and because they provided forage for pigs. At the same time they created a general stench.

It was in the 1840s that at last a suggested link between sewage and the high death rate was put forward. This was a refinement of a long-held belief, that sickness was linked to breathing the stench of foul air²² and that fever could be caught from the 'pestilential air' over marsh or moor here or e.g. over rivers in the tropics. In England this theory was now applied to the stench from unmoved sewage from the poorer areas (Longmate, 1966, 65) and it was a belief that became ingrained in health thinking. The fact that Altrincham had 'pestilential air' were words actually used in a report by the town's surgeons in 1849 (Appendix 1). This insufferable, odorous (Hill, 2002, 12), and (it was believed), 'pestilential atmosphere' or deadly air was called 'miasma'²³ (Longmate, 1966, 65; Mitchell, 1966, 492) and getting rid of this became the quarry of the reformers. The seepage of effluent into groundwater was not yet understood to be a vehicle for the transmission of disease.

The problem was to get the miasma away. There were a few small sewers in the town for rainwater, shown on the plan sheets as very thin lines in certain streets, but they were in the business and better-off, areas, i.e. the market place, Dunham Road, High Street, Church Street (leading to a drain in Manchester Road, Broadheath), and another in Victoria Street emptying rainwater and sewage directly into Timperley Brook, the principle of untreated disposal into rivers being favoured by central government.

The increasing practice of w.c.s being connected to the small-bore rainwater sewers by the well-off was additionally putting the sewer capacity under strain. It was therefore considered the first priority was to build more and larger sewers to take away the increasing sewage and thereby the 'miasma' with it to a stream. The problem was there was a lack of sizeable local streams in which to empty it. The second priority was to provide more water into houses, the outflow of which would help to wash away the deadly stench, the miasma²³ down the new sewers.

The people in power in Altrincham, members of the Court Leet and the Town's Meeting were eventually moved to do something about the health situation, perhaps thinking not only about the condition of the poor but their own futures because poor people in their overcrowded homes were thought to get diseases first, and then pass them on to higher class families. Disease was a class thing and came from the dirty and lascivious habits of the feckless lower classes. Poor people generated deadly miasma in their 'badly ventilated' areas, which, breathed in by both the poor and well-bred, affected all classes. Moreover the poor were restless and discontented; there had been Chartist riots in Manchester in the early 1840s (Goffin, 1993, 224) and the 'levellers' visited Altrincham in 1842 (Ingham, 1895, 202) so the poor were also seen as politically dangerous. Therefore there were pressures from the political side as well as the health situation, for the upper classes to take action, some no doubt against their wishes, to improve the lot of the undeserving in their alleys and courts. By this circumlocution of thought the town fathers deduced it necessary to improve the lot of the poor in order to ensure their own health, well-being and personal safety.

Crisis 3: Inadequate local government

The third major problem facing the town was that of a lack of efficient local government to cope with Crises 1 and 2 above. The Victorians 'were forced to adjust often in a frantic and *ad hoc* manner, to town-living in an age of unprecedented urban growth' (Wohl, 1983). This growth had caused ancient institutions to be suddenly outdated. Improvements in administration in Altrincham came in a series of stages. However, the response to the urgent needs of the times was not unified but met by a number of authorities and there seems to have been overlap of functions between groups in the town.

The Court Leet

This manorial burgess body had administered the town and carried out justice from the 14th century.²⁴ In the 19th century the problem arose from the lack of adaptability of the Court to manage a quickly growing number of inhabitants and the services needed. It was not the personalities who were the problem but the working structure of that body. Men strove to become burgesses by buying a burgage or fraction of one because members of the Court had superior status in the town. By the mid-19th century there might have been about 40 at a Court meeting including the Earl's officers. The administrators and law-enforcers were selected,

not elected, from that body by the mayor under the eye of the steward of the lord of the manor. In ancient times the members had many perks. For example, they were free from many county-wide tolls, such as those incurred for passing over bridges. In return they had major responsibilities and were allotted unpaid positions such as the market-looker, ale-taster, surveyor, constable, etc. These voluntary jobs were in addition to other occupations for their livelihoods where their priorities lay. There were no offices, no 'departments', no paid specialists, no 'secretariats.' There were no officers responsible for administering controls on the construction and facilities in housing, for dealing with a population explosion, for providing public services such as water supply, sewerage, or for dealing with widespread sickness; no taxes were raised for such activities. The court was also stretched not only by having to meet twice a year and having to carry out weekly responsibilities of administration but by having to meet every three weeks to act as a court of law, dealing with petty offences. The Court Leet, through the lack of any change instituted, or urged, by the Earl, stuck to the same functions, concepts, procedures and offices which had been relevant to earlier times.

It also concerned itself with ceremony and the mayoralty. A government report of 1834 (Wilkinson, 1834; Bayliss, 2000b) criticised the efficiency of the Court. Manchester, in the previous decade had been granted corporate status and a Local Board of Health by central government. The Court Leet had given way to Police Commissioners, enabling the metropolis to organise better public services.

The Court Leet received rents from a few lands (not identified on the map sheets), which could have been used to alleviate the distress of the poor and improve the insanitary state of the town in a small way but this income was sometimes squandered on wining and dining. An important factor was the control over the town's affairs exercised by the lord of the manor, the 7th Earl of Stamford and he objected to the Court's use of the income from its lands for banqueting and on one occasion, probably because there was increasing crime as population grew, there were fewer opportunities for employment and there were riots in Manchester, he instructed the court to use the money to appoint an extra paid constable.

The Court's jurisdiction function was taken over by the County Court system in 1846. Its municipal functions ceased in 1878, and were passed to the Local Board of Health. The mayoralty, now without magisterial functions, carried on to 1937.

The Town's Meeting

This body began life in the late-18th century, separate from the Court to address important concerns of the town but it was not hidebound by the restricted functions of the Court. Though called the Town's Meeting it was not representative of the general population because its membership was restricted to property-owning males and those paying a poor rate of £30 or over, of whom 150 were so qualified. It was run by several of the town's most worthy men selected by their peers (Higginbottom in Bayliss, 1992a, 43), some of whom were also in the Court and other bodies. It had the services of accountants, solicitors, surveyors and constables. Also, following the Lighting and Watching Act of 1833 it appointed watchmen in a blue livery to assist a few additional constables of the town it had appointed at fixed salaries. The Meeting also oversaw some welfare for the poor and was responsible for road repairs through levying rates called 'leys' (Ingham, 1895, 178). It also called on the magistracy at Knutsford Quarter Sessions not only for consideration of cases outside the scope of the Court or Vestry but to advise, for example, on the state of the roads. As early as 1831 its members had considered forming a Board of Health like that of Manchester but this did not happen. The Meeting investigated the causes of diseases of the 'lower classes' and vaccinated the poor against cowpox, and in the following year recorded there was cholera in the town.

Arising from a 'memorial' from the Meeting to the Earl of Stamford, complaining about the decaying fabric of the old courthouse and butter market in the market place, the Earl built a new edifice, not now called a courthouse but a town hall. This signified a change in administrative emphasis and the end of the Court's functions. It was built next to the Unicorn Inn in 1849, *Fig.1*, (a cramped site on the sheets that seems rather unprepossessing) and the Court and Meeting moved there.

The Town's Meeting Sanitary Committee

This was formed in 1839 as a response to outbreaks of cholera and other fevers. The nine members concerned themselves with a narrower spectrum of the town's problems and were very important and influential. It was important in that this body included two of the town's surgeons. The committee met in the house of Isaac Turton, the salaried Overseer of the Poor, and Clerk, living on High Street at the time. Turton was particularly influential; his signature was written at the foot of town documents for many years. The two town's medical officers and Turton were

commissioned to submit reports about the state of the town in 1849. It was believed that the health problems were rooted in the condition of the poorest people, hence, other than the two town surgeons; the natural person to make a report was Isaac Turton, the Overseer of the Poor. Details of the lack of drainage, sickness and inadequate quality, quantity and distribution of drinking and washing water revealed by these devastating surveys can be read in Appendix 1.

The Vestry

There was no Vestry until 1799 when St George's, Fig.5, was built as a chapel-of-ease to St Mary's, Bowdon. Oswald Leicester, the minister, was the first trustee. The Vestry, eventually a Select Vestry by 1822, was soon a power in the town and recouped the office of Overseer of the Poor from the Court. It employed some paid constables under the Overseer and, like the Court, it could identify perpetrators of misbehaviour and get them arraigned, especially for vagrancy. It concerned itself with administration of the workhouse at Broadheath, of which the vicar of St. George's was the chief trustee and the Overseer the chief agent. The latter seems eventually not only to have become more responsible to the Vestry than to the Court but also had some responsibility for firemen in the town and the raising and paying of the militia. The Vestry was particularly concerned with the plight of the poor and often bailed out those who had liabilities but could not pay them.

So by the mid-19th century the administration of the town was improving. The difficulties were that the approach to problems was multi-facetted and disorganised; the various bodies were overlapping in their work and several important aspects of housing and health were not covered. Also, the power of the Earl was a problem. An entirely new philosophy was necessary for the town to have effective local government in a period of rising population numbers and poor health. Central government addressed these matters and the whole administration was reformed, the bodies mentioned above for the most part lost their civil administrative capacity.

The Local Board of Health

The government introduced the concept of Local Boards of Health to concentrate on 'the supply of water sewerage, drainage and paving under the same authority' (Longmate, 156). Edwin Chadwick, a Manchester lawyer and member of the General Board of Health in London, championed the generation of such Boards. Manchester had a Local Board by 1832 to cope

with a severe cholera outbreak at the time Altrincham had a milder attack. Altrincham's Town's Meeting was awakened into action by the Sanitary Committee officers' in-house reports of 1849 (Hill, 2002, 12) and were desperate to achieve Board status for various reasons, one of the chief reasons being that Chadwick's Public Health Act of 1848 gave the government the right to interfere in any place with a death rate of 23 per thousand or above (Longmate, 1966, 155). That of Altrincham over the previous six years was 29.5. Those in authority in Altrincham must have been galvanised into asking the government for help by the appalling thought of being ousted from their offices by outside bureaucrats, and losing all their perks and influence. To improve the town the chief citizens had to convince central government Altrincham would benefit from having a Local Board of Health with wide powers. They had first to petition the General Board of Health in London to survey the town, which they achieved with the aid of the M.P., W. Tatton Egerton and 153 signatures. The government sent Robert Rawlinson, their inspector, to make a survey. A shortened version of his very adverse report is given in Appendix 2. There was obviously a need for a Local Board and this was set up in Altrincham in April 1851, and immediately began to plan improvements to the sanitary conditions in the town. The Local Board consisted of nine elected representatives under a chairman (Bamford, 1991b, 19). This was a landmark in Altrincham's history, its first ever elected administration, though the franchise was restricted to the existing pool of male landowners and those paying more than £30 a year poor rate. There was no full franchise even for males at this date. One of the first things the new Board did was to commission a cartographic survey of the town in 1852, Appendix 3, resulting in the atlas of plans which features below in this book. Its sheets showed not only buildings and gardens, but privies, drains, sewer pipes, wells, water pumps and other sanitary features. On it the Board's officers could lay out designs for new sewers and other improvements. Each building and plot of land was given a number. These were entered in a Book of Reference to be used for rating purposes - the modern style of local government had just begun, a painful moment for the poor, because everyone, rich and poor alike was expected to pay for the improved facilities.

SCALE AND SYMBOLS ON THE PLAN SHEETS

The original size of paper for the first introductory map and fifteen plans of the atlas was 40 inches (1.02m) by 26¾ inches (0.68m), double elephant size. The scales used were two feet to the mile, 1:2640 for the general map and ten feet to the mile, 1:528, for the fifteen plans each labelled a **Sheet** and numbered 1-15.

Along with the fifteen original watercolour sheets mounted on linen, two sets of the hand-coloured lithographs of the same scale are available for consultation in Trafford Local Studies Centre by special request. There is a fair bound set of lithographs, with most sheets showing 'gardens' with ruled lines and four sheets where rough shading was used instead (nos. 2, 10, 13 and 14). There is a fair amount of foxing and vertical staining. There is also an unbound set, generally clearer, but more worn.

The plans can be viewed in several ways, first as a resource for history, e.g. to show the sanitary condition of the town, or, by considering the size of houses, and facilities, for a study of social class, or as a chronicle of the first action of a new form of local government. They may also be viewed as a remarkable display of surveying accuracy and cartographic art, far superior to the tithe maps of twenty years before. This book will concentrate on their contribution to Altrincham's history.

Note:

- Altitudes above sea-level are shown on properties.
 - Houses, land plots and streets were given numbers from 1 to 1,666 with brief descriptions, sizes and their owners and occupiers listed in the accompanying 'Altrincham Survey Book of Reference', 1852.
 - 'Brick Houses or Buildings' were shown as pink.
 - 'Wood Buildings and Sheds' were brown with broken lines.
 - Green Houses with panes and the water features were shown in blue
 - 'Stone Paving or Flagging' was pale grey.
 - 'Macadam or Ballast' is a dark cream colour.
 - 'Garden Ground' was either 'pleasure ground' (flowers, bushes etc), or market gardens and both shown as green with brown mottling on the original watercolour. In the lithographic version, they are shown on different sheets as shrubs and either horizontal ruled lines or roughly shaded.
- The two land-use types were not distinguished and a judgement had to be made about which areas were which.

- Middens and pigsties were shown as open squares, difficult to distinguish.
- Railway features were shown black.

A key on the frontispiece to each set of plans, Fig. 6, was as follows:

Abbrev.	Meaning
S.G.	<i>Sewer Grates (along sewers which were shown as either a thin red continuous line or a thin dotted line)</i>
K.S.	<i>Kitchen Sink (in the poorer areas these were in the yards outside the properties)</i>
S.	<i>Sink Stone (a large slab of stone lying over a pit of small stones down which effluent could flow)</i>
C.P.	<i>Cess Pool (for collecting filthy water or sewage)</i>
O	<i>Privy (or 'necessary', a dry toilet)</i>
W.C.	<i>Water Closet</i>
W.C.	<i>Do. Overhead</i>
W.C.	<i>Do. Sunk</i>
W.H.	<i>Wash House</i>
C.^H	<i>Cistern Overhead</i>
C.^H	<i>Do. Sunk</i>
R.S.	<i>Rain Spout</i>
S.^T	<i>Stable</i>
C.H.	<i>Coach House</i>
Co.H	<i>Cow House</i>
G.H.	<i>Green house</i>
T.B.M	<i>Bench Mark (height above Ordnance Datum - sea level)</i>
L.P.	<i>Lamp Post</i>
L.	<i>Lamp</i>

DETAIL PLANS
OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF ALTRINCHAM
SURVEYED FOR THE PURPOSES OF
The Local Board of Health.
1852.

By
*Charles W. Carter, Mem. Inst. C.E. & S.
Manchester*

REFERENCE

SC Sewer Grates	PAFF	WH Waste House	ST Stable	BM Bench Mark	The Levels are given	Brick Houses and Buildings
KS Kitchen Sinks	WC Water Closet	C Cistern Overhead	CH Coach House	LP Lumpy - Red	from a Datum 32 feet	Wood Paving and Slabs
S Sink Stone	WC Dr. Overhead	T Dr. Sink	CH Car House	L Lump	below the Bench Mark	Gravel Paving and Flagging
CP Cess Pit	WC Dr. Sink	RS Water Spout	CH Green-house		on the Plinth of Front	Mosaic or Pavement
					House Bridge	Garden Ground

Scales



Fig. 6. Front sheet of the 'Detail Plans' stained over time, showing the symbols used (TLS)

THREE INTRODUCTORY MAPS

The general map of Altrincham borough at the front of the atlas preceding the set of fifteen 'detail plans' has been produced here as *Fig. 7* with some names added. It is the 1852 version of the guide map in the *INTRODUCTION*. In 1852 the main built-up area lay from St George's Church in the north to Lyme Grove in the south and extended from Market Street (which only had buildings on part of it) eastwards only to George Street with an extension to the railway level-crossings. This core built-up area occupied only about a fifth of the borough, in two distinct parts. One part lay along the curve of Church Street in the north and included the market place and High Street (top of present Market Street). The other part formed a rectangle with a long northeast to southwest trend along (present) Market Street and George Street with side streets at right angles - Chapel Walk (Regent Road) and Shaws Road. This rectangle of streets may have been the core of the original borough mentioned in the Chapter 1. Timperley Brook was a clear boundary down the east (right) side of the borough. The rest of the boundary was more complex as set out in the *INTRODUCTION*.

There were seven small suburbs. To the north, Broadheath and Sandiway grew up from 1765 with the building of the Bridgewater Canal (Bayliss, 1992a, 82, Mullineux, 1959, Grayling, 1983, Broadhurst, 1996 (for the Timperley part)). The Mount suburb and The Downs and Lyme Grove suburb in southwest Altrincham were sought-after areas from the late-18th century and contained fine Georgian and Victorian houses. Also there were fine houses in a string along Dunham Road. The Chapel Street-Albert Street and Goose Green suburban areas in the south grew from the beginning of the nineteenth century possibly with the rise of factory industry and market gardening, and Newtown from the 1840s.

Comparison with the tithe map of 1838 shows there had been some extension to the town by 1852 in nine small areas: villas had been built in the suburbs of Mount Pleasant (The Mount), Dunham Road, Groby Place, Albert Square, New Street and Norman's Place. Smaller houses had been built in Goose Green, Chapel Street and Newtown.

The chief communications were the roads, canal and railway. Altrincham lay at a hub of road routes. The main crossroad at the market place was where the Chester to Manchester road broadly from southwest to northeast crossed the line of the Warburton (and Dunham) road to Stockport from west to east. Another road to the south ran to Ashley. The roads to Manchester, Chester and Stockport were turnpiked by the

Washway Trust. The Warburton road led westward to Dunham Hall, the home of the chief landowner, and the Ashley road south to Tatton Hall seat of another large estate. Minor roads ran to Carrington, Timperley and Wilmslow.

The Bridgewater Canal of 1765 passed from west to east across the north end of the borough. It was an important route for trade between Manchester and Runcorn and a busy hamlet had grown up at Broadheath, the port for Altrincham.

The Manchester South Junction and Altrincham Railway (MSJ&AR) ran from northeast to southwest parallel to the main road and canal and reached the town from Manchester in 1849 (Macfarlane in Bayliss 1992a; Dore, 1983) and two stations can be seen. One was called 'Altrincham Station' by the former 'crossings' over Stockport Road, and there was a terminus called 'Bowden' Station (*sic*) by Lloyd Street. The latter had a hotel at its entrance. From 1765 surplus products of market gardening, textiles and footwear and post could be sent to the Manchester market quickly by the new canal and the 1765 Manchester turnpike, and after 1849 by rail.

Many of the field shapes immediately to the west and south of the town were the fossilized ancient arable strips of the Town Field. To the east and north, the larger patch-shaped fields on the map were pasture or arable, all enclosed well before 1852, formerly woodland and moss land, used for grazing pigs and cattle in earlier times. Water meadows along Timperley Brook, once held in common were long enclosed.

The small rectangular enclosures round the town were market gardens and orchards. Hale Moss (bottom right) which the town burgesses used for grazing animals was still an unenclosed wasteland. The ancient burgess right of turbary (peat gathering for heating, roofing and gardening purposes) was no longer in much use;²⁵ coal could come from Manchester and Worsley, and slates for roofing from North Wales by canal, road and, after 1849, by rail. Altrincham's first industrial area was at Woodside, north of the station.

The second map, *Fig. 8*, was included in a government inspector's report in 1851. It shows how sparsely the environs of the town were settled, and how large Hale Moss was, stretching to George Street. The third map, *Fig. 9*, was produced for this book to show how the fifteen plans covered the town; the sheets were laid out on either side of a north to south axis. The numbering started in the bottom left hand corner, just as that of the grid system of the Ordnance Survey maps does today.

Township
 OF
ALTRINCHAM

SURVEYED FOR THE PURPOSES OF
 THE
LOCAL BOARD OF HEALTH.

1852.

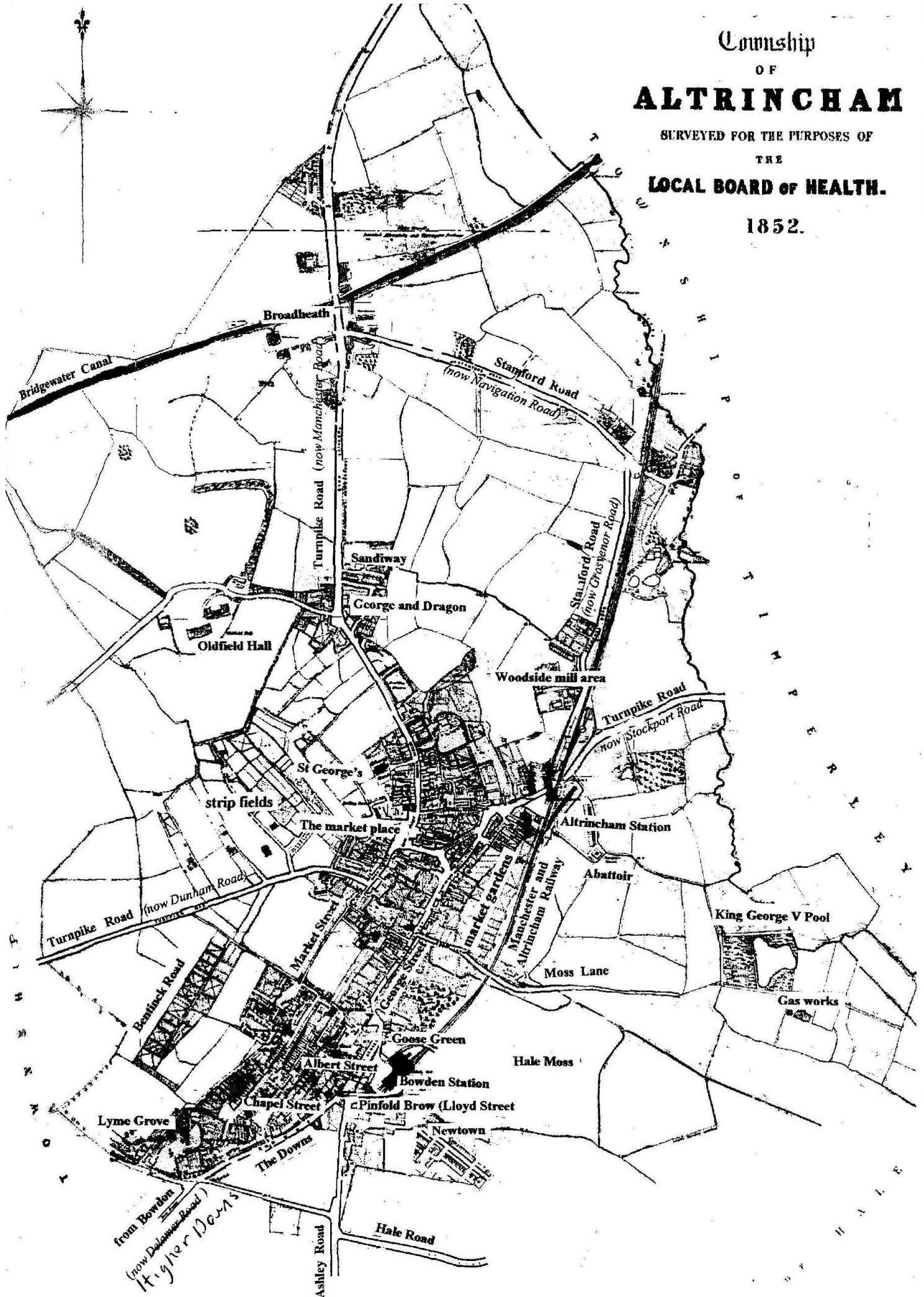


Fig. 7. Map of the town in the 1852 set of plans (TLS-IS)
 (some names added)

ALTRINCHAM

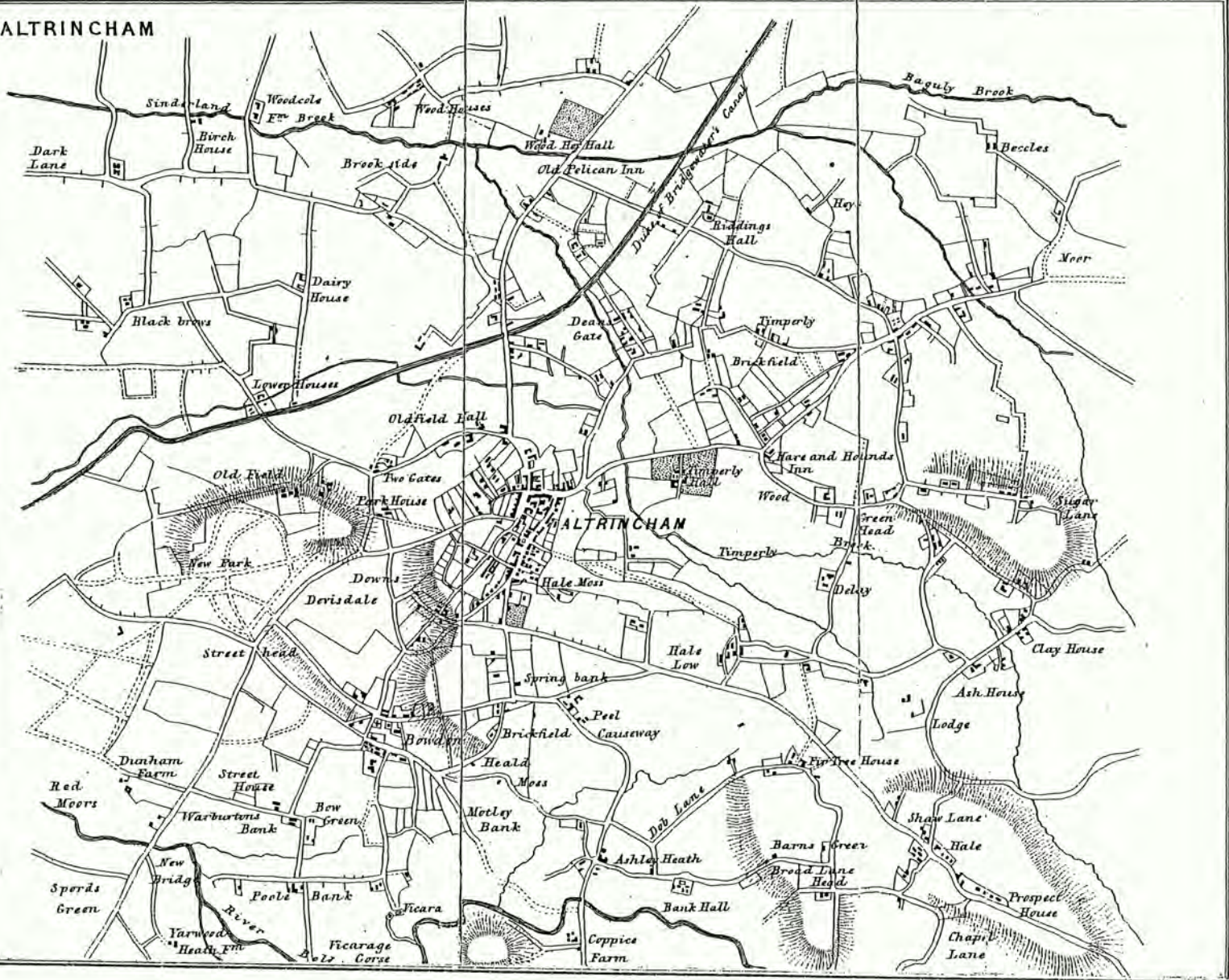


Fig. 8. The region around Altrincham in 1852 (TLS)

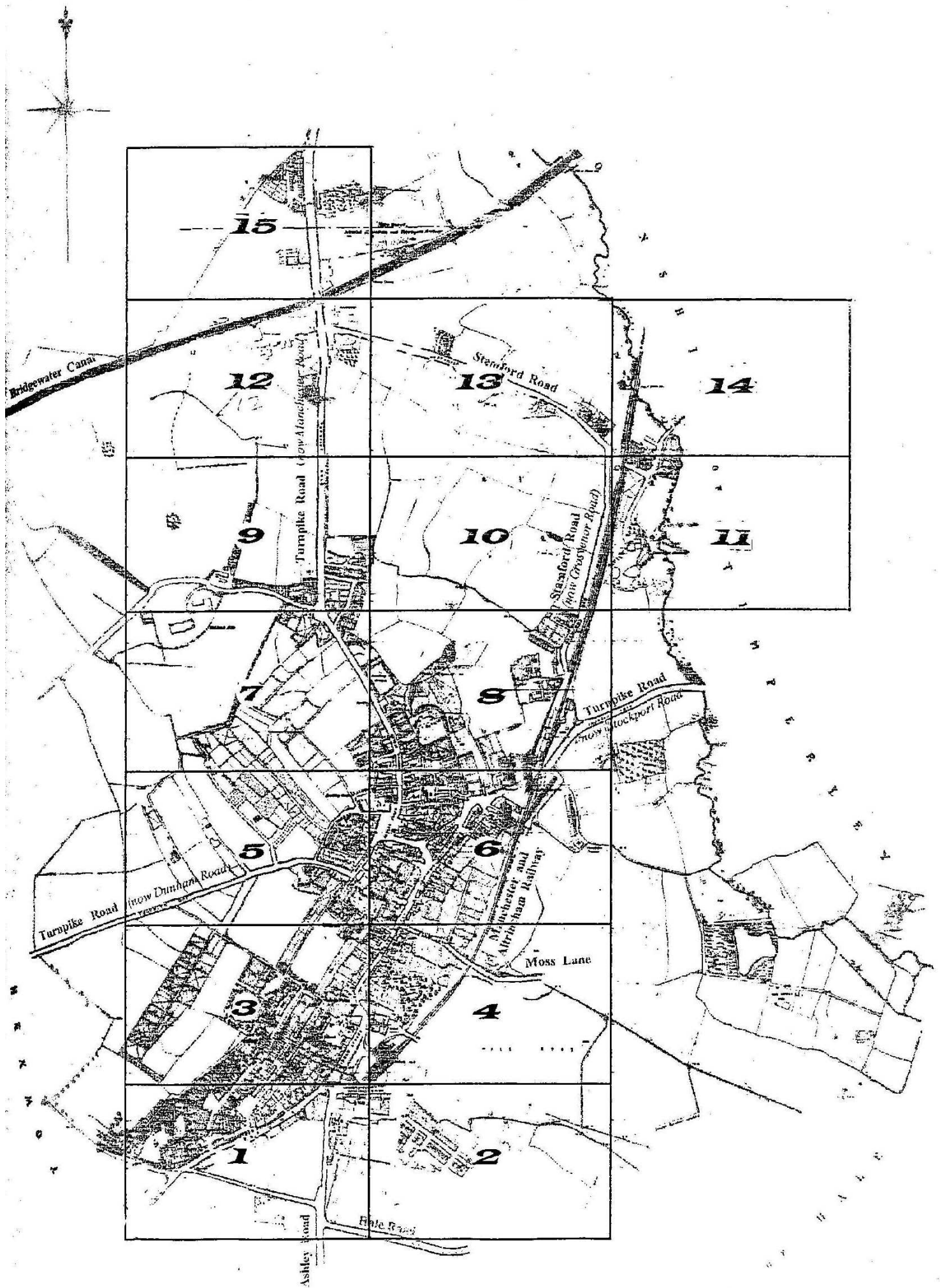


Fig. 9. Arrangement of sheets to cover the town (TLS-IS)

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE FIFTEEN PLAN SHEETS

Sheet 1 The Downs and Ashley Road

Overleaf is Sheet 1, its location shown on *Fig. 9*. One main area of housing, and a few roads, gardens and fields are shown. This was the south part of Altrincham where it abutted (bottom of sheet) onto the townships of Dunham Massey and Bowdon. No detail was shown for these places because the plan makers were only paid to map Altrincham. Curiously the map did not reach right to the south of Altrincham, omitting to show, for example, Spring Bank house and its estate. The north-pointing arrow bottom left shows north is at the top of the plan.

The Downs runs from middle left to top right. It may have taken its name from 'dun' meaning 'hill' and the road certainly climbs away to the southwest, middle left. In 1852 its villas, *Fig. 10*, lined only the northwest side. This was an upper middle-class road (Kemp, 1985, 7) well before the coming of the Manchester South Junction and Altrincham Railway (MSJ&AR) because of its elevated nature above, and to windward of the smoky town, with good views. Its proximity to 'Bowden' Station (off the sheet top right) increased its attractiveness. New Street (named) and Wellington Place (not named, plot 742) went off from The Downs north-eastwards. These roads were nearly built up. The name of Wellington Place may date its development to the decade 1810-20.

Ashley Road ran north and south along the right hand side of the right sheet. It had three clusters of houses, some smaller than those on The Downs. St John's Road, not named, ran from west to east, left to right across both sheets, partly along the township boundary and only had buildings on it at the Ashley Road junction. The site of the later St John's Church lay on the north side of this junction. The building on the south side was Gorrell's Gate Farm. Albert Square ran south off St John's Road.

The 1851 census showed these roads harboured artisans, commercials, managers and professional people, and a few people carried out industry in wool, silk and cotton. The boxes representing the houses in plan on The Downs were quite large, some with bays at the front and others extensions behind and gardens front and back. Down the road to the top right the houses and gardens were smaller, suggesting the properties were less expensive, indicating a social difference between the southwest and northeast ends of the road.

Top right there was much smaller terraced property on Pinfold Brow (Lloyd Street) and a temperance hotel, an unusual feature.

The fine parallel lines showed 'garden ground.' On the left, this included bushes and trees suggesting private gardens, whereas the same shading on the bottom middle of the sheet, dissociated from the buildings, and on the right sheet denoted market gardens or private allotments. The rest of the 'blank' area was farmland, not easy to distinguish except it had plot numbers. It was probably used for grazing animals or growing arable crops such as oats.

Some of the properties, such as Albert Terrace, top of the left hand sheet on New Street, were recent, built just after Victoria's marriage to Prince Albert in 1840. The parallel curves of the ends of gardens in New Street and Wellington Place followed the shapes of curved ends of medieval ploughland strips of the former Town Field. Also a former strip ran along the back of the houses on the upper left corner of the sheet and formed the extensive grounds of a mansion. Another strip ran east of Wellington Place. The ancient strips were one Cheshire acre in size (2.1 statute), of varying lengths and widths but about 120 feet by 800, quite large. Their curved ends onto The Downs were made by the great common ploughs drawn by up to eight oxen turning round at the end of a furrow in medieval times before ploughing back up the strip. The strips became available for building because they were unviable for later farming when this industry favoured squarer, 'patch-shaped,' fields. Early field shapes therefore controlled the shape of roads, housing and gardens. Terraced housing was an ideal form of dwellings to get as many houses as possible along a narrow strip of land. A pleasingly drawn sheet telling a lot about history and social differences.



Fig. 10. The Downs today

(DGB)



Sheet 1a The Downs and New Street (part of Sheet 1)

In order to see The Downs area more clearly part of it is shown in detail. The Downs lies across the bottom and the parallel pattern made by New Street, top left, and Wellington Place, shown as property 742 to the right, can also be seen. The long boundary between two former arable strips lay between the last two roads and served as a wall or hedge dividing the gardens. As mentioned, another strip ended at Victoria Terrace at the bottom right. The strip fields were pre-1290 from an earlier settlement on the site of Altrincham borough. When a burgess after 1290 owned a strip it could be used or sold, as the burgesses wished (but see Note 19). Different styles of houses in particular strips suggest parts of the strips were sold for building at different dates to different developers.

The bold figures refer to the plot number in the Book of Reference and the smaller figures show the altitude above sea-level in feet, e.g. house 529, at the right edge, was 120.6 feet above sea-level. Other datum points in the middle of the road, and other properties show The Downs climbed away to the southwest (bottom left) and, in fact, it reached 150 feet above sea-level in Bowdon off this plan, contrasting with Hale Moss at 70 feet off the plan to the east (right). It was a fashionable place to live, sheltered from the southwest winds by higher ground, enjoying pleasant airs above the odours of the town with views eastwards.

Two lamps (Lp) lit The Downs, no doubt gas; there were none elsewhere in the area, and some of the up-to-date houses probably had gas lighting and cooking. The works of Altrincham Gas Company were downwind, on Hale Moss off Moss Lane. There were 60 lamps in the town lit from 29 September to 25 March each year, except for three or four nights a month at full moon!

The stylish houses on The Downs here formed three Victorian terraces (one with a date stone of 1839, the others about the same age) with two blocks of semis and one detached. Most had well-laid out pleasure grounds back and front, some walled (double lines; hedges, single lines). Victoria Terrace and Wellington Place had small front gardens but yards behind. Several of the houses are listed buildings today. Most properties had their own, no doubt fashionable, washhouses (W.H.) and this suggests they had their own water supply, and hand pumps can be seen behind several houses. There were outdoor dry privies or 'necessaries,' each denoted by a small circle in a square, some at the far end of a garden or yard, others close to the house, e.g. at houses Nos. 761 and 762, bottom middle. The waste was dumped in middens, (small squares in the

gardens or yards). There was no sewer in the road so the means of w.c. disposal is not known but property 751 on New Street had a cesspit (C.P.) and others had stonepit soakaways (S) for drainage. Some necessities were cleared from paths, several of which were 'back lanes,' e.g. behind Victoria Terrace. House 757, bottom left had a cistern (C^H) so possibly a w.c. and other facilities (Plumbing and Mechanical Mag., 1994). The outside privy would be for servants and gardeners. Kitchen sinks (K.S), seem to have been the 'latest thing' outdoors e.g. in Victoria Terrace but others, e.g. at 537 were indoors. Though the houses were of high status a few cellar dwellings were recorded in this area, but not on this extract.

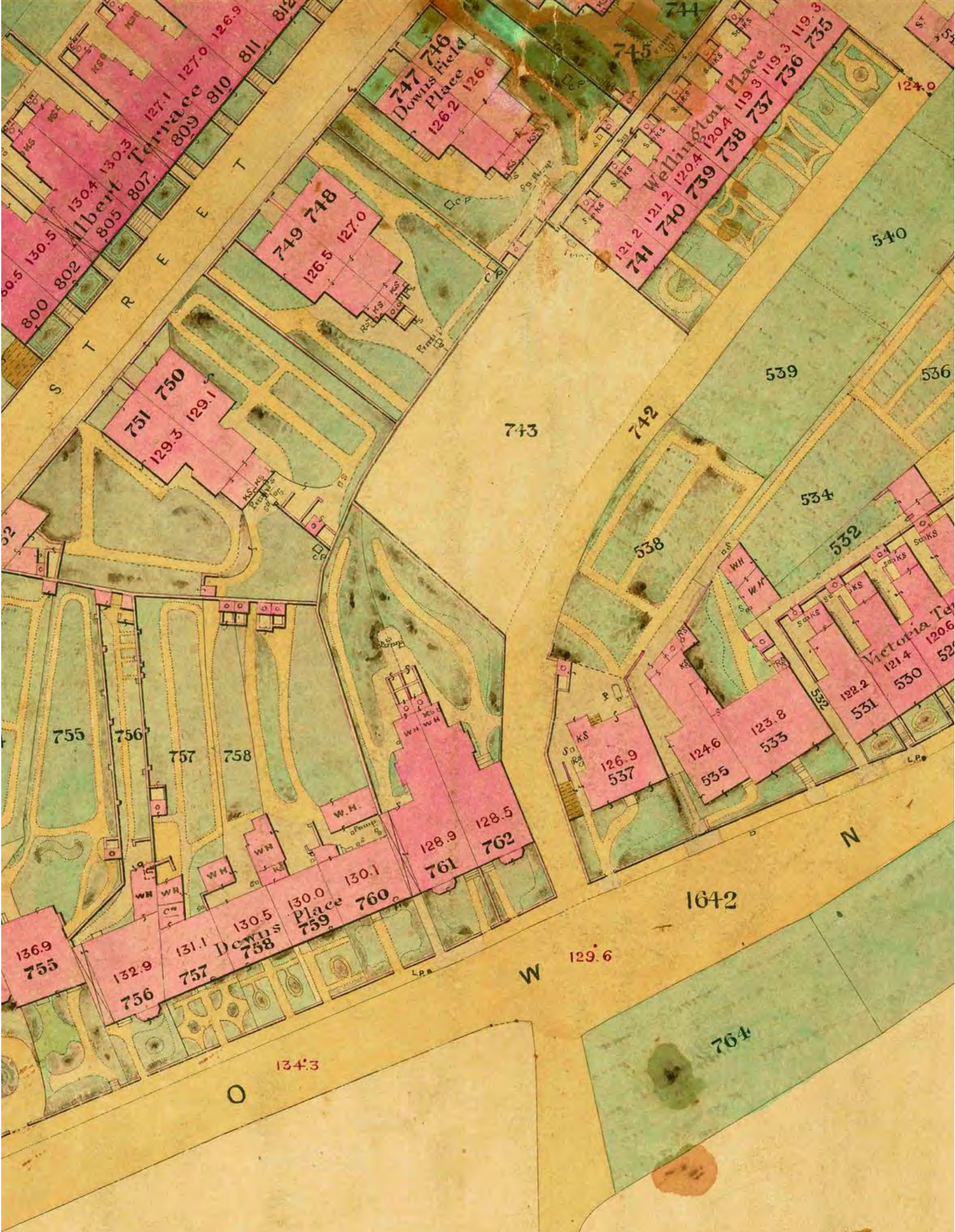
Wellington Place houses, 738-741 were not quite as large as those on The Downs, terraced, and of uniform style with gardens at the front and yards behind. There was a back lane across the rear to empty the middens and necessities.

New Street had large properties in 'Albert Terrace,' 1840s, top left, with yards behind and front gardens. On the south side of the road, the properties in each (new) pair shared a pump a few yards from their necessities; one midden was against the house. They had inside kitchen sinks. In 1851 New Street was described as a 'new street' with 104 houses, but it was 'neither paved, sewered or drained.' Nearer the town New Street property was poorer quality, *Fig. 11*,

The ground shown lined was ornamental gardens, except that plot 764 (bottom), the adjacent patch and properties 532, 534, 536, 538--540 were probably market gardens or allotments, away from the houses. Property 743, blank, had probably been bought recently for development.

The occupations by industry of 126 people living on The Downs in 1851 were:

Farming and gardening	1
Textiles	6
Clothing and footwear	3
Food and drink	4
Metals	-
Other manufactures	-
Construction	3
Retailing	5
Professional services	4
Miscellaneous services (agents, lodging house keepers, proprietors of houses or land, brokers, nurses, school teachers, governesses)	33
Labouring and apprentices	-
Servants	43
Transport	-
Independents	23



There were considerable differences from the averages of the whole town given in the first chapter in the section on Altrincham's 'Industry and Occupations' in the mid-19th century. The core groups here were those people offering miscellaneous services and those of independent means, who had one or more servants each. Another difference here was the low representation of the gardening community and labourers.

An unexpected feature was seven lodging- or boarding-house keepers in this otherwise high-class road. Wealthy people who moved out to new houses elsewhere in Dunham and Bowdon had no doubt left some large houses ideal for lodging houses, suggesting this road was declining slightly in status. Apart from this instance, the plan shows large properties in a sought-after part of the town, together with clear detail about the spacious grounds of the houses of their affluent owners. It also shows the problems of water supply, leading to reliance on the hand pump for water (other than rainwater which could be gathered from the roof), potential health dangers in relation to effluent saturation of the ground and problems of effluent disposal.

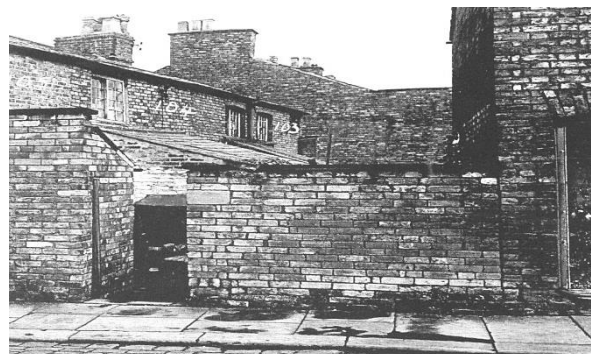


Fig.11. New Street; back of houses selected for demolition, 1952 (TLS)



Fig. 12 Richmond House, Norman's Place (DGB)

SURNAME	FORENAME(S)	HEAD	AGE	OCCUPATION ETC.	WHERE BORN	ADDRESS
SKELHORN	PETER	Son	11	SCHOLAR	CHES. ALTRINCHAM	87 CHAPEL ST.
	MARGARET	Dom	9	"	"	"
GARNER	WILLIAM	Widg	39	AG. LAB.	" HALE	"
PERCIVAL	ANN	"	34	HAWKER OF FEARHEN-WARE	IRELAND	"
THOMPSON	MICHAEL	Widg	32	AG. LAB.	"	88 CHAPEL ST.
	ANN	Wife	30	"	"	"
	SUSANNA	Dom	1	"	CHES. ALTRINCHAM	"
GANLEY	TIMOTHY	Widg	27	AG. LAB.	IRELAND	"
SCANLON	MATTHEW	"	24	"	"	"
KELLY	JOHN	"	24	"	"	"
CORRIGAN	MARGARET	"	40	"	"	"
	ANNE	Wife	50	NURSE	"	"
HOLLINSWORTH	JOHN	Widg	44	AG. LAB.	"	89 CHAPEL ST.
	MARY	Wife	46	"	"	"
	JOHN	Son	10	SCHOLAR	CHES. ALTRINCHAM	"
	ANN	Dom	7	"	"	"
	THOMAS	Son	6	"	"	"
ORRIGAN	JOHN	Widg	27	AG. LAB.	IRELAND	"
	CATHERINE	Wife	26	"	"	"
	JULEY	Dom	9m	"	CHES. ALTRINCHAM	"
PODMORE	JOHN	Widg	32	TAILOR	" BOWDON	90 CHAPEL ST.
	MARY	Wife	27	"	"	"
	ELLEN	Dom	7	SCHOLAR	" ALTRINCHAM	"
	MARY	Dom	4	"	"	"
	JOHN HENRY	Son	4m	"	"	"
HIGINS	MICHAEL	Widg	35	AG. LAB.	IRELAND	"

Fig. 13. Transcript of part of a census sheet for 1851

(TLS)

Sheet 2 Newtown and part of Hale Moss

The area shown on this sheet lay to the east of Sheet 1 and shows Newtown, a part of Altrincham built on the edges of Hale Moss where Sainsbury's and the Armitage Road flats are today. The sheet is discordant showing a huddled mass of cottages, Newtown, holding tight to the middle left of the area. The rest, particularly the north (top) part was the province of streams (thick lines) which drained a boggy and peaty area unfit for settlement, once more economically important.²⁵ Though the western part (right side) was in Altrincham it was called Hale Moss and overall with the part in Hale was shared for grazing animals between the inhabitants of Altrincham and those of Hale. Some large farm fields lay near the township boundary on drier land south of the drained area.

Newtown was an isolated private suburb of small high density terraced houses or cottages. It possibly grew up as a response to population growth and the rise of gardening and service work, not to any new factory work, as the latter type of occupation locally was reducing.

The plan makers made it quite clear that Newtown was isolated, at the drained edge of a bog, a great contrast to properties on Sheet 1. Its cottages were laid out in a grid-iron pattern of streets, at right angles to each other, with a main axis from northwest to southeast fitting uneasily in the confines of a former large irregular-shaped field southeast of Pinfold Brow (Lloyd Street) top left). The cottages would have used the adjacent brook to the north as a handy, if open, drain. Newtown homes, improved, lasted 120 years before demolition. Newtown Night School, shown in pencil on one edition²⁶ of the plans, was built in 1858 (Nixon, 1979, 202) for the secular education of people after work and after attendance at Sunday services.

No vestiges of any former strip-fields can be identified here because this area was not suited to growing corn. The pattern of fields consisted of large patch-shapes suitable for grazing animals, the ditches round the fields suggesting continuing wetness of the ground. Over time there had been a regulated drainage of Hale Moss by a stream which led northwards eventually to Dunham to drive the sawmill, and there were other drains dug eastwards to Timperley Brook. There were three numbered plots, roughly shaded, up the left side, and others across the north of Newtown likely to have been market gardens. It is probable the moss land had once existed more to the south and that fields 1436, 1554 and 1557 and the site of Newtown was land reclaimed some centuries ago.

In the middle of the right sheet the word 'Pound' can be seen alongside a rectangular enclosure. In times past this was known as the Pinfold. The burgesses of the town grazed their horses, cattle and pigs on the unenclosed part of Hale Moss. Stray animals were rounded up by the 'cattle looker' an officer of the Court Leet, and impounded in the pinfold, to be redeemed on payment of a fine.

Incidences of typhoid, and cholera in 1832, led to the construction of Altrincham's first hospital, Altrincham Smallpox and Cholera Hospital perhaps the building in the centre of the sheet, by the stream, built in the 1840s away from the town on what is now Stamford Park Road. A better, second hospital was built, in 1853. This was an isolation fever hospital, still well away from the better-off parts of the town, the one possibly nearer Newtown. It was called Lloyd's Fever Hospital and got its name from the wish of E.J.Lloyd, J.P. of Oldfield Hall²⁷ to assist its construction by his will of 1850 (Ingham, 1895, 204). On his death his widow endowed the hospital. The name of the track, Pinfold Brow, which led by the stream past the hospital to the Pinfold, was changed to Lloyd Street in honour of its benefactor. The building to the east could have been Moneyash Farm which gave its name to a road off Ashfield Road.

The terraces of property on Pinfold Brow, which at first sight look rather similar to the houses of Newtown, may be of an earlier date. Whereas several of the Newtown houses had private yards, those in the southern terrace on Pinfold Brow and John Street, south of it did not; they shared a common open space between the terraces to the north (1504). There appears to have been seven outdoor dry necessities for about ninety people.



Fig.14. Street in the poorer areas (HEB)

H A L E M O S S



Sheet 2 Newtown and part of Hale Moss

Sheet 2a Newtown (part of Sheet 2)

Now to a closer view of Newtown. This sheet shows by the dense pattern of boxes for houses, their similarity of design and small size, that we are looking at an area where poor people lived. Newtown houses were built for renting by the lower classes in the 1840s and were therefore relatively new at the time of the survey. One improvement was there were pavements round the blocks. The homes were terraced, small in size and built at a relatively low height of 97 feet above sea level, 10-20 feet above Hale Moss.

Bamford (1991b, 35) estimated the smallest size of the two-storey houses was 15 by 25 feet, two-up and two-down and they are better described as rectangular cottages. However there were no back-to-backs, and most were up-to-date in having indoor kitchen sinks though there were some (new) properties where the sinks were in the open air in another part of the estate. These houses also had an extension, like later 'tunnelbacks' possibly a scullery, occupying half the yard. The properties did not contain the latest facilities such as water closets, but most had individual yards containing a private dry privy except in house numbers 1472-1474 (bottom left) and 1464-1468 (middle left) where 6 households (possibly 30 people) shared 2 necessities in a common back yard.

A ginnel between the yards of the better houses, 1504 - 1522 (bottom right) gave access to their privies and middens for clearance. Between houses 1523 - 1533 middens were shared between two houses. Some of the enclosures of a square shape may not have been middens but piggeries.

The cottages had no piped water nor underground drains. There were only two pumps (behind 1432 and 1439) and one washhouse (by property 1523) for the 80 houses shown, i.e. for about 400 people or more. There were cesspits (C.P.s) outside properties 1530-1532, bottom right. There was also one large open 'square' where children could play (plot 1485) and perhaps washing dried. There was access to Hale Moss and to an open drain (near the top of the sheet), which was probably in an insanitary condition. The general ambience of the district therefore hardly fitted the name of one of the streets, Paradise Street (no doubt similar to *Fig. 14*). Other streets were Islington Street, King Street, Lord Street and Cross Street.

The occupations of 118 people in Islington Street in 1851 were as follows:

Farming and market gardening	9
Textiles ('weaver and printbraid maker')	1
Clothing and footwear	6
Food and drink	3
Metals	-
Other manufacture (brickmakers)	4
Construction	30
Retailing	8
Professional services (nurse)	-
Miscellaneous services (nurse)	1
Labouring and apprentices	25
Servants	13
Transport (incl. wheelwright, railway porter, ostler)	16
Independents (house proprietors)	2

Construction, labouring, transport and servant work occupied most people, catering for the growing middle class in Altrincham and Bowdon. As with all the plans no drying area is specified, though many women in poorer areas must have taken in washing.

Many servants 'lived in' in the better class areas and the thirteen servants in Newtown would have worked outside this district. As mentioned in the first chapter, for many years Newtown was called 'Cally', 'Calais' or 'Little Calais.' The origin of the three names may be short for Callaghans - hinting at the number of Irish there.

The severity of the drawing of cottages and lack of street names on the sheet in contrast to Sheet 1 makes clear the type of area shown. However there was more variety in the shapes and facilities in the terraces than first meets the eye. This was because Newtown was designed and built by a number of entrepreneurs, each erecting eight or ten properties. So much for the up-to-date estate of the 1840s.



Sheet 3 Regent Road Area

The draughtsmen have presented here a completely different picture to that of Sheet 2 and challenged the viewer to make some sense of it. It teems with man's influence in the right half. The pattern of roads aligned northeast to southwest created a parallelogram of Chapel Walk (Regent Road, diagonally across the middle), George Street and Railway Street (from north to south down the right hand side) and 'Bowden' Lane (later Market Street – up the top centre, right hand sheet). At that date George Street was a northerly continuation of Railway Street and Ashley Road (from Sheet 1). This rectangular pattern was due to the building patterns still following the lines of the streets of the medieval town. The part of Bowden Lane leading south to Norman's Place and Bowdon Church was also known as Burying Lane. The large blank plot on the top middle of the right hand sheet was later the site of Altrincham General Hospital (1870).

Chapel Walk (Regent road) was named after the Wesleyan Chapel, the large building (plot 666, now gone) at the end of Chapel Street, opposite the Grapes Hotel (638). The 'Graftons' now lie where George Street joined Railway Street in a 'dog's hind leg' bend. Today it is straight and joins Regent Road at right angles. Railway Street got its name in 1849 after the building of the MSJ&AR and was an extension of Ashley Road. There was no Stamford New Road in 1852.

From the left centre to the right hand lower corner, Norman's Place, New Street, Chapel Street (now gone) and Albert Street, (now gone, another reference to Victoria's husband) were aligned along straight strips of the former Town Field running from northeast to southwest. Chapel Street was a continuation of Wellington Place from Sheet 1. The straight streets were ideal for cheap terrace-building. This was a densely peopled area,

Houses were mixed in quality in Chapel Walk and lower class in Chapel Street. There were also working class houses in Albert Street. New Street houses of fair size were currently being built for middle class commuters. The higher ground to the west towards the borough boundary had attracted even better quality housing in Norman's Place and Lyme Grove, *Fig. 12*, Georgian in date from the Second Great Rebuilding²⁸ of the town.

On the far left, The market garden plots parcelled out of a former strip would soon be occupied by twenty high class properties. The road up the middle of the plots was the beginning of Bentinck Road named after the family of the wife of the fifth Earl of Stamford and Warrington. This road lay adjacent to the new parish of mansions to the

west designed by the Earl of Stamford to serve St Margaret's Church completed in 1855 (Bamford 1991a). It is likely the properties in the Bentinck area were completed just before the earliest mansions in the Earl's development.

In the top right hand corner of the right hand sheet note the first Unitarian Chapel in the town, off Shaws Lane (Shaws Road), which continued in use until a new and present chapel and associated buildings were built on Dunham Road in 1872.

Most of the area not covered by buildings would be ornamental gardens round better-class properties but market gardens elsewhere, e.g. in the poorer areas such as the Chapel Street-Albert Street neighbourhood. The seven or eight large numbered blank areas were farm fields.



Fig. 15. Chapel Street

(TLS)



Sheet 3 Regent Road Area

Sheet 3a Chapel Street and part of New Street (part of Sheet 3)

This extract from Sheet 3 shows dramatically how the settlement pattern made by Chapel Street, New Street and Norman's Place housing followed the shape of three former strip fields. The streets ran down the middle of the strips and the boundaries between them served as a wall or hedge along the end of the gardens. To the north the streets met Chapel Walk, off the sheet, at right angles. Examining the southeast corner of the extract first, the shaded plots (rather than ruled in this edition) 593-599, bottom right, were market gardens lying to the rear of the Downs Hotel on Railway Street (not shown).

If the cartographers used a ruler to reproduce the human boxes in which the inhabitants of Chapel Street lived, it may have been stylised but was only a reflection of how geometrically the poor were housed. The east side of Chapel Street contained three terraces of small houses with no front gardens and the interesting feature of domestic architecture is that the twelve houses 579-590 in the centre terrace shared one long common back yard, 591, and did not enjoy individual yards. Houses 556-561, 579-580, 589-590 were back-to-backs. House 579 opened onto the end of the long yard and had an unsavoury view, facing two necessities with a midden between. Water from the twelve houses in the terrace drained into ten sink stones (S) in the yard, not into sewers. The inhabitants, of whom there must have been about 65, shared one pump at the rear of property 584, and four privies, each therefore serving about fifteen people, and had no communal washhouse. However, the long yards would have been useful for drying clothes. The roofs of the houses had no rainwater (down) spouts and therefore no gutters to supply water. Another pump can be seen outside plot 560 in the street. Terrace 556-577, ten houses, appears to have had only three privies, one between probably twenty people. Conditions were little better on the west side of the street. There were six back-to-back houses, numbered 552-555 and 656 and 657 at the other end. At the northern end of the middle terrace, properties 572, 664 and another at the back of 662 were stables, reminding us of the importance of horse power in those days.

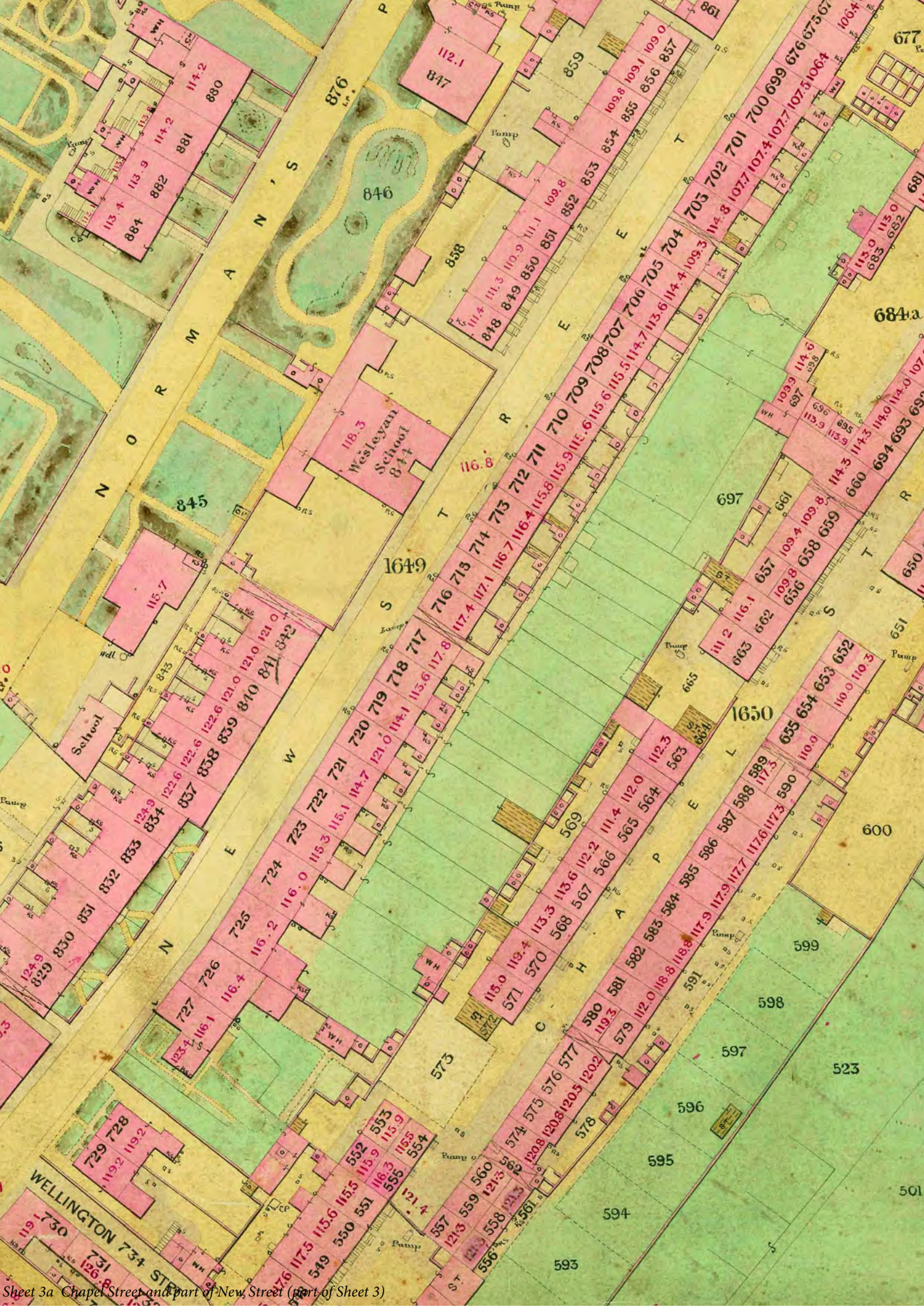
The land sloped downwards gently from top left to bottom right. Some houses compensated for this by having steps up to the front doors, e.g. just discernible by the 'H' of Chapel Street. Other steps may have led down to cellars for coal or cellar dwellings. Several of these small dwellings were lodging houses and others contained several families. The house in plot 717 in New Street, held

three families: the Bentleys, husband a trunk-maker, wife and son (2yrs); also Thomas Rooney, 'agricultural servant' and wife; and lodger Catherine May, fruit dealer and her son (aged 21), in all, six adults all from Ireland and a child. Rawlinson who carried out a survey of the town for the government was critical of the habits of the Irish. Some small enclosures near the houses may have been pigsties, if not middens. Rawlinson's report also stated "The evidence as to the want of sewers and means of house drainage is full and forcible" and "Chapel Street, 203 lineal yards, with 81 houses is not paved or drained. Many of these houses are let as common lodging houses, and the cellars of several are used as distinct dwellings." Not all the houses were old in 1852. Mr. Charles Balshaw, auctioneer, printer and property developer, reported to the Town's Meeting "I have lately built 10 houses in Chapel Street, but in consequence of the want of drains I have been unable to let them."²⁹ Nobody volunteered any suggestion as to what he could do about it.

Between Chapel Street and New Street was a belt of holdings indicated as gardens, most likely vegetable gardens. Each garden at first glance seems related to a New Street dwelling. It appears that before New Street was built, the remains of half an ancient strip field existed between New Street and the Chapel Street properties. It was purchased and divided into sections forming thin slices for market gardens. It is not known how many houses and gardens belonged together except that houses nos. 724 and 725 had 'joining links' to two plots. The rest of the gardens had links to the road, and no doubt, paid rent to its owner.

There were two schools on New Street, the southwest one behind plot 837 was probably private. The Wesleyan School in the middle of the west side of the street had many scholars listed in the 1851 census. It was associated with the Wesleyan chapel where Chapel Street met Chapel Walk. It had two playgrounds, one for boys and the other for girls. St George's in Higher Town catered for the Anglican upper social classes whereas Nonconformism served Lower Town.

The houses on the east side of New Street were larger than those in Chapel Street and socially a grade higher, probably lower middle class. Each house had its own outdoor necessary, an improvement on Chapel Street. Houses 724 and 726 had washhouses at the end of the garden near the necessary but this does not mean piped water as the dry privies remained. Only one group of roofs, from 720 to the northeast end of the street,



had rain (down) spouts and so another source of water than pumps. There were few middens among the houses, which suggests the occupants could afford to have any privy cleared frequently. Access to the necessities for emptying in many cases was along a common back lane. A few dwellings had rear extensions, such as 722 and 723 on the east side, to include a kitchen sink (K.S.). There was a short open drain into a pond at the rear of 704. There were three street lamps along this side of the street (whereas there were none in Chapel Street).

Looking at the design of the houses and appurtenances behind them in New Street, it is clear there had been at least four developers. Houses 717-726 had extensions to the rear resulting in smaller yards. The houses on the same side farther along were larger and with variations in yard plan. Houses 724 and 726 were bigger and had their own washhouses. Properties 728 and 729 were large semi-detached and possessed their own front gardens, 728 had a kitchen sink and 729 its own washhouse; both houses had no sewerage, only sink stones (S). Having front gardens, possibly the social level of the inhabitants here was middle class. Wellington Street, Plot 734, like Wellington Place on Sheet 1 was a private road and so assessable and numbered.

The left side of New Street had three types of dwelling. Those in the terrace at the north-eastern end were like those in Chapel Street, ten houses, 50 inhabitants, sharing a common long yard behind with five communal privies and one pump. The dwellings in the terraces south of the school were larger; 837-842 had a plan suggesting inclusion of a back room and scullery with enclosed sinks. They each had a small walled yard, privy, midden and access to a narrow communal yard. No clear evidence for an external water supply can be seen, except a well by the school behind. The terraced properties 830-834 were superior because they had front gardens, rear extensions with kitchen sinks (K.S.), sink stones, small individual yards backing onto a communal yard and individual necessities; the thirty people shared one pump.

Of New Street the Government inspector, Robert Rawlinson stated (report p.10, and quoted above in the section on Sheet 1a) that it contained 104 houses, and was neither paved, sewered, nor drained - but at least there were pavements at the side. At the Chapel Walk end there were poor quality houses, *Fig. 11*.

One of the town's worst black spots was Hope Square, top right, off New Street, *Figs. 16 and 17*. Rawlinson's report said it was "an enclosed yard, unpaved and undrained." The "privies and

cesspools" were close to open middens "several yards in depth, bricked round and divided into compartments. The refuse of a year or more is thrown into these places." They were full at the time of inspection. The stench must have been worse than that of a farmyard.

In the top left hand corner of the sheet there were larger good quality houses with front gardens in Norman's Place but nevertheless the street was reported as "being 150 yards in length, with 16 houses (and) not sufficiently drained." There were high status villas in Lyme Grove off Norman's Place to the south, not shown, *Fig. 12*.

The Book of Reference listed sixteen cellar dwellings in the Chapel Street and Albert Place area. This number represented half of all cellar dwellings listed for the town. In this extract they lay under properties 571, 658, 848-857 (nine adjacent dwellings except for 852), and others were in Norman's Place.

The distribution of 287 persons among 50 houses in the middle of Chapel Street, (1851 census figures) is very revealing:

No. in house	Frequency
1	2
2	3
3	4
4	9
5	6
6	4
7	7
8	11
9	2
10	1
11	-
12	1

The average household was nearly six persons. The mode (most frequent) was eight, a high figure revealing severe overcrowding, bearing in mind the smallness of the houses. There were many lodgers listed in the census, *Fig. 13*.

The industries in 1851 in which 120 working occupants of central Chapel Street were engaged were:

Farming and gardening	66
Textiles	4
Clothing and footwear	3
Food and drink	1
Metals	2
Other manufactures	2
Construction	6
Retailing	6
Professional services	-
Miscellaneous services	3
Labourers and apprentices	13

Servants	10
Transport	2
Independents	1
(pauper)	1

The numbers employed as agricultural labourers have been included in 'Farming and gardening,' rather than under 'Labourers and apprentices.' The resulting numbers of people employed in farming, gardening and labouring are amazing for an urban community. Of this sample just over half were in that category. As well as being involved in tilling the soil some no doubt moved the nightsoil and animal manure available for fertilizer. There was work also for gardeners in the 'pleasure grounds' of the big houses.

The people in the section of Chapel Street examined were occupied in a wide range of manual trades apart from farming and gardening; there were railway workers, road makers, building labourers, a silk and cotton weaver, a handloom weaver and a cotton bobbin turner, shoemakers, furniture makers, nail makers, brick setters, stonemasons, painters, glaziers, sawyers, butchers, servants, hawkers, charwomen, and coachmen. The high proportion of farmers and gardeners to the rest singles out Altrincham as a town of curious distinction and shows the importance of agriculture to the poor inhabitants of a 19th century borough. It has been often quoted that Chapel Street was noted for its weavers but there is evidence of only two from the main part of the street.

While understandably attacking the drawing of rows of similar terraced properties with their rulers, the mapmakers have also indicated a couple of instances where market gardens belonged to particular houses for rating purposes and also by numbering certain roads, which of these were private and to be rated. However an unusual thing they did was to distinguish the edges of gardens and yards, which had solid walls (double lines) from those which had fences or hedges (single lines). Whether this was a rateable feature or just geographical is not known. Their depiction of the presence of street lamps was a good guide to the social standing of a street. The cartographers produced a sheet of striking interest, indicating high density living and some districts with a lack of facilities which must have made life onerous.

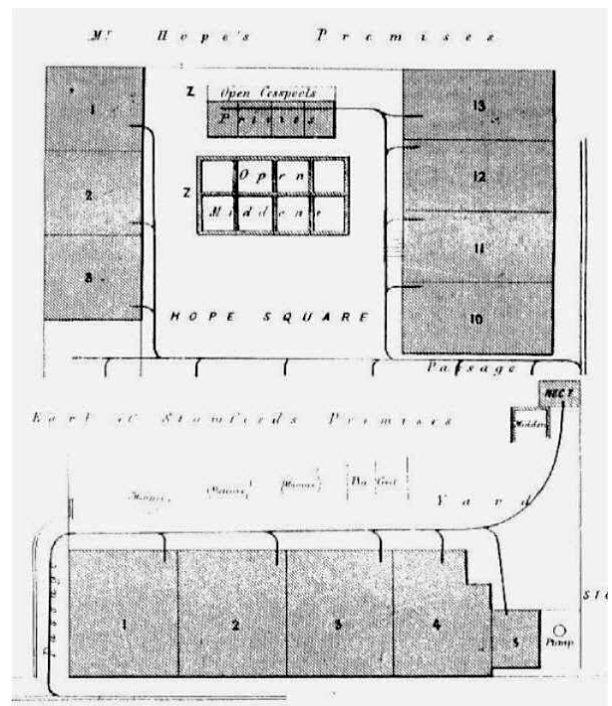


Fig. 16. Plan of cottages and middens in Hope Square, 1852 (TLS)



Fig. 17. Hope Square cottages, New Street (TLS)



Fig. 18. Albert Street before demolition in the 1950s (TLS)

Sheet 4 Hale Moss

Hale Moss was formerly a wet peat bog but by the mid-19th century much of the peat had been dug away over the centuries for fuel for fires, for a soil conditioner for agriculture, and roofing. By the 19th century it had been largely drained and stripped down to a peaty, sandy and boggy heath forming poor rough pasture for horses, donkeys and cattle. The Book of Reference informs us that the moss land was owned by the Earl of Stamford and Warrington and occupied by 'the inhabitants of Altrincham,' i.e. it was still common land for the people of the borough. Its clay bed formed the basis of a brick-making industry, important for the rapidly growing town. There were still a few thatched cottages in the town and the countryside and so it probably supplied some turf and reed roofing, and possibly fuel for the destitute, though coal had long been available in the town. Hale Moss had once extended westwards to George Street and Goose Green shown by the regular-shaped drained fields between George Street and the railway. This improved land may once have existed farther east before the railway was built. This western part had been improved to become market gardens and allotments by the use of human and animal muck as fertilizer.

The railway in 1849 had found an easy route along a shallow cutting at 70 feet above sea level through marginal market garden land. Keeping this low altitude the builders avoided having to erect expensive embankments and viaducts. Its route ran through land not as expensive to buy as prime town land. The first terminus in 1849 was near the 'crossings' at Altrincham but the line was extended in the same year to end at 'Bowden' station (for passengers only) bottom left at Pinfold Brow (Lloyd Street). Altrincham station also handled passengers and had a goods yard for the district. The labourers who built the extension to Bowden Station had to excavate a large cutting from the edge of the terraced bank on which the town lay, shown by hachures (shading) on the sheet. A station on the present site replaced the two original stations in 1881.

The tithe map of 1838 shows the triangular shape of Goose Green was already there; the excavation for Bowden Station only emphasized it. Before the railway cutting was made, there was quite a steep hill from the green down a track onto the Moss. The traffic to Hale Moss must have been very frequent and important to warrant building two new bridges over the railway, at Goose Green and Moss Lane.

Goose Green was reputedly used for herding geese onto the moss. However, the numerous places named 'green' in this region may have another connotation as assembly places for cattle or other animals as well as geese, from where they could be taken by drovers to distant markets (Bayliss, 1994, 5).³⁰

On the northwest side of George Street, Shaw's Lane (now Road) can be seen top left. A reminder - there was neither Stamford New Road nor Cross Street at this date. An indentation into the line of buildings on George Street near its junction with Shaw's Lane was Beggars' Square,³¹ the only place where beggars who were licensed could carry on their 'profession'. As Robert Rawlinson noted, "it is the residence of beggars, vagrants and tramps - persons having no direct means of subsistence, but who as truly are maintained by the public as if a regular allowance was paid to them daily" (Rawlinson, 1851, 15).

On the south-eastern side of George Street the eye can just make out a common rear boundary to many properties behind the houses suggesting medieval burgages may have been laid out here. Along Moss Lane and Goose Green bridges sewer pipes ran out into open field drains on the Moss and so north-eastwards eventually into Timperley Brook, Altrincham's boundary off the sheet to the east. The brook, in 1853, was one of Altrincham's first sewers for untreated sewage. Beyond Moss Lane bridge there was a small school and a handful of houses, the start of the future extension of building into the moss land. In the outlines of railway cuttings, of Moss Lane and the drains on the Moss, the plan makers have perhaps straightened features giving us a more 'organised' landscape than it was.



Fig. 19. Clearing a stream on Hale Moss (HEB)

Sheet 4a Goose Green (part of Sheet 4)

This was a small suburban hamlet off Railway Street and the south end of George Street on a track leading straight on to Hale Moss at the junction of two environments, one urban, with a railway station and market gardening, the other a wilderness. It will be worth considering whether the economy of the inhabitants was divided equally between work concerned with urban activities and those connected with Hale Moss such as grazing horses and cattle, shoeing animals in a smithy, peat gathering and brick making. The triangular shape of the 'green' is quite clear at this scale, its shape sharpened by the digging out of the bluff of land overlooking the western edge of the Moss to provide level land for Bowden Station. The railway was thus separated from the green by a steep bank which overlooked the station, the land rising abruptly from 83 feet above sea level at rail level to nearly 100 feet in the town to the west.

The four houses 1407-1410 appear as a group of similar properties with rain (down) spouts, and only one outdoor necessary visible for the twenty or so people, not unusual, but perhaps they had w.c.s. If so, they must have used the services of the sewer (dotted line and sewer grates, S.G.s) passing through the 'green,' though the dots might have indicated a proposed sewer line rather than a de facto one.

The other cottages had a few outdoor necessities and middens but some may also have had similar improved internal facilities. The cottages were probably late encroachments on an earlier larger green. The land to the north of the green was almost wholly market gardens. There was an open sewer drain on the north side of plot 1392 (top left) which started in an unhealthy position close to a pump. It then, apparently turned, after passing under cottages 1416 and 1417, along the west side of plot 1419 to debouch into a cesspool beyond the far corner of 1419.

Bowden Station tracks had turntables in them to turn coaches or engines round and the station seems to have been glass covered, unlike Altrincham Station. It had a hotel adjacent and a ticket office on Railway Street, possibly the second or third shop along from Goose Green ginnel. The station was really up to date and up-market with six w.c.s and one necessary and approach facilities for gentlemen's carriages. As it lay in Altrincham, its name may have been chosen to indicate a difference in social class.

Of the 47 people employed in Goose Green, the distribution by industry and occupation was:

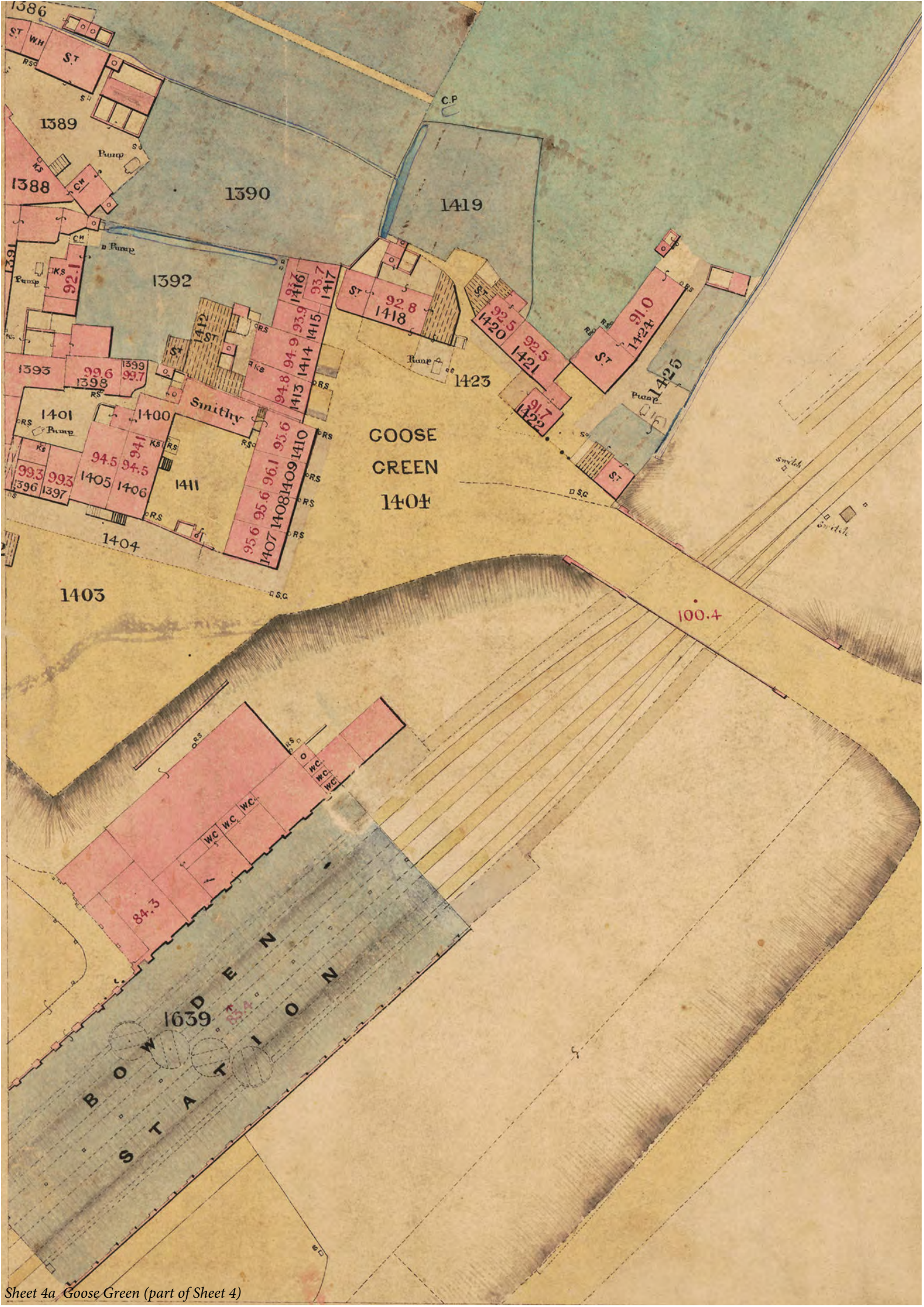
Farming and gardening	2
Textiles	8
Clothing and footwear	-
Food and drink	1
Metals	1
Other manufactures	3
Construction	8
Retailing	1
Professional services	0
Miscellaneous services	0
Labouring and apprentices	12
Servants	6
Transport	5
Independents	-

The worker in metals would no doubt have been employed in the smithy. All but one resident were working class, the exception being the man in retailing. Half were higher working class (social class 4): farming and gardening, textiles, food and drink, metals, and other manufactures, and half were lower working class (social class 5), labourers, apprentices, servants, construction and transport. Most would have worked in the town; only the smith and three brick makers out of the 47 had any link with the adjacent Moss.

John Warburton, a fustian cutter, was 38, lived with his wife, his mother and five children. It is likely he was employed in a workshop, for this difficult cutting work. Aaron Jenkinson, a brick maker, was 48, probably working at a brick works on Hale Moss. He lived with his wife and two sons Aaron and George, also brick makers, three sons who were labourers and two younger children, quite a crowded cottage of nine. Betsy Warburton, 72, lived in another cottage with her son-in-law, grandson and granddaughter - they were all on parish relief.



Fig. 20. Goose Green today, west side (DGB)



Sheet 5 Turnpike Road (Dunham Road), Groby Place & High Street (Market Street)

The turnpike road from Chester (Dunham Road), bottom left, approached the town north-eastwards downhill from Highgate. The road did not enter the market place where it does today but turned into what is now High Street by the side of the site of the former police station of 1866³² (now The Warrant House offices) to the present National Trust offices; it then turned left, north-eastwards, along what was then High Street (now Market Street) – all very confusing. Thirteen years later the Waggon and Horses hostelry in Old Market Place was demolished to allow a straightened Dunham Road to enter the market place directly.

In the middle of the right sheet was a lozenge-shaped group of gardens and properties including 945-950, surrounded by a curiously curved bank. Possibly this bank was part of the early medieval village before the planned borough was laid out in 1290.

High Street and Bowden Lane had a bend between the two roads where property 946 bulges out. It is likely there was no such bulge when the town was laid out in 1290 but it had occurred afterwards and since 1852 the junction has been smoothed out. High Street (now Market Street) was part of Higher Town where wealthy people lived in imposing houses. Some of the ancient burgages of the houses are not very clear to see, their rear boundaries lying half way between High Street (present Market Street) and High Bank above the last 'D' of (Dunham) 'ROAD.'

The whole of the top two thirds of both sheets consists of a dozen acre strips in the old Town Field³³ running from northwest to southeast. Joining two such lands had made several wider strips. Others had been parcelled across into small square fields for market gardening or house plots e.g. Groby Place, crossing down between the two sheets.

An interesting feature in the top part of both halves of the sheet is the use made of these former long arable strips which formed huge gardens for large villas or were used for market gardens. Three villas west of Groby Place occupied the middle of former strips. The plan makers show quite clearly the landscaping of their gardens. Their wealthy owners had easy access for their

carriages to the turnpike road. The villas are now parts of three schools.³⁴

Groby Place was a Victorian road created out of a strip parallel to those just mentioned; it took its name from one of the Stamfords' Leicester estates. The road contained some fine houses, still there, *Fig.21*. Other strips, to the east had been divided up for a bowling green and market gardens.

St. George's churchyard can be seen in the top right of the sheet. Between this and where Albert Place bends round, was the Unicorn's yard, 'Arnold's Yard,' plots 1031 and 1034; the inn (now the Market Tavern) is just off the plan to the right. At that time the yard was full of buildings such as stables. One of the buildings had housed Altrincham's first gasworks in 1844. On the southwest corner of Arnold's Yard was the Jubilee School, established in 1810, the jubilee year of the reign of George III. Opposite this was a bowling green which after a century and a half of existence is today under threat from a developer. The industries and occupations of the people in Dunham Road and High Street are set out in the next account (Sheet 5a). Those in Groby Place in 1851 were as follows:

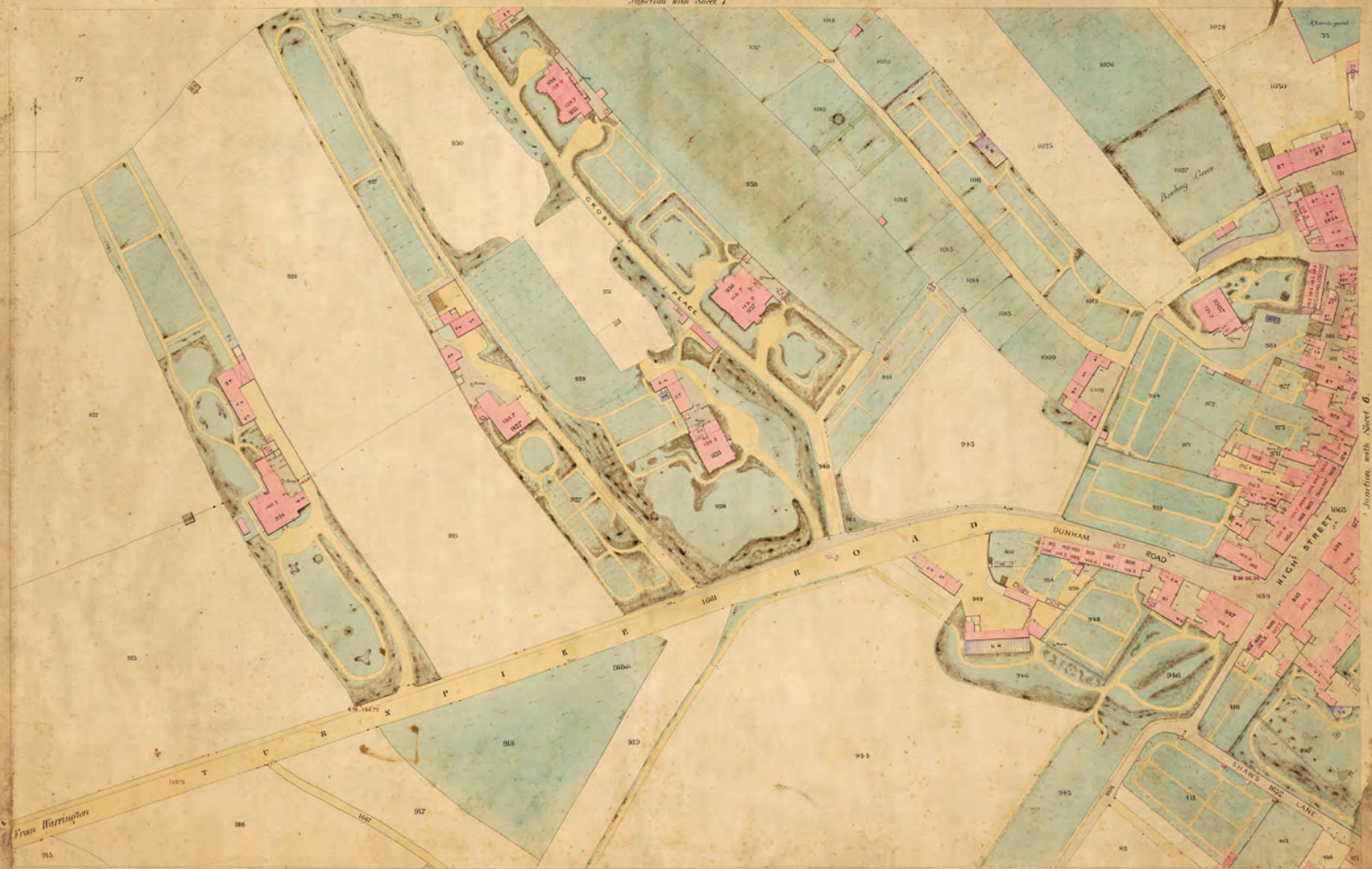
Retailing (incl. one iron merchant)	2
Miscellaneous services	1
Servants	12
Independents	4

The ambience of Groby Place is still the same.



Fig. 21. Semi, Groby Place

(DGB)



Sheet 5a Dunham Road (part of sheet 5)

This extract of part of Sheet 5 shows where Dunham Road met High Street (Market Street) by the Georgian property, 961, *Fig. 22*, the home of Hugo Worthington, Steward to the Earl of Stamford; it was also the offices of Nicholls and Worthington, solicitors.³⁵ At the rear a yard, pump and washhouse was shared with properties 960 and 962. Albert Place was plot 1022. The ends of five strip fields can be seen to abut on this lane in the top left corner of the sheet. Patch 1008 was formerly called The Butts where, in ancient times it is likely archery had been practised.³⁶ Three probable former burgages (town plots, five perches by two) on the left side of High Street were plots 963-970 together, 973 and 974 (Waggon and Horses) and 975-977.

Across Dunham Road from property 961 was 947, the site of the town hall of 1900,³⁷ where, as well as the house, there was a washhouse, coach house, pump, w.c. and stables. The w.c. was some distance from the main house, presumably for a gardener and other servants. With an overhead cistern for the w.c., and sewers (S.G.) in the road, a midden shown on Dunham Road next to the road would be surplus to requirements unless it was used for non-toxic waste from the house, or from a piggery in the grounds. Perhaps properties 951 to 958, bottom left, with no outside w.c.s also had indoor facilities. In the straightness of paths in the plots such as 959 and 984, centre left, near High Bank, the cartographers gave clues that the 'garden ground' was used for market gardening.

Property 1007, later the ASC building, had an indoor w.c., dry necessary, midden, and pleasure grounds. The Jubilee school (in memory of King George III) is at the top, and part of the words 'bowling green' is indicated with its clubhouse, one of two of these high status symbols of leisure (at that time), for wealthy people in Higher Town. The excellent houses on High Street are listed today. There were a few outdoor dry privies no doubt for servants. Dr. Alex Paterson, Member of the Royal College of Surgeons and Practitioners lived at house plot 960 with his family including his daughter, Helen Allingham, Altrincham's famous watercolourist.³⁸ Property 962 was the home of Isaac Turton, Overseer of the Poor, who had written a very critical report on the state of the town in 1849, Appendix 1 in this book, which had triggered the petition to the General Board of Health in London to inspect the town. The house was used as an office for the Sanitary Committee and the new Local Board. In Turton's household in 1851 were his wife and 7 children: daughter (a dressmaker), son (a joiner's apprentice), another son (a scholar), another daughter and 3 younger

sons down to four years of age. Next door at 963 lived Charles Balshaw, auctioneer and builder of houses in Chapel Street, with his family; he would be mayor in 1861. Plot 966 was a shop belonging to Samuel Pearson, property owner; 967 and 968 were shops followed by the Waggon and Horses on the market place.

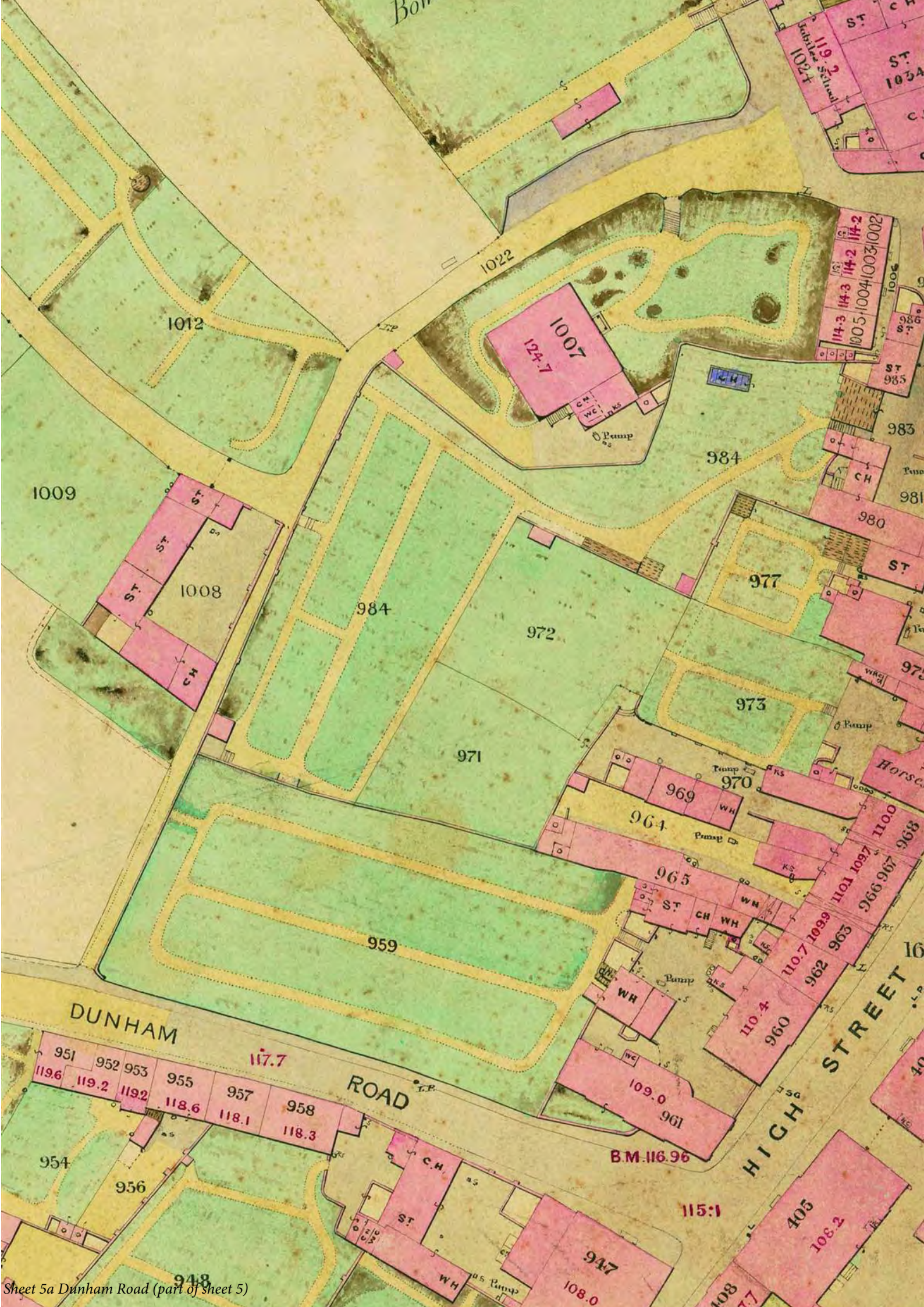
Most shops and offices also doubled as residences. On the east side of High Street there were no offices. Off the sheet, bottom right, was a shippin (cowshed), curious in a town's commercial and classy heart, owned by Richard Broadbent, one of the town's two chief surgeons and mayor in the critical years 1849 to 1850. He lived and had his surgery at No.408 High Street (just shown) opposite the junction with Dunham Road. Several fine houses are still there in High Street (Market Street), now offices. Occupations by industry in the two roads were:

Occupation	Dunham Rd	High St
Farming & gardening	3	-
Textiles	-	-
Clothing & footwear	-	1
Food & drink	-	-
Metals	-	2
Other manufacture	-	-
Construction	3	-
Retailing	8	12
Professional services	-	3
Miscellaneous services	2	6
Labouring & apprentices	1	3
Servants	5	15
Transport	-	-
Independents	3	-
Miscellaneous	1	-

There were differences between the occupations of people in the two roads. There was a large range of urban professions, services and trades in High Street whereas, in contrast, there were a few agriculturists on Dunham Road, perhaps living in the houses 951-958, and a few independents.



Fig. 22. Dunham Road-High Street corner: offices of Worthington and Nicholls, 1851 (today, National Trust); round the corner to the right - first house, Dr. Paterson's; next - Isaac Turton's, the Local Board offices (DGB)



Sheet 6 Central Altrincham - Old Market Place, George Street and the Railway

Here we see the market place, *Figs. 25 and 26 on p.42*, the core of Higher Town in the top left hand corner of the sheet. Part of Lower Town: George Street, Post Office Place, Police Street and Well Street filled the rest of the left half. Hale Moss and the town's new railway of 1849 lie to the right. Most of the properties in the town had walled boundaries (double lines) while those outside the town on the right were fenced or hedged (thin lines).

The Unicorn Inn lay at the north end of the market place. At the south end was High Street (Market Street). The rear limit of former burgages in this part can be identified by the continuous lines marking the back of the properties on both sides of Church Street and less prominently on the east side of the market place, *Fig. 3*. In George Street, common boundaries behind properties, clear on the left but not so continuous on the right, suggest there had also been burgages here. By 1852 there were increasing demands for accommodation and many of the former burgages had been divided down their middle or crosswise and sold or rented to make small plots for house building. Some burgages were almost covered with buildings or work yards, but a few on the sheet can be seen with ornamental 'pleasure grounds' - bushes and flower beds, and several were market gardens, allotments and, no doubt, orchards.

The Unicorn Inn, extremely busy before the coming of the railway, would still have been a noisy bustling staging point for coaches travelling out of and into Cheshire beyond the rail terminus at Lloyd Street. Other inns and hotels in the town included the Red Lion, *Fig. 25*, in the market place; the Waggon and Horses in High Street (Sheet 5a); the Roebuck and the Old Pear Tree Tavern in Victoria Street; The Victoria and the Malt Shovels on Stamford Street (Kingsway); the Stamford Arms & Bowling Green Hotel on Church Street; and the George and Dragon and the Wheatsheaf at Sandiway (the last three and the Waggon and Horses are not on this sheet). There was also a temperance hotel and numerous beer shops.

Adjacent to and north of the Unicorn, the outline of Altrincham's first town hall can be seen, built in 1849 by the Earl of Stamford. For centuries the Court Leet worthies selected a score of officers from among its chief burgesses to manage the town and serve as a jury to adjudicate on petty offences. The court had met until 1848 in a courthouse, last rebuilt in 1684, situated over a butter market in the middle of the market place.

When this building became dilapidated by 1848, the Earl demolished it and in 1849 built the first Town Hall, rather than a 'court house,' and the court moved there. One wonders if it was a coincidence the Earl built this when the town was seeking government assistance about major health problems, and in the same year the railway arrived in the town. The Parliamentary Act for the line had been passed in 1845 and perhaps at this earlier date the Earl could foresee the effect of this development, and wished to promote the town's image through a town hall. From 1851, when a Local Board was formed its officers administered the town from a High Street office leaving the town hall to an eventually elected council and the now largely ceremonial Court Leet. Notice that north of the town hall in Church Street a row of shops and a smithy, now gone, jutted into the street giving a narrower roadway than perhaps it was in earlier times.

Southeast of the market place, the names of streets such as Well Street, Post Office Place, and Police Street near the railway give an idea of their different functions.

Considering Well Street first, one of the mysteries about the town centre was the location of the public great well. However, a prominent square enclosure can be seen drawn round a pump marked on the east side of Well Street in plot 1103. Another well was excavated in Victoria Street by STAG, *Fig. 24*, which may well reflect Ingham's assertion (1895) that Victoria Street used to be called Well Street. However this street name is not supported by the 1852 plan under consideration. Property 1104 in Well Street was the 'Fire Engine House' no doubt well-placed for water near the town well.

In regard to the other two streets mentioned, Post Office Place was probably named following the introduction of Rowland Hill's penny postage in 1841. Police cells of were in existence on Police Street in 1838,³⁹ (no doubt established under 'Local Acts,' see Appendix 1) manned by constables or watchmen under the Overseer of the Poor. By 1852 the cells had shifted to property 1105 on Well Street and there was a police house, 1106, next door occupied by Frederick Orme. There had also been a cell under the market place courthouse manned by the Court Leet constables but this had been demolished in 1848. This restructuring of policing was another change which the inhabitants had to face.

The way south from the market place to George Street followed an intriguing 'dog-leg' curve as though the growth of the town suffered some sort



Sheet 6 Central Altrincham - Old Market Place, George Street and the Railway

of disjunction in its development. One would have expected a continuous axis of growth down High Street and Bowden Lane (Market Street) from the market place but in 1852 there were no buildings south of what is the present town hall site along Market Street. George Street, which was Lower Town, was attached at its north-eastern end to Higher Town by the short curved tentacles of Post Office Place and Stamford Street (Kingsway). The lower stretch of Stamford Street may have been of late origin because it seems to have been cut through possibly pre-existing fields, nos.1062, 1066, 1068 and 1071 on the west side, the boundaries of which can be matched in properties on the east side. A lot of open space lay between the roads in the town so that it must have seemed semi-rural at that date.

Down Victoria Street Peel Terrace can be seen, taking its name, no doubt, from Sir Robert Peel who was Prime Minister from 1841-46. At the bottom of the hill, large property 1148, *Fig. 27*, was a private girls' school adjacent to a brewery. On the opposite corner note the Victoria Tavern and the Malt Shovels Inn, altogether not a salubrious environment for the young ladies.

Victoria Street joined Stamford Street (Kingsway) after which the combined road was called Turnpike Road (Stockport Road) and crossed the Manchester South Junction & Altrincham Railway by a level crossing on the right hand sheet. At this date there was a small group of shops and services before the level crossings on the north side of Turnpike Road, another small extension to the town in 1852 when compared with the 1838 tithe map.

The right plan shows Altrincham's first station, north of the present one. As well as catering for passengers, its site had plenty of space for a yard with sidings for coal, stone, and timber. There were weighing machines for monitoring cartloads of products before they made their way to middlemen's yards or direct into the surrounding district. It is likely a continuous supply of coal was carted from the station down a track behind the Oakfield Street cottages to the 1846 gas works and brickworks on Hale Moss (not shown) and coke, tar and bricks were returned for outward transport by rail, road or canal.

The railway was situated on a narrow strip of ground between a belt of market gardens and Hale Moss. Nearby, on the Moss were a number of partly culverted drainage channels receiving

water both from the high ground of the town and the Moss itself.

The people in 1852 who lived in the terrace to the east of the station where Oakfield Street now lies were mentioned at the beginning of this book as probably having a contaminated water supply. Their case was described in the general description of Altrincham in the sub-section 'Crisis 1, Housing for the Poor,' (part of the section called 'Housing and Population'). There was only one pump for perhaps a hundred people in the terrace at the end of which lay the abattoir shown on this sheet. Waste from that undertaking was poured straight into an open drain near the pump and ran eastwards towards Timperley Brook. Rawlinson described the undertaking as "without (proper) drainage or a water supply; the refuse is placed upon or near the premises and (is) frequently most offensive" (Rawlinson, 1851, 11).

All the low land east of George Street had originally been part of Hale Moss. The Moss had experienced the abstraction of peat for fires and roofing over several centuries, which uncovered spreads of sandy heath. There had been two phases of reclamation. The part between George Street and the railway had been enclosed first, perhaps in the late 18th or early 19th centuries. These lands had no doubt been improved by lime, bones, clay and nightsoil to provide some tractable soils and turned into market gardens. The abrupt eastern edge coinciding with the railway seems artificial suggesting that the first area which had been drained was once larger but had been cut off by the building of the line and any gardens to the east of it had been abandoned because of the lack of access. East of the railway, in the wetter parts of the moss, the second phase of drainage was being carried out by a series of long straight drains cutting across large tracts of ground, *Fig. 19*. This was followed by marling and use of fertilizer creating large irregular-shaped fields for pasture for cattle, horses, donkeys and geese; it was also used for fairs, fighting, races and turf-cutting.

The market place was still the focus of the bustling part of the town at this time, where some coaches still travelled about and horse omnibuses plied the streets and was its commercial hub. However, the railway was eventually to cause a major shift of the town's economic centre down hill from Higher Town to George Street, especially after the building of Stamford New Road in 1880.

Sheet 6a Old Market Place (part of Sheet 6)

The heart of the old Higher Town has been selected for a detailed view. It abounds with the plan makers' observations: street names, steps up to or down from buildings, the names of inns and other detail in contrast to some other sheets such as that of Newtown. This area lay on a terrace: benchmarks show a gentle rise from 109 feet to 114 feet above sea-level from north to south along the terrace, and a drop of 14 feet down the beginning of Stamford Street (Kingsway) and, off the sheet, a further 30 feet down the street to Hale Moss which led to an early name 'Hollow Bank' being given to Kingsway. A stream is reputed to have flowed down this road. The market place was rectangular in shape though this might have been due to an accretion of buildings within it after 1290. The market place front of property 366, bottom centre, was in line with property 369 across Stamford Street. In earlier times this side of the market place may have carried on through yard 373 suggesting such buildings and their grounds might have been intrusions on a previously larger pear-shaped market, which was often the shape of such places.

In 1852 the market place was the centre of the town economy where some services were sought, where goods were sold in shops or brought to be traded every Tuesday and Saturday and where the annual fairs were held. There are now still a few fine buildings from Georgian to mid-Victorian times in the market place (such as Messrs. Lill's and the old Unicorn) some of which had replaced earlier buildings in the Second Great Rebuilding of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. This no doubt had reflected increased wealth in the town following the building of the Bridgewater Canal and, later, three textile factories at Woodside. Surprisingly, the market was not at the geographical centre of the built-up area of the town, but at the north end of it, due to the quirk of the medieval Anglo-Norman planner-baron who had laid out the new borough.

In the mid-19th century the town's population was growing rapidly, the town plan was spreading and the social and economic composition of the town was changing. The business centre still extended from St. George's to High Street but it was not the coaching Higher Town in the style of the late-18th and early-19th century. Some of that trade had probably collapsed due to people and post now travelling by the railway which could shift them far more quickly. The market place still had the chief inns, shops and offices and good quality buildings round it but the threefold increase of population from 1801, including a quarter increase from 1841-1851 had not led to an

equally proportionate growth of each social class. There were many working people listed here in the 1851 census. The plans of 1852 show small cottages behind the houses, shops and offices fronting the market. On the east side, properties 364-366, (north of Stamford Street) and 340-344 (north of Victoria Street) were occupied at the back by the cottages of working class families with dry privies and middens. There were also warehouses, stables, a barn or two and workshops. Though there were some professionals' offices in High Street, other professional and managerial people now lived away from the town centre. A few of the market place burgage properties now had a narrow entry running along the edge or middle for access from the front when they were divided or when smaller properties were built at the rear.

Starting the description of Sheet 6a at the bottom, plot 370 was surrounded by walls (strong lines), and had rectangular paths suggesting it was a market garden. Left of this, the front door of the large property 369, faced northwest and overlooked a grassy corner with a tree. Only one outside privy is shown on the plot in which it stood, the occupants probably also had a water closet inside. There were also stables, a washhouse and a cesspit. Property 373, main building not shown, had a coach house, stables and a couple of middens.

Looking now at the west side of the place, some properties had been completely replaced, but those in the row 989-999, *Fig. 25*, previously half-timbered, had been partially rebuilt using some of their former timbers and had been given new brick elevations at the front.

Property 988 was a shop, 989 the Red Lion with stables, coach house and bake house behind. Robert Lancaster owned eleven properties in a row from High Street (Market Street) including 988, his property stopping short of the Red Lion. 994, 995 and 999 were shops. The Unicorn Inn, the largest inn in the town, a noted staging post and hostelry with a yard for coaches, was handy for those attending town hall meetings next door. The inn and the new town hall, were both about 33 feet wide, which suggests each occupied a former burgage site 2 perches wide. The cartographers with due deference to the Earl who had just built it, numbered Altrincham's first town hall, property No. 1. It would serve the town for another fifty years until the next town hall was built in Market Street in 1900 for the Urban District Council of 1894.

At the beginning of Church Street, properties 2, 3 and 5 were shops, No. 6 was a house. Behind



properties 5 and 6 there was a smithy. Properties 9, 11 and 12 were houses. With few exceptions the shops were integral with a house and most had a yard at the rear with necessities. The plots behind the west side shops and houses had a common back boundary and were clearly former burgages.

On the east side of Church Street, north of Victoria Street, shops occupied plots 331 and 332. At the back of 332 there was a bake house. This may have been the site of the medieval lord's communal bake house.⁴⁰ It was one of the few properties other than inns, brewhouses, abattoirs or taverns which carried a description reflecting occupations in food provision. Property 334 was a house and had its main entrance, a fine Georgian door, at the rear overlooking its garden; reputedly the occupier did not wish his property to face onto the business activities of Church Street and the market place.⁴¹ The property occupied a burgage with a yard, stable, cistern and probably a w.c. with, no doubt, associated facilities, a pleasure ground and a privy for the servants.

Properties 340 to 344 were all shops. They occupied two burgages with a common rear boundary, shown up the right hand side of the sheet extract, with access, 'Garden Lane,' from Victoria Street by the side of the Old Pear Tree Tavern. Mark Pierson, mayor in 1851 and 1852, owned nine properties 343 (not shown) to 351 (including the Roebuck Inn) along the north side of Victoria Street. There was a large yard, 348, stretching from behind the Roebuck to the Pear Tree Tavern with stables and brew house, 347, for the Roebuck Inn. The yard also had 'piggeries etc' and a pump, necessities and middens. Sites 345, 349, 350 and 351 were houses. On the south side of Victoria Street, 353 was the Mechanics Institution, 354 and 355 were shops. A cellar dwelling was listed under 354 occupied by John O'Kell; it was owned by Mrs. O'Kell in the house above, in 354. Properties 1035 to 1039 onwards were houses. South Trafford Archaeological Group excavated a well in Victoria Street opposite the Roebuck, adjacent to a tippler toilet, not very conducive to public health, *Fig.24*. The toilet was cleansed by water led off from a stream running down the street.

South of Victoria Street, on the market place, property 357 was a shop, *Fig. 23*, owned by Mrs. O'Kell of Victoria Street, toy dealer, mentioned above. No. 356 was a 'wine stores, building and yard' occupied and owned by Samuel Barratt, one of the first members of the Local Board in 1851 and mayor in 1854. Property 358 was a house owned by Richard Poole a property developer. Plots 359 and 361 appear to be parts of former burgages turned into market gardens. Properties

360, 363, 364, 366, and 367 were shops. 363 was owned by the Luptons (Champness, 2002). It had been in the hands of the family on and off since 1782, noted for clocks and ironmongery and, from the 1840s, smallware dealing; one of the Luptons had been mayor in 1832. House and shop 364 was owned by Mrs. Adshead, 'shoedealer.' Plots 366 and 367 were half burgages, *Fig. 3*.

Plot 366 was a shop, tenanted and owned by Joseph Bruckshaw who had been mayor in 1841. He was a seedsman, corn merchant and grocer. His property had indoor services and a yard behind. He also owned and let 368, in Stamford Street, tenanted by Thomas Blease, surgeon, where there was a laid out 'pleasure ground' with a privy and a midden. Property 366 had a long history as the home of several mayors (Littler in Bayliss, 1992a, 107 and information from Jill Groves). It was recently a restaurant, was demolished and has been rebuilt in a similar style. It has extensive brick arch-roofed storage cellars beneath. Property 367 was a shop owned and tenanted by Thomas Bell, hairdresser, it and other properties on Kingsway have now been demolished and replaced by a larger building. UMAU uncovered two cellar dwellings (Nevell and Hradil, 2002) here. They were not recorded in the Book of Reference of 1852 which suggests they were either built later, perhaps unlawfully, or, if in existence in 1852, were not disclosed.

The buildings behind 366 have been investigated by the University of Manchester Archaeological Unit (UMAU) and found to be a barn of mid-19th century date (Nevell and Hradil, 2002), probably used for horse feed.⁴² The town must have had some of the feel of a country town in those days, reinforced by the fact that agriculture and horses were still of prime importance.

By 1852 surface water had been contained in a 15-inch brick sewer shown leading down hill from High Street along Church Street. There were 9-inch tile pipes down Stamford Street (note S.G.s) and Victoria Street (Rawlinson's report, 1851, 10). There were half a dozen street lights (L), probably gas, including one at the top of Victoria Street (corner plot 344), two at the top of Stamford Street (plots 366 and 369), and one at the Red Lion. At the top of Post Office Place, bottom right, there was a weighing machine, no doubt for mail. A number of properties must have had guttering because they had rain spouts (R.S.) at their corners. Guttering kept water off customers and directed rainwater into underground or surface drains, useful to wash out toilets of the tippler type where there were no public water mains.

The industries occupying a sample of 79 inhabitants round the market place were:

Farming and gardening	-
Textiles	-
Clothing and footwear	-
Food and drink	8
Metals	1
Other manufactures	-
Construction	1
Retailing	26
Professional Services	-
Miscellaneous Services	9
Labourers and apprentices	3
Servants	23
Transport	1
Independents	1
Misc.	6

The occupations covered most of the spectrum of activities except in farming, manufactures and professional services, the last a surprising omission in the heart of a town. There were professional people, such as solicitors, living in High Street where this work is still found today. Most people were employed in retailing which would be expected in a trading town. Certainly there were about thirty shops in the area. It is possible that some people in the clothing and footwear shops not only sold goods but also made them for their clientele and for export to Manchester and could be regarded as being in manufacturing. The work of the high number of those in the list engaged as servants is not surprising, perhaps living-in to look after households which were busily engaged in trade, or the servants worked elsewhere locally. There were few other opportunities for girls. Many who could not find other work were employed as servants at home and treated as such. At this date most of the sample of people in the market place were working class and middle class.

The Lupton household in property 358, was quite large - husband William Lupton, 60, was an engineer, Hannah Lupton, his wife, was 58 years; other members were an aunt, Martha Ashley, 65, who was an annuitant, Ellinor, a daughter, 21, a smallware dealer, Catherine, 19, another daughter, and a servant - Martha Harrow, seven in the household. William carried on the skills of watch and clockmaking until 1855 (Champness, 2002, 11)

As mentioned, Daber (in Bayliss, 1992a, 53) noted the flight of wealthy Altrinchamians to new villas being built in Bowdon and other places. Some of the new in-migrant commuting managers also did not settle round the market place. By 1852 the term Higher Town continued to reflect the altitude of the market place but not the status of all the people, or services the area offered, because its social structure was becoming more

broadly spread. The urban land-use and activities of the people in the area covered by this sheet encapsulate the features of a town centre which was changing its function. It was keeping its shops but retaining fewer professional people, and experiencing the building of cottage property.



Fig. 23. Cottage at the market place end of Victoria Street later demolished for road widening (HEB)

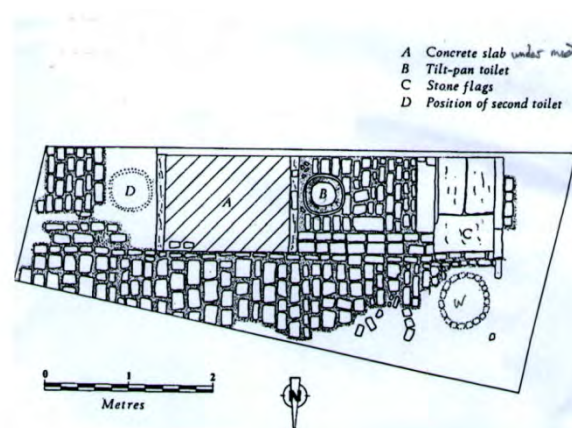


Fig. 24. Plan of STAG excavation in Victoria Street. 'A' was a midden, 'B' a tippler toilet. Note how close the toilet is to the well 'W' (STAG-MN)

Sheet 6b North end of George Street (part of Sheet 6)

This sheet shows the north end of George Street in Lower Town almost to 'Shaws Lane.' The continuous back boundary to the properties 378, 395, 399, on the bottom western side of the street may have marked the back end of burgages, of which plot 399, and three properties 396-398, and plots 400-401 just south of it are clear examples. Aligned at right angles, 379 and 375 at the top end of the street may have had a similar burgrave origin but were larger and orientated differently. Considering first Post Office Place at the top of the sheet, plot 1091, top centre, was a yard, stable and piggery, 1092 and 1093 were houses, and plot 1094 was the Axe and Cleaver Inn with its beerhouse and yard with a pump. Because it had a sewer outside and only two outside privies, probably for grooms and gardeners, there were probably w.c.s. inside for the clientele. However in spite of sewers indicated on both sides of the street many properties here had sink stones at their rear.

The post office was near the new railway, using the trains for mail business instead of it going through the staging inns round the market place. A goods weighing machine has been noted at the top of Post Office Street (Sheet 6a). A curious feature is that the Book of Reference recorded a cellar dwelling under the Post Office!

William Nicholls, solicitor, with offices at plot 961 High Street, Sheet 5a, owned more than a dozen properties down the west side of George Street; 1095 and 371 were two of them, called 'part of old street' parallel to Shaw's Road and Regent Road. Plot 374, top left, was 'pleasure ground' whereas 375 and 379 next to it were market gardens with glasshouses. Plot 379 opposite the Axe and Cleaver contained stables (S^T.), a coach house (C.H.), a yard containing a sinkstone (S.), pump and three enclosures of different sizes which may have been pigsties or middens. No. 378, centre of the sheet, was a large garden with kennels according to the Book of Reference, glasshouses and a group of piggeries or other animal pens along its southern edge. A terrace of uniform properties, 380-385, completed Nicholls's holdings. Each of these had a small yard, necessary, midden, indoor kitchen sink, and a sink stone for some effluent disposal. Behind house 386 (unoccupied at the time) there were five houses, 389-390 and 392-394, round a common yard with two middens and two privies for perhaps 25 people who lived in the five houses whereas properties 386-388 may have had w.c.s connected to the sewer in the street. Property 391 was a yard described as 'yard, piggeries and necessities' and plot 395, the extension of the

yard, had two more piggeries. Projections behind the semis 387 and 388 were perhaps early versions of Victorian tunnel-back houses, and, with 386, probably had internal w.c.s. Plot 389 was a barn, again a building necessary in a town centre in the age of the horse. Properties 396-398 were houses. The Wesleyan chapel of the Methodist New Connexion, founded in 1821 occupied plot 400, now the site of Marks and Spencer. Most of the open spaces behind properties on this side were market gardens, some (to the left) behind High Street properties, few were 'pleasure grounds.'

On the east side of the street properties 1313-1316 were houses owned by John Brownall. Plots 1316 and 1318 each had a yard and piggery. Properties 1323 to 1327 were owned by the mortgagees of the late Mr. Pass, solicitor. The County Court Office was property 1323. It had a grand entrance for carriages. This system of courts was revived in 1846⁴³ and took over the legal jurisdiction of the Court Leet. With only one privy at the back and a cistern, it must be assumed the office had w.c.s inside. Pass's patch of holdings ended at the Altrincham Gas Company's office, 1327. The Gas Office had a benchmark on the wall outside showing it was 93.12 feet above sea level. The ground to the east was dropping in height down to Hale Moss, 70 feet above sea level. Plots 1328-1333, centre right, were possibly former burgages owned by Thomas Potter. Houses 1328-1330 had a yard and necessary each, 1331 was a house sharing a privy in yard 1335; there was a cellar dwelling under house 1332, sublet by the upper occupier, Mrs. Clough; 1333 was the same with the cellar sublet by Robert Peel, stairs are shown down to the cellars.

William Warren owned properties 1336-1340. Property 1336 was large, probably a farmhouse, with a yard, washhouse, necessary and a large wooden shed (shaded) which might have held animals. Near the shed was a bushy area in which there was an 'Arbour.' There was a staircase down to the washhouse (or a cellar under it), outbuildings and yard. Plot 1338 was probably a market garden; 1339 and 1340 were two houses with yards, piggeries and necessities. Warren was one of the first members of the Local Board in 1851.

Properties 1341 and 1342 were houses which shared a yard, washhouse and a necessary and were owned by the assignees of William Pass as were 1343 - market garden, piggery and necessary - and 1344 a yard shared by houses 1345, a joiner's and 1346. Property 1347 was a shop (one of the few shops in this part of George Street), and 1348 a coach house.

Surprisingly, the only lamp in this part of Lower Town was not outside the Gas Office but was located at the end of the wooden building shown in the middle of the sheet just below the letter 'S' of 'George Street' (the symbol outside the Gas Office is an altitude benchmark, not a lamp). There were six water pumps serving the thirty properties on the eastern side of George Street, about one for every twenty-five people. The industries occupying a sample of 138 people in George Street were as follows:

Farming and gardening	21
Textiles	1
Clothing and footwear	10
Food and drink	1
Metals	-
Other manufactures	14
Construction	4
Retailing	14
Professional Services	1
Miscellaneous Services	8
Labouring and apprentices	50
Servants	12
Transport	2
Independents	-

The chief occupations of over half the workers were in labouring, farming and gardening. The one person employed in Textiles, James Hewit, was 35, a fustian cutter, unmarried and a lodger. There is no mention of any premises for this skilled work. The one professional man, a Methodist minister had 19 scholars in his charge. Mr. Manion, 56, a peddler, was classified in 'Retailing;' he lived here with wife, two sons, a niece and three lodgers. One offering 'Miscellaneous Services' was Mr. Hatfield, a master sweep, aged 50 and unmarried with two sweeps living with him. The dominant group of 50 Labourers and Apprentices establishes the social class of this part of Lower Town. James McCabe, 52, an Irish labourer, lived with his wife, daughter, a visitor and ten lodgers, a crowded household of fourteen.

Six conclusions emerge. First, there was an interesting pattern of ownership of property, it was held in blocks of up to a dozen houses, each block belonging to a leading person in the town. Second, the Earl of Stamford and Warrington owned only a handful of properties here. Third, there were forty piggeries in the town and a quarter were in this area. Pigs were bred for their meat, skins, dung and for their capacity for disposing of human and other waste in a period without waste bins and only minimal sewerage. Fourth, there was a lot of open space still left in this central area. Fifth, the market place still held

most of the shops - there were only fourteen in George Street, (Southern, 2002, 29, 30) which was later to become Altrincham's chief shopping street and take over much trade from the market place. Sixth, a problem applying to many areas: if water closets are postulated, it is not clear where the water came from to flush them unless there was a piped supply, though a public one was not obtained for several years after 1852.



Fig. 25. West side of the market place; from right to left - Orange Tree (a butcher's in the mid-19th century), a french polisher's, a beer seller's, the Red Lion, and the bank of 1877 which occupied part of the site of the Waggon and Horses (HEB)



Fig. 26. The market place, 1858, Town Hall of 1849 and Unicorn on right. Properties on left: 366 (under 'A' on Fig. 3), 364, 363, 360, 358, and see front cover (Ingham)



Fig. 27. Springfield House, a girls' school formerly in Stamford Street, property No. 1172 (TLS)

Sheet 7 Northwest Altrincham

The main road in the right half of this sheet named 'Turnpike Road' is now Manchester Road, leading south to Church Street. St George's Church can be seen in the bottom right hand corner. Top right is part of the Sandiway hamlet including Sandiway Place with the Wheatsheaf opposite. The Wheatsheaf and Sandiway Place seem to be aligned at a considerable angle across the Manchester road but why this was so is a puzzle. Another interesting feature is the path which ran south across the fields from the Wheatsheaf, but what its purpose was, is not known. The oval feature in the centre of the left sheet was a pool, since drained.

Several buildings of this middle class Sandiway suburb had indoor facilities including the Wheatsheaf hotel (with external arrangements for outside staff). This was the more ancient of two hostelries nearly facing each other; the George and Dragon Hotel and the rest of Sandiway are on the bottom of Sheet 9 the next sheet north. The properties on the east side of Manchester Road had necessities outside. There were no pumps marked, which suggests possibly a private piped water system.

Top left was Oldfield Hall, *Fig. 28*, which according to one source, dated to the early 17th century. It and its associated buildings off Oldfield Road stood in what is now John Leigh Park.⁴⁴ Its summerhouse was sited on the high southern boundary of its land. The incumbent at that time was Elizabeth Lloyd, who was recorded in the 1851 census as a 'Gentlewoman.' She was the widow of Edward Jeremiah Lloyd J.P., chairman of the Sanitary Committee of the Town's Meeting responsible for the first two surveys in 1849, which eventually brought about the creation of a Local Board in 1851 and the commissioning of this atlas in 1852. After his death in 1850, because serious illness in the town had not abated, Mrs. Lloyd, through his will, donated £300 (half the cost) to build a Fever Hospital to honour his memory, construction of which started in 1853 (Sheet 2). It was used for about thirty years, continuing in service after the present Altrincham Provident and Dispensary Hospital (General Hospital) was built in 1870. In 1851 the rest of the occupants of Oldfield Hall were two scholars, two governesses and seven servants, a measure of the gentry of Altrincham. The name Oldfield referred to a hamlet in Dunham Massey Township, which may have taken its name from a former medieval arable strip field in Dunham. Possibly part of this field (and township) was taken to create the borough of Altrincham. The large field, Plot 74, to the south

of the hall was called Pig Field on the tithe map of 1838 and may be a reference to a medieval grove where pigs were grazed for food, fat and skins, so necessary to the Dunham area military economy at the time (Bayliss, 1992b, 7).

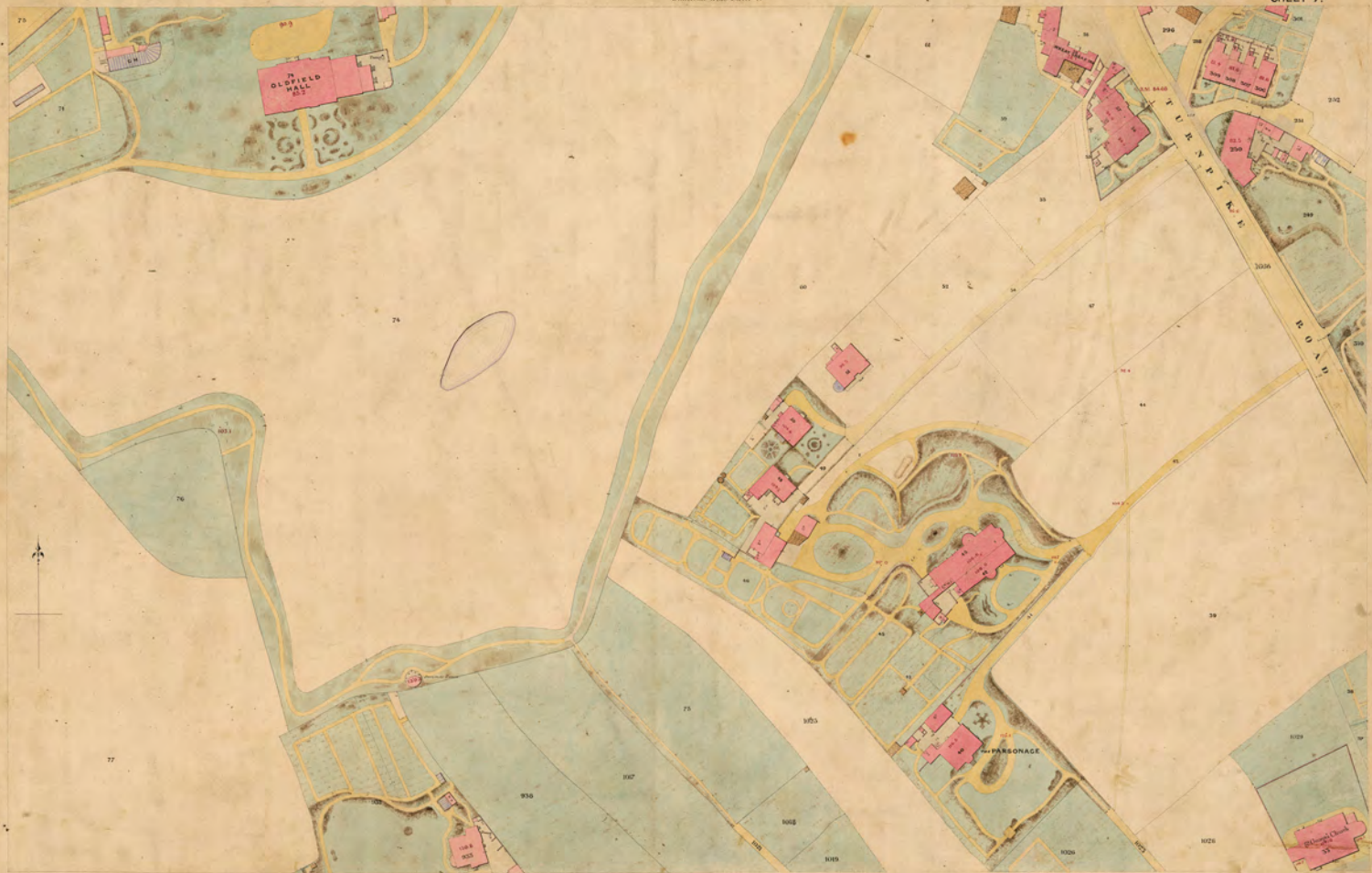
The fields occupying the middle of the right sheet consisted of relict strips of an ancient furlong,⁴⁵ (group of strips) which ran from northeast to southwest. At the bottom centre was another furlong which ran from northwest to southeast. These long thin fields were elevated and well-drained but were changing their function from arable production to sites for high class residential homes, e.g. along Mount Pleasant (now The Mount) which ran south-westward from the 'R' in 'TURNPIKE.' The villa in the middle of The Mount today, *Fig. 29*, has recently been a clinic, now residential again. Fine villas at both ends of this road also remain. Farther south, a drive, now called Townfield Road, led from the 'A' in (TURNPIKE) ROAD' to a large mansion, Townfield House. It was a hospital in World War I; a school and blocks of flats now occupy the site. The Parsonage, 1829, was built in grounds made from two long strips of the northeast to southwest furlong. The whole area, Mount Pleasant, made a fashionable northern suburb of Altrincham.



Fig. 28. Oldfield Hall (Ingham)



Fig. 29. White brick villa on Mount Pleasant (The Mount) (DGB)



Sheet 7 Northwest Altrincham

Sheet 8 North end of Church Street and the Mill Area

A sheet with two areas of interest. Church Street is shown on the left, the railway and Woodside, the mill area, on the right. In Church Street, St. George's had a short drive to it, bottom left, which it has since lost. To-day, not shown, Woodlands Road runs across the bottom of the sheet. To the north Church Street ended at the Stamford Arms Hotel (formerly north of the modern Cresta Court) where the Manchester turnpike toll road began. In 1765 when the road was turnpiked, there would have been a gate here. A common boundary along the back gardens on the east side of Church Street suggests that burgages were laid out here

A large detached villa and two semis had been built in fields east of Church Street. The areas around them were clearly 'pleasure grounds' but several of the other shaded fields were market gardens. These houses were called Barrington Fields⁴⁶ and lay on the future route of Barrington Road. The shaded fields at the southern end of this sheet were used for market gardens, whereas the large unshaded eastern and northern fields on both sheets were probably arable or grazing fields, worked in 1852 probably from Massey's farm on Manchester Road farther north.

The railway was an important feature on the right sheet. This was the 'servicing' northern half of the first Altrincham station, north of Stockport Road. Here the engines could be coaled from sidings, serviced at the engine shed, and turned round at the turntable to go back across the level crossings over Turnpike Road (Stockport Road) to their trains of coaches at Altrincham or Bowdon station (Sheets 6 and 4). The 'points' on the track were called 'switches' at that time and so labelled, the term now used in America. Water for the engines was available from the adjacent stream and a water tower is shown outside a corner of the engine shed. There was a goods shed, shaded, on 'Stamford Road' (Grosvenor Road).

A second important feature was the Woodside area, the site of the earliest phase of factory industry in the town. If the line of the watercourse from the Stockport turnpike road is followed to the engine shed northwards it can be seen to be culverted under the railway line. The stream then continued north, approached a line of cottages, turned northwest, was culverted under the road in front of the cottages, reappeared at the end of the terrace and flowed northwest off the sheet. The cottages occupied the site of a former dam (plot 1185) of one of the two mill lodges (reservoirs) used in Altrincham's first phase of industry, at Woodside, the square area on the right sheet. It is probable a water-powered corn

mill existed somewhere on the site from 1621. In the second phase, in 1777 the corn mill was demolished and a four-storey cotton mill erected (probably plot 1186, the most southerly building) by John Taylor and John Smith, worked by a new waterwheel.⁴⁷ The mill was bought by Thomas Owen and in 1796 was equipped with a Boulton and Watt steam engine. Evidence suggests there were three mills in this area at this time (Ormerod, v.I, 537; Hill, 2002, 16), perhaps two for cotton and one for worsted.

At the mill site, there were two or three buildings, which could have been factories, e.g. one adjacent to the house, *Fig. 30*, another behind, and smaller premises attached to one of them, also a yard, and a small lodge (left of the mill, property 1186). Apart from a row of workers houses the mill area did not lead to the building of any local housing. In 1849 a factory was noted that had been there 'lately,' and another which had been 'used as a Worsted Factory' (Pryor, 2003b).

This area of enterprise lasted many years but competition from larger Manchester mills caused the death of cotton spinning in small mills by about 1840. The northern reservoir or lodge had been drained and the dam site adapted for dwellings by 1852. By 1852 the steam-driven cotton mill had been converted back to a corn mill, owned by Benjamin Lupton and occupied by Thomas Jackson, and no more is known of the worsted factory. Adjacent to the boundary by the lodge, was a road now called Mill Street. The name of this street and that of a local hotel are all that remain to remind us of Altrincham's first factory area. There were still a few cotton spinners, weavers, silk workers and bobbin turners in the town in the 1851 census, perhaps working in their homes. Altrincham's involvement with factories lapsed for about thirty years until a major industrial complex developed from 1884 at Broadheath.



Fig. 30. Mill manager's house on Stamford Road (Grosvenor Road)
(HEB)



Sheet 8 North end of Church Street and the Mill Area

Junction With Sheet 6.

Scales

700 Feet
7 Chains

Handwritten signature or initials.



Fig. 31. Later view of northern end of Church Street
(HEB)



Fig. 33. Old buildings in Lower George Street
(HP)

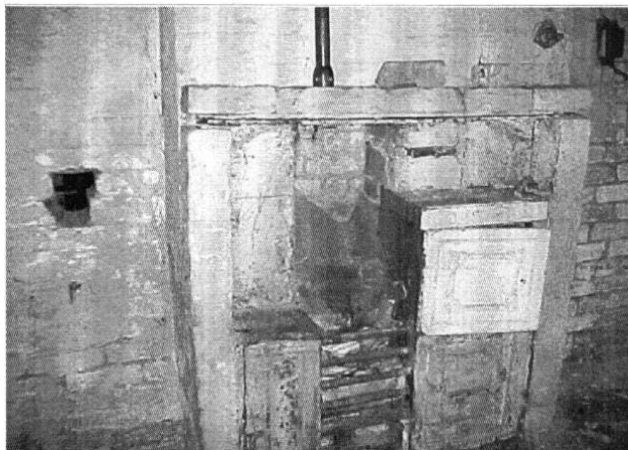


Fig. 32 Part of a cellar dwelling, Stamford Street
(Kingsway) (UMAU - MN)



Fig. 34. George Street leading off to Beggars' Square (right)
(KW)

Sheet 9 Sandiway and Oldfield Hall outbuildings

This is a curious drawing, not helped by the cartographer's lack of a range of symbols to indicate the type of vegetation more clearly. Oldfield Road runs from west to east across the bottom of the sheet and Turnpike Road (Manchester Road) runs from north to south down the right hand side. The striking central north to south belt of shading shown between the two sheets was a long, looped swathe of trees, probably a windbreak. A drain flowed south to north by the side of the trees because from Oldfield Road the land sloped down about 20' from south to north to the Bridgewater Canal. The outbuildings of Oldfield Hall are shown bottom left. Some woodland is also shown along Oldfield Road and another belt along the east side of the Turnpike Road. There was a long wall between this road and the wooded strip, perhaps for privacy; a field left of the turnpike over the word 'Sandiway' was also walled.

Another drain flowed eastwards at the right hand side of the sheet off towards Timperley Brook. There was a sewer along Oldfield Road and one along the turnpike road, the latter probably discharging to the north.

The large blocks of buildings at the bottom left-hand side of the sheet were the stables and probably workers' cottages for the hall (which is shown on Sheet 7). A couple of outside necessities are shown and middens or pigsties.

The large patch fields around here were quite different from the strip fields and market gardens round the town and were drained enclosures called 'crofts' or 'heys' used for arable or grazing. The construction of the Bridgewater Canal triggered the enclosure activity. The drains resulted from the need to enclose the peaty Timperley Moss to create dry land so the canal could be cut across it. The moss land had previously stretched from here northwards to Park Road in Timperley.

The elegant Sandiway Road terrace of (now listed) houses and other properties (bottom right) were part of the Sandiway suburb, a hamlet not far from the gates of the 'great house', Oldfield Hall, the servicing of which had initially caused the hamlet's growth. Just off the sheet to the south was Sandiway Place (Sheet 7). No doubt many inhabitants of Sandiway supplied services to the mansion, its occupants and grounds, to the local hotels and, since 1765, to Broadheath. Interestingly, agriculture and gardening were not important occupations in this area. The George and Dragon (bottom right) and the Wheatsheaf

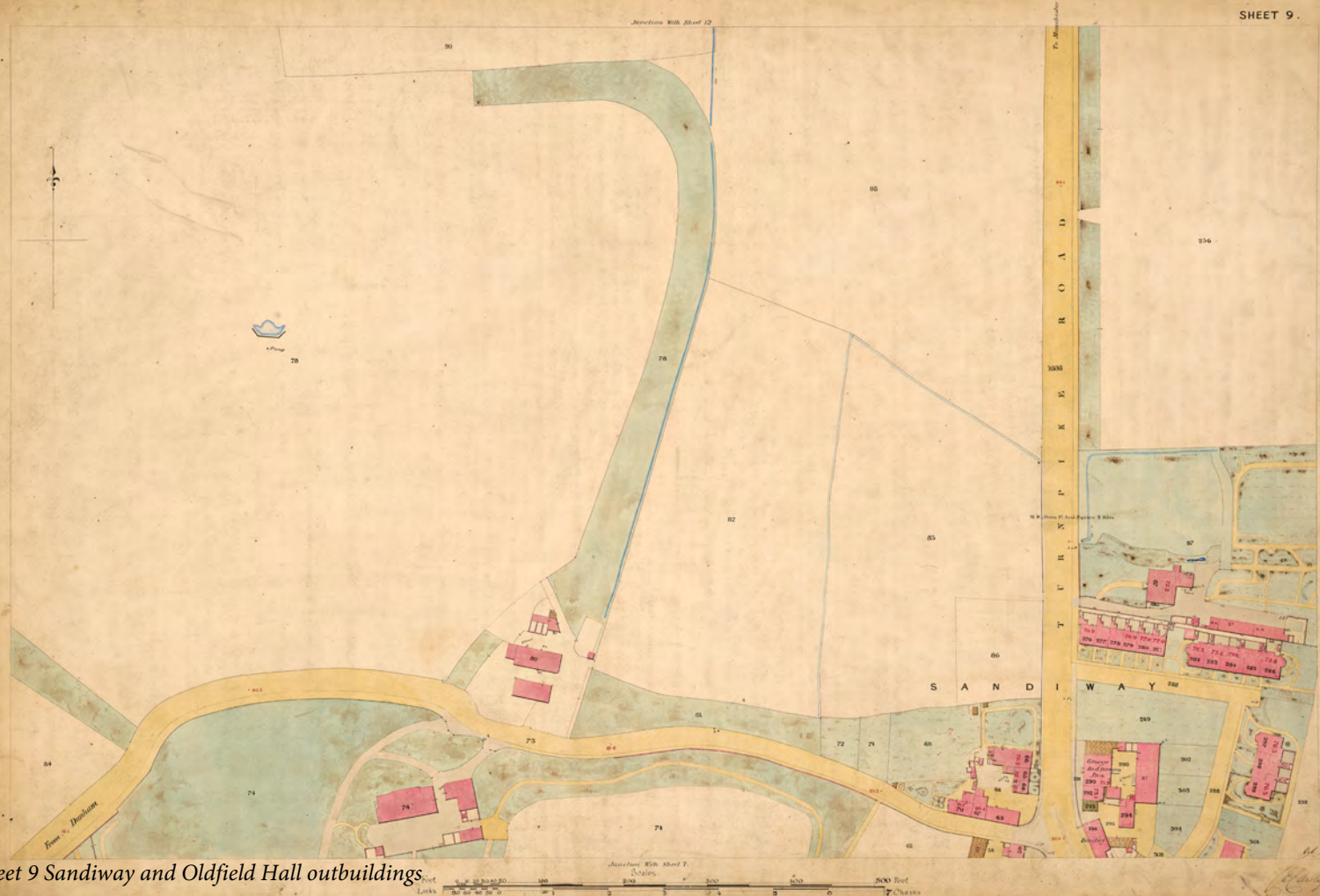
(diagonally opposite on Sheet 7) employed service labour to cater for their clients, travellers through the area or agents visiting the area on business. The importance of the inns had increased with coaching and the turnpiking of the Manchester Road in 1765 and with the growth of Broadheath as a canal port from the same date. The Victorian George and Dragon (*Fig.36*) was an extension of an earlier hotel, with inside w.c.s elevating its facilities; there was one 'necessary' outside for ostlers or other servants.

The Sandiway Road terraced properties were built between 1830 and 1840 at a time when the canal was very prosperous.⁴⁸ Though of modest size, they were for the growing middle class and had gardens at the front, yards behind, attached private necessities and a back lane for midden and privy clearance. To the north of the terrace was a villa and to the southeast, a terrace of three large houses on Burlington Road. Other houses lay at the junction of the two chief roads.

The 1851 census details of the industries in which 82 inhabitants worked were:

Farming and gardening	1
Textiles	4
Clothing, footwear	3
Food and drink	2
Metals	5
Other manufactures	5
Construction	1
Retailing	7
Professional services	3
Miscellaneous services	8
Labourers and apprentices	5
Servants	23
Transport	4
Independents	11

Work in 'Metals' possibly included working in a smithy at the George and Dragon. Work under 'Other manufactures' included a wheelwright, and under 'Construction' a saw miller. Every type of occupation was represented, a very mixed-class population. This was because the Sandiway area served the canal port immediately north and also the town a short walk away to the south. The dominance of servants is a reflection of work in the hotels, the hall, for annuitants, and for businessmen. Third, the numbers in other work was a reflection of the desirability of this northern suburb of Altrincham as a place of residence for professionals and those of affluent means as well as for skilled people.



Sheet 9 Sandiway and Oldfield Hall outbuildings

Sheet 10 Stamford Road (Grosvenor Road) south part

This plan of an area to the east of Sandiway on Sheet 9 does not add a lot of information except to remind us there was a great deal of agriculture going on within the borough boundaries. On the right side of the right hand plan, Stamford Road (Grosvenor Road) runs by the side of the railway before turning west to become Navigation Road farther north. The southern boundary of the sheet is approximately along the line of Poplar Road; the west side of the left hand sheet is west of the later junction of Barrington Road and Gaskell Road. The northern limit roughly follows part of Gladstone Road, east of Sandiway. The whole was completely built-up in the late-19th and early to mid-20th centuries.

The area was previously wet ground divided into very large irregular patch-shaped fields. It is likely that they had been created from 'carr' (wet) woodland formerly held by the landlords at Dunham and used in common by the burgesses for rough pig and cattle grazing. The field shapes were partly determined by a system of drainage in which the courses of a number of streams and ditches had to be kept constantly 'scoured'⁴⁹ because of poor drainage near Timperley Brook east of the line of the railway. Almost every field boundary was a drainage ditch or stream showing the wet nature of the ground here.

Two streams made their way from the south. One from the bottom centre of the right hand sheet flowed through a pond and headed north to join Timperley Brook. The other one, bottom left of the right hand sheet, already noted on Sheet 8 as powering the Woodside mills, struck westwards approximately along the line of Ellesmere Road to make its way to Broadheath and then to Dunham Hall to power the 17th century sawmill there (Haworth, 2000, 15).

In the bottom right of the left hand sheet drainage must have been successful at that point because a shippon or cowshed is marked showing it was dry enough to keep dairy cattle there, no doubt for milk, butter and Cheshire cheese.



Fig. 35. Sandiway terrace (DGB)



Fig. 36. George and Dragon (DGB)



Sheet 10 Stamford Road (Grosvenor Road) south part

Sheet 11 North-eastern Altrincham

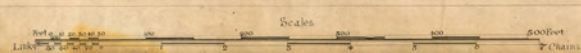
Part of the left side of the sheet is blank and the whole of the right. The township of Timperley lay to the east but nothing of that place is shown because it lay outside Altrincham. The thick winding line from south to north represented the course of Timperley Brook flowing northwards from Stockport Road to Navigation Road forming the eastern boundary of Altrincham. A short stretch of the railway is shown top left where it was crossed by Stamford Road, later Navigation Road, by a level crossing, still there. The area was part of the low-lying Timperley Brook floodplain, first reclaimed to be common water meadows mown for hay by the Altrincham burgesses for winter feed and improved later by draining and turned into large fields for grazing purposes.

Following the drying out of the ground two large mansions were built between the railway and the brook. They were linked by their drives to the level crossing, Brook Close from the northern house and Pendlebury Avenue from the southern house. Like many big houses they do not appear to have external necessities and so perhaps their better-off owners could pay for internal w.c. systems. The occupants of the northern house enjoyed a 'pleasure ground' laid out with paths and shrubs. The southernmost mansion was called Davenport Meadows and instead of having pleasure grounds of the flowerbed type, the tenants had a substantial lake, bridge and summerhouse. The houses and lake have since gone.

The rigid layout of the plans of the map makers (Fig. 9) has led to this sheet being limited in value for our interpretation except to identify a couple of dwellings, their grounds and half a dozen fields which the Local Board thought could be rated. Perhaps in arranging the sheets to cover the town the cartographers did not realise there was so little of the borough here. This is strange because they would have had the tithe map of 1838 to help arrange the sheets better.



T O W N H I P o f T I M P E R L E Y



W. G. Carter

Sheet 12 Broadheath District

The hamlet of Broadheath on the right of the sheet, dating from 1765, lay on Turnpike Road (Manchester Road) where it was joined by Stamford Road (Navigation Road) to cross the Bridgewater Canal. It was the outport for Altrincham, but quite separated from its host town. We think of Broadheath in its hey-day, full of large industrial plants surrounded by housing but in 1852 there was only a small bridge hamlet and no factories.

The rest of the surrounding area was wet ground composed of large irregular-shaped fields, the edges of several of which were defined by drainage ditches. This was the type of landscape typical of drained and reclaimed moss land and peaty sandy heath, here Timperley Moss and Broadheath of no fertility for arable cultivation, of use only for rough grazing, peat cutting, or sandpits. The name 'Broadheath' tells us what to expect of the nature of the non-moss part of the ground here. It was a heath composed of aero-, and part fluvio-post glacial deposits of sands⁵⁰ with peat basins where there had been pools immediately after the last Ice Age (12000 years ago), since colonized by sphagnum and other mosses.

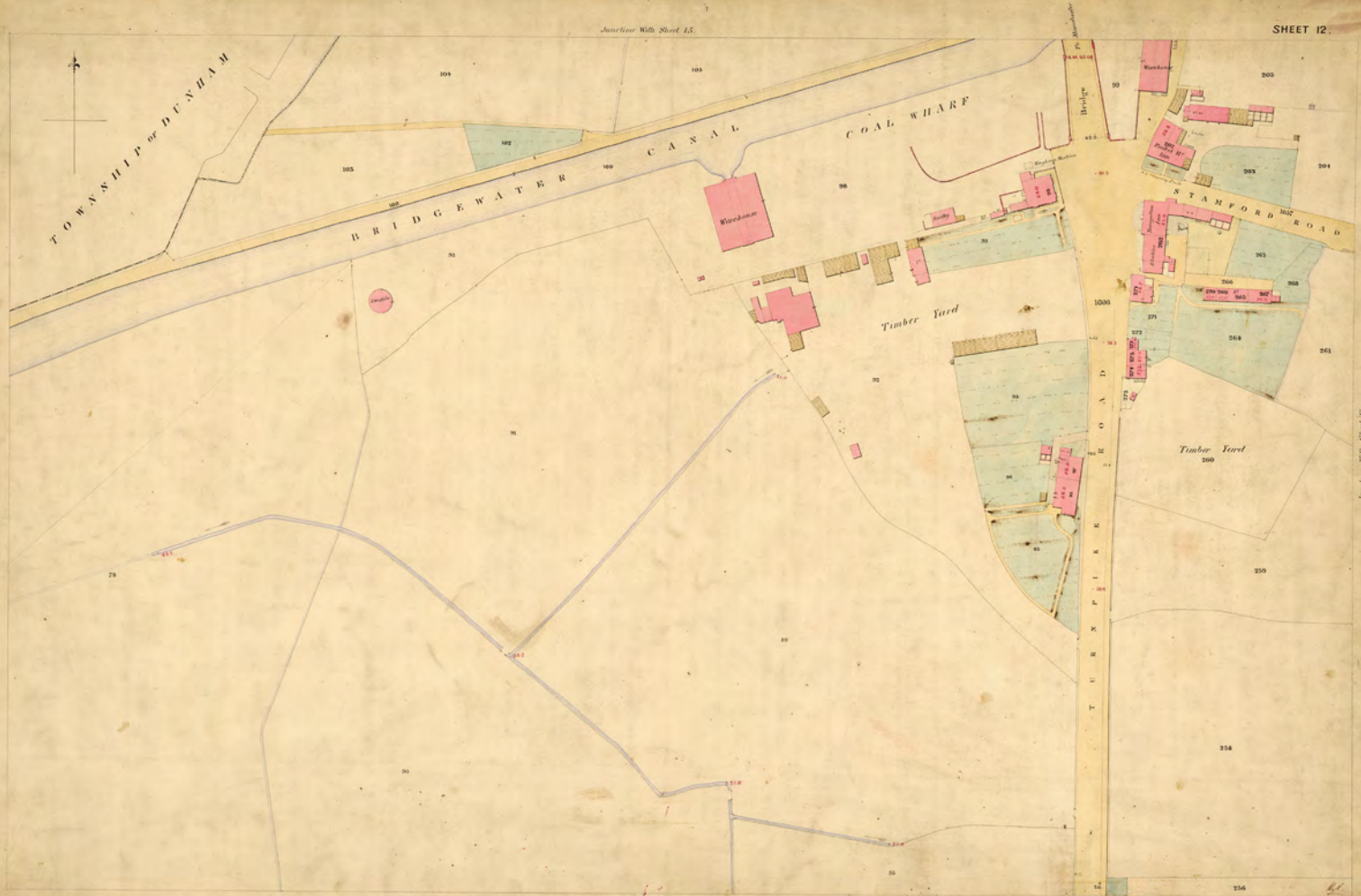
The drain flowing from east to west was constructed in the 17th century to drive the sawmill waterwheel at Dunham Hall. The watercourse was siphoned under the canal west of Broadheath (Haworth, 2000, 15). At Broadheath notice there were few houses away from the road and the settlement clung to the bridge area where quite a lot of firm material had been dumped to make good foundations for the bridge and causeway above the flood level of local streams. The Bridgewater Canal was originally designed to bring coal cargoes from Worsley to Manchester with a branch to Stockport but in an early change of policy it branched south through north Cheshire to reach the Mersey at Runcorn. It reached Altrincham in 1765 but the through route took another 12 years to complete. Other cargoes than coal were carried such as wood from local and foreign sources, slate from North Wales via Liverpool and Runcorn, and salt from Cheshire via the Weaver Navigation and Trent and Mersey Canal for chemical works, meat processing and the table. Additionally the canal carried raw materials for dyeing, tanning and brewing. Raw cotton and silk came for spinning at Styal and the town, and some for hand weaving into cloth,

braids and velvets. Wool for combing came through Manchester to be woven by hand into worsteds and, locally, flax to be woven with cotton into fustians, a hard serviceable cloth (Smith, 1973, 17) but most of this textile activity had finished. Limestone, probably from the Whaley Bridge area fed the limekiln on the left sheet. Lime was essential for the town's tanneries near Hale Moss, for improvement of the local acid soils, for mortar for brick constructions, and plastering buildings in the growing town. Products such as quicklime and limewash were essential to clean out the town's necessities and middens and to refurbish the outsides of houses. An important cargo from Manchester was effluent for Altrincham's market gardens.

Broadheath had probably reached its peak of trade a decade or so before 1852 but continued to have passenger and horse facilities, coal staithes, two timber yards, warehouses and a packet (parcel) house. Several buildings remain today including the three-storey warehouse, *Fig. 37*, a listed building of 1833, now converted into flats (Champness and Bayliss, 2003). An arm of the canal was built into it where valuable goods such as imported raw cotton or exported finished cloth could be handled in any weather and was safe from pilfering. Thirty years later saw the beginning of a huge industrial engineering complex west of the bridge (one plant can be seen in the distance in *Fig. 37*) but most works are now gone and the remaining buildings have been converted to other uses.



Fig. 37. The 1833 canal warehouse (DGB)



Join with Sheet 13.

Col. Lindley

Sheet 12a Broadheath Canal Port (part of Sheet 12)

The draughtsmen put a great deal of detail into their striking drawing of the industrial hamlet of Broadheath and the south side of the Bridgewater Canal so it is worth looking at the extract at full scale showing Altrincham's canal port. Only a fraction of the canal channel is shown (lined) in the top left corner of the sheet just before it passed under Broadheath Bridge, off the plan to the north. Turnpike Road of the Washway Trust, heading for the bridge, which was much narrower than today, is now Manchester Road. East of the incline to the bridge, was a stone wharf (plot 99), a warehouse, the Packet House Inn, stables and coach house (C.H.) now more clear to see. It is possible the packet handling function was carried out in the building adjacent to the Packet House, showing a height of 56.3 feet above sea level but no property number. Commuters for the fast flyboats left their coaches secure for the day in the coach house (Co.Ho. at the top right of the plan) and their horses were housed in stables (dashed lines) next to that building. To the right of the stables (and off the extract) were four enclosures, which could be large middens for horse manure.

South of the Packet House, on the same side of the Manchester Road was the large Navigation Inn with the appurtenances of all large inns, stables, outdoor necessary and middens. It also had a washhouse. In the hamlet generally there were only a few outside necessities for what must have been an army of visiting boatmen, wharfingers and travellers so it might be assumed there were inside facilities in some of the buildings. If so, it was a contrast to many poorer areas of the town proper and Broadheath must have been an up-to-date port.

There was a wharf down to the canal on each side of the bridge to unload barges. The one on the west, property No. 98, was a coal and slate wharf, with offices, warehouse, lime kiln and smithy. This wharf was reached by a narrow ramp, and, being near the weighbridge, was used for unloading cargoes mentioned in the description of the general Sheet 12 such as coal and probably bales of raw cotton for Styal, and the same cargo and raw silk, flax and wool for handwork in the town. No doubt handling many of the clean cargoes had declined at this wharf after the building, in 1833, of the covered warehouse farther west, *Fig. 37*. Timber and lime were also landed at this wharf. A line of coal staithes, tall structures for unloading coal, was to be seen here until the 1980s, *Fig. 40*. House 540 was the coal manager's.

No. 99 to the east, already mentioned, probably where passengers boarded the flyboats to travel

northeast or southwest, could be used for loading or unloading non-noxious cargoes in between boat movements.

A constant supply of night soil muck from Manchester and return cargoes of vegetables had to be handled somewhere at Broadheath. This wharf would be unlikely east of the bridge because of the presence of a floating chapel (*Sheet 15*, bottom right) and is likely to have been on the wharf west of the bridge or on the north side of the canal or perhaps farther northeast at Deansgate Lane. Cargoes of nightsoil could be handled quickly into, and vegetables from, waiting carts. No wharf was labelled 'for nightsoil'; Victorian cartographers' sensitivities perhaps proscribed indicating this commodity.

As well as the warehousing there were two large timber yards, standing back from the canal, one to the west, south of plot 93, and the other to the east of the Manchester Road, plot 260, needed in a period of much house-building for the growing population. The industries in which the 143 Broadheath residents worked in 1851 were:

Farming and gardening	49
Textiles	2
Clothing and footwear	8
Food and drink	6
Metals	1
Other manufacturing	13
Construction	-
Retail	10
Professional services	-
Miscellaneous services	1
Labourers, apprentices	25
Servants	18
Transport	10
Independents	-

The dominance of farming and gardening in Broadheath is most revealing when we think of a canal port, and is indeed a great contrast to Sandiway a few hundred yards south where there were hardly any people engaged on the land. However, as can be seen from *Sheet 12*, the larger sheet showing all the Broadheath area, the port occupied only a small part of a large farming area. Nor were there any people offering professional services, nor were there any independents. Classified as 'Retail' was John Hampson, 28, a coin dealer, married, who lived with his wife and three children, and with Thomas Buckley, 19, assistant coin dealer. In 'Other manufacturing', Mary Holt (husband not at home), 40, was a bone mill worker who lived with a son, also a bone mill labourer, and six other children.

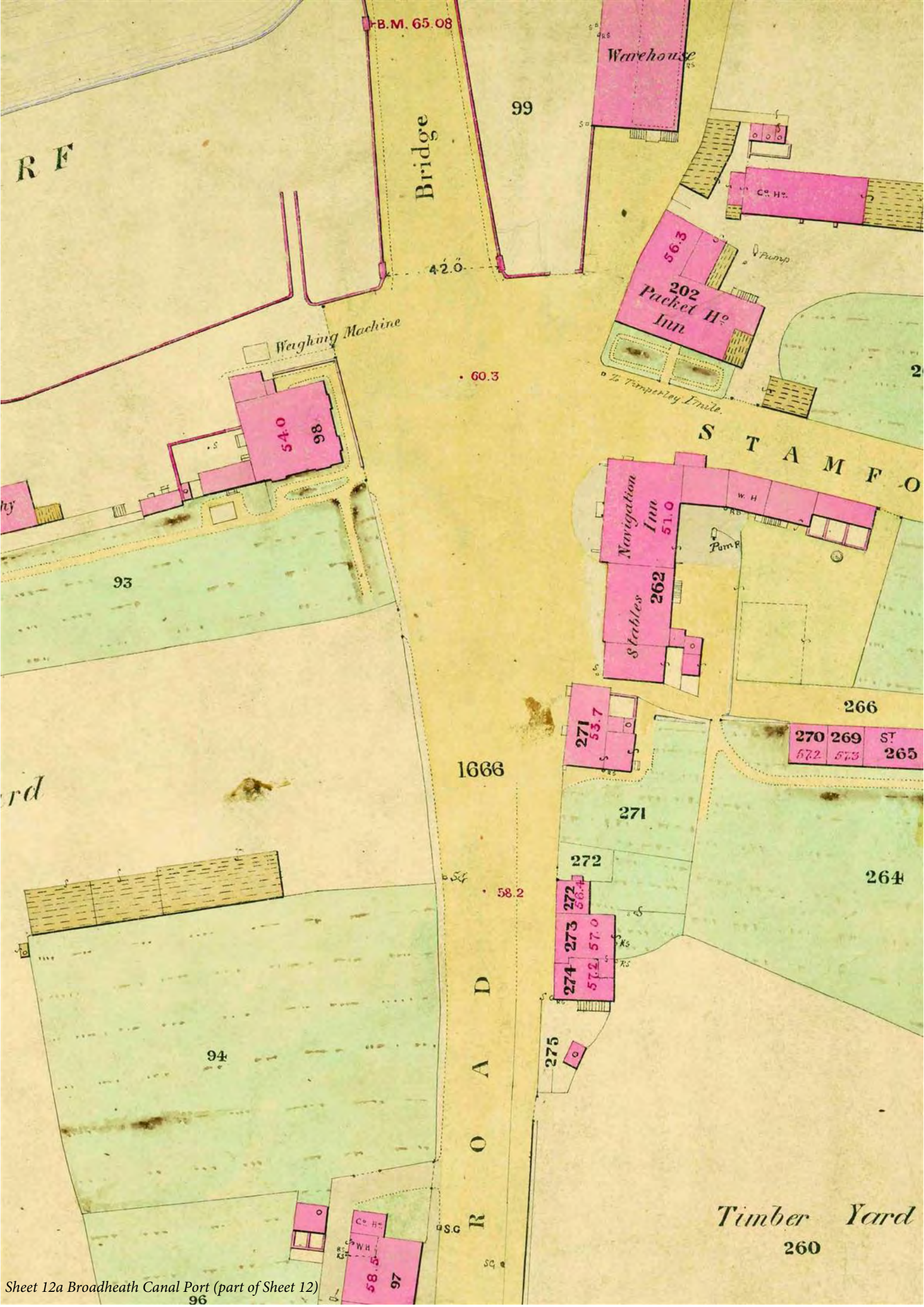




Fig. 38. Looking across from Halford's to the former passenger shed entrance (DGB)



Fig. 40. Coal staithes before demolition; 1833 warehouse (Luxi Products), beyond (DGB)



Fig. 39. Packet House Inn (DGB)



Fig. 41. Warehouses on the north side of the canal before demolition (TLS)

Animal bones were very important for fertilizer for the thin Cheshire soils (Scard, 1981, 61). Much of the work at Broadheath would be related to the canal or with horses and carts, but only ten men were strictly engaged in transport. Of these, Thomas Leigh was an agent and wharfinger, aged 49, and married with a daughter at home. Robert Calderbrook, 29, a canal waterman, was married with five children. This was a working class area and two-thirds of the working population were engaged in farming, gardening, and as servants and labourers. Some of the last may have worked on the canal.



Fig. 42. Duke's Cottages, part of former workhouse before demolition (TLS)

Sheet 13 Stamford Road (Navigation Road) north part

This sheet is largely devoid of human presence other than that shown by fields and a few farm cottages. It shows part of Stamford Road (Navigation Road) leading to Broadheath. The stream shown is a field drain flowing north westwards and then north-eastwards to join Timperley Brook (off the sheet). The road running

south from the middle of Stamford Road into some meadows followed the line of what was to become modern Hawarden Road. This was an area of large irregular-shaped wet fields, probably pastures except where drainage had been successful enough to allow some arable cultivation.

Sheet 14 The eastern boundary of the town

Another curious and uninformative plan which shows land at the edge of the borough where the Manchester South Junction and Altrincham Railway crossed Timperley Brook and disappeared into the township of Timperley. As time went by a number of new railway stations

would be built along the line such as 'Navigation Road' (1931). This station would occupy the bottom left hand corner of the map. The small road by the house, bottom left, is Brook Close leading to Brook Lane.

Sheet 15 The northern area of Altrincham

North of Broadheath and quite separate from it, there was a hamlet at the northern end of the borough where Altrincham, Dunham Massey and Timperley townships met. This can be seen at the top of the sheet. At the bottom of the sheet we can see a short stretch of the Bridgewater Canal, through Broadheath. On its northern bank there were warehouses similar to those on the southern bank illustrated on Sheets 12 and 12a. There was also a floating nonconformist chapel, on the southern bank, bottom right.

The group of buildings arranged round a square on the left hand side of Turnpike Road (Manchester Road) had contained destitute residents, isolated from the more 'worthy' parts of the town. These buildings were the Duke's Cottages, *Fig. 42*, which had been created from Altrincham's former workhouse, in existence between 1765 and 1830 when it was replaced by a workhouse at Knutsford. The former workhouse was built on a westward extension of Timperley Moss, drained for the building of the canal. The inhabitants produced many yards of hand-worked cloth each year, under the eyes of the Overseer of the Poor, which paid towards their upkeep. In 1852 the eight cottages were let and housed perhaps forty or more people for whom there were only five outside necessities; there were four enclosures which could have been pigsties or middens. The cottage complex was surrounded by kitchen gardens as can be seen.

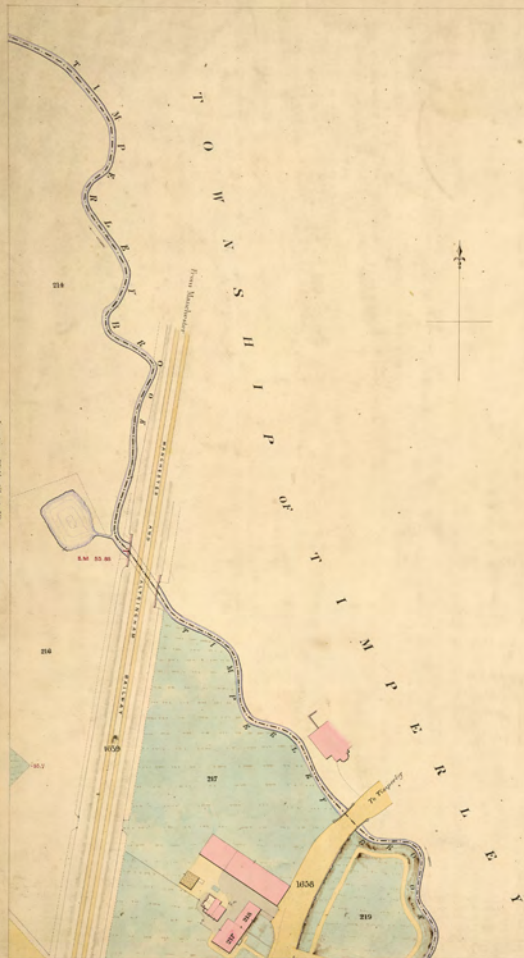
Elsewhere the field boundaries were straight, following ditches used for the drainage of Timperley Moss. It is likely the fields on the east were managed from Massey's farm, the long building on the east side of Turnpike Road and

were no doubt used for dairying, unless conditions were dry enough for a crop of corn, probably oats.

The hamlet owed its triangular shape to its position where there was a junction between a bend in the turnpike road heading northeast from Altrincham to Manchester, and the line of the ancient Roman road of Watling Street. The line of Watling Street, now Davenport Lane, can be seen coming up the sheet from the bottom left hand side. This road ran from Chester northeast direct to Manchester. No doubt travellers could avoid passing through Altrincham, perhaps allowing them to avoid paying some tolls in early times. The old road was breached and therefore closed by the building of the Bridgewater Canal about 1765. Possibly some legal argument delayed the progress of the canal because it was five years before further construction extended westwards.

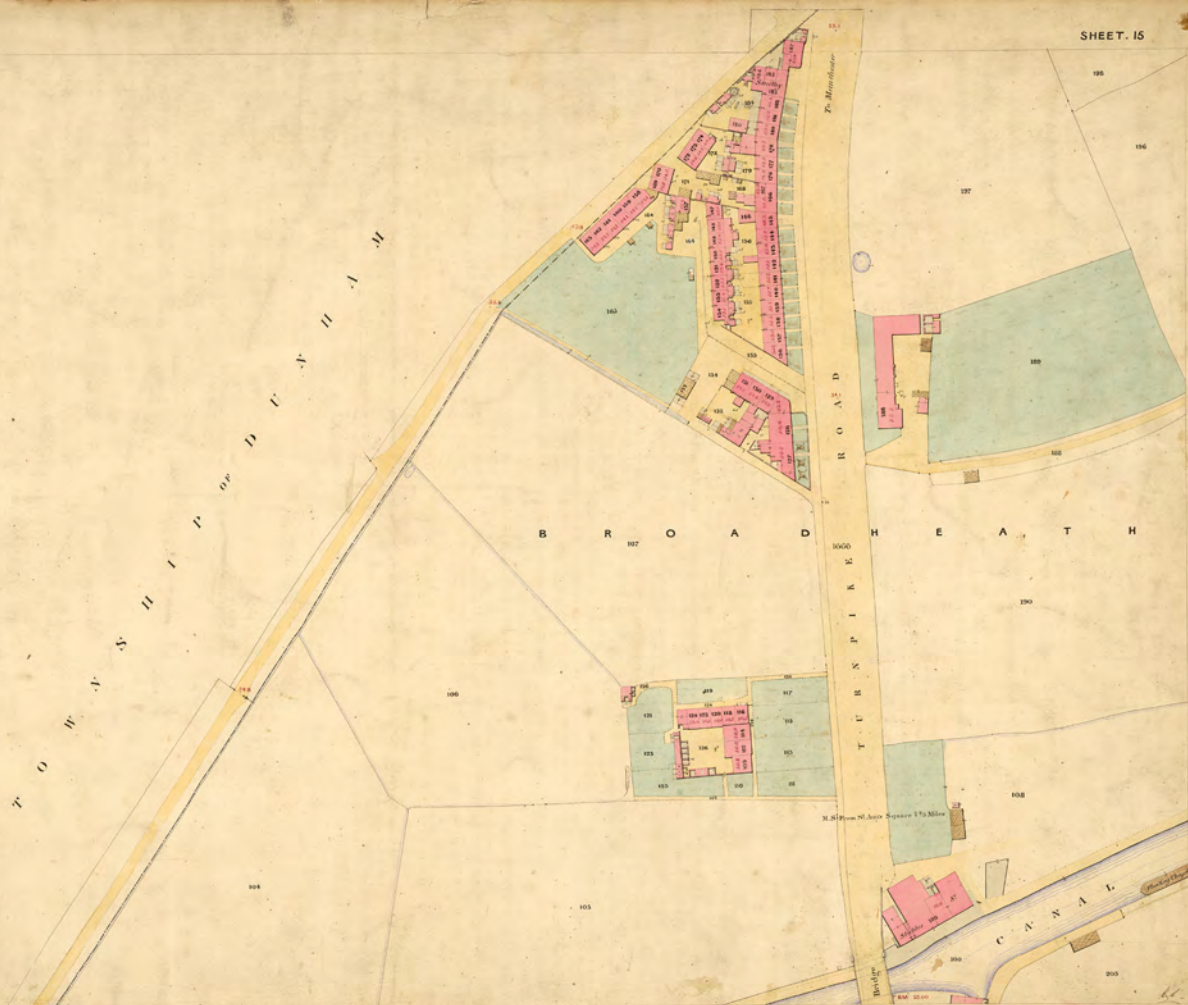
Another important road, not shown because it was outside Altrincham's boundaries, ran from Dunham Massey in the west to meet Turnpike Road at its junction with Davenport Lane just off the plan at the top. This was Sinderland Road, a route from the Irwell-Mersey valley across Carrington Moss to Altrincham.





Sheet 14 The eastern boundary of the town





Sheet 15a The northern end of Altrincham (part of Sheet 15)

This full-scale extract shows the hamlet at the northern end of the borough. This was, and still is, a good point for shops, buildings offering skills such as corn milling (until recently) and other trade, *Fig. 43* (the Cheshire Cheese was built later). Davenport Lane comes up from the south-west on the left side, and Turnpike Road (Manchester Road) runs from north to south down the middle of the extract. To assist in location, Sinderland Road runs from west to east just off the top of the sheet in Dunham Massey and so was not shown. The houses on the east side of Davenport Lane were terraced with no gardens or individual yards and had necessities and middens in small communal yards behind. The terraced properties on the west side of Manchester Road were a contrast, later in date, with gardens fronting the road, but sharing common yards at the back with properties behind in Hart Street (plot 164). The Manchester Road houses lacked outside necessities and therefore had inside toilets and probably an internal water supply; they also had rain downspouts (R.S.) from their roofs. There were no pavements at that date. A sewer ran northwards along the Manchester road, identified by a line with the letters S.G., sewer grate, at its northern end. This sewer was the reason for the lack of necessities behind the main road properties - they no doubt possessed water piping and sewerage systems which emptied into the sewer. At the north end of the terrace there was a smithy, property 183, near the road junction.

In Dale Street (plot 135 at bottom of sheet) properties 129-131 had outdoor privies. No. 129 might have been a house later converted into a Methodist Sunday School, *Fig. 44*. Each property on the east side of Hart Street had its own privy and midden attached at the rear. The nine households (possibly fifty people) used one pump in yard 155 behind. Property 165 on the left was a market garden. There was a circular feature on the west side of yard 184, the most northern yard, which might have been a round midden or well. Other than this possibility of water supply there was a pump in plot 184 and another between yards 168 and 171.

Down the middle of Hart Street, 164, there was a surface gutter running between two sink holes (S). At the south end of the gutter a small drain (dotted line) ran along Dale Street to join it.

The large property 188 on the east side of Manchester Road was Massey's farm, one of the eight farms in the borough, with a long barn or animal shed next to the house. There was a pump and a couple of piggeries or middens in the yard

behind. There was a market garden along the front and another behind.

The northern end of the sheet ended at a point thought by the plan makers to be the boundary of the borough of Altrincham. In this they were slightly wrong. In fact, the boundary ran north along Manchester Road for another three hundred yards to a bridge over the Timperley Brook before striking south-eastwards following the natural boundary of the brook back to Hale Moss.



Fig. 43. West side of Manchester Road, Broadheath. Cheshire Cheese on the right (DGB)



Fig. 44. Methodist Sunday school, 1858, Dale Street (HEB)

CONCLUSION

This section will first review the patterns made by the use of the rural land in the borough surrounding the urban area. Second, the land-use, social class, utilities and occupations of the people in the built-up area will be considered. Third, it will examine the outcome of three crises affecting Altrincham in the mid-19th century and give a few pointers to what happened in the town in the early years after the foundation of the Local Board of Health in 1851. Fourth and last, the value of the maps and plans will be considered.

RURAL LAND-USE

The depiction of rural land-use was not a priority for the mapmakers, only one symbol represented non-urban land-use, that for 'garden ground,' and farm fields were shown as empty spaces carrying a reference number. Some fields might have contained brickworks, clay pits or tanning pits but these were not shown.

The shape of fields showed the rural land-use was of three different types, which lay in three different but largely concentric zones. The outermost zone, of patch fields, lay around the town boundaries where in medieval times there had once been woods but these had been cleared and the land enclosed in irregular, large fields; some lands being also wet had been drained. In the mid-19th century, parts were used mainly for pasture depending on the fertility and drainage of local soils. There was little housing here by 1852 when the plan sheets were drawn.

The next inner belt of rural land-use, the middle circular belt of fields, was good quality agricultural land with arable cultivation and improved pasture. Most of this land was in the sandy loam Town Field and Oldfield areas. The map sheets showed there were many one-(Cheshire) acre strip fields here (see Note 2), some combined to make larger plots for arable, or closes for grazing to produce milk, butter and cheese. How efficient the remaining single strips were for arable farming in 1852 is not known, but there were, no doubt some used for corn or potatoes and other vegetables.

Building land in this belt of strips was available to be sold for housing. A few strips, such as in the sheets showing the Albert Street-Chapel Street suburb, had been sold to speculative builders and housed for rent, the increasing numbers of poor people, or were, for example, in adjacent New Street and Norman's Place, for middle-class people to buy or rent. To the higher west and southwest, wealthy families occupied imposing

villas. From 1851 there was pressure to build houses for the poor on the few acres of the Mayor's Lands run by the Court Leet and the Poor's Land (the former workhouse site), a responsibility of the Vestry via the Overseer of the Poor, but this land was inalienable in the mid-19th century years and so the needed housing development did not happen.

Close round the town there was a third ring, of intensively worked market gardening plots, indicated by small rectangular shapes shaded as 'gardens,' which were close to their main source of fertiliser, the town's privies, and to labour. Market gardening had also invaded former arable strip lands north of the town, and taken over moss land which had been improved between the town (George Street) and the railway. By 1852, the market garden ground was being invaded by developers, dividing the rectangular gardens into smaller patches for new houses for more affluent people. Also, according to gazetteers of the day, many orchards were visible round Altrincham, no doubt in this zone, but they were not identified by symbol on the sheets.

There were nine farms working the lands of the middle and outer zones. Four were clearly identified on the sheets, Gorells Gate on Ashley Road, Moneyash Farm on the western edge of Hale Moss, Massey's Farm on the road to Manchester and Brook Close farm; others were identified from other sources. Apart from one they were all situated within or close to the urban area proper, an ancient type of site, in the town where the labour was, and not where their lands lay.

The sheets made clear that the land-use outside the urban area generally followed the classic rural concentric pattern of Christaller (Fitzgerald, 1975, 19), i.e. it displayed a zoning of activity dependent on the intensity of labour required – the outer mainly pasture lands required less input of labour energy than the middle ring of cultivated arable and pasture land; the most intensively worked land, market gardening, was closest to the built-up area where the labour lay.

No theories are completely watertight however, and some linear features and 'patches' of other land-use cut the three rings of land-use.

A belt of wetlands lay along the eastern boundary of the borough, Timperley Brook. These had early been reclaimed as mowing meadows for the burgesses. Subsequently, well before 1852 the meadows were no longer held in common and had been parcelled-up as patch fields and sold or leased by the Dunham landlords to individual farmers and used as wet pasture for grazing.

Where drained there were sites for one or two large houses.

The main roads and associated buildings out of the town cut through the agricultural zones in a linear fashion, and, apart from the road to Ashley were all turnpiked; no gates were shown though they appear on some old pictures. A number of roads or drives had been made to big houses e.g. Townfield House and those off the Dunham Road. Housing was creeping along Navigation Road and along Moss Lane over the railway bridge, and housing was planned along what were to become Hawarden Road and Bentinck Road.

The canal, with its buildings was another linear feature cutting across fields and mosses in the north of the borough, a vital work corridor at this time with much barge traffic, and canalside industries and warehousing at Broadheath. Some houses had been built near the bridge partly to house workers in these activities. A wharf for passengers was shown but not for night soil, suggesting an omission to conform with Victorian sensitivities (unless it was unloaded elsewhere such as at Deansgate Lane). The Earl agreed that after the arrival of the railway his timetabled passenger traffic on the canal would be withdrawn.

The linear railway cut a swathe across the fields north-eastwards from Altrincham. Here, a coal yard was shown and it must be assumed this mineral was distributed to the gasworks and brickworks on Hale Moss by the lane at the back of the cottages on Oakfield Street. The presence of the line made access to Hale Moss more difficult from the town and may have delayed the final reclamation of that area for thirty years, to coincide with the establishment of Stamford Park.. The line had also divided some fields and isolated corners of such fields had become sites for new house building. That each of the two stations reflected social class differences is quite evident from their appurtenances but this difference ended when a combined station was built in 1881 with good facilities for all travellers.

As well as linear features across the three concentric zones, there were patch features in them, such as open moss lands and heaths. Though shrinking through drainage and parts extracted for farming and building, they were important for animal grazing, turf cutting, clay pits, brickworks and sites for a gasworks, fever hospitals and a slaughterhouse. Broadheath and Timperley Moss were still peaty-sandy heaths in part. Bowdon Downs, once open sandy heath⁵⁰ and cheap land to buy in the 19th century, had been partly enclosed for sites for middle class houses because its elevation gave it a prospect

towards the Pennines and a stench-free site above and upwind of the working class smoky and smelly areas.

Another patch-shaped feature lay immediately north of Altrincham Station in the arable-pasture zone where there had been a rectangular-shaped textile factory industrial area for three-quarters of a century but this activity had been reduced to one corn mill in the decade before 1851.

URBAN LAND-USE, PROPERTY AND SOCIAL CLASS, UTILITIES AND OCCUPATIONS

The surveyors were more interested in the size of buildings and their sanitary facilities than in their fully detailed shapes. Numbers identified each building and the plot in which it stood so that the Board could identify, list and assess them for rates to fund the cost of its public works. The town centre in 1852 still possessed some items we would associate with a village such as barns and stables, the barns no doubt held horse feed.

Former roads in the town which had been depopulated perhaps as early as the 14th century, such as Old Street, Bowden Lane (southwestern Market Street) and Chapel Walk (Regent Road) still had only a few houses on them. However, new roads had been built in the Chapel Street and Newtown suburbs, and west of the town centre to reach new villas. The names of some of the better-class roads such as Groby Place, were taken from the Grey connections of the Stamfords. There were new streets north of the town centre. Old Street, found on the sheet depicting George Street may have been the missing northern limb of the rectangle of medieval streets laid out by the fifth Hamo de Masci in 1290.

The sheets make clear the centre of the town contained a lot of open space such as 'pleasure grounds' and market gardens and in the mid-19th century this space was apparently not easily available for new building for the middle class perhaps because of its price.

The plans showed extensions to the town and suburbs so that by the mid-19th century the concept of Altrincham being divided into just Higher Town and Lower Town was geographically a simplistic view (though in the last decade of the 19th century Ingham refers to fights between Higher Town and Lower Town boys). The layout had become complex, the town was now divided into many different neighbourhoods not just two, ranging from areas of small terraced poor quality houses sharing common yards, through neighbourhoods of medium-sized houses with individual yards or gardens, to districts of quality town houses, villas and mansions in spacious grounds.

Except in the workings of the Court Leet or in some property transactions the terms 'burgage' and 'burgess' were no longer in general use by the mid-19th century but around the market place, in Church Street, High Street, Bowden Lane and George Street the sheets showed that relict burgages from medieval times could be identified by their shape and size. By 1852 the former burgages exhibited the following range of morphological differences:

1. burgages which had a messuage (house) with pleasure ground at the rear.
2. burgages with a messuage where the land behind was open and used for economic activity, such as a market garden.
3. burgages with a messuage and a yard with a few houses at the back.
4. burgages with a messuage and which were replete with other buildings behind.
5. burgages without a messuage, the land being used e.g. for agriculture or market gardening.
6. burgages without messuages which had been merged to make squarer plots for building or were taken back into farmland.

Examples of the last were those adjacent to Bowden Lane, previously the Volunteers' parade ground, twenty years later to be the site of the general hospital.

In land ownership, the Book of Reference showed the Earl of Stamford and Warrington still owned half the borough land, some lands being in the town but most outside, where building would take place later. Ten other people owned from 10 to 45 properties each. These included Messrs. Lancaster (Old Market Place), Nicholls (George Street), Gough (George Street), Potter (George Street), Ramgill (Victoria Terrace) and Balshaw (Chapel Street). Their properties were mainly in blocks, not scattered, and were almost entirely in land formerly belonging to burgesses, not the Earl.

The sheets showed the poor lived in rented terraced property frequently with no front or rear garden only a long common rear yard. Middle and higher class people in their larger houses would own or rent their properties which had front or back gardens as in Norman's Place and Groby Place where they fitted into a strip divided widthways or occupied curved ends of strips as on The Downs. Some large middle class properties had pleasure grounds and a yard as well. The sheets show many fine villas owned by the wealthy lay in spacious grounds and the good facilities for the inhabitants are clear. In the case of three properties on Dunham Road a whole acre strip had been bought for the site of a large villa

and its grounds. The men who owned such mansions and others elsewhere, some dependent on the railway, would have a great influence in the future of the town (and of Manchester where some of them worked). It is clear there was generally a direct relationship between property holding, building style and size, social class and altitude of the site. The socially higher property-owning neighbourhoods generally lay higher in altitude above the lower class ones, and to the west or south-westwards, to windward.

The symbols on the sheets show a direct relationship between larger dwellings and good facilities. It is clear the mapmakers had been instructed to show every outdoor sanitary facility. By the omission of details of houses' internal structures, we can only deduce that if the better-off had no, or perhaps one, outside privy they had water closets inside (and possibly other facilities such as baths); any outside were for servants and gardeners and had probably remained there from an earlier period before an internal w.c. had become the 'in thing.'

Some w.c.s were connected to the few rainwater small-bore tile drains shown on the sheets in the main streets, or, if not, discharged the waste into cesspools, pits or open drains or stream. No 'septic tanks' were identified at this date. For most of the less affluent townsfolk in small properties the dry necessary still ruled. Many poorer folk used a built midden for disposal of effluent or if they did not possess access to one, used open drains or ditches or left their refuse in a pit, or a pile in the yard or street.

With regard to water supply to the dwelling there was no public piped drinking water system. In earlier times the shallow sandy aquifers of the district supplied ample water from springs and shallow wells. Several place names refer to these sources – such as Spring Bank, Springfield and Well Field. No doubt in mid-century some water was still brought by shoulder yoke from local springs and streams. Affluent tenants could afford to bring water from a nearby spring in their own pipes to outside cisterns though no such systems were actually identified on the plans. On the sheets the site of the Great Town Well for the town's thousand poor was not clear unless it was in a small enclosure on the east side of Well Street, Sheet 6, and there was another small well in Victoria Street, not indicated on the sheets and there might have been private wells, also not identified.

The ubiquitous source of water after the 'spring, stream and well period' was the cast-iron hand pump, a contraption which saved the day for the town. It could reach the water table at a depth, fortunately, of only a few feet and yield copious

amounts of water. There was a town public pump but its location is unknown. Pumps outside properties in poor areas, which were used by up to fifty or more people were provided by developers. Pumps behind better-class properties were presumably private, serving only the five or more in the household. The hand pump was a lifesaver for the people of the town in the first half of the 19th century. Without it the crammed terraces of the New Street-Chapel Street-Albert Street and Newtown suburbs could not have been built.

The increasing number of pumps necessary for the burgeoning population must have gradually lowered the water table possibly causing a crisis in water supply and a lowering of the quality of water, not helped by organic matter recorded in analyses. Hand pumps were important enough to be mapped by the Board perhaps for the future provision of emergency standpipes, which was one policy discussed because of the increasing supply problem, but not agreed to be implemented. The plans showed at least a hundred in the gardens, yards and streets of the borough. So the importance of the hand pump cannot be overstressed for the existence of the town in the half a century to 1851.

However the efficiency of a water supply pumped by hand, and the associated shoulder-yoked pails was coming to an end. From the government survey of 1851 before the Local Board was formed, the problem was identified as immediate enough to warrant an analysis of water on Hale Moss with a view to accepting the provision of a piped public utility as a necessary utility for the inhabitants of the town

With regard to gas, piped provision of this utility was not indicated on the sheets except by the presence of 60 street lights lit by gas. No information was given on the sheets about the use of gas inside properties.

Information about the occupations and industries of the people was missing from the census of 1851 because tabulated census figures were not available for Altrincham per se.⁵¹ Figures calculated from individual returns in the census show that labouring, servantry, construction, retailing, and farming and gardening, in that order, were the chief forms of employment. Construction was primarily to cope with house building mainly for the lower classes of people. Servants assisted the shopkeepers, middle class managers and professionals. In retailing, there were thirty shops around the market place and half that number had spread down George Street, primarily residential at that time and there was a handful of shops in Chapel Street. Retailing might be expected to have had a higher position than

fourth place in the employment of the townspeople of a trading borough. Farming and gardening might be expected to have been less significant than fifth in order of importance.

This was the age of the horse and there were many stables shown on the sheets amongst the poorer property, giving work for drivers, ostlers and carters. It is known horse omnibuses plied the streets. Horses were also stabled near the carriage houses of the wealthy, many to take their prosperous commuting owners to the railway station. There must have been hundreds of horses and handlers about the district; it was the age of the working horse, as well as the iron horse.

THE THREE CRISES: A FEW POINTERS TO WHAT HAPPENED AFTER 1851

In the section at the beginning of the book called 'Some Features of Altrincham in the mid-19th Century' three crises were mentioned: 1. Housing for the poor, 2. Ill health, and 3. Inadequate local government and these were briefly discussed in that order. In terms of their histories after 1851 it would be more logical to deal with them in reverse order. In other words changes in Nos. 1 and 2 could not happen before those in No. 3. However for the sake of consistency the original order will be used again here.

Crisis 1: Housing for the poor

From its inception the new Local Board of 1851 could not work miracles. The town population number had expanded by a quarter in the decade 1841-51 and in this increase there were many immigrant people. A problem was that the population increase in the next decade, 1851-61 would be twice as large as that of the previous one and again in-migration of the poor was a concern. Social class in the town was changing. A number of affluent households were moving out to more salubrious neighbourhoods to even better housing; this was partly because of the deteriorating environment and other characteristics of the lower class areas in the town. This resulted in the paradox that the number of incoming middle class households seeking a salubrious environment was to some extent balanced by other middle class people moving out. This changed the social balance of the town increasing the proportion of lower class residents. The new Board therefore had to improve the environment in lower class areas for the image of the town, not just for the benefit of the poor.

Most of the worst housing provision was in terraces in former strip fields and Newtown. In the last place, in new properties, only the most fortunate had their own back yard. The effects on the lives of poor families through being crammed

into small terraced houses and cottages 15 by 25 feet in size (Bamford 1991b, 35) without running water and effective sewerage, can only be imagined. There was more provision of inside kitchen sinks, though outside ones were still being installed in Newtown.

In the early 19th century there is no doubt that the houses in Chapel Street and George Street were originally built as a response to more work opportunities in the increasing employment in the Woodside factories to the 1840s, and in craft workshops and market gardening. The two-up two-down or three-storied houses with cellars were ideal homes for single households. The top floor of the house could contain a spinning wheel, a loom or shoemaking apparatus; raw material, products and coal could be stored in the cellar. But when the opportunities for work lessened with Manchester competition in cotton production leading to the closure of the 'steam factory' in the town in the 1840s, coupled with numbers of incoming migrants, there would have been unemployment. The need for income by the residents in a time of depression meant that over a few decades life in Chapel Street had declined in quality and the inhabitants there had to take in lodgers and turn their storage cellars into cellar dwellings. The most frequent number of people in a dwelling rose to eight by 1851, sometimes including several families, long-term lodgers.

The new Local Board became very active from the start. One of the first jobs of the new officers was to register and certificate all lodging houses and lay down bye-laws such as that there should be, in any room, only one bed for every twelve 'superficial foot' (square feet?) of room; also there were not to be more than two persons per bed. Keepers who exceeded such limitations were brought before the magistrates.

One of the changes in the social character of the town was that 5-10% of the town's population was of Irish origin, resulting from a sudden influx fleeing from a disaster in that country, the Potato Famine. According to the Book of Reference, there were more than forty pigsties in Lower Town, another unexpected feature in an urban area. The pig was a big source of income for meat, bone and skin and useful for scavenging outside, or in some cases, inside the home. A number of piggeries were recorded as belonging to the Irish and getting pigsties cleaned was a frequent task of the officers of the new Board. At this date the O'Briens, O'Kells and Macnamaras were not yet recorded as pillars of Altrincham's history.

The officers ordered many areas in the communal yards to be cleared of filth and this they did using chloride of lime and limewash by which a better

environment was created, if not actual housing improvement.

Money from six charities and rent from the Poor's Lands managed by the Overseer of the Poor and the Mayor's Lands managed by the Court Leet were available for the relief of the poor, though the rent from the latter source had sometimes been squandered by the Court. Until the mid-1840s the very poor had also been recipients of blankets and other charity from the Stamfords but this was subsequently discontinued, to the disadvantage of the destitute, due to that family objecting to the views of the public on their lifestyle.

The lack of cheap public housing, with better facilities, for a rising population who wanted cheap rented property was not solved for fifty years until council housing appeared shortly after 1900 after the Board of Health ceased to exist, though in the late 19th century a Broadheath company and some private developers built good houses for workers to rent. From its inception the Board, whilst not doing any building itself, made a start to improve the quality of the built environment by legislating that from 1851 the plans for all new buildings had to be registered, applications to build inspected, and the properties built to an approved standard. The Stamfords, though absent, continued to control the high quality of properties on their lands through their agents.

Crisis 2: Ill health

The likelihood of contracting sickness was a risk for all levels of society and did not wholly reflect the social class of a person or his or her address. All had to pay for treatment, except the poorest (through charity, poor relief or a move to the workhouse). In particular the cause of the epidemics of cholera, typhus, diphtheria and dysentery continued to be thought by the well-heeled to be a 'class thing' through the 'deadly' stench of excrement and other waste, e.g. from abattoirs and the tanning industry, and the effusion emanating from the neighbourhoods inhabited mainly by the lower classes.

For a few decades after 1851 people in power continued to worry that 'miasma' from the 'ill-ventilated' poor areas could be deadly and pass on disease to themselves in the middle class. Even in 1858, Parliament was unable to meet one day because of the discomfort and danger felt from the unbearable stench in the capital. On a smaller scale, parts of Altrincham must have suffered similar effusions.

Current thought ordained that if a well-watered system of rainwater drains were built, the miasma, and so the fever, would be carried down

the drains with the raw sewage to somewhere else out of the neighbourhood which had a problem. In fact, central government advised all sewage should be piped into the nearest sizeable river. This was a problem for Altrincham, some distance from a large stream. Nevertheless it became the Board's policy, and legislation was introduced immediately it was in power in 1851 to prioritise getting a better sewerage system. The first scheme to empty Altrincham's sewers into Timperley Brook was quickly completed by 1853 after obtaining a loan. This was not effective because the small brook could not cope with the town's output of sewage in spite of men 'scouring' it and its tributary streams as they had done for centuries to keep the brooks open. Nor did an improved sewage pipe system itself solve the incidence of serious illness.

In fact there were practical sewerage problems for eighteen years until 1869 when a sewage processing works was built on Carrington Moss. The use of unprocessed effluent material for market gardening and general agriculture also continued. In the 1880s Manchester Corporation needed to dispose of 200,000 tons of raw sludge a year and bought Carrington Moss from Lord Stamford on which to dump untreated muck by rail at seven tons to the acre (Bayliss, 1998) to 'reclaim' the moss for farming, and this activity did not cease until the 1930s. Vegetables for well-known High Street shops continued to be grown recently on the 'improved' Carrington Moss. After 1894, Manchester used its Ship Canal to dump some of the untreated sewage at sea so the nightsoil cargoes to Altrincham along the Bridgewater Canal eventually ceased. Nevertheless the history of Manchester's Victorian pottery could be worked out from the countless sherds which came with nightsoil by barge, still strewn over many local fields. From 1869 into the modern period anybody could buy treated sewage from the Sinderland sewage farm. Some parts of Altrincham were not attached to the sewerage system till after 1900.⁵²

Increasing the water supply for the growing town was critical and the Local Board had to act to provide clean public water on a better footing than by one public well and a couple of pumps so its officers drew up plans in 1853 to pump water from a spring on Hale Moss to a water tower in Bowdon but this scheme failed, the water was too hard. Manchester and Salford had a water company from the 1830s and Manchester was completing a reservoir scheme in the Longdendale valley and had water to sell.

The metropolis was approached to supply water to Altrincham but wanted a capital sum of £16000 to which the Board objected. Finally in 1857

wholesome piped water for drinking and washing was obtained from the North Cheshire Water Company (who obtained it from Manchester) via a pipeline at a cost of £2500. Without access to Manchester's resources it is very likely a water crisis situation would have developed for the town. For the use of water, for those who could afford it, people paid a cost of 5% of the rack (highest possible) rent of their property at a minimum rate of 5s (25p) a year. Tenants of properties valued under £30 rack rent incurred an extra charge of 6s (30p) for the use of a w.c. and 12s a year for a bath.

It was believed more and cleaner water to houses would result in more waste water from them which would help flush out the drains and remove deadly miasma more efficiently, but this increased facility on its own, like new sewers, did not reduce the incidence of illness.

Sadly, with some contaminated middens, pumps and wells still in use, dangerous illnesses continued. The link between poor health and water contamination through bacteria was not known for another twelve years after the Board, new sewers and clean water came into existence. Even one of the town's doctors, Dr. Alexander Paterson and one of his daughters died of diphtheria in 1859.

A London physician, Dr. John Snow, had explained in the early 1850s that contamination of groundwater by sewage around particular water-pumps and wells was the cause of serious disease but his ideas were not accepted. However, after a major cholera outbreak in London in 1863, eleven years after the date when Altrincham's (and London's) new sewers were built, and six after clean water arrived, his findings were finally accepted and there were moves to eradicate contamination elsewhere. Instances of death from diseases such as diphtheria, scarlet fever and typhus took years to die down.

Turton's inspections of the overcrowded lodging houses as Inspector of Nuisances (one of several offices he acquired) did not provide the knowledge that lice carried typhus in congested situations. Typhus and other dangerous diseases only abated when there was more medical research, a higher standard of living, fewer (and well-inspected) lodging houses, a decline of lice and bug infestation in what were virtually slum houses, uncontaminated water, efficient sewerage and better personal cleanliness. In 1852 the end of the rule of the dry privy, the midden, and the pile of muck was not in sight.

It would be another decade before Altrincham's death rate would be reduced to 20 per thousand. Because of continuing ill health, Lloyd's Fever Hospital had to be built in 1853 at a cost of £600.

The hospital did not provide doctors; patients had to call in their own. The hospital continued to cope with the incidence of serious disease for several decades. In the 1860s there was correspondence from the Stamfords about the introduction of a specialist unit, Altrincham Eye Hospital. Altrincham General Hospital was not built until 1870 and one of the first matrons was sacked for keeping pigs and swilling beer.

Crisis 3: Inadequate local government

The attack on the third major problem, that of the inadequacies of the town's ancient local government has been described on pages 19 and 20. It was brought about by two brilliant initiatives from Central Government in London: first, to give the power to local governing bodies to improve the health of the people and bring down the high death rate; second to make the people in the new Local Board areas pay for the improvements rather than the government. The wealthiest persons would suffer modestly by their having to pay more rates on top of the existing taxes of the day, such as the poor rate and road tax leys but because the rates were general for the first time, the drawback was that the poor also had to pay though they no doubt valued the improvements when they came along.

The new Board rented a room in the house of Isaac Turton the Overseer of the Poor in High Street as an office and then acquired neighbouring accommodation, and had the foresight to engage new specialists from the start. In Appendix 3 mention is made that the first officer appointed was a 'Surveyor of Highways.' The former government inspector, Rawlinson, was appointed 'Engineer' for the first major project - sewerage. Turton continued as Clerk to the new Board; he was already paid £50 a year and he gave very good service for that. He was extremely useful and versatile also acquiring the posts of 'Surveyor' (presumably different from the 'Surveyor of Highways' above) and the strange posts of 'Collector and Inspector of Nuisances and Bookkeeper.' In this fashion the Board fairly quickly took over the whole administration of the town and equipped itself with numerous sub-committees and other officers. The last Court Leet officer carrying out effective administration was the market looker, who carried on his work till 1878 (Southern, 2002, 25). The market and fair rights were bought from the (distant) Earl of Stamford and Warrington for £1000 (Nixon, 110) and the Board moved the market to a new site and built a market hall for the town in 1879. The office of managing the new market fell into the remit of the Board, not the Court Leet.

Some members of the Board were also members of other bodies such as the Court, the functions of which became only ceremonial, apart from the ability to elect the mayor. It was not minuted by the first Board that its first sworn member in 1851, Richard Broadbent, surgeon, had been Mayor for 1849 and 1850. In 1852 another Mayor, not a member of the Board at the time, challenged the Chairman of the Board's authority on a matter but lost the argument. Following this the authority of the Mayor of the Court Leet became quite separate from the executive role carried out by the Chairman of the Local Board of Health (and subsequent Urban District Council, 1894-1937). However, the Court Leet Mayor's signature representing the former 'feudal' authority appeared alongside that of the Chairman of the 'civil' authority on public documents until 1937, when, on the date of the foundation of the Municipal Borough in 1937, the mayoralty passed to the Municipal Borough Council.⁵³

From the start of life in 1851 the Local Board in Altrincham was enthusiastic to begin new works and the clerk was asked to write to the General Board to see if money could be advanced against the rates. The General Board agreed.

The Local Board needed an expert to advise and Robert Rawlinson, who had been invited to be Engineer, began work on the Timperley Brook sewerage project in October 1852 by which time the set of 50 Detail Plans had been received on which officers could lay out their plans. The General Board agreed a loan of £7300 for this and a water supply scheme. Needless to say it was too much for the Local Board which opted for the sewerage scheme only and took out a mortgage for £2000 later raised to £3000 for its first works to take untreated sewage to Timperley Brook (mentioned above). For this and other schemes from 1853-78 the amount borrowed was £18,200, nine loans between three and a half and five percent each to be paid over thirty years (Ingham, 1878, in TLS 2000; Bamford, 1991b, 20). They were not cleared until the First World War.

The first sewerage schemes having been completed early in 1853, in May of the same year the Board was discussing resolutions to oblige property owners to link their properties to the main drains and to pave, flag and channel the streets. In August the council took on itself the paving of New Street, Chapel Street and Albert Street, some of the most deprived areas, showing it did indeed have a social conscience. The Earl of Stamford agreed to have some property in Bowdon and Dunham linked to the main drains and paid a contribution to the Board for this.

There was no possibility of diverting money or land for the purpose of providing parks or public

baths alluded to by Rawlinson in his 1851 report who in this respect was extremely forward-looking. It would be thirty years before Lord Stamford gave land for Stamford Park to the town, ending the era of the use of Hale Moss for commoning animals from the town, and thirty years later before public baths and public housing were built. If the Local Board had not been formed in 1851 and made its steady progress the town might have slumped in status as it had done before, in the 14th and 16th centuries.

With the beginnings of a heavy machine-tool industry at Broadheath in the 1880s, eventually known worldwide, the economic future of Altrincham was ensured. The building of large areas of late Victorian terraced properties with good facilities assured improved social conditions. So Crisis 3, in local government, was the only one solved in the middle of the 19th century with the change to a more effective form of administration.

The establishment of the Local Board of Health in 1851 with an elected local council to replace the Court Leet was a step towards democracy, but only in certain respects. In the Court Leet, any burgess, however wealthy or poor, or however small a portion of a burghage he or she owned, was entitled to a say in the town's affairs. In fact the Earl's steward arranged which burgess would be influential and he even chose the mayor, no doubt with the Earl's previous agreement. So the Court was nothing less than a continuation of a feudal hegemony, under the Stamfords, based on small-property ownership.

The problem with the Local Board was that its franchise was not universal - only landowners and men paying poor rates of over £30 were entitled to the vote. It is not likely the landowning burgesses were entitled to the vote unless they fulfilled the monetary side of the requirement and, of course, women were not enfranchised, even if they were wealthy landowners and paid the necessary poor rate. So though the election of the new Board of 1851 at first sight looks like the introduction of real democracy to Altrincham, it was only partial because of the narrow franchise. This body was in fact an oligarchy of a few wealthy men where money bought the right to be elected into office and therefore into power. Access to a modest level of power in the Court Leet did not require a man to be able to pay £30 of poor rate, which was one requirement to be eligible to be elected to the Board of nine officers. Nevertheless the actual principle of election represented an important milestone in local government.

What seems to be clear from a comparison of the Board's records with those of the Court Leet and Town's Meeting is that there was an abrupt change to making the procedures in meetings more democratic. In fact it may be the new Board members had to be instructed on how to carry out efficient procedures and perhaps how to write minutes. For the first time not only were all attendees named but the motions and any amendments put forward were set out as they were raised. There were some minor variations in procedure and setting out of minutes but it was noted how each member voted - for the motion, or amendment, and against (or 'contrary opinion'). The chairman had a vote as a member and also the privilege of a casting vote if the voting was even as happens today. This was a far cry from the ancient procedures and rolls of the Court Leet where only the officers' and jurors' names are listed with a list of simple cases of misdemeanor which were warranting fines of up to £2, and the simple records of the Town's Meeting.

The advantage of the Local Board was also that it brought in appropriate bureaucratic structures and a paid specialist staff to deal with problems though by the 1850s there were a few paid officials, such as constables and one or two other specialists in the Court Leet, Town's Meeting and Vestry. So on the positive side there was the start of an efficient programme of sanitary bye-law improvements, such as the clearing of 'nuisances,' registration of lodgers, and building regulations serving everybody and improving the town's image.

Another feature was that the administration of the town was taken out of the hands of its main landlord for the first time in the five and a half centuries of the borough's existence. The changing influence of the 7th Earl of Stamford was a critical feature, fortunately mainly positive up to the early 1850s, except for his reduction in charity work which ceased before then. However, Cheshire folk disliked not only his first marriage but his second marriage to a circus bareback rider in 1855, a distaste felt by the Earl which led to his family's removal from Dunham Massey Hall⁵³ to their Enville House in Staffordshire and Bradgate House in Leicestershire. The Stamfords were absent for sixty years until the 9th Earl returned.

The problems of his private life had the result of taking away a creative man who built the first town hall and the huge St Margaret's Church, (possibly, it was said, to embarrass the clergy at Bowdon). To support it he created a whole parish attracting cottontots and other wealthy businessmen to build huge mansions there, some

the size of small palaces, in flamboyant Italianate, Neogothic or Tudor style, each aiming to outdo its neighbour. It was a new town for the wealthy just as there was a Newtown for the poor. It has been mentioned these men, many dependent on the railway, would have a great influence in the future of Altrincham (and of Manchester where some of them worked). The Earl also continued a code of fine architecture for the properties in the town on his lands and he might have benefited Altrincham in many ways had he stayed, rather than putting his energies into houses, society, hunting and other pursuits elsewhere. The Earl left the district not even attending the consecration of his great church in 1855. It is interesting to speculate what the relationships would have been between the Earl and the new Board had he stayed. He must have recognised the Board meant a challenge to his political influence in the northwest. His presence or absence was a major factor in Altrincham's history and it would be interesting to compare how his other local estate at Ashton-under-Lyne fared during the mid-19th century.

THE MAPS AND PLANS

The Book of Reference, started with Property No. 1, the new town hall in the market place (Sheet 6a) and finished with numbers in the 1600s. After details of the houses, gardens, fields and other properties, all the roads were listed with their acreages, even the turnpikes. The tally of lands occupied by the railway and its appurtenances was also shown. However, the fifteen sheets did not cover all the lands of the borough. Beginning in the north on *Fig. 9*, and moving clockwise the areas not covered by the plans were: 1. farmland along the canal north-eastwards as far as Timperley Brook (the large district not mapped here was about the size of the area covered by one of the map sheets); 2. fields along the Stockport Road to Timperley Brook; 3. a belt of land from the railway eastwards onto Hale Moss, moss land and some farmland, about half a mile in length including the large gas works; 4. farmland and Spring Bank house and estate to the south; farmland westwards on both sides of the Dunham Road towards Highgate, and west of Broadheath. It is difficult to explain why these areas consisting of more than a score of fields, many houses and the gas works were not included, which would have brought in rate revenue. The Board members must have known how far the borough extended as several of them were Court Leet members and 'beat the bounds,' i.e. inspected and verified them, annually. Another unfortunate feature of the copy

of the Book of Reference available at present is that no rateable values had been entered in it.

It has been said that a map is a political statement because a human hand has prepared it and this was particularly true when the only purpose was to raise public money. The plans did not indicate anything about social or household structures, and little about people's activities nor the main housing and health problems. The offensive items in the town were not identified - cellar dwellings, lodging houses, refuse dumps, places where sewage was piled, polluted wells, fallen down buildings, and locations where there had been a high incidence of recent disease and death. Such omissions on the sheets were no doubt the result of government guidelines for drawing the maps, and resulted from the lack of knowledge of scientific relationships between such features which, if they could have been indicated, may have saved lives. The members of the Board desired to pay for plans showing a neutral view of their town and not showing any 'black spots.'

Another more basic discrepancy was in two lithographic variations. Most sheets have horizontal ruled shading to indicate gardens (e.g. Sheet 6) but others have rough shading (e.g. Sheet 13). However both are shown as the same green with lightly mottled brown in the original watercolour sheets. The distinction between pleasure ground and market garden was also not made clear. The plans were done quickly in nine months and so the shapes of properties were mostly shown stylised. Middens and pigsties were shown with the same symbol. Small workshops were not identified. Orchards and tree types could have been distinguished. Wells were not clearly indicated nor which were the public or private ones, and though pumps were identified, it was not made clear which of these were public or private. The location of the survey posts used by the map makers were not recorded on the plans though this had been requested by the Board and would have been useful to test the accuracy of the 1852 plans against modern large-scale plans.

On receipt of the plans, Isaac Turton, the Overseer of the Poor and Secretary to the Board, must have blinked when he saw the houses of the poor in Chapel Street coloured the same delicate pink as his own fine house in High Street.

The drawing of the plans in a Manchester office was a major factor affecting Altrincham. Without these sheets it would have been impossible for the Board's officers to lay out accurate plans for projects which brought about the council's sanitary and other improvements for the town.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 describes the efforts of the Sanitary Committee of the Town's Meeting to ascertain the scope of the town's problems. Details from two reports submitted to the committee in 1849 give an eye-opening view of mid-nineteenth century Altrincham.

Appendix 2 is a report of the government inspector sent from central government after it received a petition from the chief inhabitants in 1851 requesting consideration for the establishment of a Local Board.

Appendix 3 describes the founding of the Local Board in 1851 and its first actions. The Board quickly replaced the Court Leet and managed the town increasingly successfully for another forty years until it was replaced by an Urban Sanitary District Council and subsequently an Urban District Council in 1894. In the following Appendices 1 and 3, words recorded in the minutes of the Sanitary Committee are printed in italics (to reflect the secretary Turton's, sloping handwriting), with additional text and comments in normal print.

APPENDIX 1: THE REPORTS BY ISAAC TURTON AND MESSRS. BROADBENT AND ROBINSON TO THE SANITARY COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNS MEETING, 1849

The Report by Isaac Turton

This report of the Overseer of the Poor, slightly abridged, is in his own minutes as secretary of the Town's Meeting in their Minute Book. The sequence of topics had been provided for Turton to enquire about and report on; spelling and numbers are as written by Turton.

Altrincham July 25th 1849

At a meeting of the Sanitary Committee (of the Town's Meeting) held this 25th day of July 1849.

Mr. Joynson, Mr. Nicholls, Mr. Mort, Mr. N. Pass, Mr. Pierson, Mr. Millington, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Broadbent, Mr. Woollam, Mr. E. J. Lloyd in the chair.

Comment: Edward Joynson - magistrate; William D. Nicholls of High Street, Altrincham - solicitor, and mayor in 1856 and 1857; John Mort of Church Street - draper, and mayor in 1859 and 1860; Nathaniel Pass lived in Stamford Street - retired auctioneer; Mark Pierson lived in Mill Place - a solicitor's managing clerk, mayor in 1851 and 1852; William Milnes Millington - a gentlemen and property owner; Thomas Robinson and Richard Broadbent - surgeons, the latter was a member of the Royal College of Surgeons and General Practitioners; Broadbent lived on Dunham Road near Groby Place and was mayor in 1849 and 1850; John Woollam - a property owner; Edward J. Lloyd, of Oldfield Hall, J.P. and gentleman.

Mr. Isaac Turton having prepared a Report on the Several matters relative to the state of the Town it should be entered into the Minutes

Sewerage

There were four main sewers all contracted and inefficient two of which emptied themselves into watercourses flowing from Hale Moss, out of the town, one into Timperley Brook and one at Sandiway, the latter is in the Turnpike Road.

Drainage

The greater part of the town, particularly cottage property, has generally no drainage.

Comment: There would be no sewage works for eighteen years to come.

Water

One pump put down by private subscription, two public pumps and one public well all supplied with excellent water.

Comment: In view of the incidence of disease the word 'excellent' as a description of the water indicates the link between local contaminated water and disease was not yet understood. The 1852 plans show many, presumably private, pumps but the location of the one private one put down by private subscription and two public ones is not clear; nor are the locations of wells, but one well (ownership unknown) was found on the south side of Victoria Street by STAG and a possible site of the public Great Well on the east side of Well Street. The public pumps, several communal pumps in common back yards and possibly two public wells supplied over a thousand poor people.

Burial Grounds

St. George's Church Yard, and Shaw's Lane Chapel Yard- neither of which causes any nuisance.

Population

The population was 3399 in 1841 – since that time, 165 additional houses have been built (by 1849), which with an average of 5.5 to each house will make an addition to the population of 907. It is also estimated that there is an increased population of 1/6th in the former houses, amounting to 566 – and making a total of 4872 inhabitants at this time).

Comment: '4872 inhabitants at this time' = 1849. The census figure for 1851 two years later was lower, 4488, so there is a discrepancy here of a few hundred people. The increase of population over the decade 1841-51 according to the census had been 26.3%, just over a quarter.

Local Acts

None. The general act for Watching and Lighting was adopted in 1832.

Natural Drainage Areas

The Town is situated upon rising ground with sufficient fall for drainage.

Boundaries

The Township Boundary, also a Boundary formed in the year 1837, for the purpose of including operation of the general Watching & Lighting Act. The boundary which may be most advantageously adopted for the Sanitary Act is the Township boundary, if a difference can be made in the assessment of Land and houses.

Number of Common lodging Houses - and average number of inmates each night

Twenty six Lodging Houses with from 4 to 10 (say 7) beds in each House - and with, on a low average, 3 persons to each bed making 546 lodgers each night, all the lodging houses are much overcrowded and many in a very dirty state.

Comment: It was in these circumstances that lice could spread typhus fever, and other infections and contagions could spread.

Number of Courts and Alleys

10 Courts and alleys, containing 67 houses and a population of about 368 persons - the houses for the most part being lodging houses.

Slaughter Houses

Two – one near the market place used by two butchers and one at Pinfold Brow (the one on Oakfield Street) used by butchers – both are without drainage – and are frequently offensive.

Number of Cattle Slaughtered

Upon an average, 9 Cows, 9 Calves, 30 Sheep, 12 Lambs and 4 Pigs, total 64 per week – or 3328 per year.

Number of Inhabited Houses

In 1841 there were 616 - in May last (1849) the number was 781, being an increase of 165 in eight years, this is after deducting the number of houses taken down by the Railway Co. There are now 37 houses in course of building.

Length of Public Highways & Streets

Paved 1 mile 115 yards – repaired with broken stone and gravel, 4 ½ miles and 44 yards. Unpaved and sandy ½ mile and 89 yards, total 6 miles and 248 yards, of this, 1 ¾ miles and 425 yards is Turnpike Road.

Length of New Streets not Public Highways

New Street, 407 yards, not paved, sewered or drained with 104 houses in it, - Chapel Street, 203 yards a small portion paved, not sufficiently drained, with 81 houses in it, many of which are low lodging houses and the Cellars of several being used as distinct dwellings - Normans Place, 150 yards, not sufficiently drained, with 16 Houses on it - Sandiway Place, 170 yards having a small drain with 15 houses - New Town (built in the 1840s), without drains or any regular Road, comprising (75) houses, 1 smithy, 1 Wheelwrights shop and 1 Joiners shop.

A Return of the Number of Deaths in Altrincham for six years ending March 1849

<i>From 31st March 1843</i>	<i>To 31st March 1844</i>	<i>78</i>
<i>From 31st March 1844</i>	<i>To 31st March 1845</i>	<i>76</i>
<i>From 31st March 1845</i>	<i>To 31st March 1846</i>	<i>105</i>
<i>From 31st March 1846</i>	<i>To 31st March 1847</i>	<i>135</i>
<i>From 31st March 1847</i>	<i>To 31st March 1848</i>	<i>122</i>
<i>From 31st March 1848</i>	<i>To 31st March 1849</i>	<i>88</i>

Being an average of about 100 each year or about 2½ per cent on (of) the population.

Comment: This figure was significant because if the rate per 1000 was more than 23, central government had the power to intervene without being requested. Later, Rawlinson, the government inspector re-calculated the Altrincham figure to be higher, 29.54.

The Report by Messrs. Broadbent and Robinson

(Two surgeons – Medical Officers for the town) same date

Mr Broadbent and Mr Robinson having also presented a Report as to the Sanitary State of the Town, Ordered that such Report also be entered in the Minutes.

Report

The sanitary state of the Town in the opinion of the resident medical practitioners might be greatly improved by a systematic & effective public & private drainage, by an authorised regulation of the low lying lodging houses, and by the removal of Dunghills, Cesspools and other nuisances from the vicinity of dwelling Houses. They state also that Typhus Fever prevails, more or less, in the Town every year, and not infrequently with great severity, also dysentery and other Bowel complaints. These Diseases they find to originate almost always in the vicinity of low lodging houses, and in the dirty and ill-ventilated squares and alleys inhabited by the Working Classes from which Typhus Fever, often of a very malignant character spreads to the better Parts (as a pestilential (miasmatic) air), & affects the Shop Keepers & others, & occasions great alarm amongst all classes of the Inhabitants. The Town of Altrincham in the opinion of the medical practitioners, situated as it is on the side of a hill composed of red sand & gravel of great depth, and having no Manufacturing carried on within it (a clear indication that its factory function had ceased), ought to be a singularly healthful place, but they consider the reverse of this to be the fact as regards the lower classes arising from the circumstances above described.

On ye Motion of Mr. Woollam seconded by Mr. Mort the best thanks of the Meeting be given to Mr. Broadbent & Mr. Robinson for preparing the above Report,

Signed on behalf of the Meeting

E.J.Lloyd

Comment: No thanks were proffered to Isaac Turton though his was a far more specific report – because he was the Committee's paid employee associated with the Poor Law rate – he would not be popular. However, many of Turton's observations were to be used later by the government inspector.

The town petitioned the government in the accepted way following the Public Health Act of 1848, by no less than one-tenth of the inhabitants who were rated to the relief of the poor by £30 and this was supported in London by the local MP and agreed to by the General Board of Health.

APPENDIX 2: THE REPORT FOR THE GOVERNMENT BY ROBERT RAWLINSON, 1851

Robert Rawlinson first held a meeting at the Unicorn to sound out public opinion then used the feedback from it in his ensuing practical survey and final report. This was a long essay of 32 closely printed pages published two years later than the previous surveys and can only be briefly summarised here. A few comments are indicated in brackets. The full text may be seen at Trafford Local Studies Centre, Sale.

The town had petitioned, through a tenth of those rated over £30 to the relief of the poor, or property owners, the "Honourable Board" (of Health in London) under the Public Health Act, 1848 with the help of W. Tatton Egerton, Esq., M.P. with over 153 signatures over the signatures of Francis Lawton and E.J. Lloyd. Mr. Robert Rawlinson was sent to survey the town.

The government inspector first commented on the rapid increase of population through the previous century and which had doubled in the last 25 years. He put the population at 4872 in 1849 (taking Turton's figure, Appendix 1), which was larger than the official census figure of 4499 for 1851. The number of houses had increased by 27% whereas population had grown by 43% indicating overcrowding. He noted the new railway would cause a further increase in numbers.

He outlined the history of the place, setting out details of its charter of 1290 and bemoaned the fact there existed "no local power to pave or cleanse the town except under the general Highways Act which pertained to one portion of the town only." He then described the boundaries, mentioning there were parts where the lands belonged to several of the men of the Town's Meeting.

The present condition of the town was described with its omnibuses on the roads and swift boats on the canal. The lanes and courts, and some of the old parts were overcrowded and the place should have a proper form of local government so that the conditions and services, such as sewerage, drains and lighting could be controlled, all to the benefit of the ratepayers (i.e. the payers of the poor rate, at that time the wealthy, but hinting the definition of ratepayers might have to change; there was no rate for municipal services other than for roads, the watch and poor relief at this date).

He described the geology and meteorology of the town, then commented on the mortality which he assessed at 29.54 per thousand (three times what it is today) noting 1500 cases of illness and deaths which he put down to "preventable disease" and calculated the worth of every life lost to be £30 per annum. He realised these sad conditions were due to a lack of any system of sewerage, noting in particular the cottage property had no underground drainage.

Like Turton, and using the Overseer's figures, he listed many of the highways and streets noting their length and poor condition. A little over a mile was properly paved, the rest were roads of boulders or just sand. He noted, of new streets – (direct from Turton) "New Street containing 104 houses is neither paved, sewered or drained", similarly Chapel Street, 81 houses, "Many of these houses are let as common lodging-houses, and the cellars of several are used as distinct dwellings. Norman's Place with 6 houses is not sufficiently drained," similarly Sandiway Place, and "New Town is without any regular form of road, sewer or drain."

There were 10 courts and alleys containing 67 houses and 368 persons used mainly as lodging-houses with extreme crowding at times. He repeated Turton's figures that there were 26 recognised common lodging-houses having from 4 to 10 beds in each. For the number of nightly lodgers, vagrants and others he used Turton's estimate of 546. All these houses were without proper means of ventilation, drainage or other sanitary convenience. He went on to describe the slaughterhouses and burial grounds.

Water supply was from two public pumps for the poor. There was one public well in Well Street and one in Victoria Street, and there were also a few private wells. He had had the quality of water analysed by a professor who pronounced it was too hard. The hardness was from salts of lime and magnesia and it curdled soap. Organic matter was also present. (The lime was probably used in privies and had seeped through the ground. It is clear that the town's water was contaminated from organic filth soaking into wells and streams but the connection between this and disease was not recognised).

He described the origins of the gas company, which was founded in 1846 on Hale Moss with a capital of £4000, and noted there were 3 miles of piping in the town feeding 60 lamps. He addressed the problem of the high cost of the gas and advised the future local government to buy the company. The town never did and battled for years afterwards with the company, which it accused of overpricing its product. Bamford wondered if any of the town's officers had shares in the company (Bamford, 1991b, 22) implying they did not favour making it a public utility.

Rawlinson held a public enquiry at the Unicorn. It was the view of the two resident medical practitioners that there should be a systematic and effective public and private drainage system and the authorised

removal of "dunghills, cesspools and other nuisances from the vicinity of dwelling-houses." Typhus fever, dysentery and other complaints were frequent. Rawlinson was convinced, like the town's officers, that disease originated in the 'low' lodging-houses, and in the dirty, unpaved, undrained, and ill-ventilated (miasmatic) squares and alleys inhabited by the working classes. From the poor areas disease spread to the better streets and affected the shopkeepers and others. Mr Charles Balshaw (printer of High Street and property developer) said "I have lately built 10 houses in Chapel-street, but in consequence of the want of drains, I have been unable to let them." (they were probably awash with effluent and unattractive even to poor people).

Rawlinson found that "Hope Square, New Street is an enclosed yard, unpaved and undrained. The open middens in it are pits, several yards in depth, bricked round and divided into compartments. The refuse of a year or more is thrown into these places" and they were full at the time of Rawlinson's inspection (see Fig. 16). In one part of the town there was one public water pump for 150 houses (i.e. about 825 people). He also complained about the occupants of Beggars Square and reproved inhabitants of the town for giving charity and so maintaining the beggars and vagrants.

The Irish were condemned for various practices. One contribution to the debate was the classic statement – "the tenant of one cottage absolutely closed the window-shutter of the ground-floor room, thus depriving it of light and ventilation, that he might pile a dunghill higher up his cottage wall; the result was, that the liquid manure exuded from this dunghill, found its way through the crevices of the shutter and window and flowed into the house." Also the Irish admitted pigs into their dwellings and would object to the removal of their pigs and dunghills.

He then set out clearly half a dozen observations: Regarding effluent there was immediately a need for public urinals. Necessaries should be moved away from the houses. Also he stated, "Every house should have a water tap. Each house and yard should have a drain to take off the refuse. A branch to the sink may be provided...and there should be a separate branch for the surface drainage and water closet. The works (for the above could be) executed for a cost to each house of an annual charge of 3s. 9d. or less than 1d. per week."

The account continued with details about costs of pipes and types of tiles for drains for the town's improvement. There was a passage noting that the cultivation of vegetables was carried out over an area of 16 square miles, an incredibly large area for the small town to work, possibly part of Timperley was included. Eight tons of onion seed were sown, early potatoes and other vegetables. "Manure in the solid form is carted from Manchester to be laid, which was particularly objectionable near houses. A proper system of town drainage will preserve the liquid and soluble portions of the refuse entirely free from ashes and other solids, which may be removed separately." He thought the use of liquid excrement on land was safe for health.

There followed a treatise on the sad state of river drainage in the region including "The filthy condition of the Irk, Irwell, the Cornbrook and the (Bridgewater?) canal is most disgusting in dry weather; the entire volume of these streams is one mass of fermenting corruption (i.e.sewage) for 15 or 20 miles down their course." It was thick enough for birds to walk on.

The next sections described street pavements, road construction and street and road cleansing, and turned to a reconsideration of water supply. The local water was too hard to use, water from wells and pumps was known to suffer from 'infiltration' (lack of filtering of 'organic matter' and saturation with minerals), and getting clean water was expensive in human labour. He wondered whether supplies of water could be brought within reach of the poorer classes in public fountains or in standpipes. The last possibility was thought too expensive but the future Board might "treat with the Manchester Corporation" or consider Rostherne Mere as a source, but piped water would have to be paid for. Finally the inspector considered the desirability of creating public walks and recreation grounds and concluded there were none because suitable land was in the hands of freeholders or charterers or the lord of the manor.

These statements were very enlightened but it would be several decades before the improvements would be realised.

A Local Board of Health was recommended to bring about reforms.

"Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

- I. That the sanitary condition of the chapelry of Altrincham is exceedingly defective.
- II. That the geographic position and physical contours of the town are naturally very favourable to health.
- III. That the occupations of the inhabitants are such as, under proper sanitary arrangements, would probably secure them the highest degree of longevity attainable in this country.

- IV. That the expedients for obtaining water for domestic purposes are exceedingly defective and very costly.
- V. That there is no effective town drainage; that the cesspools, privies, and appurtenances to houses are such as to be injurious to the health of the people; and that there are no proper arrangements for the removal of decomposing animal and vegetable matters from the midst of the population.
- VI. That great advantage would accrue by forming public walks and erecting baths for the accommodation of the inhabitants.
- VII. That the health of the inhabitants would be further improved by:
 - a. An abundant supply of good water, with a tap in every house.
 - b. An efficient system of drainage of the site of the town, and of all buildings, including the abolition of all privies as at present constructed, and the substitution of water-closet or soil-pan apparatus.
 - c. Improved pavement, and surface cleansing.
 - d. The better drainage of agricultural land.
- VIII. That such of the above improvements as are of a nature of public works may, in all probability, be accomplished at the following rates per week for a cottage house: -
 - a. Constant supply of water, with a tap in the house, at *one penny*.
 - b. Efficient drainage of house, court, privy, &c., at *one penny*.
 - c. Improved pavement of public footways, at the same price as the present pebble pavements.
 - d. Efficient cleansing of the surface of streets and courts, at *one halfpenny*.
- IX. That, irrespective of the additional comfort, and the improvement to the public health, the whole of these charges would probably be less than the existing direct and indirect cost.
- X. That the whole of the sewage of the town may be applied to the garden and meadow-land with much advantage to such land (a remarkable insight into wrong thinking at the time - there was no mention of the mechanics of any process, and no mention of any necessary treatment).
- XI. That it would be highly advantageous if the Local Board could purchase the gas-works, that the public lighting may be in the hands of the rate-payers".

Following this the inspector recommended the creation of a Local Board of nine elected persons and that "one-third in number of the said Local Board shall go out of office on the 25th day of March each year."

There followed a very long Appendix, which added evidence such as - that the (ancient) Mayor's Lands of thirteen acres could be laid out for building. The income was stated to be about £90 per annum but this large rental was no use 'at present, whatever, for it was spent in eating and drinking' (by the Court Leet). Robert Rawlinson was against the rent being used for such orgies. Instead it could be obtained to raise money for some of the public works suggested or the income from "it might be possible to give the people a park or a public baths, or school might be provided." One observer noted that bodies such as a Local Board must take care because what it provided might diminish the activities of charities.

Rawlinson made points about the relationship of the proposed future local government vis-à-vis the Court Leet but it was obvious that body and the mayoralty were not to be discontinued. He advised that Court Leet members should pay for their own wining and dining and the money from the Mayor's Lands should not be so squandered in future but put to good public use. There followed a long discussion of the actions of various mayors in the past, some who used the income to the public good particularly for the poor, and others who had squandered it. He also noted the Poor's Land of nine acres round the old workhouse near the Bridgewater Canal fetched £80 rent and that the workhouse itself had been turned into cottages (Fig. 42). He understood the rents from the lands had not always been put to some charitable use for the poor in the past and suggested an Act be obtained to make the Mayor's and the Poor's Land available for building. Turton pointed out the Poor's Land was held in trust for them.

In the light of the three reports above, from Turton, the town's medical officers and Rawlinson we can now ask what had been the stimuli which caused the ruling worthies to petition the government to institute a new system, a risk which might well put them out of office.

First, the members of the Town's Meeting Sub-committee might have honestly been very keen to help clean up the town and give its citizens a better environment in terms of public health and that they supported the clauses of the Public Health Act which were available to improve the town for the benefit of the masses.

Second, they would have been aware that other towns were changing their administrations and would think that if they could be members of a new style Board, they would be independent of the restrictions of the Court Leet (on which several of them served) and they might eventually become even more important.

Third, a less charitable view is that they believed deeply that the dreaded cholera, smallpox, diphtheria dysentery and typhus fever emanated from miasmic odours of the lower classes and were affecting their own households and loved ones, and for this reason the public health of the poor, urgently needed improvement.

Fourth, property built recently by speculative builders (some in the Court Leet and Town's Meeting) had not been selling well, whereas if the town's people would eventually have to pay for improvements through the imposition of a general rate, the resulting public purse would pay for drains and possibly a water supply to each house. This could make such properties more saleable.

Fifth, the Sub-committee members realised the death rate was well over the acceptable limit and unless this figure was reduced some Government officials would be foisted over them and their reign of power would be at an end.

APPENDIX 3: BACKGROUND TO THE MAP AND PLAN SURVEY AND THE BEGINNINGS OF THE LOCAL BOARD OF HEALTH

After the town had been accredited with the facility to elect a Local Board of Health, elections went ahead for nine members. This election of officers was the first the borough had ever had and the townsfolk must have been elated because all previous officers of the Court Leet had been 'voluntary' and virtually nominated, not elected. However the franchise was similar to that which had brought about the petition to the government, namely property owners and those rated to over £30 a year (only males need apply).

After the election the first meeting of the Local Board met on the 4th of April 1851 at Turton's offices in High Street. Those present for the swearing-in of officers were:

*Mr Samuel Barratt
Mr Jesse Blew
Mr Edward Joynson
Mr Thomas Marsden
Mr William Warren
Mr Robert William Bennett
Mr Richard Broadbent
Mr John Mort
Mr William Milnes Millington
Mr Isaac Turton was clerk*

Richard Broadbent was elected chairman (and remained so for 11 years).

Barratt – wine merchant and landowner, mayor 1854; Blew – calico printer and merchant; Joynson – magistrate; Marsden – gent. and property owner; Warren – gent. and insurance agent; Bennett – attorney and solicitor; Broadbent- surgeon, mayor 1849 and 1850; Mort – draper, mayor 1858 and 1859; Millington – gent. and property owner (Bamford, 1991b, 19). Five of the gentlemen were from the Town's Meeting Sanitary Committee of 1849.

The first name entered into the Minute Book was via the declaration by Richard Broadbent.

I, Richard Broadbent of Dunham Road Altrincham, Surgeon, do solemnly declare that I am rated to the relief of the Poor of Altrincham upon the annual value of thirty pounds.

Signed Rich. Broadbent.

Made before us Samuel Barratt and William Milnes Millington members of the Local Board of Health for the district of Altrincham this fourth day of April 1851.

*Signed Sam Barratt
William M Millington*

The rest followed.

From then on the health of the people of Altrincham and the general affairs of the town were the concern of the Board, an administrative body that took its lead from the 1848 Public Health Act. Their task was the creation of a number of byelaws for developing better sanitary facilities and practices, which everybody had to observe upon a fine of £5 for non-observance. As part of the government's conditions, a full town map was required to show salient features of the sanitary situation. This should be obtained forthwith. But there were initial objections to its cost with so little in the (now public) purse. But it was essential to know where problems existed in the town, through a survey. The following extracts are from Local Board papers (Trafford Local Studies Centre).

It was clear the Board had lost no time in appointing in appointing specialist officers:

At a meeting of the Altrincham Board of Health on the 14th April at a quarter before nine o'clock in the morning it was Moved by Mr Barratt and seconded by Mr Blew that the following gentlemen be appointed a Committee viz: Mr Warren, Mr Barratt and Mr Blew to confer with Mr Barber as Surveyor of Highways as to his terms of taking a vertical survey of the town and also to ascertain from him terms for reporting as to the best means of sewerage the town and to report to the next meeting
Carried unanimously.

At a meeting of the Altrincham Board of Health on the 21st April 1851 at Six o'clock in the evening a motion was Moved by Mr Barratt and seconded by Mr Bennett
That it was desirable before commencing any works to ascertain what would be the probable expense of obtaining a map of the Township exhibiting a system of sewerage for effectively draining the town in accordance with the 42nd section.
For the amendment

Mr Blew	Motion
Mr Barratt	Mr Millington
Mr Marsden	Mr Mort
Mr Warren	Mr Bennett

<i>For the original Motion</i>	<i>Contrary opinion</i>
Mr Mort	Mr Bennett
Mr Bennett	Mr Marsden
Mr Millington	Mr Warren
The Chairman	Mr Blew

The Chairman gave the vote in favour of the Motion.

Amendment moved by Mr Marsden and seconded by Mr Barratt that a vertical survey of the districts of this Town is sufficient for the present and that the expense thereof be ascertained.
Rejected

Moved by Mr Millington and seconded by Mr Mort
That an advertisement be inserted in the Manchester Guardian of Wednesday and Saturday next for estimates of the expense of a map of the Township of Altrincham – exhibiting a system of sewerage for effectively draining the Township for the purposes of the Local Board of Health. For particulars apply to Mr Isaac Turton High Street Altrincham Clerk to the Board.

<i>For the Motion</i>	<i>Against</i>
Mr Bennett	Mr Barratt
Mr Mort	Mr Marsden
Mr Millington	Mr Blew
Mr Broadbent	Mr Warren

The Chairman gave his casting vote for the motion.
Carried

At a meeting of Altrincham Board of Health held on the 5th May 1851 at Seven o'clock in the evening a motion was Moved by Mr Joynson and Seconded by Mr Mort

That it is desirable to have a new survey of the district in compliance with the requisitions of the General Board of Health with the several plans and sections necessary to carry out an effective system of sewerage to the satisfaction of that Board.

<i>For the Motion</i>	<i>Against the Motion</i>
Mr Joynson	Mr Marsden
“ Blew	“ Barratt
“ Warren	
“ Mort	
“ Bennett	
“ Millington	

The Board was between a rock and a hard place - the proposal was passed.

At a meeting on the 14th May the advertisement for the Manchester Guardian was finally agreed

The Chairman having presented to these meeting specifications for a new Survey and Maps from Mr. Rawlinson
Ordered That the same be received and that the Chairman be requested to acknowledge the same and request Mr. Rawlinson to furnish the Board with the Specimen Maps alluded to in the specifications.

Moved by Mr Millington and seconded by Mr Joynson

That the following advertisement be published in the Manchester Guardian and Courier of Saturday next.
Carried unanimously

Altrincham Local Board of Health

To surveyors and others

The Board are ready to receive Tenders for the survey Maps, Plans, Sections, Tracings and details of the Town and Township of Altrincham according to the specification required by the Board which may be seen at the office of the Board.

The Tender must be sent in to the Clerk of the Board on or before the 31st day of May instant.

The Board will not undertake to accept the lowest Tender.

Security will be required for the due performance of the tender accepted.

Local Board Offices

High Street, Altrincham

By Order

Isaac Turton, Clerk

14th May, 1851

Specification for a Survey and plans of the Town and Township of Altrincham in the County of Chester

General Conditions

The Contractor is to provide at his own Cost all Instruments, labour and material to furnishing the Local Board of Health in Altrincham with complete surveys, Maps, Plans, Sections, tracings and details as required by the General Board of Health and as shewn upon the specimen plans herewith and as detailed in this specification.

The Contract price to be stated in one sum to be paid after the plans have been certified and passed by the General Board of Health.

No money will be advanced previous to this Certificate being given, and if such Certificate be refused, the Contract shall be declared void, and the Contractor shall have no claim upon the Local Board for any work which may have been done. All Bench marks, posts, and other datum marks intended to be permanent being forfeited and remaining the property of the Local Board.

No extra charge above the contract will be allowed. The work estimated for is intended to be in every respect complete.

Survey, how to be made

The entire township must be triangulated in the most approved manner. Permanent Station Marks must be left on all convenient places, to be fixed by means of substantial oaken posts placed along the main lines of the survey, at points not exceeding twenty chains apart (440 feet). These station marks to be indicated upon the Maps and plans.

Scale of plans

The general map of the Township must be done to a scale of two feet to the mile and must be finished in all respects in sheet conformity with the specimen map shewn. The town area must be set out upon each map, and be indexed in sheets as is shewn upon the same specimen map. This Town area must embrace the main outlets for sewerage and drainage, as also take in the entire area of the present Town with a margin allowing for its probable extension during the next twenty years.

Town Area how to be plotted

The plans of the town area will exhibit in detail the existing Condition of the property of every kind laid down accurately to a scale of ten feet to one mile. The several signs and marks shewn upon the specimen plan are to be used and embodied where possible.

Lining, shading, printing etc.

The lining, shading, colouring, printing and writing upon the Maps, plans and Sections must be in accordance with the specimen plans shewn and must be also equally neat, full and clear.

Description of paper to be used for Maps and Sections

Both Maps at two feet and at ten feet to the Mile to be laid down on the best mounted drawing paper. That at the ten feet scale to be on sheets of double elephant size. The Sections and levels to be plotted on sheets of engraved Section paper, to a horizontal scale of forty-four feet to an inch and a vertical scale of ten feet to an inch. The sheets to be bound into a book.

Datum

The fixed Datum to be in such a situation within the Township as the Local Boards may determine upon.

Tracing what to contain

Existing drains, sewers, gas pipes, water pipes and things of a similar class to be laid down upon Tracings of ye Map at the ten feet scale such Tracings to be made at the Cost of the Contractor. The whole of the Maps, Plans, Sections and Tracings are to be delivered to the Local Board on entire sheets and perfectly clean.

On the 16th June the Board accepted Mr Cawley as cartographer. His maps were to be lithographed for copies and Cawley was to produce a record book with sufficient details for the Board to rate the district to finance future projects. The plans were received ten months later on 14th March 1852. A Mr. Falkner tendered to lithograph the original map and plans on the 24th September 1852. Following this the Board had to raise a rate to cover its costs. Messrs. Cawley's and Falkner's costs, along with those of Messrs. Day & Co for 50 smaller versions were shown in the following notice:

ALTRINCHAM BOARD OF HEALTH

General District Rate 1852

Estimate made for the purpose of such expenses as are chargeable upon the General District Rate for the Survey plans and Maps of the District procured by the Altrincham Local Board of Health

	£	s	d
Survey plans and Book Of Reference (Mr Cawley)	115	0	0
50 copies of Lithographic plans, small scale (Messrs. Day & Co)	30	14	0
Mounting 5 Copies do.	1	0	0
50 copies of Lithographic plans, large scale (Mr Falkner)	110	0	0
	256	14	0

Dated 17th December 1852

Isaac Turton

Surveyor.

Moved by Mr. Joynson and Seconded by Mr. Warren

That Notice be given that it is intended on the 31st day of December instant to make a General District Rate of Sixpence in the pound and that the Statement of the proposed Rate is deposited for inspection at the office of the Board.

Carried unanimously.

The modern system of local government system of funding to develop public works had just begun.

NOTES

1. Both the watercolour and hand-coloured lithographic plans may be viewed in Trafford Local Studies Centre, with only the lithographic version found in Rylands Library, University of Manchester (records from the National Trust). There were at least two lithographic editions, one of the original scale and one at reduced in size with 50 copies of each, but only a few copies appear to remain.
2. The Anglo-Saxon word 'township' means 'the land of the tun', the 'tun' being originally only a farmstead; later, a 'township' was an area of land, related to, and enclosing one or more settlements. The term did not necessarily mean a 'town.' A village 'township' of Altrincham may have been in existence before the Norman Hamo de Masci V had laid out the planned 'borough' of 1290 by his charter. The word 'borough' originally meant a defensible place, later an organised or corporate place. The boundary round Altrincham's 657 statute acres borough (an early census figure was 630 acres; a statute acre was 640 acres) included not only the urban area but a large area of farmland and moss land. In 1290 each burgess was allocated a burgage (a small plot of land in the new town on which to build a house) and a one-Cheshire-acre strip (2.1 statute) from the open fields of the former village; the burgess was expected to earn most of a living through trade (the previous 20 or so villagers probably had five or six acres each to get a living out of agriculture). It is possible that some parts of Dunham such as Oldfield were added to make an appropriate amount of land to support the new town population of probably 120 households in food. Indeed there was not enough grazing land included in the 657 acre borough so the charter allowed the burgesses to graze their animals beyond the Altrincham boundary into Sinderland, Timperley and Dunham townships. The words 'borough' and 'township' of Altrincham eventually became synonymous as everyday terms. The bounds of the medieval borough are still inspected and 'beaten' annually by the members of Court Leet of Altrincham, which preserves ancient customs; its members claim the boundaries are eight miles round. An error was made in defining the boundary of the borough on the map on page 7 of Altrincham, a history (Bayliss, 1992a) where the area shown as the boundary of the borough (defined by dots) refers only to the built-up area of burgages; the borough occupied the whole township.
3. The moss lands were formed after the last ice age from about 12000 years ago, mainly in the Atlantic and sub-Atlantic wet climatic periods. Glaciers had moved from the north depositing under them sheets of boulder clay, material eroded from rocks over which they had passed. After the ice ceased to exist, hollows in the clay deposits filled with water. Some of these pools were colonised by water-loving plants such as sphagnum moss and eventually the water disappeared and left compressed layers of peat and other deposits creating infertile, wet moss land.
4. Bowdon was a small township in the huge parish of Bowdon, which included Altrincham, and several other surrounding townships between the Bollin and Mersey. Ashton-on-Mersey was created a separate parish in the 14th century and Altrincham a parish in 1868. St Margaret's parish was made when that church was built in 1855 (and so the church was not shown on *Fig. 7*, the map of 1852) and Altrincham was made a parish in 1868.
5. The site of Altrincham lies on what can be called the Altrincham ridge, which runs roughly west-east along the line of the road from Warburton to Altrincham and then along the line of Hale Road. This was probably a glacial morainic ridge deposited on a sheet of boulder clay which had been laid down under a late-glacial advance existing from 25000 to 12000 years ago. The boulder clay lay on the solid rocks of the Mercia Mudstone Group, including Bunter Sandstone and Keuper Marl. Sands, gravels and clays deposited by glaciers as moraines at their fronts and sides were left exposed to fluvial and aerobic erosion when climate warmed up after the last glacial period and were moulded by later streams making hummocky ridges (kames) or dispersed by wind making dry sandy heaths, or mosses could result as in Note 3. The low Bollin valley and Ashley Heath lay south of the Altrincham Ridge; the similarly low Hale and Timperley mosses and Broadheath lay north of the ridge.
6. Field mapping since 1992 has suggested that the burgages, 2 perches by 5, would have been 33 feet by 82½ feet if the perch of 16½ feet had been used, standardized in the 16th century, not as quoted in Bayliss 1992a, p.17. On the western side of the market place the burgages in 1852 were longer than their remains are today, their size having been truncated by the widening of Church Street.
7. I argued from documents in Rylands, EGR 1/1/1 and /2, which I dated to 1348 (AHS Journal No. 3, 1992), that the population fell by over a third due to the Black Death plague. It is possible the population of the borough started upwards of 750 (120 burgages x 5 per household and other employees), and this fell to not much more than a third. At that date a woman was recorded as being the largest landholder with 19 burgages (and thereby, as a landowner, listed as a burgess, an attribute usually given to males). Haworth, J. A., (2000) argued that the date of the Rylands source document was 1347. If so, Altrincham's population had fallen dramatically to 40 burgesses *before* the Black Death, perhaps through famine. A document of 1411 shows its low numbers of population remained stable at about 40 households through the ravages of the plague unlike other local places where dramatic falls occurred in the numbers of people.

8. Altrincham according to Sir Peter Leycester, 1673, had become 'a nest of beggars', p.204. The arguments for and against the notion of general urban decline can be seen in *The Economic History Review*, Second Series, vol. xxxix No. 3. August 1986.
9. The social division in the mid-19th century, the north part 'Higher Town' and the southern part 'Lower Town' may not have existed at first in medieval times when the whole town was laid out for burgesses, presumably more-or-less equal in status, though there would also have been a few from other classes present, skilled people, servants and labourers.
10. I am indebted to Harry Kershaw of South Trafford Archaeological Group for the first information I received about the early industrialisation of the town, including the installation of a Boulton and Watt beam engine in the cotton factory.
11. The registration district for the 1851 'Occupations of the People,' Altrincham Registration District included Ashton-on-Mersey, Sale, Bowdon, Timperley, Altrincham and five other places so it is not possible to identify details for Altrincham borough alone. Some later censuses gave details of both Occupations and Industries for the town itself.
12. Information from Chris Hill and Hazel Pryor of Altrincham History Society. See also Mabey, R., and Greenoak, F., 'Back to the Roots,' TV Channel 4 book by Arena, 1983, p.77, and 'Whatever happened to the Altrincham Carrot?' *Cheshire Life*, April 1985, p.44.
13. George Massey had experience of making gas, having had connections with a gas works in Ashton-under-Lyne where gas production had begun in 1825 - information from Chris Hill on the unveiling of a blue plaque from Altrincham History Society at the Unicorn Inn regarding the beginning of gas production there by Massey in 1844. The site of the 1846 works on Hale Moss was interesting, downwind in the prevailing southwest winds away from the town, some distance from the canal for coal when it started production but near the station sidings when the railway came.
14. Robert Rawlinson, a government inspector at the time, urged Altrincham Board of Health of 1851 to buy the gas enterprise which would have saved Altrincham people a lot of money, but it failed to do so. Rawlinson would have been familiar with the use of gas lighting which had started in 1812 in London. In this respect Altrincham, nearly forty years later, must have seemed to him very much behind the times. Rawlinson is frequently stated to be 'Sir' but was not given this accolade until 1888. He gave his name as 'Esq.,' on his report to central government in 1851 (Appendix 2).
15. Living, as we do, with piped water, w.c.s and the weekly emptying of the waste-bin it is hard to envisage living without these. To dispose of waste it was left in a midden. A midden could be in a variety of forms ranging from a pile of refuse in the street to a well-designed structure for holding household waste and excrement. A widely-used type was a square wooden structure with slatted sides, a few feet high, which could be increased or decreased in height, and low wooden doors through which it could be emptied. Piles of refuse on the ground were not shown on the plans and the range of middens was shown by an undifferentiated square symbol. They were emptied usually at night. Some privies could be emptied into a cart in the back lane by the use of a low opening through the back wall of a garden or yard. Altrincham middens ranged from unenclosed piles to brick-built structures mentioned in Rawlinson's report.
16. The mechanical w.c. was invented in the 12th century, according to David Miller, with improvements in 1596, 1777 and in the early 19th century. A myth has grown up that Thomas Crapper invented it (perhaps for obvious reasons) in the early 19th century but his London company was not started until 1861 from which date he produced elaborate and artistic versions. There were several types of w.c., not all used piped running water, for example one type had a box water reservoir and a hand pump. With copious water in the house there could be other facilities, fixed sink, bath, etc.
17. Some houses were back-to-back with no access to a back yard behind, sharing a yard via a tunnel or using a yard down the street for personal hygiene or drying clothes. The facilities in the yards included sink stones or soakaway pits for effluent disposal, which might soon clog up, the occasional public washhouse and a communal midden or two, sometimes attached to the wall of a domestic property. The poor lived in substandard housing in insanitary courts, alleys and streets because they did not have the means to enjoy better facilities such as a well-constructed house, a water supply and drains. This led to an inability to keep themselves and their property clean, which led to despair and acceptance of the insanitary condition, the stench, lack of water, drainage and sewerage and insects as normal. In such surroundings disease could spread easily.
18. At a risk of being accused of semantics, the term in-migrant can be used for movement, for example, into a town from within a country, whereas immigration more usually refers to incomers from outside a country. We do not have to look far for the cause of the massive emigration from Ireland, most of which went to the States: the Potato Famine of 1845-9 in Ireland. So one of the problems indirectly creating overcrowding in Altrincham had been brought by a windblown fungus from Mexico which had destroyed the main food of these white, British, but different people. It is quite likely that employers, including master gardeners in the town, at first welcomed the new agricultural hands, no doubt on low wages. After a time, however, the limited amount of extra work was not available and the limited residential facilities in the town could not cope. The existing populace, wealthy and poor, were beset by more badly built houses, cellar dwellings, lodging houses, odour and ordure from immigrants used to different rural conditions and traditions.
19. Except it could not be sold to the king or a member of the church. This caveat shows even in a small way the power of the barons and their independence of the crown and church in the palatinate county of Chester.

20. To the sanitary reformers and the governing classes, overcrowding was an intolerable evil practised by the lower classes leading to drunkenness, crime, and sexual immorality. It destroyed the sanctity of the home, was politically dangerous and helped to spread disease (Wohl, 1983, 299). The poor lived without adequate housing, piped water, water closet or bath because there was no public housing or infrastructure to provide these, and no doubt they would have been too expensive for the very poor to afford at any event. They disposed of effluent in middens or streams or dumped it in piles outside their homes in their yards (not shown on the sheets but mentioned in contemporary surveys, Appendix 1, in the town doctors' report, and Appendix 2 in Rawlinson's report).
21. Public Health Act 1848 – a landmark in world public health which aimed to increase the number of Local Boards with powers to appoint a medical officer of health and raise a tax to remedy sanitary defects by recourse to a sanitary code. Contemporary opinion prioritised the provision of sewers to get rid of the miasma. There were many reformers. Edwin Chadwick, a Manchester lawyer was secretary to the Royal Commission (1832) on the reform of the Poor Laws and was later a Poor Law Commissioner. He saw the social link between poverty and disease, but not the link between sewage, contaminated water and ill health and was the key figure in pushing through the Public Health Act of 1848.
22. The belief that breathing a foul atmosphere was a cause of disease and death, 'miasma' theory, explained that if one breathed in the stench-drenched air from human or animal excreta and other decaying waste, cholera, dysentery and typhoid could be caught from it. The possibility of another cause of infection - from overcrowding, was shown in a report from the Overseer of the Poor in 1849 (Appendix 1) which stated there were 26 lodging houses with from 4-10 beds in each, with 3 to bed making 546 lodgers a night. He would also know of the miasmatic connection but not the true bacterial cause of infection, e.g. contagion through the bite of a louse or other particular insect, or drinking contaminated water. Even at the time of the building of the Panama Canal in the first decade of the twentieth century, fifty years later, the incidence of yellow fever was still attributed to a tropical 'miasma,' though after that date its insect-borne nature was realised. Miasma theory of disease in English towns was current until Dr. Snow, a London doctor, was the first to link sewage contamination of drinking water with disease in 1854, identifying outbreaks with particular pumps on one side of a street but not with pumps on the other but it was not until about 1862, ten years later, that the link began to be accepted. Eventually the science of bacteriology explained how cholera and dysentery were spread by ingested infection, diphtheria by aerial-borne infection and typhus by a louse bite, the last a permanent danger where several lodgers shared the same bed. There are still occasional cases of cholera, typhus and dysentery in Britain.
23. Miasma theory was followed by germ theory for some decades, and eventually by the recognition of bacteria and viruses as the causes of infection, contagion and contamination, and the role of carriers, human and other.
24. Altrincham was first given a portmote court by its seignorial charter, appropriate to a trading town (a 'port', e.g. 'Stockport', and 'mote,' a legislative court) run by a bailiff and self-regulated by the burgesses. In the mid-14th century the first mayors appeared and it is likely that at this date, possibly due to Altrincham's decline before the Black Death, or because of the crisis in population numbers due to the plague itself and a possible collapse of the borough's urban economy, the portmote was changed retrogressively to a more general manorial agricultural court, the Court Leet. For information about the modern Court Leet contact the steward of the Barony of Dunham Massey via Trafford Direct. The 19th century minutes of the Town's Meeting and its Sanitary Committee are held in Trafford Local Studies Centre, Sale.
25. The right of turbary, to cut peat (for fire, roofing or lightening heavy soil) had been granted in the 1290 charter but it is doubtful if much peat was left by 1852, nearly 600 years later; the soil on the moss would still be quite peaty in nature, if also rather sandy by then. There was little organised grazing, wildfowling or reed-cutting by this date.
26. Newtown Night School appears on one copy of the plans. It started life in 1858 and so its shape must have been inserted at this date for administrative planning or rating purposes.
27. Oldfield Hall was in Altrincham but the hamlet of Oldfield was in Dunham Massey township. Any 'Old Field' referring to an open strip arable field is likely to have been there and not in Altrincham, but see Nevell, 1997, 41.
28. The first Great Rebuilding of many towns extended from about 1600-1700. For local details of the first event see Groves, 1994. Urbanism and commercialism flourished and wealth was brought into English towns doing away with many thatched roofs and daub walls and replacing them with new timber, or brick walls and, for example, tile roofs. The author of this book considers there to have been a second Great Rebuilding, mid-18th to mid-19th century in Altrincham with a trading boom after the building of the canal. As well as new building, new brick shells were put round former half-timbered houses in some instances (see Nevell, 1997, 76). Squires, 2002, 123 states "In Altrincham, the Bridgewater Canal brought great prosperity after 1765 and a great rebuilding of the town in brick rather than wood." Also there was a third Great Rebuilding around 1900 and a fourth in the 1950s-60s when the shopping precinct was built.
29. This is an amazing statement by a printer and property developer, Charles Balshaw, complaining that the poor had the effrontery not to move into his new homes because they were not properly drained. Balshaw lived at 12, High Street (Market Street) and published Stranger's Guide to Altrincham in which he wrote (p.3) "the town...has an air of quiet comfort and respectability; in the vicinity are some handsome villa residences" – obviously not those in Chapel Street.

30. It is argued many local greens were not village greens but open areas sited on boulder clay, very suitable for pasture and the collecting of animals for grazing or droving.
31. Robert Rawlinson disapproved of the populace supporting beggars. The houses in the Beggars' Square area were "virtually destitute of light and air" (the disease-laden miasmic air).
32. The first constables' cells were built into the former courthouse in the market place (pulled down in 1849); a set of cells was in existence in 1838 in Police Street; there was a later police station built for the county force in 1866 with its main face on Dunham Road (now converted to offices called The Warrant House); its side faced on (present) High Street.
33. Each of which would formerly have belonged to one burgess.
34. Loreto High School, North Cestrian Grammar School and Loreto Primary School.
35. The regional office of the National Trust is a listed building with a fine pilaster doorway and curved oval staircase.
36. The churned-up ends of arable strips (or selions), where the big ploughs turned to plough in the reverse direction were sometimes used in medieval times as butts for archery practice.
37. The second town hall of 1900 is being refurbished and the rest of the site redeveloped into offices and apartments.
38. Helen Allingham, née Paterson, was born in 1848. Her father was a respected doctor. The family moved from Derbyshire to No.16 High Street in 1849 and in 1852 to The Downs. Helen developed as a fine watercolourist and became the first woman elected as an associate of The Royal Watercolour Society in 1875. Information can be obtained from Chris Hill's Occasional Paper No.1, Altrincham History Society, May 1991. Her father and sister died of diphtheria.
39. The first police station was built in Police Street in 1836 following the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835. The date 1838 was carved on a lintel; after demolition the author had the lintel moved in 1990 to form a seat in Old Market Place.
40. The 1290 charter states that the burgesses must grind their corn at the lord's mill but omits the need to bake at his bake house, but later court rolls refer to this duty.
41. In 1799 the Hon.B.Grey of the Grey family of Dunham, Bradgate (Leics.) and Enville (Staffs.) lived there.
42. Univ. Manch. Arch. Unit, 2002, 1, recognised a barn three bays in length, built between 1835 and 1852. That such a structure should appear next to the economic centre of a borough in the 19th century implies that it was used for horse feed and that grain production may have been an important part of the local economy. Mrs. Littler, owner of the property, stated it was used in the early 20th century as a stable.
43. The county court system originated in Anglo-Saxon times but declined because of the rise of the Quarter Sessions. The system was revised in 1846 to deal mainly with land problems.
44. Sir Peter Leycester refers to Oldfield Hall as in the hands of Robert Parker, one of the four 'charterers' Leycester listed in Dunham Massey in 1673. In the same volume, Leycester mentions 'Parker's Hall' in Altrincham which no doubt was 'Oldfield Hall'. Nickson (p. 253) stated Oldfield Hall was built as a dower house by the 2nd Earl of Warrington (1675-1758), rather later than Leycester, writing in 1673, suggested.
45. In arable cultivation a furlong was a group of adjacent strips running in the same direction. On enclosure, if of the same length, such a group often gave the shape to a rectangular patch-shaped field.
46. This name is from the tithe map of 1838.
47. In 1782 the company went bankrupt, sued by Richard Arkwright for using his machinery design without patent fees.
48. During this period there was much investment in the canal such as the large listed warehouse of 1833, Bridge Works, inside which an arm of the canal allowed goods to be imported, or exported, stored under cover on several floors.
49. Court rolls of the 17th century record people fined for failing to scour (clean out) ditches through their properties, thus impeding the flow of water necessary to keep the land dry and effluent moving.
50. The suite of post-glacial deposits left in the area at the waning of the last ice in the district, about 12000 years ago, included not only glacial and water-deposited sands, gravels and clays (e.g. the ridge on which Altrincham and Bowdon stand) but also aeolian deposits. The interesting aeolian deposit in this area is the Shirdley Hill Sand (glacial or post-glacial sand, not sea sand – when the modern Irish Sea was dry land) blown by strong winds from the area around Hillhouse near Southport as far east as Broadheath creating the sterile heath deposits from which Broadheath got its name. This area also included peat beds such as Timperley Moss resulting from former lakes held up by clay lenses in the sand. The sand of which the formerly open Bowdon Downs was made was of the same origin. The Downs harboured camping armies in earlier times, and the Devisdale continued to be used for town activities such as agricultural shows.
51. Occupation figures for 1851 for the borough of Altrincham for 1851 are not available from the census, see Note 11.
52. Sinderland, Broadheath, Oldfield and Hale Moss were not linked to a sewage disposal system until after 1900 when the 9th Earl prompted Bucklow Rural District Council into action on his return to Dunham Massey from Enville (Bernard Champness).
53. The terms 'playboy, horse-racing 7th Earl of Stamford' (Squires, 2002) and the 'Errant Earl' (Bamford, 1991a) were appropriate terms to describe his personal interests but his contributions to Altrincham before he left Dunham should not be forgotten.

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About this book

In the early 19th century Altrincham was a small market town of less than 2000 people with an important market gardening industry, some canal-based import-export trade, a small cotton factory industry and some domestic industry. By mid-century its population had grown to nearly 5000. It was increasingly regarded as a salubrious residential area to industrialists from Manchester using the new railway to get to work and was also attractive to less well-off immigrants. The increasing population, the market gardening and the lack of efficient services led to several crises especially problems of housing and health. Also, because of its nature, its ancient feudal form of government was unable to supply adequate services. The situation was so bad that only a swift rescue action by the town's worthies avoided a take-over by central government. What followed was a sudden imposition of a new form of local government. While this was only in part democratic it was a start towards modern forms of administration. This book traces the process which wrested the town from its ancient governing body and thrust it on the road to progress. One of the first examples of large scale mapping of a town followed which allowed a new administration to plan for the future. These maps and other sources have given an interesting insight into life at the time.

About the author

*Don Bayliss was Principal Lecturer at the former Manchester Polytechnic, now Manchester Metropolitan University, specialising in Quaternary Studies and Historical Geography. He has written and contributed to several books including editing and writing part of *Altrincham a History*, and *A Cheshire Town in Victorian Times: Altrincham in 1841*, and has written a *Historical Atlas of Trafford*, and *The Buildings of Central Altrincham in the Year 2000* and has contributed to several journals. He is currently Chairman of Altrincham History Society.*

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