

The History of Hale, Cheshire, Revisited



David Miller

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Frontispiece: Ollerbarrow Farm, Ashley Road, Hale

Back cover: The Bleeding Wolf Public House, Hale

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THE HISTORY OF HALE REVISITED

INTRODUCTION

This book is an update of Norman Dore's 1972 book *A History of Hale, Cheshire* and contains much of his material. The original book was published in 1972 by Hale Civic Society and is now out of print. The update was originally under the care of Hale Civic after Councillor Barbara Hall left a legacy in 1999 to get the book reprinted. It was agreed with the trustees that the book would be updated, retaining most of Norman's work. Because of the group being disbanded, the legacy was forfeited so after sixteen years' work I have published the book to avoid a great loss of new material and effort.

The book is dedicated to Norman's memory and to the great contribution of Alfred Tarbolton, the first chairman of Hale Urban District Council and local historian who researched and wrote about Hale. Both books owe a great deal to Tarbolton's unpublished *History of Hale* (c.1930). Without Alfred Tarbolton, Hale might have been a different place with a different name!

Norman Dore consulted official documents of the township of Hale, following their discovery in 1972 in the cellars of the Hale Urban District Council Offices. These documents, now deposited at Cheshire Record Office, included 400 papers dated from 1695 to 1860: accounts of township officials; apprentice indentures; removals; bastardy cases; poor rate; land tax; militia associations; lists of freeholders and jurymen; four minute books of the annual vestry meetings from 1812 to 1900; and a number of rate books, minute books and other documents from the early days of the council.

The emphasis in this history is on the area administered by Hale UDC in 1900 and absorbed into the present Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council in 1974.

Every effort has been made to ensure that facts are correct but the author welcomes feedback to correct any shortcomings: davidmiller@talk21.com.

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1. AN OUTLINE OF HALE'S HISTORY

The ancient township of Hale lies thirty miles north-east of Chester and nine miles south-west of Manchester. Today, Hale is bounded to the north by the market town of Altrincham, and by Timperley; and to the west by Bowdon; to the south-east by Manchester International Airport; and to the south by the Cheshire Green Belt.

Hale was settled perhaps as early as the 6th century AD. It is recorded as Hale in the Domesday Book¹ of 1086, the name probably deriving from Old English *halh*, a corner of land. The area then included Hale Barns, now a busy, thriving community with a separate identity from Hale, but for many years regarded as Hale's centre and a large part of this history. At the time of Domesday, Hale's valuable assets were described as "*half an acre of meadow, a wood one league long and half a league wide, and a hawk's eyrie*," possibly situated in the present Hale Barns area.

There is some evidence of Stone, Bronze and Iron Age settlement in the area surrounding Hale. Most local names are Saxon but the name of the River Bollin bordering Hale may be partially Celtic. A few Roman coins have been unearthed, and some field names may indicate Roman settlement. Certainly Romans passed through and their roads have been found. Under Alfred the Great, Hale became border country. It was under the Danelaw and therefore ruled by the Danes from York, while neighbouring Dunham was probably part of Anglo-Saxon Mercia, ruled from Tamworth in Staffordshire.

The glacial moraine sand ridge along Hale Road must have been an excellent natural communications route, even in Stone Age times. The evidence from field names and soil types indicates that Saxons probably settled along the line of Hale Road, spreading out from here over the centuries. Hale Low off Hale Road means Hale Mound, possibly a Bronze Age burial mound and nearby field names indicate a medieval settlement on the drier ground off Hale Road between Ashfield Road and Hermitage Road. Medieval open fields are thought to have existed between Ashfield Road and Queens Road but may also have extended down from Ollerbarrow Road to Ashley Road. There were possible settlements near Davenport Green, and north of Rossmill Farm, Hale Barns which have indications of open fields. Hale Barns is likely to have been settled early by Anglo-Saxons since *halh* is often associated with a river and field names there include Great Tom Field (town field) and Tom Field Bank².

Following the distribution of Saxon manors by William the Conqueror in 1070, the Norman Masci (later Massey) family occupied the Dunham area. Hale is recorded in the Domesday Book as being administered through the Bochelau (Bucklow) Hundred and held by Hamon de Massey, together with the land around, and Dunham and Bowdon. Hale's half acre of meadow may have been near the Bollin where flooding would have improved fertility and given early grazing. At the time of Domesday in 1086, the population was believed to be about 50-100 people living on about 5000 acres, a figure rising to perhaps 200 people in the 14th century and 800 by 1800. Other than the Domesday Book, the earliest mention of Hale is in the Massey deeds of 1281 which also have references to Bank Hall, Ringway and Rossmill.

When the Massey barons died out in the mid-14th century the estate was disputed for 100 years and then split between the Booths of Wilmslow, the Stanleys of Alderley Edge and the Chauntrells of Bach Hall. A Hale branch of the Massey family continued into the 17th century.

The church played a major role in social development. Until the late 19th century Hale was in the ecclesiastical parish of St. Mary, Bowdon whose origins appear to be Saxon or possibly even Celtic. By 1515, however, a chapel-of-ease was recorded at Ringway, originally Roman Catholic

¹ The Domesday Book was a detailed survey of England, conducted in 1086 for King William I.

² Tom Field Bank is still on modern maps.

but becoming Church of England after the Reformation and later taken over by Dissenters. In 1723 Presbyterians built Hale Chapel on Chapel Lane, Hale Barns, which became Unitarian. One of the results of Hale's scattered hamlets is felt to be an independent-minded population which gravitated towards free thinking and an interest in new religious movements.

In the 17th century, national conflict touched the fringes of the area. The Civil War saw Prince Rupert's army camping nearby on Bowdon Downs and the siege of Wythenshawe Hall involved a few Hale men.

Major change came in the late 18th and the 19th centuries when Hale, although still rural, was well placed to exploit the Industrial Revolution by supplying agricultural produce for the new urban growth of Manchester. From 1765 the Bridgewater Canal enabled Hale farmers to export their produce to rapidly expanding Manchester.

The Tithes Commutation Act of 1836 was designed to replace the old system in which tithes were paid to the church largely in kind. The new system was for monetary payments based on land values linked to the price of corn, and part of this reform was a comprehensive survey of land on which tithes were raised. Large-scale maps were produced supported by schedules listing every plot of land and the 1842 Tithe Map of Hale gave the first proper record of land use and population in the area since the Domesday Book.

Hale had almost no areas of overcrowding in its hamlets and probably because of this the population during the 19th century was relatively healthy. However there were cholera outbreaks in Altrincham in the 1830s and 1840s because of the overcrowded and insanitary conditions of the town's terraced houses. This led to the formation of the Altrincham Board of Health in 1851 which commissioned very detailed plans of the town and took over some local government functions from the Court Leet. The board was absorbed into the first district council in 1894.

The railway was a major player in the development of the area. Until the mid-19th century, Hale's scattered farms and cottages included two small hamlets, one at Hale Barns and the other at Peel Causeway, the area around Hale Station. Peel Causeway started out as a farm and a few cottages near the present Hale station where a track crossed the boggy ground. The railway arrived in Altrincham in 1849, with separate stations for Altrincham and Bowdon, triggering house building in Hale along Ashley Road. In 1859-62 the Cheshire Lines Committee built a railway line from Altrincham to Knutsford with a station at Hale for Bowdon residents.

The new station enabled easy commuting to Manchester. It was built on the site of Peel Causeway Farm and called Bowdon (Peel Causeway) to distinguish it from Bowdon Station in Altrincham. Entrepreneur John Siddeley opened a brewery opposite the station in 1866. Soon afterwards attempts were made to drain the marshy land of Peel Causeway by diverting Spring Bank Brook across the present Altrincham Boys' Grammar School playing fields which enabled house building on the land through the present Hale village shopping area from about 1870.

As part of national reorganisation, Hale Urban District Council was formed in 1900 led by Alfred Tarbolton replacing Hale Parish Council, with Ringway as a separate civil parish. Peel Causeway was renamed Hale, and Hale Barns became the name for the south-easterly part of Hale. Following another local government reorganisation in 1974, Hale became part of Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council and Ringway part of Manchester.

The Millennium was marked by the Millennium Clock, built over the foundations of Siddeley's brewery on Ashley Road. The trend in the late 20th and early 21st centuries has been the development of small plots of land squeezing in more houses, and the replacement of both old and fairly modern houses by expensive and more up-to-date homes. Hale is nationally recognised as a very desirable place to live and house prices continue to rise.

2. GEOLOGY, CLIMATE AND EARLY SETTLEMENT

By the mid-6th century AD, Hale may have had a few inhabitants. Its scattered nature is a result of several ancient settlements called 'greens'. Today Hale consists mainly of the villages of Hale and Hale Barns, and a few medieval greens such as Davenport Green, Well Green, Warburton Green and Etrop Green, which retain the name though they have lost the green space. It is a popular place to live with a range of housing including many high-quality expensive homes on pleasant tree-lined streets. The area's popularity and prosperity owes much to its position on the edge of the Cheshire countryside while still within commuting distance of Manchester and conveniently placed for the national motorway network, the airport and the Metrolink.

Cheshire was originally created out of part of the Saxon kingdom of Mercia around Chester, the fortified town that grew up because of the Roman camp. Hale bordered on the old settlements of Altrincham, Timperley, Baguley, Wilmslow, Ashley and Bowdon. It was also close to Dunham, the ancient seat of the Massey family from the village of Maci (now Macey) near Mont St. Michel in Normandy. All of the townships were in the ecclesiastical parish of Bowdon, which originally covered 30 square miles from Ashley to Sale.

At the time of the Domesday Book, Hale township covered about six square miles and was probably a few hamlets clustered around open fields. The full extent and boundaries of the Domesday manor of Hale are not known, but about 5,000 acres of woodland were recorded. Ringway was included and was probably a deer park surrounded by oak palings. The boundaries of Hale-cum-Ringway are given in the Tithe Award Map of 1842.

Geologically, Hale lies on an east-west sand and gravel ridge that runs along the northern bank of the River Bollin from Ringway through Bowdon along the South Dunham Ridge to Warburton. Most of the area is covered by till, a drift of pebbles, gravel, sand and silty clay, brought down from the Lake District and deposited by the ice sheet which once covered the whole region. A narrow strip of glacial moraine sand deposit stretches from Bowdon Downs along Hale Road and gradually disappears when the ridge is lost in the general rise of ground through Ringway and beyond to the Pennine foothills. The ridge rises to 60 metres, sloping gently south to the River Bollin at its lower Bowdon end, and more sharply for the rest of its length towards Ringway. There is a series of cloughs³ and banks: Halliwell, Bentley, Tombank, Sunbank and Cotterill, all still quite heavily wooded. A geological fault line runs along this south side.

Northwards from the sand ridge along Hale Road the land slopes fairly steeply towards Timperley Brook caused by glacial melt waters from the Pennines flowing towards the River Mersey. Afterwards the slope is more gradual towards the terraces of old river alluvia and gravels spreading outwards from the bed of the Mersey. Important features of the area on the northern and eastern boundaries were Hale Moss and Shadow Moss, two large areas of peat formation, where deposits of clay impeded drainage and the saturated soil destroyed the woodland. Bowdon Moss also existed on the south side of Bowdon between Moss Farm and Bow Green Road. These mosses were important to early inhabitants who cut turf, dried it in the sun and used it for fuel.

Ancient black oaks have been found buried and preserved in the mosses and have been used to produce furniture. Old maps show that only Hale Moss had any real significance in Hale. Despite the name most of it was in Altrincham where the moss came up to the backs of houses in George Street halfway through the 19th century.

On the fringe of these mosses, and in pockets elsewhere, were carr⁴ formations of swampy ground where moisture-loving trees such as alders and birches grew, indicated by names of farms, fields and lanes such as *Whitcarr* (marsh), *Swang* (swamp), *Willow* and *Ollerbarrow* (alder). Water

³ A small valley or dell; a ravine.

⁴ Wet woodland with trees such as alder and willow.

draining east off sandy Bowdon Hill on to clay ground caused much of Hale village to be swampy, and Hale Cinema in Willowtree Road had a pump running continuously to keep the boiler room dry.

Roman finds in Bowdon, Hale and Hale Barns show Hale Road to be a minor Roman road and its height above the surrounding mosses would have made it an ideal track-way for Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age settlers moving between the Mersey estuary and the Pennines.

Much of the topography of Hale is illustrated by the Saxon place names around the area. The main settlements around Bowdon Hill include *tun* (meaning a farm, as in Warburton) and *ham* (a house, as in Dunham), while those in the wooded areas to the north and east have *ley* (a clearing, as in Timperley), *den* (valley, as in Northenden) and *sal* (willow, as in Sale). Much of medieval Hale consisted of a large area of woodland on clay soils, particularly in south-eastern parts. Surrounding Hale are Danish place names such as *Toft* and *Knutsford* on the south side, and Norse names such as *Rostherne* and *Urmston* to the west.

Oak forests would have covered the greater part of the area, with particularly dense growth on southern parts. The eastern part of the township around Hale Barns and Ringway was still well wooded during the Middle Ages. On the sandy stretch of land from Bowdon Downs to Ringway, trees would have included hazel, birch and the durmast (or sessile) oak. There may have also been ash, pine, elm and lime. Clearance, leaving behind a heath, would have taken place early, possible in the Bronze Age as in Oldfield Brow, certainly by the time of the Domesday Book. Alder, willow, birch and ash would have grown on the swampy carrs.

Climate since the last ice age 25,000 years ago has included cold tundra type, cold wet type, warm dry type, and the modern humid climate without extremes of heat and cold, resulting in mild winters and cool summers.

Heavy clay soil and lack of sun may have discouraged primitive farmers but early settlement and cultivation have been found in the surrounding area and by medieval times Hale had a large area of woodland on the clay soils with small areas cleared for cultivation. The area had plenty of natural resources. Marl⁵, often found in clay soil, could be dug up and spread on fields to improve fertility. There was timber, sand and clay for building, and peat and brushwood for fuel. When the woods were cleared, the cool moist summers helped produce 'grass of a peculiar, good quality' as noted by Londoner, William Camden, in his travels in the 16th century. John Speed, a Cheshire man writing in the 17th century, commented that Cheshire produced the best cheese in Europe and by 1700 much was exported by sea to London. Hale's prosperity was visible even in the Domesday Book and compared well with its neighbours by Elizabethan times.

In the 14th century the Black Death came to north-east Cheshire, halving the population in Hale as in many other places. However, by the mid-17th century about a fifth of the households in Hale had three or more taxed hearths (a farm might have two) and clearly wealth was increasing. Hale was just slightly better off than its neighbours.

In the late 18th and the 19th century industrialisation was changing the situation. Hale, although still rural, was well placed to exploit it, firstly by supplying agricultural produce for the new urban growth of Manchester and later by providing a retreat from its worst consequences.

⁵ A natural fertiliser containing lime leached from the soil and collected in a layer.

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3. PREHISTORIC, CELTIC & ROMAN OCCUPATION

Timeline of events

Date	Local	Regional	National
Stone Age	Stone Age settlement at Oversley Farm, Ringway; axes and flints found in the Altrincham area.	The oldest Stone Age finds in the region were at a flint tool factory in Tatton Park dated 10,000BC.	Neolithic 5000-2000BC. Rectangular buildings. Long barrows.
Bronze Age	Bronze Age burial mounds, possibly including Hale Low. Burning indicating land clearance from pollen under the Roman road in Broadheath.	Copper mines at Alderley Edge date from about 2000BC, (also used by the Romans).	Bronze Age 2000-500BC. Round houses. Round barrows. Cremation.
Iron Age	Evidence from air photography of farmsteads in the lower Bollin Valley.	Iron Age forts on the sandstone ridge from Malpas to Helsby.	Iron Age 500BC-50AD. Round houses. Rectangular graves.
Celtic	<i>Bollin</i> and <i>Hollow Bonk</i> the old name for Kingsway in Altrincham, are partly Celtic.	'Lindow Man' found preserved in peat in Lindow Moss, 1984, dating to the 1st century AD may, indicate Celtic rituals continuing after Romans came.	350BC to 10 th century AD. Celtic invasion 500BC. Celtic art.
Roman	A Roman road passes through the Altrincham area from Chester. Roman coins and tiles found on Hale Road indicate a secondary Roman road.	Romans establish forts in Chester (Deva) in 60AD and Manchester (Mamucium) in 79AD. Evidence of early worship in Manchester 3rd century AD & Christian burials at Eddisbury Hill Fort 390AD.	Caesar invades 55BC. Romans under Claudius invade England in 43AD and stay. Romans leave Britain 410AD.

Stone Age and Bronze Age occupation

Archaeological finds in and near to Hale show evidence of Stone Age and Bronze Age occupation. A Mesolithic settlement dated 3000BC and Bronze Age settlement dated 2000BC were found at Oversley Farm by Mike Nevell when Runway 2 was constructed. Mark Olly has recorded flint pebbles shaped as primitive tools at Millington, south-west of Hale in 1998 and these, dated around 390,000BC, are the earliest possible evidence in Cheshire of the Stone Age. He also records a hand-axe dated around 250,000BC found at Knutsford in 1973. However, it is possible that these items were carried down from the Pennines or the Lake District by the ice sheets of later ice ages, which would have wiped out most local evidence unless protected by a cave. Neolithic (Stone Age) farmers were well organised, grew crops, kept livestock, and constructed walled fields for animals. Stone Age people liked to live in forests in winter but preferred sandy areas for the summer, and Bowdon Hill near Hale would have been an attractive site with potential for defence and surrounded by forests full of game.

Alfred Tarbolton suggested that Stone Age people may have constructed crannogs⁶ for protection on Hale Moss, similar to the Glastonbury lake villages, a speculation supported in general terms by Dr Tony Phillips' views on Cheshire mosses. Just south of Hale, an early Stone Age flint tool factory dated about 10,000BC was discovered in Tatton Park by Prof. Nick Higham, and early Stone Age flints have been found at Alderley Edge. Old Stone Age hearths have also been found at Tatton, as well as Bronze and Iron Age structures. A flint arrowhead and a blade were found near Dunham Hall. There is also some evidence of the late Stone Age near Hale: flint scrapers

⁶ A lake dwelling.

were found in a well in Victoria Street, Altrincham in 1980, and a Stone Age axe head from Langdale in the Lake District was found in the Altrincham area. Flint scrapers excavated by the South Trafford Archaeological Group at Timperley Old Hall, on the edge of Hale Moss, have been carbon dated to 41,000BC but may have been moved by water and ice from another area such as the Pennines.

Although no Neolithic⁷ burials or pottery has been found to support Tarbolton's speculations about crannogs, clearly Bronze Age people lived in the area. Pollen evidence from local meres and peat bogs indicate cereals such as wheat and barley were being grown at that time. An early Bronze Age burial and a bronze dagger were found at Little Bollington in 2002. There is evidence of Bronze Age working of the copper mines at Alderley Edge in about 2000BC. Closer to hand, Hale Moss also showed Bronze Age habitation and evidence that timber was being cleared at Dunham at this time. There are Bronze Age barrows to the north of Dunham Hall and near Dunham Home Farm while one interpretation of the name Hale Low, just off Hale Road, may refer to a Bronze Age burial mound. When Runway 2 was constructed at Manchester Airport in 2001, Bronze Age finds were excavated by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit and a Roman road identified.

Iron Age Celts

The name Celt comes from Greek *Keltoi* and Latin *Celtae* and was given to the race of fierce warriors who first appeared in mid-Europe from the east about 500BC and, over the next century, migrated to southern Europe and Britain. Most of the Celtic population of Cheshire was situated along the central Cheshire ridge from Helsby to Malpas where there is a series of Iron Age forts. Locally, from aerial photographs, there appears to have been Celtic settlement along the River Bollin valley, possibly also around Bowdon Hill and on the edge of the Hale Road ridge. Before it was first extended in 1815, St. Mary's Church, Bowdon had a D-shaped churchyard which may indicate Celtic origin. The rounded shape was believed to prevent the Devil from hiding in corners.

By the time of the Roman settlement in Britain in 43AD, the Iron Age Celts (British, Cornish, Welsh, Scots, Picts and Irish) occupied much of the British Isles, intermarried with Bronze Age people in Britain and often lived in their settlements. In the 6th century AD, much of Lancashire, Cheshire and North Wales to the River Clwyd formed the southern part of the Pictish Kingdom of Rheged, whose name derived from the Brigantes tribe. The area fell to the Angles, Jutes and Saxons after about 613AD but Celts remained in some of their settlements on higher ground in England until the 10th century.

Small numbers of people probably farmed in the Bollin valley, following Stone and Bronze Age occupation in the area. Celtic Iron Age ditched enclosures containing farmsteads were identified from the air in the Bollin valley in the 1990s. The local river Bollin may be partly Celtic in name. Local Celtic communities probably owed their allegiance to the *Cornovii*, who occupied the lands to the south of the Mersey that became Cheshire and Shropshire or possibly to the *Brigantes*, who controlled much of the North and East. The Mersey would have presented a considerable barrier and it is possible that Hale folk had a greater affinity to the *Cornovii*. Five miles south of Hale the discovery in 1984 in Lindow Moss of the preserved remains of an Iron Age Briton, now in the British Museum, caused national interest. 'Lindow Man' had been painted bright blue using dye from woad; he had manicured fingernails, and his stomach contained traces of mistletoe, a plant sacred to the Celtic Druids. A second body was found later in several pieces, probably damaged by peat cutting. Other possible evidence of the Celts includes place names in the wider area such as Bron⁸, Bryn (near Wigan), Cheadle, Crewe, Eccles, Mellor, Peover, Tame and Tarvin. In

⁷ New Stone Age.

⁸ Just east of Warburton on Burdett's 1777 map.

addition Northwich, according to Camden, used to be called *Hellath Du*⁹ or *Halen Ddu* in modern Welsh.

The Romans

The Romans marched into the North West in about 70AD having established a fort at Chester in 60AD. Their interests in the north were probably salt, lead and copper from Cheshire; lead, silver and copper from North Wales; and lead and silver from the Peak District. There is some evidence of Roman occupation in Hale. William Watkin, Mike Nevell, Anthony & Colin Phillips, and Mark Olly all agree that a minor Roman road ran from Watling Street, now the Dunham Road, through Bowdon towards Buxton, from Streethead Farm, passing Bowdon Church, through Peel Causeway and roughly following the line of Hale Road through Hale Barns where a few Roman coins and field marks have indicated its route. According to Watkin, a secondary Roman road may have run from Warrington (a major crossing of the Mersey) through Warburton, and reaching the St. Margaret's Church area then along Hale Road where a Roman road was identified under the site of Runway 2. Two small triangular-shaped south-facing fields near Castle Mill called *Vinyard* may reflect occupation from Roman times. The Romans grew grapes wherever they settled, even as far as north Yorkshire, and these fields might be indications of earlier Roman plantations. Grapes are grown as far north as Scandinavia and there are nearly 500 vineyards in Britain today.

Some physical evidence of Roman occupation, including second century Samian Ware¹⁰ and possible Roman tiles, has been found in Hale Barns in the 19th century on the site of Holy Angels Church.

A field near St. Ambrose College was called Wall Field, which may indicate a Roman villa or a small Roman camp on the levelled ground. Mary Stewart Hibbert-Ware, thought that the name Wall was a corruption of Latin *vallum*, a rampart. However, Cheshire Place Names derives it from Old English (OE) *waellan*, 'to boil', hence a spring or a well and this is the more likely derivation. The site of the forge, near the Bull's Head Inn opposite to the entrance to St. Ambrose College, has a spring said to have been used by the Romans. A Roman coin was found nearby in 2004.

Watkin suggested the probability of a Roman *villa* in the Wall Field. Hibbert-Ware, a local antiquarian, suggested it was more likely a Roman camp in such a backward and military area. The deliberate terracing on the upper part of the field may have led him to this conclusion. He also observed a filled-in ditch and a drop of about two metres between the Wall Field and the field beyond. Mark Olly believes there was a Roman villa just south of the River Bollin and west of Ashley Mill (unrecorded).

The Great and Little Wall Fields are marked and named in the Hale Tithe Award Map. They were bounded on the south by the footpath from Hale Barns to Broad Lane and to the west by Broad Lane itself. Since the beginning of the century, modern houses with large gardens have covered the western parts. Now the buildings of St. Ambrose College come up to their eastern boundary and about two thirds of the fields are the college's rugby pitches with Little Wall Field left as rough ground. No drop in the ground is currently visible, although Tarbolton saw one in 1908. Great Wall Field now has the 2012 buildings on part of it.

Finds made in Watkin's day in 1879 have all disappeared and cannot be checked out by modern analysis. They came from the site of two farms incorporated into The Manor House near Holy Angels Church in the 1880s and included a number of small red tiles, seven and a half inches square and two inches thick, possibly used as paving. A piece of Samian Ware embossed with

⁹ The black salt pit.

¹⁰ Samian Ware is a high quality red-glazed pottery from southern France usually associated with Roman occupation but also adopted by the richer Romanised British inhabitants.

vine leaves was found under the cobbled courtyard, and some coins and a small bronze statue were also discovered at the entrance to St. Ambrose. Although he did not see them Watkin recorded the tiles as Roman or possibly medieval. Tarbolton, who did see them, thought they were quite modern but admitted he was no expert and did not attempt to explain how they came to be in the foundations of an ancient farmhouse. He was informed that the other finds had been given to the village children to play with and lost.

Two fields where Burnside is now off High Elm Road were known in the 1842 Tithe Award as Nearer and Further Stratton. Stratton is OE *stræt tun*, street town, and often denotes a farm by a Roman road. In 1900 when fields immediately north-east of the Stratton fields were being ploughed for the first time in living memory, the plough struck and was broken by large stones about a foot below the surface. These stones went on for 300 to 400 metres and were two metres wide, possibly the remains of a Roman road.

Tarbolton followed up the belief that Long Lane (Hale Road) was of Roman origin by writing to the County Surveyor responsible for repairing it in 1899. The reply was that, to the surveyor's knowledge, nothing had been found.

In the 1960s, Lymm Historical Society discovered another minor Roman road passing through Lymm towards Tatton Park, on the west side of the major Roman road from Chester to Manchester. The South Trafford Archaeological Group (STAG) have found evidence of a Roman road running east-west at Millington.

Despite all of these invasions, the genetic origins of much of the population of England and Wales shows a much earlier migration from Spain (see Chapter 4).

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4. SAXONS AND VIKINGS

Timeline of events

Date	Local	Regional	National
Anglo-Saxon	Local place names including Hale indicate Anglo-Saxon settlement. Saxon carving on a cross fragment in Bowdon Church. Minor archaeological evidence, e.g. a Saxon hearth at Timperley Old Hall.	Anglo-Saxons arrive in the north in the 6th century.	Angles and Jutes from the Baltic invade and settle the south-east about 390AD and the Saxons about 450AD. Offa's Dyke constructed 789AD. St Augustine brings Christianity.
Danish, Norse Vikings	Hale becomes part of the Danelaw.	The term <i>Cheshire</i> used for first time in 980AD. Rostherne and Urmston are Norse (Norwegian) place names. Toft, Knutsford and Davyhulme are Danish place names.	Danish invade Britain from Scandinavia c800AD. In 886AD Alfred the Great (871-899) splits England into Wessex/Danelaw. 902 Norse settle in Cheshire. Ethelred the Unready 979-1016. Canute 1016-1035. Edward the Confessor 1042-1066.

After the Romans left Britain, Celts were probably still in the Cheshire area when it was settled in the 6th century by Angles from the Midlands and Saxons from the Mersey valley. By the 10th century the Celtic language was gradually disappearing in Cheshire as Celts integrated with the new English society. It is generally thought that Anglo-Saxons took over existing Romano-British (Celtic) settlements and in some areas of England it is possible to trace continuity from the Iron Age, through Roman administration districts to Saxon estates. Generally Saxon settlements were in fertile land such as river valleys or at the foot of light soil slopes.

Most evidence for the centuries between the Roman occupation and the Norman Conquest, often known as the Dark Ages¹¹, comes from place names. In this area they are mostly Anglo-Saxon such as Altrincham, Bowdon, Dunham, Hale (probably) and Timperley, and originate in the seventh or eighth centuries. Dodgson believes that *ingaham* is an early form of Altrincham and *ham* in Dunham point to settlement later than 615AD following Saxon invasions of the Mersey valley in 570AD and 615AD. Bowdon and Hale names may be late sixth century or early seventh. The main indications of Saxon activity in Hale are *Halelow*, first referred to in 1443, and field names containing 'low' such as *Little Low Field*, *Great Low Field* and *Further Horselow*. The 'low' element derives from OE *hlaw*, a mound or hill, sometimes a burial mound.

¹¹ The Dark Ages is used to describe the Anglo-Saxon period between the Roman and Medieval periods about which little is known, now usually called the Early Medieval Period. There are few written records until Christianity was adopted. Buildings were of timber and only post holes survive.

Saxons

Most of the place names in the area are of Saxon origin but, despite that, Oppenheimer says that genetic origins of more than two thirds of the English race are more Spanish than Saxon. There have been a small number of Saxon finds in the Hale area. The remains of a Saxon cross exists in the Chapel of the Cross in Bowdon Church and the D-shaped churchyard also hints at a Celtic site, a logical deduction given its prominent position. The South Trafford Archaeological Group found evidence of a Saxon hearth of the ninth century at the Timperley Old Hall site on the Hale border.

According to the Domesday Book one of the Saxon settlements in Hale, *Sunderland* (meaning separate land) was north of Davenport Green on Shay Lane. Archaeologist Mike Nevell has identified a major landscape feature in the area in the form of a substantial bank possibly enclosing a medieval deer park. Buttery House Farm near Davenport Green may originally have been a hunting lodge within the park. Another settlement was *Alretune*, which may have existed on Hasty Lane between Hale Barns and Ringway. Ringway, once part of Hale, was probably *ring hey*, or a circular hedged enclosure, a fenced hunting park, perhaps also confirmed by the place name Heyhead (now gone, under the airport).

Little archaeological evidence has survived from Saxon times, unsurprising considering the flimsy nature of the building material generally used. Saxon buildings were usually wooden and Saxon pottery easily disintegrates. Contemporary written evidence for the early stages of Saxon occupation of the north-west is almost non-existent and is generally poor for the whole Saxon period.

Hale is not mentioned until Norman times, making its first appearance in the Domesday Survey of 1086. However, the entry does include a glimpse of the settlement in the period before the Norman Conquest and – even more important – gives an early mention of the name *Hale*, identical with the present form, true for only a handful of places in Cheshire and not many in the country as a whole. The study of place names makes it possible to learn something of the original nature of these Saxon settlements and the approximate date of their foundation. The Saxons arrived in the north-west via invasions up the Mersey valley in the second half of the 6th century, over a hundred years after their first landings in the south-east. One of the few-recorded events in this area is the defeat of the Britons in 616AD by Ethelfrith, a Northumbrian king. He retreated soon after and probably the first settlers in the area were not his followers but Mercians, a Saxon tribe who struggled up from the Midlands often taking over existing Celtic farmsteads.

There is some dispute about where the earliest settlement in the Hale area took place. Dodgson believed that Altrincham was the earliest, the form of the name meaning ‘the homestead belonging to the people of Aldere’ and Bayliss believes that Albert Place and High Bank in Old Market Place, Altrincham may indicate, from their curved shape, the remains of a Saxon village. The Victoria County History thinks that Dunham and Bowdon may be earlier. Other Saxon settlements such as Baguley and Hale may have followed later, possibly in the early seventh century.

The Saxons were country farmers growing crops on river banks, not town dwellers, and were more interested in colonising Britain than the Romans. Their social structure was an organised cluster of farms called a *tun*, surrounded by a stockade, which became a *tunscipe*¹². This picture fits well with later medieval Hale. Saxons brought their form of local government from Northern Germany. There were several levels of rank in the tribe, including a *ceorl* or freeman who had rights to the land. In each large community, there would have been one person of superior rank, bearing the title *eorl* while at the lowest level there were a few slaves, perhaps taken through battle, crime or debt. The wider area, such as Cheshire, was divided into administrative areas known as ‘hundreds’. Each hundred had its own court. *Bochelau* was one of the hundreds and became Bucklow, with Hale as a civil parish within the Bucklow Hundred.

¹² Township

Norse and Danes

The Vikings began their raids into Britain from Scandinavia about 800AD. In 886AD Alfred the Great split England into Wessex/Danelaw¹³, the border being roughly the present A5 road from London to Chester, and possibly on to Manchester along the present A556/A56. Hale may therefore have been in Danelaw territory and Dunham outside. Much of the land east of Cheshire was in Danish hands, controlled from York. In 902AD Norsemen settled in the Wirral alongside Danes and Mercians after being expelled from Dublin by the Irish and moved east via the Mersey. The Huxley Hoard of Viking silver was found near Chester in 2004.

In 920AD King Alfred's son and successor, Edward, and his daughter, Ethelfleda, Lady of the Mercians, constructed forts at Runcorn, Thelwall and Eddisbury. They rebuilt those at Chester and Manchester to form a wedge between the two Viking settlements from Ireland and York and prevent them from uniting. Much of Cheshire was then considered part of Northumbria and became known as Chesheshire from about 980AD. Place names reveal heavy Norse settlement in the Wirral and south Chester, and eventually along the River Mersey. A sizeable Danish settlement already existed along the eastern border of Cheshire where they raised cattle. The nearest places to Hale known to be of Norse origin are Rostherne, Birkin Brook and Urmston. Cheadle Hulme, Davyhulme, Knutsford and Toft are Danish names. Tarbolton thought that Thorley (Lane) might have been the 'glade of Thor', the Norse god of thunder, and Etrop (Green), which in Tudor times appears as *Aplethropp*, meant a *thorp* or 'Danish village by an apple tree'. It seems more likely, however, that Thorley was originally *thornlea*, a glade of thorn bushes, so Norse settlement in Hale remains unproven.

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¹³ The *Danelaw* is a name for an area of eastern England under the administrative control of the Danish empire from the 9th century until the Norman invasion, roughly to the east of the A5.

5. THE NORMANS AND DOMESDAY (1066-1215)

Timeline of events

Date	Local	Regional	National
1066	-	Cheshire is the last English county to fall to the Normans, who crossed the Pennines from York to Chester in the winter of 1069-70. Cheshire said to be 'laid waste' in retribution for late resistance.	Battle of Hastings and the Normans conquer England. William I 1066-1087.
1070	The Norman Masci family occupy the Dunham area following the distribution of lands by William I via his earls.	William I's nephew Hugh d'Avranche, takes over the Earldom of Chester. Cheshire created a County Palatine.	
1086	Hale, Bowdon and Dunham are mentioned in the Domesday Book but not Altrincham. Perhaps 50 people living in Hale. Similar numbers in the adjoining areas.	Cheshire had been divided by the Saxons into 12 Hundreds or administrative divisions including Bochelau (Bucklow). (A hundred contained 100 hides ¹⁴). Manchester is mentioned in the Domesday Book.	The Domesday Book compiled. Transport by boats and horse and cart. The mouldboard plough ¹⁵ in use. Glass windows used in the best houses. Fireplaces moved to the walls of houses. William II 1087-1100. Henry I 1100-1135.
1150	Castle of Ullerwda (in Ringway) mentioned by chronicles in 1173.	Lancashire formed from north Cheshire & parts of Yorkshire & Furness, 1169. The number of 'hundreds' reduced to 8.	Timber-framed houses built. Woollen industry in Cotswolds. Steven 1135-1154. Maud 1141. Henry II 1154-1189. Richard I 1189-1199.
1204	-	-	Normandy lost. John 1199-1216.

The Normans

After the 1066 invasion, William The Conqueror commissioned his 'Great Survey' of much of England and parts of Wales, completed in 1086, and consolidated his position by taking possession of all non-church land and distributing it to his knights. His nephew, Hugh d'Avranche, known as Hugh Lupus because his coat of arms included a torn-off wolf's head, was created the Earl of Chester and controlled Cheshire, which at the time ranged from the River Ribble to the River Clwyd. The wolf crest may relate to Wolf Gate in Chester, and *Grosvenor*, an important name in Chester, means 'large predator' in Norman French. The crest is pictured in stained glass in one of the windows of Altrincham Town Hall's Council Chamber. William allocated the whole of Cheshire to Hugh to enable the Welsh border to be defended and Hugh in turn gave land to his loyal followers, creating eight barons, including Hamon de Massey. In addition to other grants Hamon received the Bucklow Hundred including the manors of Dunham, Bowdon and Hale.

Cheshire was created a County Palatine by the Normans, managed under Hugh Lupus. *Palatine* means 'belonging to the palace' and while the palatine nominally reported to the king, the area was governed as a separate country similar to Normandy, free to make its own charters, administer its

¹⁴ Hide is from the OE *higid* or *hyda*, meaning 'household', and may represent the value of the ideal land to support one or a group of families. In the Domesday Book it was used as a unit of tax measurement.

¹⁵ The mouldboard plough was a major advance with a coulter (cutter) in front of the share which turned over the land.

own laws and impose taxes. Under this structure, which lasted until 1536, Cheshire did not send representatives to Parliament and was only obliged to supply military service in England. In the 12th century the Normans reduced the number of hundreds to seven, plus Chester. The manor of Hale remained intact under the lordship of the Massey family of Dunham, for about 260 years, during which time there were said to have been six successive Baron Hamons de Masseys in a direct line.

The Domesday Book

At the time of the Domesday Book of 1086, Cheshire administration reached north to the River Ribble and some hundreds were west of Chester in what is now North Wales.

Change happened slowly During Saxon times and Hale and the surrounding hamlets would have remained the same for many generations. Hale's history is linked with its neighbours and it is useful to look at the Domesday Book descriptions of Dunham, Bowdon and Hale together. Domesday, so named by the native Saxons, describes what was there (i) in Saxon times; (ii) in 1070 when the Normans arrived; and (iii) in 1086 when the Domesday Book was compiled. Evidence for the survey was taken under oath by commissioners from the sheriff, barons and Frenchmen, the priest, reeves¹⁶ and six villagers. Information included:

1. The name of the place, who held it before 1066 and at the current time; how many hides, ploughs and lordships existed.
2. The numbers of villagers, cottagers, slaves, and free men.
3. Details of woodland, meadow, pasture, mills and fish ponds.
4. The previous and current values.
5. The previous and current possessions of each free man.

Ashley, Dunham, Bowdon and Hale are mentioned in Domesday but not Altrincham and Timperley. Aelfweard, a free Saxon thegn¹⁷, owned Dunham, Bowdon and Hale before Hamon de Massey took possession and the Domesday Book entries translated from the abbreviated Latin read as follows:

*"In Bochelau Hundred Hamon holds **Dunham** (Massey), Aelfweard held it and was a free man. 1 hide¹⁸ paying tax. Land for 3 ploughs¹⁹; 1 lordship; 2 ploughmen; 2 villagers and 1 smallholder. Woodland 1 acre; 1 house in the City (Chester). Value before 1066 12s; now 10s; it was waste."*

*"The same Hamon holds **Bowdon**, Aelfweard held it; he was a free man. 1 hide paying tax. Land for 2 ploughs, 2 Frenchmen²⁰ have 1 plough. A priest and a church, to whom half of this hide belongs. A mill which pays 16d. Value 3s; it was waste and he found it so."*

*"The same Hamon holds **Hale**. Aelfweard held it. 1 hide paying tax. Land for 2½ ploughs. 3 villagers with 1 rider²¹ have 2 ploughs. Woodland 1 league long and ½ wide; an enclosure; a hawk's eyrie; ½ an acre of meadow. Value before 1066 15s; now 12s; found waste."*

¹⁶ A reeve was an administration official.

¹⁷ A nobleman.

¹⁸ A hide was about 120 acres and supported several families, probably related.

¹⁹ A plough is a taxable amount of land that can be ploughed by a team of eight oxen.

²⁰ The Frenchmen were Normans.

²¹ A rider or radman was a free man with special duties as an advisor to the earl (Norse).

As can be seen, Dunham was the largest area; Bowdon had a church and a mill. Hale was worth most and had a wood, a meadow and a hawk's eyrie offering sport. A hawk's eyrie was important as a source of young hawks for the lord's mews for rearing and training hunting birds.

It is not easy to interpret Domesday Book today because time has removed almost all traces of the society it recorded. There is controversy about the meaning of many of its terms, and even William the Conqueror's purpose in causing it to be compiled has not been clearly established. Nevertheless, it presents a body of facts relating to thousands of large and small settlements in England at a particular time. For many of these, including Hale, no comparable description occurs again until the 1842 Tithe Map which plotted all the fields in Hale, the names of land owners, the occupiers of land, plot numbers and descriptions, field areas and rent charges.

Although we do not know where the cultivated fields and houses of the Domesday settlement of Hale were, the 1842 Tithe Map evidence suggests several places where field names and shapes indicate open unfenced fields divided into individual strips in late Saxon, Norman and medieval times:

- The Queens Road area, based on Hale Farm;
- The area below Chapel Lane and the Bollin between Butts Clough Farm, Rossmill Farm; and Warburton Green;
- The Hermitage Road area based on Hale Low Farm;
- The Davenport Green area based on Davenport Green Farm;
- The area near Ringway Chapel, now part of Manchester.

Each of the above possible open field was probably associated with a hamlet. The first two are the favourites where the settlement of Hale may have been.

Norman Dore thought that the most likely local area for a Saxon settlement was based on Queens Road. Road and field names include *Hale Field* and *Partington Shutts*, a projecting piece of land. Both the Queens Road and the Hermitage Road areas would have had a ready supply of water from springs. The area is of sandy soil and would not have been heavily wooded. The light soil would give poor yields but was suitable for primitive ploughs. Field names such as *Broomfield* indicate the sandy nature of the soil along Hale Road. The ground, rising towards Bowdon, would have provided some shelter, and the church and mill within the manor of Bowdon would have been within reasonable distance.

The second likely area for an early Saxon settlement is between Chapel Lane in Hale Barns and the River Bollin, known as East Hale in the 13th century. This fits in with some of the descriptions in the Domesday Book, including the presence of a water meadow and it would have been heavily wooded on the clay soil. *Halh* is often associated with a river, and field names there include *Little Hough* and *Great Hough* (meaning little and great Hale), *Great Tom Field* (town field) and *Tomfield Bank* (still shown on modern maps). However, the soil is heavier and only more advanced Saxon ploughs would have been able to break it up and turn it over. The fields of Little and Great Hough and Great Tom Field were offered for sale together with Rossmill Farm in 2004 at £2m. It is still an open area and used for grazing.

Either area is large enough to have been the manor listed in the Domesday Book but, for reasons already suggested and the use of the words Hale Field as a field name, the Queens Road area is more likely. However, Norman Dore suggests that the Hale Barns site was a separate and later settlement, perhaps 13th century, from the interpretation of field names, so perhaps this is the one recorded in Domesday.

Few individuals are mentioned in Domesday and three of them are in Bowdon – a priest and two Frenchmen. The three areas of Dunham, Bowdon and Hale were grouped together and their

fortunes were necessarily closely interwoven. Although Dunham was the seat of Hamon de Massey, the lord of the manor, it was small, like the parochial centre of Bowdon.

Hale's value as recorded in Domesday was more than either of these because it was the centre of food production, probably from some grazing, some grain production, pigs and deer. In Domesday the Hale area is described in general terms as a heathland of natural scrub and forest, not yet cleared for farming. The manor of Hale was held by Aelfweard, his other manors being Alretune, Ashley, Baguley, Bowdon, Dunham, Hale and Sunderland.²² The area round about was remote from the main centres of population and civilisation throughout the Saxon period.

The fields in Ringway may have been the wood of Hale mentioned in Domesday. In the 1842 Tithe Map, names such as Old Wood, Rough Wood, and Great Wood are common. The farms of Higher and Lower Mainwood²³ stood on the south-western limits of Ringway, while the medieval hunting preserve of *Ullerswode* stretched from the neighbourhood of Castle Hill and Castle Mill into the lordship of *Le Bolyn* (Wilmslow) and included a castle. It is likely that Oversley Ford, the bridge over the Bollin on the Wilmslow Road, is related to the name *Ullerswode*.

Domesday records that Hale was in *Bochelau* Hundred²⁴. The hundreds had courts of their own and although lost by the 16th century, the hundreds retained some administrative importance. *Bochelau*, alone of the names of the Domesday hundreds in Cheshire, survives in the form Bucklow to the present day.

Hale at the time of Domesday was probably larger than at the 1842 Tithe Survey, perhaps about six square miles compared with around five in 1842. However, it is not possible to identify the exact amount of land at the time of Domesday. Two units of measurement are given in the entry. Hale paid Danegeld, the nation-wide tax of the day, on one hide, and had two and a half ploughlands (or carucates). These were largely accounting devices, based originally on very rough-and-ready calculations, because accurate land surveying was unknown. Traditionally, a hide was about 120 acres supporting perhaps up to 20 families, but by the time of Domesday it was a term used mainly for taxation purposes. A ploughland was supposed to be the area ploughed by a full plough-team of eight oxen in a year. This varied considerably according to the nature of the soil and other circumstances in different localities. The plough-team itself was often a term of measurement, rather than a practical reality, for a very small manor would not have supported a team and would have worked its ploughs with much smaller teams. With two plough-teams Hale would have had a substantial area of ploughing land, more than two hundred acres to keep its sixteen oxen fully employed.

Hale's wood, one league long and half a league wide (just over a square mile), and half an acre of meadow, were valuable assets. The meadow, presumably near the Bollin where it could be flooded, would ensure hay for the cattle over winter and early grass. The wood provided timber and brushwood for building houses and fences and fuel and also grazing for a considerable herd of pigs. Inside the wood was a deer enclosure and a breeding place for hawks. There were three farmers and an estate official.

These features would have increased the value of the manor to Hamon, offering sport for his family and friends. The inhabitants of Hale would have had little benefit from them except by providing some additional work in helping the lord's huntsmen and falconers in repairs and maintenance.

The population of Hale at the time of Domesday would be about five to ten people per square mile, compared with about ten people per square mile in Cheshire generally and about 75 in the same area in densely-populated East Anglia. Tarbolton estimates that about 25 people lived in Hale but other estimates reach 100.

²² Sunderland was north of Davenport Green

²³ *Mean* or common wood.

²⁴ A division of a shire/county from the 10th century. A hundred contained 100 hides.

The neighbouring manors of Dunham and Bowdon had agricultural workers both higher and lower in the social scale than in Hale. Bowdon had two Frenchmen – free farmers who would have come over in the wake of the invaders – and Dunham had a bordar or cottager/crofter and two oxmen or ploughmen. Hale may also have had other workers who went unrecorded because they were landless, or not attached to the lord's demesne²⁵ like the oxmen at Dunham. Two ploughlands with wood and meadow attached would have been a considerable area for four farmers to work, especially as one of them had additional duties. They may have had a number of landless labourers to help.

By Domesday, the Saxon Aelfweard had been removed. Nothing more is known about him and it seems likely that he was killed by the conquering Normans. His place was taken by Hamon de Massey who took over all Aelfweard's old land, which then included 37 manors in east Cheshire, south Lancashire, Wales, the Wirral; as well as estates in Hampshire and Wiltshire. He established his main manor at Dunham, which in time became Dunham Massey, and his family remained lords of the barony until the middle of the 14th century. Although there were several larger baronies in Cheshire, the length of their descent and the support of the Earls of Chester, made the Masseys one of the most important families in Cheshire.

The farmland of south Cheshire was relatively prosperous in Saxon times, as it is today. The value of Hale in 1086 with its rating for Danegeld²⁶, its area of ploughland, its number of plough-teams and its recorded population, shows that, compared with some manors in Cheshire and the great majority in the Midlands and south-east, it was small and poor. On the other hand many other manors in Cheshire were equally poor, so among its immediate neighbours it might have passed as prosperous. The pre-Conquest value was greater than that of Dunham, the head manor of the barony, and its value for 1086 far greater than that of Bowdon, despite Bowdon's church and mill.

Tarbolton thought that the mention of a villein²⁷ in Hale indicated that Hale as well as Dunham was regarded as a manor. Hale's value just before the conquest was fifteen shillings, and its value at Domesday was still twelve shillings, revealing a remarkable recovery from the terrible 'harrying of the north' by the Normans in the winter of 1069-70 which must have reduced its value to nil. Just after Christmas, William devastated Cheshire as he had punished the rebels of the north-east. Cheshire had been an area of persistent unrest and Chester itself had never submitted. If, as seems probable, William's army took the route from York through Huddersfield and Manchester it would have passed very close to Hale. The main party probably used the Roman Road from York to Manchester, then through Bowdon to Chester. Flanking parties may have cut swathes of destruction through the greater part Cheshire and the already poverty-stricken little manors seem to have suffered worst of all. There were only two in Cheshire that were not described as waste. In nine manors there had been no recovery at all. Fields were unploughed and there were "only the dens of wild beasts and robbers to terrify the hearts of the travellers."

This extreme fate had also befallen the manors of Ashley to the south and Baguley to the east. Hale, with its sixteen oxen working on a sizeable area of cultivated ploughland, a water-meadow, a wood with swine feeding, patches of cleared timber, a deer enclosure and a hawk's nesting place, might very well have looked like an island of modest prosperity in the midst of desolation.

²⁵ Demesne land belonged to the lord of the manor (from Latin *dominus*).

²⁶ A tax raised to buy off Danish invaders, or to maintain an army to oppose them.

²⁷ A villein means a tenant, usually a large farmer, later a partially free peasant.

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6. THE LATER MEDIEVAL PERIOD (1216-1485)

Timeline of events

Date	Local	Regional	National
1216	First mention of de Mascys as lords of Hale, later called Masseys.	Stockport received its borough charter 1225.	Civil War 1215 & Magna Carta sealed. Henry III 1216-1272.
1281	First mention of Ringway and Ross Mill.	-	Edward I 1272-1307. War with Wales.
1290	Altrincham given a market charter by Edward I and created a free borough by Hamon de Massey V.	Vicars at St Mary's Church, Bowdon are known from 1210.	England's population about 3 million. Jews driven out Longbow in use.
1317	Enclosures in Hale start in the 14 th century & continue to the 19 th century.	A fulling mill is recorded in Manchester for the beating and cleaning of cloth 1322.	Three years' torrential rain leads to famine. Edward II 1307-1327.
1342	Dispute over the Dunham estate following Hamon de Massey VI's death & the end of the Masseys in Dunham.	-	Edward III 1327-1377. 100 Years War begins between England and France 1337.
1349	Hale loses half its population in the Black Death.	Some land reverts to nature as a result of the Black Death.	A quarter of the population dies from the Black Death. French ceases to be the aristocratic language.
1377	First mention of Bank Hall.	-	Richard II 1377-1399. Peasants' Revolt 1381.
1387	First mention of Bentley (Latham) Hall.	Richard de Hale and five others operate fulling mills on the Dee at Chester 1394.	A law compels journeymen and apprentices to bring in the harvest 1388. Wars with France continue in the century.
1401	Hale's population around 200; 14 are charterers (freeholders).	Owain Glyndwr attempts to restore Cheshire to the Welsh 1400.	Henry IV (House of Lancaster) 1399-1413.
1406	First mention of Ollerbarrow Hall.	Cheshire archers at Agincourt 1415.	Battle of Agincourt. Henry V 1413-1422.
1430	First mention of Vawdreys in Hale.	Manor house of Grelly family 1422 (later Chetham's School) becomes home for Manchester parish church clergy. Church later becomes the cathedral.	Henry VI 1422-1461. Joan of Arc and end of 100 Years War and English presence in France 1429.
1433	Manor of Hale split between the Booths, Stanleys & Chauntrells.	The Booths of Bollin (Wilmslow) eventually take over most of the former Dunham Massey estates.	Henry VI had a bout of madness and Richard Duke of York appointed Regent of England.
1455	A tithe barn recorded in Hale Barns.	Many outsiders hold burgages in Altrincham as investments.	Wars of the Roses 1455-71: cannon used for the first time. Edward IV 1461-1483.
1474	First mention of the Peles ²⁸ of Hale & Thorley Moor in 1462.	Altrincham described as 'a poor thing with a mayre'.	William Caxton produces the first printed book in English. Edward V 1483. Richard III 1483-1485.

²⁸ Peel is from Latin palus, a stake, in this case a palisaded enclosure.

Places and People

The Hale Domesday Book entry gave concise information about the settlement of Hale from before 1066 to 1086. Other less-comprehensive surveys exist from the 14th and 15th century, and in 1641 when the Poll Tax was resurrected and in 1662 when the Hearth Tax or Chimney Tax was imposed levying a tax on each fireplace. Nevertheless, from scraps of information that have survived, certain trends emerged. Settlement continued despite periods of near-anarchy, pestilence and agricultural depression, and by the reign of the first Elizabeth, Hale had become a more populous and prosperous place. Its people and resources were no longer grouped around the original Domesday settlement, but scattered in detached hamlets and outlying farms as a result of enclosure of the open fields. This pattern continued until the arrival of the Victorian commuters four centuries later.

The first record of post-Domesday Hale is of the castle of Ullerwda or Ullerwele mentioned by chroniclers in their account of the 1173 rebellion against Henry II. Benedict, the Abbot of Peterborough, and William of Newburgh both record that "*Hamo de Massey held castellum at Duneham and Ullerwel*" (or Ullerwda, probably later Ullerswode) against the king. Walter de Coventry²⁹ tells us that Hamon "*held the castles of Doneham and Ullerwela*."

The Duneham castle was probably in Dunham, the main manor of Hamon's barony, but where was Ullerwda or Ullerwele? Hale tithe fields 369 (Toothill) and 371 (Higher Toothill) indicate defensive lookout points, possibly from Danish invasion times. No castle with such a name is ever mentioned again but Castle Mill Farm seems a possible site. This is a 19th-century building halfway down Mill Lane between Manchester Airport and Ashley, near the River Bollin. The farm replaced a much older building, probably 16th or 17th century. At the foot of the hill is Castle Mill and in the 1840s the first Ordnance Survey map of the district has *Ullerwood* written just above Castle Hill and below Cotterill Clough. It seems likely that this is the site.

Another castle mentioned in the chronicle of 1173 was a mile to the east at Watch Hill, in Bowdon. Also known as Yarwood Castle, the remains are just east of the A56 on the north bank of the Bollin at Newbridge Hollow at map reference SJ748860. The mound and ditch have been dated as from before 1189 and were possibly constructed during the civil war in the reign of Stephen, 1097-1154. The structures at Watch Hill and Castle Hill could have been used to monitor traffic on the River Bollin, deeper then and possibly used by flat-bottom boats to ferry goods. Watch Hill could also have been used to monitor the Roman road from Chester to Manchester.

Hamon de Massey held these two castles against the royal forces, possibly supporting the 6th Norman Earl of Chester, Hugh de Kevelioc, who was a leading figure in the revolt against the reforms of Henry II in 1163. Buildings at Castle Hill and Castle 'Milne' certainly existed in Tudor times, and Castle Hill was known as the demesne house, that is belonging to the lord. Henry II followed his suppression of the revolt by the destruction of a large number of private castles and any settlement round it may have perished and the site lost.

A castle may well have existed in the 13th century because at this time Cheshire was playing a major role in suppressing Welsh uprisings in the struggle. The early climax came with Edward I's two campaigns of 1277 and 1282-3 suppressing the Welsh. At this time the city of Chester was the centre of national activity and the king, the queen, the military and ecclesiastical leaders of the nation were frequently in the county. Troops, workmen and supplies poured in from all directions, stimulating agriculture and trade and resulting in charters to Cheshire towns and grants to Cheshire vassals³⁰. Among these were Hamon de Massey's 1290 charter to Altrincham and his grant of lands in Hale to Jurdan de Davenport, both having as their first witness one of the most

²⁹ A 13th century landowner in Warwickshire.

³⁰ A vassal was a tenant of land rented from the lord of the manor on conditions of homage and allegiance.

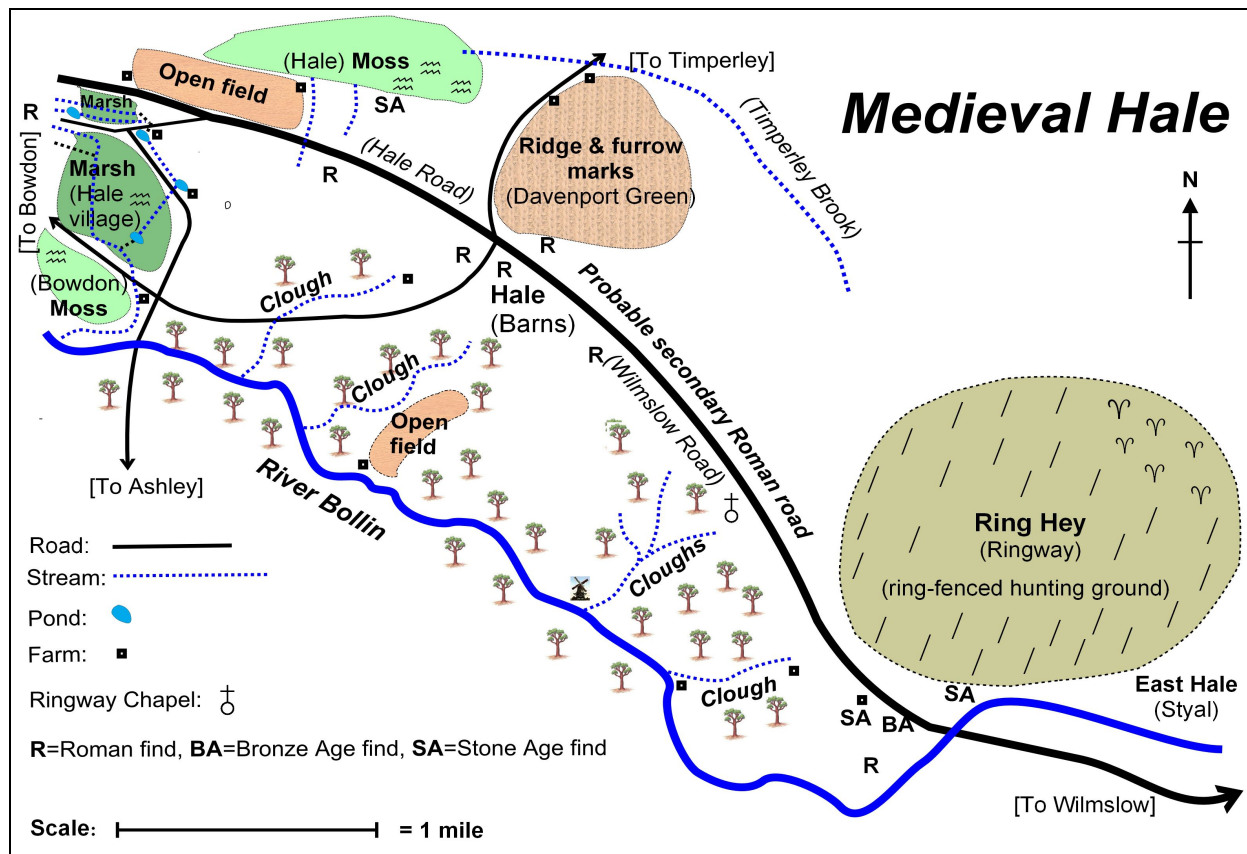
important men in the kingdom, Reginald de Grey, Justiciar³¹ of Chester. Jurdan's grant, which only survives in a Tudor copy, fails to record with any certainty the position of his lands. The mention of Richard de Baggelegh as a neighbour would suggest the northern part of the township; and maybe the later hamlet of Davenport Green derives its name from Jurdan de Davenport.

More identifiable are the two other places mentioned in Jurdan's grant, one of these being "*my mill of Rass.*" *Rass Milne*, first mentioned in 1281 refers to Rossmill Farm. The present Rossmill Farm was still called Rass Mill Farm well into the 19th century but the mill must have fallen out of use some time before as it is not mentioned in the 18th-century records of Hale. There is no trace of it at the farm, and its position is more likely to have been by the River Bollin, where two fields on the Ashley side were named Ross Mill Meadow in 1842 records. The other mention is in 1377 when Alice, widow of Richard de Hale sued Robert del Bonk (Bank Hall) for her dower.

Fields of medieval origin stretched up north and east of Rossmill Farm, through Butts Clough Farm, past Hale Chapel and over the main Wilmslow Road. In the Tithe Award, Tomfield (Townfield), Middle Flatt and Lords Field, reach up from just north of Rossmill Farm through Butt Knowle, Nearer & Further Yeastow field on the east side of the main road. A document dated 1637 shows Great and Little Yeastow Fields close by. These link with *Eastoe*, *Easter*, *Eastod* or *East'ard* (the eastward) *Lane*, names once given to the stretch of the Wilmslow Road running nearby. Back in the 13th century a number of people called *de Easthale* appear in law suits against Hamon de Massey, one of them claiming rights of common pasture in Ringway. These names seem to indicate that by the 13th century there was a second settlement of East Hale, extending further south than the later hamlet of Hale Barns, and with its own mill conveniently close at hand, probably now Styal.

Jurdan's grant and one of the lawsuits of the de Easthale family in the 13th century mentions Ringway, noting that Hamon de Massey was proposing to enclose the wood of Ringway as a hunting preserve. The modern spelling of Ringway does not appear until the late 18th century. Earlier forms were usually Ringey, Ringheye and Ringeye, but there were variants such as Rungeay and Ringesey. Probably Ringheye is the earliest form, meaning a circular hedged enclosure probably for hunting deer and wild boar. Tarbolton says that Ringey Park was 200 acres of moor in the 15th century. It is recorded that a chapel of ease was there in 1515 which must have been built to serve a local community which had grown up nearby. Field names from the 1842 Tithe Award and earlier documents show signs of medieval arable agriculture.

³¹ Justice of the Peace or chief political and legal officer.



This conjectured map shows the probable features of Medieval Hale based on known water courses, roads, buildings and the landscape. Hale was a marshy place with mosses and many springs running into the River Bollin and Timperley Brook. Hale village is on the site of the larger marsh and Hale Barns, then known as East Hale, was just east of the crossroads. A sand ridge ran along the lines of the present Hale and Wilmslow Roads, and is believed to be the site of a minor Roman road. The open fields would have had a few farm dwellings and cottages around the edges. The ridge and furrow marks indicate medieval ploughing activity.

Alretune and Sunderland: Two lost settlements of Hale

Some places in the wider area of Hale have disappeared but the names remain to tantalise. Morris suggests that the lost Domesday manor of *Alretune* was Alretunstall near to Davenport Green while Tarbolton thought it was near Hasty Lane. Dodgson believed that the name might mean 'a farm site at an alder', from *alor*, OE for an alder tree. Barker suggested that the name 'Altrincham' may be a corruption of *Alretune*. Broadhurst thinks that Alretunstall was probably part of the Saxon Sug's manor while evidence from *Place Names of Cheshire* suggests that it was part of Timperley where Ridgeway Road used to be called Sugar Lane. Morris suggests that the lost Domesday manor of *Alretune* was Alretunstall near to Davenport Green while Tarbolton thought it was near Hasty Lane. The name may be associated with *Alretunstall*, which Hamon de Massey III granted to his daughter, Cicely, sometime before 1215, along with *Sunderland*. Broadhurst thinks that Alretunstall was probably part of the Saxon Sug's manor while evidence from *Place Names of Cheshire* suggests that it was part of Timperley where Ridgeway Road used to be called Sugar Lane. Not far away in Ashley is Sugar Brook.

The family name *Artenstall* occurred in Hale Barns from the mid-14th century until the early 19th century and the same appears on graves in Bowdon Churchyard. The surname no longer exists in Hale but similar names can still be found in Manchester and Stockport. The first reference in this

area is to John de Artonstal, an archer and parker³² of *Ringhaye* (Ringway). The seat of this family may have been the farm called The Artenstalls at the Wilmslow Road end of Hasty Lane, demolished some time after 1850, possibly by W C Brooks, the banker when he created Brooks' Drive in 1862. The surname may relate to Alretune.

It is now thought that the Domesday manor of Sunderland lay at Davenport Green near Buttery House Farm. It may have been this holding which was given by Hamon de Massey to Jurdan de Davenport in a charter of 1291. This theory is supported by the fact that, in the Domesday entry, Sunderland was linked with Baguley manor which was close by. In 1066 three Anglo-Saxon lords held these two manors and this fragmentation of ownership might have been the origin of the name, which means 'separate land', probably similar to Sinderland north-west of Altrincham.

Evidence from excavations at the moated Buttery House Farm suggests that there was a deer park at Sunderland, and the farm may have originally been used as a shooting lodge by the Crewe family. In the Altrincham Borough Charter of 1290 Hamon de Massey states that he is "... *saving to myself and my heirs the enclosure of Sunderland (Clausturam de Sunderland)*..." This *claustrum de Sunderland* is probably the same as the *Parcum de Sunderland* which occurs in the Ministers' Accounts of 1353.

Landscape features suggest the boundary of an oval shaped deer park to be about 3.7 kilometres long. Nevell has examined the landscape of the area and his report on Davenport Green concludes that its features and size equate to a medieval park. The size compares well with other medieval parks in the area such as Dunham at 5 kilometres, Warburton at 4½ kilometres and Wythenshawe at 4 kilometres. Nearby is Bentley (Latham) Hall, first mentioned in 1387.

There are five further settlements mentioned in documents about Hale during the Middle Ages, including East Hale which occurs in the 13th century when the de Esthale family are first recorded in lawsuits against Hamon de Massey. The name has survived on the 1842 Tithe Map as Easter Lane Farm and in a number of field names. It also remains as the name of a village next to Manchester Airport, *Styal* or *East Hale*.

Buildings

The first mention of the name 'Peel' in the Hale area was in 1462 when Masseys owned the *Pele at Hale* and the *Pele at Thorley Moor*. These may refer to moated stockades for enclosing animals. Until about 1860, the *Pele at Thorley Moor* may have been between the present Ashley Road, St. John's Road and The Downs. The farmer in 1478 was Robert Joyce. Ashley Road here used to be Thorley Moor Lane and 36 Ashley Road, next to St. John's Church, is called Thorley Moor. The *Pele at Hale* may refer to Hale Farm where a farm building still exists off Queens Road, Hale. Stamford Park School was built on its orchard, and Peel Street (now Peel Road) was the first road to be built on its land. More likely the reference could be to Hale Low Farm, which may have been the centre of the Hale manor and on the tithe maps is associated with three fields with 'Hale Field' in the name such as Higher Hale Field, Lower Hale Field, and Hale Field. Hale Low first occurs in 1443 as *Halelow*. Some houses in Hale Low Road contain apple trees descended from the farm orchard and have cobble stones in the garden.

Although many castles, churches and manor houses were built of stone, most cottages at this time were flimsy single-storey wooden or wattle and daub³³ structures, without chimneys or glass, and afforded little more than shelter. The floor would have been of beaten earth and the roof thatched with reeds, straw, heather or turf. The occupants often shared the building with animals, especially during the winter. Timperley sandstone could have been used for foundations and lower walls if the owners could afford it. The better houses in Hale were of sandstone from Lymm or Kelsall and

³² A parker is a deer park keeper.

³³ A wooden framework of hazel between the main beams with a clay coating.

slates came from North Wales by sea. Timber for the construction and repair of buildings was available locally from the oak woods.

Iron came from Flintshire, Staffordshire and Spain, lime and lead from Buxton, and lime and lead from the North Wales coast. 'Sea coal' was imported in the 13th century from North Wales along the coast and up river. By the 17th century coal was also mined at Shadow Moss in the south-east of Hale while roofing flags came from Kerridge in Derbyshire.

By the end of the 14th century, two new buildings appear in Hale: *Ollerbarwe* or Ollerbarrow Hall is mentioned, and *Le Bonk* or Bank Hall. Two buildings with similar names stand today but were erected much later, in the early 18th century. The remains of the first, now known as Ollerbarrow House, is a very modest farm building of about 1740, currently used as offices, and standing in Ashley Road opposite to the Bowling Green at the bottom of Leigh Road. Over the years it has been a police station and a base for the Women's Royal Voluntary Service. Just south of this on the corner of Ashley Road and Cambridge Road was Ollerbarrow Hall, itself dating from the late 14th century and probably a large moated timber building. Bank Hall, dating from around 1700 but massively rebuilt, still stands in its original position on Bankhall Lane, having been restored from near derelict condition in the 1980s.

The 1842 field names in the area of Ollerbarrow Hall are on the southern fringe of the Domesday settlement and suggest medieval arable land use. Four cottages on Bankhall Lane dating from about 1800 are shown on the Tithe Map and referred to in early census returns and on maps as Towlands, probably originally Town Lands. They were possibly in the open fields of a nearby medieval settlement. The name became Tolland and the lane behind the cottages is still called Tolland Lane. Interestingly *Tollund* is a Danish name.

Social structure

Under the feudal system each plot of land had to have a lord. At Domesday the lord of Hale was Hamo de Masci I of Dunham. In 1216 Roger de Massey was lord of Hale, a descendant of Hamo and the son of Geoffrey de Massey its previous lord, and he sold half of Bowdon to Agatha de Massey for £4 7s 0d plus two robes, one for himself and the other for his wife, and one pound of cumin seed paid annually at the feast of St. Martin. Paying rent with rare and expensive spices was not unusual in the 13th century. Ormerod also says that this younger branch of the Masseys held considerable lands in the township and neighbourhood of Hale, and that several of them styled themselves as 'de Hale'. The Plea Rolls³⁴ of 1320 refer to the de Hale and del Bonk families when Alice, widow of William de Hale sued Robert del Bonk for her dower.

There are two rentals of Hale dated 1347 and 1411 in the Stamford Papers in John Rylands Library (EGR2/1/1). These documents, made on the order of the lord of the manor, list the names of each tenant identified as free or unfree, and show details of property and rent. The 1347 rental in the reign of Edward III, a year after the Battle of Crecy, shows 23 freemen and 81 unfree. The 1411 rental near the end of Henry IV's reign in 1415 shows 16 freemen and 46 unfree, a large drop in population. Estimating five people to a household, there were probably more than 500 people in Hale in 1347 dropping to around 300 in 1411 almost certainly as a result of the famine and plague, especially the Black Death of 1348/49.

Farming was both arable and pasture, and the lands of the free men were probably enclosed estates. Until the 14th century, unfree men were villeins or tenants-at-will of their lord, cultivating their own and their lord's arable land in strip fields worked by communal ploughs. This type of farming was declining as the unfree began to move out of serfdom becoming landowning peasants. There were meadows for winter feed down by the Bollin and several 'greens'. Ringway

³⁴ A parchment roll recording details of legal suits or actions in a court of law.

was enclosed, part woodland, part grazing, part hunting, while Hale Moss was not enclosed until the 19th century and peat was cut there for fires and roofing. Meanwood was extensive woodland with clearings for cultivation called assarts. Finally, Sunderland Park, now Davenport Green, was used by the baron of Dunham for hunting deer. We know little of employment other than farming except where personal names give clues to roles which existed in the community, such as Fletcher (arrow maker), Chamberlayn (agent and steward of the baron), Baxter (baker), Rouper (rope maker), Swon (Swineherd), Parker (park keeper), a Smith, and William the Draper.

A comparison of Hale rentals with other local rentals shows important social changes. Until 1300 five socio-economic groups could be identified: first, the lord of the manor; second, freemen with their own estates; third, skilled workers such as smiths; and fourth, 'tenants-at-will' who were not free and had to plough the lord's lands and pay to grind their corn at his mills and bake in his oven. Military men formed a fifth social group, cutting across the others, and may well have been the most important people of the time, ranging from knights to archers, sergeants, constables, squires and other support staff, some holding their land by peppercorn rents for military service. Hale at this time seems to have been a place where men from outside the township settled for military purposes.

The lower orders of the social structure began to change through the 14th century and this happened early in Hale. In 1347, while the villeins in Dunham and in Altrincham were called 'tenants-at-will' in the rentals, all the lower class at Hale had become 'termors', peasants renting their land for a period of time based on the lives of named people in a family, or a specific number of years.

In 1347, 81 termors (tenants) farmed an average of 12 Cheshire acres each (25 statute acres). Several seem to have come from outside Hale including John de Arnewayfelde (from Wales) and Richard de Tesdall (perhaps from Teesdale). William le Whyte held 12 acres but also had a hall and a small chamber and grange, a good holding for a peasant. Eight women also held land at this time. The le Swon family, Ellen, Matthew, Hamo and Richard le Swon, held 69 acres between them. Ellen, a swineherd, had the highest holding of any peasant with 26 acres for which she paid 43 shillings rent. In 1359 John and Hugh Swon were Hale archers. The Swon swineherd trade was important to the military, providing meat, fat and skins.

The number of freemen fell by one third between 1348 and 1411, and the number of peasants halved as the most devastating plague of the medieval period, the Black Death, took its toll hitting the lower classes hardest. In 1411, sixty years after the plague, the number of people in Hale had still not recovered to its 1347 level. In 1411 there were only 42 termors farming approximately the same total acreage, so the average holding had increased to nearly 20 acres each.

The warring 14th century was, therefore, a time when free peasants emerged and a lord now had to pay for labour on his land because of the shortage of labour. The plague had reduced the number of workers available, so survivors were in a better bargaining position over wages. The peasant holding most land in Hale in 1347 was a woman, and while no women were free then, by 1411 two had achieved that status. However, it is unclear to what extent the status of free women was equal to that of free men in Hale.

Military men

The background to the military situation was that in 1288, Hamon de Massey V, lord of Dunham had been ordered by the Chester judiciary to furnish King Edward I with five knights, their horses, accoutrements and foot soldiers. In the 14th and 15th century wars one knight was listed in each of the rentals holding a large estate in Hale. A number of military men such as the Swon brothers of Hale and John de Artonstal were listed as archers in the army of the Black Prince, the Earl of Chester, in campaigns in France.

By the end of the Welsh wars, Cheshire soldiers had a reputation for violence and fighting and were highly prized and well paid, particularly for their archery skills. Cheshire soldiers travelled north in Edward I's abortive attempt to conquer Scotland, and south to the Channel ports and across to France during the Hundred Years' War. Names of Hale men, not all knights or squires, are recorded in muster rolls. They included John de Artonstal, parker (keeper of the hunting preserve) of Ringheye (Ringway), and John de Oldfield, archer, who went with the Duke of Lancaster to France from 1355 to 1357 and may well have fought at Poitiers. There was Ricardus del Bonk (Bank Hall) who was in France in 1417, in company with other Cheshire archers such as Hamo Boudon (Bowdon), Johannes Robynson de Ashlee (Ashley) and Thomas Aleyn de Timperley.

Humbler men are also recorded. John and Hugh Swon, archers of Hale, did not actually sail to France in 1359 with the Black Prince, but they intended to and travelled down to the muster-point of his forces in Hampshire. They are recorded because their commander, Richard de Massey who held land in Hale, wrote a note to the Chamberlain of Chester to say that they were too ill to continue and were being sent home. This was to prevent the Chamberlain from arresting them as deserters on their return.

If Cheshire soldiers were prized on the battlefield, they were dreaded off it because of their lawless and high-handed behaviour and there is evidence that men of Hale did not differ much from the rest of the county. John de Artonstal had to ask for special letters of protection on his return from France because he had so many and such bitter enemies. John, William and Thomas de Massey of Hale, and Robert de Massey del Bonk were part of the notorious Cheshire bodyguard of Richard II which was used to browbeat Parliament, an episode ending in several of the greatest in the land being condemned to death.

The most important freeman and landholder in Hale in 1347 was Sir Thomas Danyers with a quarter 'of the old vill of Hale' plus 24 acres for which his rent was a nominal 20d. A military man, his deeds as a soldier are commemorated in a brass plaque in Grappenhall Church which reads *"in memory of Sir Thomas Danyers of Bradley within Appleton, who died 1354. He was present at the Battle of Crecy, 1346, where he rescued Edward the Black Prince's standard from the enemy and took prisoner the Count of Tanquerville, Chamberlain to the King of France."* Of the 23 freemen at that time, Jurdan de Davenport, an incomer, was also very wealthy, holding about a carucate³⁵ of land.

Sir Thomas Talbot of Blackmere, Shropshire held land in Hale around 1411. He came from a distinguished line of Welsh border knights, fought against the Scots at Newcastle, then fought in Ireland and was awarded the Honour of Wexford. Sir Thomas's estate was Le Bonk (Bank Hall). Robert, son of Hugh le Mascy, paid one pair of gloves for his house, and Thomas of Mobberley and John de Mascy of Ollerbarrow each paid one barbed arrow for theirs. It seems likely that as important landowners they had some local military position, possibly in command of some troops, and therefore paid minimal rent in return for military service.

Whatever the faults and virtues of the men of Hale in the Middle Ages, there is little doubt that many of them saw life well outside the confines of their obscure settlements.

Medieval disputes

During the second half of the 14th century there was a feud between the Massey family of Hale and the Prior of Birkenhead who held the manor of Bowdon and the Parish Church. The vicar and

³⁵ 120 acres

parson stood between them as the recipients of tithes, three quarters of which went to the rector and the rest to the vicar.

The tithes were a valuable asset. At first in kind and later in currency, they were 10 percent of the parishioners' incomes donated to the church and used as income and for church purposes by the clergy. A dispute over tithes in 1278 had been settled by Hamo de Massey with a charter in that year which gave the Priory at Birkenhead an advowson³⁶ of the rectorial tithes, and the right to appoint vicars at Bowdon Church. In July 1383, nearly 100 years later, Thomas de Massey and his friend Hugh de Artunstal, carried off the tithe corn. Thomas certainly had no right to the corn but he must have expected to get away with it, and seems to have done so, possibly because of the distance involved, Birkenhead being forty miles away at the end of the Wirral.

A few years later, in 1396, the feud flared again following the appointment by the Prior of Richard del More as the new Vicar of Bowdon. He had only been in office a month when the Masseys entered the vicarage and held it by force until Palm Sunday, threatening the Prior and his new Vicar that they should have no profit from the church unless Richard, the son of Robert de Massey, was vicar. They also browbeat the Prior's tenants and tried to make them quit their holdings. Richard was only 18 and could not hold church office in any case. Their efforts to capture this rich vicarage for one of the family did not end in their favour and the result may have given rise to the local saying recorded by Sir Peter Leycester in his *History of Cheshire* in 1673, "*Every man is not born to be Vicar of Bowdon.*"

The 15th century was even more disturbed by civil strife than the 14th, but saw some revival of economic prosperity. Glimpses of life in Hale reveal increased population and continuing expansion of settlement. A document of 1401 in the Stamford Papers shows fourteen charterers or freeholders in Hale, three times the number of landholders recorded in the Domesday Book. Except in medieval boroughs, charterers were always heavily outnumbered by less privileged inhabitants. The total population may well have passed the two hundred mark. By the middle of the century a tithe barn had been set up in Hale for the collection of tithes to sell for the upkeep of the parish church. It is recorded as being in Hale Barns in 1662 and the village is named after it. It is shown on John Crampton's map of Hale Barns in 1800 as occupying the present site of All Saints' church hall.

Tithe figures from the first half of the 16th century reveal that the annual value of tithes from Hale was more than double that of any other township in Bowdon parish. At the same time additional settlements appear: *Athroppe* or *Aplethropp* (Etrop Green) to the north, *Meanwood* (Mainwood) to the east and *Castle Hill* and *Castle Miln* (Mill) to the south. Hale seems to have continued to be more important than most of its neighbours since the time of the Domesday Book.

One of the four inhabitants recorded in the Domesday Survey was a radman, a tenant who also acted as an estate advisor. His official duties may have taken him through *Ullerswode* to Hamon's manor at Bramhall and possibly right across the county to his lands in the Wirral. About 1150 Hamon Massey III founded the Cistercian Priory of Birkenhead on these lands, and a hundred years later yet another Hamon granted the patronage of the church at Bowdon to the monks who received the tithes until the dissolution of the priory in 1536.

Most of the journeys undertaken by Hale men outside their own area would have been for military purposes. War or the threat of war was never far away anywhere in England during the Middle Ages, and was always present in a border county like Cheshire. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, before Edward I brought in the rest of the nation, it was threatened by the growing power and ambitions of the princes of Gwynedd in North Wales. Military service was usually limited to forty days a year but it could be required of Cheshire men at any time if the Welsh were raiding the county or the earl was leading a punitive expedition across the border. The Masseys of Dunham

³⁶ A legal statement of possession.

owed the service of five knights and an unspecified number of foot soldiers some of whom must have come from Hale and from time to time would have to rescue Chester from attack, and take part in raids into Wales.

During medieval times Davenport Green lay within the manor of Hale and remained in the possession of the de Masseys until the death of Hamon VI between 1342 and 1344. The inheritance was contested by several claimants, including the Fitton family of Bollin (Wilmslow) and the Le Stranges of Knockin (Oswestry). Because there was no agreed lord, the 1347 rental was written at a meeting presided over by Sir Peter De la Mare, probably for the Black Prince who was Earl of Chester, and held the Dunham barony while the succession was decided. The situation had not been resolved by 1411 when the barony was held by the next earl, Prince Henry, Duke of Lancaster. The rental simply states it was taken "*In the time of John Legh del Bothes, steward there*" so the name of the lord of Hale at the two dates is not known. Eventually the barony, but not the title, passed to the Booths.

Over the years the land was bought, sold, divided up and given away. In the 15th century the Stanleys, Earls of Derby, the Chauntrells, the Venables and the Booths all laid claim to the barony and the Dunham and Hale estates. The dispute was finally settled in 1433 and had important consequences for the manor of Hale, since the settlement split the lordship of this holding into three parts. The Booth family, as acknowledged heirs of the Masseys, received half of Hale. The rest, mainly Ringway, Hale Barns, Warburton Green, and parts of Peel Causeway and Hale Green, went to the Stanleys of Derby and the Chauntrells who both sold them to Sir Baptist Hicks, a London merchant EGR1/12, EGR1/1/3). At his death in 1629 the Crewe family bought the lands.

The lordship of Hale remained divided between the Booths and their heirs, the Greys, as the Earls of Stamford, and the Crewe family until 1807 when the Crewes auctioned most of their estates at the Old Bleeding Wolf Inn, Hale. The Egertons of Tatton bought a large part, but the Crewes' half was sold to the Earl of Stamford, partly re-uniting the manor.

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7. THE TUDORS, STUARTS AND CIVIL WAR (1486-1713)

Timeline of events

Date	Local	Regional	National
1515	Ringway Chapel built.	Woollen dealer operating in Manchester 1524.	Henry VII 1485-1509. Henry VIII 1509-1547.
1543	-	MPs elected for Cheshire, previously a palatine county.	Edward VI 1547-1553. Jane Grey 1553.
1553	Grammar School founded in Bowdon.	Earliest records of the Manchester Court Leet. Manchester producing cloth.	England and Wales united 1543. Clear glass produced 1560. Mary I 1553-1558. Elizabeth I 1558-1603.
1642	Hale men in the Wythenshawe Hall siege.	Siege of Manchester by Royalists; earthen barriers erected at entrances to the town.	Civil Wars 1642-49. Dissolution of Parliament 1629-1640. Commonwealth 1642-60.
1644	Royalist troops of Prince Rupert of the Rhine camp on Bowdon Downs in May 1644 during the Civil War.	Prince Rupert sacks Bolton and besieges Liverpool; Stockport surrenders. Wythenshawe Hall siege.	Combined Parliament and Scottish Covenanters defeat Prince Rupert, July 1644, losing York and the north of England to Royalists.
1701	Peel Causeway mentioned.	Decline of Chester as a port because of silting of the estuary.	1707 Great Britain formed by union of England and Scotland. Population of England & Wales about 5.5 million. Jethro Tull invents the seed drill. Queen Anne 1702-1714.

Hale landowners

Single lordship of Hale ended when the main branch of the Masseys of Dunham died out about 1342. Confusion and dispute followed. After 100 years without a lord of Dunham, the lordship of Hale was divided from 1433, initially between the Booths, Stanleys and Chauntrells, until the beginning of the 19th century which affected the township as most of the new owners lived out of the area and probably never visited it.

Long before the end of the Middle Ages the Hale area was the subject of large leases and grants: in 1402 there were fourteen charterers or freeholders in the township and by 1662 this had risen to nearly thirty. Hale was not a 'closed' village, tightly controlled by a single landlord. Its scattered nature and accessible position close to the Chester-Manchester road would have made this difficult in any case. As it was, the crisis of the Civil War revealed that the township of Hale was open to many influences, and inhabitants could and did adopt more than one standpoint, and the population in the neighbourhood became known for religious radicalism.

The Masseys of Hale had the smallholdings of Hale Low and Ollerbarrow Hall in the 15th century. By the 1560s John Massey had bought up land in Hale from the Earls of Derby amongst others and had interests in Altrincham, Bowdon and Timperley. His son George gave Hale Low to his son Ralph and Ollerbarrow to his other son Roger. Hale Low became Ralph's daughter Elizabeth's dowry when she married Lawrence Leicester of Tabley about 1585.

In 1598 George Massey of Hale sold *messuages*³⁷ in Hale, occupied by Roger Ryle, William Hyle and others. This is the last reference to the Masseys of Hale, and it seems likely that by 1673 the Hale family had died out. There were, of course, a number of other branches.

The charterers or freeholders of Hale varied greatly in wealth and status. In Elizabethan times the two most important were the Masseys of Ellerborough (Ollerbarrow Hall) and the Vawdreys of Bank Hall. Both were of ancient descent, had substantial halls, a number of tenants, and were

³⁷ Property and land.

squires of Hale in every respect except manorial rights. Roger Massey of Ellerborough recorded his descent in the Heralds' Visitation of 1580³⁸ as coming direct from the Masseys of Rixton, but quartered both the mullet of the Rixton Masseys and the lion of the main Dunham branch on his coat of arms.

The best-known Vawdrey was Robert Vawdrey of Riddings Hall in Timperley and Bank Hall who traced his ancestry back to Sir Claude Vawdrey, a distinguished ancestor of the 12th century. Robert had a townhouse in the Bridgegate, Chester, and was Vice-Chamberlain of the County Palatine. As the Chamberlain was always a great nobleman, his deputy normally presided over the Exchequer in Chester Castle, an ancient and important court. Robert is the first Hale inhabitant of whom we have any information. He would have been brought up in an age when many men could recall the Wars of the Roses, and when quarrels between neighbouring gentry still ended in bloody fights between followers. He kept an armoury well stocked with bows and arrows, spears, bills and pole-axes, and at his death in 1576 bequeathed to his grandson a full suit of armour, lance and great sword.

Robert's third son, John, to whom he left Bank Hall, was given the responsibility of providing a yearly salary of £4 to provide a schoolmaster for a grammar school in Bowdon. This was in support of a previous endowment of 1553 made by Robert's friend and neighbour, Edward Janny, a Manchester merchant with an estate in Timperley, to establish a grammar school in Bowdon parish.

The middling range of Hale charterers, or freeholders, included the Leycesters of Hale Low, a branch of the Leycesters of Nether Tabley who produced the Cheshire historian Sir Peter Leycester. The Hale Low family were minor gentry without great possessions, living in a modest cruck-framed hall. Probably both the Gooldens (or Gouldens) of Clay House and the Granthams of Davenport Green Hall were wealthier, although both were styled 'yeomen' at the beginning of Stuart times, as the Granthams only became established as gentry after some useful service in the parliamentary cause during the Civil War, while the Gouldens remained yeomen.

Lower still in wealth and influence were junior branches of the Granthams and the Hardys who were styled 'husbandmen' in a Civil War document and owned no more than a dozen fields, in total under a hundred acres.

Very little is known of tenant farmers of Hale at this time except that some were still providing old feudal services and dues in kind, as rent as well as money. Examples include one to four days ploughing, and reaping; 'muckinge' or 'fillinge dunge' and providing between half a load to two loads of coal. Leases varied a great deal. Some were tenure 'on the rack'³⁹ or 'at will'⁴⁰; some a term of years (usually twenty-one); and some the chancy but apparently popular lease 'for three lives'⁴¹. A great deal depended on the conscience and amiability of the landlord. 'Lease for lives' rental agreements were phased out in the mid-18th century.

Civil War

A considerable number of Hale men attended meetings at Ringway, Bowdon and Baguley just before the outbreak of civil war and signed a document known as the Remonstrance, which denounced as public enemies all those who sought to divide King and Parliament. This reflected their desire for peace, and also the great influence in the township of 'old' Sir George Booth, who,

³⁸ During the 16th to 18th centuries heralds carried out visitations to counties to regulate the use of coats of arms.

³⁹ A rent stretched to the utmost annual value of the item rented.

⁴⁰ A temporary tenancy.

⁴¹ A tenancy until the deaths of three people named in the lease.

as head of the bench of justices in the county, had been the prime mover in this last-minute attempt to prevent fighting.

Sir George Booth the elder and his grandson, Sir George Booth the younger, who between them ruled at Dunham Massey for over a century (1579-1684), had the reputation of being good to their tenants, charging no more than a moderate fee when sons took over fathers' tenancies, renewing leases on the old terms, and letting cottagers settle on the waste for a nominal rent. Sir Peter Leycester complained that they had done so much of this in Altrincham that it had become a 'nest of beggars'. This policy cannot have been necessary in Hale, for only nine households out of 140 in the township were too poor for the hearth tax imposed by Charles II's government in 1662.

Stuart times saw the national situation impinge more on Hale as local people were caught up in the King-versus-Parliament conflict. Chester, Nantwich and Wythenshawe saw dramatic action in the Civil War and Hale men were drawn in. There were three periods of Civil War: 1642-46, 1647-48 and 1649-51, followed by Cromwell's rule from 1651 and the restoration of Charles II in 1660. Some men from Hale had strong feelings about Charles I and the dissolution of parliament from 1629 to 1640, and were involved in actions in other parts of Cheshire under Sir George Booth and Robert Tatton.

Sir George Booth with considerable reluctance, supported Parliament, and his grandson George, with more initial enthusiasm, raised a regiment. Richard Grantham of Davenport Green Hall commanded a company. The regiment served in many minor actions and fought in the decisive battle of Nantwich on January 25th, 1644. Afterwards, under a new colonel, Henry Bradshaw of Marple, the regiment took part in Cromwell's last great victory at Worcester. However, not all Hale support was for Parliament. Some Hale men were present when Robert Tatton of Wythenshawe held his manor house for the King during 1643. It was a rather amateurish defence, maintained by his tenants and many of the minor local gentry and other volunteers. All were captured when the Hall fell into Sir Thomas Fairfax's hands in February 1644 and parliamentary agents sequestered (seized) their lands. There are indications that other men of humble means in Hale gave assistance to the royal cause.

Inspired by Sir William Brereton, squire of Handforth Hall a few miles away to the north-east, religious enthusiasts on the parliamentary side gathered at Ringway Chapel. Although of only moderate means, Sir William had great connections, and his vigorous championship of the parliamentary cause and military ability resulted in his appointment as parliamentary commander-in-chief for Cheshire.

It is not possible to make any accurate judgement of the sufferings of the people of Hale from taxation and requisitioning during the Civil War. Hale's fortnightly assessment of £1 12s 10d was the highest tax in the whole of the division of East Bucklow except for Mobberley and High Legh, and more than twice as much as most of the others. There were additional assessments for the maintenance of the Scots army and the suppression of the rebellion in Ireland.

More to be dreaded by the country people was the requisitioning of supplies and farm animals by passing armies because this easily degenerated into plundering. Hale cannot have escaped entirely, because the Chester to Manchester road was close by and the unenclosed space of Bowdon Downs⁴² came near the western boundary of Hale township and was a recognised camping ground for armies of any size. The Scots and Prince Rupert's armies, both notorious plunderers, bivouacked there and Prince Rupert's army marched across the township in May 1644. They appear to have been in a hurry, however, which probably saved Hale, for there are no records nor legends of any devastation.

Probably more serious in the long run, were the depredations of a nearby garrison living on 'free quarter'. Supplies were taken on a promise, rarely honoured, to pay later. Hale again appears to

⁴² Bowdon Downs included the present Devisdale but extended to The Downs and Groby Road.

have been lucky. Throughout 1643 the royalist garrison at Wythenshawe was a small force composed almost entirely of local men and when Parliament gained control it did not need to set up any garrison in the neighbourhood.

There remained the final reckoning. Those who had supported the beaten side had their lands occupied and were threatened with fines, confiscation and sale. Old Sir George Booth was on the Committee for Compounding for Cheshire which imposed severe fines on Royalists in the form of a percentage of their estate value. However, Parliament cancelled the proceedings against those whose lands were under the value of £200, and this exempted every Royalist in Hale except the Vawdreys of Bank Hall. This family was doubly vulnerable because Richard Vawdrey, who had helped in the defence of Wythenshawe Hall, was a Roman Catholic. There was threat of sale, but Henry Vawdrey, one of his brothers, succeeded in establishing that that he was neither a Catholic nor a royalist and that the estates had been made over to him by their father, Robert, before the war. The threat was not carried through on condition that Henry maintained his brother and paid his debts.

Although Hale was fortunate in escaping serious material destruction during the war, the atmosphere in the years following can hardly have been comfortable. Too many inhabitants had fought on opposing sides, and the business of examining and fining royalists must have led to information being laid against neighbours, with inevitable false witness, lying and evasive defences. All around were disgruntled squires, debarred by past views and actions from taking part in local government. After the execution of King Charles, the defeated royalists were joined by the Presbyterians who had opposed the execution of the king. Among these were the Booths of Dunham Massey. It is no wonder that the ancient squirearchy and the regular clergy (and many of humbler station as well) looked sourly on the enthusiastic meetings which William Barrett and his sectarian supporters held at Ringway Chapel under the protection of the Commonwealth government. These in their turn, however, showed that they could face adversity, when the restoration of the monarchy brought them deprivation and persecution. Their resilience was such that they founded a congregation at Hale Chapel which has continued without a break until the present day.

Post-war prosperity

In the second half of the 17th century land taxes, low prices and continuing enclosure caused small estates and farms to suffer more than the large ones and no doubt this was true in Hale. Bucklow Hundred at this time was regarded as the most prosperous region in Cheshire. The late 16th and early 17th centuries were a prosperous time for Cheshire farmers and their relative wealth would have spilled down to local traders. Much wealth came from the improved trading of goods to towns and cities and overseas via better shipping through the Dee and Mersey estuaries. This was a time of building new churches, grand houses and extensions. Locally, Davenport Green Hall and Hale Low were extended. Davenport Green Hall was probably started by Richard Grantham in the 1560s and extended in 1578 to include the cross-chamber wing.

The relative prosperity is also reflected in wills and inventories of Hale people in 1600-1640, which show Hale farmers working with mixed farming of crops and livestock. Wills indicate the type of hunting and defence weapons available in the early 17th century. Lawrence Leycester had a gun, four swords and two daggers. George Bolton, Thomas Perrin and Robert Johnson each had a sword and a dagger. Robert Johnson and James Leycester had longbows, but they were old fashioned by then as matchlock muskets and pikes were available. Longbows and crossbows would have been used for hunting. Randle Goulden had a long-barrelled birding piece, worth 4s and James Leycester had one worth 8s. Many of these weapons would have been used in the Civil War.

In the 17th century tanning was an important local industry with plenty of oak bark available. The process was smelly but was believed to ward off the plague. There are three 'Tanyard' farms in Hale and others just outside. Tanning took a large amount of capital and William Grantham had over £100 (£30,000 today) worth of hides in pits when he died in 1617. Tanning became less important in the middle of the 18th century when it was overtaken by linen weaving. Flax had been grown locally for linen since the 14th century but, by the late 18th century, it became cheaper to import flax from Ireland.

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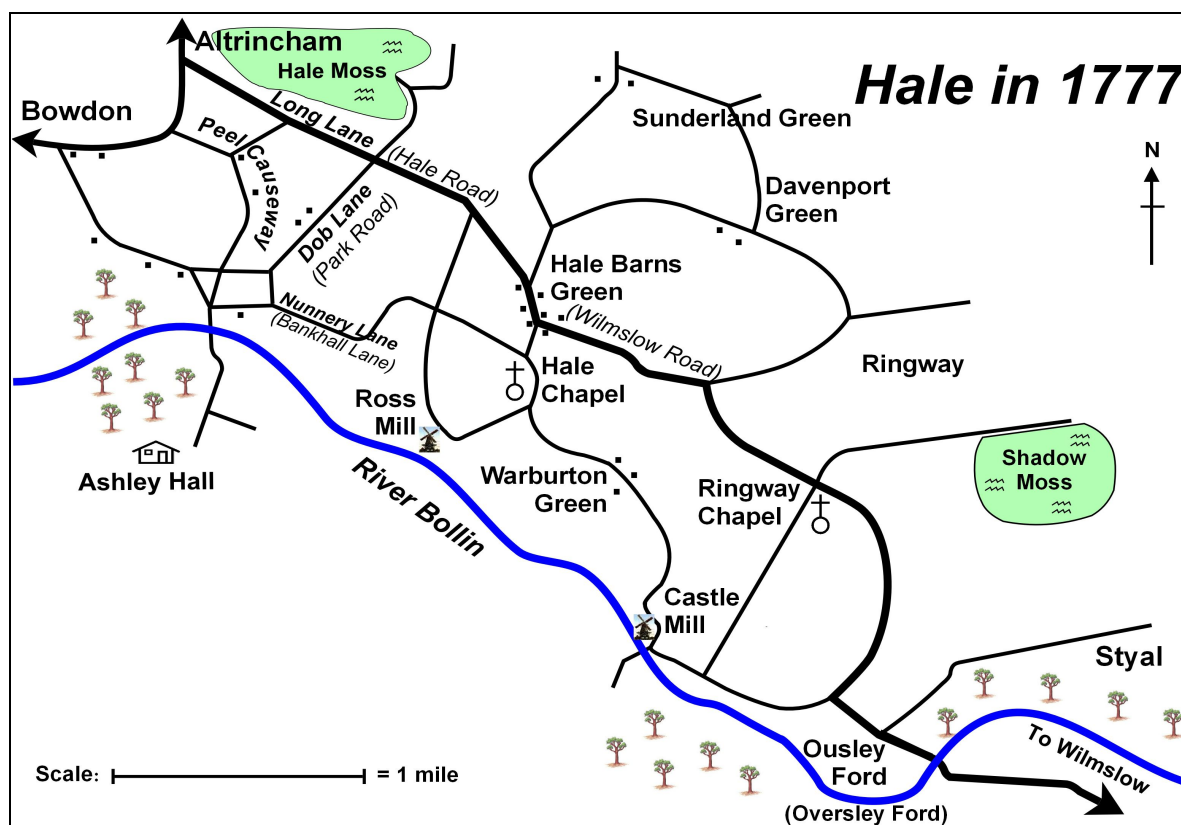
8. THE GEORGIANS (1714-1836)

Timeline of events

Date	Local	Regional	National
1715	Jacobite supporters meet at Ashley Hall, led by Sir Peter Legh of Lyme Hall.	Manchester's first newspaper, <i>The Manchester Weekly Journal</i> , 1719.	First Jacobite Rebellion supports the Old Pretender in Scotland. George I 1714-1727.
1721	Ringway Chapel rebuilt. Hale Chapel built.		South Sea Bubble (trade with South America) bursts 1720.
1723	Hale Chapel, Chapel Lane, Hale Barns opens.	First turnpike road in the region Manchester to Buxton 1724.	George II 1727-1760.
1745	Bonnie Prince Charlie's troops stay overnight in Old Market Place.	Bonnie Prince Charlie passes through Manchester on the way to Derby & on the retreat northwards.	Second Jacobite rebellion. William Cullen demonstrates refrigeration 1748.
1765	The Bridgewater Canal extended to Broadheath, enabling the export of local produce from Hale to Manchester and beyond.	The Bridgewater Canal, the UK's first modern artificial waterway, takes coal from Worsley to Manchester 1761. Altrincham to Manchester road turnpiked 1765.	Hargreaves develops the Spinning Jenny enabling several threads to be spun at once.
1773	Self-governance of Hale.	Census shows Manchester's population as 22,581.	American War of Independence 1775-83 causes economic problems.
1775	Robert Seddon opens a worsted mill in Bowdon.	Pleasure boats on the Bridgewater Canal.	Start of the Sunday School movement.
1780	Market gardening starts in Hale on a large scale.	Crompton's spinning mule leads to steam-powered mills.	Arkright's first cotton mill in Manchester 1781.
1783	First Sunday School in Altrincham. Steam power used in an Altrincham cotton mill.	First USA cotton in Manchester via the Bridgewater Canal 1784. Quarry Bank Mill, Styal opens.	Edmund Cartwright develops power loom weaving 1785 using James Watt's steam engine. Mail coach service established.
1801	Census shows Hale's population as 780.	Manchester's population 75,000. Bulk limestone imported to Manchester from Buxton, and then on to Altrincham.	Population of England & Wales about 10 million. Union with Ireland. First Factory Act 1802.
1811	Census shows Hale's population as 929.	Modern Order of Oddfellows formed in Manchester 1810.	Gas used to light London streets 1812.
1815	Bull & bear baiting outside Bowdon Church stopped.	48,000 tons of coal imported into Manchester annually from Worsley via the Bridgewater Canal to power cotton mills.	Corn Law Act protects landowners' interests after the high prices of the Napoleonic Wars. Battle of Waterloo.
1821	Altrincham to Stockport Road turnpiked.	<i>Manchester Guardian</i> founded 1820. Coal gas production starts.	
1825	Thomas Sowler of Hale founds <i>Manchester Courier</i> .	<i>Manchester Courier</i> published.	Trade Unions legalised. Stockton & Darlington Railway opens.
1832	Outbreaks of cholera in Hale.	Outbreak of cholera in Manchester leads to Board of Health survey.	Charles Babbage develops his analytical engine, the forerunner of computers, 1830.
1834	Last use of Hale Poorhouses on Dob Lane (Park Road).		New Poor Law requires formation of workhouse unions. Modern Local Government starts.
1836	Altrincham Poor Union formed including Hale and extending to the borders of Warrington and Northwich.	15,960 power looms in Manchester.	117,151 power looms in the UK. Tithe Commutation Act. Registrars established allowing marriage in all churches. Registration of Births. First telegraphic message.

Jacobites in Cheshire

There had been local support for the Jacobites during the first rebellion in 1715 when ten members of the Jacobite Cheshire Club met at Ashley Hall to debate supporting James Francis Stuart, the 'Old Pretender'. Sir Peter Legh of Lyme Hall, a Jacobite supporter, had probably set up the club and he persistently refused to swear allegiance to James II's successors, the Protestant William and Mary. At the Ashley Hall meeting, however, the group decided not to join the revolt and the club was disbanded.



This map is based on Peter Burdett's map of Cheshire and shows Hale in 1777. Long Lane (Hale Road) was, as now, the main highway linking Altrincham and Wilmslow. Also shown are the chapels and the greens around which the scattered hamlets were based.

The present Ashley Hall dates from the 15th century and was the ancient seat of the de Ashley family in the 13th century and the Brereton family until 1660. Mary Queen of Scots is reputed to have spent the night there.

Bonnie Prince Charlie caused a flurry of excitement in the area in 1745 when he crossed the Mersey at Cheadle with his army of 5,000 Highland clansmen, on their way to Macclesfield and Derby. They had recruited about 100 troops in Manchester. At the same time 500 of his cavalry under Lord Elcho came through the snow into Altrincham on Sunday December 1st and camped for the night in Old Market Place, Thorley Moor Farm, and probably on The Devisdale. Horses were stolen in Sale and farmers in Altrincham and Hale hid their animals in the woods while the troops were in the vicinity, fearing plundering by the Highland soldiers.

A little over a week later the defeated Jacobite army passed back through Cheshire, hotly pursued by the Duke of Cumberland whose recruiting officers were far more threatening to locals than the Jacobites. However, in a comparatively short time life was back to normal. Those who had fled returned and Cheshire people resumed cattle rearing and marling, cautiously investing in property, attending chapel meetings and sporting on the township greens.

Leases

Terms of leases in the Georgian period became more complex and conditions were of fundamental importance to landlord and tenant. In many aspects the terms can still be seen in modern farm leases. In the 18th century it was common to grant leases for three lives, usually the tenant, his wife and children or brothers⁴³. This clearly appeared fair to the tenant but was also risky as the time period was unknown and tenants had to make judgements on investment. Leases for three lives were eventually phased out in favour of 21-year leases or for other fixed periods.

A Hale lease from the early 18th century was made for Ollerbarrow Farm between landowner John Crewe and Robert Perkin. The agreement was for 11 years for an annual rent of £45 6s, with an extra shilling for the steward's dinner. The farm was relatively small at about 35 statute acres lying between Ashley Road, Broomfield Lane and Ollerbarrow Road. One quarter of an acre was to be a plantation maintained by the tenant. The landowner reserved all quarries, minerals, springs and timber, the right to search and dig for marl, clay and gravel, to make bricks, and to hunt, hawk, course, fowl and fish. The tenant had to give two days' teamwork annually, service to the Court Leet and Court Baron⁴⁴ of Hale and to maintain and repair buildings, hedges and ditches.

All hay, straw, clover and fodder were to be used on the premises (to avoid depleting the land), and all manure was to be spread on the leased land. The tenant was forbidden to grow potatoes, flax or rape, except for his own use. He was not able to sub-let the land or buildings without agreement from the landlord. The penalty was a fine of £5 a month representing nearly a year's income for a labourer. The tenant had to plant clover and grass and five trees every year or risk a fine of 3s 6d per tree. Fines of 3s 6d per cow or 1s per sheep or lamb were levied for pasturing other people's animals. The tenant had to marl any ground changed from pasture to arable to a maximum of 12 acres. There were also complex rules about crop rotation and fallowing, most of which were probably memorised by the tenant since there was a good chance he could not read.

The Industrial Revolution

The next 100 years saw the Industrial Revolution gather pace. Transport changed how people lived. Locally the Bridgewater Canal enabled increased trade with the fast-growing population of Manchester, and turnpiked roads⁴⁵ and the railways were on the way. Inventions such as the flying shuttle and the spinning jenny were changing how people worked, and factories and mills attracted workers and led to a move away from the land. Life was hard but very gradually conditions for ordinary people began to improve though not without costs such as the Peterloo Massacre⁴⁶ and cholera epidemics.

The Bridgewater Canal built by Francis Egerton was opened in 1761 to bring coal from Worsley to Manchester and was the first commercial canal in Britain. In 1765 it was extended to Altrincham and was used to carry farm and market garden produce and cloth into Manchester from Hale, Timperley and Altrincham, and to bring wool, bricks, cotton, coal, corn, lime, marl, slates and stone into Altrincham. A regular market boat from Altrincham to Manchester ran from 1770. The canal brought cotton for Gregg's Mill at Styal and some Hale people made a living carting it. The barges also returned from Manchester with night soil to fertilise the fields at Sale, Timperley and Dunham, sixty-three thousand tons of it exported from Manchester in 1840.

⁴³ Because rents were kept low by legislation, there was a substantial 'consideration' to pay initially, often amounting to tens of thousands of pounds in today's money. If a named life died there was a cost in replacing them.

⁴⁴ The Court Leet and Court Baron were manorial courts.

⁴⁵ A toll road raising finances to maintain the road.

⁴⁶ The Peterloo Massacre took place on 16th August 1819 in St Peter's Fields, Manchester when armed cavalry charged a crowd of around 60,000 people gathered to demand the reform of parliamentary representation, and killed 15.

From 1767 the Bridgewater Canal was also used to import goods from Runcorn to Manchester because it was easier and more reliable than navigating the locks of the Mersey and the Irwell. This galvanised the development of inland waterways across England. Fast passenger transport on the Bridgewater Canal was introduced about 1780 when it took an hour to get to Manchester on the two or three boats a day in each direction, about the same time as it takes today's buses. This enabled people to live in Hale and work in Manchester. The canal also allowed Manchester and Salford people to come to Dunham Park in the late 18th and early 19th century, as mentioned by Elizabeth Gaskell about 1840 in her book *Mary Barton*. The canal was the main force behind the original growth of the Altrincham area but it declined with the improved turnpiked roads in the late 18th and early 19th century (the road to Manchester was turnpiked in the same year that the canal opened to Altrincham). The coming of the railways from 1849 completed the decline.

No factories or mills appeared in Hale in response to the Industrial Revolution, but in 1775 Robert Seddon opened a small worsted mill at Hollybank, on Sandy Lane (Stamford Road), Bowdon where Garner Close is now, opposite to Spring Bank. The mill was probably operated manually initially, but there is evidence of it being a water-powered mill later and a good supply of water would have been necessary for washing and dying. However, by 1800 wool was going out of fashion and the enterprise went downhill even though the mill was still recorded as producing worsted in 1851.

Wars, religion & slavery

Although there were hard winters and poor summers, and outbreaks of rinderpest⁴⁷, there was little else to disrupt the everyday life of Hale in the 18th century. Nationally, the wars against the French increased taxation. The constables' accounts for Hale have many entries for the collection of the irritating window tax and the more serious land tax. The dislocation of trade and the high price of food during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars caused great hardship and in 1800 a subscription list was opened in the township for the relief of the poor. Lord Stamford of Dunham Massey and John Crewe of Hale subscribed ten guineas each and fifty other householders contributed sums ranging from five guineas to a shilling. At the same time the militia was reorganised and a much smaller force than before was chosen by ballot, trained with and filtered into the regular army.

Peace time saw a remarkable lowering of the religious temperature illustrated by the change that took place in Hale Chapel in the mid-18th century. In common with most of the old Presbyterian congregations of the country, ministers adopted the Unitarian principle of non-acceptance of the Trinity. This caused some dismay and disruption inside the movement. A contemporary letter survives, written to a member of the Hale congregation, beseeching him to see that a new minister who held these views was not appointed. Despite this, ministers with Unitarian views were appointed and Hale Chapel is still Unitarian today. The Reverend Thomas Whitaker, curate of Ringway, reported to his bishop that the people who frequented Hale Chapel were generally called Presbyterians but seemed to prefer the name of Unitarians or Rational Dissenters. The more conservative took advantage of the revival of Ringway Chapel and returned to the established church.

Joseph Barker and Joseph Moore of Hale spoke eloquently against slavery which was abolished in 1833. Henry 'Box' Brown (1815-1879) toured England between 1850 and 1860 lecturing on anti-slavery and stayed with Joseph Moore, the village shopkeeper in Hale Barns. Free slave Samuel 'Boxer' Smith had bought Brown's freedom with Brown's savings and had smuggled him out of slavery in a box. Brown wrote an account of his life *Narrative of the Life of Henry Box Brown* which was republished in Manchester in 1851 and he and Smith toured Britain for a year. Brown married

⁴⁷ A plague affecting domestic and wild cattle.

a woman from Stockport and they continued to tour until he returned to the States in 1875 with his wife and three children. Smith stayed in Hale Barns for a while, acting as an assistant in Moore's shop. When he returned to America he gave his gold watch and chain to Moore.

In 1834 a new Poor Law allowing workhouse unions to improve efficiency and reduce costs, resulted in the 1836 formation of the Altrincham Poor Union, extending to the borders of Warrington and Northwich and including Hale. The Altrincham Workhouse then moved to Knutsford in 1870 and continued there into the late 20th century as a psycho-geriatric unit. The Hale Poorhouses on Dob Lane (Park Road), two small whitewashed cottages near Bower Road, were last used in 1834.

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9. THE VICTORIANS (1837-1900)

Timeline of events

Date	Local	Regional	National
1842	Tithe Map of Hale produced with apportionments table.	Population of Manchester 181,708.	Church tithes become land rents linked to the price of corn 1836. Queen Victoria 1837-1901.
1843	About 1,000 in Hale.	Free Trade Hall rebuilt.	Penny Post starts 1840.
1844	Town gas production from coal starts at the Unicorn Inn, Altrincham.	Construction of back-to-back houses in Manchester stops.	Steam-powered boats & buses. Repeal of the Corn Laws 1845. Potato famine 1845/46.
1849	The railway comes to Altrincham and Bowdon.	Manchester, South Junction and Altrincham Railway opens, as the region's first commuter route.	Hansom cabs operating. Public Health Act sets standards for water supply, street cleaning, refuse collection, sewage disposal 1848.
1851	Altrincham Local Board of Health formed following cholera in the 1830s/40s. Water pumps installed in Altrincham town 1852.	Population of Manchester 303,382. Altrincham Board of Health plans produced to tackle water supply, sewage disposal 1852.	Great Exhibition in London. Window Tax repealed allowing better light & ventilation in houses.
1853	Bowdon seen as a suburb of Manchester.	Manchester becomes a city and prohibits cellar dwellings.	County & Borough Police Act: police force for each county and town.
1861	Altrincham mills close.	Lancashire mills close, soup kitchens set up.	American Civil War causes a cotton famine.
1862	Bowdon (Peel Causeway) Station opens.	Formation of the Co-operative Wholesale Society.	Foot & mouth disease 1865/66.
1868	John Siddeley opens Peel Causeway brewery. Spring Bank Brook culverted c1868/9 enabling house building in Hale village.	Three Irishmen convicted and hung for the Fenian murder of Sergeant Brett on Hyde Road, Manchester 1867.	Factories' Act forbids employment of children under 8 and restricts those under 13 to half a day 1867.
1870	Sewage farm opens at Sinderland.	Altrincham Union Workhouse moves to Knutsford.	Education Act provides primary education from local rates.
1875	Hale houses built with water supply and gas lighting but without sewers.	Introduction of horse-drawn trams in Manchester 1877. Bowdon Board of Health Plans produced 1876.	Threshing machines in use. Poor weather and imports from the United States cause collapse of English agriculture.
1878	Hale Sewage Works on Bankhall Lane.	Newton Heath Football Club formed (Manchester United FC in 1902).	Horse-drawn trams introduced in Douglas, Isle of Man.
1883	Hale resolves to install public lighting.		Frozen meat from Australia, New Zealand & South America 1881.
1884	Broadheath industrial estate started by American George Richards.	Cheshire County Council formed 1889. Altrincham Football Club formed 1891	First petrol-driven cars 1887.
1894	Electricity power station opens in Broadheath. Bucklow Rural District Council established.	Manchester Ship Canal opened. Thirlmere Aqueduct opened giving Manchester water from the Lake District.	Urban and Rural District Councils created, consolidating Poor Law and sanitation.
1900	Hale UDC forms modern Hale. Peel Causeway renamed Hale and Ringway becomes a separate parish.	First electric trams in Manchester 1901.	Aircraft developed 1901. Labour Party formed 1901. King Edward VII 1901-1910.

Settlement in Hale

As the 18th century drew to a close, Manchester's great growth was already having an effect on Hale's population which had increased slowly over the centuries, remaining almost static until 1841 despite the rapid national increase. The movement of population was towards the city and from

1770 to 1815 most apprentices went to weavers in the Manchester area instead of to rural crafts around Hale.

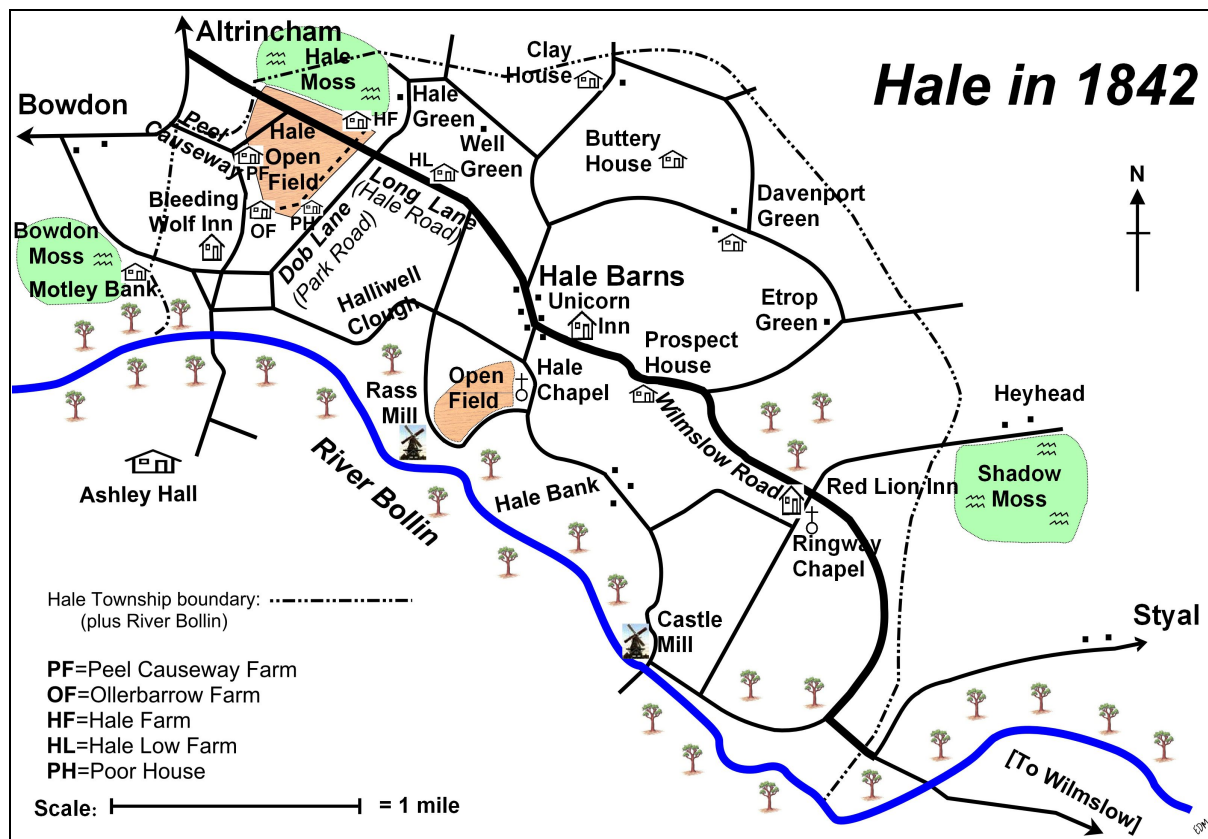
Throughout the 18th and early 19th century the same local names reappeared in court records, but 1841 to 1855 saw a remarkable turnover in the occupation of farms and other houses. Few families remained in the same property and many left the district altogether. Several of the successful farmers in Hale's last rural days came from areas which were being built up like Stretford. Demand for farms was high and leases for lives disappeared as landlords refused to renew them. Increasing opportunities to produce food for the growing markets in Manchester was the reason why land in Hale became so desirable and scarce.



Hale Barns Shopping Centre c1910 (AAIA).

In 1842 author Dr Samuel Hibbert-Ware was one of the first of many people who chose to retire to the leafy lanes of Hale bordered by the Cheshire countryside. Retirement became an important factor in the build-up of the modern suburb. Peace and seclusion and accessibility to the city were the main attractions then as now.

Later in the century, Dr John Leigh, Manchester's first Medical Officer of Health, built the Manor House where Holy Angels Church now stands in Hale Barns. Henry Brogden, a member of the family of iron, coal and railway engineers from Barrow-in-Furness and South Wales, bought Hale Lodge near Well Green from the Rev. Charles Wallace in the 1860's and died there in 1913, aged 87.



This map based on the Tithe Commutation Map shows Hale in 1842. The approximate site of Hale Open Field is conjectured from the names, sizes and shapes of fields. A footpath now along the lines of the present Cambridge Road, Ollerbarrow Road and Queens Road connected Ollerbarrow Farm in the south with Hale Farm in the north. There was a second open field near Hale Chapel. The area was largely agricultural with small hamlets based around greens and isolated farms. The whole area was still fairly heavily wooded, especially in the Bollin valley, with cloughs down to the river.

John Richardson, the builder of most of Edgar Wood's houses in Hale, constructed Halecroft on Hale Road to Wood's design in 1890. The house was used as Hale Urban District Council offices in the 1960s and early 1970s. A local builder related a story about Halecroft: when George Cruikshanks was an apprentice joiner of about 17, he used to start at half-past six in the morning. He went to work at Halecroft one morning in the 1890s and was whistling away when the bedroom window opened and the contents of a chamber pot were emptied over him. About an hour later John Richardson, the eccentric millionaire, came out and gave him £5 to buy a new suit. Cruikshanks said that he wouldn't mind if it happened every morning. Most houses had chamberpots in those days, with outdoor WCs. Very few had indoor facilities.

Improved communications with Manchester via the Bridgewater Canal had greatly increased Altrincham's importance. Fertile soil round about made it a centre for market garden produce which was transported as far as South Lancashire. Even before the advent of the railway in 1849, the area was becoming a popular place to live and the railway greatly accelerated this development. Housing was needed for labourers and a whole new working class district named Newtown was built between Hale Road and Lloyd Street, Altrincham, later called 'Calley' locally.

Speculative building

The railway line from Altrincham to Oxford Road opened in 1849 as the Manchester South Junction & Altrincham Railway. Bowdon Station at the foot of The Downs enabled commuters to reach Manchester in less than half the time taken by road or canal. Even before 1849, houses were built below Bowdon Church, along Langham Road and Sandy Lane (Stamford Road) towards their junction with Ashley Road. From 1850 mansions for cotton kings or cottontots as they became known were built on the sunny slopes of Bowdon Hill. By 1851, the census showed that Peel Causeway's six households had become sixteen. Bowdon Peel Causeway (now Hale) Station opened in 1862.

Hale was changing even before the first trains came through, before a single farm was sold for building on the western boundary in Peel Causeway. Some of first urban building began about 1850 in Peel Street, now Peel Road, on the northern side of Long Lane, now Hale Road. A terrace of small houses went up along one of the narrow fields on the Hale Low estate. It remains a mystery why this particular site should have been chosen. The new street stood out in the fields, separated from any similar building by half a mile. Peel Street's inhabitants were labourers, bricklayers, painters, tilers, coachmen and gardeners, all trades needed for the new residents of Bowdon and Altrincham. These houses have all been replaced but it is still a narrow road.

A more substantial development had taken place at Peel Causeway which before 1842 consisted of Peel Causeway Farm and two small blocks of cottages occupied by six households. Charles Holt, Samuel Brown and Joseph Owen, speculative builders from Altrincham and Bowdon bought land in Peel Causeway in 1849 and built Willow Bank along Ashley Road consisting of two blocks of five terraced villas with gardens at the front and back, and a row of six cottages flush with the road. Later both Owen and Holt lived in the new community they had created. Holt's own house, The Willows, still stands near the corner of Willowtree Road. Four new terraced houses built in the garden were for sale at £525,000 each in 2004.

At that time Spring Bank Brook still ran behind these houses and the remaining deep ditch can still be seen behind numbers 80 to 124 Ashley Road. From the depth of the ditch there must have been a good flow of water at times and it may have powered not only Seddon's Mill on Stamford Road but also a further water wheel mentioned by Tarbolton behind 124 Ashley Road. A row of cottages called Poplar Grove built about 1835 faced south over the brook at the back of the new houses and a few still exist as offices. The villas remain substantially as they were built, but the cottages on Ashley Road were all converted into shops later in the century, now largely restaurants.

John Clarke ran a school in one of the three cottages by the entry next to the present Railway Inn before moving to Hale Barns. Next door, Thomas Hardey Chear kept a dozen donkeys on land behind his cottage and took them up to Bowdon Church 'for the delight of the children', while his wife Elizabeth practised as a 'bleeder with leeches'. Their cottage eventually became part of the Railway Inn. On the other side was Peel Causeway's first cottage shop, selling general provisions. Chear died on December 23, 1866, at the age of 58, and his wife two years later. Their tombstone in Bowdon Churchyard reads 'Don't be alarmed; pray to the Lord'.

Among the early inhabitants of the Poplar Grove cottages at the back of Ashley Road were three bricklayers, a plasterer, two joiners, a coachman and a gardener. A linen merchant, two pattern designers and a merchant's clerk lived in the villas towards Spring Bank. During the next ten years these residents were joined by milliners, dressmakers, laundresses, two commercial travellers, an insurance agent, two engineers, a chemist, a yarn salesman and a clock manufacturer. The bakery in Peel Causeway served the customers and the bakehouse under the pavement kept feet warm and dry until legislation in January 1904 banned underground bakehouses. There was a beer house, later to become a brewery, opposite between Ashley Road and Broomfield Lane.

The railway station heralds in a new era for Hale

The opening of the Cheshire Midland Railway to Northwich on May 22nd, 1862 stopping at Hale Station, then called Bowdon (Peel Causeway), was the dawn of a new era for Hale, though no one appreciated it at the time. The station was built at Hale for residents of the eastern parts of Bowdon but the promoters of the railway were only interested in the fast transport of valuable Northwich salt to Manchester and little stations on the way were of minor importance.

Bowdon Church Vestry Committee negotiated with the railway company to cross Hale Road with a bridge and there were no protests when the Cheshire Midland saved money by putting a level crossing at Peel Causeway because they had three other bridges to build near the Bleeding Wolf. The level crossing on Ashley Road was to remain a thorny problem. In 1906 plans for a subway were drawn up but Cheshire Lines Committee resisted the scheme despite the Urban District Council's efforts which continued for nearly fifteen years.

House building had halted for a few years because of the construction of the line. The Cheshire Lines Committee had bought up surrounding land and began to sell when the course of the line was fixed. Building resumed, largely west of the railway over the next ten years. The existing line of building on the south side of Ashley Road was extended almost up to the railway and in 1865 included a new inn, The Cheshire Midland. Between the two inns were more cottages, pulled down in the late 1870s to build the present three-storey shops.



*Peel Causeway Brewery c1900.
It was situated where the Millennium Clock now stands (AAIA).*

Records show the commercial growth of the Peel Causeway area while Hale Barns remained a quiet village surrounded by farmland. The following table illustrates the comparatively rapid growth of Peel Causeway between 1863 and 1900, Hale Barns remaining static:

	Peel Causeway	Hale Barns
1863	1 shop, 1 beer house, 2 farms	2 shops, 2 inns, 26 farms
1892	16 shops, 2 inns, 2 farms	3 shops, 2 inns, 26 farms
1900	31 shops, 2 inns	3 shops, 2 inns, 26 farms

Spring Road and the north side of Peel Causeway were built up from the 1850s. During 1901 two houses in Midland Terrace opposite the Railway Inn were bought and turned into a men's social club, but after a year or two the scheme was abandoned through lack of support. Local architect John Macnamara was one of the first committee members.

The most outstanding development in Hale was Peel Brewery, the new community's only industrial building, on the triangle of land bordered by the railway line, Broomfield Lane and Ashley Road. The Cheshire Midland Company sold the land to John Siddeley, seedsman and chemist of Altrincham who built a brewery whose tall chimney and ugly outline dominated Peel Causeway until it was demolished in 1907 for road widening. The beer was known locally as Siddeley's Purge.

Hale station and its level crossing presented a charming rural scene in the early 1880s. Before the construction of the station buildings and the signal box, the gates were opened by hand and the crossing keeper sat in a little box at road level. He was on duty day and night, and was expected to rest in the intervals between infrequent trains. On one occasion he was caught napping by the

unexpected return of a breakdown train from Plumley, which carried away one of his gates and deposited it further up the platform.

Over the railway crossing, on land between Hale Road and Broomfield Lane, Mr. Thorley, a blind ex-schoolmaster from Stockport, managed Bowdon Nursery supplying gardens on Rose Hill and Richmond Hill, Bowdon. This nursery and the isolated villas of the early commuters were further indications of approaching urbanisation.

Urbanisation changes the landscape

For 25 years or so after the opening of Peel Causeway Station, this urbanisation continued steadily. When the north side of Peel Causeway and the whole of Spring Road were built up, development inevitably crossed the railway line. Until 1868/9 Spring Bank Brook had run down both sides of Ashley Road to Cambridge Road where the brooks joined and meandered across Crescent Road and Cecil Road towards Motley Bank and the Bollin. The brook was culverted across the present Altrincham Grammar School playing fields enabling building to take place from 1870 in what is now Hale village. Bowdon Nursery was sold in 1875, and Victoria Road and Albert Road were developed on the site.



*Hale Drill Hall originally built as a skating rink in 1876,
demolished in 1970 and replaced by a hotel and shops (AAIA).*

Houses went up on both sides of Ashley Road as far as Ollerbarrow Farm. Housing development on Cambridge Road started in 1877, and Lisson Grove and Cecil Road followed. Purpose-built shops and living space above went up on the corner of Broomfield Lane. Local builders did the work, still catering for the Altrincham overflow rather than migration from Manchester.

In the early part of the 1870s houses were built with water and gas but no sewers. From 1877 sewers were laid to new houses such as in Cambridge Road where the three-storey houses had a maid living in the attic and a mechanical bell system. Gas was piped for cooking and heating, and with gas lights around the fireplace. Electricity came later, from the 1900s, but a few houses in Hale remained without electricity until the 1950s.

Manchester businessmen began to look in Hale for investment opportunities. In 1880 William Berry, a Manchester blacking manufacturer, bought some 30-year old cottages on Ashley Road between Poplar Grove and the railway line, pulled them down and built the three-storey block of shops. Another, bolder venture was a hall for roller skating on the south side of Ashley Road built in 1876, and later used as the Drill Hall, demolished in 1970.

Further south along Ashley Road, on the opposite side, St. Baldred's Hall was built in 1883 as a girls' home by philanthropist Frank Crossley. In 1898 it was a police orphanage, then a few years later it was sold as assembly rooms for social and political gatherings, and was Hale Conservative Club until it closed in 2008. It is now used as offices.

In the 1880s John Marriott, a yarn merchant, and Henry Goldsmith, a builder and Manchester architect, began a great leap forward, purchasing land and developing it well beyond the existing building area. They counted on the improved rail service and on the increasingly built-up nature of the Manchester suburbs forcing business and professional men further out.

Marriott built detached and semi-detached villas along Ashley Road, near the Bleeding Wolf, (at that time a public house and now a small development of apartments.) Designed by William

Owen, the son of one of the early developers of Peel Causeway, these were substantial houses catering for business and professional men. Owen lived in one of the semis himself and in 1885 Alfred Tarbolton, a rising Manchester solicitor, newly married and about to become the area's most important local politician and historian, bought the house next door.

Goldsmith was more ambitious than Marriott and took greater risks. Holloway Clough at the top of Arthog Road presented engineering difficulties because the easy approach along the line of Bower Road and Woodhead Drive had to be abandoned when one of the landowners refused to sell. A much steeper route was taken, beginning parallel to the lower part of Bankhall Lane, and the top of Holloway Clough was levelled and used to fill in the hollow.

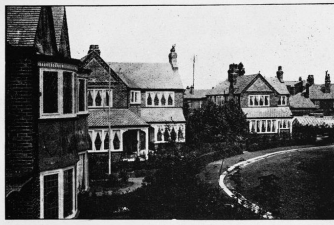
TO INTENDING RESIDENTS AND OTHERS.

The houses depicted in the illustration are situated in a new road, within two minutes of the Station, yet almost in the country, overlooking the Bollin Valley and receiving the breezes from the Rivers Dee and Mersey. Seddon Road as it is called, is named after the late Right Hon. Richard J. Seddon, P.C., (Premier of New Zealand 1893-1906) and was opened in 1911 by Mrs. Seddon and her daughters.

style with Rustic Bricks are of a substantial character and have been planned with a view to labour saving, as homes for the "modern business man." The elevations are pleasing to the eye and the interior fittings have been arranged with a view to giving comfortable and cheerful rooms.

For particulars of the houses, which are for sale, apply to . . .

ADAM F. FOX, Builder,
Holmrook, Heath Road, HALE.



The houses which are built in the early English

Seddon Road ads for 1910 (AAIA).

Overdale, the first house on this distinctive site was built for Jonathan Norbury of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company. The almost trackless country was lit by storm lanterns hung at selected points, and often guests and neighbours lost their way and wandered over the fields towards the River Bollin. The new road was named after Arthog Hall, near Barmouth, at the request of the Fodens who sold the land from their Bank Hall estate. Another house built in the area of Holloway Clough in 1899 was Halliwell House on the corner of Rappax Road and Bankhall Lane and a son of the owner became Lord Arnold of Hale in 1924. A meeting at Halliwell House in 1931 with Stanley Baldwin, Ramsay MacDonald and their ministers, resulted in the formation of the national government that year.

Adam Fox walked from the Lake District to Altrincham about 1870 looking for work as a joiner. He eventually became very successful, building houses at the northern end of Victoria Road, then about 1900, substantial villas in Park Road, Park Drive, Park Avenue and Harrop Road. He built his own house Holmrook, in Heath Road in 1901 and Seddon Road in 1909/11, named after his friend the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Richard Seddon.

Kensington Gardens Estate. :: Freehold Houses.

"From CITY to SUNSHINE."

MANCHESTER (CENTRAL) TO HALE.

SEASON TICKETS.

	FIRST CLASS.	THIRD CLASS.
Yearly...	19 8 6	12 0 0
Half-Yearly...	10 10 0	6 9 9
Quarterly...	6 1 6	3 10 6
Monthly...	2 4 7	1 5 10

TRAINS FOR BUSINESS MEN.

MORNING—Leave Hale: 7.5, 7.55, 8.23, 8.50, 9.30, 9.39, 10.39.
 EVENING—Leave Manchester (Central): 4.32, 5.0, 5.12, 5.40, 6.5, 6.40, 8.10.

8 Miles from Manchester.
 ::
 About 35 Trains per day.
 ::
 Special Trains for Theatregoers are run in the Season.

OPEN SPACE at Entrance to the Estate.
 YOU CANNOT BUY A BETTER HOME.





Advertisement for Kensington Gardens 1920 (AAIA).

Between 1861 and 1891 the population of Hale increased from 500 to 600. In the next ten years it jumped from 2,803 to 4,562, and by 1911 it had reached 8,351. In the years immediately after the turn of the century the council passed more than 100 plans each year for houses, extensions, workshops, stables and roads. Plans were passed to convert Ashley Road houses into shops on condition that the front gardens were paved to allow for future road widening. Today restaurants are busy reclaiming this land for pavement dining.

The tide of building flowed on uninterrupted, almost reaching Hale Barns, now the eastern boundary of Hale UDC. Back in Manchester, some churchgoers commented on the dwindling congregations to a minister. "Ah, yes," he replied, "*they always go either to Heaven or to Hale.*"

The final days of farming

When the railway came through and Spring Bank Brook was culverted to drain the area, a further great tide of urbanisation hit Hale. The outbuildings of Peel Causeway Farm were pulled down and the farmhouse became the stationmaster's house. The farmer moved into a new building called New Farm opposite Ollerbarrow Farm, now the site of Cecil Road car park, at that time conveniently placed half way along his fields which stretched to the Bleeding Wolf.

Hale farms were prosperous in their last days because of the size and nearness of Manchester and improved rail transport. These enabled farmers to withstand the cattle plague of 1866 and the competition from produce brought over by steamship from North and South America and Australasia.

An epidemic of foot and mouth disease took hold in England in the winter of 1865/66, possibly via cattle imported from Hungary. In Cheshire 70,000 cows died or were killed and farmers lost 34% of their cattle. No doubt Hale was affected. Joseph Hough, a farmer in Mobberley, successfully tried vaccination and lost no cattle despite being surrounded by contaminated farms. At Hale Green Farm, John Burgess' stock was devastated by rinderpest. He could not pay his rent and had to move to Rose Cottage nearby. Farmers on the Tatton estate were fortunate that their landlord, Lord Egerton, was paternalistic and wealthy enough not to press for rent until they recovered.

Hale's mixed farming was an advantage. Fresh milk, and large crops of fresh vegetables for immediate transport to Manchester continued in demand and were not affected by colonial and American farm produce. The Renshaws grew market produce at Well Green for several generations. Lettuces, onions, turnips and parsley were washed in the evenings and just after 11.30 pm the teamsman would arrive and at midnight would set off with a loaded cart for the Manchester markets, arriving at 4 am. Other methods of marketing vegetables were also used. One gardener cultivated an outlying portion of the cemetery, stored his produce in a rented house in Peel Street and sent out children to sell them from door to door. A famous potato crop from Buck Hall Farm, Ringway, was in the charge of the teamsman Arthur Hamnett who claimed the proud distinction of driving the tallest horse in any market – 18.3 hands.

No work of any kind was allowed on Sundays, not even cooking or washing dishes so all meals were prepared on the Saturday.



Broad Lane Head Farm barn, later converted to a house (AAIA).

It seems to have been a healthy open-air life with some people living to the age of 90. It was also a life that carried on the tradition of the Fighting Men of Hale. Cheshire bowmen were prized during medieval times and no doubt some came from Hale. Bare fist fights took place in Altrincham, particularly at the time of fairs and Dean's Pond, now King George's Pool, is a recorded site. The farm labourers of the day, hard-working reliable men, had drinking as their main amusement and good-natured fights were normal after closing time. One such fighter was John Holford, who died in the 1870s. He was a farmer and butcher and lived in the farmhouse at The Triangle, Broad Lane Head, then a farm. One of the last of these fighting men to die in the late 19th century was John Taylor, a tenant at Ashley Heath Farm.

Impressive farming in Cheshire's traditions continued at the largest farms on the Tatton estate at Ringway. Once the threat of a new railway line out of Manchester was over, no shadow of residential development fell on the area. Airports and motorways were unheard of and Ringway remained agricultural. Samuel Raingill of The Grange, once Pinfold Farm, Ringway, was noted throughout Cheshire for his prizewinning dairy herd, and his neighbour, James Jackson of the Manor Farm, was famous for breeding shire horses. There were large prosperous farms in the western parts of the district and northern and southern fringes.

Landowners

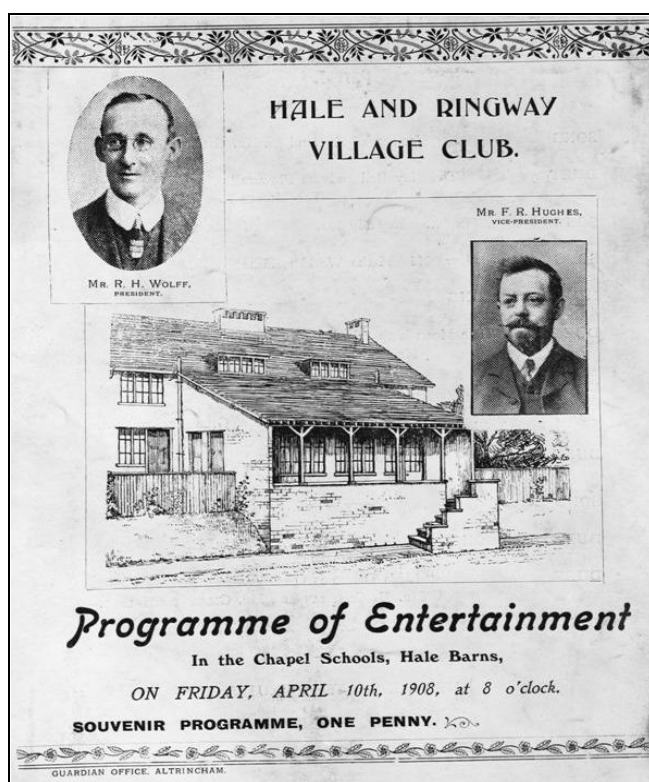
Sometimes an injection of city wealth brought prosperity. Samuel Brooks of the banking firm of Cunliffe-Brooks and known familiarly in the Stretford neighbourhood as 'Owd Stink O'Brass', bought 800 acres in Hale when land was sold following the departure of the 7th Earl of Stamford to Enville in 1855. His son, later Sir William Cunliffe-Brooks, bought more land, until the estate stretched from Davenport Green to Warburton Green and Brooklands, and included much of Hale Barns. The farms, including Davenport Green Hall, were nearly all let on yearly tenancies. A number of them were rebuilt in comfortable style, and given substantial outbuildings.

The general layout of the Brooks' estate, of which the Hale section was only a fringe, was planned in a manner worthy of the 18th century. A great carriageway, double-hedged and tree-lined with plantations eight yards wide on either side, was intended to run from Brooklands Station to Warburton Green. Samuel Brooks launched the scheme and personally supervised the first stage from Davenport Green to the Wilmslow Road and lunched every day at The Unicorn in Hale Barns. After his death his son William continued with one break at Roaring Gate Farm to Stockport Road, where it linked up with the Brooklands section. No start was ever made at the Warburton Green end. Part of the great avenue remains as Brooks' Drive.

During the late 19th century, Sir William Brooks, MP for the division, enjoyed the role of lord of the manor at Hale Barns. He planted trees on Hale Barns Green, fenced it and provided a drinking fountain. He removed the old smithy and the cottages nearby, replacing them with a new smithy and houses. He gave land for the black-and-white mission church, built at a cost of £750, and headed the list of subscriptions for rebuilding the Church of England school in the village. He also paid for the installation of lighting and water supply in the village. The shape of present-day Hale Barns was considerably influenced by his patronage. After his death the estate was held in trust for his grandchildren, but none ever lived in the neighbourhood, and in 1917 it was broken up into lots and sold.

Robert Harrop Wolff of The Clough took over the Brooks' position as patron at Hale Barns. His father, C H Wolff, came from Nottingham in the 1860s. His mother was from a local family, the Harrops, and had inherited important estate farms: Barrow House, Rossmill Farm and Holford's Farm at Broad Lane Head. C H Wolff built The Clough, a sizeable Victorian-style mansion, near to Barrow Farm, which continued as Clough Farm. His bailiff lived in Hill Top Cottage across Barrow Lane, which was turned into a drive, with a lodge at the entrance to Broad Lane Head in similar style to The Clough itself. The Clough and Barrow Farm were demolished in the early 1970s.

R H Wolff took his religious and social duties very seriously. He was secretary of Hale Chapel for many years; reopened the defunct Working Men's Club in Hale Barns in 1905 under the new title of the Hale and Ringway Village Club; and provided new premises opposite to Yestercroft Cottages in the centre of the village. Hale Cricket Club, which played on a ground behind Hale Chapel, owed



1908 advertisement for Hale & Ringway Village Club, which was where the terrace of houses are between Tithebarn Road and Elmridge Drive (AAIA).

much to his patronage. The lodge, once the manse for the Unitarian minister, is now a private house as is the village clubhouse on Wilmslow Road.

More transport changes

The railways drove the stage and mail coaches off the roads. Bicycles were well-established, no longer perilous penny-farthings or bone-shakers, but equipped with wheels of reasonable size, pneumatic tyres and efficient brakes. They were still too expensive for most of the working classes but those with middling incomes used them for business as well as pleasure, and several Hale doctors cycled on their rounds.

The main modes of transport were still horse and foot. These were the last great days of the horse. There were horses everywhere for pulling the fine carriages of the greater households and the gigs and dog carts of the farmers, as well as for ploughing and harrowing. Farm vehicles bringing produce to the Altrincham and Manchester markets were pulled by horses as were cabs at Hale Station, brakes and waggonettes for party outings, milk carts and tradesmen's vehicles. The horses ranged from splendid hunters to great shire horses and humble nags. They all needed shoeing, and there were old-established smithies at Ringway and Hale Barns, and one in Brown Street near Peel Causeway station, tucked away in the mass of new streets just over the Altrincham border.

Following the success of the first passenger line from Liverpool to Manchester in 1830, the line from Altrincham to Oxford Road was opened in 1849 as the Manchester South Junction & Altrincham Railway. The first Altrincham Station was built just south of the site of the railway crossings near The Old Mill pub. In September of the same year the line was extended to Bowdon Station at the top of Lloyd Street. Bowdon Peel Causeway (now Hale) station opened in 1862 and was an early venture by the Cheshire Lines Committee.



The River Bollin before alteration for Runway 2 (AAIA).

By the end of the 1870s Hale Moss was abandoned to gypsies. The old area was a battlefield for dogs and men, with stinking dangerous pits left from peat cutting and animal carcasses. Lord Stamford donated land and a park was laid out which opened in 1880. The rest of Hale Moss was fenced and eventually cleared up, drained and the edge used for housing in the 1920s.

Local residents included amateur botanists, self-educated men who took advantage of two developments in the 1840s, the spread of the railways and the introduction of the Saturday afternoon half-holiday. The most influential of these was Leo Grindon. He welcomed the arrival of the station at Peel Causeway as it provided a shorter route through the heart of modern Hale to his favourite country haunt of Cotterill Clough at Ringway.

The writings of Grindon and others had their effect in weekend visitors and those in search of a home in Hale. Tarbolton, who led the flood of commuters to Hale from 1885 to 1914, knew his Grindon well, and echoed him when he said, "The glory of Hale lies in its country roads and its rural footpaths, its trees and its fields, and its ever-rolling Bollin." He believed that this was Hale's main attraction as a place to live.

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Tithe Award and Map of 1842.

10. THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Timeline of events

Date	Local	Regional	National
1904	Horse-drawn bus runs from the Old Bleeding Wolf, Hale to Broadheath. Horse-drawn trams operating in Broadheath until 1924.	The Midland Hotel, Manchester opens and Rolls meet Royce there, resulting in the formation of Rolls-Royce.	King Edward VII 1901-1910.
1907	Electric trams run from Altrincham to Manchester.	AV Roe flies the first British plane in 1909 and a year later builds & sells them for £450.	Retirement pensions start 1908. George V 1910-1936.
1911	Captain Scott visits Seamons Moss School, Oldfield Brow, fundraising for his final Antarctic expedition.	Ford factory opens at Trafford Park for assembly-line production of Model T cars.	Captain Scott's last expedition to Antarctica 1912. Titanic sinks on maiden voyage, 1912. WWI 1914-18.
1931	Trams to Manchester replaced by buses.	Building starts on the Wythenshawe housing estate.	Edward VIII abdicates 1936. George VI 1936-1952.
1937	Altrincham becomes a Municipal Borough.	Ringway Airport, now Manchester International Airport, opens 1938.	Frank Whittle invents the jet engine. Robert Watson-Watt develops radar, 1935. WWII 1939-45.
1940	Blitz in Broadheath affects Hale.	Christmas Blitz inflicts serious damage on central Manchester.	Dunkirk; the Battle of Britain. Income Tax 10s (50p) in the £1.
1951	Census triggers local slum clearance.		Elizabeth II ascends the throne 1952. Wartime rationing ends 1954.
1962	Population of Altrincham, Bowdon and Hale about 63,000.	Co-operative Insurance Society skyscraper opens in Manchester.	
1971	Population of Altrincham 40,787.	Population of Manchester 541,468.	North Sea oil discovered 1969.
1974	Hale becomes part of Trafford MBC.	Formation of Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council.	
1990	Altrincham Borough celebrates 700 years.	Metrolink opens between Bury, Manchester and Altrincham, 1992.	Tim Berners-Lee invents the World Wide Web, 1991.
2000	Hale Millennium clock built. Runway 2 completed at Manchester Airport 2001.	Population of Manchester recorded as 439,500.	The Millennium.

Transport changes

James Ward ran a horse-drawn cab business in Peel Causeway before World War I with his garage at 20 Victoria Road, Hale. His sons William and Herbert later opened car showrooms at 1 Lisson Grove, Hale which had been the family home. After the war there was a thriving business in teaching driving, garage servicing and repairs. James also ran a horse bus from 1900 to 1907 from the Bleeding Wolf, Hale to the Cheshire Cheese in Broadheath. The Manchester trams terminated at the Pelican at that time.

At the turn of the century, a family who came to live in half-built Avon Road, Hale would have been excited at the prospect of living in the country. Laburnum Lane and Nursery Avenue were not yet built and there were fields all around. A few hundred yards across the fields on the corner of Ashley Road and Bankhall Lane, was Ashley Heath Farm - the house still stands. In the Altrincham direction, Long Lane, now Hale Road, was a developed highway with almost no houses, but by the time it reached Hale Barns it was lined with hedges and the surface was uneven as setts were laid only part way across. The new gas lamps were lit only when there was no moon. Road surfaces in the area were poor by modern standards and in bad weather the cabs at Hale Station were a vital link with the railway for Hale residents.



James Ward's taxi order office on Peel Causeway (1920s, AAIA).

Various attempts were made to provide road transport. In 1860 George Baxter set up a twice-daily omnibus service from Hale Barns to Altrincham, but the fare of sixpence (2½p) was too much for the rural community and the service stopped in 1880. In 1906 Altrincham and Hale Councils refused to allow a motorbus company to develop the route because buses were considered a nuisance and added to road maintenance costs. However, in 1910 they relented and approved an application to run a two-horse bus.



Ashley Road looking towards Hale railway station (AAIA).

By 1900 there was a reasonable schedule of trains to and from Manchester, and a certain sporting element sometimes entered into catching the morning train. Each train sounded its whistle three times on leaving Ashley Station. Those living near the Bleeding Wolf could hear it and could just catch the train with a quick dash along Cecil Road which now had some of its surface made up. During the winter months some carriages were heated with large metal cylinders of hot water. An editorial in 1907 in the *Altrincham, Bowdon & Hale Guardian* records Hale's dissatisfaction over irregular bus services and plans were produced for a local tramway in 1900, seven years before the first tram ran from Piccadilly in Manchester to Altrincham in 1907.

Children always walked to school. No one dreamt of providing public transport for them and bicycles were not in everyday use. Religion was very important and on Sundays young and old walked to church. The Victorian and Edwardian urban middle classes were very strict observers of the Sabbath and farmers saw to it that their workers did the same, often to both morning and evening services. On Sunday mornings the roads would be thronged with families going to church. Many children also attended Sunday School in the afternoon and made the journey from home to church six times. The most impressive walker was the organist of Ringway Chapel who lived in Bowdon. Every Sunday morning he walked along Hale Road and Wilmslow Road to Ringway. After morning service he ate at The Romper and then walked to Hale Barns where he played for the evening service in the Mission Church before walking home.

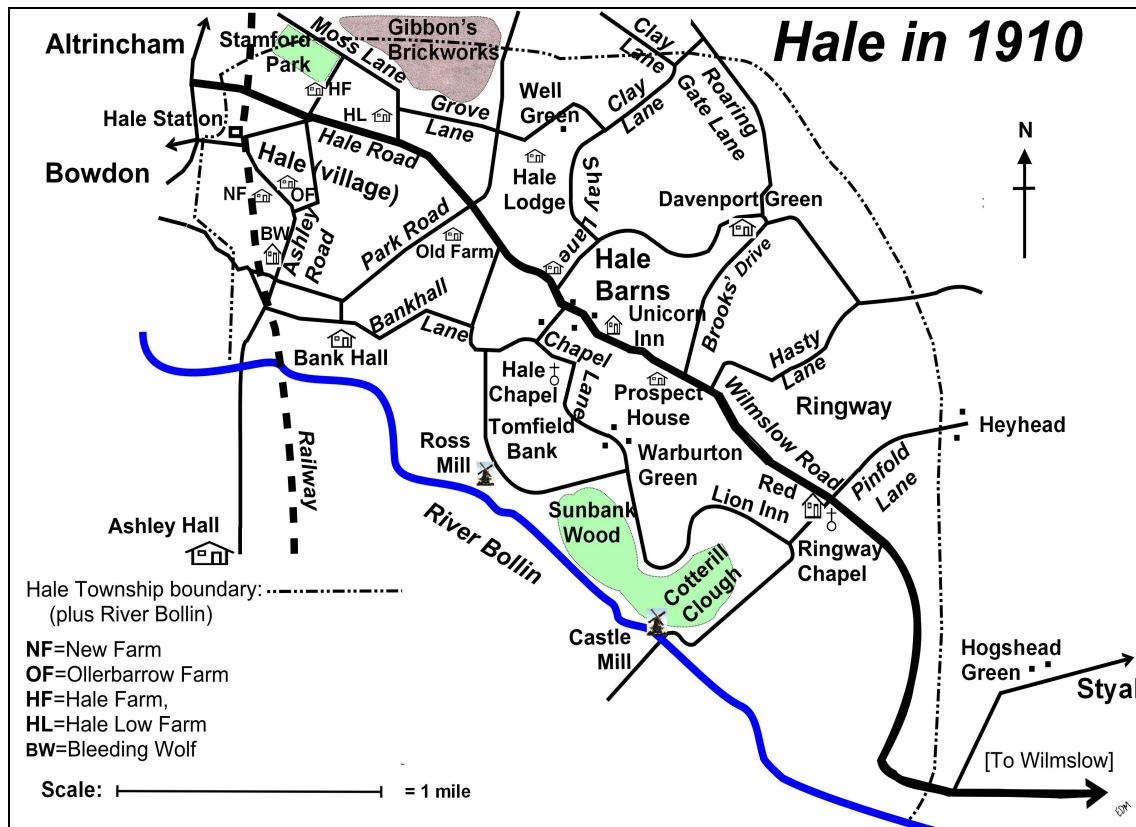
By 1910 Hale Council reluctantly allowed the first motor taxi owned by CR Alexander to run from Hale Station, charging one shilling per mile. There was still opposition from horse cabbies who ensured that the rank was never empty by trotting round from the Victoria Road rank. The press was hostile, as recorded by the *Altrincham, Bowdon & Hale Guardian*: "*Motoring is the dread of the cyclists, the despair of the carriage men and the foe of the peaceful pedestrian.*"



*James Ward's garage Victoria Road, now with petrol pumps,
later Drabble & Allen (1920s, AAIA.).*

By the outbreak of World War One (WWI) the Alexander fleet of taxis had grown to five or six and had a stand on the Victoria Road side of the railway. The railway strike of 1911 had changed the views of both council and press and even the *Altrincham, Bowdon & Hale Guardian* admitted taxis were useful. As business increased one of the main worries was the shortage of trained drivers. There was business for weddings, funerals and special tours and several doctors began to hire taxis for their rounds instead of using bicycles. By this time the council had appointed a hackney carriage inspector, and both taxis and horse cabs were inspected once a year at Ward's Lisson Grove garage.

The 1920s saw the installation of petrol pumps in place of the two-gallon sealed tins carried in cars by motorists. Hale has a place in motoring history because the first pump in the north of England was said to have been installed at the Bleeding Wolf Garage in 1927, operated by Len Ollier. In spite of this service the average motorist was suspicious and went on demanding sealed tins which were still available in the 1950s.



Hale in 1908 based on the 25-inch Ordnance Survey Map. The mosses had disappeared. The Manchester railway had been extended to Knutsford in 1862 and arrived in Hale at that time. From 1875 Hale expanded along Ashley Road towards Hale Barns. The Bollin valley was largely preserved and Sunbank Wood and Cotterill Clough later became nature reserves. The village of Peel Causeway was renamed Hale in 1900 and the area east of Hale Barns became known as Ringway.

By 1923, as petrol engines and bodywork improved, bus companies started a regular frequent service from Altrincham and Hale railway stations to the outlying areas of Hale Barns. A short-lived venture in 1910 with an open motor coach foundered because of the danger to passengers from low branches of trees on Hale's roads. The Altrincham Bus Company agreed to run two services from Altrincham Station with stops at Hale Road Bridge, Queens Road, the Cemetery, Park Road and Broad Lane, Hale Barns; and from Hale Station to The Bleeding Wolf, Tolland Lane and the top of Arthog Road which was the terminus because of stumps across the road. Eventually the stumps were removed and the service became circular. Buses still run on this route today and the stops remain unchanged but the route has been extended.

Before World War II people often walked several miles to work. Horses were used by those who could afford it and had land to graze them. On Sundays walking was an important leisure activity - to the Dunham Road to watch the traffic or to Ashley or Mobberley for tea. Bicycles still played an important role into the 1960s and were visible in force at the beginning and end of the day at Broadheath when workers arrived and left.

Ringway Airport & the war years



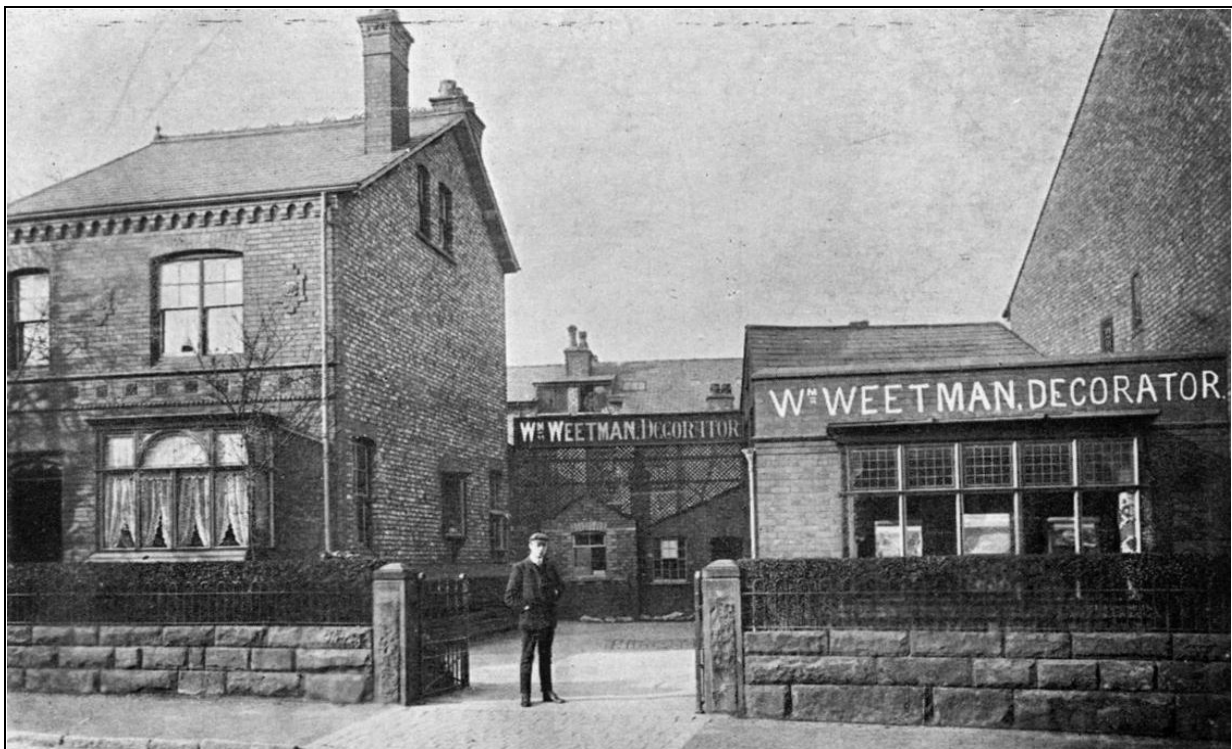
A party from the Cheshire Yeomanry pulling a gun carriage near Castle Mill about 1905. The mill was rebuilt in 1808 (AAIA).



A sunny day at Castle Mill Swimming Pool in the 1930s (AAIA).

Ringway was part of Hale until 1900 when Hale became an Urban District Council, with Alfred Tarbolton as chairman. Following advice from Hale resident John Leeming, Ringway Airport was opened in 1938 when Manchester Corporation, found the grass runway at Barton Airport unsuitable for further expansion. Rumour has it that Dutch Airline KLM told Manchester Corporation to find a new site or they would stop flying to Manchester. The hamlet of Heyhead and a number of farms disappeared under concrete and now only war memorials off Woodhouse Lane mark the site of Heyhead Chapel. Flights started in 1936 with scheduled air services from 1938. Fairey Aviation of Heaton Chapel constructed hangars at Ringway and by 1939 were producing 53 aircraft a month for various allied air forces. Manchester Corporation retained ownership of the airport during the war and were very successful in expanding it afterwards. In 1939 there were 7,600 passengers; in 1946 10,000; and by 1974 when it was renamed Manchester International Airport the number had reached 2,418,000. A first extension to the runway took place in 1969 allowing Jumbos to land. Runway 2 opened in 2001 and the airport now handles 24 million passengers per year. It has dramatically increased traffic in the area. Hale Road, once the rural Long Lane, is now a major link to the airport and the motorway. Hale Barns, with its proximity to these modern developments, has lost much of its farmland to housing and the airport.

A War Memorial of a soldier dressed for the battlefield in the gardens at the junction of Broomfield Lane and Hale Road was unveiled before a large crowd in March 1922. Plaques record the names of 150 young men from Hale who died in WWI. After World War Two (WWII) 50 more names were added. Apart from this and a second memorial at Hale Barns, the wars did not change the appearance of Hale, as bombs caused relatively minor damage. Several fell in Altrincham killing about 20 people. Fortunately many of those dropped in Hale fell in the countryside or into gardens, with just one person killed. In 1940 a land mine, probably intended for the railway, landed on Weetman's decorators in Peel Causeway. It went through a pony cart and into a stream below ground level, but failed to explode. The horse was injured and had to be put down. Ashley Road was closed for several days, buses were diverted around Spring Road, and neighbours were evacuated to Hale Cinema and to friends' homes and cellars while the bomb was dealt with.



William Weetman Decorators on Peel Causeway near Bath Place, built 1899 (AAIA).

A bomb also dropped in Bradbury Central school yard but again failed to explode. Another fell in Hale Cemetery blowing a gravestone through the roof and bedroom floor of a house in Chiltern Drive. Bombs also dropped on Moss Lane, Altrincham at the top of Oakfield Road where 12 people were killed, and on Cleveland Road, Bath Street, South Downs Road, Hale Barns and near Castle Mill Swimming Pool.

The whole population was involved in war-related activities. During both wars, the Red Cross ran hospitals in St. Peter's Assembly Rooms and the Congregational Church School opposite. During the 1939-45 conflict, a number of larger houses in Hale were taken over by the British and American armies. Belgian refugees were billeted at Holly Bank at the corner of Delahays Road and Grove Lane. The war brought evacuees from Manchester and London, immediate rationing and total blackout, air-raid precautions and a flood of American soldiers everywhere. Armaments were transferred from a dump at Sinderland and passed through Hale Station at night.

The Number 1 Parachute Training School was established at Ringway and practised from a basket under a barrage balloon over Tatton Park and Rostherne Mere. After the war the aerodrome became a haven for wildlife until its expansion in the 1960s.

The present allotments in Moss Lane are a relic of the 'Dig for Victory' campaign of WWI. The movement started in 1917 when the Urban District Council provided a specialist to lecture on land cultivation, and made a horse plough available. Volunteers were numerous and enthusiastic and by 1918 there were 560 allotments. After the war an Allotment Holders' Association was formed into a registered society to take over management and administration. A popular annual show was held and the association became a great power in Hale during the 1920s. Increased demand for building land curtailed their activities, but there was a revival during WWII with sites in Hill Top, Nursery Avenue and Murieston Road. After the war another contraction reduced the plots to 130, all on the northern boundary. A new allotment site was developed at Wellfield Lane.

House building in Hale Barns

The two world wars temporarily slowed down the spread of houses and the growth of population in the area. The growth rate of 1901-11, when the population almost doubled, was slowing down before 1914 but building did not stop until 1916. With the sale of the Cunliffe-Brooks estates in Hale and Ringway in 1919 more land became available for building including Davenport Green Farm and Elm Farm, and land north of Hale Barns along Shay Lane and south-east along Chapel Lane.

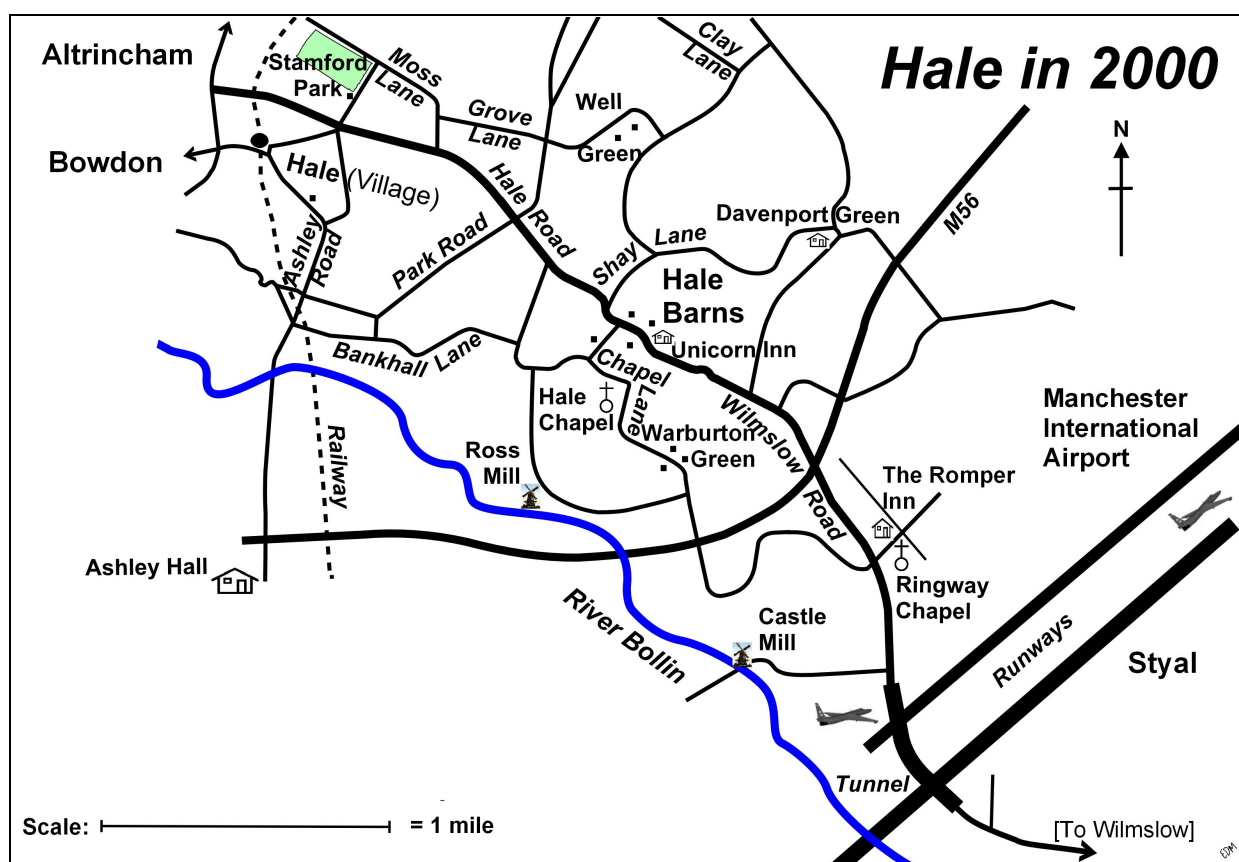
At about the same time the council bought ten acres of land for housing in response to the 'land fit for heroes' promise of Lloyd George. The Geddes axe fell just as the deputation from Hale reached Whitehall to put the scheme before the authorities and claim the subsidy. The land was later sold to the Hale Barns Cottage Trust Company and to private builders. The company agreed to build cottages with a controlled rent to house working men living in Hale and the result was Tithe Barn Road and Barns Place. The builders erected houses in Crampton Drive for private sale.

By the 1930s Chapel Lane was being built up around the 1723 Chapel. The adjustment of the eastern UDC boundary in 1936, released land up to the proposed Green Belt for a large expansion of housing in Hale. The new area included land west of Warburton Green towards the River Bollin and up to Hasty Lane and Davenport Green. The southern part of this new area was scheduled for development, and a beginning made with Carrwood, Castleway, Elmridge Drive and the two ends of High Elm Road. On the north side of the Wilmslow Road the last completed stretch of Brooks' great avenue of trees was the setting for a number of large houses with extensive gardens. In the process Easter Lane Farm, a splendid example of ancient cruck-frame construction, was demolished without any record other than a drawing made years before by John Owen. Developments included almost every type of house and a wide price range from £800 for three

bedrooms to between £5,000 and £6,000 for a five-bedroom mansion with a large garage and a tennis court.

WWII halted building, but it resumed in 1950 and continued beyond Warburton Green to the line of the M56. The other big development was a large private estate in the Well Green area. Since 1945 the council has built 450 houses including flats and bungalows for older people. The first area was The Mount, Hale Barns; the second north-east of Delahays Road and Grove Lane; the third at Well Green.

In the 19th century house prices reflected the prosperity of Hale, influenced by its convenience, good transport, leafy suburbs and adjacent countryside. This was still true into the 20th century and Manchester Airport and good motorway links continue to attract residents. The only remaining agricultural land is by the banks of the Bollin and east of Ash Lane over to Davenport Green, which is scheduled for development as a business park.



Hale in the twenty-first century, with Ringway parish now part of Manchester. By 1970 part of the Wilmslow Road had been realigned to allow for the Manchester Airport runway extension. The M56 was opened in 1972. In 2000 the Bollin was diverted and culverted and a second runway built. Development of the area continues.

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11. OPEN FIELDS IN HALE

Hale's boundaries

Hale's natural boundaries are the River Bollin to the south, a branch of Spring Bank Brook/Motley Brook to the south-west and Timperley Brook to the north-east. The northern boundary has no natural features except for a quarter of a mile where it follows a branch of Spring Bank Brook. It is likely that boundaries shrank over the years, but the basic shape of Hale must have been recognisable by Saxon times. The Domesday Book and some court documents fix parts of Hale from the 13th and 14th centuries, such as Ringway in 1281 and Ashley Heath in 1377. Hale is shown in some detail on Burdett's 1777 map of Cheshire and some 18th century estate maps.

The Open Field System

The Anglo-Saxon open field⁴⁸ system had the advantage of bringing the community together, sharing good and poor land. There would usually be two or three fenced open fields grouped together, one of them left fallow, and individuals would have strips in several parts, possibly separated by furrows. The open fields in Hale seem to have been connected to small hamlets, rather than clustered around one village as in Altrincham which only had one or two open fields. Some open fields probably existed in Hale before the Norman Conquest, linked to scattered farms and hamlets, rather than larger settlements such as a village or a small town like Altrincham. The word *field* was used in the Middle Ages to denote the open arable fields of the settlement.

In Hale there appear to have been several open fields, each with a crop rotation system within the single field. The pattern would be at least one year fallow, one year winter corn (rye in Hale) and one year spring corn (oats, barley, rye) or peas or beans. An open field was sometimes divided into two, with fallowing by furlong rather than by field. The fallow years would rest the land and enable the control of weeds. Later the need for a fallow year was removed by the sowing of peas, beans or clover to restore nitrogen. The woodland would supply fuel and provide food for animals such as acorns for pigs. Nevell has found minor evidence of ridge and furrow marks between Ash Lane and Shay Lane, the results of medieval ploughing.

The court leet determined agricultural policy in medieval Hale's open fields and ploughing, harrowing, sowing and reaping were carried out communally for the lord of the manor and for tenants. Enclosure of open fields in Hale probably took place from as early as the 13th century, speeded up in the 14th century by the Black Death which caused unused land to be incorporated into other land following the death of the owners. Most Hale fields were enclosed⁴⁹ well before 1750 ahead of the rest of Cheshire where half of the arable land was still cultivated in common open fields. By 1800 few were left in Hale and gypsies camped and grazed horses on unenclosed waste on Hale Moss and Dob Lane (Park Road).

Mosses in the area such as Shadow Moss and Hale Moss were enclosed much later. Enclosures on Bankhall Lane around Broad Lane Head Farm took place in 1755. The resulting field names are a particularly rich source of information on Saxon occupation and are often derived from Old or Middle English. Good examples are *Tomfield* in Hale Barns, probably originally *tun feld*, a piece of arable farmland or town field, usually an open field.

⁴⁸ From Saxon times villagers shared large areas of common land which they divided into flats, furlongs or shoots, which themselves were divided into selions, loonts or lands which were strips of land allocated to families.

⁴⁹ Enclosure of open fields ended the communal use of common land and restricted it to a particular owner.

While a few field names go back to Saxon times and to the 13th century, most are probably much later, following enclosure. They are often descriptive, revealing a history of the area by showing how land was employed or its description. Old fields have influenced the position and shape of roads and a few have been incorporated into road names, such as Riddings⁵⁰ Road.

The 1842 Tithe Commutation Map

Hale had to wait until 1842 for the first substantial document fixing boundaries, fields and buildings and leaving us with an idea of how the area would have appeared well before that date because change happened slowly. Tithe Commutation began the process of converting tithes to land rents linked to the price of corn. Every plot was shown on the map, with names, land use, area⁵¹, owners and occupiers in an accompanying reference book and this is one of the main sources of information about field names. A detailed Ordnance Survey map of Hale was not published until 1876 although in nearby Altrincham a plan showing every building was commissioned by Altrincham Board of Health in 1852, following cholera outbreaks in the overcrowded and unsanitary conditions of the town. There were only minor outbreaks in Hale so no major action was thought necessary.

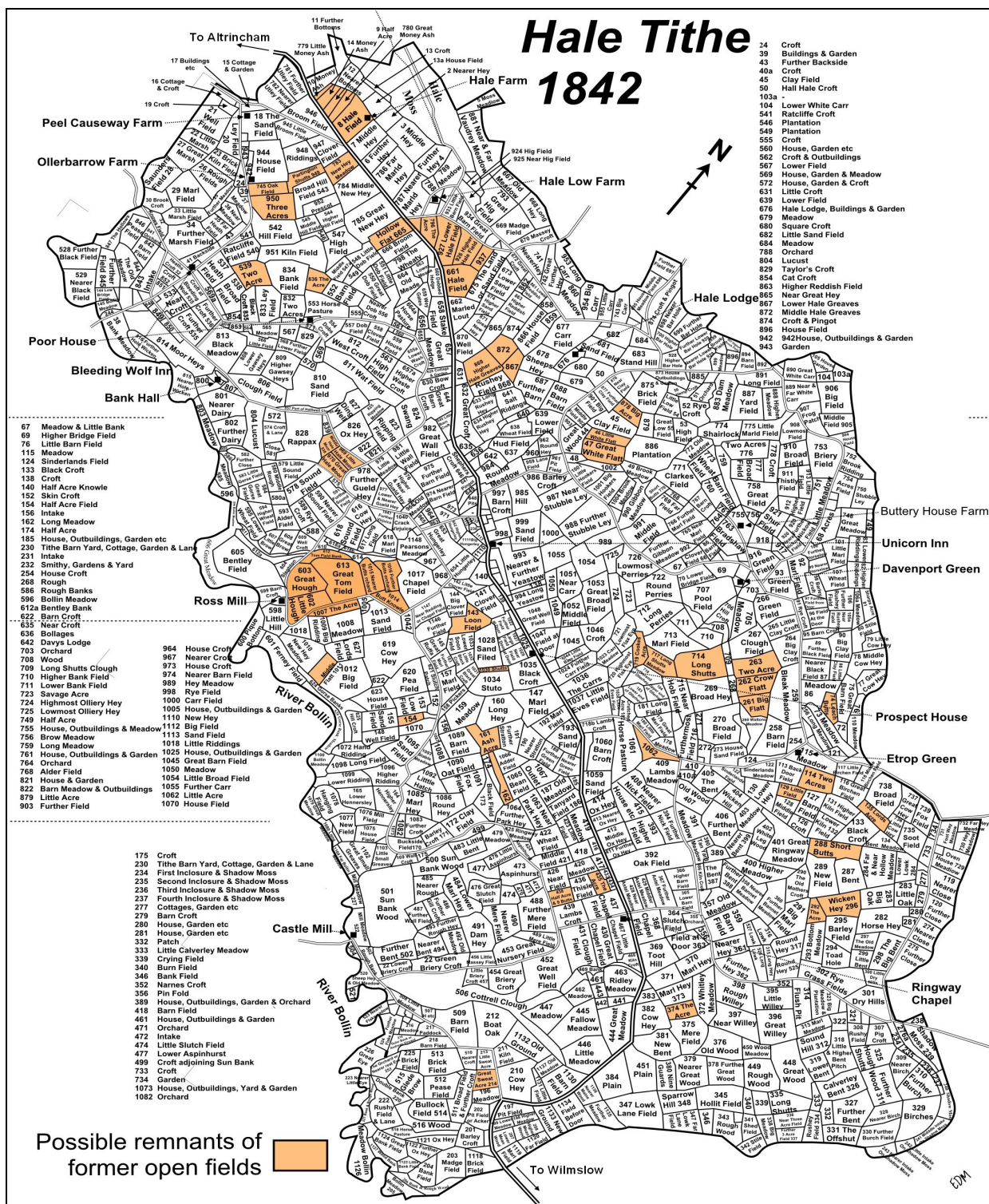
To understand what Hale looked like during the 18th and 19th centuries general deductions have to be made from the Tithe Map, estate books and the wills and inventories of the period. Enclosure was a gradual process depending on the attitude of owners and circumstances, but in Hale as in the rest of Cheshire it happened early, starting with the Black Death in 1349. Economic pressures would also have included the lord of the manor's wish to increase his income, and the need for a more efficient agricultural system to produce food for Manchester. Almost the whole area was enclosed by the beginning of the 18th century.

The Hale Tithe Map showed fewer than 100 acres of woodland in 1842, most of them down in the cloughs overlooking the Bollin. Field names such as *Old Wood*, *Rough Wood*, *Wood Meadow*, *Big Oak*, *Little Oak* and the *Birches* in the eastern section of the township beyond Ringway hamlet, show that these had been cleared from woodland, probably the *Ullerswode* of medieval times. But the great woods had gone, although Hale was still an area of many trees and twelve farms took their names from trees including oak, elm, alder, yew and fir. The Victorian novelist, Mrs Titus Hibbert-Ware, describes Long Lane with hedge backings as "*being so high and fringed with such lofty trees of oak and ash that towards the dusk of evening the traveller was enveloped almost in darkness.*"

There are seven field names on the Hale Tithe Map containing the word *butt* such as *Leach butts*. The word means the raised part of a strip in an open field, or the end of the field where the plough was turned. This land was sometimes used for archery practice and some must have existed in Hale. Archery was an essential skill and Henry VIII made providing and maintaining butts a statutory obligation on every parish. Each manor had to ensure young men were trained since they were obliged to support the local lord in times of war. Cheshire soldiers were famous for their archery skills and the longbow remained in use until the end of the 16th century.

⁵⁰ OE *rydding*, a clearing.

⁵¹ In statute acres, roods and perches.

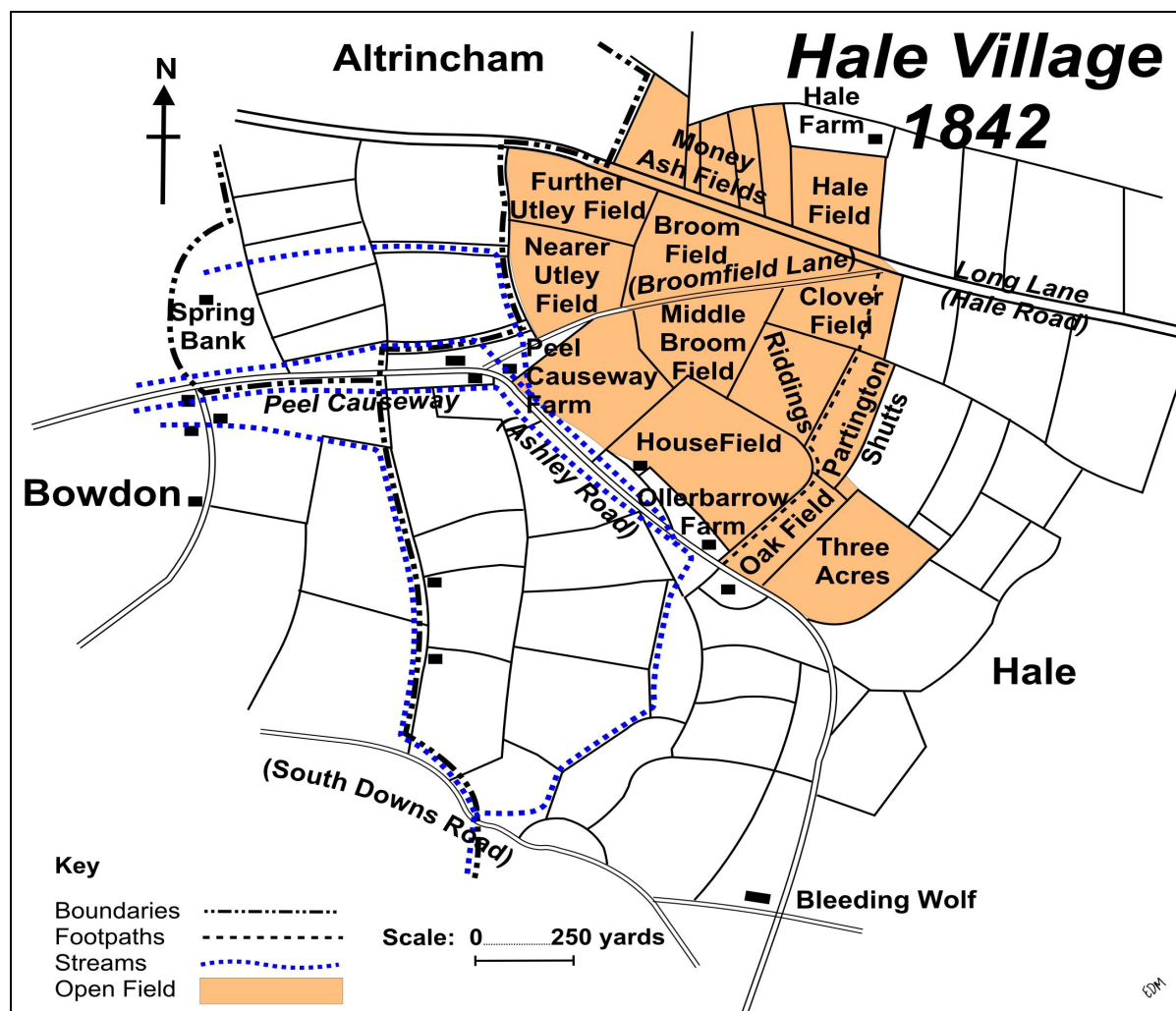


The map of Hale based on the full 1842 tithe map. The shaded areas are parts of enclosed open fields, as derived from field names, sizes and shapes. The field names are generally not legible at this scale.

Not all field names containing *butt* were used for archery practice but Tarbolton thought that a field below Butts Clough Farm, on Rossmill Lane, Hale Barns was the right shape. There are also fields close by with names such as Butt Knowle (top of a hill from OE *cnoll*), Nearer Butts Orchard, Further Butts Orchard, and Butt Field on which the Hale Chapel is built. These may be a reference to the enclosure of open fields rather than archery butts.

Hale field names

Below is the current centre of Hale Village showing the field names based on the 1842 Tithe Commutation Map, and modern road names. The area would have looked much the same for several centuries previously.



Hale Village in 1838/42 based on the Tithe Commutation Map. The shaded fields are probable enclosures from an open field but there may have been more such as the fields east of Peel Causeway Farm and Ollerbarrow Farm, and along Hale Road. Notice the many springs emanating from Spring Bank on the west side, the source of the boggy nature of Hale.

By 1842 the large, shared open fields had been split up into fields conveniently-sized for ease of use. A good example in Hale of an enclosed open field is Partington Shutts (field 949 on the 1842 map) and now the south-eastern side of Ollerbarrow Road. The curved snicket linking Ollerbarrow Road with Cambridge Road may be where the medieval plough was turned at the end of the field but probably just part of the path from Peel Causeway into the open fields.

The map shows roads, footpaths and fields around the present Hale village in 1842. The boundaries between Altrincham and Bowdon are marked by a dashed line. Several springs out of Spring Bank join to become Motley Brook at Ashley Heath.

Words which may in some circumstances denote divisions of a medieval open field include: *acre, bigg, butt, dole, dale, field, flatt, furlong, gate, land, lawnd, loond, lord, lound, platt, rigg, selion,*

shoot, shott, tom and *town*, (see appendix 1). The use of repeated names in adjacent tithe fields would similarly indicate the enclosure of an open field. Evidence of names is supported by the survival of long narrow fields indicating consolidation and enclosure of strips in open fields as in *Hale Field Dole, The Acre, Little Hough, Great Hough, Great Tom Field, Tom Field Bank, Lords Field* and *Hale Field*. Examples of narrow fields in Hale village include *Partington Shutts, Half Acre* and *Half Acre Field*. The word *ridding* is also of interest as a medieval word for clearance of wood or marsh for arable land, and is remembered in Riddings Road.

The field names Sand Field and two Broom fields along the line of Broomfield Lane indicate light, dry, land. The fields from Spring Road across Altrincham Grammar School playing fields towards South Downs Road are Well Field, Little Marsh and Great Marsh and were known locally as The Marsh. Well Field, now Spring Road, is from OE *waella*, 'to boil', and is the site of the well for Peel Causeway. Spring Road and the present playing fields were marshy, as one would expect from the lie of the land. Other marshy fields were called *swang*.

The Crewe estate book of 1726 shows field names suggesting open moor, heath and marsh and as late as 1842 there were still 50 acres of open common land, over 30 of them in the Hale section of Hale Moss. Areas south of Bankhall Lane, west Broad Lane, and around Rossmill and Butts Clough were already divided into fields and allotted to farms.

A few fields have less obvious names. They are often of Middle or Old English origin and indicate how the area must have appeared perhaps a thousand years before 1842. Some field names describe the shape of a field or the crops grown there while others describe what the field was used for such as marling or tanning, or digging clay for brick making. In England, grapes were grown before the Romans came, however the Romans planted vineyards wherever they went and some *vinyard* field names appear to indicate that grapes were once grown in Hale in south-west facing locations.

In the descriptions below, OE means Old English or Middle English. Examples of Hale field names from the Tithe Map and their probable origin include:

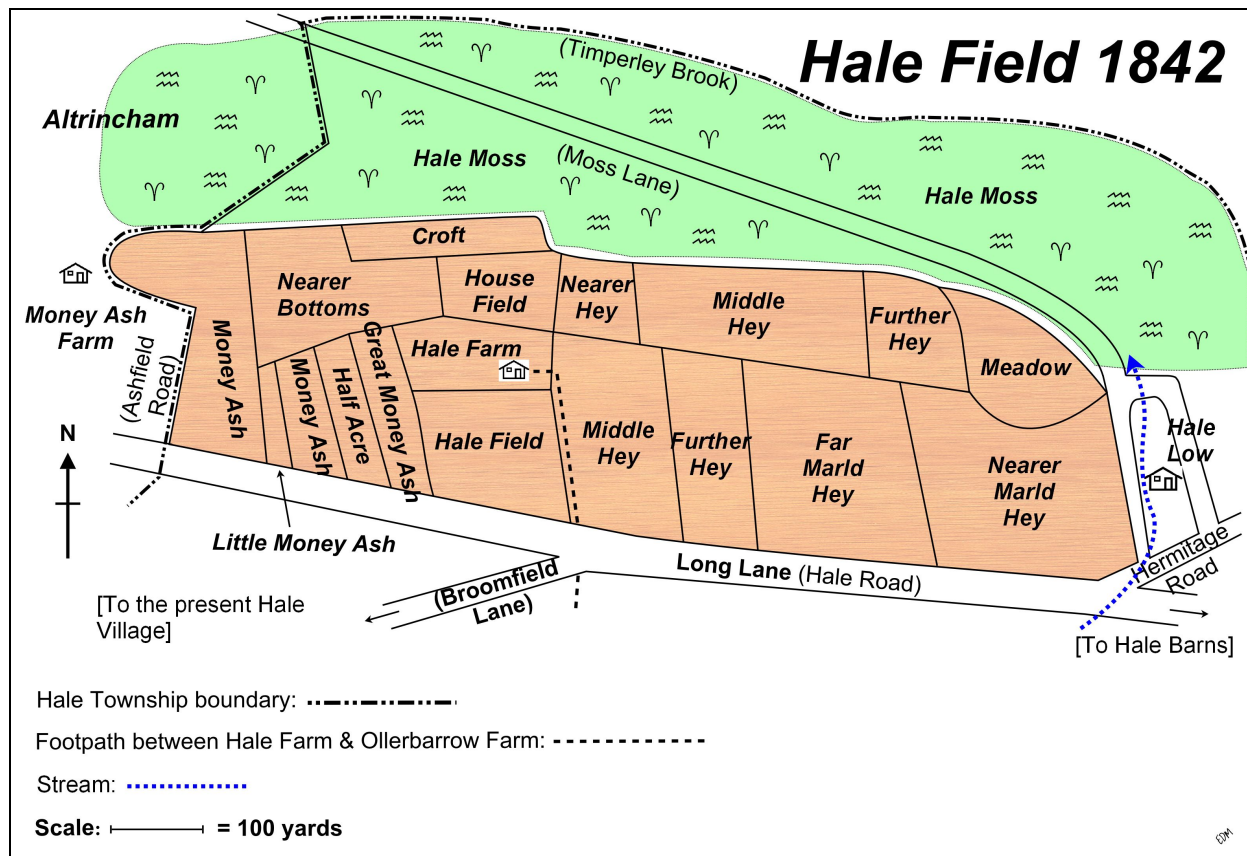
Field name	Description
Aspinhurst	Aspin includes the willow family, plus OE <i>hyrst</i> , a wood.
Bigg Flatt	A reference to a strip from an open field (Old Norse).
Further Uttley Field	Out-ley, outlying clearing of land or from OE <i>utland</i> , outlying land in north-western Hale; (a local road name and a local surname).
Great Willey	The largest of several fields with the name 'Willey' which is possibly from the Welsh <i>gwennol</i> or Cornish <i>wennili</i> , a martin or swallow.
Hand Ridding	OE <i>rydding</i> , a hand-cleared area.
Le Cockridmoss	Moss at the cock clearing (pheasants?).
Ley Field	A clearing.
Long Shutts	Shutts means a projecting piece of land, possibly indicating remnants of an open field.
Ouler Bank/Vinyard	Alder bank/vineyard; a small triangular south-facing field just above the Bollin near Cotterill Clough; there were also vineyards in Sale.
Prescot	A shelter in a brushwood covert.
Ripping Field	Possibly from OE <i>rippel</i> , a strip of land or 'rip', to harvest.
Skutch Field	A field infested with scutch, twitch, or couch grass, from Old French <i>escoucher</i> , to strip.
Tinker Loonts	Gypsy lands, possibly part of an open field.
Toothill	OE, a lookout (and a local surname), possibly from threatening Danish invasions.
Wicken Hill	From OE <i>wic</i> , a dwelling or collection of buildings.

On the Hale/Altrincham border, at Spring Bank, Ashley Road are some Saxon field names containing *Charlmor*, from the early Saxon word *ceorl*, 'a free peasant' and *mor* 'a marsh or barren area'. The word *mor* indicates common land on clay with freemen having rights to graze, and may indicate links to a Saxon landowner. *Charlmor*, therefore, refers to freeman's land on a barren marsh and the narrow fields here may indicate another area of open field⁵². Where a field name has Saxon origins such as this the name may be ancient but care has to be taken since names change over time and may be relatively modern.

Hale Field

The map below shows more detail of the possible site of the original open field between Ashfield Road and Hermitage Road. The cultivated fields are on the slope down to Hale Moss. This large open field, which would have created a living for the first people of Hale, stretched north of the present Hale Road, later probably extending south across Hale Road to Ashley Road and Ollerbarrow Farm.

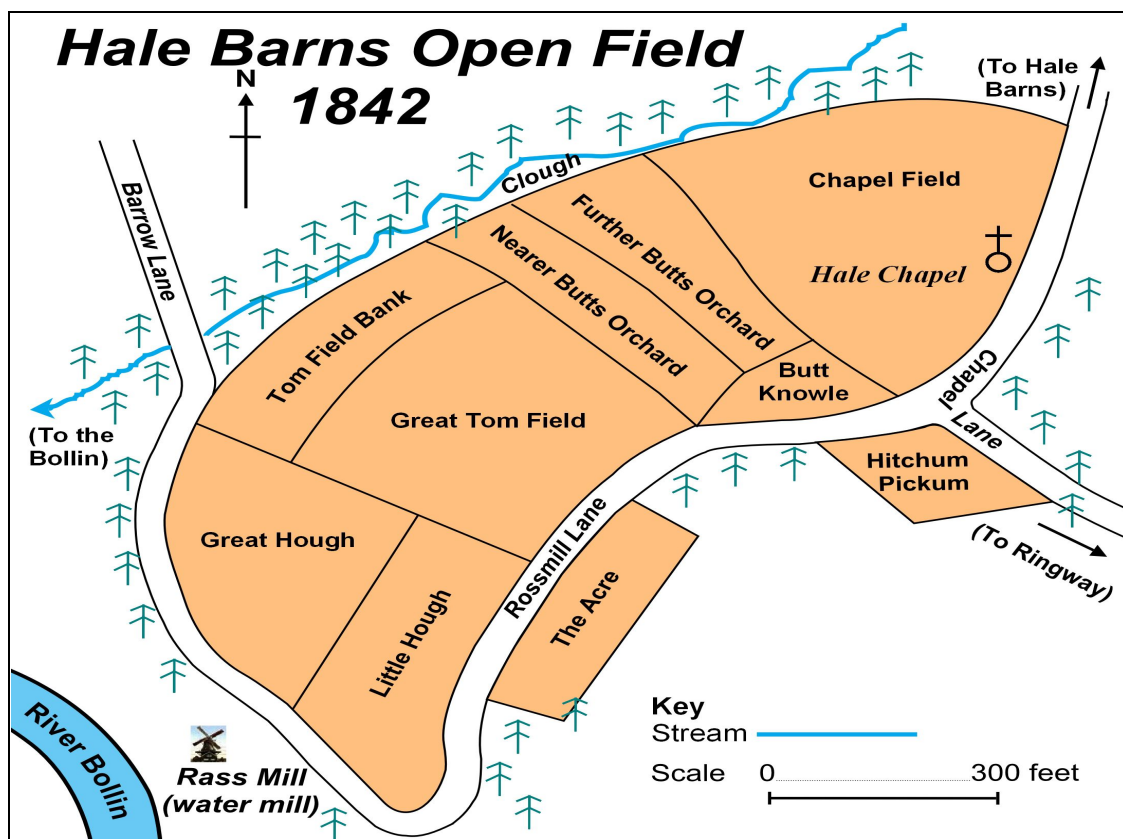
⁵² From Saxon times villagers shared common land which they divided into flats, furlongs or shoots, which themselves were divided into selions, loonts or lands which were strips of land allocated to families.



Hale open field was a large open area stretching from Ashfield Road to Hermitage Road and down to Hale Moss creating a living for the first people of Hale. It may have extended south across Hale Road to Ashley Road and Ollerbarrow Farm. The above map, derived from the 1842 Tithe Commutation Map and Schedule, shows the lower shaded area now has named smaller fields. Some of these fields created by enclosure are very narrow, some have indicative names such as 'Hale Field' and some are an exact number of Cheshire acres. They are now built over by houses in Ashfield Road, Finchley Road, Hawthorn Road, Beech Road, Peel Road and Oak Road. Hale Field may be the centre of the open field which would have been cultivated from dwellings on its edge. The footpath to its east is now Queens Road. Note the three Money Ash ('many ash trees') fields.

Hale Barns open field

The map below shows the fields between Chapel Lane and Barrow Lane, Hale Barns, the site of a second possible open field in Hale, still in evidence above Ross Mill Farm. Most of the field names indicate enclosure from an open field.



The above map derived from the 1842 Tithe Commutation Map and Schedule shows a second Open Field in the Hale township in the area now known as Hale Barns between Chapel Lane and Barrow Lane. Most of the field names indicate fields enclosed from an open field. The name 'Tom Field' is a corruption of 'Town Field'. 'The Acre' is one Cheshire acre (just over two statute acres), the size again indicating enclosure from an open field. The meaning of 'Hitchum Pickum' is not certain but is possibly a corruption of 'Higher Pingot', a collection of strips merged into a narrow field. 'Butts' means an irregular piece of land where the plough was turned in an open field, occasionally used for archery practice. A 'hough' is an enclosure on a slope, probably related to the word 'hale'.

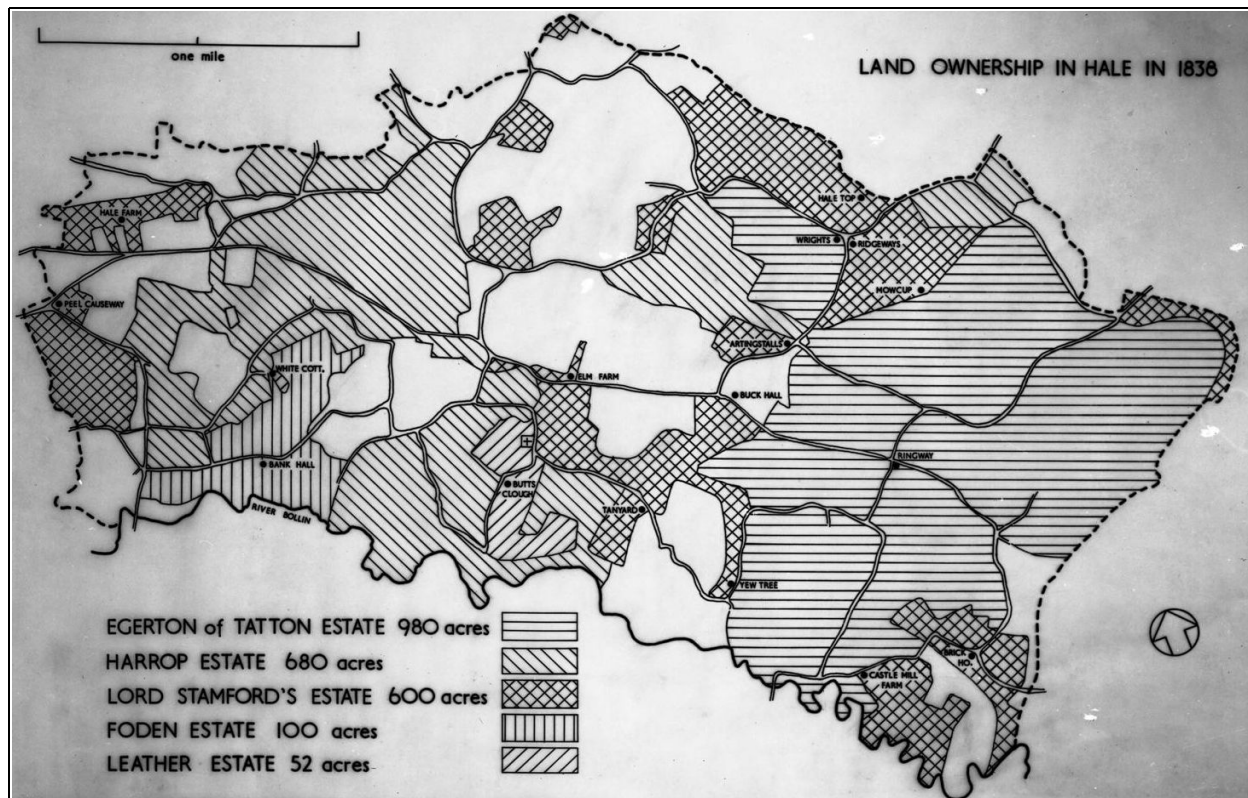
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12. FARMING IN HALE

Farming activities

With the exceptions of bigger landowners such as the Egertons, Fodens, Harrops and Lawtons, land holdings in Hale were quite small compared with modern farms. A small farm would make most profit from growing potatoes and cabbages or making cheese to sell to the towns, while common land would be used to graze animals, supply fuel for bread ovens and osiers⁵³ for basket making.



Major Land Owners 1838 (AAIA).

Market gardening was a minor activity in Hale from at least the mid-17th century and from 1765 the Bridgewater Canal was used to export crops to Manchester. By the 18th century the dairy farming and stock raising was more popular than raising pigs which previously outnumbered cattle. Although Hale had never been one of the main cheese-producing areas – there is only one dairymaid recorded in the township in the 1841 census – the growth of Manchester was increasing demand for fresh milk and beef, with tanning as a by-product. In the mid-19th century the setting up of steam-driven factories in Warrington killed this trade but it has left memories in numerous Tanyard Farms, some of which have now changed their names or been swallowed up by urbanisation.

From the end of the 17th century, most larger farms were given over to pasture. By 1842 nearly 2,500 acres of Hale were meadow or pasture and less than 1,000 were arable. Many agreements stipulated that the greater part of each farm should be put down to grass for cattle already the source of agricultural wealth in Cheshire for two or more centuries and, although horses, sheep and pigs are recorded in field names, cattle were the main concern of farmers in Hale.

⁵³ Willow.

Crops

The area was noted for the production of grain even in medieval times. Cheshire landlords avoided extensive corn growing believing it exhausted the soil. They were at the mercy of foreign affairs and a surplus could mean ruined tenants and unpaid rents. However field names such as wheaty, barleycroft, ryecroft and oat field show the tradition of arable farming.

Until about 1880 Hale inns and many of the farms still brewed their own beer from local barley, the most valuable crop, but it was also used for coarse bread making and feeding animals. Hay was essential for horses and cattle for over-wintering but oats was the largest cereal crop in Hale, grown to supply the needs of Manchester. Oats to feed horses must have been the equivalent of today's diesel oil as horses powered farm machinery and was also eaten in the form of gruel, bread and oatcakes, or boiled with milk and water to make hasty pudding. Rye was sometimes grown to make dark bread and pastry and for animal fodder. Wheat was not grown much because of the damp conditions, although it made the best bread. These cereals were cheap, relatively easy to grow and mostly suited the local weather.

Vetches⁵⁴, clover and field beans were grown for animal fodder and to enrich the soil with nitrogen. Peas and beans were mixed with corn and ground to produce bread flour. Flax (for longbows, linen and fustian) and hemp (for sacks, coarse cloth and ropes) were grown and used locally from the 14th century until the mid-18th century when imports from Ireland became cheaper.

Vegetables such as turnips, carrots, celery and asparagus introduced by the Romans were only grown on a small scale. Turnips and carrots needed a lot of attention with weeding and thinning. If carrots were plentiful they were fed to horses. Beans, peas, cabbages, carrots, onions, shallots, leeks, turnips, garlic, beetroot, celery, lettuce, sage, parsley, fennel, borage and watercress had been grown since at least the 13th century but on a small scale in cottage gardens and later market gardens. Rhubarb was imported from China in the 14th century as a drug to lower fevers but later became an important crop on mossy soils, especially in Timperley. Potatoes were grown from the mid-17th century, and commercially from the early 18th century, and the crop expanded during the food shortages of the Napoleonic Wars in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Mangolds⁵⁵ were also grown in the 18th century for cattle and sheep; swedes and kohlrabi⁵⁶ from the late 18th century. In the 19th century ox cabbages for cattle were preferred to swedes and turnips, which tainted the milk. Fruit such as apples, pears and cherries were grown in the orchard and were important in Hale in the 17th century and bee-keeping became popular as the bees fertilised the fruit and provided honey.

Manure

Manure was a valuable but scarce commodity and most leases would stipulate that all dung was to be recycled on the same farm. Some farmers made compost with dung and straw. Dung prices rose from 5s to 7s per ton between 1760 and 1808 then dropped to 2s as the farms took on more dairy cattle. From 1765 the Bridgewater Canal was used to export market garden produce from Hale to Manchester and bring back night soil to spread on the land.

⁵⁴ Small plants with bean-like pods.

⁵⁵ A large root beet.

⁵⁶ Cabbage turnips.

Marl, a type of clay found in the area, had been used in Cheshire to enrich the land and increase productivity since at least the first half of the 13th century. An old rhyme went:

“He that marls sand may buy the land
He that marls moss suffers no loss
He that marls clay throws all away.”

So marling improved sandy and mossy land but was no use on clay. It was found at a depth of between one and three yards and consisted of clay mixed with silt and lime, and sometimes aluminium, silicon and iron salts called foxbench. Lime leached down from the surface to reform in a layer and consisted of 10% to 20% of the volume of marl. It was spread in the summer months and would last about 12 years. Other forms of manure could be sand or peat used to lighten stiff, clayey soils together with ashes, bone dust, rape dust, leather refuse and rags. Little liming took place in Hale because it was too far from sources in Derbyshire. From the early 17th century stubble burning and ploughing-in was used.

The Hale Tithe Map shows very clearly that the use of marl gave unusual fertility to Hale fields. Over 20 marl or marled fields on the map indicate fields where it had been taken or spread. Old marl pits now filled with water can be identified by the shallow side where the marl was loaded and the steep side where digging finished. Cheshire was one of the few areas in Britain where marling was carried out in medieval times. The practice, which probably goes back to the 13th century, reached its height during the 18th century but in the mid-19th century it was declining because of other fertilizers. A contemporary writer, William Palm, records that “*the whoops of the marlers, a particularly tough breed of men once heard all over Cheshire, were becoming rare.*”

Animals

Pigs were important from the 14th century in Hale and at that time were the commonest of farm animals. The earliest survey and rental of the manor of Dunham in 1347 records how important pig-keeping was to provide meat, leather, fat for cooking, and oil for lighting and lubrication. Cottagers usually had a pig at the bottom of the garden fed on leftovers but by the 17th century pig breeding in Hale had declined in favour of cattle. Cheshire bacon, salted beef and Cheshire cheese were popular exports to London in the 17th century. Hale cheeses were quite small, about six pounds, and were sold locally. A wide variety of poultry was bred to produce eggs and meat for sale.

By the 16th century cattle were becoming more important, bred for meat with milk and cheese as by-products for sale at market. They would have grassland to graze on but also used the stubble from gathered crops and leafy hay from young tree branches. Milk was often pooled for cheese making and left-over whey used for butter, with full-cream butter saved for sale at market. Until the early 18th century many of the cattle would be slaughtered and salted for the winter, with only a small breeding stock retained. Cattle droving was still happening around Hale in the early 20th century when they were driven to the Pennines in May for summer pasture and returned in October or went to city markets. Young farmers unable to afford to buy stock would hire cows to start a farm. Five people were recorded hiring out cows in the 17th century in Hale.

In the 17th and 18th century some oxen were still bred in Hale for ploughing the heavy clay. These animals are mentioned in wills at Hale Low (1619) and Bank Hall (1626) but enclosure of open fields, better ploughs and the introduction of horses led to their decline. Horses used for ploughing only lasted three years but were cheap to keep though they needed oats as well as grass. They replaced oxen for ploughing from the 17th century in most of Cheshire with the introduction of stronger horses and the broad yoke, and the loss of oxen through cattle plague. Lighter horses were used for transport and riding. However, oxen were still used in Hale in the

18th century, long after most of Cheshire, because of the heavy boulder clay soil and for pulling farm carts.

Sheep were fairly rare in Cheshire until the mid-18th century, except on large estates such as Dunham, Tatton and Delamere, or on the Pennines. Dunham had a large proportion of sheep reared until about 1680 when demand for high-quality cheese from London and the Navy changed farming practice. Sheep were kept for wool, but in Hale there was no convenient port for exports to the continent and generally the land around Hale was not suitable for sheep so the return on the investment was small. Farmers and cottagers kept a few sheep to provide for their own wool needs. In a will inventory of 1517, Ryecroft Farm at Ashley had 16 sheep. There were only three farmers keeping sheep in commercial numbers in the first half of the 17th century in Hale.

Bees had been kept for their honey since the 11th century and were mentioned in the Domesday Book. Jill Groves has found evidence of at least 72 hives in Hale in the 17th century, a higher number than any other local township, which seems to indicate that Hale would have been a major producer of honey and of orchard fruit and vegetables pollinated by the bees, with the wax used for finishing leather. The fruit included apples and crab apples, and probably pears, damsons and plums. Not every cottage had a hive, perhaps because of the expertise involved, and just a few people kept bees commercially. In the 18th century bee keeping was beginning to decline.

The 17th-century Hale wills and inventories illustrate much farming history and animal averages per family are interesting: Poultry 8, Cattle 7, Sheep 2.5, Horses 1.5, Pigs 1, Beehives 0.5. The surprise is the small numbers. Clearly, the animals were for domestic use and farming was mainly arable. However, Sale and Ashton farmers at that time were growing potatoes and moving from breeding plough oxen to fatstock⁵⁷. Hale was slow to take advantage of the growing Manchester market and was concentrating on geese which were cheap to fatten on grass and hay and could easily be driven to the Altrincham market.

⁵⁷ Animals fattened and ready for market.

People

Because Hale was made up of scattered hamlets and lacked proximity to a major highway, it never developed into a town borough with burgesses and burgage plots. The 1841 census shows the population to be 974 (currently it is about 15,000). There were 185 families with an average of just over five people per household. The trades show that most people worked on the land. There were 64 farmers, 114 farm labourers, 6 blacksmiths, and there was a woman farrier. Another 150 family members and servants were probably supported by farming. Women and children often added to the farming workforce, particularly at busy times. Gangs of migrant workers helped with the harvest, digging marl and building walls, moving north with the harvest.

By 1860 Hale had 53 farmers, 5 shopkeepers, 4 wheelwrights, 3 blacksmiths, and 2 boot-and-shoe-makers. There were four inns: the Railway Inn at Peel Causeway, the Old Bleeding Wolf at Ashley Heath, the Unicorn at Hale Barns and the Red Lion at Ringway (the present 'Romper'). The Bull's Head at Hale Barns was originally a small alehouse.

Farming ends

In 1900 there were still two working farms surrounded by houses in the centre of Hale village. Ollerbarrow Hall, on the corner of Cambridge Road on the site of 227 to 229 Ashley Road, was built in the late 14th century. The last but one farmers were Zebulon and Mary Leigh (their name lives on in Leigh Road) followed for two years by Mrs Anne Holt. The hall was pulled down about 1909 but never photographed. Ollerbarrow House, the small building at 211 Ashley Road, was built about 1740 and was part of Ollerbarrow Hall's farm buildings. It was later used as the local police station and then by the Women's' Royal Voluntary Service. The library behind is on the site of the orchard which was still used as an allotment after the war.

On the other side of Ashley Road was New Farm, active from 1862 to 1910, the last farmer being James Billington. Cecil Road car park was the farmyard. New Farm's 80 acres previously belonged to Peel Causeway Farm and stretched from Hale Station to South Downs Road. The restaurant in the car park, developed from old farm buildings, was the farriers and blacksmiths premises of Walter Preston and his son Billy from 1910 to the 1950s. Clegg's Garage with Clegg's Rooms above, again part of New Farm, stood next to the bowling green until about 1970. The upper part of the wooden building was accessed by an external stair and was for a time used as St. Peter's meeting room.

Farming was affected by severe outbreaks of foot and mouth disease in 1923/4, 1967/8 and 2001/2. Mechanisation gradually increased but even in the early 1960s potatoes and peas were still picked by hand by casual workers. There is still a rural feel to the fringes of Hale but very few farm fields exist within the Hale boundary. The land is so valuable that there is constant pressure to nibble away at green belt land for housing, commerce and the airport.

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13. RURAL HALE THROUGH THE AGES

Greens

Before Hale became the dormitory village it is today it was a rural community with a focus around areas called greens. These were common grazing land, sometimes of several acres, possibly converted from part of an open field or woodland in the 11th or 12th centuries. They existed in scattered hamlets and their presence means that Hale was an open manor/township with many landowners for much of its history. People living in the hamlets tended to be of independent means, working in rural industries such as tanning and better off than those in the surrounding townships.

Possibly the word *green* in Cheshire may have referred to an assembly place for cattle before they were driven to market, in this case to Altrincham, Stockport, Manchester or further afield to the Dee and Mersey ports and London. This may have been influenced by the Vikings who formed settlements with large greens. Tarbolton observed that most of the greens in Cheshire are named after people or places whereas in Lancashire the term *fold* is used instead for a place where animals are gathered. The greens of Hale may have fulfilled both functions.

There were probably ten greens in Hale, some of which still exist as place names (*):

- Barns Green at Broad Lane Head, the junction of Broad Lane and Bankhall Lane *
- Davenport Green at the junction of Brooks' Drive and Thorley Lane *
- East Hale Green also known as Hale Barns Green at the junction of Hale Road and Wicker Lane
- Etrop Green on Hasty Lane near the Airport *
- Hale Green, near Hale Low, at the junction of Hermitage Road and Grove Lane
- Leather Green at Hale Chapel on Chapel Lane
- Sunderland Green near Buttery House Farm off Roaring Gate Lane
- Warburton Green on Chapel Lane east of the motorway *
- Well Green between the junction of Wellfield Lane and Ash Lane on Grove Lane *
- Hogshead Green near Styal (now in Wilmslow).

The Hale Low area close to Hale Green is thought to have been the centre of the manor of Hale, which extended from the Altrincham border to Hale Barns. There was also the lost green of *Alretune* which may have been at Ringway on Hasty Lane. There are several other greens just over the Hale border such as Goose Green, Altrincham; Cross Green and Newall Green on the Manchester border; Thorns Green just over the River Bollin in Ashley; Saunders Green at the junction of South Downs Road and Marlborough Road; and Bow Green, the last two in nearby Bowdon.

We know the history of a few of the greens. Hamon de Massey granted lands in Hale in the 13th century to Jurdan de Davenport for whom Davenport Green is named. This green is known to date back to the 13th century and a nearby field possesses the last traces of ridge-and-furrow open field farming in Hale. The area is likely to be developed as a business park and in 1994 was the subject of an archaeological survey by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit, part of Manchester University. The area investigated lies along the northern edge of Hale in a shallow valley crossed by Timperley Brook and other small streams. The team examined available maps, aerial photographs and documentary evidence from published and manuscript sources. The soil is poorly drained and marshy in some places as indicated by ancient field names. There are many ponds, probably the result of marl extraction.



George Hankinson's Cottage, 18th century (AAIA).

The group found only one possible prehistoric site and no Roman sites. Only two medieval settlements were identified: Latham Hall first mentioned in 1387, now rebuilt; and Buttery House Farm dating from the 13th century and a site of regional significance. A further three farmsteads Ash Farm, Clay House and Thorley Cottage were found to date from the 17th century, and Roaring Gate Farm from the 18th century. On nearby Whitecarr Lane, Manchester University found evidence of three fourteenth-century iron furnaces.

Most of the surviving field systems and ponds were created over the last 150 years, with the exception of two fields, probably medieval ridge and furrow, to the east of Davenport Green Hall. The name of one, Further Horselow, derives from OE *hlaw* a mound or hill and is often associated with burial mounds.

Warburton Green on Chapel Lane just after the bridge over the M56 was in the Hankinson estate, a family mentioned in tenancy agreements in the 14th century. At his death in 1740, Josiah Hankinson held the estate from the Earl of Warrington on the usual terms of a lease for three lives. It consisted of a farmhouse and about 50 statute acres, previously owned by Henry Warburton and probably named after the family. Tanning was an important and lucrative trade on the estate. Charles Hankinson ran into financial problems in 1826 and the Warburton estates were sold. Samuel Brooks, the Manchester banker who built Brooks' Drive, bought the lease in the 1850s. In the 1950s Hale surveyor Harold Hankinson owned and built on land on Chapel Lane but it is not known if he was related.

Hale Green was a triangle of land at the junction of Hermitage Road and Grove Lane and was enclosed late, around 1875. At that time Hermitage Road continued north-eastwards, joining up with Green Lane before Delahays Road and Thorley Lane were built.

Ashley Heath

Ashley Heath stretched from Motley Brook and Ashley Mill on the Bowdon boundary eastwards along Bankhall Lane. The 1842 Tithe Map shows only one building on Ashley Road between Ollerbarrow Farm and the Old Bleeding Wolf, a thatched black and white cottage at the northern entrance to Crescent Road and demolished in 1895. The Bleeding Wolf was originally part of a farm that existed from about 1800 to 1898 and faced Ashley. The pub of 1900 and adjoining garage were converted into flats in 2004 and the bowling green included.

Heather Road was named after Heather Croft, the field to the south. There are three railway bridges at Ashley Heath, an expensive undertaking in the 1860s when there was little road traffic. The 19th century trade directories call this area Motley Bank, which today exists as a house on South Downs Road near Motley Brook and was occupied in the 1840s and 50s by Thomas Sowler, founder of the *Manchester Courier*. At the junction of South Downs Road and Heather Road are the remains of Ashley Heath House, a substantial black and white timbered farm converted to a house by Thomas Guest who called it The Manor House. Today it is called The Old House.

One dramatic incident recorded by Tarbolton and illustrating the stringent laws of the time was of a poaching expedition that went wrong. On a moonlit night in the autumn of 1833 a dozen young poachers set out for the Tatton estate across the Birkin Brook, just south-west of the Bollin. A party of gamekeepers with their dogs appeared and the poachers ran towards Ashley Heath, past Coppice Farm on Ashley Mill Lane and up Bankhall Lane. At this point they confronted the keepers, a shot was fired and a keeper wounded. The Town Watch was roused at Altrincham and found one poacher at Hawthorn Cottage on the corner of what is now Bower Road and Park Road. He and others were held in the Star Chamber in the Red Lion Inn at Old Market Place, Altrincham. All were committed to Chester Assizes and the youngest, John Henshall, who had joined the poachers for the first time, was wrongly identified as the one who fired the shot. He was sentenced to death and hanged at Chester.

Ford Bank was an old house with a duck pond on the south-east corner of Ashley Mill Lane and Ashley Road. Opposite on the corner of Bankhall Lane was a thatched cottage with outbuildings and a wheelwright and blacksmith's shop, bought by the Fowdens from the Harrop family in the sale of 1872. On the north side of Bankhall Lane, Ashley Heath Farm was held by the Ashleys about 1800. The outbuildings have been converted into offices.

Hale Moss

One of the most important features of rural Hale was Hale Moss which originally extended from George Street, Altrincham eastwards to Green Lane, Timperley. The moss is a flood plain of Timperley Brook, probably deepened by glacial melt waters flowing north-west from the Pennines across Hale. Deep pools formed over clay deposits filled in over the centuries by mosses which had failed to decompose because of the acid conditions. For many generations Hale Moss was a source of turf, firewood and kindling, and was used as common grazing land by the Altrincham burgesses. A small amount of coal may have been dug there. It was also a place where wild flowers grew, including orchids.



Hale Moss from a drawing with St John's Church in the distance (1877, AAIA).

The Twiggery and Cresswell Springs below Hale Road were the source of water flowing from the moss into Timperley Brook. In 1621 a channel was cut from here to take water down Oakfield Road and Grosvenor Road to power Sir George Booth's 17th century mill at Dunham Hall. The channel goes just south of the Stamford Park duck ponds, once a swimming pool, under the railway near Derby Street, where there were several cotton-spinning mills in the late 18th century, under the Bridgewater Canal at the Linotype Works and back under the canal at Dunham. All that remains visible in the Hale area are manholes but, using dyes, the channel was proved to be still flowing in Broadheath about 1930 and was traced in 2000 by Jim Haworth and Chris Hill. The watercourse was so important that the Countess of Stamford ensured the preservation of water rights on behalf of herself and all local landowners when the Duke of Bridgewater negotiated the building of the Bridgewater Canal in the early 1760s.

In the first half of the 19th century two large clay pits were dug on Hale Moss for brick making. One became Gibbon's Pond, now filled in and used as a football field off Delahays Road. Part of another belonging to 'Nib' (Abraham) Dean, still exists as King George's Pool, once popular for skating in cold winters.

The enclosure of Hale Moss



Gypsies with their Showman Caravan, horses and donkeys (AAIA).

The moss was owned by Lord Stamford who allowed residents of Altrincham to use it until he decided to enclose and sell it for building. It was often used to tip rubbish, including carcasses and fishmongers' offal, which caused hygiene problems. Some people claimed grazing and fuel-gathering rights and the moss was subject to a dispute in the 19th century when the area was enclosed for health and safety reasons. The Earl of Stamford applied for the enclosure under the 1845 Inclosure Act and in 1862 a public inquiry was held at the Unicorn Hotel in Altrincham led by J J Rawlinson. Rawlinson recorded about forty people, many of them gypsies, who claimed commonable rights. In the end only one person, a Mr Barrett, could substantiate his claim.

The Earl sold off building plots on the moss and no further claims were made. At a meeting of the Altrincham Local Board in 1866, Joseph Gaskarth, a member, proposed that a recreation ground was needed and that Hale Moss was suitable. In 1869 the issue was revived but rejected at a stormy ratepayers' meeting. In 1878 the Earl's offer of about eight acres for a public park and recreation ground was accepted. The following year the offer was increased to twelve acres and then settled at sixteen.

The site which became Stamford Park was designed by landscape gardener John Shaw, who was responsible for several Manchester parks. His son, also John, of The Downs, Altrincham laid out the park and it was opened in 1880 by Joseph Gaskarth, chairman of the local board. About 4,000 people attended and a banquet for 150 prominent citizens was held at the Old Town Hall. To commemorate the occasion a silver engraved key was presented to George Smith, mayor-elect for 1881. The land was generally received as a final settlement of any public claims to the Moss. In March 2001 English Heritage included Stamford Park in the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England. It now has Grade II listed status and has been used as a model for at least one park in Germany.

But this was in the future and in the 19th century the moss was still being developed. A Charity Commission inspector held an inquiry but was unable to determine ownership of rights and responsibilities.

A Gas Company had been set up in 1846 at the Unicorn in Old Market Place where there is a blue plaque. It was moved to Hale Moss in 1847. In 1892 the company promoted a bill to increase their capital and construct a proper road and tramway from Altrincham goods yard to the gas works.

In 1894, the Stamford Trustees caused an outcry by fencing in the land to discourage tipping and a joint meeting was called between the newly elected Altrincham UDC, Bucklow RDC and Hale Parish Council. A Hale Moss Committee was appointed to consider improving the moss and to come up with a scheme for keeping it as an open space for the benefit of Hale and Altrincham. They agreed with the Stamford Trustees to help to put the moss in a proper sanitary state in return for the provision of drains into Altrincham sewers for the Hale sections of the area around Ashfield Road. This all fell through because of financial difficulties but the Urban Road portion was finally resolved in 1899.



Hale Mayoral Chain (1974, AAIA).

Hale Urban District Council formed in 1900 under the chairmanship of Alfred Tarbolton soon found themselves investigating public rights on Hale Moss. In 1901, they agreed with the Stamford Trustees to buy three acres between Moss Lane and the gas works and to lease the land on which Hale Bowling Green was later built for the public. In 1902, in final settlement of claims of commoners' rights to the moss, the Stamford Trustees sold Pollitt's Field lying between Urban Road and the gas works to Altrincham Council. The field was named after Henry Pollitt, the slaughterhouse keeper in the 1850s, and was subsequently used by Altrincham Football Club. They also sold ten acres on the north side of Moss Lane to Hale UDC, and this became Altrincham Football Club's ground in 1910 with allotments laid out next door in 1914. Agreement was also reached to take Hale sewage from the north watershed into the Altrincham system. The reed beds next to the allotments, previously the Cresswell Springs where watercress was grown, were replanted in 2003.

Until about 1900 gypsies used to camp in the area and the 19th century census returns contain entries for a gypsy caravan and a tent on the moss. The gypsies in Hale had well-known leaders Charles and Emperor Boss, and in the 1881 census their family consisted of Charles, Emperor, Uriah, Eli, Lyari, Walter, Sinai, Agnes, and children Annie, Famie and Rhoda. By 1913 Emperor (his real name) had abandoned an open-air life as a horse dealer and was living at 24 Queens Road, Hale, in business as a furniture remover and firewood dealer. His grave is just inside Hale Road cemetery. His descendant, Emperor Boss, died in 2010 in Manchester. From about 1900 the moss was drained and small industrial buildings set up, alongside the 1847 gas works and the slaughterhouse.

The River Bollin valley

One of Hale's advantages is its proximity to the Bollin valley on the edge of the Cheshire countryside, an area of natural beauty which has been attracting visitors for 250 years. The Bollin rises above Macclesfield and flows thirty miles through Bollington, Wilmslow, Hale, and Little Bollington to Warburton where it joins the Mersey. The name may derive from OE *bol*, an eel and Celtic *lynn*, water, or perhaps from Celtic *bolin*, a mill. Although there is no direct evidence of the Romans using the river as a waterway, the Bollin was deeper a few centuries ago and they may have used flat-bottomed boats to transport materials, particularly downstream. This is supported by remnants of a minor Roman road running parallel through Hale Barns. Evidence of Iron Age Celtic farms just west of Hale in the Dunham/Warburton area also suggests their use of the river for transport.

The Saxons usually settled near a river and there is evidence of Saxon origin for East Hale, the area between Chapel Lane, Hale Barns and the River Bollin. The water meadows would have flooded in winter enriching the soil. The names of two mills on the Bollin in Hale are recorded: Castle Mill first mentioned in documents in 1363, above which was a mound which may have been a 12th century castle guarding the river; and Ross Mill, first mentioned in documents in 1289 when it was part of the lands granted to Jurdon de Davenport by Hamo de Masci. The exact site of the mill at Rossmill Farm is not known and any remains may have been swept away in the hurricane flooding of 1839.

A curiously-named place on the Bollin west of Sunbank Wood is Pigleystairs Bridge. The upper part of the river above the junction with Birkin Brook is named as Ringey Flu on 17th century maps of Cheshire, from French *fleuve*, a river, or even possibly from the Norse *fleet*, a brook.

The Bollin Valley has always been admired for its flora and fauna and in the 19th century, amateur botanist Leo Grindon generated interest in the area through his magazine articles. Leo moved to Manchester from Bristol in 1838 through his work as a cashier in a cotton firm. By 1849 the railway had reached Altrincham, enabling Manchester workers and dwellers to visit the countryside in the area and in 1860 Leo formed the Manchester Field Naturalists' Society and the Bollin Valley became their favourite haunt.

Ironically his enthusiasm helped to end Hale's rural charm, tranquillity and seclusion. His books on botanical rambles became enormously popular. Visits by Manchester folk to the Bollin on Bank Holidays and summer weekends replaced outings to Dunham Park on the Bridgewater Canal. One of Leo's favourite walks from Hale Station along Bankhall Lane into the Bollin valley was described in his book *Country Rambles* in 1882. He followed an ancient track across country running between Peel Causeway Farm, Ollerbarrow Farm, Barrow Farm and Rossmill Farm to Sunbank Wood and Cotterill Clough, most of which can still be walked today.

Leo lived long enough to see the effect of this popularity on the ecology. In *Country Rambles* he noted that the primrose was a rarity on the banks of the Bollin because of flower collectors. His route was abandoned when the bus service to Hale Barns began in the 1920s and Chapel Lane provided the nearest access to the Bollin. In 1934 Cotterill Clough was preserved from destruction by the rapid and well-organised action of naturalist and preservation societies, dedicated to T A Coward and it is now part of a SSSI⁵⁸ site. Developers have not built on the meadows beside the Bollin but these fields show the impact of modern life.

Ornithologist T A Coward lived in Hale and Bowdon all his life. He became internationally recognised writing extensively on nature, local history and Cheshire. About 1890 he recorded in the Bollin valley five species of bats, red squirrels, dormice, hares (still seen south of the Bollin), polecats (returning), weasels, stoats, otters (rare), sedge warblers, sand martins (they still nest on

⁵⁸ Site of Special Scientific Interest.

the banks of the Mersey), corn buntings, nightjars, green woodpeckers, an osprey at Rostherne (seen again now), red grouse (rare), corncrake, water rail and snipe.

Some of the wild life has been lost, including curlews which were seen on Hale Moss in the 19th century. Even in the mid-20th century there were red squirrels in the local woods, sand martins on the Bollin and skylarks living on the edge of Ringway Airport. In the last fifty years many of the local ponds in Hale have been filled in with the consequential loss of sticklebacks, snails, newts, frogs, caddis, great water beetle and dragonfly larvae. However, we have also gained some species, not all welcome, such as jays, magpies, collared doves, urban foxes, mink, giant hogweed and Japanese knotweed. Some species such as kingfishers and herons have returned as the water has become less polluted and able to support fish.

Since the coming of the railway, the sandy banks of the Bollin have attracted visitors and in the early 20th century they were very busy on sunny weekends with camping, walking, boating and swimming. After some neglect, in the 1960s local groups began to take an interest in preserving the footpaths and flora of the Bollin Valley. In June 1968 Hale UDC bought eighteen acres of land from Rossmill Lane to the Hale and Manchester boundary on the Hale side of the river and asked the Countryside Officer for Cheshire County Council to review the situation and produce a proposal for a Country Park. In 1972 the Bollin Valley Partnership, was formed covering 30 miles of the Bollin from Macclesfield to Warburton as a protected public area. Today the restored footpaths run from Bowdon to Ringway and beyond including Sunbank Wood and the area of the Cotterill Clough Nature Reserve at Castle Mill. When Runway 2 was completed in February 2001 footpaths were rerouted, many ponds moved and bat roosts provided under the Bollin tunnel. Unfortunately all the oxbow lakes have been lost beneath the runway.

Ringway & Hale Barns

Ringway didn't have a green but it did have a chapel and an inn with a blacksmith's shop attached, and a few cottages. Nearby were some of the largest farms in the township: Tanyard (now Manor) Farm, Pinfold Farm (now The Grange), Clough Bank and Broadoak. All were part of the Crewe estate, sold to the Egertons in 1808. Crampton's map of 1800 shows the tithe barn, two inns, the schoolhouse and schoolroom, five farms, and four cottages in Hale Barns. One of these farms was named Oaklands, then as now, in the ownership of the Warburton family. In Bowdon Churchyard, a stone records that John Warburton was buried there in 1691 in his 83rd year. Opposite the farm across Shaw (now Shay) Lane was a walled-in circular pond where the car park of the Ringway Golf Club is. Wicker House lay at the foot of the brow and Easter Lane Farm a few hundred yards along the Wilmslow Road. In the next forty years one new farm (Elm Farm) and four houses, Springvale, Brunswick, Prospect House and Hale Mount, were built in or near the village. The schoolroom was the only public meeting place in the township in the early 19th century and the Vestry met there leading to the word 'Hale' being placed adjacent to Hale Barns in the county maps of this period in the mistaken belief that it was the old Hale. At least as far back as Tudor times the name referred to the whole township, not to any particular spot.

In the 1820s, according to Mary Stewart Hibbert-Ware, Hale Barns was still a secluded hamlet with just a handful of cottages. An old black-and-white timbered farmhouse on the site of what is now Holy Angels Church, was converted to The Manor House in 1879 by Dr John Leigh, Medical Officer of Health in Manchester, and later became the home of William Cunliffe-Brooks. There were tanning pits along the south side of Long Lane (Hale Road) with willows growing around. The 1723 Hale Presbyterian Chapel was just visible down Chapel Lane to the south of the village. However, by 1851 Hale Barns had developed into a village with a green known as East Hale Green in front of the present Bull's Head Inn where bull baiting took place. There was a school, a smithy, several shops, and two inns or alehouses serving the surrounding farms and hamlets. There were fine trees and, at nearby Partington Pool, a large pond where cattle could drink and shelter under the trees.

The Earl of Stamford's steward demolished the old redundant tithe barn in 1848, now the shopping centre car park, following the abolition of tithes in the 1830s. Tithe Barn Cottage which had been adjacent was demolished in 1935 as unsafe. Ormerod writing in 1844 said that the cottage dated before Henry VIII's time and told the tradition of how the Black Friars of Birkenhead kept their tithes in the barn. According to a story the barn was haunted by a ghost, the Black Boggart of Hale Low, who was said to haunt Long Lane.

By then a few business people had either retired to Hale Barns or commuted from there to work in Manchester. During the second half of the 20th century much of Hale still remained rural, despite the spread of Victorian houses, villas and terraces from Hale Station. Housing development continued slowly up to WWI but accelerated post-1919 following the sale of the Cunliffe-Brooks estate. WWII stopped this but housing continued rapidly from 1950 at those sites and was only limited by the airport and the motorway. Since 2005 some of these houses have been demolished to erect more modern or larger ones since Hale Barns has become one of the most expensive suburbs of Altrincham, with house prices reaching £4m in 2007.

Two older residents in Hale in the 19th century quoted sayings about Hale Barns to Tarbolton. William Johnson remembered: "*These Hale Barns lads I've heard say, They go on poaching night and day, They go in the day to look 'em out, They fetch 'em at night when the Watch are about.*" Isaac Bush a market gardener of Ashley Heath who died in 1929 recalled: "*There's only a sheet of paper between Hell and Hale Barns!*"

Rappax Road near the top of Bankhall Lane leads to Hale Golf Course, built on what had been the fields of Barrow Farm and Rossmill Farm. The footpath from Hope Cottage on Bankhall Lane leading to Barrow Farm and Rossmill Farm, had to be diverted when the original nine holes were

laid down. This was also the way to Jacob's Ladder, a steep track down to the Bollin near the golf club. The club was formed in 1902 with 60 men and 25 women enrolled as members with land leased from the Harrop family to set out a finely-positioned golf course above the wooded Bollin valley. A pavilion designed by William Owen, the Hale architect and surveyor, was erected at the western end. Henry Galloway was the first president and the initial annual subscription was two guineas for men and one guinea for women. Later the links were extended below Tomfield Bank, site of the Saxon hamlet of Hale and a picturesque bridge was built across the intervening Bently Bank Clough. There are still nine holes and the membership is now 350.

Ringway Golf Club was opened in 1909 originally incorporating Hale Mount (built in 1808) as the clubhouse. It is thought that a minor Roman road may cross the links behind the clubhouse which has a fine view over the links. The club has eighteen holes and a membership of 360.

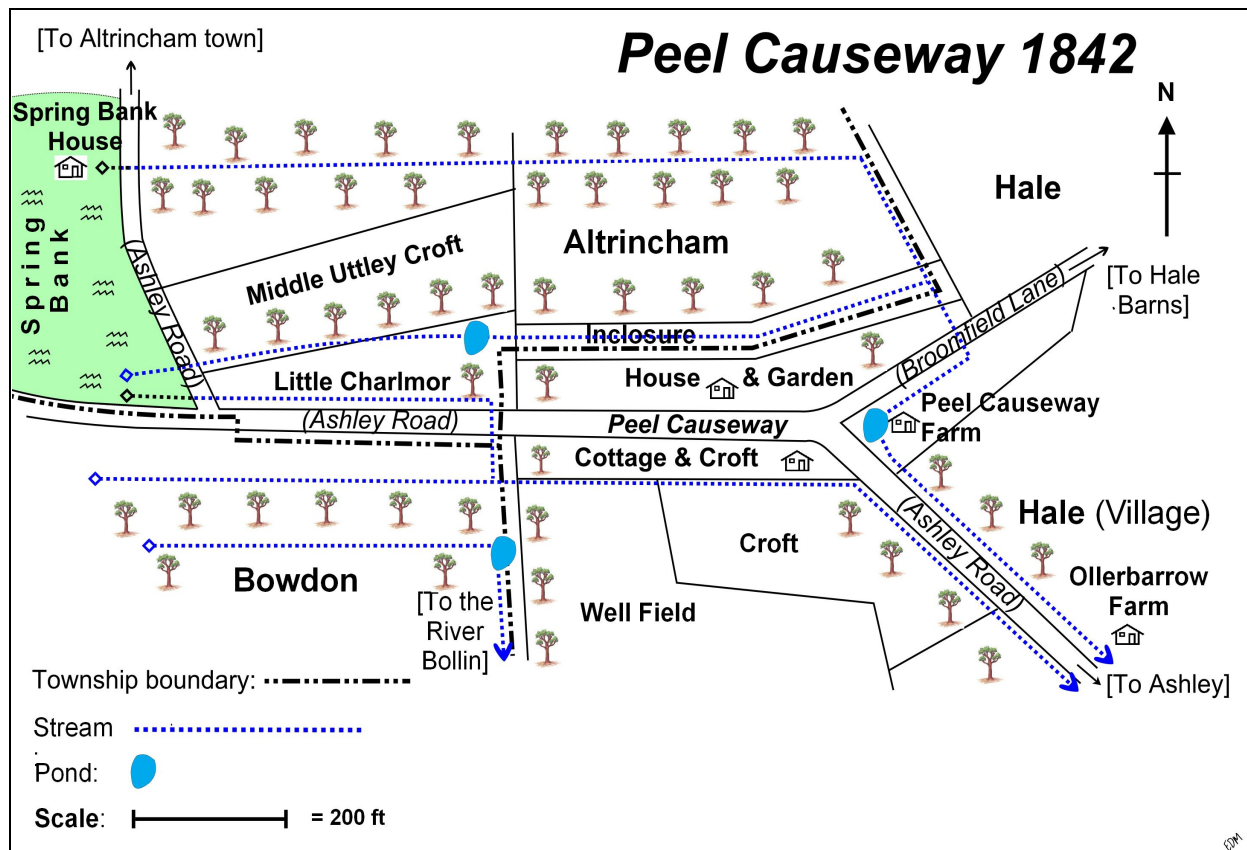
Ringway was in Hale until local government reorganisation in 1900 when Hale became Hale Urban District Council with Ringway as a separate parish. In 1938 Manchester Corporation chose Ringway for their new airport site after Barton proved unsuitable. During the war Special Operations Executive personnel including Odette Churchill GC and Violette Szabo GC, practised parachute drops there. Other well-known personalities who spent time there included Frank Muir, Richard Todd and Evelyn Waugh. Ringway was still a haven for wildlife just after the war and even in 1958 the weather station was still only a little wooden hut in the middle of a field at some distance west of the control tower.

Since the 1960s Ringway has experienced the rapid development of Manchester International Airport and the M56 Motorway. In 1974 under local government reorganisation Ringway became part of Manchester and Hale Urban District became part of Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council.

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14. PEEL CAUSEWAY & THE COMING OF THE RAILWAY



The above map is mainly derived from the Tithe Commutation Map and Schedule and shows Peel Causeway in Hale. As the name Spring Bank suggests, many springs emerged at this point as water met clay under the sand of Bowdon hill. 'Little Charlmor' means 'freeman's boggy land,' the 'Uttley' field would have been named after a person and 'inclosure' is another spelling for 'enclosure', probably named because a small stream lined with alder trees (as in 'oller' barrow) had been fenced in.

Peel Causeway

Peel Causeway was the name for the centre of Hale village, the area from Spring Bank (the first part is in Bowdon) to the railway crossing but in the 1880s continuing along Ashley Road to Ollerbarrow Farm at Leigh Road. The whole area was known as Peel Causeway until 1900 when Alfred Tarbolton successfully campaigned to change it to Hale. The coming of the railway had raised the profile of the village and Tarbolton, the new chairman of the Urban District Council, decided that Hale, the historic name with its Domesday connotation, was more appropriate.

The name Peel Causeway may refer to a path across a marshy area defined by wooden palings. The dictionary definition of 'peel' is a stake, or a fence made of stakes, or a stockade (14th century), later a fortified tower or keep (16th century). Peel is from Latin *palus*, palum, Old English *pal*, Middle English *pel*, a pointed stake or pale, ie something driven into the ground or a fence of stakes. A 'paling fence' and the words 'palisade' and 'pole' are derived from it. Palus then came to mean a palisade or stockade. 'The Pale' was then used to describe defended, but not necessarily enclosed territories, eg the English-governed Pales in France, the Isle of Man and Dublin, from which comes the phrase 'beyond the pale'. In some areas 'pale parks' were constructed to contain animals, especially deer.

A brook or drain ran through Peel Causeway and springs and willow trees have left their mark today on the names of some of the streets. Tarbolton described a thatched farm building called Peel Way Hall built in the style of the early 18th century. This was situated down the track at the back of 124 Ashley Road until it was demolished in 1886. There was a ditch in front and a millrace to the rear and it may have been an ancient stronghold with a moat, or a small mill.

The first reference to Peel Causeway comes in a deed of 1701 when Robert Ashley took over Peel Causeway Farm from his father. The house still exist next door to Hale Station and is currently a vet's practice. The Tithe Map of 1842 shows Peel Causeway Farm to be 81 statute acres with farm buildings at the junction of Ashley Road and Broomfield Lane. At that time Ashley Road forked eastwards into Broomfield Lane towards Hale Barns and southwards towards Ashley. According to Dodgson, part of Ashley Road in 1831 was known as Pale Causeway and the 1898 Ordnance Survey map of Hale shows Peel Causeway extending down Ashley Road and including Ollerbarrow Farm.



Southern's Bakery, near the Drill Hall, Ashley Road (1910s, AAIA).

One of the buildings of Ollerbarrow Farm, an 18th century cottage, still stands at the corner of Ashley Road and Leigh Road. Ollerbarrow means 'alder grove' implying a wet area, probably along the line of Ashley Road. Ollerbarrow Farm was of ancient origin, mentioned in 1406 when the widow of John de Aldcroft of Ollerbarwe sued Henry de Massey of Carrington and his wife for her dower. Centuries later, in June 1761, the property was offered for sale in Altrincham when, obviously rebuilt, it was described as "*A newly-erected dwelling house and outbuildings, 24 Cheshire acres of good sandy land, and a valuable pew in Bowden Church, known by the name of Oller Barrow in the possession of Thomas Ashley.*"

The Railway

The significant changes to the area began when the railway came to Altrincham in 1849. Manchester South Junction and Altrincham Railway (MSJ&A) from Oxford Road, Manchester to Altrincham opened in that year with two stations in Altrincham. The original Altrincham Station was opposite to the Barrington Hotel and Bowdon Station had its main entrance, booking office and hotel on Railway Street. The MSJ&A was a joint railway, the partners being the London and North Western Railway (LNWR) and the Manchester Sheffield and Lincolnshire (MS&L).

With the lure of the Cheshire salt field and possibly some extra passengers, an extension was proposed. The LNWR was not interested because it had its own access from the south and its huge centre at Crewe was nearby. The LNWR was a rival of the MS&L as far as the salt trade was concerned, so an act of parliament was obtained in the name of the Cheshire Midland Railway with the MS&L being interested from the start. Sir Henry Mainwaring of Knutsford started the Cheshire Midland Railway in 1860 with an extension from Altrincham to Hale and Knutsford in 1862. Plans for a station in Hale were drawn up. Hale was connected and the line was extended to Northwich in 1863, and Chester in 1874.

Later the Cheshire Midland Railway joined with a number of other railways, their names all equally forgotten, to form the Cheshire Lines Committee (CLC), a joint railway, the partners being the MS&L and the Great Northern Railway (GNR). The Midland Railway joined a year or two later. The CLC remained a joint railway until nationalisation in 1947. At the end of the 19th century the MS&L reached London and changed its name to Great Central. All the locomotives in the Hale area were labelled with that company's name except for the limestone traffic from Derbyshire. This originated on the Midland Railway and their locomotives hauled these trains to Northwich. The limestone hopper wagons were introduced in 1937.

Hale Road was bridged but not Ashley Road. Over the years consideration was given to an underpass or a flyover but neither happened, fortunately for the shopping centre and local people because the increased traffic flow would have changed the character of the village. As it is, of course, traffic stops for considerable periods at the level crossing many times a day.



*Hale Station and the 1908 George Baker Walsh
memorial drinking fountain with horse trough (1920s, AAIA).*

Plans for the station at Hale were issued in 1862, a few months before the opening of the line. Its low importance is reflected in the cost estimates: Hale £260, Ashley £500, Mobberley £500. The first station was on the site of Peel Causeway Farm in Hale, but as most of the population was situated in Bowdon to the west, it was named Bowdon (Peel Causeway) to distinguish it from the

Bowdon Station in Altrincham. After the station was rebuilt in 1877 it was renamed Peel Causeway (Bowdon), then Peel Causeway for Hale, and finally Hale in 1902.

When the Cheshire Midland Railway opened its line from Altrincham to Knutsford on May 12th 1862, there were six passenger trains each way on weekdays and four on Sundays between Manchester (Oxford Road) and Knutsford, serving the little station of Bowdon (Peel Causeway). For over five years from September 1869 Hale had a service to Helsby after which passengers could continue to Chester. This was replaced in November 1874 when the Cheshire Lines opened its own line to Chester (Northgate) Station. On July 1st 1878 Hale trains started to use the new Manchester (Central) Station. There were no further changes for 90 years until 1969 when Manchester Central Station was closed and on May 5th trains to and from Hale reverted to Manchester Oxford Road.

The service had increased to ten each way by 1880. By then standardisation of time known as 'railway time' had been achieved to enable railway timetables to be produced. Previously each community had its own variation on solar time. Most trains took 37 minutes from Northwich to Hale. The fastest train from Hale to Chester was 72 minutes, with a return of 74 minutes making the same stops as today. The fastest train from Manchester (Central) to Hale, with a stop at Altrincham, took only 18 minutes.

Hale Station has at various times been used by other services such as through trains from Manchester to and from London Euston via Northwich, Middlewich and Crewe. This service started in 1885 and ran until the autumn of 1933. At first trains did not call at Hale so Altrincham was the nearest stop. After a few years Hale became a request stop.

The railway goods yards on both sides of Hale Station closed in 1963 and were converted to car parks and a town yard. Apartments were built on the Brown Street side in 2004. Passenger trains have remained fairly constant during the past 100 years, but goods traffic has changed particularly since the closure of the railway between Skelton Junction, Timperley and Warrington in 1985. New traffic included large British Oxygen Company tank wagons, the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority trains, now stopped, and trains of cement wagons. Above all, Hale residents will be familiar with the sight, sound and vibrations of the hoppers from the Peak District of Derbyshire en route to ICI at Northwich and Winnington, all helping to keep the line to Chester open. It is a unique service, which has run every day of the year except Christmas Day and New Year's Day since about 1875. Once, steam trains struggled to climb the hill from Altrincham to Hale and slipping wheels were common but modern diesels now pull 24 hoppers.

Some residents of Hale will have memories of wagons bringing animals to Hale Station for the Altrincham Agricultural Show, which closed in 1966. In addition there was an occasional circus with wagons rocking wildly as elephants got out and trundled up Broomfield Lane on their way to the Hale Moss ground.

The impact of the railway

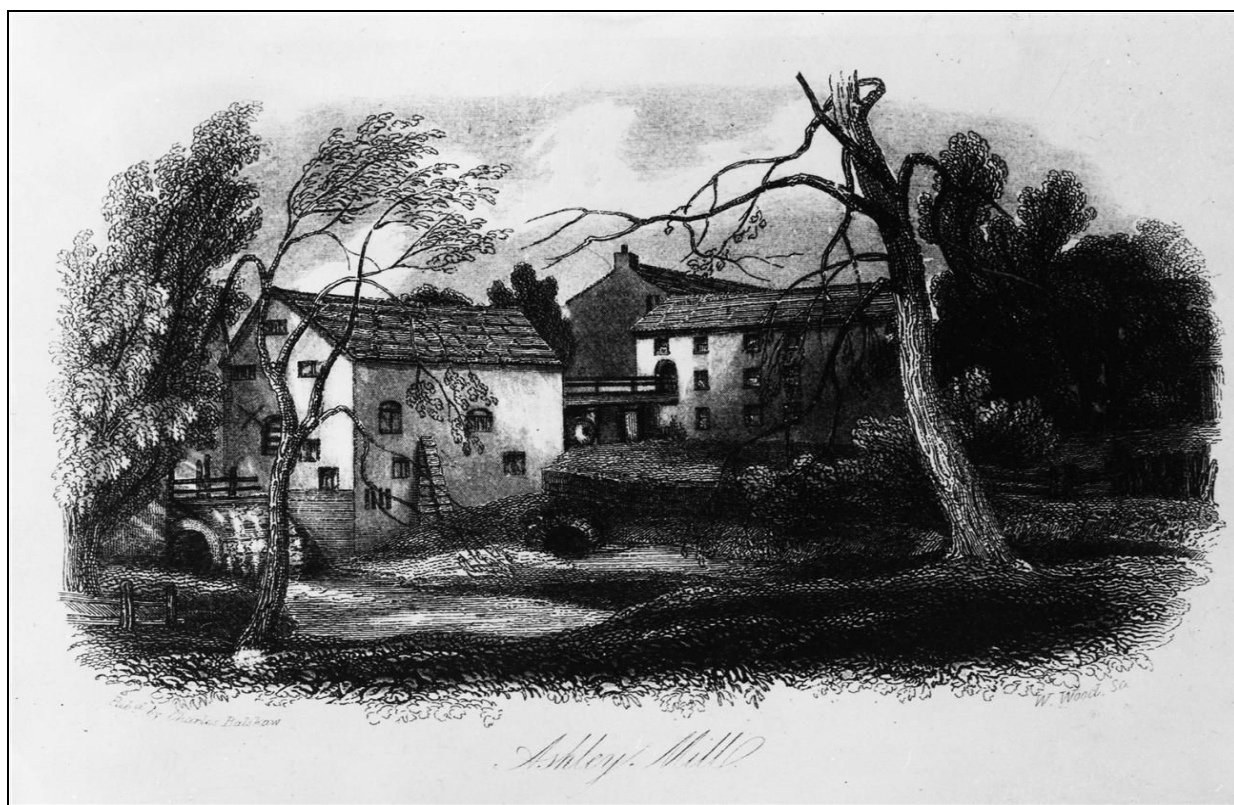
The construction of the railway from Altrincham through Hale in 1862 by the Cheshire Midland Railway became the single most important factor in the shift from rural to urban Hale. Peel Causeway must have been an attractive place to live as Altrincham grew in importance and the railway opened up the possibility of easy commuting to Manchester. The same pattern was emerging all over the country. Entrepreneurs saw possibilities and houses were built and services provided. What is now Hale Village, started to develop a separate identity from Hale Barns.

The land immediately adjoining the station became surplus to the railway's needs and was sold to John Siddeley who opened a brewery about 1863 on the triangle of land where the Millennium Clock now stands. The unsightly building with a tall chimney towering over the station buildings was removed in 1907 and replaced by a drinking fountain which still marks the spot.

A more acceptable development was the terrace of five large and five smaller houses on the south side of Ashley Road adjoining Peel Avenue. These handsome houses named Willow Bank were built by Charles Holt, who bought the land in 1849 from the 7th Earl of Stamford. Samuel Brown bought the remaining land up to the present Cheshire Midland Hotel and built four cottages numbered from 126 to 132 Ashley Road. Number 130 was licensed as a beerhouse and eventually became the Railway Inn. Brown's remaining land was sold on to William Berry who built the impressive terrace of three-storey shops leading up to Spring Road.

The impact of the railway on Hale and particularly Peel Causeway was considerable. In 1861 the population had reached 1160, showing an increase of only 218 in the previous thirty years. Ten years later it had reached 1711. A writer in the *Manchester Evening News* in October 1901 described Hale before the railway as:

"Almost entirely agricultural; a region of wide undulating fields cut by winding lanes and inhabited principally by the tenants of scattered farmsteads. A few wealthy citizens had indeed discovered the district and built themselves lordly pleasure houses there, picturesquely perched on green knolls, girt by spacious gardens..."



A drawing of Ashley Mill published by Charles Balshaw (1858, AAIA).

One such citizen was John Henderson Broun who built Altrincham's first office block, Station Buildings now Stamford House in 1905. In 1896 he built his own house, Riverside, on a hill overlooking the River Bollin on Ashley Mill Lane North. Over the war years the building deteriorated and it was replaced in the 1960s by a modern single-storey house, winner of a Civic Trust award, offered for sale in 2008 at £4m. This was itself demolished in 2014 and a contemporary house with a helipad built.

A populous place

The Cheshire Midland Hotel went up three years after the completion of the railway and Peel Causeway Station. By 1891 it was a fully licensed house but under the terms of the licence the landlord, Richard Brundrett, was obliged to close at 10pm and vacate the adjoining stables filled with horses and drivers waiting for farmers from the Cheshire markets on the 10.21 pm train and visitors to Manchester on the 11.05pm. In order to extend the licensing hours the landlord had to apply to Altrincham Petty Sessions to prove that Peel Causeway was 'a populous place', and then apply for the licence to Knutsford Licensing Committee.

In 1891 Mr Brundrett made the application. The stationmaster had prepared some figures, which showed that in June 9,954 passengers received tickets at the station, in addition to holders of contract tickets. In July the number was 11,935, and in August 10,705. Mr W H Hadfield, assistant overseer for Hale, said that in 1874 the population of the district was 875, in 1881 it was 1,385 and it had now reached 2,005, a milestone in the area's growth. The chairman declared that the Peel Causeway district had become a populous place and Mr Brundrett and the Cheshire Midland had won. The inn and stables stayed open later, and horses and drivers waited in comfort.

A big building development in the area came in 1876 when a group of Manchester merchants built a roller-skating rink on an acre of farmland fronting Ashley Road with the railway behind. The building was quite distinctive, with a rounded roof spanning nearly 50 feet. The enterprise failed and Bowdon Skating Rink Ltd closed after only three years. However, the building was eventually purchased by the Salvation Army in 1882, and six years later by the Cheshire Volunteers. During both wars it had a prominent military presence and was a depot for the parachute regiment in WWII when it was sandbagged and remained a drill hall for the training of volunteers until after the war.

Immediately alongside the Drill Hall, Henry Kenyon designed and built a Girls' Home. Local philanthropist Francis Crossley of Crossley Engineering funded the cost of £2,500 and the building was later used as Hale council offices. In the 1960s was demolished together with the drill hall next door to build a supermarket and a hotel.

Francis Crossley also provided funds for "*religious, moral and industrial teaching for girls*" in a building on the Warwick Road side of Ashley Road. Formerly Hale Conservative Club, it was originally built in 1883 as a school and in 1898 was lent by Mrs Emily Crossley to be used as a Police Orphanage. In 1903 it became St. Baldred's Hall, a social meeting place named after the Northumbrian saint. During the war Les Vauxbelets College, evacuated from Guernsey, used the building as a meeting place which led to the formation of St. Ambrose College, Hale Barns.

The big name change

Peel Causeway became Hale in November 1901 after a campaign led by local lawyer and historian Alfred Tarbolton who was very proud that the name Hale was referred to in the Domesday Book. As chairman of the newly-formed Hale UDC, Tarbolton decided to regularise the name. On June 17th 1901 his council approached the *Altrincham & Bowdon Guardian* with a request to add the name 'Hale' to the title. The editor Charles Nickson agreed to the change, possibly anticipating an increase in circulation, and the paper became *The Altrincham, Bowdon & Hale Guardian*. Hale UDC also asked the postal authorities to change the name of the Post Office in Victoria Road, which within a few days became Hale Post Office. However, persuading the Railway Company to change the name to Hale Station proved to be much more difficult. The previous Parish Council had already obtained approval from the Cheshire Lines Committee to change the name Peel Causeway to Peel Causeway for Hale. This was not good enough for the chairman of Hale UDC. His lawyer's mind found it too woolly and he regarded it as a half measure.



*Council Offices and Drill Hall in 1963 demolished 1970.
Now the site of a hotel and shops. The Bowling Green is to the left (AAIA).*

The council decided to meet Mr David Meldrum, manager of Cheshire Lines Committee, and his engineer in June 1901, to discuss alterations and improvements to the station and sound out the possibility of changing the name. This subject was tentatively raised and the council decided to make a formal request giving six reasons for the change, one being that Peel Causeway was calculated by the telegraph authorities as two words so a telegram addressed to Hale Station would reduce the cost.

Mr Meldrum dug his heels in, reluctant to take on the administrative work in changing the name on the station, printing new tickets and informing Bradshaws, the timetable for the whole of England and the regular railway passenger's bible – price 6d.

The council made two further attempts in October and November, even offering to compromise with the name 'Peel Causeway, Hale'. In desperation, Mr Meldrum wrote, *"I may say finally that my committee are quite satisfied with the name Peel Causeway and have not the slightest desire to make any alteration, and I shall be very much obliged if your council will leave the subject alone."*

The council reluctantly decided to follow his advice, but not Tarbolton. On the morning of November 28th he was waiting on Altrincham Station for his train to Manchester when he encountered Sir William Pollitt, General Manager of the Great Central Railway Company and a member of the Cheshire Lines Committee. Tarbolton opened the subject of changing the name to Hale. It was news to Sir William who said that he had attended all the committee meetings that year and was confident that the subject had not been raised at any of them! Within a week he leapt into action and sent a telegram granting the council's request regardless of cost. Peel Causeway had become Hale and the old name faded away.

The following celebratory ditty has survived attributed to Alfred Tarbolton from a glee *Hail, Smiling Morn* by Reginald Spofforth in 1799:

Hale, Hale, Hale

*Tell it out in Altrincham, in Timperley and Sale,
That Peel Causeway Station must be designated Hale.
What though it is a beverage, with an aspirate before,
You must not call the station Peel Causeway any more.
When you hear the porters sing it out, it's known to you and me,
They are not carol singers, a-singing of a glee,
But if they drop the aspirate, the name could not be matched
In fitness, for this station with the brewery attached.
It's stylish and peculiar, and then again it's shorter,
And suits the gentry living in the residential quarter.
'Tis said it's an achievement that will bring a lasting fame,
To the Urban District Council with the alcoholic name;
A splendid lot of gentlemen selected from the classes,
They've even got a butler, though he does not wash the glasses.
Some folks say they are clever, some call them addlepates,
Because they ain't done nothing towards reducing of the rates.
And why should they be bothered with shillings, pounds and pence,
When they've such a testimonial from a ratepayer named Spence?
We really must excuse them, no doubt they do their best,
For they generally have parsons and they always have a guest.*

The removal of the 'Peel Causeway' road sign opposite to the Railway Inn in the 1960s finally completed the process.

Other developments

An important residential building project following the coming of the railway was the Victoria Road and Albert Road estate, built on Nearer Uttley Field and Further Uttley Field. This was the site of Bowdon Nursery which supplied plants to Bowdon houses in the mid-19th century. In 1874 the nursery was closed and Victoria Road and Albert Road were built by a group led by Henry Kenyon, a member of the Local Board from 1876 to 1879.

All of the early houses had dry closets at the back, a running water supply and gas mains, but no bathrooms. Main drains were not laid until after 1878. The bottom end of the unmade Victoria Road became known as Slutchy Lane because of its muddy condition, probably worst at its southern end where it came on to clay as it approached Ashley Road. An OS map of 1876 shows a spring going eastwards from Spring Bank towards Victoria Road and until the railway was built it may have been used to irrigate the nursery, which was on very sandy ground. The classic red-brick houses on the corner of Broomfield Lane and Victoria Road were built in English Bond using Ruabon bricks. Albert Road has no number 13 and the first Hale UDC offices of 1900 were in Thorn Grove, in a tiny house on the left, then known locally as the Dog Kennel.

The story of Hale Recreation Ground is a sad one because cost forced it to be dramatically scaled down. In 1908 Hale UDC attempted to establish a recreation ground in Hale village and approached the owners of eleven acres at the corner of the newly-cut Bower Road and Harrop Road. At the time as much as £700 per acre was being asked for this building land but the owners were willing to sell a plot for £500 per acre. With fencing and laying out the ground this would have meant a cost of over £7,400. The council felt that the limit was £5,000 entailing a 2d rate, but ratepayers were unsympathetic despite rising land prices. The proposal failed and the scheme

was abandoned in 1909. Eventually, as Bower Road was developed before and after the Great War, a tiny plot was purchased at the corner of Bower Road and Warwick Drive. It remains today, an attractive spot, but hardly the public open space envisaged by the council. However, Hale village does have a substantial public amenity in the bowling green purchased from the Stamford Estate in 1901. It is centrally placed in Hale and well used by local people.

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15. HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS

Tracks & causeways

Burdett's map of 1777 was the first county map identifying Hale showing the road system which appears on the later Tithe Map. Long Lane (Hale Road), Dob Lane (Park Road), Yestow Lane (the Wilmslow Road east of Hale Barns), Barrow Lane, Nunnery Lane (Bankhall Lane), Broomfield Lane, Shaw (Shay) Lane are all identifiable. Peel Causeway and Ollerbarrow Lane (Ashley Road) are also mentioned. The accounts of highways overseers from fifty years before suggest that many of the roads were from an even earlier date.

The state of these roads would have appeared dire to modern eyes and some contemporaries thought the same. The late 18th century agricultural innovator, Arthur Young, described most Lancashire and Cheshire roads as 'execrable' and solemnly warned all travellers that they should as soon think of venturing their coaches on them as on the waves of the sea. He particularly objected to the Cheshire habit of making paved causeways of varying widths never wide enough for carts and carriages to pass. The road makers or road repairers of Hale in the 18th century were more concerned about horse and foot passengers and protecting them from the Cheshire mud. Most of the 'causeys' or 'coseys' recorded in the highway surveyors' accounts were only half a yard wide and bordered by stumps. For horse and foot passengers the roads were probably adequate and an aristocratic traveller, the Honourable John Byng in 1792 described the whole country around Altrincham as *"flat, wooded, sandy and populous and very pleasant to ride."*

The roads and footpaths of Hale were well used. From at least 1779 farm produce was taken to the Bridgewater Canal at Broadheath and Timperley for transport to Manchester. Farmers rode to Altrincham market and worshippers rode and walked to the chapels at Ringway and Hale Barns. However, Hale roads were never turnpikes, that is toll roads maintained by trusts, because there was never sufficient traffic.

Until the mid-19th century the maintenance of Hale roads was in the charge of two overseers who chose six days a year for road maintenance. All farmers had to send a cart and two men, and all other householders had to come along or send a substitute. Their job was to fill up holes with sand or gravel, cut back trees and hedges, scour existing ditches and dig new ones. Overseers paid farmers for providing stones and sand from their fields. In 1816 the vestry was fined by the Justices of the Peace for neglecting the road from Castle Mill to the main Altrincham-Wilmslow road. The repairs were tricky, as they had to get the brow lowered and the hollow part raised up. The work was contracted out to John Metcalf for under £40 and a special rate of 1s. 6d in the pound was levied to pay for the work. In June 1829 an unusually well-attended vestry meeting protested against the overseer for the north side of Hale for having the gravel road outside his own house paved. The roads were referred to as 'lanes' but, with the passing of time and improved paving, some aspired to the name 'road'. Bankhall Lane, Broomfield Lane, Hasty Lane and Shay Lane have retained the old name.

Roads, farms and houses

Hale's main highway was **Long Lane**, now Hale Road, linking Altrincham and Hale Barns. Long Lane really was a very long lane, with almost no houses until about 1900. Some children from Peel Causeway and Altrincham went to school in Hale Barns in the 19th century and it must have been a weary trudge and very scary in winter and in the dark. In the mid-19th century the lane was narrow and neglected, with ruts two or three feet deep so carts were often stuck and axles broken. It was much used by farm carts laden with produce for Altrincham Market or the Bridgewater Canal, and drays carrying raw cotton bales to Gregg's Mill at Styal, returning with woven cotton and finished cloth for transport to Manchester. It was lined with hedges, and oak and ash trees so that by the evening any travellers were enveloped in darkness.

Miss Edith Hall, formerly of The Grange, Yew Tree Lane, Ringway who died in 1970 at the age of 101, recalled that her mother was regarded as foolhardy if she insisted on returning home after dusk in winter from shopping in Altrincham. It was expected that she would stay overnight at an Altrincham hotel rather than brave the perils of Long Lane.

One of the few breaks was at Broomfield Lane, which swept back to Hale Station and Bowdon Church. The farmer at Ollerbarrow Farm on Ashley Road in the mid-19th century was Thomas Clarke, who had the fields up to Long Lane. He used to go down the present Queens Road, past Hale Farm to Sandholes on the edge of the moss to get stones and sand to repair the road. Improvements began with the appointment of a township surveyor and in 1863 the northern side of Long Lane was paved with setts at a cost of £2,500. However in 1897 the council were petitioned to replace the setts by tarmac because of the noise. The name Long Lane was changed to Hale Road in about 1890.

One story which has come down through the years is known as the Long Lane Tragedy. This was a gang fight that ended in violent death and a murder trial. Two gangs from Altrincham and Hale had an encounter on Long Lane on the evening of Saturday September 6th, 1868 which ended with the men running into Peel Street, now Peel Road. Bricks were thrown inflicting a nasty head wound on one of the boys. After helping him the local men, including Thomas Jenkinson, went in search of the other gang. This group had gone further up Long Lane and torn down fences to protect themselves, and the locals did the same. In the fight that followed Jenkinson was injured and died from a severe fracture of the skull. His grave is in Bowdon Churchyard, grave 2725. One man escaped but six of the youths were captured at various farmhouses. They were charged with wilful murder at Chester Assizes on December 5th and all pleaded not guilty, as extensively reported in the *Chester Chronicle*. The trial hinged on whether the prisoners were acting in self-defence and, in fact, they were discharged with a warning from the judge.

Long Lane from Altrincham to Hale Barns used to end at Hale Barns Green at The Bull's Head Inn but today Hale Road goes east to Ringway and Wilmslow and becomes Wilmslow Road at the M56. It was commonly called Th'east'ard Lane, deriving from Eastward Lane and has been variously called Easter Lane, Easty Lane, East'ard Lane, Eastoe Lane and Eastod Lane. Part of Ringway Golf Course is on Long Yeastow, and Nearer and Further Yeastow fields. Nearby were some semi-detached houses called Yestercroft Cottages.

Elm Farm was on the east side of Hale Road near Rydal Drive, and Prospect House lay on the west near Prospect Drive and Winmarith Drive, just before Brooks' Drive. Easter Lane Farm, a cruck-framed building demolished between the wars, was on the left corner of Brooks' Drive. One of the few remaining buildings before the Bollin valley was the 1770 Buck Hall, a wing still standing on the left just before the M56. A beerhouse called The Duke of York stood opposite, and finally The Red Lion (now the Rompin' Kitlin') and Ringway Chapel were both at the Wilmslow Road/Pinfold Lane crossroads.

Ashley Road now runs from Altrincham through Hale village to Ashley Heath. Before the arrival of the railway the Hale section was called Peel Causeway and forked opposite to the Railway Inn, with Broomfield Lane branching off to Hale Barns. The section from the railway through the present shops was called Ollerbarrow Lane and was described in the 1830s as a 'track by a brook'. At that time brooks ran behind the present shops on both sides of Ashley Road and the area between Ashley Road and the railway area was a marsh.



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See Page 34.

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*Edwin Watson, Ironmongers, Ashley Road,
currently the site of Sealpoint and Rooftops (1920s, AAIA).*

Bankhall Lane was originally called Nunnery Lane and may have formed part of the Warrington to Macclesfield road. At the Ashley Road end there used to be an old thatched cottage with a wheelwright's shop on the south side. At the end of Tolland Lane, originally Back Lane, are four cottages dating from around 1800, known in 1851 as Towlands, probably a corruption of Townlands and perhaps a reference to open fields to the south. Opposite Tolland Lane across Bankhall Lane was Clibran's Nursery. Hale Sewage Works at the back was built about 1876, partly on a field belonging to Peel Causeway Farm called Bank Meadow. It originally used alder trees and bullrushes to filter the sewage and in 1914 it was reported in the local *Guardian* that it was 'an abominable and public nuisance'. Even in the twenty-first century the smell was often objectionable. In 2004 it was closed and sewage is now pumped via Hale Barns to the main works at Broadheath.

Further up on the right is Bank Hall, a listed timber-framed building, mainly early 18th century and next to it, a path leads on the right to the stretch of river known locally as the Rappax Bollin. Further up on the right is Hope Cottage, an early 16th century timber-framed building. A track behind used to lead to Barrow Farm and Rossmill Farm, Leo Grindon's route⁵⁹ now diverted by Hale Golf Course.

⁵⁹ See the Hale Personalities chapter.

A holy well is reported to have existed opposite Hope Cottage in the valley called Holloway Clough which is known locally as the Dingle. A small brook in a field called Ding Well above Bankhall Lane runs down Holloway Clough, flows under drives and then turns down to the Bollin. The banks of the dingle are deep sand and were used to fill sandbags during the war.

Park Road was originally known as Dob Lane. Dob could come from daub, as in wattle and daub, since this is a very clayey area where field names indicate that bricks were made. However, *dob* means 'an extension of land' and this is the most likely source of the word. From the direction of the Old Bleeding Wolf, there were no buildings before Tolland Lane in 1838. Soon afterwards on the right, where Birchfields is now, was Yew Tree Farm and its outbuildings, once the home of John Kinsey, a notable Altrincham surveyor in the 1850s. At that time Bower Road was a field path and just past it on Dob Lane were three whitewashed cottages used since 1722 as the Hale Poorhouse, a small workhouse. In 1834 a new Poor Law caused them to close and they were demolished in 1865. At the corner of Hill Top Drive stood Long Lane House, now The Old Farm, dating from 1689 and one of the oldest houses in Hale.

By 1862 Samuel Brooks the Manchester banker, created Brooks' Road, now **Brooks' Drive**. In doing so he blocked up a public path from Buttery House Farm to Hale Road without the sanction of magistrates.

Roaring Gate Lane links two sections of Brooks' Drive and runs between Davenport Green and Whitecarr Lane. There are just two old buildings on it, Roaring Gate Farm, now part of Chapel House Farm, and Davenport Green Cottage which was used for hand-loom weaving in the 18th century. The weaving chamber was converted into a workshop and later merged into the house. Nevell dates the original Roaring Gate Farm as 18th century and Tarbolton believed that it was rebuilt in 1876. There used to be a stone flag at the back of the house bearing the initials 'G' over 'W & A', said to be the initials of William and Ann Grantham and with the date 1691 underneath. In the 19th century there were some remains of a square moat.

At the northern end of Roaring Gate Lane, Brooks' Drive crossed Dobbinetts Lane towards the present Altrincham Road/Stockport Road roundabout along Brooklands Road to the station. Until the 1920s tolls were collected at the tollhouse, still situated at the roundabout. On the east side was the 1902 Baguley Isolation Hospital which became Wythenshawe Hospital in 1939.

Hasty Lane off Hale Road just before the M56 is an ancient road leading to Etrop Green. The dip at the first bend known as Thieves' Hollow was featured by Mrs Titus Hibbert-Ware in her novel *The Old Tithe Barn* as the spot where an attempt on the life of Captain Ralph Leycester was frustrated by the timely appearance of the Black Boggart. A vestry minute in 1841 records a resolution to pave the road 'to the Evers Hollow', probably an error for 'Eaves' and the same place.

Shay Lane in Hale Barns was marked as such on old maps. *Shay* is a northern form of Shaw and is OE for a small wood or coppice. Oaklands Farm at the top of Shay Lane has been in the hands of the Warburton family for several centuries. The Manchester Region Industrial Archaeological Society (MRIAS) surveyed the barn in 2004 before it was dismantled and rebuilt as town houses and apartments. Opposite, across Shay Lane, was Hale Mount, erected in 1808 and used as the clubhouse for Ringway Golf Club in 1909 until it was rebuilt following a fire in 1987.

Peel Road, originally Peel Street on the northern side of Long Lane, was the first street to be constructed in the area in 1838. It was built on a very narrow enclosed strip from the original open field system, and apart from the adjacent Hale Farm, was half a mile from other neighbours. Hale Farm was owned by a Massey in 1462 when it was referred to as the 'Pele at Hale'. Peel Street saw the start of local Methodism in 1866 when meetings were first held at number 29 before the Methodist Mission on Hale Road was built in 1897. In 1935 a street party was held in Peel Street to commemorate George V and Queen Mary's Silver Jubilee. The original houses were demolished and replaced about 1980.

Footpaths

Hale is bounded on all sides by ancient footpaths often running along the boundaries of fields and owing their existence to economic reasons. They ran from farm to farm, to open fields, to hamlets, to churches and to mills. Some go back to Saxon times connecting scattered settlements. In the north of Hale there are tracks past King George's Pool to Well Green and Davenport Green. To the east there are many footpaths around the Bollin valley towards Ringway and to the south there are long walks on back roads and tracks to Ashley and Mobberley. To the south-west there are footpaths towards Rostherne and Little Bollington and westwards there is a maze of footpaths around the Bowdon and Dunham area. In addition several remnants of footpaths still exist within central Hale:

- Money Ash Bridge on a route from George Street, Altrincham to Money Ash Farm, Hale Farm (Queens Road) and on to Hale Barns.
- The path between Ollerbarrow Road and Cambridge Road, Hale preserving part of a route from Hale Farm in Queens Road to Ollerbarrow Farm at the bottom of Leigh Road via the open fields between the two farms.
- The path from Park Road, Hale through to Woodhead Road and Arthog Road which was on the route from Ollerbarrow Farm to Barrow Farm and Rossmill Farm in Hale Barns.
- The path between the bowling green and Barclays Bank in Hale, probably preserving a track from Ollerbarrow Farm and New Farm which crossed the railway line into Cleggs Lane (now Heath Road) and on towards South Downs Road and Ashley Mill.

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16. HALLS AND FARMS

Introduction

In 1720 Hale Barns, then the main centre for Hale, had one inn, a tithe barn, a blacksmith's shop run by Bradley Pass, and a few cottages clustered together. The major road to Ringway now the Wilmslow Road was Easter Lane, a continuation of Long Lane. Tracks off this road led to some substantial buildings such as halls and farms with a few clustered cottages. The 1851 census gave comprehensive details of roads, buildings, owners, tenants and occupations. It showed Hale to be a very different place from today. It was a scattered community linked by roads with different names. What is now Hale village was called Peel Causeway and the main roads were Long Lane (Hale Road), Peel Causeway (now Ashley Road) and Nunnery Lane (now Bankhall Lane). These roads were full of potholes and very rutted and Peel Causeway was impassible in winter. Hale Township still had its centre at Hale Barns which had more of a village feel than Peel Causeway.

Hale's six halls were Bank Hall, Buck Hall, Davenport Green Hall, Etrop Hall, Latham Hall and Ollerbarrow Hall. The owners were minor gentry, working farmers producing mainly beef cattle, sometimes with milk and cheese as a by-product, and crops like oats and barley. There were a number of farms of various sizes generating many of the jobs in the area. In addition to agriculture, tanning took place on some farms and little industries like weaving and basket making went on in cottages with suitable lean-to buildings.

Many of the older, larger houses started off as moated buildings. Moats usually date from the 12th to the 16th century and they demonstrated the wealth of owners and providing drainage to the site. In the 15th century the Wars of the Roses caused moats to be restored and they were also a source of water to put out fires and useful for rearing fish and ducks as well as defence. Buttery House Farm off Shay Lane and now demolished, was moated and there is evidence of moats at Bank Hall and Ollerbarrow Hall. By the 16th century the moats were largely ornamental but the threat of Civil War in 1642 caused Hale families to fortify their houses yet again.

The older halls, farms and houses in Hale were timber-framed, often crucks, on a sandstone foundation. Cheshire was a suitable county for building in brick, having both clay and sand with lime imported from Buxton. Poorer dwellings were primitive huts of wattle and daub, but by Tudor times brick had become the material for fashionable houses and by the mid-18th century for smaller houses too. Brick houses built in the township in the 18th and early 19th centuries included Ollerbarrow Hall, Bank Hall, Buck Hall, Springvale, Hale Mount and Prospect House. All followed the general Georgian plan of four rooms, two at the front and two at the back, separated by a central staircase. The front rooms were living and withdrawing rooms, and those at the back were the kitchen and service rooms.

By 1664 there were 113 houses and by 1778 there was a handful more but still only a further 30 by 1838. They were scattered over the entire area, sometimes single farmhouses with one or more cottages situated on or near the various greens of the township. Leather Green, at the junction of Chapel Lane and Rossmill Lane had no houses nearby.

Houses were built in the vernacular tradition with local materials by local craftsmen. The great rebuilding that took place towards the end of the reign of Elizabeth I was a movement towards greater comfort and privacy, which spread from the landed classes and had, to a certain degree, reached all classes by the second half of the 18th century. How long it took to reach all levels in Hale can be seen from the decision of the vestry meeting in 1821 to raise the roof of the poorhouse in Dob Lane to make a room over it by laying a floor, and slating the roof.

In the 1870s John Owen noted that a cottage at Well Green was one of the few left with the main room open to the rafters. It had a chamber at the east end with flooring over it and a room above.

Even more interesting was the building which ended its days as a cattle shed near Hale Top cottages at Etrop Green. It had a central hall open to the rafters and chambers at both ends with rooms above. In one of these was a virtually immovable bed with its posts at one side cut away to fit the sloping roof and both sides made of thick oak planks corded together. Tarbolton believed that one of the downstairs rooms had been a weaving chamber and that there were many like it in the township before the factory system spread from spinning to weaving and ended the weaver-farmer. There were other uses for additional rooms: parlours, bedrooms, storerooms, even stables and mangers.



The Old House, probably originally a farm, on South Downs Road, before Greenside Drive was built (1920s, AAIA).

Other cottages which still survive, such as Hope Cottage on Bankhall Lane, and more substantial houses like Davenport Green Hall and The Old House on South Downs Road at Ashley Heath, were all timber-framed in the Cheshire tradition. Hope Cottage has been dated as 16th-century, possibly early in that century. It has been variously known as Chesters, from the name of the tenant, Holloway Clough Cottage, and Halliwell Clough. The present name, Hope, was the Christian name of a recent owner. Before WWI it was used as a mission house.

The 18th century was a time of stability and gradual growth. Families established during that time still live in the area or their names mark the roads such as Harrop Road. Gradually the pattern of scattered manor houses and large farms changed and substantial Victorian and Edwardian buildings, several with small turrets, a feature of the area's architecture, filled in the land around Hale and Hale Barns. Later smaller domestic houses went up with the gradual loss of farmland and open spaces.

The development of the railway system in 1862 from Altrincham to Hale and beyond, forms a broad division of building styles between Hale's rural past to its present residential aspect. Initially small cottages were built near the railway but increased in size to substantial villas within a mile of Hale Station.

The Halls

In the past these halls must have been important focal points reflecting the status of their owners. The earliest mention made of **Ollerbarrow Hall** estate is in 1406. It is also recorded as Owlerbarrow, Oulerbarrow and Ellerborough, from OE *oler* or *alor*, an alder tree, probably meaning an 'alder grove' implying a wet area, probably along the line of Ashley Road. Today the name remains in Ollerbarrow Road with its substantial Victorian houses. Ollerbarrow House, built about 1740 by the Ashleys, is the last surviving building of the estate. It is in the centre of Hale at the corner of Ashley Road and Leigh Road between Victorian houses, now shops, and the 1966 library (to be demolished), which stands on the site of the orchard. George Pearson, a dairyman, lived there in 1910. The building is listed, including the circular leaded lights in the gable end. It was constructed from small hand-made bricks from a brickyard at Riddings Road.



Ollerbarrow Farm at the junction of Leigh Road and Ashley Road in recent times (DM).

Over the years Ollerbarrow Hall was owned by many of the important local families: Aldcrofts in 1406; Masseys in 1411; mainly Vawdreys from about 1430; Masseys to 1640; Ashleys from 1707, Crewes in the 18th century;; and Clarkes from 1762 to about 1850. The Hearth Tax return of 1664 lists Ollerbarrow Hall with three fireplaces. On June 22nd, 1761, the estate was auctioned by Thomas and Mary Ashley at the Bowling Green Hotel, Altrincham and was described as *“a large newly-erected dwelling house and outbuildings, 24 Cheshire acres of good sand land and a valuable pew in Bowdon Church, known by the name of the Oller Barrow, in the possession of Thomas Ashley.”*

In 1851 Zebulon and Mary Leigh from Northenden and later their son, also Zebulon, farmed the 16 Cheshire acres (about 34 statute, reduced to 24 statute acres in 1906), then Anne Holt until about 1909 when the farm buildings were demolished. Leigh Road is named after the Leigh family. The farm's fields ran up to Broomfield Lane and Ollerbarrow Road and were worked until 1906 by which time houses surrounded the farm. It is said that the moat of the hall was still visible until about 1900.

There were plans for a cinema on this site before WWI but local protests stopped it and instead a site was approved on Willowtree Road, Altrincham. Ollerbarrow House was probably the last house to retain its full front garden when Ashley Road was widened. Just a token garden remains.



Davenport Green Hall (1617, AAIA).

At the other end of the township at the junction of Shay Lane and Thorley Lane, Hale Barns is **Davenport Green Hall** a listed building, the finest example in Hale of Elizabethan Cheshire magpie architecture. It has a date stone of 1617 and the exposed gable end is a good example of box frame construction. The Hearth Tax returns of 1664 show that the farm had three fireplaces.

The antiquarian John Owen sketched the hall about 1875 and described it as an ancient oblong timber mansion on a stone basement with a brick addition at one end. Some of the timbers had been taken out and in many places bricks had been substituted for the wattle and daub. He also sketched some carving on two of the upright timbers at the back of the hall: 'ET 1617' and 'IG'. The 'IG' refers to John (Iohannes) Grantham, the eldest son of Richard Grantham, the original builder of Davenport Green Hall. In 1610 Richard had replaced the wattle and daub infilling by

brick. Richard Grantham died in 1667 and his descendant John Smith took over until he died in 1731.

The Harrop family papers describe Richard Grantham Junior as a parliamentary captain in the Civil War during Charles I's reign. It is not known to whom 'ET' refers. Geoffrey Grantham of Mere and his son Richard bought or rented the core of Davenport Green estate including the present hall. The family married into the Worthington, Harrop and Wolff families, and Isaac Worthington Harrop sold the property to Samuel Brooks in 1860. The late 16th-century box-frame hall could be a replacement for the 14th-century hall.

Owen described a nearby timber barn built on stone foundations and strengthened at intervals by miniature buttresses. The squares between the timbers were filled with weatherboards inserted into grooves in the uprights. Tarbolton thought that from the description it was similar in build to the old tithe barn in Hale Barns which was about six yards longer and a yard wider. A second barn, based on crucks and in Owen's opinion much older, was demolished about 1900.

The earliest reference to **Bank Hall** on Bankhall Lane is in the 13th century when the owners were referred to as 'Le Bonc' or 'Le Bonk'. Masseys held the hall in 1377 and the next known owners were the Talbot family who leased it in 1411. The Vawdreys, one of the few Roman Catholic families in the area, held it from 1550 to 1763, followed by the Egertons of Tatton and the Fowdens from 1764 into the 19th century. The hall was probably largely rebuilt in 1607 and the flag-roof porch with a room over the top probably dates from that rebuild. In 1664 it was taxed for four hearths. It was sold in 1761, much rebuilt and slated.

The hall was documented in 1860 as having a moat which is shown on the 1842 Tithe Map. In 1851 John Perrin was farming 30 Cheshire acres there and James and Jane Worthington farmed it with two servants and four agricultural workers in 1871 and 1881 when it was 97 statute acres. John Owen sketched it about 1875. Edwin Sylvester Kearns was the farmer there before WWI and just afterwards it was the site of a gypsy encampment.

The hall was derelict in the 1970s before being rescued by Eddie Shah who revolutionised the newspaper industry in the early 1980s by introducing computer typesetting and colour printing. Shah was besieged there in 1983 during a union dispute. It is a listed timber-framed building now used as a children's nursery.

Just before the motorway roundabout on the Wilmslow Road at Hale Barns stands **Buck Hall**, now part of a hotel complex. Tarbolton believed that it dated from about 1770. It owes its name to its handsome coat of arms, an enigma to historians, showing a stag *statant*⁶⁰ with the motto *Deus Regit Omnia* associated with several families with no connection with the area. It may be named after Buck Smith who farmed there. Another source of the name could be Freemasonry, which was becoming fashionable in the early 18th-century when numerous similar associations sprang up. One of these was known as the Bucks' Club or the Society of Bucks, founded about 1724 and had a coat of arms similar to that of Buck Hall but with the buck *trippant*⁶¹.

In 1855 Matthew Goodier farmed at Buck Hall. Opposite at that time were two cottages, one a beerhouse called The Duke of York where James Perrin, known as 'Owd Jigger', brewed and sold beer, with Mrs Perrin listed as the licensee. Matthew Goodier's daughter Mary married William Warburton's son Joseph and their son George Goodier Warburton succeeded Matthew at Buck Hall.

⁶⁰ Watchful.

⁶¹ Prancing.

By 1871 and 1881 George and Sarah Ann Warburton were farming at Buck Hall and the farmer in 1910 was Andrew Pearson. The 1910 Ordnance Survey map shows the building to be part of a much larger structure, possibly one of two wings of an Elizabethan hall.

Bentley Hall situated next door to Ash Farm was renamed **Latham Hall** which means 'at the barns', a name used in the 14th-century. The ancient building was reconstructed by Sir William Brooks on the same site in 1888. It was a thatched, half-timbered and gabled house with a beam over the top middle window with the initials GB : IB and the date 1708, late for a timbered building. Owen thought it was possibly rebuilt in that year as there was a pair of crooks inside. When sold with the Clay House estate at the Unicorn in 1821, it had been leased from the Earl of Stamford on the three lives of Hannah Goulden, Ashton Latham and John Latham. Owen was told by William Goulden, the tenant in 1876, that some years previously he had dug up two Elizabeth I sixpences dated 1569 and 1570.

At the junction of Thorley Lane and Hasty Lane, Hale Barns, **Etrop Green Hall** is now a hotel and restaurant. Jane Wright lived at the hall for many years where she died in 1815, aged 77. Her husband Thomas died about 1785. Their son Thomas was known as Mad Tom of Etrop because he frittered away his inheritance of £1,000 and a good stock of cattle. He was remarkably supple and at the age of 70 could put his leg behind his neck and drink a glass of ale which he balanced on the sole of his foot. The building was thatched until 1800 and then slated and the wattle and daub replaced by brick. An ancient hollow yew tree standing on the south side was cut down in 1877. According to John Owen, any servants arriving home late at night gained access through a window via the yew tree.

Hale Low was a major farm site and its lands stretched along Hale Road from the Altrincham border to Hale Barns. The tithe map shows substantial outbuildings. In the early 16th century it belonged to John, George, and then Ralph Massey. From about 1585 for several generations it was the home of the Leycesters who were cousins of the Leycesters of Tabley. The earliest mention on a gravestone in Bowdon Churchyard is James Leycester who lived there and died in 1636. The Leycesters continued through the 17th and the 18th centuries during which time they built a new house next to their timber house, which stood beside it until Owen's time. Robert Leycester was still living there in 1815 but his mother moved to Spring Bank on Ashley Road, Altrincham and lived there with her son Peter until 1857. The Hale Low estate was sold by Peter to John Tickle in 1859 for £2,500.

Hale Low Farm is not referred to as a hall as such but was probably the centre of the original Hale manor and therefore of ancient origin. The farm and its outbuildings were situated on what is now Hale Low Road and cobblestones belonging to the building can still be seen in gardens. Associated with the farm was a Georgian building known as The Hermitage, and both buildings occupied by Leycesters in the 17th century. The origin of the name 'Hermitage' is not known. To the south-east several fields incorporating the word 'Hale' probably indicate enclosure of an open field.

According to Dodgson, Hale Low means 'the mound at the nook'. Owen described Hale Low as a brick farmhouse of three storeys with a stone coping and stone ball ornamented, possibly dating from Queen Anne's time. On the south front was a tablet with the letter 'L' over 1719 with the letters 'E' and 'R' at the side, probably recording Robert Leycester and his wife. On the north side was a remnant of an earlier two-storey whitewashed cruck building described by Mrs Hibbert-Ware as 'having a flagged roof with small lozenge-shaped windows'. A tablet on the barn was inscribed 'WL 1734', probably William Leycester. The cruck building had gone by 1907 and Ormsons, the Bowdon builders used the crucks to form a porch for H T Gaddum's house, Oakley, in Green Walk.

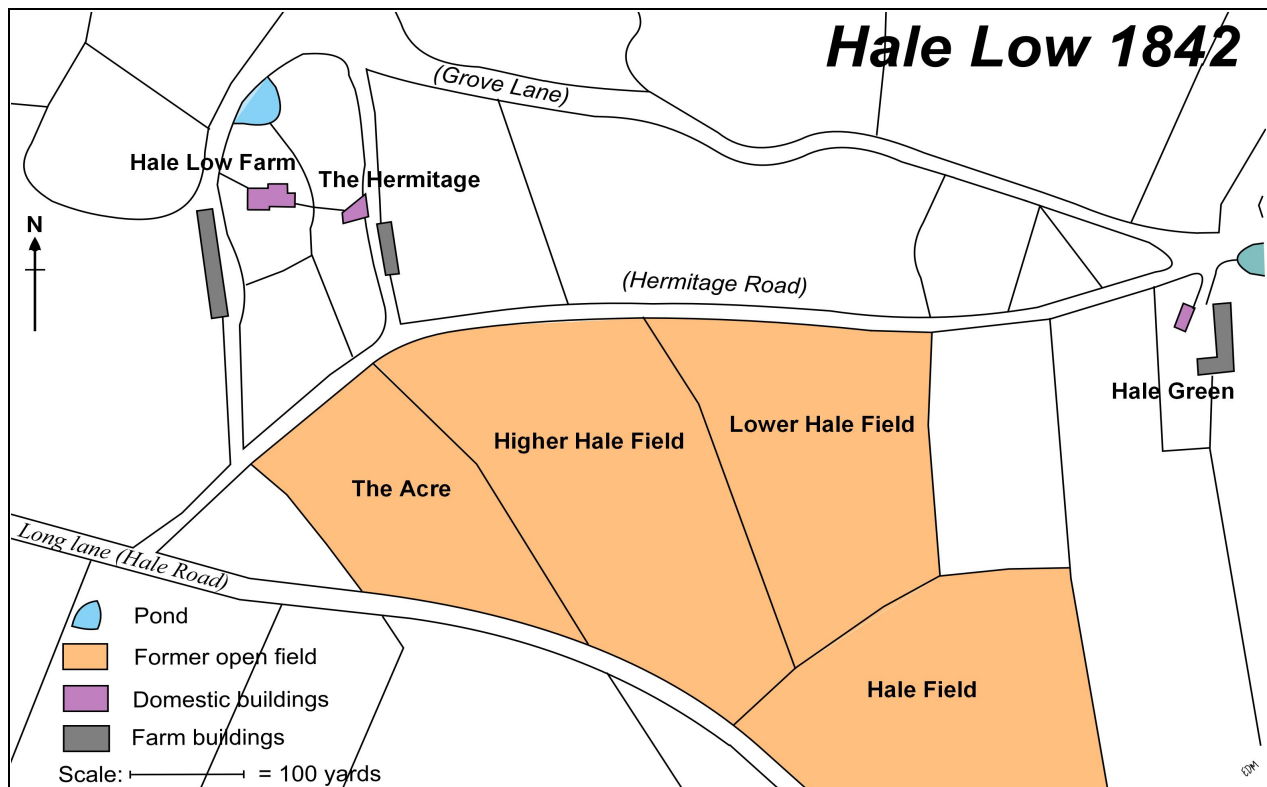
In 1851 three families lived in the Hale Low buildings: John Barton, a silk manufacturer, and his wife Mary; Thomas and Mary Wilcock who farmed the 50 Cheshire acres; and Edward Lignum, a medicine vendor, and his wife Lydia. Owen connected Lignum with an unqualified surgeon named

Wood who practised in Manchester from about 1750 to 1770 and elected to be known as 'Dr. Lignum'. In 1881 Henry Brogden farmed 130 acres here and Samuel Goolden was the farm bailiff.

The Hermitage, demolished in 1968, was a Georgian building which stood near to Hale Low Farm on the present Bancroft Road, and was the home of another branch of the Leycesters.



The back of The Hermitage on Bancroft Road (1967, AAIA).



Farms

There was little difference between some of the halls and the ancient farm buildings of the area. **Rossmill Farm** is one of the oldest farms being “*my mill at Rasse*” granted to Jurdan de Davenport, the son of Peter de Davenport in 1291 by Hamon de Massey. Hamon set Jurdan free of tolls on this property for his lifetime. In Court Rolls in the Stamford Papers it is referred to as ‘Le Ras’. The mill consisted of farm land, a farmhouse and a mill. There are various theories about the source of the name, including ‘horse mill’ which is unlikely given the presence of the river. The position of the actual mill building is not known exactly but we do know that Edward Tipping was the tenant miller at the time of his death in 1630. In 1807 Rossmill was sold at the Bleeding Wolf along with the other Crewe lands in Hale. The 1842 Tithe Map and Tithe Apportionments’ Table shows it as Rass Mill and lists about 100 statute acres owned by Isaac Harrop and tenanted by William Warburton⁶².

In 1851 William and Anne Warburton farmed 50 (Cheshire) acres at Rossmill and James Whalley farmed 93 acres in 1871. The Wolff family who married into the Harrops lived there from 1898 to 1968. The farmhouse is listed and is on the southern edge of a likely medieval open field with adjacent field names of Tomfield Bank (which is still on modern maps), Little Hough, Great Hough and Great Tom Bank. The house, the barn (dated 1737), outbuildings and the fields mentioned were put up for sale in 2004 for £2m.



Ross Mill Farm, Ross Mill Lane, Hale Barns (AAIA).

The other mill in Hale was **Castle Mill** on Mill Lane on the Ashley/Ringway border. The reference to castle is to the mound, probably Norman, at the back of nearby Castle Hill Farm on the Ringway side of the valley. According to Dodgson the earliest reference to the mill is 1481 and it is recorded that in 1583 the tenant paid rent to the Chauntrells. In 1672 John Brereton was licensed to hold religious meetings at his own house at Castle Mill. William Pownell and then the Leighs were tenants of Castle Hill Farm and part of Castle Mill from 1698 to the mid-18th century when the Booth family owned it. Early maps show Mill Lane as a broad track, possibly from Ringway Chapel to Mobberley. Originally the mill bore a tablet recording that it was “*Rebuilt by W Asshton Smith and John Pierson in 1808.*” Asshton Smith was the grandson of Thomas Ashton of Ashley Hall who married a daughter of John Smith, speaker of the House of Commons. Their son Thomas who died in 1774, adopted the older spelling of Assheton. Masseys were millers there in 1851 and 1855 as was Richard Jackson in 1871.

Some ancient buildings, important in their day, have now been demolished under the pressure of development. **Higher and Lower Mainwood Farms** have both disappeared because of the spread of Manchester Airport. Higher Mainwood Farm stood to the west of Mill Lane on Wilmslow

⁶² William was the great-great-great grandfather of Ray Warburton who manages the Warburton One Name project.

Old Road approaching Runway 1 and Lower Mainwood Farm, an ancient unmodernised building in Tarbolton's time, stood east of Mill Lane, where the airport tunnel is now. The first mention of the settlement of Meanwood, meaning shared land, was in 1535 when William Artenstall tenanted Higher Mainwood Farm. Artenstalls were there until the late 17th century. In 1540 Robert Chauntrell bequeathed it to his son Laurence who in turn passed it to his son William. When Tarbolton investigated it, the farm had been modernised but still possessed some ancient windows with small diamond-shaped panes of glass. Several generations of Johnsons lived here in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Yew Tree Farm on Sunbank Lane, Hale Barns is listed. Bowdon Churchyard has a grave to George Bentley of Hale of Yew Tree who died in 1717 and in 1763 the farm was offered for sale as Bentley's o' the Yew Tree with 14 Cheshire acres. A couple of ancient yew trees remain nearby. Owen relates that around 1830 two skeletons were found here, variously attributed to Bonnie Prince Charlie's troops, a missing lodger and a missing Scottish traveller.

Warburton Green on the east of Chapel Lane, Hale Barns near the motorway, was the centre of the Hankinson estate in the 18th century. This early settlement consists today of Tanyard Farm, **Warburton Green Farm**, a house and a row of workmen's cottages. William Hankinson farmed there in 1851 on 16 Cheshire acres and Richard B Leather farmed 53 statute acres in 1881. Joseph Pearson was the farmer in 1910.

Butts Clough Farm now on Carrwood in Hale Barns, was owned by the Leather family from the 16th century. The earliest deed is in 1578 when the farmhouse was settled to Marie Tipping on her marriage of William Leather, son and heir of Richard Leather. In 1851 John Dodd and Richard Leather farmed 50 Cheshire acres there. In 1871 the farmer was Richard B Leather. Henry T Gaddum bought the building about 1888 and his son Alfred was living there in 1929. Today it is a private house at 34-36 Carrwood. Butts Clough Farm probably took its name from fields where archery was practiced and shooting at the butts was a usual part of holiday exercise.



Butts Clough Farm, Barrow Lane in the 1900s. It is now residential (AAIA).

Behind Carr Cottages on Grove Lane was the black and white **Carr Farm**, drawn about 1875 by John Owen. Thomas Worsley and his wife Ellen farmed there until 1686 followed by their eldest daughter, Ann Key, the widow of Quaker John Key. There is a link at the Friends' Burial Ground at Mobberley where a memorial exists to John Kay or Key of Carr in Hale, a Quaker who died in

1682. The farm's land extended to Long Lane, explaining the name of the later house, Hale Carr, higher up the hill. The farm was demolished to build the cottages.

The present **Clay House Farm** on Clay Lane near Grove Lane was built about 1840 by Thornham, a Quaker from York, on the site of an old thatched brick cottage used for Quaker meetings. Randle Goulden who died there in 1636 had become wealthy from tanning. His son Thomas was also a tanner. In 1851 Josiah and Margaret Warburton farmed 23 Cheshire acres there and James and Mary Goolden were the tenants in Owen's time when the estate belonged to James Lawton. It later belonged to a Mr Barrett, a corn dealer, and then to a Mr Helsby, a Manchester dentist.

At the end of Grove Lane, **Ash Farm** took its name from a large ash tree opposite which was hollow and capacious enough to contain a table where four or five people could take tea. The property belonged to William Pass and was sold by auction for £2,000 to Isaac Harrop, mayor of Altrincham in 1835/6. Isaac immediately sold it to a Mr Lawton for £1,800. In 1851 and 1871 John and Jane Johnson were farming there. About 1875 John Owen reported that the farm was a low thatched building of 'raddle and daub' and black and white timbering, fronting the road and the home of a Warburton. The farmhouse was rebuilt in 2010.

Almost opposite to Clay House on Clay Lane is **Chapman's Tenement**, a farm which had 11 acres extending north-west to Timperley Brook. The name was from a former owner William Chapman who in his will of 1714 left a yearly rental of £2 for the wardens of Bowdon parish to buy bread for the poor at Christmas. Tarbolton said the income was £35 in the early 1900s of which £2 was paid to the vicar of St Peter's Church, Hale and it was the only remaining charity specifically mentioning Hale. In 1855 the farmer was John Whitehead and for much of the 20th century the Walkers ran a market garden from the farm.

An historical building now demolished was **Buttery House Farm** on Buttery House Lane off Roaring Gate Lane, next to Davenport Green. The name may have come from Bawtree or Burtree, a surname meaning 'the farm with a large buttery' from Old French *boutellerie* where wine and ale were kept in butts. The farm's history is uncertain but it is likely that it was the site of the sub-manor of Sunderland Green granted by Hamon de Massey to his daughter in the 12th century. Only the foundations remain of a later house which fell into disrepair in the late 16th century. The Granthams bought part of the estate and built the present Davenport Green Hall in the 1570s, and the old house became a farm. It was probably owned by Warburtons in the early 17th century then the Crewes in the late 17th and 18th centuries. The Brundretts were tenants in the 17th and early 18th, and Gooldens in the late 18th and 19th centuries.

The farm was offered for sale in the *Manchester Mercury* in 1778 and 1782 under the name Hale Hall, although this may have referred to the nearby Hale Lodge site. There were two farms close together, Higher and Lower Buttery House. Bowdon Church records the marriage of James Hardy of Buttery House in 1698. Owen thought that Higher Buttery House had been rebuilt and he saw a stone flag inside with the initials 'W' over 'WH' with a date of 1666 that he believed referred to William and Hannah Warburton. In the mid-18th century, two sides of the square moat were visible, the other having been filled in to extend the lane. Mrs Goolden, who lived there in 1855, remembered a timbered building within the moat. Her son had dug up timbers, which might have formed a bridge, and Owen dug up clay pipe bowls from the 17th century, traces of stone steps leading into the moat, and possible stone foundation of the wooden building. What remained of the moat was very deep and he found debris from iron smelting. Owen sketched both farms in pen and ink and in watercolour, and left manuscript notes, observing that two footpaths intersected at the farms. In 1851 Ann Goolden was the farmer of an extensive 86 Cheshire acres and in 1871 Thomas and Mary Goolden farmed 93 acres there.

The buildings were demolished in the 1950s and the site excavated over four seasons in the 1980s by Manchester University producing evidence of almost continuous occupation from the 13th century, and possibly even the 12th century, to the 20th, with at least five phases of building. The waterlogged site is on clay and a series of medieval drainage ditches and gullies were found with

land drains from the 18th century. One surprising feature was a pond which had been fenced in with wattle hurdling and completely filled in during the 18th century. A limited excavation of the moat suggested that it had been in use until the late 17th or 18th century. The team concluded that the site might have been used as a hunting lodge. A second timber building may be the remains of a farmhouse of the Brundrett family in the 17th and early 18th centuries. John Brundreth's will of 1684 indicated that the building had four rooms and there was a sawpit of the same period nearby.

A 17th century building behind 19 Queens Road stands on the site of **Hale Farm** next to Hale Field, a square field of two Cheshire acres between the present Queens Road and Peel Road. The name and size indicates an enclosure from a large open field of the early Saxon Hale. On the Tithe Map, Queens Road was a track leading to Hale Road, and on to formerly extensive open fields around Hale Low Road and then to Ollerbarrow Farm in the present Hale village.

The first reference was in 1462 when a Massey owned the 'Pele at Hale', possibly Hale Farm but probably Hale Low. The word *pele* may indicate that it was originally fortified, possibly with a moat. The farm was part of the Hale Low estate and the tenant in 1478 was Christopher Hulme. Edmund Barlow who had been a trooper in the Royal Regiment of Horse Guards, was the tenant in 1784. Mary Daine farmed 46 statute acres there in 1842, and with her son Peter in 1851. William Barton was the farmer of 42 acres in 1871 when the farm was known as Barton's Farm or Cottages, or 'Barton's Flout', possibly a corruption of *flatt* meaning a bridge. Stamford Park School was built on its orchard in 1906 and Hannah Barton was a farmer and contractor living at the farm in 1910. Hannah's descendants still live in the area.

A row of large trees along South Downs Road is all that is left of Phoebe Checkley's Plantation. At one time **The Old House** at the junction of Heather Road was two separate houses. In 1654 the property was conveyed to the yeoman tenant Lawrence Ashley of Hale. Lawrence's brother Randle had died and left the farm to his son Robert. Robert had several children the eldest being Alexander, baptised at Bowdon Church in 1665 and buried there in 1695. After Alexander's death Robert conveyed the property to his second son Robert Ashley the younger, by a document dated June 7th, 1701 in which the father is styled "*Robert Ashley the elder of Ashley Heath in Hale, yeoman*" and the son "*Robert Ashley the younger, late of Peel Causey but now in Altrincham*". The inscription RA+RA+AA+ 1688, standing for the names of Randle, Robert and Alexander Ashley, is cut into an oak beam on the lintel of a door. The house was originally called Ashley Heath and may have been a farmhouse. It was converted into one house some time after Phoebe's father bought the estate in 1796. After WWII the whole of the front of the building was covered with cement rendering and pebble dash. Recent renovations to the main elevation have exposed part of the original timber framing.

The Old Farm on the corner of Park Road and Hill Top Drive is an imposing, attractive building and has been known variously as Long Lane House, Fir Tree House, and Park House. It is a substantial building and unusually has three storeys. Its top floor was accessed by an external ladder and was used in the 19th century for housing temporary harvest workers. Timber houses were only one room deep in the main part, continuing the late medieval tradition while new brick houses sometimes had two or three storeys as was the case with Old Farm. The property has a date-stone of 1689, a two-storey porch and an 18th-century listed sundial.

On the west side of the drive are the remains of a six-bay cruck barn, the same age as the house, and originally thatched. At 100 by 20 feet it may have been the largest in Cheshire but was reduced to three bays and converted to a house in 1959. A local archaeologist believes that a medieval routeway from the Roman road passed along Bow Lane and through Moss Farm.

Outbuildings, now a restaurant on Hale car park, are all that remain of **New Farm** built to replace **Peel Causeway Farm** when it was taken over for Hale Station in 1860. At the time the farmer was John Clayton who was still farming there in 1871. His 81 statute acres of land extended from the present Hale Station across Altrincham Grammar School playing fields to South Downs Road. Access to the fields from the farm was over the new railway line to Northwich and this crossing remained up to WWI. The alternative access was along Clegg's Lane, now Heath Road, and across the railway to the farm. James Billington from Lancashire farmed there in 1910 when houses and shops surrounded the farm.

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17. MANSIONS, INNS & VILLAS

Introduction

Hale had its share of substantial houses bought or built by men of substance who chose to live in what was then leafy countryside. **Hale Carr**, built about 1850, was the earliest house on Hale Road and its entrance is still marked by the lodge near to the Delahays Road and Grove Lane junction. The main house, in the Delahays Drive and Carr Road area, was the home of Thomas McConnel, a Manchester manufacturer who played a leading part in Hale's affairs. William Brooke was living there in 1871. The Hale Carr housing estate (Delahays Drive) was started in 1934 but the foundations of Hale Carr itself were still visible in 1950.

Hale Lodge stood on the site of Buckfast Close between Grove Lane and Ash Lane with the main entrance on Grove Lane. When built by Robert and Ann Harrop in 1808 on the site of Hale Hall⁶³, it was the largest house in Hale and formed the centre of the Harrop estate which stretched across much of the eastern half of Hale. In the 1840s the Rev. Charles Wallace, a minister of Hale Chapel, lived there and ran an Academy for Young Gentlemen. He employed three agricultural labourers living on the premises to run the 108 Cheshire-acre farm. The railway engineer Henry Brogden lived there from the 1860s until his death in 1913. The building was demolished in the late 1950s to build the Wellgreen estate.

Originally two cottages, **Holly Bank** was built around 1850 at the edge of a brickfield at the south-eastern corner of Delahays Road and Grove Lane. It was used to house Belgian refugees during WWII and in 1952 was occupied by naturalist Robert Jackson, who founded the Welsh Mountain Zoo. He used the outbuildings and grounds for rearing fish and exotic reptiles. About 1990 it was demolished to build three houses.

The Clough on Barrow Lane with a lodge at the Hawley Lane end was previously the site of Barrow Farm. It was absorbed into the Wolff's' 1873 house designed by Altrincham architect Peter Pons who also designed the old Altrincham Hospital on Market Street and the listed shops on Kingsway. It was the home of Charles Henry Wolff until his death in 1902. Charles came from Nottingham and married Annie, a daughter of Isaac Worthington Harrop, a Manchester cotton merchant and farmer of 60 acres at The Clough. His brother-in-law, Robert Harrop, lived in the house from 1908 to 1922. The Clough was demolished in the 1960s when the area was developed as a small estate.

The first building of importance going towards Wilmslow from Hale Barns centre was **Prospect House**, a detached building demolished in 1933. Situated near the present Prospect Drive, it was built by John Worthington, a tanner, on the site of two cottages which he bought with adjoining land when the Crewe estates were sold in 1807. Tenants of the property were John Leaf, John Hethorn and James Rowley. In 1862 John Worthington junior sold the house to Samuel Brooks, the Manchester banker and Charles Wolff was living there in 1871. Across the road was Easter Lane Farm, an ancient crook-built structure, at the corner of what was to become Brooks' Drive.

The development of the airport spelled changes for **Moss's Folly**, later **Etrop Grange**, a listed building on Outwood Lane on Hale's boundary near to the village of Heyhead at Ringway. In the 19th century a Mr Moss had built a tall brick house with cellars called Moss House which became known as Moss's Folly. He is said to have lived there alone but constructed several wax figures to make up the household, including one for Mrs Moss! At dinner Mrs Moss would be placed at the head of the table and guests would be represented by the figures, all fashionably dressed. After dinner they would be seated opposite to the window and many passers-by would doff their hats, which delighted Mr Moss. The cause of these eccentricities was said to have been the loss of his

⁶³ Briony Avenue was built on tithe plot 50, Hall Hale Croft.

wife. Mr Moss sometimes wore a cocked hat, light brown coat, a red waistcoat with flaps nearly down to his knees, silk stockings and silver-buckled shoes.

Edgar Wood properties

Edgar Wood was born in Middleton, Manchester in 1860, educated at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Middleton and trained in Manchester to be an architect. He set up his own offices in Middleton, moved to Manchester in 1897 and became well known in England, Germany and Scandinavia, specialising in Arts & Crafts houses, which he built all over the country but especially in Rochdale, Oldham, Middleton, Bramhall and Hale. He also built several churches and commercial buildings.

Wood designed the First Church of Christ Scientist in Victoria Park, Manchester and some of the interior of Timperley Church. Like William Morris and Charles Rennie Mackintosh, his interests included furniture, jewellery and metalwork. He was a founder member of the Northern Art Workers' Guild set up in 1896, was its Master in 1897 and briefly a member of the Red Rose Guild. Wood was interested in conservation and helped arrange for the colonnade of the Old Manchester Town Hall to be rescued and re-erected in Heaton Park. A public figure, he was president of the Manchester Society of Architects for 1911-12 and invariably wore a black cloak lined with red silk. He designed his own house in Monte Calvario, Italy where he died in 1935.



*The Garth (1905), Planetree Road
designed by Edgar Wood (AAIA).*

The coming of the railway to Hale caused more distinguished and prestigious houses to be built, and Edgar Wood built Halecroft on Hale Road in 1891, following the architectural ideas of William Morris' Arts and Crafts Movement. He returned to the area to design several outstanding houses: Cintra, Broad Oaks and The Hollies on Park Road; The Homestead and The Garth on Planetree Road; and Greystoke on Hale Road. All are Grade II listed buildings in the Vernacular Revival style, now of great interest to architectural historians. Experiments in this style were closely followed and developed on the continent, particularly in Germany and Scandinavia, where Wood's work gained great respect. His influence can be seen in the more careful use of quality materials, better design and the improved sighting of many Hale houses.

In 1914 Wood built **Royd House**, 224 Hale Road, a remarkable Art Deco house where he lived until retiring to Italy after WWI. It is the only Grade I listed building in the Altrincham area. Even now, Royd House causes a gasp of surprise, with its flat concrete roof and symmetrical concave façade using Lancashire Red Brick and Portland Stone. There is an arabesque of jazzy-coloured Pilkington tiles round the door, curved gables, corridors and rooms described by Pevsner as in the Modern Movement. Pevsner recorded a similar house by Wood in Staffordshire as being the only English private house of the early 20th century which looks as if it might have been designed about 1935 with a view to expressing the structural characteristics of concrete.

Wood possibly did the tiling work on the front façade of Royd House himself due to the lack of labour and certainly laid out the back garden. He also designed the interior including the furniture. He regarded his unusual radical development with humour as can be seen from his instructions to the Altrincham cabbies when he came off the Manchester train: *"Drive me to the ugliest house in Hale."* Numbers 223 to 233 Hale Road, once thought to have been the work of Wood, are now known to have been designed by the Altrincham architect John Cocker. They show Wood's influence very strongly.

Inns

As in most areas, public houses are among the ancient and well-known buildings. The oldest in Hale is probably **The Bull's Head** on Wicker Lane, Hale Barns. It started as an alehouse attached to a small farmhouse with 300-year-old beams, perhaps associated with the nearby blacksmith's workshop. The building, enlarged to nearer its present size in the late 1920s, is linked to bull baiting which took place on Hale Green just outside until the practice was stopped in the early 19th century by the vicar of Bowdon and the curates of Ringway and Hale Chapels. It was made illegal in 1835 and the last bull baiting took place at Elm Farm in 1836. The bulls were usually brought to test fighting dogs and would be tethered to a ring still visible on the side of the inn in 1900. Bare-fist fighting also took place on the green in the 1840s, frequently on Sunday afternoons.



The Unicorn, Hale Barns being demolished and replaced by the building behind in 1935 (AAIA).

The nearby **Unicorn**, recently a restaurant and now business premises, was rebuilt in 1936 near the site of an older building owned and kept by the Moores, a local family with a provisions shop near to the schoolhouse. The bread and confectioneries were baked in the inn. Later they built a house across the road, where Joseph, the younger brother of John the innkeeper, looked after the grocery. In premises behind it they set up a small shoe factory employing three men who made shoes for Chetham's College boys and others. The grocer's shop ended its days as an off-licence and formed a very hazardous corner for modern traffic until it was pulled down in the 1960s to make way for the shopping precinct.

Also in Hale Barns, **The Rompin' Kitlin'** (The Romper) is situated beyond the M56 on Wilmslow Old Road next to Ringway Chapel. The road here, cut off when Runway 1 was built in the 1960s, was called Ned's Lane and was formerly at the centre of Ringway parish which had a blacksmith's shop and a few cottages. The blacksmith in 1800 was Bradley Pass, the third generation at the site. In 1812 the inn was licensed as the Crewe Arms but in 1814 it became The Red Lion because of the lion in the Egerton crest. However, the failure of the sign painter to execute a good likeness of the lion led to it being known as The Romper⁶⁴. The licensee was William Baguley whose family ran it for several generations.



The original Bleeding Wolf Farm and Inn on the corner of Heather Road and Ashley Road demolished in 1898 (c1880, AAIA).

Hale lost one of its pubs the **Old Bleeding Wolf** on the corner of Ashley Road and Heather Road when it was developed as houses and apartments in 2004/5. The pub had replaced an earlier building which was originally part of a farm that existed from about 1800 to 1898. The farm was situated on the south side of the present Bleeding Wolf building facing south towards Ashley. The pub took its name from Hugh Lupus, the nickname for Hugh d'Avranches, the nephew of William I who became Earl of Chester in 1071 and whose crest included a wolf's head. Grosvenor (at Chester) means 'mighty hunter'. Local stories around the hostelry include the romantic, but unlikely, legend that this was the spot where the last wolf in England was killed. When Bonnie Prince Charlie's troops stayed in the Altrincham area in 1745 the innkeeper is said to have killed a straggler in Altrincham. Alfred Tarbolton relates an eye-witness account of a man leading his wife by a neck halter passing the Bleeding Wolf on the way to Altrincham Market where he sold his wife at public auction for 1s 6d in 1818!

Known publicans include Joseph Barrow (1753-1775), John Newall (1777), George Boardman 1778-1779), Nathaniel Harrop (1780-1791), John Howard (1794-1795), John Ashley (1796-1802) and Sarah Ashley (1803-1828), John Berry (1871), Edward Bailey (1874 and 1881), Hugh Frazer (1901 and 1910), Thomas Dyson (1930) and Harry Kempton (1948). In 1807 the Crewe estates in Hale were auctioned there. The publicans and farmers in 1851 were Henry and Sarah Lees and land belonging to the farm extended from here to opposite St. Peter's Church. In 1897 the lessee, Edward Bailey, bought the freehold from the Stamford Trustees and in 1902 erected the new Bleeding Wolf pub for £7,000. It is said that it enclosed part of the old building to ensure a continuous licence. A local man, Tom Colley, had painted a signboard for the original inn which was transferred to the new one. In an article on the history of the inn for the *Altrincham Guardian* in 1897, Colley wrote that a wolf was killed here about 1470.

⁶⁴ A *kitling* is a kitten in Cheshire

The offices of the **Old Wolf Garage** next door were originally the coach house to the pub building. The garage was established as the Hale Motor Company in 1914. It was later renamed the Northern Automobile Company. In 2004/5 the pub and garage were also included in the apartment development called Wolf Grange, which retained the style of the pub and old coach house.

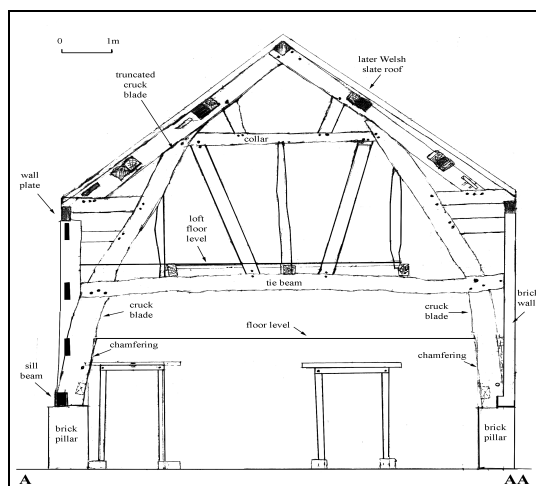


The Railway Inn under the Brewery sign in Peel Causeway with Edward Weetman, Ironmonger's shop next door (c1905, AAIA).

Two Victorian pubs, both named after the railway and almost next door to each other in Hale, started life very differently. **The Railway Inn** was an alehouse in a cottage in a terrace of four, a speculative build by Samuel Brown in 1849 before the coming of the railway. By the 1930s the inn occupied three houses, numbers 128 to 132, and had incorporated a cottage at the rear dating from about 1835. Older customers remembered the worn step leading into J'olts (Joe Holt's) pub in the 1930s. It was then rebuilt in small bricks in 1937 to include number 126.

The Cheshire Midland Hotel was purpose-built in 1865 following the extension of the railway line to Northwich. It was named after the Cheshire Lines Committee, remodelled in the 1930s and has a fine inn sign. Before WWI it opened at 6:30am when customers would be served beer or a rum and coffee to prepare for the day's labours! Until World War I many pubs opened early and stayed open until midnight. There was also a billiard room upstairs and an off-licence was attached in Spring Road.

Other buildings



The tithe barn at Coppice Farm, Ashley (Mike Nevell).

The **Tithe Barn** from which Hale Barns gets its name was on the site of the present centre car park. The building may have dated from the 15th century, when a tithe barn in Hale was first recorded. Several drawings were made, including one in 1844 by Captain Edward Jones for Dr. Samuel Hibbert-Ware. Measurements taken gave the barn as 87ft. long and 18ft. 9ins wide. The height to the apex of the roof arch was 18ft 9ins and it was built on crooks about 19ft 6ins long by 15ins broad. When tithes were commuted, the barn was no longer needed and it fell into a state of disrepair and was demolished in 1848. One of the oldest buildings still standing in the area is the **Tithe Barn** on Ashley Mill Lane over the Bollin towards Ashley. This listed building, part of Coppice Farm, reflects Hale and Ashley's rural past. The original structure dates from the 15th or 16th century and was a place where local corn tithes were collected to sell for the upkeep of the parish. The dominant feature is a pair of massive oak cruck trusses. In the 17th century a threshing floor was created at the west end of the long wall between the crucks and in the 19th century a stable and a bullpen were added and at some time the eastern end was adapted for a cow byre. By 1900 it was in a poor state of repair but the oak weatherboarding has since been sympathetically replaced and Coppice Farm is now a small garden centre.



Hale Fire & Ambulance Station (1957). The site is now the small car park backing on to the railway off Cecil Road (AAIA).

The proposal to erect the Cheshire Midland Hotel prompted concern that local firefighting facilities were inadequate. Altrincham Fire Brigade stationed behind the Unicorn in Altrincham had attended fires in Hale free of charge but in 1894 it was proposed that villages should be charged. John Richardson of Halecroft offered to buy an equipped steam fire engine for Hale if it could be housed and plans were drawn up for a building with the township's offices and fire station on the ground floor and a public hall above. A volunteer fire brigade was raised, but the parish council objected to the cost of a fire engine's maintenance and no action was taken. It was only when war threatened that a **Fire and Ambulance Station** was built on Cecil Road about 1910 on the track from New Farm to Clegg's Lane, now Heath Road across the railway line. It remained there until 1962 when the new fire station in Broadheath opened and is now a small car park with the wartime siren still on a post at the back.



Hale Cinema in Willowtree Road, closed 1978 & demolished 1980 (AAIA).

Hale's entertainment for many years was provided by **Hale Cinema** situated in Altrincham just over the Hale border in Willowtree Road. It was open from 1923 to 1979 and originally had an orchestra and a restaurant at the front and employed 16 staff. Following heated discussion in 1921 the cinema was built just over the Hale border in Altrincham because Hale UDC would not give permission. It was built on the site of a pond and until the 1960s there were ancient willow trees at the top and bottom of the car park on the line of a spring from Spring Bank. The boiler house at the back suffered from this and had to be pumped out continuously. In the 1920s a different film would be shown most days. All films were talkies by 1930 and most were still in black and white but often the film shorts of 10 to 15 minutes, run after the newsreels, were in colour. The excellent sound system attracted people from some distance. In the 1930s George Formby who lived at Mere used to visit quite often, sitting on the left of the balcony and hiding his face with his coat in the interval. The Berry (boot blacking) family who lived at Parklands, Charcoal Road used to attend matinées and were chauffeured to the cinema in a Rolls Royce, a rug over their knees.

The millennium was marked in Hale by a Clock Tower on the triangular piece of land once occupied by John Siddeley's brewery in Peel Causeway opposite to the Railway Inn. It was donated and dedicated as **Hale Millennium Clock** on July 8th 2000 by local builders, P J Kennedy, and is a distinctive focal point visible from each end of Ashley Road.

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18. FAMILIES OF HALE

Hale has always been a desirable place to live, initially because of its rich farmland and today because of the attractive, leafy roads and proximity to the airport, motorway links and easy access to Manchester. Some Cheshire families flourished for centuries here, and spread their branches into other manors and families leading to the saying “*As many Leghs as fleas, Masseys as asses; Crewes as crows, Davenports as dogs’ tails.*” They intermarried, changed their names, hyphenated them with other names, and in some cases failed to produce heirs and disappeared after a few generations. Their houses often reflected their fate, sometimes falling into disrepair and becoming lost.

The Leghs, Masseys, Crewes, Davenports and other minor Hale gentry, tended to be landowning farmers based in the small manors of Hale, producing beef cattle, with milk and cheese as a by-product, and crops such as oats and barley. **Massey** is perhaps the best-known name in the area because of its links with Dunham. Sir Robert de Massey, the second son of Hamon de Massey I of Dunham had a son Geoffrey who was the first of the Hale Masseys. Several of them styled themselves ‘de Hale’ and the name occurs down the centuries. Earliest records go back to 1216 when land transactions show Roger Massey of Hale, son of Geoffrey Massey, owning half of Bowdon. Records from 1377 show Robert de Massey del Bonk (Bank Hall) was taken to court by Alice, wife of Richard de Hale over non-payment of a dowry.

The name of this Robert de Massey of The Bonk crops up in several records during the last years of the 14th and the early 15th century. He seems to have attained some importance in the area and was granted a crown annuity of 100 shillings in 1397 when the king retained his service for life. The following year Robert celebrated his daughter’s marriage to William de Becheton, equitor⁶⁵ of the Forest of Mara, now Delamere. In 1400 and over the next few years he was in constant demand as surety for the good conduct of various individuals. Additional distinction was conferred on him in 1403 when he was one of the commissioners appointed for the Hundred of Northwich “*to enquire into false rumours and disturbance and to array all the fencible⁶⁶ men of the Hundred.*” In 1406 he was one of the collectors of a subsidy of 8,000 marks⁶⁷. This period from 1400 was the era of Owain Glyndwr’s Revolt and the subsidy may have been raised to help pay for the eventual Battle of Shrewsbury in 1403 between Henry IV and the Northumbrian Henry Percy, both sides using longbows and with the king’s forces winning.

Other mentions of Masseys occur in court records. In 1403 Thomas de Massey of Hale was in debt to Peter le Massey of Lyme for four and a half marks. About 1410 a John Massey of Hale fell out with Edward Massey of Altrincham and ultimately both found themselves in the grip of the law. In 1443 Thomas Massey of Hale was bound over to keep the peace.

Masseys held Ollerbarrow Hall in 1411, and in 1462 owned the *Pele at Hale* and the *Pele at Thorley Moor*. Several centuries later, Balshaw’s Guide of 1855 lists two Hale Massey families: the Reverend John Massey, minister at Ringway Chapel, and Massey and Son, millers at Castle Mill. The name is still common in the area.

The main road through Hale village commemorates the **Ashley** family. The name seems to derive from Hamon Dutton, son of Geoffrey, the Lord of Cheadle, who took the manor of Ashley and adopted the surname ‘de Ashley’. Hamon was sued in 1295 by his widowed sister-in-law for her dowry. In 1399 another Hamon de Ashley was a tenant of land in Hale belonging to the Lord of Dunham. Ashleys lived at the 15th century Ashley Hall until the mid-16th century. Thomasine, sole child and heiress of George Ashley, married Richard, a younger son of Sir William Brereton and there followed five generations of the Breretons at Ashley Hall until 1660 when it passed to the Asshetons, who lived there until the early 18th century.

⁶⁵ Horsekeeper.

⁶⁶ Fencibles were full-time soldiers who defended the country.

⁶⁷ A mark was about 13s 4d.

The Ashleys were also involved in most of the small halls in Hale. Ashley Heath, now the Old House on South Downs Road, was conveyed to Lawrence Ashley in 1654. George Ashley of Ollerbarrow Hall was buried in Bowdon Churchyard in 1700, followed by his son George in 1729. In 1763 Ann Ashley, daughter of Thomas and Mary Ashley of Peel Causeway, died and was buried at Bowdon. This may be the same Thomas who offered Ollerbarrow Hall for sale in 1761. Sarah Ashley is recorded as licensee of the Old Bleeding Wolf between 1807 and 1812.

The Ollerbarrow Estate papers give us glimpses of the Ashleys in the 18th century. In 1704 a field called Little Broomfield was leased to George Ashley for six months for the sum of 12 pence. In 1707 George Ashley leased Little Broomfield to John Newton and Edward Ashley of Hale for six months for the sum of five shillings. Other documents include an indenture of demise between Thomas Ashley and George Warburton in 1749. There was litigation, indentures, and a deed poll agreed between Thomas and Mary Ashley, and George Robinson in 1757, and in 1762 Thomas and Mary Ashley and others leased land to the Clarke family.

Most of the family history of the local **Bowdon** or Bowden family is tied to Bowdon Old Hall, their ancestral home for nearly 450 years until sold to the Booths of Dunham Massey Hall in 1650. The present building on Langham Road near Vicarage Lane dates from about 1700. Towards the middle of the 16th century the Bowdons held land on the eastern side of Hale from William Booth, the manorial lord. Edward Bowdon died in 1532 leaving John his son and heir and his widow, Joan. Both John and Joan died in 1536, leaving a widow, Margaret, who received other lands in Hale for her dower, and for a son Henry. Henry died in 1546 and his son Urian inherited the estate in 1558 when he was 21.

The direct line of the Masseys of Dunham ended in 1342 on the death of Hamo VI de Masci without a legitimate male heir and inheritance of the estate was in dispute for nearly a century. It was expected that Hamo's sisters would inherit but other claims occurred and it was 1427 before problems were settled. In 1433 half of the Hale estate went to the Booths and a quarter each to the Stanleys and the Chauntrells.

The **Chauntrell** interests in the south-eastern part of Hale, towards Ringway, were granted to the Booths in 1437 in return for the manors on the Wirral, formerly part of the barony. The Chauntrell line continued through Robert who died in 1502 aged 51, another Robert who died in 1519 aged 47. His son Robert in 1525 sold some of his lands in Hale to Richard Holland and others. On his death in 1540 aged 43, this Robert Chauntrell, the great-great-grandson of William Chauntrell, owned "*the hamlets of Castell Hill, Meanewood and Athroppe*." Robert bequeathed Meanwood to his son Lawrence who married Joan and on Lawrence's death in 1558 the land around the Mainwood farms, on the old Wilmslow Road above Castle Hill passed to their son William. When William died in 1583 he owned a rent of 40 shillings for a water mill called Castle Milne and a messuage⁶⁸ called Demesne House of Castle Hill.

The wealth of the **Crewe** family, like the Chauntrells, came from a successful legal practice. Randle Crewe of Nantwich was Speaker of the House of Commons in 1614 and Chief Justice of the King's Bench in 1625. He was dismissed from the office by Charles I for resisting Charles' attempt to exact a loan without summoning Parliament. Randle and his eldest son, Sir Chippersley Crewe, and his son John, were all sympathetic to the Presbyterians.

In the late 16th century the Crewes bought up land in south-east Hale and supported Presbyterianism there. Sir Peter Leycester writing in 1666 says: "*The Lord Delamere is now chief*

⁶⁸ A dwelling house, its outbuildings and land.

lord of one moiety⁶⁹ of Hale (ie that formerly owned by his ancestor Sir George Booth) and John Crew of Crew⁷⁰, Esq is chief lord of the other moiety."

When John Crewe died in 1684 the estate went to his eldest daughter Anne who died in 1711. She married John Offley of Staffordshire and their son, John Crewe Offley, changed his name to John Crewe by statute in 1708. He was MP for Cheshire in several parliaments and died in 1749. In 1719 he had declared his intention of restoring Ringway Chapel from nonconformism back to the established church. His eldest son, another John Crewe, inherited his estates and was succeeded by his eldest son, also John, who became Sheriff of Chester, MP for Cheshire and eventually Baron Crewe of Crewe in 1806. The Crewe estates in Hale were sold in 1807 after being held by the family for more than 150 years.

The earliest mention of the Hale **Leycesters** (or Leicesters) is of Robert who was buried in 1639 at Bowdon Church. His family was a branch of the Leycesters of Tabley Hall. Sir Peter Leycester, historian of Tabley, said in 1669 that there were more than twenty charterers (freeholders) in Altrincham including William Leycester of Hale Lowe, Gentleman. The line continued with Robert who died in 1729. There were two branches of the Hale Leycesters, one living at Hale Low which was demolished in the 1920s and the other in the adjacent Hermitage on Bancroft Road, demolished in the 1960s. Robert remained at Hale Low when his mother moved with Peter Leycester to Spring Bank where he died in 1857. Peter was an eminent barrister in Altrincham and was remembered as a short man who used to shoot in a wood on the site of Byrom Street.

One of the most ancient names in Hale was **Vawdrey**. The family claimed descent from Sir Claude Vawdrey of Normandy who was allocated land in Cheshire in the late 11th century. Various spellings of the name exist including Vaudrey, Vaudré and Voudré. Vawdreys farmed at Ollerbarrow Hall from the 15th to the 18th centuries and at Bank Hall from the early 16th century to 1760. There were Vawdreys at Riddings Hall in Timperley in the 16th and 17th centuries. Robert Vawdrey who lived at Bank Hall in the early 16th century and at Riddings Hall, became Vice-Chamberlain of the County Palatine. He had a house in London, a town house in Bridgegate, Chester, and was executor of Edward Janny's gift of land for a Free School in Bowdon.

Robert died about 1570 and left Bank Hall to his third son John who died in 1626. After the death of John's wife in 1632 the estate passed to Richard, the eldest son of John who became Roman Catholic and was living there in 1640. To keep Bank Hall safe during the Civil War when Catholic property was at risk, the hall was made over to John's brother Henry, who was a Protestant. Another Robert Vawdrey, possibly Richard's son, helped to defend Wythenshawe Hall in 1643 in a minor Civil War siege. Many Vawdreys are recorded as baptised in Bowdon Church and buried in the churchyard. Three were mayors of Altrincham: Alexander in 1616, George in 1636 and another George in 1671.

The oldest inscription in Bowdon Churchyard is to 'William Artingstall de Ringey, deceased November XXVII 1617', a member of the **Artingstall** or Artonstall family living in Hale Township from the 14th to the 19th century. John de Artonstal of Ringway is recorded as fighting in France in 1355. In the burial registers the first entry is that of Henry Artingstall de Ringey, January 19th, 1628. The surname derives from the hamlet of Artingstalls, which may have been near Etrop Green. Two cottages, the homes of William Blease, mole catcher, and Mrs Moore, the former licensee of the Unicorn Inn, are described as 'The Artingstalls' in Balshaw's Guide.

The Reverend Robert **Harrop** was minister of Hale Chapel from 1769 to 1815 and married Ann Worthington, daughter of Isaac Worthington of Altrincham. Robert died aged 90 in 1834 and was buried at Shaw's Road Chapel, Altrincham. Ann inherited the land in Hale bought by Robert in 1808, probably at the auction of Baron Crewe's estate. In 1842 the Harrop estate consisted of 680

⁶⁹ Half.

⁷⁰ Crewe, Cheshire

statute acres of land between Ringway and St Peter's Church in Hale. By 1865 the estate included the farms of Davenport Green Hall, Hale Green, Well Green, Long Lane, Rossmill, and Barrow. At its centre was Hale Lodge on Grove Lane. Robert and Ann Harrop had seven children and the eldest, Isaac, became mayor of Altrincham in 1835 and 1836. Their name remains in Harrop Road.

The **Hibbert-Ware family**, descended from Titus Hibbert, a prosperous Manchester linen merchant was one of the most influential literary families in Hale. In 1780, his son Samuel married Sarah Ware, owner of an estate, which included Partington Farm in Wicker Lane, Hale Barns near the Bulls Head. The Ivies, now the vicarage of All Saints' Church, was converted from its outbuildings. Samuel II, the most interesting member of the family, was born in 1782. He was educated in Manchester, studied medicine in Edinburgh where he gained an MD and settled there in 1815, becoming involved in a variety of archaeological and scientific investigations. He was a friend of Sir Walter Scott, wrote several books and numerous papers and is well regarded as an antiquary and geologist. He married three times and finally retired in 1844 to The Ivies where he died in 1848.

Samuel II was a prolific writer who researched and wrote about the history of Manchester including his magnum opus *A History of the Foundations in Manchester of Christ Church College, Chethams Hospital and the Free Grammar School*, and also a history of the Altrincham area. Captain Edward Jones sketched and measured the tithe barn in Hale Barns for him. Samuel had six children and the youngest, Titus Hibbert-Ware II (1810-1890) of Stamford Road, Bowdon, was a Manchester barrister and is buried in Bowdon churchyard. Titus married Mary Stewart, author of several novels including *The Old Tithebarn* (1880) and *The Life and Correspondence of the late Samuel Hibbert-Ware* (1882). There are several thousand archived papers of the Hibbert-Wares at the John Rylands Library in Manchester.

Samuel **Brooks** was born in 1793 and joined the Manchester calico-printing firm of Reddish, Brooks & Co. By 1846 Samuel owned 628 acres of Sale and in 1852 bought the Stamford land in Ashton-on-Mersey. Samuel bought an estate of 32 acres in Hale in 1857 and two years later agreed terms with the Manchester, South Junction and Altrincham Railway Company for land to build a new station to serve his property development on Brooklands Road, named after him as was the station which remains today as Brooklands Metrolink Station. By 1862 he had created Brooks' Road, now Brooks' Drive linking his home, Prospect House on the Wilmslow Road in Hale Barns, to Brooklands Station with the intention of creating a coach route to improve his journey to work. The section on to Warburton Green on Chapel Lane was never completed.

The Brooks were Lancashire farmers who came from Whalley near Clitheroe to south Manchester and grew rich through cotton, banking and property development. Whalley Range in Manchester was laid out by Samuel Brooks and was named after his home village. His father, William Brooks, traded in raw cotton and in partnership with his wealthy friend Roger Cunliffe became bankers, founding the firm of Cunliffe-Brooks & Co. of Blackburn. Samuel eventually owned 800 acres in the Hale area and his eldest son William Cunliffe-Brooks (1819-1900) became MP for Altrincham and Sale. He was knighted in 1886, corresponded with Charles Darwin and was sketched by the artist Frederick Sargent. Sir William Cunliffe-Brooks enlarged and altered the estate leaving it in trust for his six grandchildren, the children of Lord and Lady Francis Cecil.

Another eminent Victorian family was the **Sowlers**, descended from Baron Sowler of Normandy. Thomas Sowler was a printer in Manchester and his only son Thomas founded the weekly Manchester Courier in 1825. One of Thomas's sons Robert became a judge and another, Sir Robert Sowler, took over the Courier with his brother John and turned it into a daily newspaper. The family lived at Motley Bank on South Downs Road in the 1840s and 50s and number 23 close by is called Sowler's Wood and named after them.

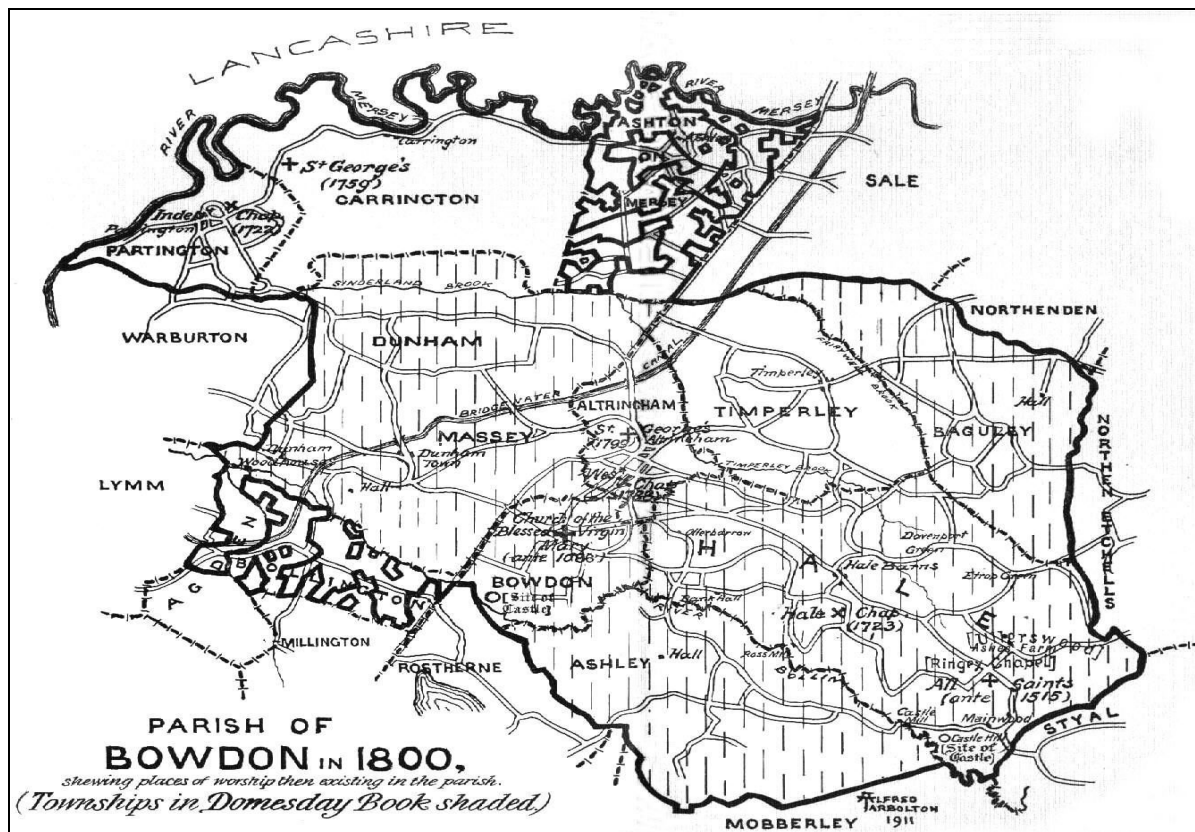
The Industrial Revolution triggered major change when the arrival of railways in the 1840s altered the landscape and changed the population. While Bowdon became a haven for the cottontots, Hale's meadows attracted wealthy families who appreciated the pleasant countryside and its proximity to the city.

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19. RELIGION

In the early days Hale lay within the parish of Bowdon Church and to make their Sunday observance Hale residents had to climb up what is now Stamford Road to St Mary's Church, a beautifully-proportioned building overlooking the Cheshire plain on the highest point of the sand ridge forming the Bowdon Downs. Little is known of this church's pre-reformation past. It originally had a parochial boundary covering about 30 square miles from the River Mersey in the north to Ashley in the south, and from the Warburton boundary in the west to the Northenden/Styal boundaries in the east. The huge parish included Altrincham, Timperley, Baguley, Hale, Ringway, Ashley, Dunham Massey, Oldfield Brow, part of Bollington, Agden, Partington, Carrington, and part of Ashton-on-Mersey.



Bowdon Parish in 1800 (Tarbolton, 1911).

Nothing demonstrates the growth of late 19th-century Hale so much as the blossoming of churches and chapels. In 1840, apart from the informal Methodist meetings on Hale Barns Green, the only places of worship in Hale were the Anglican chapel-of-ease at Ringway and the Unitarian Chapel near Hale Barns. Episcopal returns of the 18th century recorded Presbyterians and members of the established church: no one admitted to being Roman Catholic. In 1778 a lone Quaker, James Barrett, was recorded at Ringway. According to his great-grandson, Fletcher Moss, James came from the Wilmslow area in the early 1770's and built Wicker House.

With the increase in population in the area, new parishes were established. In 1852 the parish of Timperley grew up round the new Christ Church and took in part of Hale. In 1863 Ringway became a separate parish. It had become more and more self-sufficient since the end of the 18th century when a parsonage house and a proper income were provided. In 1866 the parish of St. John's, Altrincham was created, taking in a large part of Hale stretching up to Bower Road. In 1881, Ashley Parish Church was set up covering part of Hale just north of the Bollin. St. Peter's

was the first parish entirely within Hale. It was opened in 1893, absorbing the Hale part of St. John's parish as well as some of Bowdon, and in 1906 it became a parish church in its own right.

Methodism was strong in Bowdon in the last years of John Wesley's life, and was vigorous in Hale Barns in the middle of the 19th century, actively supported by Francis Timperley and the tenants of Dial and Partington Farms. However the local belief that Wesley slept at Davenport Green Hall Farm is not verified by his journals. After the services at Davenport Green ended, class meetings were held in Partington Farm near the Bull's Head. Meanwhile, at the other end of the township, Bowdon Methodist Society established a Sunday school and class meeting, with occasional sermons, in Peel Street in 1866. The rest of the century was marked by a struggle against shortage of funds and inadequate accommodation. From the humble premises in Peel Street the class moved in 1878 to a new school room with a small chapel in Henry Street (now Oak Road).

The 18th century episcopal returns for the parish of Bowdon reported no Independents or Anabaptists. When they reappeared as Congregationalists and Baptists, there had been a break of nearly two hundred years, and numbers were reinforced from Manchester. The Baptist community came mostly from Manchester and after six years in temporary premises they built a chapel on the corner of Willowtree Road and Hale Road, just over the Altrincham/Hale boundary and known as Hale Road Baptist Church.

The Congregationalists had Bowdon Downs Congregational Church and by 1899 they had built a school and church at the southern end of Cecil Road. Fourteen years later they converted the church to a lecture hall and added new schools and a much more imposing church fronting Ashley Road, now known as Altrincham United Reform Church, Trinity Hale.

In the 1960s Holy Angels Roman Catholic Church, and All Saints' Anglican Church were built in Hale Barns followed by a Synagogue on Shay Lane in 1978.

Ringway Chapel

The story of early religious observance in Hale is of conflict between the established Anglican Church and Dissenters, and therefore between upper class and the poorer working class. As such it seems to mirror attitudes and happenings in the country as a whole.

The journey to Bowdon Church was not too far for those living around Peel Causeway but a serious trip for the people of Hale Barns. They had the option of Ringway Chapel (originally known as Ringey Chapel) near to The Romper pub and just off the Wilmslow Road. However, the chapel was only for Sunday observance and services of baptism. Marriage and burials still had to be at the parish church.

We know that Ringway Chapel's origins predate the Reformation because the original building contained an inscription dated 1515 asking the reader to pray for the soul of the Earl of Derby, one of the lords of Hale. Alexander Gordon believed that it might have been built in 1504 to honour the memory of the first Earl of Derby who died in that year. The chapel would not have survived the 1547 Chantries Act⁷¹, but it may have been restored in the late 16th century. In 1541 the priest in charge was John Colior, and in 1577 it was marked on the first known county map of Cheshire, engraved from a survey by Christopher Saxon. In 1627 'G B' (perhaps Sir George Booth) presented a bell and shortly before this someone living in Davenport Green had made a gift of £12 towards the chapel's repair. John Speed wrongly marked it as Romleigh Chapel on his 1610 map.

⁷¹ The Chantries Act closed small chapels of ease as part of the dissolution of the monasteries.



Ringway Chapel, Pinfold Lane (rebuilt 1894, AAIA).

After the Reformation the chapel would have reopened as Anglican but some local non-conformists wanted to use it for their own form of service. Dissenters occupied it in the mid-17th century. At that time there was no resident priest and its remoteness and lack of regular endowments would have made it an obvious building to be taken over by extreme Puritans.

Sir Peter Leycester, royalist squire of Nether Tabley, in his *Historical Antiquities* of 1673, described the Ringway Chapel as frequented by 'schismatical, illiterate ministers'. Adam Martindale, vicar of Rostherne, recorded similar trouble from Bowdon parish separatists who went into Nether Tabley Chapel in his parish and challenged him in theological dispute. As Sir Peter was part-owner of the chapel, it is easy to understand his anger. Nevertheless, the congregation of Ringway survived, despite the persecution of the Puritans after the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660.

The religious confusion of the years following the Restoration was bewildering and Ringway Chapel seems to have been the focus of a tug-of-war between the Church of England and Nonconformists. It was a local reflection of the national situation which culminated in the Civil War.

The Presbyterians, particularly in Cheshire, were enthusiastic for the restoration of the monarchy. They had supported the premature attempt of young Sir George Booth of Dunham Massey for the return of Charles II and played an important part in his peaceful restoration a year later. They hoped that they were in a strong enough position to compromise with the Episcopalians, share in the national church, and join in suppressing the Independents and Separatists who hoped for freedom to worship in their own way.

However, the Clarendon Code of 1661/65 forced all clergymen who would not accept the Book of Common Prayer to resign their livings and move more than five miles away. The code declared as illegal all religious meetings not held according to the forms of the Church of England.

John Brereton, priest in charge at Ringway, ignored the Five Mile Act, and his congregation defied the Conventicle Acts of 1664 and 1670 which made religious meetings for worship of more than five people (other than a household different from that prescribed by the Liturgy) to be illegal. In 1668 Sir Peter Leycester lectured the grand jurymen at the Knutsford Sessions on their failure to inform against conventiclers, and listed Hale as one of the places where they met. For the next dozen years Nonconformists at Ringway were still active and in possession of the chapel. It is clear that what was decreed in Westminster and what was carried out in the distant Puritan stronghold of North Cheshire were by no means the same thing.

In 1672, when Charles II made a brief attempt to carry out his old promise of toleration, John Brereton was licensed to hold religious meetings at his own house at Castle Mill which was within five miles of Ringway and his old living at Wilmslow. However, after 1681 the Clarendon Code was enforced more strictly. During this period at least three ministers, one of them the minister-in-charge, held services according to the Book of Common Prayer at Ringway, but because they could not have a minister of their choice, the congregation allowed the building to fall into decay. Evidently the Anglican ministers could not gather sufficient supporters to maintain it, and when James II issued his Declaration of Indulgence in 1687, the Nonconformists regained control.

The fall of James II in 1688 and the Toleration Act that followed, gave them sufficient confidence to undertake a considerable building programme at the chapel. Pews and a gallery were introduced and a second building added but they had no licence to worship there. They relied both on its ancient usage as a place of worship and the obscurity around its exact status. However, it had mainly been part of the established church, and no sanction had been given for transfer to Dissenters.

Two factors safeguarded the chapel's position: it had no endowments and it was maintained by voluntary subscriptions. In 1717 the Reverend Peter Lancaster warned the Right Reverend Francis Gastrell, Lord Bishop of Chester, in three letters that it would be extremely difficult to raise equivalent subscriptions from Anglicans, most of whom lived in the western parts of the parish and used Bowdon Parish Church. Although its exact status was uncertain, the chapel had been built for the use of tenants on land owned first by the Stanleys and then by the Crewes. The Crewes, like all the rest of the Puritan aristocracy, had returned to the restored Episcopalian Church for political and social reasons but continued to show sympathy for humbler folk outside the national church. The Booths at Dunham followed a similar policy, and the double protection afforded by the two lords of the manor was a major reason for the vigorous survival of nonconformity in Hale.

Ringway Chapel was rebuilt in 1720. A big change occurred in about 1721 when Lord John Crewe declared his intention of restoring it to the Established Church and having the Dissenters forcibly ejected from the chapel. He was prepared to donate £200 towards the upkeep of the chapel on condition that he retained the right to nominate the minister. A further £200 was forthcoming from the recently established Queen Anne's Bounty⁷². The Nonconformists appear to have made no attempt at resistance and concentrated instead on providing alternative accommodation.

The exact date when the Nonconformists were turned out of Ringway Chapel is uncertain but it was after 1721. The official takeover appears to have been civilised but some time before there had been a dramatic scene when Thomas Assheton, squire of Ashley Hall, came to the chapel one Sunday morning with a body of servants and followers. They interrupted the service, dragged Mr Waterhouse from the pulpit, turned him and the congregation out and locked the doors. Some local feud may have exacerbated the trouble but the roots of it were in the national situation. The

⁷² Created to help poor ministers.

new Hanoverian rulers and their Whig governments were not popular and a continued outcry against the governments of the day was that they were endangering the national Church by allowing liberty to Nonconformists.

In 1863 Ringway Chapel became the Parish Church of All Saints. It was rebuilt again in 1895, consecrated on 20th April, and dedicated to St. Mary in memory of Baron Egerton's wife. Wilbraham, Baron Egerton financed the church which was built by William Brown & Son of Salford at a cost of £3,000, but in 1970 it closed when the new All Saints' Church was opened in Hale Barns. In 1997 the chapel was restored and used as a design studio by Richard Chadwick & Associates Ltd and a plaque erected "To God's Glory & Fred Ratcliffe 'Pa' of Ringway." Fred was from Woodhouse Farm, demolished for Terminal 2. The Seventh-day Adventists bought the chapel in 2010 and have restored it for use as a church and as a lifestyle centre for the local community.

Hale Chapel

Following the problems at Ringway Chapel, 95 Protestant Dissenters signed a claim organised by Isaac Newton. The list included 55 names from Hale, among them the well-known figures of Richard Leather, William Royle and Josiah Warburton⁷³. As a result land was bought for £5 from the Leathers on Butts Field near Leather Green and a Meeting House was built on what became Chapel Lane, Hale Barns. Among the 30 buyers of the Chapel Lane ground were men from Altrincham, Ashley and Mobberley.

The ejected Presbyterians temporarily met at Manor Farm on Yewtree Lane, Ringway before moving into their new chapel on Chapel Lane. The building was registered and the first service held there in October 1723 making it the oldest place of worship in Hale. The chapel and its lychgate are both listed. The more usual term was 'meeting house' but with the rise of Methodism in the 18th century the word 'chapel' came to be applied to Nonconformist places of worship and the congregation were known as Presbyterians. So the meeting house at Hale came to be known as Hale Chapel for a period when there was still a chapel (in the older sense) at Ringway.

Records show that Nicholas Waterhouse had a flock of 400 at the new chapel, including 27 gentlemen, 63 yeomen, 40 tradesmen and 50 labourers. Ninety-three were of sufficient standing to be on the register of county voters. Because the township of Hale itself contained fewer than 50 voters and hardly any tradesmen at all, many of the congregation must have come from outside. Waterhouse and his two predecessors conducted baptisms in private houses on the far side of Altrincham, to the great annoyance of the vicars of Bowdon. The Hale Barns venue meant that the new chapel was much more conveniently placed for those in the eastern area of Bowdon parish.

By 1880 the congregation had changed from Presbyterian to Unitarian. In 1886 a new vestry was built; the lychgate went up in the 1890s; and in 1906 a new belfry was donated by Charles Wolff of the Clough. Today Hale Chapel retains its original appearance with oak panelling and box pews. The pulpit is centred on the long wall to meet the Presbyterian emphasis on preaching the gospel. The 1906 stained glass is by Morris & Co and Burne-Jones.

In 1740 a day school was founded on land in Hale Barns Village. Township meetings were held in the schoolroom, now known as the John Clarke Room, from about 1813 and the schoolmaster's house, later used by the caretaker, was built in front. A Sunday school opened in 1788 using the schoolroom at Hale Chapel. A larger schoolroom was built adjacent to the old school in the village in 1880 and extended in 1886.

⁷³ Whose descendant is Ray Warburton who is carrying out the Warburton One Name project.

Other places of worship

To meet the needs of the growing population in expanding Victorian Hale, several new churches were built from the 1890s.

A new church was needed in Peel Causeway following the housing development after the coming of the railway in 1862. A meeting was held in the waiting room at Peel Causeway Station in 1889 in which it was agreed that a mission room or church should be built in the neighbourhood of Peel Causeway Station. As a result a section of the parish of Bowdon was separated as had happened when St. John's Church was established. Subscriptions raised £1,926, fund-raising increased this to £6,755 and in 1892 **St. Peter's Church** on Ashley Road, Hale was consecrated.

Architects Tate & Popplewell designed the new building in red brick and red terracotta with a partly octagonal steeple. Inside the church has an Arts and Crafts appearance with spectacular roof timbers and chandeliers and stunning pre-Raphaelite stained glass by Heaton, Butler & Bayne. There are two mosaic panels commemorating war deaths. It was designed with two entrances instead of the usual one: the south door was for householders and the north for domestics. The local builder was Robert Hazlehurst who told the tale that the bricklayers got into the habit of taking bottles of beer up the scaffolding and one day when the clerk of works came they bricked up two bottles into the spire. The clock was installed in 1912. A stained glass window was incorporated into the church from the Methodist Dome Chapel in Belgrave Road, Bowdon when it was demolished in the late 1960s.

In 1905 St. Peter's Assembly Rooms were built in Cecil Road. These were used as a Red Cross Hospital in both wars when rooms over Cleggs Garage next to the Bowling Green became a temporary home for the Sunday school. In 1966 a house called Carahor, adjacent to the church was bought for £10,000. Formerly the home and practice of Dr Crowe, a physician and surgeon, it was converted into a chapel, meeting room, parish office and accommodation for a curate. Now St. Peter's House, it was extensively refurbished in 2003 to provide meeting rooms.

The church had a moment of fame at the end of 2014 when its vicar, the Rev Libby Lane, became Bishop of Stockport, England's first woman Anglican Bishop.

Hale Methodist Church had its beginnings in 1866 when Thomas Buck, a local builder and one of the superintendents of the Bowdon Sunday School, hired a cottage in Peel Street (now Peel Road) for a Sunday school and preaching room which was opened on February 26th, 1866 with thirteen scholars. It was led by Buck and William Johnson, a tailor from Peel Causeway who had both attended the old Wesleyan Chapel in West Road, Bowdon. In 1877, the quarterly meeting of the Bowdon committee approved a new chapel and in 1878 bought a plot of land at the corner of Henry Street (now Oak Road) and Hale Road. The first subscription of £30 came from a local resident, Mrs Walton in 1893. The foundations were laid in 1896 and the Wesleyan chapel was opened in 1897. Emily Crossley, the widow of Francis Crossley may have contributed considerably to its funding. The builders were the Altrincham firm of Martin Stone & Sons who constructed Altrincham Town Hall in 1900. It is faced with red Ruabon brick and red terracotta. The style is perpendicular Gothic with large mullioned and traceried windows of leaded lights. A new larger chapel was built in 1899 on a site adjoining the old one, facing Hale Road. During WWII the chapel was used as a Red Cross base. The chapel was demolished in 2011 and the complex, now called The Vine, redeveloped to include a new chapel, a meeting room and housing.

In 1897 members of Bowdon Downs Congregational Church bought a plot of land at the corner of Ashley Road and Cecil Road and commissioned architects France & Laycock. The foundation stone was laid in 1898 and the church was built by Lamberts in red brick with arched windows. In 1912 a foundation stone was laid for a new larger church on Ashley Road in front of the old one, to become what is now **Altrincham United Reformed Church, Trinity Hale**. It was opened in 1913 with a large Sunday school at the side.

The new building in red brick with a square tower and in the Arts and Crafts style was by Martin Stone & Sons. In 1913 the name was changed to Hale Congregational Church. The old church and classrooms were used as a military hospital by the Red Cross in 1914. In the early 1960s the manse in Warwick Road was sold and a new smaller building bought on Arthog Road. In 1972 the church joined with the Presbyterian Church and was renamed Hale United Reformed Church. It joined with Trinity United Reformed Church on Delamer Road (now deconsecrated), Altrincham and the two names are combined.



Hale Red Cross Hospital in St. Peter's Rooms (1914, AAIA).

Between the departure of the Vawdreys at the end of the 17th century and the arrival of seasonal Irish farm workers on the farms of Hale in the middle of the 19th century, there were no Roman Catholics in the district. However, the Irish famine, emigrations across the Irish Sea, and the German occupation of the Channel Islands when evacuees came to Hale, reversed this trend and **Holy Angels Roman Catholic Church** Hale Barns was opened in 1962 on the site of Tanyard Farm owned by the Leigh family during the 19th century.

John Leigh, the first Chief Medical Officer of Health for Manchester and an author, built the Manor House in 1879 roughly on the site of the present church. The property, including the house Woodeaves, was later owned by Leo Waugh, a Manchester merchant and magistrate. In 1946 Mrs. Waugh donated the house and five acres including the derelict Manor House for Holy Angels Church which opened in 1964. The architect, Arthur Fairbrother, designed it along the lines of the Benedictine Quarr Abbey on the Isle of Wight. The imposing and beautiful church with its rose window stands at the corner of Wicker Lane and Hale Road with St. Ambrose College behind. Woodeaves was home to several Christian Brothers who founded St Ambrose College. The 17th century listed threshing barn next to the church with a lintel bearing the inscription AA 1701 GS, was demolished in 2006 because of poor repair, but the lintel was incorporated into the new preparatory school building in 2007.

With the development of Manchester International Airport at Ringway and the growth of Hale Barns, a larger Anglican Church was required. The old Mission Church, built about 1890 on land donated by Sir William Brooks, was demolished in 1966. The Bishop of Chester, the Rt. Rev.

Gerald Ellison, consecrated the new **All Saints' Church** on November 4th, 1967. The architect was Brian Bonskill. The interior of the church is noted for its fine acoustics and the Hale Barns Festival began here in 1979. It has a fine locally-embroidered hanging in the entrance area, including a representation of the nearby airport as three stylised aeroplanes.

The **Hale & District Hebrew Congregation** was born at a Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) dinner in 1976 when a group of pioneers decided to start a Shul (Synagogue) in the area. One family offered the use of an empty flat in Delahays Road and others gathered the necessary equipment and furniture for the first service on November 6th, attended by 60 people. A Sefer Torah (Scroll of the Law) was loaned by Stenecourt Shul and other Manchester communities provided support in different ways. Increasing attendance, including large numbers of children, inspired the founders to move to larger premises at Bowdon Jubilee Rooms until the current site in Shay Lane was purchased in April 1978.

The first Rabbi was the late Rabbi Eliezer Simcha Rabinowitz who was persuaded to come out of retirement to become part-time Rav (rabbi) of the new community. Reverend (now Rabbi) Leonard Tann took over in 1981 until the appointment of Rabbi Joel Portnoy in 1987. The original Shul and community centre building in Hale served its members well for 20 years until the community outgrew these facilities. In 2002, an ambitious rebuilding project was launched, forcing the congregation to hold services in a tent in a neighbouring field for 16 months, until the new Hale Shul and P J Davies Community Centre was consecrated and opened in March 2003. The congregation has also established its own Cemetery in Dunham, a Chevra Kadisha (group who prepare persons for burial) and hosts the South Manchester Mikva (ritual bath) on its site. Despite its growth over the last 30 years to more than 350 families, Hale has retained the same close, family-oriented atmosphere with which it began. It has been described as one of the most energetic communities in Britain and remains dynamic and innovative as it enters its fourth decade.

St. David's Mission Church on Grove Lane lay within the parish of Christ Church, Timperley. The decision was made in 1914 to erect a temporary church and the plan was that the district should become a separate parish in the future. It was estimated that a church for 250 people could be built for £600. Local architect and councillor John Macnamara gave £250 and one acre of land from his estate for the church but it never became a parish on its own.

In July 2003 the Altrincham Muslim Association bought the former St David's Church which has since been operating as the **Islamic Cultural Centre, Hale**. The AMA was formally established in September 1995 with the object of setting up a Masjid (mosque) and Islamic Cultural Centre in Altrincham to serve the spiritual, educational, social and recreational needs of the Muslim community in the Altrincham area and in the outlying areas of Lymm, Mobberley, Bucklow Hill, Mere and Knutsford. The Islamic Cultural Centre is a vibrant and dynamic centre with activities for everyone, and welcomes people of all ages, nationalities, madhabs (schools of thought), and level of knowledge and practice. They have also engaged with the wider community through their work with the local schools, the Altrincham Interfaith Group (of which they are a founding member) and with Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council.

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20. HOW HALE WAS GOVERNED

Law and Order

At the time of the Domesday Book, Hale was one of nine manors of Aelfweard, the Saxon lord, who also held Alretune, Baguley, Bowdon, Dunham and Sunderland and lands in the Wirral. After the Norman invasion, Hamon de Massey took over all Aelfweard's land, establishing his main manor at Dunham which in time became Dunham Massey.

Hamon's descendants held Hale as part of their lands until the main branch of the Massey family died out in the 1342. After this the ownership of the Hale Manor becomes confused but the Masseys of Hale appear to have retained or acquired part of the manor including Hale Low, Ollerbarrow and part of Davenport Green. Another part was given to Jurdan de Davenport. Following a settlement in 1427 the Booths of Dunham Massey took half of the manor; the Stanleys (earls of Derby) a quarter; and the Chauntrells of Bache another quarter. Each of these lords would have administered justice from their own manorial courts.

A manor was a landed estate and the lord preserved his rights and controlled his tenants through a **Manorial Court** presided over by the lord or his steward, normally at the lord's residence. Tenants had a reciprocal right and duty to attend these courts and a form of jury presented individuals for breaches of feudal dues and services. The manorial courts carried out useful functions but also raised income for the lord and, although there was plenty of scope for abuse, this method of enforcing law and order was respected as the system for tenants to resolve disputes. Men and women accepted that they were subject to a network of overlapping jurisdictions including church courts such as the **Consistory Court**, a bishop's court for ecclesiastical issues and offences including moral discipline.

Hale was part of the Bucklow Hundred and one of the most important functions of the **Hundred Court** was to maintain frankpledge. This put males over twelve years old into groups of ten (tithings) responsible for each other's conduct and they would present transgressors to the manorial court. The group would decide on the custom of the local manor, indict the offender and decide the issue. This system of presentment, also used by the court leet, was the main source of the development of the Grand Jury or Jury of Presentment used in common law courts until the 20th century and continued today in the USA. The trial jury in the UK has a different origin.

The **Court Customary** or Halmote was the manorial court for non-free tenants, presided over by the lord's steward or bailiff. A tenant might be presented at the halmote for a range of transgressions such as failing to perform a feudal obligation; acting contrary to manorial custom; inconveniencing fellow tenants; failing to pay a toll or to use the mill; or allowing livestock to damage crops.

Cases before the Halmote of Hale in 1401 during the reign of Henry IV included an enquiry into the behaviour of John le Masty and Thomas de Chapman who were accused of making a disturbance. It was presented by a jury of ten who included John Williamson, William Hutchinson, John de Tolynton (Bolynton?), Robert de Bowdon, William de Monton, Robert del Deno and William del Deno. The jury also presented Thomas de Chapman, Thomas de Sandy and Hamo de Chester for failing to use the lord of the manor's mill, and Thomas de Chapman for failing to repay a debt to the lord of the manor. A second Halmote in the same year named jurors including John de Thornton, John de Sutton, Robert de Baguley, William Atkinson, Thomas de Benteley, John Alcot and Thomas Casso.

The **Court Leet**, often described by its function 'View of Frankpledge', was the manorial equivalent of the hundred court. It was a franchise court granted in post-Conquest England by the Crown to

lords such as Hamon de Massey. The Hale Court Leet met twice a year at Easter and Michaelmas⁷⁴ to elect constables and other officers, carry out administration of the area and try petty offences. The court leet elected constables annually until 1856 when they were replaced by the police. It also tried offences relating to highways and footpaths, commons, poaching, stray animals, drunkards, weights and measures, ale and bread quality, market trading, cattle and swine, water supplies, fire prevention, the poor, scavengers and leather curing. Often sessions of the halmote and the court leet were combined and until the 18th century males over 16 had to attend or be fined. While Hale has lost its court leet, Altrincham Court Leet remains today with a ceremonial role.

The **Court Baron** was a manorial court which for Hale met once a year in Dunham at Martinmas⁷⁵ and was concerned with feudal services from free tenants. It was a survival of the Saxon village moot where the freeholders and villeins met to regulate the cultivation of the common fields, uphold the rights of the lord and tenants and settle civil disputes. A bailiff represented the lord and collected his dues.

By the 15th century Justices of the Peace in England had become an important means of social control. Serious offences were dealt with by magistrates at **Quarter Sessions** and by Justices of Assize on circuit, and the hundred courts and all the manorial courts gradually declined.

Before local government the church played a large part in how an area was governed through **Vestry Meetings**. Once a year parish officers were chosen for ecclesiastical and civil duties. Churchwardens dealt with money and presented the church accounts at the annual meetings in the vestry. The vestry meetings also took on some local government roles such as appointing waywardens to look after the parish roads and constables to maintain order. The system was not democratic but was more broadly based than the manorial administration it replaced. The parish priest often led the group which was likely to include a dozen or so leading inhabitants who held office for life and co-opted new members. Meetings ranged from those attended by a few members to decide where sand and stone should be taken from for road maintenance to large meetings of more than forty protesting against revaluation of the corn tithe.

By the 18th century vestry meetings for Hale were held at the Old School House in Hale Barns which was the only public meeting place in Hale. Before that the **Town's Meetings** were held at the Great Oak on Hale Barns Green or in the chapel vestry or a private house. Township documents and vestry minutes for Hale survive from the 17th to 19th centuries. Hale's Town Meeting for 1751 set the local tax rate, mainly for poor relief and for highway maintenance. The Hale Minute Book for that year showed the rate as five shillings for the first six months and two shillings a quarter for the rest of the year. It lists the overseers as Peter Leather, Thomas Warburton, Robert Jackson, George Hardy, Henry Neild, Josia Artinstall, Isaac Worthington, Thomas Johnson, William Newton, Joseph Faulkner, Robert Barlow, John Goodson, Edward Barlow, Samuel Pearson, Thomas Harwood and two others who made their marks.

Hale Vestry meeting on December 22nd, 1831, did not think it necessary to appoint a Board of Health for the prevention of cholera which was proving a problem in overcrowded Altrincham. In 1842 a special vestry meeting was held to ask ratepayers which roads should be repaired during the current year. The size of Cheshire parishes and the growth of population meant that specialised officials had to be appointed gradually to each township but the churchwarden was always from the parish. Occasionally Hale men appeared in the township documents such as Joshua Gratrix of Dial Farm whose name crops up in the early 19th century. Until 1870 the vestry also dealt with sanitation matters but after 1894 when local government was formed meetings were restricted to church matters.

⁷⁴ 29th of September.

⁷⁵ 11th of November.

The Parish Constables

Constables were established before Tudor times as a local Watch but their weighty and sometimes dangerous duties were eventually transferred to the townships. Surviving accounts show that they had to obtain and serve all warrants, conduct witnesses and prisoners to court, collect national and county taxes, preserve law and order, muster and see to the equipment of the township's militia, and supervise the killing of vermin. Sparrows and bullfinches were classed as vermin because they ate corn and damaged fruit trees. In 1756 the payment was a farthing per head, increasing to a halfpenny by 1852.

Just after the rising of 1715, gunpowder and coals were provided for the Watch who also received expenses for muskets. The militia disbanded about 1745 but was revived during the French wars later in the century when one of the constable's main duties was to see that those balloted to serve did so, or provided a proper substitute. The work of the parish constables continued until 1856 when a professional force was organised at county level and placed in the two most highly populated areas at the time, Hale Barns and Peel Causeway.

Relief of the poor had been the responsibility of the church and was originally one of the duties of the churchwardens. The Elizabethan Poor Laws of 1597-1601 laid down that Overseers of the Poor were to assist churchwardens and could levy a rate to cover the cost of relief. Women could be overseers and among them locally were Mary Daine in 1845; Elizabeth Timperley and Mary Pickstone, who was also a constable, in 1846; Margaret Holbrooke in 1847; and Mary Brown in 1848.

Poor Relief

There was little attempt to provide the direct work specified by the Poor Laws and there were difficulties providing tools and supervising different occupations. Relief in money and kind was given to the sick and needy. Three names appear regularly on the books from 1710 to 1712 as receiving weekly payments: Mrs Jane Unkles, a widow; William Bentley; and Joshua Timperley who was also given 10s 6d for medicine. At the same time there were occasional payments of between sixpence and seven shillings for relief; four shillings for Hugh Garsitt's (Garside's) rent; four shillings towards Elizabeth Boyle's funeral; sums for shifts, and shoes; and stockings for children.

Expenses for court orders, certificates and warrants, lawyers' fees, journeys of the overseers themselves and witnesses to sessions, were always considerable items. One case at Middlewich, sessions cost the township a pound, including four pence for a horseshoe. Many cases concerned 'removals', allegations that poor people on the rates of one township had moved from another area without licence. If the JPs decided the allegations were true, the officials of the first township had to take back offenders and make sure they did not wander or attempt to settle in yet a third township. From the surviving records Hale seems to have returned and received back about equal numbers.

The Workhouses

By 1723, the rising expenses of the poor led to an act authorising parishes to set up workhouses providing direct work and separating the deserving poor from the idle. The township built three whitewashed cottages in Dob Lane (Park Road) for the aged, poor and infirm. However, when the 1834 Act led to the building of a workhouse in Altrincham it was felt that the cottages were not needed, so in 1837 the existing tenants were given notice to quit and the cottages re-let at a

quarterly rent. Tenants were hard to find and it proved difficult to sell the cottages until 1863 when the trustees of the surrounding Harrop estate were prepared to pay £300, mainly for the land.

The vestry in Hale adapted or sometimes ignored the laws in order to make the system work locally by paying for constables' and overseers' expenses. When these became a burden, the poor rate was used to cover increased highway expenditure to satisfy the increasing demand for better roads.

Bastardy Bonds

Before the 19th century JPs across the country set the local wage and tax rates and ran the local criminal courts. In the late 18th century 90% of the rates were for poor relief. Many illegitimate children were abandoned or sent to the workhouse and many died young. Before the 1860s it was normal for brides to be pregnant when they got married to prove that they were capable of reproducing, but some children had estranged fathers. Surgey records that there were 55 bastardy cases in Hale on court records between 1786 to 1826 and a further 14 cases lacking maintenance by the father.

Where there was an illegitimate child, grandparents often helped but sometimes the parish provided financial relief. Bastardy Bonds or Agreements were drawn up to determine who should support the child, and the mother or child might be moved elsewhere to avoid support costs falling on the community. Where a child was without parents, the parish would try to find an apprenticeship to relieve the burden on the parish funds. The Poor Law system changed in 1834 when Poor Law Unions were created and use of Hale Poorhouse was abandoned. After that bastardy cases were mainly dealt with at Petty Sessions. This was a practical way of handling the problem if the father could be found and was equivalent to later Child Support Agency arrangements. No doubt in many cases the father would vanish from the scene.

The bonds were legal documents drawn up before the birth, promising payments to the overseers and the mother and regular weekly payments to support the child. The amount varied according to circumstances. As an example, a bond promised that the father would pay two pounds to the Overseers, pay the mother one pound five shillings after the birth and one shilling and fourpence per week towards the child's upkeep. At the time an agricultural labourer would earn no more than five pounds per year so an assessment of the father's ability to pay would have been necessary.

Rural to suburban Hale

By mid-19th century Hale was still rural, but additional work in the public sector brought about an increase in the number of people employed in local affairs. In 1842 John Crampton, a surveyor, farmer and ex-schoolmaster, was paid £10 a year for keeping accounts, writing notices and measuring paviers' work and sandpits, and also making land assessments, collecting books and assessing taxes. In 1856 his salary was raised to £35 and he was given an assistant, John Kinsey, a surveyor from Dob Lane. Kinsey soon took over Crampton's work and four years later was given a salaried assistant himself.

The changes brought new people into the township. Hale was becoming suburban and the system of local government operating from Tudor times began to break up. By the mid-19th century it was replaced piecemeal and the result was near chaos as authorities overlapped. The old vestry continued, but it had no control over the constables. One Poor Law Guardian represented Hale's interests on the Board of the Altrincham Union and one Waywarden on the East Bucklow Highway Board, but these were single voices on committees of 30 and 40. The vestry struggled with problems of lighting, sanitation and general health barely recognised by its predecessors.

Drainage

Following another threatened cholera epidemic in August 1866, the vestry appointed a Vigilance Committee to investigate Hale's drainage. Until about 1850, Spring Bank Brook, the main brook through Peel Causeway, had been used to turn water wheels at Seddon's Worsted Mill opposite Spring Bank and at Peel Way Hall now 224 Ashley Road. The area would have been virtually impassable in winter, very marshy and a danger to health, especially after new houses went up in Peel Causeway in 1849.

One spring out of Spring Bank formed the Hale/Altrincham boundary and ran past Peel Causeway Brewery and Peel Causeway Farm, now Hale Station. Along the way it joined with other springs, leaving a very muddy area and causing the bottom of Victoria Road to be known as Slutch Lane. A public drain in brick, paid for jointly by Hale, Bowdon, the Earl of Stamford and the tenant of Motley Bank, was constructed in 1869. It was the beginning of the sewerage system, which was developed further ten years later, allowing the construction of Hale village along both sides of Ashley Road.

Gas lighting

It was recognised that the western end of the township was getting built up and might have different problems from the eastern end. The divided interests became obvious in 1872 when the annual meeting of ratepayers called for gas lamps on Long Lane to Hale Barns, and in Peel Causeway. It was decided to set up a committee from the area to be supplied with gas. A year later opposition to more costs for the farmers vetoed further action but property owners were given permission to erect lamps along the highway at their own expense. In 1889 a special rate was levied to pay for gas lighting for the larger urban zone west of Park Road. Five lighting inspectors were in charge until the formation of the UDC in 1900. Alfred Tarbolton, who was to play a major role in Hale's affairs, was appointed as a lighting inspector in 1899.

Farmers versus townfolk

The intention of the Local Government Acts of 1888 and 1894 was to create a new system of Rural District Councils to take over the duties of the Highway Boards, the Rural Sanitary Authorities and the Poor Law Guardians. It was hoped that vigour and local control could be put back into the old parishes and townships by electing councils each year to deal with important local matters. Under this new system Hale ratepayers would elect seven parish councillors and two representatives to the new Bucklow Rural District Council.

However, though it might suit the rural areas of Bucklow, the new system was not the answer for rapidly-expanding Hale. The Parish Council's main role was to regulate footpaths and for the rest it had to ask the Rural District Council. The ratepayers elected local members to the RDC but they were outnumbered by farmers and small landowners. There was some sympathy for schemes to improve roads but hardly ever for the expensive lighting, paving and sewerage schemes required for the built-up areas.

These different viewpoints were highlighted in 1897 when a petition was sent to the RDC by twenty of Hale's wealthiest residents, two of whom were refusing to pay their rates. Their chief complaint was about Hale Road, the northern half of which was paved with setts. The petitioners wanted the setts replaced by tarmac to give a smoother surface and reduce the noise of carts and carriages. The RDC turned down the request pointing out that Hale Road was the best-paved road in the whole district. The setts had been put down only 30 years before at a cost of £2,500, and they were not prepared to pay a further £3,200 to pull them up and lay tarmac. One councillor

suggested that rubber tyres round carriage wheels would be a simpler and cheaper solution. There was nothing wrong that could not be put right by a loan of the Rural District Council's newest and most prized possession – a steamroller.

Who gets Hale?

In 1894 Bucklow was transferred to one of the new Rural District Council administration divisions of Cheshire. Rural civil parishes, of which Hale was one, could apply to the county authority to be urban districts with all the powers of an RDC. Meetings were held, and Tarbolton's acute mind and legal knowledge was of immense value. He saw the danger of exchanging Bucklow RDC's indifference to Hale's needs for the ambitions of Altrincham, which was interested in amalgamating with Hale.

Bucklow RDC opposed Hale's application to be an Urban District Council because it took away the area with the highest rateable value, although many farmers were happy to let the 'townies' go as long as they only took the part of the district where their interests swamped all the others. This area of Hale was small and mostly along the boundary with Altrincham. In places the dividing line ran across and down the middle of streets, and even through houses. What could be easier than to argue that this artificial barrier should be removed and the whole urbanised area absorbed by Altrincham? There was no doubt at all that Altrincham would put forward these arguments. A pamphlet on this subject had been published as far back as 1884.

Hale had only a small shopping centre and many people used Altrincham's shops. The houses in north-west Hale linked with Altrincham's sewage system. Hale had no library, hospital or public park, whereas Altrincham had all of these. The cemetery (and part of the park) was actually sited in Hale whose residents could only use it with Altrincham's permission and on the payment of double fees until the Joint Cemetery Board was formed in 1946. Amalgamation would give the residents of Hale a full share in all these privileges. Hale, on the other hand, still had what Altrincham desperately needed: land reasonably near its centre on which to build houses, a hospital, a park and other amenities.

Opposition to incorporation was a matter of feeling. Altrincham and Hale were entirely different types of places with different destinies. Hale was not entirely rural or urban: it was suburban. Tarbolton felt that the two areas had different interests. Altrincham wanted to be an industrial rival to Stockport and Warrington while Hale wanted to preserve its rural amenities. Tarbolton felt that Hale's three representatives on Altrincham Council would be useless in the face of the fifteen from Altrincham. He also disliked the disorder at council meetings at which, he maintained, the chair was frequently insulted and ignored.

Hale won the fight and became a UDC. A meeting was held at the Bleeding Wolf in 1898 addressed by HT Gaddum, chairman of Bowdon Council, and in 1900 the Local Government Board sanctioned the creation of a new UDC. The new boundary began in the north along Ash Lane, included Hale Barns village and finished along the north-south line of Chapel Lane and Rossmill Lane. Twelve councillors were elected with Tarbolton as chairman and the first meeting was at the Drill Hall, Peel Causeway on April 9th, 1900. The first Hale UDC offices were briefly in a tiny building in Thorn Grove sometimes called 'The Dog Kennel', later at 229 Ashley Road, then at the former home for girls next to the bowling green, and finally at Halecroft on Hale Road.

Hale or Peel Causeway?

A new seal was designed to include the old tithe barn in Hale Barns and the arms of the Earl of Stamford, and Tarbolton was inspired to initiate an enthusiastic campaign to bring the name of Hale back into general use. This caused some local controversy. The Post Office renamed the

local post office and eventually the Cheshire Lines Committee renamed the railway station but many of the people living near the station bitterly resented the disappearance of the name Peel Causeway and wrote letters to the press accusing the council of snobbery, philistinism and a lack of traditional and historic appreciation. Tarbolton won this battle, as he was able to show that Hale was the more ancient name going back to the Domesday Book and the local *Altrincham & Bowdon Guardian* newspaper agreed to include 'Hale' in its title.

A more serious battle loomed with a renewed attempt at a take over by Altrincham led by an Amalgamation League inside Hale itself. The formidable John Macnamara, a surveyor, architect, land owner and agent, led dissatisfied ratepayers from the West Ward. Macnamara, from The Hermitage on Hermitage Road, was a man of great vigour and considerable ability, and had a reputation for being a spokesman for the less fortunate.

At the council election of 1902, Macnamara and three other candidates opposed the re-election of the retiring councillors, blaming them for wasting ratepayers' money by building a canopy from the cab-rank into Hale station and neglecting vital matters of sewerage and road reconstruction. One official candidate made the unfortunate remark that the council were one 'happy band'. He had intended to show the ratepayers their affairs were in the hands of men who worked well together but the opposition turned this into an admission that the council was a narrow clique.

The councillors fought back, pointing to the achievements of the previous two years and accusing their opponents of being motivated by council decisions on housing schemes. Tarbolton was re-elected to the chairmanship for 1902 but Macnamara also gained a seat and was a critic of council policy, the councillors themselves and council officials, particularly the surveyor who had been responsible for refusing to pass Macnamara's plans for affordable housing (probably in the Hale Low area).

In the 1903 election, the Amalgamation League ran four candidates pledged to work for union with Altrincham, supported by Macnamara in speeches at public meetings and letters to the press. On the same side, local historian Charles Nickson, manager and editor of *Altrincham, Bowdon & Hale Guardian*, also supported the amalgamation with Altrincham in editorials in the paper. Leading the opposition was Tarbolton, who was not seeking re-election. He formed an Anti-Amalgamation League which also ran four candidates and won the election, removing amalgamation from practical politics. Soon afterwards the Anti-Amalgamation League became the Ratepayers' Association.

For the next 30 years Tarbolton lived in the area, widely known and respected for his activities as JP, president of the Manchester Law Society and local historian. He had moved from Ashley Road to Elmhurst, on South Downs Road, and after leaving Hale Council, he crossed the boundary line into Bowdon to build Athelney, also on South Downs Road.

His opponent, Macnamara resigned, put up for Altrincham Council and was elected at the second attempt. By 1911 he was back on Hale Council, as touchy as ever but resigned after two years. He was a man who put up a strong fight for causes he believed in. In 1913 at a crowded meeting in St. Baldred's Hall to protest against plans for a public park between Hale Road and Moss Lane, he raised a lone voice in favour of the park. He put into practice his concern for the amenities of the less well off, giving £250 plus land from The Hermitage estate for the building of St. David's Mission Church and provided land and equipment to start Hermitage Bowling Club.

Urbanisation

Despite the rural nature of Hale, land for building purposes was disappearing so fast that open spaces for recreation became scarce, and the provision of playing fields became a problem for the council. The larger houses had extensive gardens and many residents refused to admit any problem existed, but Hale Moss had gone and although some of the land had been converted into a park, much of this was in Altrincham. The nine or so greens of the old township had either completely disappeared or been fenced in like Hale Barns Green. Children in small houses had to rely on unofficial permission to play in fields earmarked for building. Between 1905 and 1913 three schemes for establishing playing fields had to be abandoned because of the fear of hooliganism or expense.

Just before WWI land was purchased at the junction of Hale Road and Broomfield Lane for a small ornamental park where the war memorial now stands and in 1921 tennis courts were laid down on council-owned property in Leigh Road and a bowling green established in Ashley Road.

Sewage and drainage were ongoing problems. The sewage farm built in 1876 on a site off Bankhall Lane by the River Bollin proved inadequate for the rapidly increasing population. Meetings, discussions and alternative schemes were considered as the council faced the terrible threat that the whole of Hale would have a bad name, land still vacant for building would not be bought and the rateable value of the district would fall. A German system was under consideration just before WWI but the outbreak of war gave all concerned something else to think about. The problem was not resolved until 2004 when effluent from Bankhall Lane was pumped to the main Altrincham works at Broadheath.

Despite difficulties the members of Hale UDC could look back with pride on the achievements of the first 14 years. The change of unspoilt countryside into suburbia had been carried through without allowing Hale to be converted into a wilderness of bricks and mortar. Many of the old roads had been widened, broad new ones laid out, and Hale's tradition of tree-lined streets continued. Lime trees were planted along Victoria Road to disguise the railway. The area was fortunate to have many nurserymen and many gifts of trees were received from individuals like architect Edgar Wood who gave 12 cherry trees.

Although the design of many houses was outside the council's powers, they had insisted on byelaws concerning spacing, drainage and sewerage. Sewerage and lighting had been taken out to Hale Barns and schemes were ready for the northern section of the district.

In 1974, Hale became part of the Metropolitan Borough of Trafford within the conurbation of Greater Manchester. It is significant that in their debate on alternatives Hale councillors used arguments similar to those of Alfred Tarbolton and John Macnamara in the great 'Urban District Council or amalgamation with Altrincham' controversy of the 1890s. One could speculate on whether it was a good or bad move but there was an inevitability about the outcome.

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21. EDUCATION, EDUCATION, EDUCATION

Hale Barns schools

By the 17th century the level of education in Hale seems to have been better than average. Jill Groves records that more than half of the Hale men were able to write their signatures on the Grand Remonstrance in the Parish of Bowdon in 1642. In her research into Hale wills, Groves identified that in the years between 1641 to 1680 at least 26 people could read and write. The number may well have been much greater and it included many local yeoman families. Her conclusion is a strong link in Hale between the openness of the township, the strong Puritan element especially in the eastern half, and the relatively high literacy level. While education at the time was unlikely to have been much above literacy level, the Puritans believed it was important for everyone, men and women, to be able to read the Bible and to achieve this there was a strong emphasis on learning to read.

Many of the early schools in Hale were associated with churches as was the national pattern. Children in western Hale around the present Hale village had a school from as early as the 16th century when Edward Janny's will of 1553 founded a school in Bowdon. In Hale itself, one of the earliest recorded schools goes back to 1682 when John Hollinpriest was a schoolmaster in Hale Carr. Thirty years later there was a John Hollinpriest, though probably not the same one, at Bowdon Church School. The township records of the 18th century show that the Ringway curate Thomas Whitaker and his successor John Massey kept a school.

Children who could not go to school picked up some education from itinerant schoolmasters who visited outlying farms and taught the farmers' children to read and write and do simple arithmetic. Some literate farmers augmented their income by teaching, like one from Crossacres in Wythenshawe described in an inventory of 1614 as 'schoolmaster' with books valued at 20 shillings. Village craftsmen sometimes taught the rudiments of reading to children out of neighbourliness or pure interest.

The most detailed record is of a day school founded and endowed in 1740 in Hale Barns by Silas Sidebottom, the Unitarian minister of Hale Chapel. He bought a plot of land next to the Unicorn Hotel and built a schoolhouse which rapidly became the local school. Few of the vast, scattered Cheshire parishes can have had a school at this early date. There was no public endowment but Unitarians never confined education to their own children. This enlightened and tolerant policy was partly because of the broad nature of the Unitarian faith and because there was no provision for the schoolmaster's salary in Sidebottom's original endowment. Schoolmasters were chosen by the vestry and remuneration depended on subscriptions and attendance fees.

Names of the earliest schoolmasters at the Hale Barns school are not known. Their salaries would not have been high and they would have had other employment. The first name to be traced is that of John Crampton, son of a Bowdon farmer who came to Hale about 1800, worked as a land surveyor and married the daughter of Benjamin Whitelegg of Tanyard Farm. Crampton prospered sufficiently to buy twelve acres in Wall (now Wicker) Lane opposite the Bull's Head in 1808 from the Crewe estates. His house called Springvale was later famous for its large porch with classical features reclaimed from Bowdon station. Crampton added to his funds by other work. In 1818 he made a complete survey of the district and for many years was chairman of vestry meetings. He was teaching at the school in 1818, retired between 1825 and 1830 and is commemorated in Crampton Drive next to the Bull's Head.

The school flourished under the energetic Crampton but standards fell after he left. Finance was the root of the trouble. The trustees were forced to spend their own money on the upkeep of the schoolhouse and the schoolmaster was reduced to living in a crowded wheelwright's cottage on the green. From 1829 to 1832 it was a girls' school, but its fortune declined further until 1842 when

a Mr Roylance was appointed. Under his leadership it improved but he moved to a better-paid post in 1845. This led to a campaign for subscriptions to increase the schoolmaster's salary and as part of this campaign Hibbert-Ware published his *Memorial Relative to the Present State of Education in Hale*.

By this time the need to educate the working classes was widely accepted through fear of revolution and the hope that some education would result in gratitude, obedience and acceptance of their lot by industrialised workers. Hibbert-Ware's *Memorial* was an attempt to gain subscriptions from the landed middle class as he believed that schooling would prevent rural dissipation and vice, and crimes against property, particularly poaching. He was also capable of a wider view, campaigning for a library to encourage and inform the more ambitious poor. A trained schoolmaster was needed but the training schools set up by the two great voluntary educational bodies, the Church of England National Society and the Nonconformist British and Foreign Society, could not satisfy demand. The master who was eventually appointed, John Clarke, had not been to a teacher training school but in other ways was an admirable choice.

Clarke was born in 1817 at Cook's Cross Farm on Langham Road, Bowdon, the son of a farmer. He was handicapped and unable to work as a labourer. After being educated at a private college on Moss Lane, Altrincham, he was in charge of Bowdon Day School by 1840. In 1842, having applied unsuccessfully for the post at the Hale Barns school, he opened his own school in Peel Causeway at the back of what is now 224 Ashley Road. In 1845 his second application for the Hale Barns school was successful, and he brought his sister Phoebe to be his housekeeper. Shortly afterwards she married Joseph Moore, the grocer and brother of the Unicorn's landlord. Clarke joined the Unitarian Chapel and taught at the Sunday School. The school flourished attended by local children and some Altrincham children walked in daily and some boarded at the schoolhouse. Clarke set high standards of punctuality, reliability and correctness. His discipline was strict but impartial, and his interest in the characters and concerns of his pupils made him many friends. He was a known and respected figure in the district. No successor was appointed when he retired two years before his death in 1892 and the school closed. It had been a remarkable venture.

In the middle of the 19th century there was an Academy for Young Gentlemen at Hale Lodge, on Grove Lane, the home of the Rev. Charles Wallace, minister of Hale Chapel. He attended public meetings of the township and served in 1843 as overseer of the poor for the north side. The academy took only a handful of boarders but must have had a reputation because the parents of Joseph Toulmin Smith of Birmingham sent their son there. Wallace was the author of books on Latin and philosophy and became an authority on a number of topics, including health and local government, and a well-known opponent of bureaucracy and over-centralisation.

A school in Hale Barns was set up in 1860 by the Church of England National Society. When education received state funding in 1870 it was taken into the new school-board system and the renovated and enlarged buildings still stand by the church hall. The infants were all from Hale Barns village and the farms around. Older children had to walk to the Church of England school at St. John's, Altrincham or the non-denominational and non-conformist school in Oxford Road, Altrincham.

Twentieth Century Expansion

When the 1902 Education Act made County and County Borough Education Committees responsible for higher education, the result was fee-paying grammar schools with scholarships from primary schools resulting in the great expansion of free public education and the establishment of many successful schools in the Hale and Altrincham area.

Because of their proximity just over the border in Bowdon, Hale youngsters tend to regard the two Altrincham grammar schools as their local schools. **Altrincham Grammar School for Boys** with around 1200 pupils is on the Hale/Bowdon boundary with the building in Bowdon and most of the playing fields in Hale. **Altrincham Grammar School for Girls** just a few streets away is in Bowdon and has about 1300 pupils. These two very successful schools were initially established, and run by Cheshire County Council and highly regarded under the wider grammar school system for pupils within the north Cheshire boundary. Today they are foundation grammar schools with entrance examinations. Their external examination results rank them as two of the best schools in the country and both have specialist status as language colleges.

The boys' grammar school was opened in 1912 as Altrincham County High School for Boys with 57 pupils and three staff on land donated by the Earl of Stamford. It originally took preparatory pupils aged 9 to 10. The playing fields ran to the Hale/Bowdon boundary, marked by a brook running across the present playing fields until 1920 when the brook was culverted and the fields extended in two phases to Heath Road. Saville Laver was the first headmaster and dramatist Ronald Gow was a pupil and teacher. While teaching at the school in the 1920s Gow produced several professional films which were distributed nationally. He left in 1933 to become a full-time writer, and is famous for dramatising *Love on the Dole* and marrying film star (Dame) Wendy Hiller. There is a Cinema100 Plaque at the school commemorating his work and 150 years of cinemaphotography. In the 1920s the school bought a projector which was sited in a tin hut on the flat staff-room roof outside the building and projected into the hall through a hole cut in the walls because of the inflammable nitrate film.

During WWI there was an anti-aircraft gun mounted to the south of the school and for many years this was buried for safety but with its barrel sticking out of the earth! The school buildings have gradually been extended and improved and now stretch along most of Marlborough Road.

Further down this road on the other side is **Altrincham Preparatory School**, once on the corner of South Downs Road and Grange Road in the old Bowdon College building now rebuilt as apartments.

An important school is the Roman Catholic college of **St Ambrose**, set in extensive grounds off Hale Road, Hale Barns and currently with a roll of about 1000 pupils. The college owes its existence to the evacuation of seventy boys and six De La Salle Brothers from the Catholic Les Vauxbelets College in Guernsey during on 21 June 1940. After temporary accommodation at St. Baldred's Hall (later Hale Conservative Club) and using St. Peter's Schoolrooms in Cecil Road as classrooms, they established a school at Oakleigh on the Dunham Road, Bowdon in 1940, attended briefly by skiffle star of the sixties, Lonnie Donegan. At the end of the war the evacuees returned to Guernsey but in 1946 St. Ambrose was established at Woodeaves in Hale Barns, bought for £34,000. In 1961 building started and the school became an independent grammar school run by the Christian Brothers. Woodeaves was damaged by a fire in 1983 when one brother died. Although none of the Christian Brothers now teaches at the college, it retains that ethos. Its sport is rugby. It is a voluntary-aided school for Roman Catholic boys from the wider area around Altrincham and a £24-million pound rebuild announced in 2007 was completed by 2012. A large preparatory school has been established on the same site and the school has been classified as an outstanding Catholic school. It is now a state-funded independent Catholic boys' grammar school.



The Guernsey refugees arrive at Hale Station, 21 June 1940 (AAIA).

Technical education in the area was provided at **Bradbury Central School**, opened in Queens Road in 1910 as the Altrincham Higher Elementary School with Mr A W Boucher as head teacher. It was renamed Bradbury after Captain Edward Kinder Bradbury VC, the son of Judge James Bradbury, chairman of the joint Altrincham, Bowdon & Hale Sub-committee for Education, who was awarded the Victoria Cross for heroism in WW1. Pupils came from a wide area including Northwich, Knutsford, Lymm and Cheadle and the school had a high reputation for commercial subjects. It was demolished in 1985 and St. Andrew's Court retirement apartments built on the site.



Bradbury Central School, Queens Road sketched, demolished 1985 (Roger Colling, 1984).

Another school just over the Hale/Altrincham border and well-used by Hale youngsters is **Altrincham College of Arts** on Green Lane Timperley, a specialist community school recently judged outstanding in all of the seven OFSTED report categories. **Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic College** specialising in maths and computing is also just over the border and also judged outstanding. In recent years both schools have started newly-built 6th forms.

Hale is served by three state primary schools, all very highly regarded. **Stamford Park Primary School** was built on land from the Stamford estate on the orchard of the medieval Hale Farm which still stands next door in Queens Road. The school cost £15,000 and was opened in 1906 by local philanthropist William J Crossley. The head teacher was Charles B Winn who lived in Albert Road, Hale. The school was built for 900 pupils and catered largely for children from Altrincham after the closure of the British Schools at Rigby Street (Oxford Road), Altrincham and the New Street Wesleyan School. Leslie Pendlebury, one of the first pupils, remembered walking behind a brass band from the British Schools to the new school on opening day. In 2006 it celebrated its centenary with the publication of a book on the school by Catherine Merrill.



Stamford Park Primary School, Queens Road (AAIA).

New schools were needed in Hale Barns following extensive housing development after WWII. **Elmridge County Primary School** was opened in 1961 and replaced the National School of 1860 which itself had replaced the non-denominational 1740 school run by the Unitarians of Hale Chapel. **Well Green County Primary School** built in 1965 was officially opened by Lady Bromley Davenport in 1967 to cater for children on the Wellgreen estate. Miss F Benyon was the first head teacher.

A large number of private schools have flourished over the years, some fitting the description of dame⁷⁶ schools and other much bigger concerns. Middle-class Hale was always ahead in the supply of private nursery schools and many schools across the age-range were established, often short-lived, from late Victorian times until World War II. Some of the smaller ones around the turn of the 20th century included a kindergarten run by Miss Eleanor Butler at 84 Victoria Road; a boarding and day school called the High School and Kindergarten at Park House, Park Road; a kindergarten headed by Miss A Shaw at 9 Lisson Grove; Hale High School run by Miss E Mills in a pair of adjoining houses at the corner of Park Road and Nursery Avenue as a 'boarding and day school for ladies' in 1898.

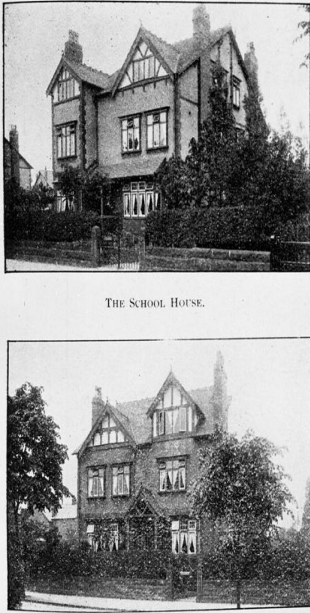
Victoria House School was a single-form private primary school run by Mrs Cooper at Victoria Cottage in Albert Road during the 1930s and 1940s. It took pupils from three to ten and at any one time had about 15 pupils, all in one class, definitely a 'dame school'.

In 1910 Miss Emily Petremant was running a girls school with preparatory boys at Wraysbury on the corner of Ashley Road and Cecil Road. Emily Petrement transferred her school in 1914 to **Broussa**, a house in Broomfield Lane. The name is said to derive from Bursa in Turkey where the previous owner had business dealings. The Misses Munn took over the school from Miss Petrement and were remembered as always wearing gloves and being very strict. In 1953 Mrs Little bought the school and the Rev. J Frankland took over in 1962. When Mr Frankland retired in 1980, the school became **Hale Preparatory School** under the headmastership of Mr J Connor.

⁷⁶ A small private primary school run by a woman, often with only one class of different ages.

Another early private school founded by local women was **Dudley Bank**. Miss Isabella Robertson and Miss Ethel Read opened the school in Park Road in June 1903 to meet the needs of new housing. It moved in 1906 to new premises at Dudley Bank, 26 Warwick Road, and this became the boarders' house about 1909 when the new school was opened across the road. It eventually catered for girls up to the age of 18 with a mixed kindergarten, totalling about 100 pupils. The founders retired in 1938 and Miss L Furniss ran the school during the war years. In 1946 three sisters, the Misses Watson, took over, with the eldest, Euphemia, as headmistress. In 1959 Mrs Little from Broussa bought the school and in 1961 the Rev. Frankland took over and the school merged with Broussa. The Broomfield Lane school became a mixed preparatory school and Dudley Bank became Broussa Nursery School, often known as Little Broussa.

Wadham House School opened in 1898 on Arthog Road named after Wadham College, Oxford where the first headmaster, Herbert Ashe, was educated. It started with just three pupils but by 1900 there were 15 boys, all boarders. Until the 1950s, the farmland, off Park Road, where Birchfields, Wadham Way and Fernlea are now, was used for the playing fields and Lightoaks, still on Arthog Road, was the dormitory. Disaster struck in 1960 when six pupils lost their lives in a fire in a Paris hotel where they were staying on a school trip and the headmaster, Mr John Horsfall Turner, closed the school. The schoolhouse burned down pending demolition in early 1962, having been sold with eight acres for the development of the present estate. Brick making was taking place here in the 1850s and may have been used to build Yew Tree Farm which stood on the site of Birchfields until 1960. The farm was occupied in the 1850s by John Kinsey, surveyor and tax collector.



Dudley Bank, Hale.

HIGH-CLASS SCHOOL FOR GIRLS.

Principals: Miss Robertson and Miss Read.

Efficient Staff of Resident and Visiting English and Foreign Mistresses.

The Aim of the School is to give a thoroughly sound education on approved modern lines and to train the girls to become cultured, intelligent, useful members of Society.

The Boarders are under the direct personal care of the Principals and a refined Home-Life is combined with the advantages of School. The Boarders have exceptional opportunities for French and German conversation.

Pupils are prepared when desirable for Public Examinations. Arrangements are made for elder girls wishing to specialize in certain subjects, and there are facilities for the Study of Music, Art and Languages.

The Kindergarten and Transition Department, with which is associated a training course for Students, is under the direction of Mistresses holding the Higher Certificate of the N.F.U.

There is a large **Studio**. Figure, Painting, Designing, &c.

The Tennis Courts are in the School Gardens. The Playing Field is a few minutes walk from the School.

Prospectus on application to the Principals.

THE SCHOOL HOUSE.

THE BOARDERS' HOUSE.

*Advertisement for Dudley Bank School,
Warwick Road (AAIA).*

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22. HOW ORDINARY PEOPLE LIVED

Early descriptions of Hale

At about the time of the French Revolution, Charles Hulbert, a cotton manufacturer and antiquarian from Shrewsbury, described one of the Hale greens as *"a delightful spot where he could shoot his arrows, fly his kite and enjoy watching the locals dance and sing."* At this time he was a boy living with his grandparents just over the boundary in Northen Etchells. The family often went to service at Ringway Chapel and the curate taught him, along with the sons of Ringway farmers.

Hulbert remembered that in the winter, mummers went round performing a local version of St. George and the Dragon, with Hector as a pagan villain and a quack doctor in attendance. For the Northenden or Ringway Wakes his grandmother made a great pot of furmity⁷⁷ which was placed on a low table with bowls and spoons, ready for callers to taste. At the wakes there were savage entertainments such as bull and bear baiting and cock fighting, and softer sports such as shooting for kettles.

Fifty years later an Altrincham man wrote about Hale Moss: *"I saw a delightful stretch of green sward on which all sorts of cattle were grazing and beyond a plain of golden gorse. Boys were chasing donkeys or playing on the sand hills and the whole made a picture of Arcadian peace and beauty."*

There is plenty of evidence for the survival of bull baiting in the area right up to 1838. The Bull's Head in Hale Barns was named after the sport which usually took place on the green outside. Another amusement on the green was fighting with bare fists, and here Hale achieved some distinction having bred some famous boxing families known as 'the Fighting Men of Hale'. This was a rough, tough, zestful community which preachers and teachers were striving to soften and refine. Charles Hulbert spoke of the *"sweet, mild and persuasive manner of Mr Whitaker,"* the curate of Ringway, and the *"Thundering voice and zealous manner of his brother-in-law, Mr Ollerenshaw of Mellor."* Whitaker was the first curate at Ringway to hold regular services since the displacement of the Nonconformists. His successor, Reverend John Massey, and ex-schoolmaster John Crampton, stopped bull baiting in the township on a field off Hawley Lane at about the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign.

The teachers of the Sunday school at Hale Chapel offered a penny to each of their pupils if they stayed away from Ringway Wakes, obviously fearing its corrupting influence. William Berry, a Methodist preacher, used the green outside the Bull's Head for services on a Sunday afternoon using logs tipped on to the green by the wheelwrights next door as his pulpit and pews. To judge by a local rhyme there was some heckling of Methodists by the local youth:

*"We'll bore a hole through Goulbourn's nose
And put a string therein;
And lead him down to Finney's Bridge
And there we'll tumble him in."*

Goulbourn was a local Methodist, and Samuel Finney, a Hale landowner and JP, made it his business to see that the highways and bridges in the district were repaired and maintained. He lived at Oversley Ford and was known for his support of poor Methodists.

When Victoria ascended the throne in 1837 Hale, like much of England, was poised on the brink of the Industrial Revolution but it was still a rural community and most working people were engaged in farming and supporting trades.

⁷⁷ A pudding made from grain.

The farming community of Hale treated their land in the same way as the big landowners treated their great estates, making them the subject of all sorts of transactions, purchases, mortgages, trusts and marriage settlements. Many transactions were entered into on property where the lease depended on one surviving life, but up to the middle of the 18th century often three lives were named in the lease. They also followed the lead of the gentry by sending the youngest son into the church, the difference being that they supported the dissenting church.

Occupations

In the 1841 census there were about 70 farmers in Hale, employing 35 members of their own families, 40 men servants and 120 agricultural labourers. The numbers had probably not altered greatly for the previous hundred years and it is hard to distinguish between minor gentry like the Leycesters of Hale Low, long-standing yeomen like the Leathers of Butts Clough, and successful leaseholders like the Hankinsons of Warburton Green. By the 19th century the names of those who worked the great farms on the Tatton estate at Ringway, like Richard Wood of the Pinfold, Henry Royle of Clough Bank, and Hugh Gresty of Ringway Woods, appeared on jury lists and reports of vestry meetings, although they were only tenants-at-will or on short leases.

The 1841 census showed that almost the whole community farmed or served the farming community: only 90 men out of the total of 350 did not work in farming. A few had independent means or incomes from professions: a Manchester dentist, a doctor, a lawyer, an architect, and two land surveyors, with small farms and labourers to work them. The Rev. Charles Wallace ran an academy at Hale Lodge and also employed three agricultural labourers living on the premises to run the farm. The publicans of the Bull's Head at Hale Barns, the Bleeding Wolf, and the Egerton Arms at Ringway all farmed between seven and fourteen acres.

The three oldest inns, the Bull's Head and the Unicorn (now closed) in Hale Barns, and the Bleeding Wolf (now apartments) in Hale, are named in the earliest licensing register of 1812, though no doubt they were in use earlier. Inns were often the only buildings suitable for such events as the sale of local farms and estates. The Crewe estate sales took place at the Bleeding Wolf in 1808, and land sales are also recorded at the Unicorn in 1826.

Maps and directories show that the only real Hale centre was in what is now named Hale Barns. There was the wheelwright's shop and a smithy near the Bull's Head. A second smithy opened later on the north side of the village and both were run by the Hollingworths and the Aldcrofts, blacksmiths of long standing in the neighbourhood. Craftsmen and shopkeepers were scattered around the rest of the township. A carpenter and his wheelwright son lived at a cottage on Bankhall Lane halfway up the hill (now Hope Cottage) and a joiner lived nearby, possibly because of the proximity of the Holloway Clough woodland.

People in some outlying areas of the township went to Altrincham or Timperley village for supplies and itinerant craftsmen provided services like Francis Timperley the Hale Barns tailor whose cottage stood by the tithe barn and was only demolished in the 1930s. He used to travel the district with his two assistants, staying two or three days in a house, measuring for new clothes, repairing old ones, and mending curtains and carpets.

Balshaw's *Stranger's Guide to Altrincham* published in 1855 gives us a picture of Hale in this early-Victorian era. There were 3,769 acres of land, 89 of them made up of roads, rivers and waste. The population in 1801 was 783, and this showed a gradual but steady increase: 942 in 1831, 974 in 1841, and 995 in 1851. The principal landowners were the Earl of Stamford and Warrington,

Reginald Foden, Thomas Hulme Bowers, Thomas Lowton, and the trustees of the late Isaac Harrop. The vicarial tithes⁷⁸ were £97, and the rectorial tithes⁷⁹ £323.

The list of heads of household from the directory shows that most were still involved in farming or supporting rural trades. The number of households was: Ringway 31, Hale 51, Peel Causeway 34, and Hale Barns 34. Mrs Baguley was a publican and blacksmith, and there were several women farmers, presumably widows. Names of some families are commemorated today in local areas such as Warburton, Davenport, Baguley and Timperley, and in road names such as Ridgeway.

Hale Barns had some large houses including a handsome residence belonging to Titus Hibbert-Ware, and Hale Mount at the top of Shay Lane owned by Edward Threlfall. However at this time most of the estates in Hale with the exception of the Stamford, Egerton and Foden estates were fewer than 50 acres. By 1865 the Harrops had built up an estate stretching right across the eastern part of the township from north to south, including Davenport Green Hall Farm, Hale Green, Well Green, Long Lane, Rossmill and Barrow Farms. The hub was Hale Lodge, off Grove Lane, built in 1808 on the site of an older house called Hale Hall. It was larger than any other building in the area and built with classical symmetry and style. In the Cheshire section of *Magna Britannia* of 1810 the Lyson brothers singled it out as the only private house worthy of mention in Hale. It was pulled down in the 1950s to make way for the Well Green estate without any official record of its appearance or a road name left to mark the site.

In 1968 an Arts Council was formed with members from interested organisations and individuals to foster artistic and cultural activities. Hale Library, established by the council in 1907 at 113 Ashley Road (Peel Causeway), with a stock of 5,000 books, moved three times before the construction the present building in 1966 in Leigh Road, currently under threat of re-development.



Hale Library shortly after building in 1966 (AAIA).

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⁷⁸ The part of the tithe intended for the vicar of Bowdon.

⁷⁹ The part of the tithe intended for the rector, in this case Lord Stamford.

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23. INDUSTRY IN HALE

Hale is known as a leafy, middle-class suburb, but over the years various industries sprang up. The earliest local evidence of people working together in this way is a 12th-century iron works discovered at Newall Green Farm by Manchester University and the South Trafford Archaeological Group. The farm is close to one of the areas which may have been the earliest Hale settlement. These early workers may have used iron-rich sand from the banks of the Bollin or the iron may have been imported. Another early industry may have been the extraction of salt possibly at tithe field 641 called Salt Riddings now beneath the Well Green estate.



*Harrison's Brickyard, Oversley Ford, later Jackson's Brickworks.
It disappeared under Runway 2 (AAIA).*

Many minor brickfields existed in Hale in the 19th century and earlier, as indicated by the dozen or so field names on the 1842 Tithe Map containing the words *brick* or *kiln*. Bricks were handmade as late as the early 20th century and in the early days of building with bricks it was usual for materials to be made nearby if suitable clay was available, often made by a builder. Two substantial brickworks grew up on Hale Moss because substantial clay deposits were found. **Abraham Dean's claypit**, round the King George's Pool area, was just outside Hale and later owned by James Hamilton, an Altrincham builder. The largest was **Gibbon's brickworks**, north of Grove Lane and off Delahays Road. The excavations left huge holes which filled up with water and became lakes stocked with large fish, which were filled in with local tipping in the 1950s and the fields are now football pitches. Following WWII **Jackson's Brickworks** still existed at Oversley Ford until engulfed by airport expansion.

One of the earliest industries in the area was **Seddon's Worsted Mill** just over the Hale boundary opposite Spring Bank in a cottage, a tenement and two fields called Butty Croft and Well Croft at the bottom of Sandy Lane, now Stamford Road, Bowdon. In 1774 Robert Seddon is mentioned in

an Altrincham lease as a 'shag maker'⁸⁰ and in 1775 he leased land on Sandy Lane, Bowdon from the Earl of Stamford and opened a small worsted mill at Hollybank where Garner Close and Hollywood are now. The lease was for three lives, his own and those of his sons Robert and Thomas. Although the mill may have been manually operated at the beginning, Tarbolton believed that later it was powered by water and there is evidence of a small stream passing through the site and a header-pond may have existed higher up the hill. The mill is confirmed by the presence of a dye house in the 1775 Valuation Book, and the 1782 Book lists a warping mill, dye house and comb shop. Broster's *Guide to Altrincham* in 1782 also lists Robert Seddon, woolcomber, in the Altrincham area. The 1793 trade directory of Bowdon shows a worsted mill which can be identified as Hollybank and lists Altrincham's principal manufacture as worsted yarn, worsted and hair shags.

The technology was available because James Hargreaves developed the Spinning Jenny in 1765, and Arkwright invented the water-driven spinning frame in 1769, leading to the development of water-powered mills. If Seddon's mill was water-powered, it was clearly in the forefront of the Industrial Revolution.

There were Seddons in Dunham Massey in the early 18th century and three Robert Seddons were active in the Hale, Bowdon and Altrincham area during the 18th and 19th centuries. The first Robert Seddon was born in 1715 and came to Altrincham as an itinerant dealer in the early 1750s, possibly from Lancashire. The name can be tracked through various documents over the years. In 1759 Robert witnessed the will of Ralph Pimlott. His son, Robert II, married Phoebe Clarke, the daughter of Thomas Clarke and Phoebe Burgess of Ollerbarrow Farm, at St. Mary's Church, Bowdon. Robert and Phoebe had a daughter Ann and sons John and Robert III. In 1786 Robert I died and Robert II continued to run the mill until he died in 1806. Robert II appears to have married again, because when he died his wife was called Margaret. Robert III continued to run the mill after his father died. He married Catherine and they had children: Margaret, Mary, Edward, Robert IV, Frances and Harriet.

Bryant's 1831 map calls the mill area 'Siddon's Brow', a corruption of Seddon. A Robert Seddon, presumably Robert III, attended a Bowdon Vestry meeting in 1832. In the 1851 census he was living on the south side of Sandy Lane, Bowdon, probably at Hollybank. The 1855 directory has a Robert Seddon living at Oak Hill, Stamford Road and a Robert Seddon died aged 72 in 1858, clearly the same person, by which time the mill/factory had closed. Frances died in 1857 and Catherine in 1862. Harriet was still living at Oak Hill, Stamford Road, Bowdon in the mid-1860s, taking in lodgers.

The other major commercial enterprise in this part of Hale was **Peel Brewery** on the triangle of land to the west of Hale Station opposite the Railway Inn. Photographs show a tall chimney where the millennium clock now stands. **John Siddeley**, the brewer, was born in 1834 at Davenham. He trained as a chemist and druggist with William Paulden with whom he was lodging in Police Street, Altrincham in 1851. In 1864 and 1871 John was listed as a chemist, druggist and seed merchant at 30 Church Street, Altrincham and by 1874 at Springbank, Stamford Street, Altrincham. He advertised his products as 'physician's prescriptions carefully prepared' and 'genuine patent medicines'. He also offered toilet soap, perfumery, tooth, nail and hairbrushes, colza oil⁸¹ for lighting, wax, sperm and composite candles, teas, coffees, spices etc, and garden flower and agricultural seeds. At the time he also owned The Rising Sun public house in Police Street.

In 1858 at Bowdon Church John married Sarah Anne Davenport whose father John was mayor of Altrincham in 1855. John's Siddeley's brother William married her sister Elizabeth. In 1866 John Siddeley bought a house on the west side of Hale Station from John Henry Wright, a brewer and beer retailer. In partnership with his brother-in-law Thomas Kent, a brewer from Slaithwaite, Yorkshire John expanded it to become Peel Causeway Brewery. They probably used water from

⁸⁰ A fabric with a long coarse nap.

⁸¹ Rape seed.

the spring from Spring Bank which must have been contaminated but would have been heated in the brewing process. The business employed six people and ran for 30 years until 1907 when the building was demolished. John Siddeley was Mayor of Altrincham in 1878 and died in 1908. His special brew, known as Siddeley's Purge, was re-created for the Millennium celebrations at the Railway Inn and was in the Good Beer Guide at that time. Two of John's sons Samuel and Percy were trading as seed merchants in 1901 and Samuel was living in Broomfield Lane, Hale in 1891. John and Sarah Siddeley and some of their children including Jessie and Percy are buried in Bowdon Churchyard. From the other branch of the Siddeley family, John Davenport Siddeley, son of William and Elizabeth, was the founder of Siddeley Motors and became Baron Kenilworth.

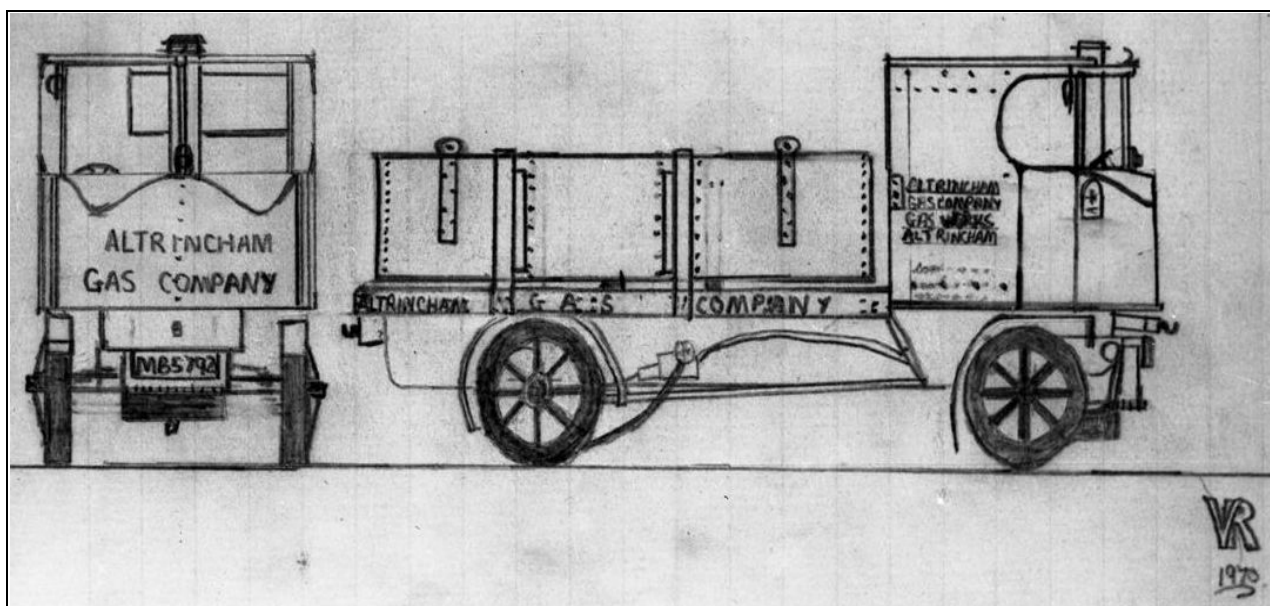
One of Hale's most important commercial enterprises was **Clibran's Nurseries** started by Joseph Clibran in Carrington and Oldfield Brow, Altrincham some time before 1875. In 1877 they bought a house south of Oldfield Road, possibly Oldfield House, the old Seamons Moss School. The main, extensive nursery was in Oldfield Brow on the site of Medway Crescent with additional land from the Hartley Road site, both on the 1876 OS map. The firm supplied the quicks⁸² for hawthorn hedges in the new big fields in the farm modernisation programme of the Stamford Estate from 1896 to 1910 when the old tithe hedges were ripped out. The business transferred to Hale in 1902 and the family moved to Broad Lane. They moved their main nurseries, warehouses and offices to Bankhall Lane, remaining there until 1968, with extensive growing areas off Park Road and Hale Road and at Ashley, Ashley Heath, Bowdon, Timperley, Oldfield Brow, Urmston and Llandudno, and shops and warehouses in Manchester. They supplied expanding suburbs and councils, becoming the biggest nurserymen in the country and were known worldwide. They had contracts with crown establishments and supplied trees for forests in Delamere, Wales and Scotland.



Clibran's catalogue 1895 (AAIA).

Much of the 20th century industrial activity in Hale developed along Moss Lane, straddling the Hale/Altrincham boundary. Until the 1950s a railway line crossed Moss Lane from the Altrincham Station Goods' Yard allowing a small engine to take coal to the 1847 **Gas Works** and return with coal tar products and coke. Originally this was horse-drawn then a steam lorry was used to pull a wagon until about 1950, after which steam and diesel engines were used.

⁸² Young hawthorn plants.



Drawing of Altrincham Gas Company Steam Lorry (VR 1970, AAIA)

Engineering was important in this area and by 1903 **Cook & Co. Ltd (Engineers)** were established at Stamford Works, Windsor Road off Moss Lane, Altrincham, just outside the Hale boundary. At its height Cook's employed about 300 people making the company an important employer. The firm started in the 1890s in Exchange Street, Manchester. In a local 1923 directory they are listed as Ring Traveller Makers for the cotton industry in Lancashire and Yorkshire. They produced vacuum card stripping machinery for cleansing cotton, using hooks on cards to comb impurities out of imported cotton before spinning. During the war, like many engineers, they produced aeroplane parts. The company closed about 1969 after merging with a Scottish firm. The Cook family lived in Hale in the 1920s and 30s.

From the 1920s onward the **Ruby Cycle Company** was based on Moss Lane. George Rigby founded the company in 1906 assembling bicycles at Cannel Street (later Canal Street) in Ancoats. In 1912 they started to produce motorcycles and in 1913 a four-wheeled car. In 1914 they were producing twin-cylinder motorcycles for the Russian Imperial Army and in 1916 constructed a motorcycle side-car combination which was never delivered because of the Russian revolution. The remaining motorcycles were delivered to the British Army and used with side-cars to bring wounded from the front line. During WWII the company produced munitions and this left them in a strong financial position and in 1920 they moved to Moss Lane, Hale, taking over the existing Saver Clutch Company site. Soon afterwards a 9,000 square yard building was erected at a cost of £100,000. The new works was capable of producing 10,000 cycles and 5,000 motorcycles per year and later produced three-wheeled cars and designed a new range of engines and motorcycles. In 1920 the Ruby Royal Vibrationless Motor Bicycle was quite expensive at £120. In November 1922 the company went bankrupt and the designs, manufacturing rights and trademark were sold to Albert Horrocks of Horrocks Motor House, Bradshawgate, Bolton where production continued until 1933.

The Ruby site at Moss Lane was bought by **Bannerman's Shirts** in 1928 to produce 'Banner' shirts and the building became their head office. The family diversified from farming when David Bannerman, born in 1789 in Perthshire, was sent by Henry, his father, to Manchester to research commercial possibilities. By 1805 Henry and his four sons were operating a fustian, shirting and cambric business from 66 Market Street, Manchester where they were still listed in 1813. In 1841 they were at 122 Market Street and from 1851 to 1931 at 33 York Street as spinners, merchants and manufacturers. With factories established on Bradford Road, Henry died in 1823 and David

took over the company which continued to expand. In 1923 Sir Charles Macara was chairman and managing director and in 1928 they moved some operations to Hale. The factory on Moss Lane closed in 1976 when work was transferred to Ireland. From 1980 until 2003 when it was demolished, the building was called Elitex House and was in multiple occupation. Local historians and archaeologists have unearthed evidence on the Bannerman's site of a variety of different business operations including a knackers' yard, a market garden, various textile businesses, an architect's office, a bed linen shop, a saddlery, textile sewing, knitting and a property developer.

Another engineering company **Edward Holme (Engineers)** started in Broadheath in 1914 when they took over Edward Martin Holme and Percy Scholfield at Taxilo Works. In 1926 the company moved to Moss Lane, Hale taking over the factory built for the Artistic Printing Company. The company was re-formed as Edward Holme (1931) Ltd, still based at Moss Lane and described as Manufacturing Electrical Engineers & Die Castings. They produced electrical switchgear used in the mining, cotton and railway industries, a typical product being the controls for a crane. During the war with around 100 employees, they produced control gear for naval vessels and were awarded sub-contracts by Metropolitan-Vickers for other secret work. The company was taken over by the William Pickles' Group, Textile Traders, who owned the adjacent Bannerman's building and this closed in 1971 when Pickles transferred work to their other company Clifton Engineering at Lytham St. Annes. Stan Silman and several other employees then set up Silman Engineering in Atlantic Street, Broadheath to manufacture spares for Edward Holme's electrical gear.

In 1947 **Northern Automatic Screw Products** moved to its present site on Moss Lane, Hale. It had been founded by Peter Buckley in 1946 in a small building off The Downs in Altrincham. Peter's son, Steven, joined the business in the 1960s and in 1978 they acquired the old Edward Holmes' site next door, allowing them to build an additional factory completed in August 1980. The original business was renamed **Sabre Repetition**, and continues, currently manufacturing precision-turned components for a variety of international industries, particularly tube fittings as a second-tier car industry supplier. In 1990 a valve manufacturing and dental drills business was started on the same site.

A cabinetmaker and upholsterer's business called **Kinsey's** was established at Ashley Road, Hale in 1915. The owner, Joseph Shepherd Kinsey, was born in Altrincham in 1885 and learned his trade as an apprentice cabinetmaker in Altrincham, probably at Starkey & Neild. In 1915 he married Marjorie Bond and they had two sons Joseph and Alwyn, and a daughter Joan. Joseph senior started in business as a high-class cabinetmaker, upholsterer and house furnisher at 163 Ashley Road, probably living over the shop but with ambitions to expand. By 1923 he had moved the business to 173 Ashley Road creating upholstery and soft furnishings departments, with workshops in Cecil Road⁸³ manufacturing furniture and cabinets. The shop at 173 Ashley Road, run by Mr Overberry the manager, had a shop window displaying wares with an office and store behind. Over the shop was the sewing room with seven women in the 1940s producing upholstery for chairs, loose covers, feather-filled cushions, pocket-sprung mattresses and curtains. Behind was the showroom. Next door over the shop at 175 Ashley Road shop was the upholstery section with an interconnecting door where seven upholsterers and a foreman worked in the 1940s. At the back of 173/175 was the polishing shop on stilts over the yards, with bridges from both shops. These buildings still exist. By 1928 Kinseys had taken over stables in Cecil Road. At this point, the premises included two buildings behind numbers 174/176 Ashley Road around a yard used to stack timber for seasoning. The larger building had a machine shop downstairs where three men worked and an upper storey where thirteen people assembled suites and cabinets.

During the war these workshops produced polished boxes for the Royal Airforce. Kinseys also did a thriving trade in carpets, working in the wider area as well as supplying large houses locally. It was said that an order from the Berry family (who produced 'blacking' and boot polish) for a

⁸³ Behind numbers 174 to 176 Ashley Road.

ballroom carpet nearly bankrupted the company because it was faulty. After the war Kinseys tried unsuccessfully to use parachute silk for cushion covers.

About 1950 the Cecil Road varnish shop burned down in a spectacular blaze when tins of varnish caught fire. Work moved to Crown Passages into the former New Farm outbuildings and stables previously used as a farrier's and blacksmith's and now part of a restaurant. From 1932 the Kinseys lived at 14 Broomfield Lane, Hale moving to Madeley House, Ashley Heath about 1955 where Joseph erected workshops in the back garden to produce TV cabinets. The house was demolished and replaced by Madeley Close by 1972. During the 1950s and until about 1967, Kinseys produced TV cabinets in Hale but had gone by 1970 by which time the TV business had been moved to Broadheath.

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24. HALE PERSONALITIES

Hale's position on the southern edge of Manchester with the Bollin valley countryside, Dunham Park to the south and west, and good communications to the city, has made it a pleasant and convenient place to live and many celebrities including Manchester United footballers and TV stars have chosen to make their homes here.

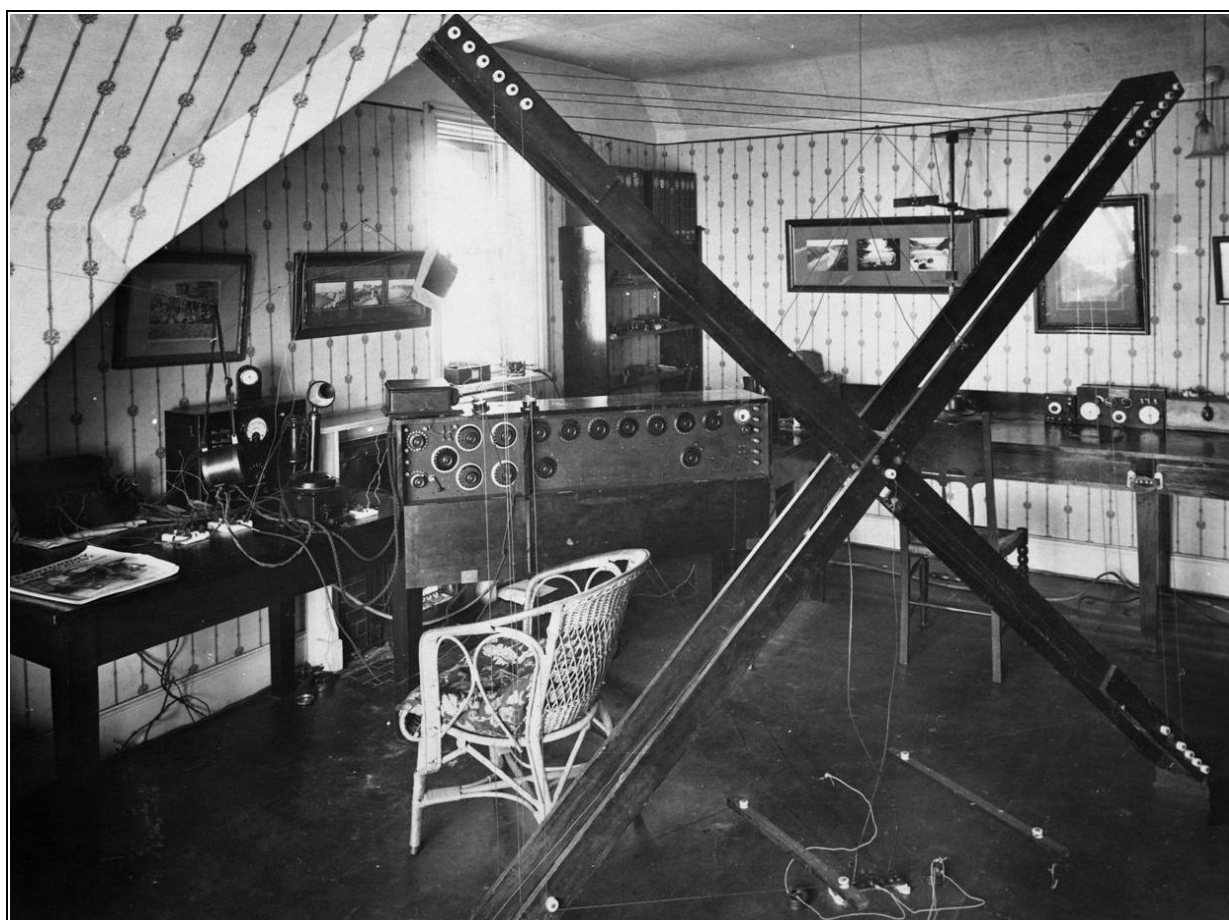
Remarkable people from previous generations have included computer pioneers Alan Turing and Vivian Bowden. **Dr Alan Mathison Turing** lived in Nursery Avenue, Hale for three years from 1947 to 1950 when he was a reader at Manchester University working on the first stored-program computer. One of the pioneers of modern computing, his achievements were overshadowed by the fact that he was an openly-gay man at a time when this was punishable by prison. He was born in Paddington, London in 1912 and studied maths at King's College Cambridge where his remarkable ability was recognised with his election as a fellow at the age of 22. He later gained a PhD at Princeton University and was also a Marathon runner. In 1936 he worked on the idea of a machine to carry out mathematical functions and logic, and wrote a paper on the design of computers entitled *The Turing Machine: on Computable Numbers*. He built an electro-mechanical binary multiplier to solve codes and his Turing Machine used sequential logical steps, programs, process control, storage and input/output, all groundwork for the development of modern computers.

In 1938 he was recruited to decrypt coded messages from the German Enigma machines and moved to Bletchley Park. He later worked with a team who constructed the first programmable machine, Colossus. Turing was awarded an OBE for his work. In 1942 he was sent to Washington to update American code breakers and in 1945 designed a speech scrambler. He was recruited by the National Physics Laboratory to write a report on the design of an electronic universal machine including programming which resulted in the Automatic Computing Machine (ACE) in 1946. After moving to Manchester Turing became, in effect, a writer of software for pioneer computer engineer Freddie Williams and in 1948 the 2048-bit 'Baby' computer ran its first program.

He continued to work for GCHQ, the post-war successor to Bletchley Park but the Cold War and the alliance with the United States meant that known homosexuals had become ineligible for security clearance. His death at his Wilmslow home in 1954 by cyanide poisoning was recorded as suicide. Recognition of his achievements came later when a statue to him was unveiled in Sackville Park, Manchester in June 2001, and Turing Way in East Manchester was named after him. In 2009, Prime Minister Gordon Brown made a posthumous personal apology for Alan Turing's treatment saying "*his unique contribution helped to turn the tide of war and he received a royal pardon. The debt of gratitude he is owed makes it all the more horrifying therefore, that he was treated so inhumanely.*" A successful film of Turing's life *The Imitation Game* mainly about his work at Bletchley Park was produced in 2014.

Dr B Vivian (later Lord) Bowden, another computer pioneer who worked closely with Turing, is probably best known as Principal of Manchester's College of Science and Technology (later UMIST) which under his leadership from 1953 became one of the leading universities for the study of engineering and technology. He was born in 1910 in Chesterfield, Derbyshire, graduating from Cambridge with First Class Honours in Natural Sciences in 1931. He worked in the Cavendish Laboratory with Lord Rutherford and was awarded a PhD in 1934. After a further year of research in Amsterdam, he taught physics for five years in Liverpool and Oundle. Dr. Bowden spent the war in radar research in Britain with Robert Watson-Watt, and in the USA, followed by a year at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 1950 he joined Ferranti in Manchester where the first British digital computer was being built, working in development at Manchester University with Professor Freddie Williams, Dr Tom (later Professor) Kilburn and Alan Turing. While still at Ferranti's, he contributed to and edited an early book on computers *Faster Than Thought: A*

Symposium on Digital Computing Machines, published in 1953. At the time there were just four professors in his department and he fought to strengthen the college's resources and for technological education reform. During his time as principal the number of students increased tenfold. From 1960 to 1964 he was chairman of the Electronic Research Council of the Ministry of Aviation and in 1963 was created Lord Bowden of Chesterfield. In 1964 he was appointed Minister of State at the Department of Education and Science, but resigned in 1965, returning to an academic life at his old college and remaining principal until he retired in 1976. As part of his work he advised a number of firms about automation, including Kearns Engineering in Broadheath and in retirement he wrote many papers on education and a history of UMIST. When he first moved to the Altrincham area in 1950 he lived at Woodleigh in Bradgate Road, Altrincham and in 1955 moved to Roxana on Park Road, Hale. In the 1970s he retired to Stanhope Road, Bowdon and continued to be active in the House of Lords until he died in 1989 aged 79.



Fleming's radio apparatus in his Hale Road attic (1920s, AAIA)

An early radio pioneer, **Sir Arthur Percy Morris Fleming** was born in 1881 on the Isle of Wight where he died in 1960. In 1916 he lived in Hale at 133 Hale Road in 1916 and then moved to Highclere, 235 Hale Road in 1922. Sir Arthur was an electrical engineer particularly involved in the manufacture of radar equipment. After training in the USA he joined the British Westinghouse Company⁸⁴ at Trafford Park and was awarded a CBE in 1920 for his wartime work on submarine-detection gear. He pioneered the development of radio, establishing station 2ZY at Trafford Park, the second British transmitting station to broadcast programmes on a daily basis. He set up a receiving station in his attic in Hale and, in November 1922 received the first public broadcast across the Atlantic. From 1931 to 1954 he was director of research and education at Metropolitan-Vickers. His work helped to establish radar stations in this country and he was knighted in 1945 for

⁸⁴ Later Metropolitan-Vickers or just Metrovics.

his war effort. Some of his personal papers are kept at the National Archive for Electrical Science and Technology.

Several aircraft pioneers have made their homes in the area. Probably Britain's greatest aircraft designer, **Roy Chadwick** CBE, was a Hale resident for many years. He was born in 1893 in Farnworth, Lancashire, the fifth generation of engineers, studied at Manchester College of Technology (later UMIST) and joined British Westinghouse in 1907 as a trainee draftsman. He worked for A V Roe & Company at the research works at Hamble, Southampton and became Chief Designer in 1917 at the age of 24, later Technical Director. He designed the York aircraft, built at Ringway and the Lancaster, Lincoln, Shackleton, Anson, and a prototype of the Vulcan. Much of his later work was done at Chadderton and from 1929 he lived at Kingsley, Gilbert Road, Hale until his death when a test flight from Woodford crashed on take-off in 1947. In 1943 he was awarded the CBE for his work.

John Leeming was a local flying pioneer who advised Manchester Corporation to establish their airport at Ringway. He was born in Chorlton but lived in Hale and later in Bowdon and worked for his father who was a silk manufacturer and oil merchant. John first saw the pioneering efforts of powered flying at Birkdale, Southport. He built a glider in 1921 in his parents' cellar, later moving it to the garage and then the greenhouse to accommodate its size. In 1924 he flew his fifth glider built from scrap from Avros with his friends Tom Prince and Clement Wood and known as an 'LPW' after their initials. All his later gliders could be dismantled and stored in a garage. He crashed the glider and rebuilt it, installing a Douglas motorbike engine which proved too heavy to take off and could only be trundled around the field. In 1924 John Leeming and nine friends formed the Lancashire Aero Club, the first flying club in Britain with John as first chairman and later its president. Originally the club flew from Hough End Fields off Princess Road, Manchester, and in 1925 considered a field at Ringway where the airport is now but eventually used a site at Woodford. John was famous for landing on the Chester Road near The Swan Inn in the early 1920s to refuel at a petrol station, and for landing on Hevellyn in 1926.

Manchester Corporation opened Barton Aerodrome in 1928 but it proved to be unsuitable for large aircraft. The war stopped amateur flying but the aero club was restarted at Barton in 1946 and is the oldest and largest surviving aero club in Britain. As an authority on flying, John was asked to advise on a new airport site by Manchester Corporation in the 1930s and recommended Ringway, which was at first rejected but eventually opened in 1938.

In the early 1930s John built Owlpen in York Drive, Bowdon and developed a two-acre garden. He had published his first article at the age of thirteen and became a well known author, writing ten books between 1935 and 1960 including *The Garden Grows* about building his garden, his autobiography *Airdays*, and *Manchester & Aviation*. In 1936 he created *Claudius the Bee* for the *Manchester Evening News* and Walt Disney bought the film rights. He was a friend of Harry Killick and must have known **Graham Wood**, also a flying pioneer, who lived close by at The Coppice in South Downs Road whose restored rotary ornithopter machine with flapping wings is in the Manchester Air and Space Museum. Before the war John set up the Northern Air Transport Company based at Barton. He flew in Wellingtons during the war, and became a prisoner-of-war after being shot down over Sicily. After the war he ran a business extracting oil from rags from engineering works, producing new rags and reclaimed oil. He died in 1965 aged 69.

Another local flying enthusiast was **Harold Durant Killick**, the son of Thomas William Killick, an East India merchant, magistrate and amateur historian who lived at Southfields, Richmond Road, Bowdon from the late 19th century to 1914. Harry, born in 1897, was one of eight children, and went to Bowdon College. He was a member of the Lancashire Aero Club in the 1930s and 40s and a friend of John Leeming and Ronald Gow. In the 1920s and 30s he built small planes and racing cars in his parents's coach house on Langham Road, and later at Ashley Heath. About 1935 he built a Flying Flea from a French kit which he and scouts paraded around Hale and Altrincham with its engine running as part of the VE Day celebrations.

Harry, who had a reputation for eccentricity, was active in the scouting movement all of his life and was nearly always to be seen in shorts and a flying helmet, and after he retired from the scouts, in a kilt. During the war he was scoutmaster at Altrincham Preparatory School and assistant scoutmaster with the 3rd Altrincham Scouts at Altrincham Grammar School. It is said that he once lost his false teeth in the snow and had the scouts searching for them. He told one tale of flying so low that his wheels touched a hedge but fortunately the tail touched telephone wires and brought him level again. He raced at Brooklands, took part in hill climbs and introduced the roll bar to racing cars. His sports car, an HDK Special based on a 1929 Alvis open-top sports car, had distinguishing leather straps around the long home-built aluminium bonnet and was often to be seen around Bowdon and Hale. In response to a competition with a £5,000 prize, he attempted to build a pedal-powered autogyro. He also built high quality HDK trailers and assisted scouts to build very professional soapboxes with gears and cable brakes for the Northern Soapbox Derby at Southport. He lived at Bowborough, Vicarage Lane, Bowdon, which always had a flag flying outside and the cellars were fitted out to accommodate scouts visiting from other countries. Harry died in 1966.

Because of its natural beauty the area attracted men interested in the natural sciences. **Leopold (Leo) Hartley Grindon** was an amateur Victorian scientist with particular interest in botany and ornithology. Although he never lived in Hale, he spent much time here and his writings about the area drew people from Manchester and around to explore and enjoy the natural beauty of the surroundings. He was the son of a Bristol solicitor and city coroner, and contributed to Bristol naturalists' activities. In 1838 aged 20 he moved to Manchester where he worked as a clerk and by 1840 was a leading contributor to *Flora Mancuniensis*. He collected plant specimens, now housed in the Manchester Museum, and by 1852 he was lecturing at the medical school where he was well respected for his botanical knowledge. Among his many books was *Manchester Flora* in which he described Cotterill Clough as an outstanding spot for botanists. By then the railway had reached Altrincham enabling Manchester people to visit for days out. In 1860 Grindon formed the Manchester Field Naturalists' Society and the Bollin valley in Hale became one of their favourite haunts. In 1882 he published *Country Rambles* describing one of his favourite walks from Hale Station into the Bollin valley at Bankhall Lane. This followed an ancient track running between Peel Causeway Farm, Ollerbarrow Farm, Barrow Farm and Rossmill Farm to Sunbank Wood and Cotterill Clough, most of which can still be walked today. The walk proved a huge success and many Manchester people followed the route. He published several more scholarly books up to 1892 and died in 1904 aged 86.

Another local natural scientist, **Thomas Alfred Coward** was born in Bowdon in 1867. His family lived at 8 Higher Downs, Bowdon between 1871 and 1887. Thomas was educated at Owen's College⁸⁵ and in 1901 was an agent/merchant in his father's calico bleaching and finishing firm. Following early retirement in the early 1900s, he became an internationally recognised ornithologist writing extensively on nature, local history and Cheshire. His first publication in 1900 was *The Birds of Cheshire* when he was living at Tryfan, Warwick Road, Hale and he went on to write a further nine books. During World War I he was Acting Keeper of Manchester Museum and was chairman and later president of the Altrincham and District Natural History and Literary Society. He was also an amateur astronomer with his own telescope. A Blue Plaque marks his house at Brentwood Villa, Grange Road, Bowdon, where he lived from about 1911 until his death. When Thomas died in 1933 subscriptions were raised to buy and preserve Cotterill Clough near Castle Mill, Ringway as a Nature Reserve in his memory. All of his field notes have been preserved and are archived in the Department of Zoology at Oxford.

Robert Jackson was born in Knutsford in 1915 and became a zoologist. He set up his first business at Ashley breeding and selling tropical fish and as the business expanded, he moved first to Timperley and then in 1952 to Holly Bank at the corner of Grove Lane and Delahays Road, Hale. By this time Robert was breeding tropical fish and importing animals for zoos throughout the

⁸⁵ Now Manchester University.

British Isles. The outbuildings and grounds of Holly Bank were adapted with outdoor pools for coldwater fish and greenhouses for breeding tropical fish, and neighbours soon became accustomed to the chirping of frogs and the occasional escaped lizard. A second business in zoological exhibitions was also based at Holly Bank, forming the foundation for the fulfilment of his lifelong ambition, to own and run a zoo. In 1962 this dream became reality when he moved with his wife and three sons to Colwyn Bay, North Wales where he founded the Welsh Mountain Zoo. He was killed by a falling tree in May 1969 while fishing in the River Elwy in Denbighshire. The family continued to run the zoo and its long-term future was ensured in 1983 when ownership passed to the Zoological Society of Wales. Robert's three sons Tony, Chris and Nick continued as directors of the zoo and Mrs Margaret Jackson as president of the society.

Academic pharmacologist **Professor Sir John Henry Gaddum** was born in Hale on 31st March 1900, the eldest of six children of Henry Gaddum, a silk merchant. John was educated at Langham Lea, Stamford Road, Bowdon where John Ireland, the composer and Ronald Gow, the dramatist were also taught. John went to Rugby School and Trinity College, Cambridge where he read medicine. In 1925 he researched for the Wellcome Research Laboratories, writing his first paper on the quantitative aspects of drug antagonism. From 1927 to 1933 he worked for Sir Henry Dale at the National Institute for Medical Research in Hampstead and held professorships at Cairo University, University College London and the College of the Pharmaceutical Society, London. During the war John worked at the Chemical Defence Research Station, Porton Down and later became a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army. In 1942 he was appointed Professor of Materia Medica at the University of Edinburgh and built up an outstanding research department. In 1958 he became the Director of the Institute of Animal Physiology at the Babraham Institute, Cambridge. He became a Fellow of the Royal Society, and in 1964 was knighted and awarded an honorary LLD at Edinburgh. John died in 1965. The British Pharmacological Society commemorates his services to pharmacology with a medal and a prize awarded for important contributions in this field.

While not a Hale man, the industrialist and philanthropist **Francis William Crossley** was much involved in the area and was responsible for many local charitable initiatives. He was born in Northern Ireland in 1840 of a Protestant Huguenot family, trained as an engineer and came to England in the mid-1860s with his family including his younger brother, William John. In 1867 they bought a business in Great Marlborough Street, Manchester and set up as Crossley Brothers making machinery for producing India rubber and flax. In the late 1870s they secured the rights to sell the Otto-Langden gas engine and by 1881 were employing about 300 men. They later produced their own engine designs, leading to the establishment of Crossley Motors in 1920 to manufacture buses. Initially the two brothers lodged at 24 Stamford Road (1 Bell Place), Bowdon with builder Martin Stone. Francis married Emily at St. Margaret's Church in 1871 and they set up home on The Firs, Bowdon and had four children.

By 1878 Francis and Emily had moved to Fairlie on Catherine Road, off The Firs, now an annex to Altrincham Grammar School for Girls. They attended nearby Bowdon Downs Church and became teetotal, donating profits from sales of Crossley engines for breweries to charity. Later they left Altrincham to live at Star Hall, Ancoats, a hostel later taken over by the Salvation Army.

The Crossleys were great philanthropists and their local work included funding two orphanages in Hale, donating generously to St. Anne's Home, Altrincham, the Methodist Dome Chapel and the Salvation Army. When they retired, it was to concentrate on missionary work. Francis died in 1897 and was buried in Philips Park Cemetery, Manchester. The following year Emily moved to a cottage at 38 Henry Street, now Oak Road, Hale and may have contributed to the funding of Oak Road Methodist Church. William was Altrincham's first Liberal MP, was knighted in 1909 and died in 1911.

Hale has had its share of historians. A key figure was **Alfred Tarbolton** who was elected the first chairman of Hale Urban District Council in 1900 and led local government in the area for many years. He was responsible for initiating and carrying through many important decisions, not least

giving Hale its name. He took a keen interest in local history, was an exceptional researcher and did much to preserve the history of Peel Causeway and Hale. He produced several books and lectured on the subject. When he died in 1934 he had drafted a comprehensive book on the history of Hale, a considerable resource for this book.

Alfred was born in Chorlton-on-Medlock in 1861. He was articled as a solicitor in 1878, admitted in 1883 and became a partner in the Manchester firm of Brett, Hamilton and Tarbolton. He was a JP for 30 years and President of the Manchester Law Society for 33 years. He became Commissioner of Income Tax in the Altrincham District. In 1883 he married Hannah Elizabeth Jones, also a solicitor, and had a daughter Lilius Una and in 1885 they moved to Hale, initially to The Lodge, 247 Ashley Road, Hale, then to Elmhurst, 24 South Downs Road, Ashley Heath from 1898 to 1903. In 1903 he leased a building plot from the Stamford Estate and built Athelney, South Downs Road, Bowdon, a fine Arts & Crafts house. The family moved to Altrincham in 1911 and in 1929 were at The Manor House, Woodlands Road, now the site of Altrincham Methodist Church.

The Works of Alfred Tarbolton

A Handy Book for Hale (published 1900 on the occasion of the formation of the Urban District Council); *Local Government in Hale, an Historical Review* (a lecture given to Hale Ratepayers' Association in December 1907, published in four instalments in the *Altrincham, Bowdon & Hale Guardian* in the same month), and later published by the council; *Chapters for Hale Fellows* (a series of articles on old Hale in the form of a walk round the township; published in the *Altrincham, Bowdon & Hale Guardian* from Jan. 4th to Oct. 10th, 1908, renamed *Records of the Township of Hale*); *Hale in Olden Times* (A lecture with lantern slides given to St. Peter's Church Literary Society and reported in the *Altrincham, Bowdon & Hale Guardian* in February 1912). The printed cuttings of the above three items were put together in a beautifully bound volume, with many maps, plans, portraits and sketches, and presented by Tarbolton to the Urban District Council in 1921. The general title of the volume is *Records of Hale*. Much of it is now primary source material, because the diaries, estate plans and pedigrees on which it was based cannot all be traced. Other publications included *Ringway Chapel before the Disruption 1551-1721* (1923); *The Renaissance of Hale* (a lecture on the formation of the Urban District Council, given on its 25th anniversary, 1925); and *The Story of Peel Causeway* (1929).

Tarbolton's notes for the *Records of Hale* and a comprehensive *History of Hale* which he began but did not complete, were among documents found in the Council Offices and contain much additional information not used in his printed papers.

Robert Norman Dore published several Cheshire history books and lectured. Originally from Cardiff, he graduated from Oxford in 1929 and after serving with the RAF during the war, he became Senior History Master at Altrincham Boys' Grammar School until his retirement in 1969. He became a well-known authority on the Civil War in Cheshire and was at various times secretary and president of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society. In the 1950s and 1960s he lectured in the extra-mural departments of Manchester and Liverpool Universities and to WEA groups. He was a fellow of the Royal Historical Society and founder-president of the Altrincham History Society. He broad-casted on the radio on the Civil War in the Manchester area and was awarded an honorary MA by Manchester University for his local history work.

His books included *A History of Altrincham Grammar School for Boys*; *The Great Civil War in the Manchester Area*; *The Civil Wars in Cheshire*; *A History of Hale, Cheshire*; and *Cheshire* in the Batsford series on Northern Counties. His most extensive work was editing two volumes of the letters of Sir William Brereton, the 17th century parliamentary general of Handforth Hall. The letters cover a year of the siege of Chester 1645-46 and contain copies of over 1200 letters, accounts, minutes and lists in shorthand and cipher. Norman spent over 30 years on the work which was published in 1984 and 1990. With Alfred Tarbolton, he was responsible for depositing the Hale UDC Records at Chester Record Office. He was a member of Ashley Cricket Club and always retained his enthusiasm for sport. He was still researching and lecturing when he died in 1997 aged 90.

An early historian of the area, **Samuel Hibbert-Ware**, retired to Hale Barns in 1842 and did much to publicise the existence of Hale by his books and writing on education. His father, Titus, was a wealthy Manchester linen merchant but Samuel's interest lay in literary, scientific and historical matters. He studied medicine at Edinburgh University but his inherited wealth enabled him to devote his life to writing and he joined Sir Walter Scott's circle. His works on the history of the Manchester area became standard references and included memorials of the 1715 rebellion, histories of the Collegiate Church, Chetham's Hospital and Manchester Grammar School, and various books and papers on history and geology. Some were written in Hale Barns and about this time he changed his name to include Ware, his wife's maiden name.

Sarah Ware was the daughter of Robert Ware, a Dublin soldier who had settled in Manchester and became paymaster to the Lancashire Militia. He bought the small estate of Partington's Farm in Hale Barns which he left to his daughter and the Hibbert-Wares built The Ivies, now the parish vicarage, from the outbuildings. Their son **Titus Hibbert-Ware** who lived in Stamford Road, Bowdon was a barrister in Manchester and married Mary Stewart, a novelist. Archived papers of these and other Hibbert-Wares are in John Rylands Library, Manchester.

Our knowledge of properties around Hale owes a great deal to **John Owen** who was born in Bolton in 1815 and sadly died in the Stockport Workhouse in 1902. While living at Lower Buttery House from 1874 to 1876 he sketched and made historical notes on many Hale buildings. Owen had a great interest in vernacular architecture and sketched hundreds of old buildings around Manchester, many now demolished. The ones in Hale include: the barn at Bank Hall; Bentley Hall; Carr Farm; Davenport Green; Higher and Lower Buttery House Farm Davenport Green; Easter Lane Farm; Hale Hall; Hale Low; Hodson's Farm; Hope Cottages; Ollerbarrow Farm; Old Farm; Old House Wellgreen; Park House; Roaring Gate Farm; Whitehead's Cottage; and Yew Tree Farm.

Owen spent more than 50 years collecting historical material around the north-west, including North Wales and the Isle of Man. A successful corn dealer he devoted his spare time and retirement to antiquarian pursuits copying gravestones and memorial inscriptions which earned him the nickname of 'Old Mortality'. He also copied parish registers, sale notices and every kind of document with a bearing on the history of Manchester. His drawings are often the only record that some buildings ever existed. His many newspaper articles and the eighty-odd volumes of his notes, sketches and cuttings, a great source of information, were purchased in 1899 by

Manchester Free Library and are now held in Manchester Central Reference Library. Many of his sketches are now digitised.

Canon Maurice Hill Ridgway was curate of St. Peter's, Hale from 1944 to 1949 where he was known for visiting each family in the parish at least once a year. He became vicar of St. Mary's, Bowdon from 1962 to 1983 and an honorary canon of Chester in 1966. He was born in 1918 at Stockport where his father was vicar of St. George's Church and had strong links with Bowdon. There are Ridgway gravestones in Bowdon Church dating back to the mid-18th century. A founder member of the Bowdon History Society, the canon continued to write scholarly articles for the society and learned journals after retiring to Oswestry in Shropshire. An expert on Cheshire silver and Chester hallmarks, he wrote three volumes of *Chester Silver* and co-authored *Chester Gold & Silver Marks*. He was also an authority on medieval rood screens and was awarded the Fellowship of the Society of Antiquaries for his work in this field. He was joint editor of the local history journal *The Cheshire Sheaf* for several years. There is a Ridgway Gallery at the Grosvenor Museum with his portrait on display. His retirement years were spent at Rhydygroesau near Oswestry where he spent time helping to restore and document the ancient Pennant Melangell Church. He died in December 2002 at Ely in Cambridgeshire.

A well-known writer of popular fiction in the 1940s and 1950s, **Richard Lakin Mason** was born at Dalkieth, 14 Bower Road, Hale in 1919. Richard wrote two early books under the name Richard Lakin and then achieved fame in his 1947 book *The Wind Cannot Read*, later made into a film with Dirk Bogarde. His most famous book however was *The World of Suzie Wong*, made into a play in the 1950s and a film starring William Holden, Nancy Kwan, Sylvia Syms and Michael Wilding. He retired in the 1950s, spent most of his time in Rome and died in 1997.

John Macnamara was born in Leeds in 1844 and trained as an architect and surveyor, earning his living by investing in property and acting as agent for absentee landlords. In 1901 he was living and working from 35/37 Hale Road and in his later years lived at The Hermitage, 13 Bancroft Road, then part of the Hale Low Farm estate. He taught in the Altrincham Technical School next to the old Free Library in Lower George Street. John worked with John Henderson Broun to design and build Mossburn Buildings, which included the former Post Office, in Stamford New Road, Altrincham.

A man of great vigour and considerable ability, he had a reputation for standing up for the less fortunate. He was elected to Hale Urban District Council in 1902, opposing Alfred Tarbolton and making a case for the poorer people in Hale. He criticised the right-wing council, planned affordable housing, sports grounds and allotments, and supported amalgamation with Altrincham to allow better-shared facilities. He successfully stood for Altrincham Council in 1908, defeating the Labour candidate, but came back to Hale Council in 1911 for a couple of years. A public benefactor, he gave £250 and land from his estate for the building of St. David's Mission Church (later the Islamic Cultural Centre) on Grove Lane and also land and equipment for Hermitage Bowling Club on Hale Road. He was the second president of the Altrincham and District Natural History and Literary Society. He died in 1925.

John Henderson Broun, a retired cotton spinner, was born in Edinburgh in 1829. He developed Station Buildings (now Stamford House), the first office block in Altrincham and also created the terraces in Willowtree Road, Altrincham. John Broun (or Brown) was born in Stockbridge near Edinburgh in 1829, parents James, a solicitor, and Isobel, neé Anderson. He had brothers James, David, George and Henry and by 1841 James had come to England, with perhaps John following in his footsteps. In 1871 John was in Huddersfield as a cotton spinner employing 130 hands and in 1881 was living in Chorlton-on-Medlock working as a master doubler in cotton.

In the early 1891 Broun was living at 5 Queens Road, Hale and bought tithe fields Middle and Further Uttley Croft, Near Jenkins Croft, and Middle and Further Meadow and created Willowtree Road, Altrincham. He developed the terraces of large high-quality houses on the east side of

Willowtree Road in the late 1890s using Ruabon brick and terracotta facings, later used again in Stamford New Road. In 1899 he built the Mossburn Buildings block in Stamford New Road, Altrincham employing local architect John Macnamara following national tenders. In 1905 he built Station Buildings (now Stamford House), Stamford New Road, the first office block in Altrincham.

In 1896 he built his own house, The Bungalow, later Riverside, on a hill overlooking the River Bollin on Ashley Mill Lane North. It was single-storey, of Accrington brick, with stone dressings, a parapet wall, and Westmoreland green slates and was approached by a long drive, paved with stone setts which are still in place. The ornate windows had granite mullions with carved capitals. Internal walls were oak-panelled with oak-coffered ceilings and parquet floors. It was so distinctive locals gave Mr Broun the nickname of 'Bungalow Broun'. He owned the land between Willowtree Road and Ashley Road, still fields in the 1920s, and donated a strip of land to widen Ashley Road from Hale Road to the traffic lights at the bottom of Stamford Road, Bowdon. He died in 1910 and left his estate to his brother James' children. James' daughter Anne came to live in The Bungalow and died there in 1925.



Hale Cricket Team First IX 1912

Top row, left to right: H Faulkner (umpire), H Hamnett, A Balmforth (scorer), ET Nelson, J Farrow, HE Barwell, JH Leech, C Yates, J Harrington (umpire). Bottom row: GE Smith, LO Crosby, RH Wolff, RH Robinson, Q Shrewsbury (AAIA).

Two well-known barristers from different generations made their homes in Hale. **Edward Theophilus Nelson** was born in 1874 in Georgetown, British Guiana (now Guyana) where his father, Philip, was a builder. Edward was called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1904, probably the first West Indian to be called to the English Bar. He was educated at St. Philip's School, Demerara and read law at St. John's College Oxford. In 1900, his second year, he was elected secretary and later treasurer of Oxford Union.



*The opening ceremony of Hale Conservative Club,
barrister Edward Nelson on the right (AAIA).*

He set up a legal practice at 78 King Street, Manchester and was a successful defence barrister in a number of high-profile cases. One of these was the defence of 15 Liverpool men charged with riotous assembly and assault in the aftermath of the race riots in Liverpool in the summer of 1919. Seven hundred black men and their families had been removed from their homes. Edward was well known in legal circles in Lancashire and Cheshire and frequently appeared in cases at the Assize Courts as well as in Petty Sessions and County Courts. In March 1913 he won Hale UDC's West Ward for the Conservatives and remained a councillor until his death. Nelson was chairman of Hale Council several times and a prominent figure in the public life of Hale. He lived at Beech Holme, Stamford Road, Bowdon in 1906, then 2 Laurel Bank, Stamford Road in 1907, then Cecil House (now 47/49) Cecil Road, Hale in 1909 until the end of his life.

He was the first chairman of the Cheshire Urban District Councils' Association, a member of the District Councils' Association of Great Britain and a recognised authority on the legal aspects of local government. A small, quiet and modest man, he enjoyed sport, particularly cricket and was a member of Hale Cricket Club and Bowdon Cricket Club. He died in 1940 and was buried in Altrincham Cemetery, Hale, where his daughter May was also buried.

George Carman QC became the only barrister with a household name in the UK following a series of high-profile trials, earning him the titles of Great Defender and King of Libel. Celebrity names he defended in the 1970s included George Best, Jeremy Thorpe, Arthur Scargill, Peter Adamson, Ken Dodd, Elton John, the Hamiltons, the Maxwells, Richard Branson, Tom Cruise and Mohamed Al-Fayed. Carman was born in Blackpool in 1929 and, following National Service, read law at Balliol College, Oxford. He joined Lincoln's Inn and in 1953 was awarded a certificate of honour in the Bar finals. While living in Woburn Drive, Hale and later at 124 Park Road, Hale, George had his first high-profile cases working for Manchester United. In 1971 he was earning £20,000 a year. He moved to Didsbury, then Altrincham and retired to Wimbledon in 2000, dying a year later.

Photographic journalist **George Rodger**, was born in 1908 at 145 Hale Road, Hale, and was educated at Miss Petremant's School, now Hale Prep, and St. Bedes in Cumbria. At 17 he joined the Merchant Navy, and began his interest in photography. He worked for the BBC and then joined the Black Star Photo Agency. His wartime Blitz pictures were published in *Picture Post* and

he travelled in Africa and Burma for *Life* magazine. He covered the war in Europe including Belsen revelations and the surrender of Germany. In 1947 he was one of the four founder members of Magnum, a prestigious international photojournalism agency, with Robert Capa, Henri Cartier-Bresson and David Seymour. George published a number of books on Africa and one about the Blitz in London. He travelled 7,000 miles in Africa in 1940 and another 20,000 in 1948 photographing tribal societies. He died in 1995 in Kent and a blue plaque marks his childhood home on Hale Road.

A blue plaque also marks the house on Hale Road where **Paul Young**, a pop star of the 1960s, lived. Paul was born in Wythenshawe in 1947. He took an early interest in music and by the age of five was singing in the local church choir. While still at High School in 1962 he formed his first band 'Johnny Dark & the Midnights' and in 1964 he became lead singer of the prominent 60s Manchester Beat band 'The Toggery Five', which took its name from a hip menswear shop in Stockport. After joining a succession of notable Manchester bands, Paul went on to form 'Sad Café' in 1976. Their first single 'Every Day Hurts' reached number three in the charts followed by two more top twenty singles from their 'Facades' album. In 1985 Paul co-founded the internationally renowned 'Mike & The Mechanics' with Genesis guitarist Mike Rutherford and ex-Ace Squeeze singer, Paul Carrack. Paul's final work as a vocalist was to join the all star line up of the 'SAS Band', formed by Spike Edney, the fifth member of one of the largest ever super group 'Queen'. Paul died suddenly from a heart attack in 2000 at his home at 63 Hale Road, Hale where he lived with his wife Patricia and son Jason who have erected a blue plaque in his memory.

Douglas Hartley, a champion cyclist, was the well-known owner of a large cycle shop in Hale. He was born in 1921 in Manchester and in the late 1930s he joined the West Manchester Cyclists' Touring Club and then the Dukinfield Cycling Club. During the war he served with the RAF and later the police and was apparently possessed of an extraordinary physique. In 1942 he was the best all-round racing cyclist in Britain based on timed distance and endurance trials. After the war he worked for Raleigh in Manchester and in 1949 took over a cycle shop at 100 Ashley Road, Hale which had been opened in 1897 by Frank Jackson. Hartley later extended the premises to include 102 and 104 Ashley Road. Doug and his wife Margaret lived over the shop initially, later at 79 Ashley Road and finally at Mere where the house backed on to the golf club. Roy Goodwin joined him in 1950 and became his manager until the shop was sold in 1996 after Doug's death when a list of his world records was displayed in the shop window. Doug was a friend of racing cyclist Reg Harris who built cycles after retiring from racing and Doug bought many from him in the 1950s and 60s as well as building his own. In 2000 local developers Kennedy rebuilt numbers 100 to 104 Ashley Road which included the shop as apartments in simulated Flemish Bond in 2000.



Jackson's Cycle Shop later Doug Hartley's (circa 1920, AAIA).

One of several local artists was **George Allen**, who was born in 1913 and lived much of his life in Leigh Road, Hale. He studied at the Warrington School of Art and joined a textile design studio in Manchester. After service in the armed forces he became a driving instructor but spend much time painting in watercolour. In the last 20 years of his life he developed into a full-time professional artist, concentrating on landscapes and seascapes but also producing several naïve cartoon paintings of Altrincham, including Goose Green and Old Market Place.

Basil Morrison was an auctioneer and estate agent in the family firm of David Morrison & Sons but was best known for his drawings of local buildings and street scenes. Basil was born in 1915, the fourth generation of the family to live in the Altrincham area. He spent an active life with his brother Phillip in the family business established in 1875 but also found time to develop his grandfather's interest in old Altrincham and like his grandfather gave illustrated lectures on local history. Nearing retirement he found time to incorporate some of his drawings and knowledge of Altrincham in his 1980 book *Looking Back at Altrincham*. His father Stanley founded the Altrincham Rotary Club in 1929 of which Basil was president in 1957. Basil was also a a senior figure in the Chamber of Commerce. Basil's Christmas cards showing a carefully-chosen local building were always eagerly awaited. His final artwork was for Hill's Bakery in Hale to celebrate their 2012 centenary. Basil passed away on 7 June 2012 aged 96.

These and other men and women of Hale have added to the eclectic mix of Hale's residents.

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26. TODAY AND TOMORROW

In the 1930s house building in Hale Barns expanded up High Elm Road towards the airport and along Chapel Lane to Warburton Green, halted by the war and restarted in the late 1940s. Like the rest of the country, the area went through a period of massive change in the 1960s and this change continues today. In retrospect not all was for the best. The shopping square in Hale Barns built in the late 1960s was demolished and rebuilt in 2015. In Hale village the Skating Rink, later the Drill Hall, was replaced in the early 1970s with a hotel, several storeys high, a supermarket and other shops, all now in need of refurbishment. Hale has its own library currently built in true, flat-roofed 60s style in 1966, and at present under threat as Trafford Council imposes cuts in the economic downturn.

The M56 improved links with Manchester and the airport and increased the importance of Hale and Hale Barns as commuter-land. House prices rocketed and house-building increased exponentially. In Hale the Well Green estates went up in the 1950s and 1960s and large private estates were built in Hale Barns making it one of the country's most expensive areas to buy a house. Many of these houses are being dramatically updated to suit modern living with the installation, for example, of rooms for large-screen entertainment. The sites are often so valuable that it is not unusual to see large houses demolished and new ones built.

In 1968 the Bollin Valley Country Park was established to preserve the natural environment and create a walking path along the River Bollin. However, vast tracts of farmland and the Bollin valley disappeared under Runway 2 and various buildings linked to the airport such as hotels, and for freight and offices are lining the local lanes causing them to lose their rural appearance. Plans have been mooted for many years about the development of Davenport Green as a business park and there are plans for a high-speed rail link with London to traverse the edge of Hale Barns.

The area is famous for high quality education and demand for places in the schools has led to massive building work in recent years. Buildings for Altrincham Grammar School for Boys now line almost the whole length of Marlborough Road. Altrincham Grammar School for Girls has a sixth form centre on the Devisdale. Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic College and Altrincham College of Arts have newly-built sixth forms. Several local primary schools have new buildings.

Altrincham town centre has suffered from competition from the Trafford Centre and many shops left empty. There is currently some regeneration led by the new transport interchange and a new hospital. There are plans to redevelop The Stamford Quarter which includes the market and the old hospital building is to be redeveloped with a new library.

Broadheath, once the site of massive engineering works is now a retail park, and bordering it is a large private housing estate, Stamford Brook, built on land once part of the ancient Dunham estate and sold by the National Trust to ensure the future of Dunham House and the estate.

Hale village has become a restaurant destination and in Hale Barns a new shopping centre was opened in 2015. It remains a very pleasant place to live and the future beckons.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Definition of terms, names & local words

Several thousand words are peculiar to the Cheshire area because the local dialect derived from the north-western rather than south-eastern variation of Middle English. Middle English developed from Old English (OE) by incorporating many Norman French words. Old English derived from the languages of the Jutes, Saxons, Angles, and Frisians. It incorporated Latin and some Celtic words such as *ass*, a donkey in Old English, and *causie* Welsh for a causeway, as in the old name for Hale village, *Pele Causey*. However, there was also a strong Scandinavian influence in the Hale area, with words borrowed from Old Norse such as *Birkin* as well as Irish, French and Dutch.

The Northern European languages have left their mark on English generally, as well as on the Cheshire dialect. The use of these languages is particularly strong in buildings: wall is from OE *weall*; roof is from Norse *hrof*; window is from Norse *vind* (wind) plus *auga* (eye); door is from Norse *dyrr*; stair is OE and Old Dutch *steiger* (a ladder).

The following local words are all derived from earlier languages and show the influence of the Saxon and Norse invaders and settlers: asker, barley, bawm, bonk, bong, brew, brow, clemmed, cop, cowl, fettle, flit, freak, gammy, gawp, gawmless, mangle, oo, petty, pike, pikelet, pobs, scotch, shippin, skrike, starved, swang, thrutch, traipse and un. Many of these words are known throughout the north.

In the 19th century and into the 20th century Altringham was pronounced 'Awtringham', missing out the 'l'. Wilmslow is still pronounced 'Wimslow' locally and Rostherne is 'Rostern'.

OE=Old English

Term/Name	Meaning
acre	Old Norse <i>akr</i> , not originally used as a measurement but meaning a cultivated piece of land, sometimes a collection of <i>selions</i> (furrows) indicating enclosure of an open field.
agistment	Feeding ground for cattle.
Alretune	A lost green, possibly on Hasty Lane between Hale Barns and Ringway.
Altringham	OE, <i>the homestead of Aldhere's people</i> ; from <i>inga</i> a group of people and <i>ham</i> a homestead, village or estate. It has been spelled about 15 different ways since 1290AD. The 'ingaham' structure is rare and indicates 7th century or earlier Saxon origin. Aldringham in Suffolk was <i>Alrincham</i> in the Domesday Book and has a similar origin.
asker	A newt; Old Norse and Gaelic <i>ask</i> , a lizard.
Ashley	Ash glade.
barley	To claim a truce, possibly from French <i>parler</i> ; used in playground games.
barrow	OE <i>beorwe</i> , dative of <i>beoru</i> , a grove or wooded hill or swine pasture.
bawm	OE <i>bawm</i> , a tree. To dress up something; to spread a covering of material.
benchmark	An inscription carved into a piece of stone wall for 6-inch and 25-inch Ordnance Survey maps of the 1870s to 1900s. Many of the remaining benchmarks are usually about a foot from the pavement on a solid piece of stone and date from this period. All benchmarks incorporate a vertical arrow with a bar above relating to the height shown on the map. They have often been destroyed by rebuilding or raised footpaths.
bigg	Probably a variation of 'big' as in bigg field, ie an open field.
Birkin	Birch trees river (Norse).
Bochelau	Now Bucklow, one of the Cheshire hundreds in the Domesday Book; Saxon.
Bowdon	Originally <i>Bogedon</i> , the name used in the 11th century means the dwelling on a hill or stronghold from OE <i>bode</i> , a dwelling and <i>don/dun</i> , a plain on a hill; <i>boga</i>

	could also be from OE 'a bend' or 'bow-shaped'.
Bollin	The nearest river to Hale, possibly from OE <i>bol</i> (eel) and <i>hlynn</i> (water) or Celtic <i>llyn</i> (water); or a mutation of Celtic <i>felin</i> or <i>melin</i> , a mill, ie a mill river.
bonc/bonk/ bong	From Old Norse <i>banki</i> , Welsh <i>ponc</i> or <i>bonc</i> , a small hill or river bank; as in Hollow Bonk in Altrincham and The Bongs at Lymm, Warrington, Rostherne, Tabley and Goostree.
bordar	A small farmer or crofter.
bower	Probably from Dutch <i>bouwen</i> , to farm; related to Old Norse <i>byr</i> , a settlement.
brew/brow	OE <i>bru</i> , Old Norse <i>brun</i> , Sanskrit <i>bhrū</i> , an eyebrow; the slope below the projecting edge of a hill; probably related to Welsh <i>bron</i> or <i>fron</i> , the breast (of a hill) and perhaps Irish <i>brú</i> , a bend in a river.
burgage	A plot of land in the borough on which a burgess's house was built. Burgage plots in Altrincham were two by five perches, ie 33 feet wide by 82.5 feet deep; triple, double, half, third and quarter plots could also exist. They date from the 13th century in Altrincham when there were about 120 burgages compared with Knutsford's 38. Burgess property could be sold.
burgess	A tradesman/woman who owned land called a burgage in a borough and had an acre in the town field. The annual rental for the burgage and land in Altrincham was 12d in 1290 and a burgess may have owned more than one burgage.
burh/burgh	A Saxon fortified town, eg Chester.
butt	The raised part of a strip in an open field, sometimes used for archery; the end of a field where the plough turned; an irregular piece of pasture land; probably indicating strips from an open field; next to a boundary.
buttery	From Old French <i>boutellerie</i> where wine and ale was kept in butts (hence butler), later the kitchen.
by	Old Norse, a farm.
bylaw	Town law from Old Danish <i>by</i> , Old Norse <i>byr</i> , an isolated settlement; local government law.
Caley	A colloquial name for the Newtown part of Altrincham, origin unclear.
carucate	From the Latin <i>caruca</i> , a plough; a measure of ploughland used in the Danelaw which included Hale. It can be equated to a hide in Cheshire although it means the area ploughed rather than its value which was recorded in <i>hides</i> .
carr	From Old Norse <i>kjarr</i> , overgrown marshy land containing alder, willow and birch.
catchpole	A person who catches fowl.
causey	A causeway from Old French <i>causie</i> ; still used in northern England, Scotland and Wales.
Celts	Small dark people who settled in Europe from the east. Present in England from 350BC (Iron Age) to the 10th century AD.
ceorl	OE, a churl, freeman, small farmer, hence 'churlish' and a group of fields around Spring Bank called <i>Charlemoor</i> , probably indicating a Saxon village.
chapman	A travelling salesman.
charter	The Royal Charter sealed by Edward I in 1290 allowed Hamon de Massey V to hold a market and fair in Altrincham. It was followed soon after by Hamon's own charter, creating a market borough. Hamon's object was to improve his finances through local taxes. The charter made Altrincham a free borough separate from Dunham (which included Bowdon); created the Court Leet; and included the right to hold a Tuesday market and a fair on the Feast of the Assumption, in 1319 changed to the Feast of St. James, hence Sanjam Fair.
charterer	A freeholder.
Cheshire acre	References to farming in Hale before 1786 used the Cheshire Acre which was twice as big as a modern acre (based on an 8-yard perch instead of the statute 5.5 yards and 2.1 statute acres). Some later documents and census records may still be in Cheshire acres and it is sometimes difficult to tell. Field names in Hale incorporating the word 'acre' refer to Cheshire acres. Measurements on the tithe maps are in statute acres.

clemmed	OE <i>clemmen</i> , to shrink up; hungry, starved.
clough	OE <i>cloh</i> , a small valley or dell; Dutch <i>kloof</i> , a ravine.
cop	OE <i>copp</i> , a hedgebank on top of a hill.
Court Leet	A manorial court held twice a year electing constables, officers and juries to administer law in Altrincham, Bowdon and Hale. It tried petty offences, oversaw the law (constables were active until 1856 when they were replaced by a police force), and dealt with issues around the following: highways and footpaths (surveyors); commons (common lookers); poaching; stray animals (pinders); drunkards; weights & measures; ale quality (ale founders; tasters and conners); bread quality (bread lookers); market trading (market lookers checking on corn, flesh and fish); cattle and swine lookers; water supplies (pump and well lookers); fire prevention (chimney lookers); the poor; scavengers (refuse collectors); leather curing; court bailiffs and the Town Crier. The Court Leet also created the Guild Mercatory to promote free trade. It appointed the mayor until 1937 and the list of mayors of Altrincham from 1452 survives, the first two being Masseys, the last Raymond Littler in 1973. It was also responsible for defining the town boundaries by beating the bounds with willow twigs each year. The ceremony was revived in 1977 and the Court Leet still beats the bounds on the 2 nd Sunday in July following modern boundary markers and the small square red paving stones set in the pavement.
cordwainer	Shoemaker or leather worker, originally from Cordoba in Spain.
covert	Overgrown land used to give cover for game.
cowd	Dutch <i>kond</i> , cold.
crannog	A lake dwelling.
culcheth	A narrow wood from Celtic <i>coed</i> .
Danegeld	A tax raised to buy off Danish invaders or to maintain an army to oppose them.
Danelaw	In 876AD Alfred the Great split England into Wessex/Danelaw, approximately along the line of Watling Street, the present A5 road from London to Chester, and probably on to Manchester along the present A556/A56. Hale was therefore in Danelaw territory, whereas Dunham was not perhaps.
daub	Clay used to infill hazel twigs on a timber-framed building.
Dee	Celtic <i>Deva</i> , goddess.
den	A valley, swine pasture.
Deva	<i>Goddess</i> in Celtic, giving the River Dee.
dob	An extension of land.
Dob Lane	Park Road, Hale.
dole/dale	OE <i>dal</i> , Old Danish <i>deill</i> , Welsh <i>dol</i> , an allotment of land, eg the Devisdale; sometimes indicating an enclosed field.
down/dun	OE and Celtic meaning a hill or hill fort; in Ireland, Scotland and parts of England a fortified house or hill, a fort, eg Maiden (<i>Mais Dun</i>) Castle in Cheshire (Bickerton), Dorset and Durham.
Dunham	The 'homestead on the hill', or 'below the hill'.
East Hale	The Saxon settlement south-west of Hale Barns, between Chapel Lane and Barrow Lane.
Eastod Lane	<i>East'ard Lane</i> , the Wilmslow Road out of Hale Barns.
enfeoff	To grant land.
Etrop Green	Possibly a corruption of Norse <i>athroppe</i> , apple farm or village.
eye	OE, a water meadow, often in a loop of a river.
fettle	OE <i>fetel</i> , Old Norse <i>feddla</i> , good order.
field	OE <i>feld</i> , open country, a piece of arable land; often an indication of an enclosed field.
flat or flatt	Old Norse. a piece of level ground in an open field consisting of parallel strips.
fleet	Old Norse, a stream.
flit	Norse <i>flytja</i> , to carry; to move house.
fold	An animal pen as in Pinfold Brow.

foreigner	A Norman, a large landlord and to all intents a freeman.
frankpledge	An Anglo-Saxon system of tithing households in tens to monitor their own conduct.
freak	OE <i>frecca</i> , a warrior or man.
furlong	OE <i>furh</i> and <i>lang</i> , a 'furrow long'. The length of a ploughed strip in an open field, about 220 yards.
gammy (leg)	Welsh <i>cam</i> or <i>gam</i> , crooked, lame.
gate	Danish <i>gata</i> , an allotment of pasture, a roadway or pathway.
gawmless	Scandinavian, stupid.
gawp	Dutch, to stare stupidly.
gelt	Danegeld; a tax payable to the Danes.
grange	French, an outlying farm, usually associated with a monastery.
green	'Green' often means a small settlement around pasture and arable fields, possibly dating from the early Middle Ages; Hale had about ten greens, some still exist.
grove	OE <i>graf</i> , a copse.
Hale	<i>Hale</i> occurs all over England, the dative singular of the West Saxon word for a nook or shelter - <i>halh</i> or <i>healh</i> - meaning 'at the nook or hiding place'; or from <i>leah</i> , a clearing in a wood. Also Celtic meaning a marshy area growing willows, modern Welsh <i>helyg</i> , 'willows'; also 'flat land by a river'.
ham	OE <i>hamm</i> , an enclosure, hence a house.
hay or hey	OE <i>haeg</i> , an enclosure marked off from the forest by a hedge for inspection, protection or slaughter of beasts such as deer, wild hogs, domesticated pigs, goats, cattle or sheep.
Haugh/ hough	OE <i>haga</i> , an enclosure.
heald	OE <i>healh</i> or <i>healh</i> , or <i>helde</i> , a steeply sloping area; a protective area, as in Heald Moss and Heald (or Yeald) Common, Bowdon; it can also mean the warp in weaving from OE <i>hefeld</i> .
hide	From the OE <i>higid</i> or <i>hyda</i> , meaning 'household,' may represent the value of the ideal land to support one or a group of families. The actual size varied depending on fertility, but is estimated to average 120 statute acres which became the standard after 1066. In the Domesday Book it was used as a unit of tax measurement.
Higher Town	Old Market Place, Altrincham until the about 1860.
hoitytoity	Old Norse <i>hutututu</i> , arrogant or haughty.
Hollow Bonk	The Kingsway area of Altrincham, described as a precipice in the early 19 th century, was a short cut from Higher Town (Old Market Place) down steps to Lower Town (George Street) but not accessible to traffic. Kingsway itself was built in the 1860s when Hollow Bonk was filled in and the terms Lower Town and Higher Town discontinued. Bonk or bong may be from Welsh <i>ponc</i> or <i>bonc</i> , a small hill or bank.
holt	OE, a small wood.
hulme/ holme	From Old Danish <i>hulm</i> and Old Norse <i>holmr</i> , land almost surrounded by water; a water meadow.
hundred	A division of a shire/county from the 10th century. A hundred contained 100 hides.
ingham	Old Norse <i>innam</i> , an enclosed meadow (and a local surname).
intake	Old Norse <i>intak</i> , land enclosed from waste,
journeyman	A qualified craftsman; originally a worker hired on a daily wage (French <i>journée</i>).
land/lawnd/ loon/loont	OE, a unit of land for ploughing or enclosures incorporating the ridges of an open field.
league	The Domesday league is thought to have been about three miles.
leah/ley/lay	OE, a clearing in a wood (and a local surname).
Long Lane	Hale Road.

low	OE <i>hlaew</i> , a slope, hill or mound, as in Hale Low; sometimes describing a grave mound.
Lower Town	George Street and Goose Green areas until the mid-19 th century.
Mamucium	Manchester.
mangle	Dutch <i>mangel</i> , clothes wringer.
marl	Natural silt and limey clay mixture used for fertilising sandy or peaty ground.
mere	OE <i>maer</i> , a boundary; hence mere stones, boundary stones; an inland sea.
Mersey	Boundary river.
messuage	A dwelling house, its outbuildings and land, Old French <i>mesnage</i> .
moiety	Half, Latin <i>medietas</i> .
Money Ash	OE <i>manig</i> , many ash trees.
mor/moor	OE <i>mor</i> , a barren, wet wasteland.
moss	OE <i>mos</i> , a bog.
oo/hoo	OE <i>heo</i> , she or wife, recently used in Buckley, Flintshire.
neatherd	A cow herder for the local lord.
Neolithic	New Stone Age.
Nunnery Lane	Bankhall Lane.
oller/ouler	OE/Norse <i>oler</i> or <i>alor</i> , alder trees, growing only in marshes, often known as the clog-wood tree because it was used to make clog soles; also used to make Iron Age wheels. Ollerbarrow Farm, Hale indicates a very marshy area.
Ollerbarrow	OE <i>oler</i> or <i>alor</i> , alder tree plus OE <i>bearwe</i> , dative of <i>bearu</i> ; a grove or wooded hill or swine pasture.
open field	From Saxon times villagers shared common land which they divided into flats, furlongs or shoots, which themselves were divided into selions, loonts or lands which were strips of land allocated to families.
palatine	Cheshire was made a palatine by the Normans whose earl exercised sovereign power over the county.
pannage	A charge for allowing pigs to forage for acorns in the woods.
pantry	From Old French <i>paneterie</i> , a bread store.
parker	A deer park keeper.
Peel Causeway	Peel is from Latin <i>palus</i> , OE <i>pal</i> , a stake, plus Latin <i>calx</i> or <i>cealc</i> , pebbles, chalk or limestone, plus 'way'. Perhaps a brushwood or staked causeway.
petty	French <i>petit</i> , small; the little house, the privy.
Pie Powder	The Court of Pie Powder administering instant justice at markets and fairs across England. A corruption of Old French <i>Pieds Poudreux</i> meaning 'dusty feet' describing itinerant traders.
pike	OE <i>pic</i> , a pointed hill, or the gable end of a house.
pikelet	Welsh <i>bara pyglyd</i> , dusky bread; a crumpet.
Pinfold Brow	Lloyd Street, Altrincham where stray animals were penned on a hill.
pingot	A collection of strips into a narrow field.
platt	OE and German, a plot of low land; in Cheshire a wooden footbridge; sometimes an indication of an enclosed field.
pobs/papes/pobbies	Latin <i>pabulum</i> , baby food; bread and milk.
raddle	Another name for wattle, the hazel or willow twigs used to form the base for clay daub on a timber building.
radman	A freeman who was an advisor.
ridding	OE <i>rydding</i> , a clearing in a wood.
rigg	The ridge left between ploughed furrows, from Old Norse <i>hryggr</i> ; sometimes indicating an enclosed field.
Ringway	A fenced hunting park; other spellings include Ringeye, Ringhey Park, Ringehay; probably 'ring hey', a circular hedged enclosure; 'hey' OE <i>haeg</i> , a hedged enclosure. Spelled 13 different ways since 1281.
Ross (Mill)	Ross is from Old Norse <i>hross</i> , a horse possibly.

sal	Willow; Sale means 'at the willow' in OE.
Sanjam Fair	Corruption of St. James' Fair originally held for three days in Altrincham around the Feast of The Assumption (15 August). Created by the 1290 Charter but changed in 1319 to the Feast of St. James (25 July). Sanjam Fair was opened by a procession of the Court Leet and held until 1895.
scutch grass	Old French <i>escoucher</i> , couch grass.
seisin	Freehold possession of land, Old French <i>seisir</i> .
selion	Old French <i>sillon</i> , a furrow, an unfenced strip of land; sometimes indicating an enclosed field; a fraction of a furlong or acre when ploughing the arable fields of the open field system. The oxen ploughed the land in a circular fashion producing a central ridge.
serf	A tenant not free to travel or marry without his lord's permission; largely vanished after the 1348/9 Black Death because of labour supply and demand.
shaw/shay	OE <i>sceaga</i> , a small wood or coppice, as in Wythenshawe and Shay Lane.
shippon, shippen	OE <i>scypen</i> , a sheep pen; it came to mean a cowshed in the north.
shire	OE <i>scire</i> , from <i>sciran</i> , to divide; a division of land.
Shotts/shoots	A group of open field strips.
Shutt/shott	A projecting piece of land from OE <i>Sceat</i> .
sinder	'Separate land' as in Sinderland, Broadheath; also see Sunderland.
skrike	Swedish <i>skrika</i> , to cry.
slutch	Cheshire dialect for mud, sludge; as in Slutch or Slutchy Lane: Victoria Road.
socager	Norman, a small landlord.
STAG	South Trafford Archaeological Group.
starved	OE <i>steorfan</i> , to die a lingering death; dying of cold (rather than hunger).
stile	OE and Old Dutch <i>steiger</i> , a ladder; an opening in a hedge, related to 'stair'.
street	OE <i>straet</i> , a paved way, often indicating a Roman road, as in Watling Street and Stretford.
Styal	Probably 'East Hale'.
Sugar Lane	Now Ridgeway Road, Timperley, probably named after the Saxon lord Sug.
Sunderland	OE, land asunder, separate, apart, remote, private, shared land.
swang	Old Norse <i>swangi</i> , a low place; a swamp.
tenterframe	A wooden framework for stretching cloth with hooks.
termor	A tenant or lessee paying rent without any service involved.
Thorley	Possibly Norse. Thor's Wood, or thorn tree wood as in Thorley Moor Road, Thorley Lane; a local surname.
thorp	Norse, an outlying farm (and a local surname).
thrutch	OE <i>thryccan</i> to squeeze; as in 'thrutch up, make room for me'.
tithe	OE <i>teogoth</i> . One-tenth (sometimes one eleventh) part of produce as a local tax, eg for the church; the tithe could be a crop, pigs, eggs etc; replaced in the 1830s Tithe Apportionments by a rent charge based on area of land occupied fixed to the price of corn. The term <i>tithe</i> was also used when grouping ten families together in <i>frankpledge</i> .
toft	Old Danish, a homestead, farm, building site or curtilage (and a local name).
tom/town	An open field near to the town centre.
tontine	From Lorenzo Tonti, an 18 th century Italian banker. A club whose members contributed equally to a prize awarded to the surviving participant.
townfield	OE <i>tun</i> , farm plus <i>feld</i> , field, the open cultivated field of the local community.
traipse	Old French <i>trepasser</i> , to pass over; to walk with a weary step.
tun	A tenant or large farmer, regarded as a settlement and hence township.
un	Welsh and French <i>un</i> , one.
uttley or utley	An outlying field or wood (and a local surname).
vestry	Parishioners forming the governing body of the church and its parish. It also

	looked after the poor. To be eligible, parishioners had to be financial contributors to the church.
villein	Norman French <i>vill</i> , equivalent to the Saxon <i>tun</i> , meaning a tenant, usually a large farmer; later meaning a partially free peasant.
Watling Street	The Roman road from London to Chester; also used locally for the Roman road from Chester to Manchester.
wattle	Hazel branches and twigs used to form the base for clay daub on a timber building.
weard	OE meaning successor.
yeoman	A small farmer owning a farm.

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Appendix 2. Population and acreage of Hale

(a) Hale early population

<i>Date</i>	<i>Population estimate</i>	<i>Material on which estimate is based</i>
1086	50-100	3 villeins and 1 radman. Domesday Book gives Hale about 6 square miles.
1402	200 plus	14 charterers (Dunham Massey rental of 1402).
1563	250-400	420 households (Diocese of Chester return to the Privy Council for Bowdon parish).
1664	500-550	Hearth Tax: 124 dwelling houses; one hearth = 77, two hearths = 21; three hearths = 3; four hearths = 2; seven hearths = 1.
1667	500	Poll Tax Roll: 101 households.
1778	700-750	119 houses in Hale (Vicar of Bowdon's return for Episcopal Visitation).

(b) Hale census returns 1801-2001

<i>Date</i>	<i>Total population</i>	<i>Area and form of government</i>
1801	783	Township, later civil parish, of Hale-cum-Ringway.
1811	929	
1821	958	
1831	945	
1841	974	
1851	995	
1861	1,160	
1871	1,711	
1881	2,222	
1891	3,114	
1901	4,562	Urban District of Hale, Hale Barns forming the eastern boundary.
1911	8,351	
1921	9,300	
1931	10,667	
1941		No census during the war.
1951	12,152	Urban District of Hale, Hasty Lane forming eastern boundary.
1961	14,800	
1971	16,230	
1981	17,030	
1991	15,868	
2001	15,316	

(c) Hale acreage and rateable value

<i>Date</i>	<i>Statute acres</i>	<i>Rateable value</i>	<i>Area</i>
1842	3,679		Hale-cum-Ringway
1900	1,283	£29,431	Urban District of Hale
1971	2,264	£663,548	Urban District of Hale

Appendix 3. The Lords of Dunham

The descent of the original line from the Hamon de Massey of Domesday times to Roger Grey, the last Earl of Stamford is reasonably clear. Because of their residence nearby and the forceful personalities of some of them (notably the Booths in the 17th century), they exercised considerable influence on the development of Hale. The outline family tree follows.

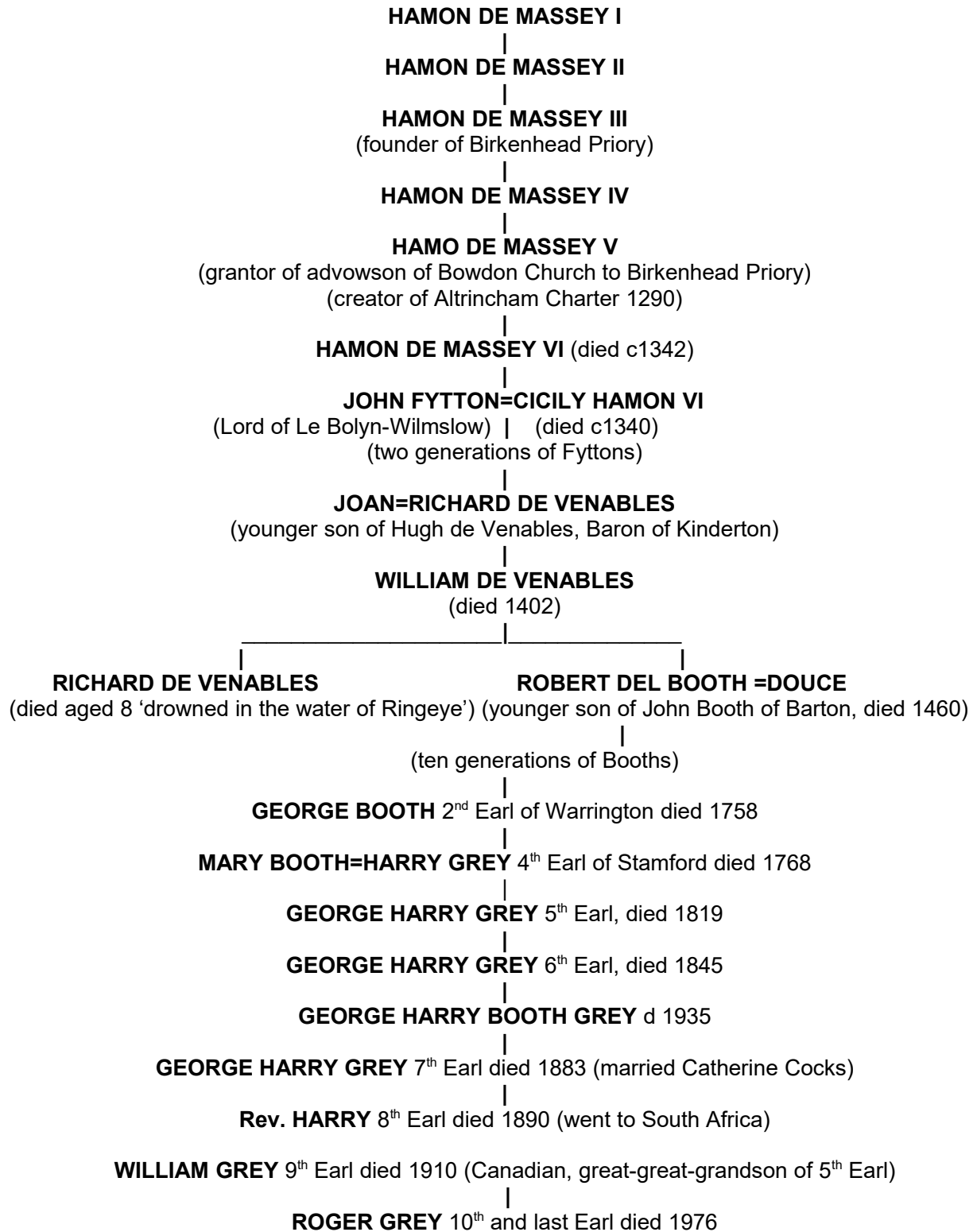
Other claims and links to the Masseys are obscure. Oliver de Ingham, a Norfolk knight who became an important royal official in Cheshire, appears to have had no claim to the Massey estate after the death of the last Massey. He was the last of Hamon's commanders in the suppression of the rebellion of Thomas of Lancaster and a grant from Hamon himself may have been the origin of his claim. Henry de Grosmont, Duke of Lancaster and loyal nephew of the rebellious Thomas, was in the French wars with Ingham and may have stepped in to protect the rights of his heirs, the Le Stranges, after his death.

The connection between these claimants and the Stanleys and Chauntrells, who were two of the three successful claimants of the settlement of 1443, is not known, nor is the nature of their claims. Their support of the usurping Henry IV in 1399 in an area where the deposed monarch, Richard II, had great influence, would have told heavily in their favour. Both sold off their Hale lands early in the 17th century. Many of the Stanley leases went to Sir Baptist Hicks but whether the Chauntrells sold to Hicks or a little later to the Crewes, or to the Booths and maybe to some of their own tenants as well, is uncertain. Sir Baptist Hicks' brief tenure of the Hale lands is interesting, for not only was he the most distant of the Hale lords but the only one whose wealth came mainly from trade. He was a London merchant, who made a fortune supplying Elizabeth's court with silk and became a crown contractor under James I.

The wealth of the Crewes, like that of the Chauntrells, came from a successful legal practice. They appear to have bought the Hicks' leases in Hale and owned a great deal of land in Hale in the 18th century. Despite this and their half-share in the lordship of the manor, they remain shadowy figures in Hale's history. There is no evidence that they ever lived here or even, as the rumour goes, had a shooting box in Hale Barns.

The Egertons of Tatton, to whom the Crewes sold most of their Hale estates in the early 19th century, had more influence in the township although were never legally lords of it because the Crewe half-lordship was sold to the Earls of Stamford. The Egerton lands stretched unbroken from Tatton Hall through Ashley into Hale and Ringway. Even during the 20th century their power over tenants was little short of absolute. Just before WWI tenants were forbidden, on pain of immediate eviction, to supply teas to weekend trippers. Despite the extra cash offered and the protest of 10,000 trippers who gathered at Rostherne (the centre of the storm), the injunction was obeyed.

Barons of Dunham and Hale

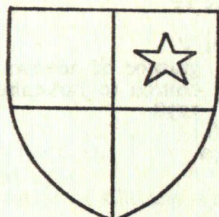


Arms of the Lords & Landowners of Hale

ARMS OF SOME OF THE LORDS AND LANDOWNERS OF HALE



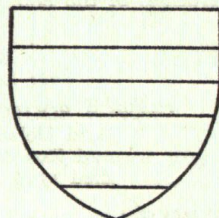
MASSEY OF DUNHAM
Quarterly, gules and or, in the first quarter a lion passant argent.



MASSEY OF RIXTON
Quarterly, gules and argent, in the second quarter a mullet sable.



BOOTH OF DUNHAM
Argent, three boars' heads, erect and erased, sable.



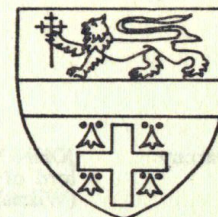
GREY OF DUNHAM
(EARL OF STAMFORD)
Barry of six, argent and azure.



CREWE OF CREWE HALL
Azure, a lion rampant argent



EGERTON OF TATTON
Argent, a lion rampant gules between three pheons sable.



VAWDREY OF RIDDINGS
AND BANK
Or, a fess gules, in chief a lion passant gules, holding a cross crosslet fitchy sable, in base a plain cross between four ermines tails.

EXPLANATION OF TERMS AND NOTES

Tinctures (colours). The first tincture given is that of the 'field' (i.e. the main background of the shield).

Argent=silver; *Azure*=blue; *Gules*=red; *Or*=gold; *Sable*=black.

Passant=walking; *Rampant*=rearing on hind legs.

Mullet=not originally a star, but the five-pointed rowel of a spur.

Erect=any charge (figure) on shield, naturally horizontal, placed in perpendicular position.

Erased=torn off with ragged edges.

Barry=a division of the shield into equal parts, six or more, with alternating tinctures.

Pheons=crossbow bolts.

Massey of Ellerborough (Ollerbarrow) had a shield, quartered, with the Dunham lion in the first quarter and the Rixton mullet in the second.

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The History of Hale, Cheshire, Revisited

This book is an update of Norman Dore's 1972 book *A History of Hale, Cheshire*. The book is dedicated to Norman's memory and to the great contribution of Alfred Tarbolton, the first chairman of Hale Urban District Council and local historian who researched and wrote about Hale. Both books owe a great deal to Tarbolton's unpublished *History of Hale* (c.1930). Without Alfred Tarbolton, Hale might have been a different place with a different name!

The emphasis in this history is on the area administered by Hale UDC in 1900 and absorbed into the present Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council in 1974.

The book of 200 pages is well-illustrated by maps and photographs.



