

PRESENTED

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE

BATHS & WASH HOUSES COMMITTEE

IN OCTOBER, 1945

BY THE AUTHOR

AS AN APPRECIATION OF THE MANY KINDNESSES  
RECEIVED BY HIM DURING HIS LENGTHY TERM  
OF SERVICE AND AS A RECORD OF WHAT  
MANCHESTER HAS DONE REGARDING THE  
PROVISION OF PUBLIC BATHS AND WASH HOUSES.

A SUMMARISED RECORD OF THE PROVISION AND DEVELOPMENT  
OF PUBLIC BATHS & WASH HOUSES, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE  
TO MANCHESTER.

COMPILED BY:-

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25 YEARS OF WHICH HE HELD THE OFFICE OF GENERAL  
SUPERINTENDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT.)

THE AUTHOR desires to express his sincere thanks  
and appreciation for the valuable assistance  
rendered to him by friends in many ways.

To the LIBRARIES COMMITTEE for permission to search  
through the various reference books of Manchester,  
Newspaper files dating back to the 18th Century, and  
other records in their possession.

TO THE STAFFS OF THE GENERAL OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT  
for the time given in going through these documents  
and extracting the desired information and to the many  
OFFICIALS OF THE CORPORATION for their assistance.



## INTRODUCTION.

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The following history on "Baths and Wash Houses" was primarily intended to refer to the part undertaken by the City of Manchester or its Societies, Associations and Inhabitants, in the provision of Bathing and Washing Establishments for the General Public from the period of approx. 1800 and onwards up to the present time.

During the process of searching through the many old manuscripts, files, documents, books, pamphlets, newspapers, etc., (by kind permission of the Manchester Reference Library Authorities) so much interesting and detailed information has been obtained, that under the circumstances a short summarised history dealing with Baths & Wash Houses may not be out of place, dating back from the early ages.

Included in these records are a number of events which have taken place and are applicable to other parts of the country (not being concerned in any way with the City of Manchester) but which will be of interest when studying the Baths and Wash Houses in England. By giving close attention to many of the schemes which received consideration in the early nineteenth century as against the so-called up to date modernistic ideas, it cannot be denied that there is very little difference between the two periods, thus showing that present day methods are not so far advanced as some people would be led to believe.

A most interesting subject amongst the various Municipal Officials is that of which of the various Departments is the oldest, with the usual remarks that Baths are quite young, and the "Cinderella" of Municipal Services; but tracing the history back it is easily ascertained that Baths had been in operation centuries before Gas, Electricity, Transport, Highways, Cleansing Parks, and all other sections (with the exception of Water) were even thought about, hence all those connected with Baths and Wash Houses can claim to be employees of the Oldest Public Service

## CHAPTER 1.

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In relationship to Manchester, history definitely outlines the date of the commencement of Bathing facilities as early as A.D. 50 when the Romans first pitched their camp on a site which was named 'Mamucium' later 'Mancunium' and eventually became the 'City of Manchester'. It is recorded that Baths were a principal and essential part of the administration buildings, and it will be found that in every part of the country where the Romans decided to make a settlement for a prolonged period, Baths were always included in any scheme carried out. From search made amongst old documents, it appears that the Romans were the first to put the hot springs at Bath to practical use. It is also stated that Bladud, only son of King Lud Hudibras discovered these springs in the year 863 B.C. and thus the commencement of bathing at Bath.

An interesting article on Roman History referring particularly to the question of Public Baths is appended, being obtained after search through books on this subject in the Manchester Reference Library. It makes most interesting reading, imparting knowledge on a subject known to only a small proportion of the community.

"The Romans developed their Public Baths to such an extent that makes out brick buildings and plain furnishings, excellently suited to their purpose as they are, look quite skimpy and poor. They decorated the Baths with beautiful marbles, pieces of statuary and exquisite mosaics, and the record continues:- "To such a pitch of luxury have we reached that we are dissatisfied if we do not tread on gems in our Baths".

A hot bath was regarded as an appetiser, like a cocktail before a meal, and we read of Emperors who are said to have taken seven or eight baths a day in order to do justice to the pleasures of the table. But this is neither an ornamental age, nor a faddy one. If our baths are plain straightforward things, so are our tastes. Milk and Whey and other special kinds of baths, fashionable in the old days, have now been given up to the simple soap and water variety.

In the days of the Romans, the Turkish Baths were in vogue, and the system for heating adopted in those far off days, is to some extent in force in the present up-to-date Turkish Bath Establishments. A good example of this can still be seen in the old Roman Baths at Bath.



In early days the Romans made use of the bath only for Health and Cleanliness. They washed their arms and legs once a day, and the whole body once a week, but in later times bathing came to be regarded, not merely as a necessity, but as a luxury, and in the Imperial Period, was a conspicuous feature of Roman Life. At first, public baths were only intended for the use of poor people of low rank who were unable to have the luxury of a bathroom at home, but before the end of the Republic, people of all classes resorted to the balnex.

Originally, in strict language, balnex meant the Public Baths, balneum - a private bath - balnea - a private bath of more than one room: but the distinction of these terms became gradually obliterated in use. The Emperors themselves used to bathe in public with their fellow citizens.

The Bath was a very cheap luxury which the poorest man could indulge in, as the fee was only a quadrans, the smallest Roman coin.

Women had probably to pay a higher price.

The usual time for bathing was about the eighth hour, before the chief meal of the day, but idle and luxurious people often bathed several times a day. Gourmands used to take a bath after eating as well as before in order to get a fresh appetite, this practice is only ascribed for instance to Caligula and to Nero, and a contemporary writer, Pliny the Elder, considered it partly the cause of the degeneration of morality.

It was an ordinary practice in the time of Cicero to take emetics for the same purpose.

The number of Public Baths - some built by the State, others by Private Speculators was enormous. Agrippa is said to have added one hundred and seventy to those already in existence, and by the beginning of the fourth century there number was nearly a thousand.

The bathing did not consist merely of a hot or cold bath, but was a long process, somewhat like that of our Turkish Baths, but much more elaborate. Hot air was employed as well as water. The chief rooms of a bath were the apolyterium or stripping room, in which the bathers took off their garments and committed them to slaves who were proverbial for their dishonesty; the elxothesium or oil room for those who wished for cold baths, the tepidarium, a chamber heated by moderately warm air in which the bather sat and was anointed before proceeding into the hot atmosphere



of the caldarium. (In some rich baths there was a special anointing room or unctorium). The caldarium was heated by a hypocaust, over which its floor was suspended.

At one end of this room in the Baths of Pompeii was a bath of warm water which was poured over the head before leaving the room.

In some baths there was a sweating chamber of higher temperature, known as the *Loconicum*, which was a round room with a domed ceiling. When he was duly perspired, the bather was scraped all over with a *Strigil*, a sharp instrument of bone or metal, whose edge was softened with oil. The rich man was scraped by his slaves whom he brought with him for the purpose, the poor man scraped himself. It was a disagreeable experience for fastidious people to bathe at the time of those who used rank smelling oil. After anointing, the bather remained some time in the *tepidarium* so as not to pass suddenly into the cold air.

This general description applies both to the ordinary Baths (*balnex*) and to the special kind of Baths called *Thermx* which were introduced by Agrippa, and formed a feature of Imperial Rome.

Baths were only part of the *thermx* which were really "a Roman adaption of a Greek *Gymnasium*".

In the period with which we are concerned, four great *thermx* were erected at Rome, those of Agrippa, Nero, Titus and Trajan. They were extensive and splendid establishments fitted up with every convenience for exercise and pursuit. Here the youth of Rome could learn and practise athletics; here there were cool, colonaded halls (*exedrx*) where the idler could lounge and talk, where the philosophers could lecture and the poets recite their verses.

It was usual for clients to escort their patrons to the Public Baths, and these large crowds of shabby and dirty retainers were a nuisance to others.

At the *balnex* (not in the *thermx*) there were separate sets of baths for women. A story is told of a Consul's wife who wished to bathe in the men's baths at *Teanum in Campania*, and an order was consequently issued and instructed that all the men should be turned out. The men's establishment was probably better provided with conveniences than the women's but, although there were separate departments, it was a common practice in the Imperial Age for men and women to bathe promiscuously in the same baths. Respectable women, of course, did not do so, but the habit was so widespread that both Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius had to make attempts to check the scandal.

Rich men had Private Baths (balnea) in their own houses, though they used to frequent the Public Baths also. Juvenal mentions 600,000 sesterces (£4,800) as a large price for building a set of bath rooms. The baths at Fronto cost more than half that sum (£2,800).

After the departure of the Romans from their camp at what is now known as Campfield - Deansgate - Manchester, no traces can be found of any Bathing Establishments being in existence until as late on as the 18th Century.

Baths and Wash Houses Historical Archive



## ROMAN EXPRESSIONS

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The tenth hour was considered late, some bathed at the sixth hour (eleven a.m.)

Juvenal mentions the Baths of Phoebus (Vll 232) the Baths of Stephanus which were close to the abode of Martial (Martial Xl. 52.4)

The towels (lintea) were of linen. The luxurious Trimalchio (in Petronius. Sat. 28) was rubbed with woollen rags.

The bottle containing the oil was called gatus, it was sometimes made of horn (gutus corneus) and was sometimes called a rhinoceros.

For ball playing in the Baths see (Martial Xll.82.)

Juvenal in satirising the depravity of women, describes a lady visiting the Baths with a crowd of moisy retainers at night (Vl. 419)

Extract from correspondence between Pliny (Roman administrator in the province of Pamphylia) and the Emperor Trajan (A.D. 98 - 117)

Pliny -- In many towns persons condemned to the mines or to fight as gladiators, are serving as public slaves and receiving wages. What is to be done?.

Trajan - Execute the sentences, except where the condemnation dates back more than ten years, and in the latter case cause the convicts to be employed in such menial offices as are nearly penal, such as cleaning the Public Baths and the Sewers.



## CHAPTER 2.

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It can therefore, be said that Manchester has always been a leader in most things, particularly Baths, for even in the first century they had facilities for bathing which other parts of the country did not possess, whilst at the time of writing this book, the City is far in advance of, and better catered for than any other Municipality so far as bathing and washing facilities are concerned, and the City is looked upon as Leader in this section of Municipal Service. In addition it has been the pioneer of many schemes and instigator of several innovations and enterprises which have eventually been copied and carried out with great success in many other parts of the country in the various Bathing Establishments.

From detailed information which it has been possible to obtain from old records, it is definite that Baths were in use in various parts of the City, notably those erected in Piccadilly adjoining the imposing pile of buildings which comprised the Manchester Infirmary, Lunatic Asylum, and Public Baths. The actual site of the Baths was in Bath Street, which is now known as Parker Street and backed on to Mosley Street. A study of an old photograph taken in the year 1789 clearly shows what an alteration has taken place between the present congested area and the splendid open space where the old Infirmary once stood. It will also be seen that in front of the buildings there were gardens, and an ornamental stretch of water known as the Infirmary Pond, which gave a pleasing and finished look to the scheme.

The actual date of the opening of the Public Baths, which was an imposing building and had been erected in the Infirmary grounds near to the gates in Mosley Street, was in the year 1781, and the income arising from the use of the same by the public went to the maintenance of the Infirmary.

The first Superintendent was named W. Calow, and he was succeeded by a John Haworth, who for many years had been a Councillor for St. Georges Ward.

A reference to the charges in force in the year 1781 is most interesting and reads as follows:-

Cold Bath to non-subscribers...	1/-
" " " subscribers of half a guinea.....	10d.
" " " " " one guinea.....	9d.
Vapour Baths..	5/-
Vapour & Hot Baths (when used together).....	6/-
Shampooing Bath.....	7/-

Any person using the bath on Sundays must pay double the ordinary charge.



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In the year 1804, certain alterations in the list of charges were made, whilst a series of elaborately detailed rules had to be observed by those using the Baths.

A comparison with the list outlining the various prices of admission at the Corporation Baths in the year 1940 will shew what a change has taken place so far as charges are concerned.

There would not be many customers patronising the Baths in the present century if the prices of admission were anything in the region of the 1781 period.

It must, however, not be forgotten, that in the early period of Baths, it was necessary if not essential, that the results of a twelve months working should shew a good profit to meet the high expenses. There had to be no adverse balance, in fact there was no Act of Parliament sanctioning the building, equipment and maintenance of Baths out of the Rates for the benefit of the health of the community, they were a business, and must be a profit making concern, otherwise the building would be closed down, as there was no such thing as running establishments at a loss. The shareholders wanted a good return on the money invested, hence a profit was most essential so that a fair dividend could be paid out.

These Baths appeared to have been in constant use for several years, for in a later advertisement in the Manchester Guardian, a reduction in charges was published drawing the attention of the Public to the fact that on becoming an Annual Subscriber upon payment of the sum of one guinea they could obtain a hot bath for half a crown in lieu of 5/- and for another half guinea the fee would be reduced to 2/- per hot bath.

Whether this reduction in charges was a successful experiment does not appear to have been stated in any publication, although there is a record to the effect that in the year 1836 the prices were revised, and that there had been a profit of £200 on the last year's working, which amount had been handed over to the Infirmary Funds, the Baths being the property of a body of Trustees.

During one or two years, prior to 1836, certain alterations had been made, whilst a sulphurous fumigating bath had been installed, the price for the use of same being three shillings. When requested by customers, 'leeching and cupping' was also undertaken.

The latest record of these Baths being in use was in the advertisement which appeared in the Manchester Guardian on Saturday, May 24th 1845, which stated that the Manchester Public Baths at the Infirmary Gates were open, and outlined the various classes of Baths along with the charges made, these it was stated, being greatly reduced terms.

Then these Baths were erected the building was situate in the recognised high class residential district of the City, where



all the wealthy merchants and nobility lived, and at that time could only be patronised by the better classes, who could afford to pay the high charges.

Owing to the gradual change in the character of the surrounding area, and the constant changes that were taking place in the style of buildings that were then being erected, the neighbourhood was fast becoming a commercial instead of residential one as previously. The practice that had been developing for some time of the fitting up of hot and cold water baths in private houses had a disastrous effect upon the Piccadilly Baths, and ultimately they were forced to close down, the buildings afterwards being demolished. (The exact date of the closing down is not ascertainable).

It cannot be denied that from a study of the photographs of the elevation and the ground plan (as taken from the ordnance map) that the Baths were of an imposing character and a credit to the City, and whilst being an attraction, also served to fulfil an important part in raising the standard of health of the community.

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### CHAPTER 3.

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Prior to the year 1845 it is a definite fact that private enterprise had opened Baths in the City, proof of this being found in the following extract from the Manchester Guardian dated January 17th 1846:-

WHALLEY'S BATHS. 57 Peter Street and 27 Cooper St. Manchester  
15 Bolton Street, Salford.

Warm & Hot Water Baths -- 1/- to 1/6d each  
6 for 5/-

Vapour, Sulphurous and Hot Air Baths  
Galvanism and Shampooing judiciously applied.

That the question of providing Washing and Bathing facilities for the General Public had become an important and essential question was proved when on July 4th 1846 a Bill for promoting the 'Voluntary Establishment of Baths & Wash Houses' was moved in the House of Commons by Sir George Gray, Mr. James, and Lord Courtenay, the result of which was the passing of the first Act of Parliament for this purpose in 1846. Since that time many new Acts and Amending Acts have been passed, viz:-

1847	termed the	Baths & Wash Houses Act.
1878	"	" " "
1882	"	" " "
1896	"	" " "
1899	"	" " "
1907	"	Public Health Act.
1920	"	" " "

The first Act only allowed Bathing Establishments being provided with apparatus for individual Baths only. It was not until 1878 that an Act was passed which gave powers to Local Authorities to erect Swimming Baths for the Public. A simplified version of the various Acts will be found among the 'Statistics'.

In an effort to obtain funds for the improvement and extension of the Baths & Wash House in Millers Lane, another Fancy Dress Ball was held on Tuesday, May 18th 1849 upon the occasion of the opening of the then (new) Royal Exchange. This was under the patronage of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria and His Royal Highness Prince Albert, and proved highly successful.

Many more bathing establishments were being opened about the year 1850, as a search through old newspapers and other files brought to light details of other baths which were in use - amongst them the following:-



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Baths were erected in Sycamore Street, Oldham Road, Miles platting, complete with Wash House, at the sole expense of Sir Benjamin Heywood Bart. and opened for public use in July 1850. The accommodation provided in this building in addition to the Washing Tubs for 45 persons and other drying appliances was:-

23 Wash Baths (15 for Males - 8 for Females)  
consisting of 3 separate classes.

1 small plunge bath 27 ft. long x 18 ft. wide with  
a depth of from 3 ft. to 4' 6".  
Total capacity 10,000 gallons of water.

(This was emptied and cleaned every other day).

An interesting item regarding this establishment found after perusal of some old records stated:-

Charges for the use of the Wash House Facilities:-

1d for the 1st 4 hours.  
 $\frac{1}{2}$ d for each hour afterwards.

These prices were later altered to  $\frac{1}{2}$ d per hour at any time, but even this reduction did not prove very successful according to a report issued later which stated:-

"That even with these reduced charges, fees were too high for average incomes with the result that many washers were forced away".

By this it is evident that either money value was very much greater then, than in the previous years, or that the class of residents in that district must have been very poorly paid.

This Bath was at a later period (1864) rented to the Manchester & Salford Baths & Laundries Company by Sir B. Heywood, but was finally closed down on September 29th 1869 on the grounds as stated in the Company's Annual Report "that they were not likely to pay the working expenses."

Other Bathing Establishments which had been opened and which were in use about this time were:-

Medicated Vapour Bath Institution opened on July 28th 1831.

The "Dolphin" Baths, situated in the Red Bank District.  
This establishment had a 'spring' adjoining to supply the water required for the Baths.

The "Adelphi" Baths, George Street, Salford, in use about March 1851 - comprising:-

Gentlemen	1st Class	Swimming Bath		
"	2nd	"	"	"
"	3rd	"	"	"

## CHAPTER 4.

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Leaving Manchester aside for a short space, it may be stated that prior to 1794 there were no Public Baths in Liverpool. The people, therefore, had to avail themselves of the caravans on the north shore, and those who could not afford the luxury of a caravan had to undress on the sands.

A private Bathing Establishment was however situated at the end of the New Quay, which later derived the name of Bath Street.

In the year mentioned above, the Corporation of Liverpool purchased this establishment at a cost of £4,000 and expended an additional £1,000 on embellishing and making large alterations to the original plan.

These Baths were demolished in 1820 to make way for the present Prince's Dock.

From searches made amongst the records housed in the Manchester Reference Library, details were obtained which state that "Queen Elizabeth had a dress for every day of the year, her Doctor, boasting of her fastidiousness stated that the Queen taketh a bath once every three months whether her person need it or no".

Incidentally, it is stated that James I never had a bath nor even washed for fear of injuring his complexion. To make up for this, however, he occasionally dipped the tips of his fingers in rose water.

Even in the eighteenth century there were still many rich persons who never bathed. Taking Frederick the Great for instance reports state that when he was undressed for burial he was found to be a rich mahogany colour.

For all these reports, there is an expression still popular to the effect that "Cleanliness is next to Godliness" - so where is the comparison.

Whilst upon the subject of early practices obtaining in the past so far as bathing is concerned, an extract from the Manchester Guardian dated August 4th 1930 may be of interest, for it points out that whilst a joke may be made of the Bill introduced in the Polish Parliament to make it compulsory for people to have a bath at least once a month, it is of historical interest to know how the views on the virtues of washing have been brought to the forefront.

When a Don went up to Oxford and enquired about a Bath, he was met with the remark 'Bath', you're only up here for eight weeks.



This was a fair expression of current opinion eighty or ninety years ago.

Another example was that London had not a single private bath room in 1800, and when the Lord Mayor in 1912 asked for a shower bath, his request was sharply turned down on the grounds that "the need of the same has not been hitherto complained of".

From records which have been traced in the daily newspapers it is stated that the first bathroom in a private residence in the United States of America was installed by an Adam Thompson at Cincinnati in 1842, but was violently denounced by the Doctors of that age on the ground that the indulgence it invited would cause such complaints as phthisis, rheumatic fevers, inflammation of the lungs and the whole category of zymotic diseases.

Another rather interesting item which appeared in the Manchester Guardian on August 4th 1930 stated that in 1843 Philadelphia had considered an ordinance forbidding persons having a bath between November 1st and March 15th, but the cause of cleanliness won the fight by only 2 votes.

In Virginia, U.S.A. the opinion then held of the "Bath Tub" was shown by the fact a \$ 30 tax was "clapped" on anyone having a bath, whilst the authorities of Boston U.S.A. determined to stand no nonsense, and forbade anybody to have a bath except on the advice of a Doctor.

## CHAPTER 5

It is interesting to note that in the year 1742 there was in existence in Glasgow, a Public Wash House which was erected on 'The Green', where 'Tubs, Stools and Hot Water' were supplied at a moderate charge. At the beginning this establishment was for a few years run by the 'Master of Works', but was later hired out to 'Tacksmen' who, judging by the periodical changes which took place, had difficulty in making a success of it.

The first Public Baths in Glasgow were erected in 1800 by a well known philanthropist, Mr. William Harley, and were situated in Baths Street at the head of Nile Street, and consisted of four small Swimming Baths (cold water only) and five stretching Baths for men and five for women.

A description of the various types of baths and charges made in 1800 makes interesting reading:-

### COLD BATHS.

"One Swimming Bath for Gentlemen, forty feet long by twenty feet wide, and four feet six inches deep. One ditto for ladies, twenty feet long by twelve feet wide and three feet six inches deep. One ditto for Boys, twelve feet long by ten feet wide and two feet nine inches deep, and one ditto for Girls, twelve feet long by ten feet wide and two feet six inches deep".

### HOT BATHS.

Five stretching baths for Gentlemen, viz: One of Marble, two of Arbroath stone, and two of deal. Three chairs or reclining baths of stone and two shower baths. The same number and quality of baths are fitted in the Ladies' Compartments, and the avenues to same are formed with Shrubberies and are quite distinct from those leading to the Gentlemens' Baths. The Hot Baths have all dressing rooms attached to them and are provided with every suitable convenience. A small Saloon is fitted up for the use of bathers and is supplied with London and Glasgow newspapers.

### TERMS.

#### FOR ALL THE COLD BATHS

One year.....	£2. 2. 0.	Saloon.....	8/-
Half year.....	1.11. 6.	" .....	5/6



One Quarter .....	£1. 1. 0.	Saloon.....	3/-
One Month .....	10. 6.	" .....	1/-
Single Bath .....	1. 0.		

For Small Swimming Baths, Shower and Stretching Baths adjoining.

One year .....	£1. 11.6.	Saloon.....	8/-
Half year .....	1. 1. 0.	" .....	5/6
One Quarter .....	15.0.	" .....	3/-
One Month .....	7.6.	" .....	1/-
Single Bath.....	6.		

Hot, Cold and Tepid Bathing in the Chair and Stretching Baths.

	<u>Hot.</u>	<u>Tepid.</u>	<u>Cold.</u>
Marble or Chair Hot Baths .....	3/-	2/-	1/6d
Subscribers to the cold Baths.....	2/-	1/6d	1/-
Stone Hot Baths .....	2/-	1/6d	1/3d.
Subscribers to Cold Baths.....	1/6d	1/-	6d
Deal Hot Baths .....	1/-	1/-	6d

#### TICKETS.

1 dozen Tickets for Marble or Chair Hot Baths.....	£1. 10. 0.
1 " " " Stone " " " " .....	1. 1. 0.
1 " " " Cold Baths .....	10. 6.

N.B. Two of the Cold Bath Tickets are taken for a Warm Stone Bath and three for a Marble or Chair Bath.

The Wash House Section accommodated two hundred washers. The Tacksman provided Hot and Cold Water, 100 large and 80 small Tubs and 100 stools. These articles were available to any person who chose to apply for them, in consideration of the following dues:-

Hot & Cold Water for a days washing of one person without the use of Tubs and Stools .....4d.

Hot & Cold Water for half a days washing without the use of Tubs and Stools.....3d

One days use of Washing Tub.....1d

One days use of small Tub or Boyne..... $\frac{1}{2}$ d

One days use of a washing stool ..... $\frac{1}{2}$ d

When two persons use one tub (commonly called a Rubber) an additional charge is made for Hot Water of three half pence a day or one penny for half a day.

3 pailfuls of warm water for sinding (rinsing).....	1d.
Boiling Clothes in large boiler for 1 hour .....	8d
" " " small " " " " ,.....	5d

Clothes if kept in the Washing House all night at the risk of the Tacksman, to pay, per boyneful, one penny.

Night Watching of a day's washing of clothes laid out on the Green for Bleaching, if removed by 8 o'clock next morning 3d, if not removed by then 6d. Ditto if sheets or bed covers 4d, if not removed by 8 o'clock 8d.

Clothes which have not been washed in the Washing House are to be paid for at double rates for night watching.

(The Tacksman on receiving the fee for Watching or Storing ensured the clothes against theft. The persons who watched clothes through the day had no connection with the Tacksman-they usually made a charge according to the duty performed.)

Persons injuring the Tacksman's Tubs or Stools by accident or otherwise to pay a reasonable sum for repairing same.

Notwithstanding the above regulations and dues, any citizen could bleach clothes on the Green which had been washed at home, without charge and they could warm watering pots and wash at the side of the river without paying any dues, provided by so doing their operations were not offensive to others, and not harmful to the Green.

The Stone Reservoir in the Washing House was originally supplied with water from the Glasgow Water Docks Company (1813) It was 19 ft. 6 ins. in circumference and 5 ft. high - 8" deep.

There were two other Public Washing Houses in the northern quarters of the City on the North West Bank of the Molindinar Burn, one of them being privately owned, the other belonging to a Charity. The rates were similar to the Washing House on the Green.



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CHAPTER 6  
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The last record respecting the establishment adjoining the Infirmary on Piccadilly is dated for the year 1832.

It is evident, however, that the provision of facilities for bathing and washing in the City was both a necessary and essential health service, because an influential section of the community arranged and held meetings regarding this question and finally, on March 10th 1845, appointed a Committee to make the necessary arrangements for the holding of a Fancy Dress Ball in aid of funds for the 'Establishment of Public Baths and Wash Houses'. This event took place on Wednesday, April 30th 1845 and in addition to being a great social success, realised a net profit of approximately £400 with which to finance the proposed scheme. This amount was later increased by Donations and Subscriptions to a total of £700.

An interesting Souvenir of this Function is a framed picture depicting the interior of the Free Trade Hall during the evening of the Ball, and this has been on exhibition in the Board Room of the Victoria Baths, High Street, Manchester 13, for some years. (This was the property of the writer who handed the same over to the Baths & Wash Houses Committee in May 1945 along with other descriptive articles, records, statistics, photographs etc. upon his retirement from the position of General Superintendent after having held the office for over 24 years.)

A perusal of the 'List of Patrons, Patronesses, Stewards, etc. who took part in the Fancy Dress Ball is interesting, many of the names included being still prominent family ones in Manchester today.

In addition to the above list, there is a full description of the arrangements made inside the Hall, for such a brilliant affair including the Ball Room, Refreshment Wine and Supper Rooms, along with a complete list of the persons present together with their addresses and the Fancy Costumes worn on that occasion.

There is also the list of the Stewards taking part, full details of their costumes and the names and order of all the Dances for the full evening.

The result of this splendid effort was that the Committee responsible decided to procure premises which would be suitable and easily adapted for the purpose required. In this they were eventually successful and obtained a large house connected with the old 'Manchester Mills' situated in Millers Lane, Nr. Rochdale Road, (late St. Georges Road) which consisted of a good sized house of three stories, with excellent cellars and a yard at the back, the whole of which was obtained for a moderate rent.

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After the necessary alterations and additions had been made it was expected that the accommodation afforded in the washing and laundry departments would consist of 5 pans for boiling, 45 tubs for washing clothes, each having taps for hot and cold water, and a drying apparatus. In the bathing department a plunge bath 22 ft. long x 12 ft. 6 ins. wide was provided and there were also 6 private baths for females and 1 Private bath for Males. These could be used either Hot or and in addition a Vapour Bath was included in the equipment. Room also was available for any extension in the number of Baths is required.

It must be admitted that great credit should be accorded to those responsible for the provision of facilities for all classes of the community.

A waiting room which was furnished with books, and apartments for the Superintendent who had to reside on the premises were also included in the establishment.

The final scheme, however, so far as bathing accommodation was concerned, provided 18 baths - 6 for Females on the ground floor and 12 for Males on the upper floors, these being contained in rooms divided into cubicles by partitions. In the cellars 26 tubs and the necessary apparatus was provided for the washing of clothes.

Arrangements were made with the Manchester & Salford Works Company for the supply of water.

These Baths & Wash House were opened to the General Public on September 7th 1846, the first Superintendent being a Mr. Thomas Harding.

The following were the list of charges that had been operative from the date of opening for use by the General Public.

Private Bath, including towels      2d & 6d    according to class used.

Washing Compartments with use  
of drying room      1d per four hours.

A perusal of the Report and Balance Sheet submitted to the Meeting of the Committee responsible for the Miller Street Baths & Wash House held in the year 1854 is most interesting, and the following extract regarding the financial aspect clearly outlines the results of the working of the establishment for nearly 8 years.

It might be pointed out that the figures appended herewith



are the only ones published shewing the actual Income and Expenditure since the date of opening of the Baths & Wash House.

for  $7\frac{3}{4}$  years

Bathers	202,883	Income	£3,153. 14. 10.
Washers	35,720	"	<u>148. 16. 8.</u>
			3,302. 11. 6.
Working expenses:-			
£365 per year for $7\frac{3}{4}$ years			<u>2,728. 15. 0.</u>
Credit Balance.....			<u>£ 573. 15. 6.</u>

## CHAPTER 7

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Immediately the transfer of the Mayfield and Leaf Street Baths had been effected, the Committee decided to endeavour to obtain a site for a new Baths to cater for the Working Class District of Ancoats. They eventually obtained a suitable plot of land for a new Baths bounded by New Islington - Baker Street - Horne Street - and the passage at the back of the houses in Pott Street. The area of the plot was 2,246.5/9th sqr. yds. and the cost £7,431-2-0. The City Council approved of the acquisition and the price of the land on August 1st 1877.

The scheme contemplated for this Bath was far in advance and more ambitious, so far as accommodation was concerned, than either the Mayfield or Leaf Street Baths, and comprised:-

Males 1st Class Swimming Bath - 90 ft. long x 30 ft. wide varied in depth from 3 ft. to 5 ft. 6 ins. with 56 Dressing Boxes. In addition 18 private porcelain wash baths were erected on the gallery above the Swimming bath with divisions made of enamelled slate.

Males 2nd Class Swimming Bath - 109 ft. long x 30 ft. wide with 82 Dressing Boxes and 36 private Baths on the gallery - similar to the 1st Class Bath.

Small Females Swimming Pond

Waiting Rooms for each set of Baths.

(The water in the Swimming Baths was heated by means of Steam Pipes fixed round the bottom of the ponds.)

Eighteen Private Wash Baths for Females, complete with waiting rooms.

Central Wash House and Laundry for the establishments own washing of towels etc.

Superintendents residence, Engine and Boiler House, and Engineers Work Shop.

To complete and cover the whole area purchased, there were two Public Halls included, one on the ground level, the other built upon this on the first floor.

The whole scheme and equipment was far in advance of any Bath that had been previously erected, and showed great foresight on the part of those members of the Council and Officials concerned.

The Memorial Stone for this building was laid on December



14th 1878 by Councillor Thomas Bright, the first Chairman of the Baths & Wash Houses Committee, and finally the whole of the establishment was opened for use by the General Public on May 1st 1880 by Alderman Patteson, Mayor of Manchester.

New Islington Baths has therefore, the honour and distinction of being the first Municipal Bathing Establishment erected by the Baths & Wash Houses Committee under the jurisdiction of the City Council of Manchester.

Appended below is a summary of the building programme for Public Wash & Swimming Baths under the control of the Manchester Corporation.

Establishment.	Address.	Erected.
Mayfield	London Rd. Manchester	1856 )
Leaf St.	Stretford Rd. Hulme.	1860 ) a.
New Islington	Baker St. Ancoats	May 1st. 1880
Osborne St.	Rochdale Rd. M/cr.	July 11. 1883
Gorton	Hyde Rd. Gorton	June 20. 1890 )
Whitworth	Ashton Old Rd. Openshaw	July 5. 1890 ) b.
Newton Heath	Oldham Rd. Newton Heath	April 21. 1891 )
Cheetham	Cheetham Hill Rd. M/cr.	April 4. 1894
Red Bank	Axle St. Red Bank. M/cr.	March 24. 1896 - c.
Pryme St.	Chester Rd. Hulme.	Dec. 24. 1904
Victoria	High St. Chorlton-on-M.	Sept. 10. 1906
Moss Side	Broadfield Rd. Moss Side.	Sept. 10. 1906
Bradford	Barmouth St. Bradford.	Aug. 26. 1909
Harpurhey	Rochdale Rd. Blackley	Oct. 29. 1910
Armitage St.	Hyde Rd. Ardwick	May 5. 1911
Miles Platting	Grant St. Hulme Hall Lane.	May 5. 1911
Withington	Burton Rd.	May 1. 1913
New Quay St.	Deansgate - M/cr.	Sept. 6. 1914
Levenshulme	Barlow Rd. Levenshulme	Oct. 10. 1921
Moston	Dean Lane.	Oct. 13. 1927
Chorlton	Manchester Rd. C-c-H.	Sept. 19. 1929
Clayton	Bank St. Clayton	Dec. 17. 1931
Workesleigh St.	Culcheth - Newton Heath	Dec. 17. 1931
Broadway	New Moston.	July 13. 1932.

(a) These were built by the M/cr. & Salford Baths & Laundries Company and purchased from them by the City of Manchester in 1877.

(b) Handed over to the City of Manchester upon Amalgamation.

(c) Closed down and finally disposed of in 1934.

Having outlined the progress made and the dates of opening of the various bathing establishments, it may be interesting to draw attention to special facts and detailed descriptions of some of the Public Baths.

A few years after the Leaf Street Baths had been purchased by the Corporation it was found that bathing facilities for Females, especially swimming, was being requested, and with an endeavour to meet this new demand the Baths Committee decided to construct a Ladies Swimming Bath on the vacant land belonging to the Committee at a cost of £4,677. This was the first pool built in Manchester for the exclusive use by Ladies, and a fore-runner of many more in the years which followed.

When the New Islington and Cheetham Baths were erected, included in each scheme was a Public Hall. Unfortunately, these Halls were not patronised to any great extent and it was considered that a mistake had been made by the inclusion of such accommodation by the Baths Committee, especially owing to the fact that all the Municipal Halls in the City were then under the control of the Town Hall Committee.

It was, therefore, decided on May 17th 1911, to ask the Town Hall Committee to take over full control, including the booking etc. of both the Cheetham and New Islington Halls. This request was agreed to and a payment of a sum of £30 per annum for each establishment fixed. Certain conditions were attached to the transfer, which were agreeable to both Committees.

The above arrangements continued until the year 1920 when, after an application had been made by the Baths Committee, it was agreed by the Town Hall Committee that the amount of the payment to be made in the future should be increased from £30 per Hall to £60, bringing the total up to £120 per annum.

As time went on Public Halls came to be in great demand and the Baths Committee realised that the same would be of great advantage and well patronised for Dancing, Concerts, etc. and regretted having made the transfers referred to above, but it was realised that having been the instigators of the above arrangements they could not request the return of the two halls to them. They decided to convert one of the Swimming Ponds at Victoria Baths into a Public Hall by covering the same with wooden flooring and opening the same for public use for Concerts, Meetings, Dancing etc. This was in 1922 and since that date 6 other establishments have also been converted.

From a survey made of the map of Manchester, it will readily be seen that there are no Public Baths in the centre of the City. This is unfortunate, for such a building is most essential in that area, particularly in view of the large number of visitors and big floating population.



A splendid opportunity, however, was missed to remedy this defect when a request was made by the City Council to the Baths Committee on the 15th September 1909, asking whether they had any requirements involving the erection of new buildings upon the old Royal Infirmary site in Piccadilly. Unfortunately the Committee passed a resolution to the effect that they had no requirements in that direction. Whether anything definite would have accrued in problematical, but still it was worth trying for -- what a splendid and suitable site it would have made, for the erection of an up to date modern Public Baths in such an area would almost certainly have been well patronised when opened for Public use.

The Pryme Street Baths, erected in Chester Road, Hulme included in the scheme a Public Wash House, the 2nd to be erected in the City. This was a new building, and from the experience gained at New Islington (where a portion of the building was converted into a Wash House) vast improvements and the installation of more modern equipment was made possible all this being to the benefit of the women patronising the Wash House.

As this new establishment was situated in a very congested and poor working class area, an innovation was put into operation so far as the Wash Baths were concerned. The Baths Committee realised that the future patrons would not be well off so far as money was concerned, and in an endeavour to help and assist to inculcate the habits of cleanliness in the population of that district, the price of admission to the Wash Baths was fixed at 1d each. This charge included one large towel, together with a piece of soap. The charge for the use of the Wash House was 1½d per hour.

By providing such modern facilities and equipment within easy reach of their homes and due to the reasonable charges, the establishment was an immediate success, and from the date of opening up to the present time, has been one of the most regularly and best patronised establishment under the Baths Committee's control. The date of opening was December 24th 1904.

A further step in the provision of new Baths was taken upon the acquisition of the Barnes Green Tramways Depot from the Tramways Committee on the 31st March 1905. The area was equal to 5420 sq. yds. and the cost £1,000 - payable in 10 yearly installments of £100 each. There was also a Chief Rent attached.

This site was eventually cleared and the present Harpurhey Baths & Public Wash House erected thereon, the same being opened for public use on October 29th 1910, a matter of 5 years from the completion of the purchase of the land.

About this time, it was intended to extend swimming facilities for females at the Cheetham Baths, and with this object in view



enquiries were made by the City Surveyor regarding four houses adjoining that establishment in an endeavour to purchase the same if possible. Eventually the houses referred to were bought by the Committee and an area of approximately 710 sq. yds obtained.

The intention of obtaining possession was to demolish the property and extend the existing building thus providing an extra swimming bath. This was about the year 1907, but for reasons unknown to the writer, no steps were taken up to the year 1945, the houses still remaining tenanted, and no additional swimming facilities being provided for the district.

On September 10th 1906 a new bathing establishment was opened at Broadfield Road, Moss Side. This Bath was originally the scheme of the Moss Side Urban District Council, but came under the jurisdiction of the City of Manchester upon amalgamation. This building was partly erected before the Baths Committee took control, and was situated on a plot of land adjoining the Cleansing Committee's Destructor Works, arrangements having been made for the latter Department to supply the necessary steam for heating the building and the supply of hot water required for the Baths.

This did not prove a very satisfactory proposition, particularly from the Baths Committee's point of view, and it was eventually cancelled and a large Lancashire Steam Boiler purchased and fitted up on land adjoining the Baths which proved far more beneficial. In addition there was another very important drawback, that of the close proximity to the Destructor Works, a large amount of dust being blown into the Baths and settling over the building, especially on the top of the water in the Swimming Pool.

At the present time this does not apply, as the Destructor Works have been closed down, so that the Baths Department have no complaint to make so far as "dust" is concerned from that direction.

It was evident that as early as 1880 the residents of the City were keenly interested in bathing, for old records have proved that on December 30th of that year a Memorial or Petition was submitted to the Council from the residents of Chorlton on Medlock and neighbourhood urging the establishment of Corporation Swimming Baths in the district, specially mentioning a plot of land situated in Denmark Road which would cater for that district in addition to the Greenheys area. The matter was referred to the Baths Committee for their consideration, but evidently was not favourably received, for nothing was done. In fact it was not until the year 1906 a matter of 26 years after the petition had been received that the Victoria Baths, High Street, Chorlton on Medlock were opened for public use.

Previously, a plot of land and buildings situated in Wilmslow Road, Monmouth Street and Moor Street, Rusholme (part of the estate of the late Councillor Samuel Royle) was offered to the Baths Committee in 1888.



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The area of land was 4658 sqr. yds and the buildings a small Ice Skating Rink (the first in England) and a small Swimming Bath 54 ft. sqr. with tiled sides and bottom and the necessary dressing rooms. In addition there was a childrens bath, together with pumping engines, steam boilers etc. The water required was obtained from a natural spring with ample supply. the holding capacity of the Swimming Bath was 40,000 gallons and the water was pumped from the spring in approx. 5 hours.

The amount asked for the land and buildings was £8,000 but on July 30th 1889 the Baths Committee decided not to accept the offer.

In later years alterations and extensions were made to the buildings and the same converted into a Picture House or Cinema.

A very important aspect of the above offer was, that when the Victoria Baths were first contemplated in 1900, it was remembered that there had been a well attached to Royles Baths and as the district was adjacent to the plot of land (5626 sqr. yds) which had been purchased and which was situated in High Street, Chorlton on Medlock, the Committee were of the opinion that if a well was sunk on the site they acquired, they would become the owners of a good supply of water from the natural spring. (This supposition proved correct, but many difficulties had to be overcome.)

It was, therefore, decided to make an experiment and commence boring operations to see if it was possible to obtain a sufficient quantity of well water for use in the Baths instead of using the ordinary supply from the mains of the Corporation Water Works Committee, and thus be independant of the towns main. This would prove most helpful during hot summer weather, especially after long dry spells when restrictions were imposed and supplies curtailed. Under such circumstances it is most serious if the baths have to close down owing to water shortage, especially as these usually occur during the summer months or "Busy Period" and to refuse bathers admission is nothing short of a calamity.

Well boring operations were commenced and when these had reached a depth of 200 feet from the surface it was found that the coal measure strata had been reached with no signs of water. The Committee, therefore, decided to obtain expert advice and opinion regarding the wisdom of continuing or ceasing boring operations. After discussion, full details and samples of the various stratas passed through were forwarded to Professor W. Boyd Dawkins F.R.S. of the Manchester University, (Owens College) (as he was a recognised authority and expert in these matters) asking for his opinion regarding the desirability of continuing operations.

The Professor, after due consideration, gave the following opinion to the Baths Committee:-

"In my opinion it is no use boring further in search of water and I advise you to stop the boring".

He also stated in his report that:-

"no water is likely to be found at a less depth than 2,000 feet,



and if found at that depth would hold out no hope of a sufficient or permanent supply".

This was a great set back to the idea of the Committee, who had started on the project with great hopes of success. However, some members were convinced that water could be obtained and before the scheme was finally closed, further advice was sought from a few well known and recognised firms of well borers as to their opinion of proceeding to a greater depth. Eventually it was decided to continue boring and this was done until a depth of 760 ft. was reached, when those who had upheld the scheme were rewarded. The necessary strata was reached which yielded a continuous supply of water at the rate of approximately 20,000 gallons per hour for a lengthy period. This was a most satisfactory ending a project which at one time shewed signs of turning out an utter failure. The bore hole varied from 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ " at the bottom to 18" at top

It can here be stated that in the year 1944 there is no difficulty in obtaining 15,000 gallons of water per hour from this well whenever it is required.

This was an innovation so far as Baths were concerned in having their own water supply and I am of the opinion that at the time this was the only Public Bath in the country so equipped.

Success having thus been secured it was essential that the necessary equipment such as an Air Compressor for lifting the water from the ground, storage and settling tanks etc. should be provided. All this machinery etc. was therefore included and fixed during the erection of the building. Two large tanks were built over the Boiler and Engine House, thus forming a substantial roof for that part of the Baths. The holding capacity of the tanks is approx. 189,000 gallons and they are capable of almost filling the three swimming Baths, the capacity of the latter being 206,000 gallons.

For administration purposes the above have proved beneficial in many ways, in addition to representing a great saving in the cost of water had the same been drawn from the Town's mains and paid for at the usual rates.

The High Street or Victoria Baths were the most modern and up to date Bathing Establishment in the country when opened for public use on September 10th 1906 and deputations from Local Authorities all over the country and even from the Continent have visited the same. High appreciation has been expressed of such splendid, well built and up to date, attractive baths and of the excellent equipment, and proved what a fine incentive Manchester had given to other Municipalities to copy their example.

Although at that time the capital cost of the buildings and equipment was considered to be very high, the results have proved, after being in use by the general public for a period of 38 years, that the outlay was justified and appreciated. It can with truth be stated, that even in the year 1945 the Victoria Baths, Manchester, are still looked upon by members of Local Authorities and Officials as one of the finest bathing establishments in the country.



In addition to the usual amenities provided in Public Baths there are one or two additional phases which have been incorporated in the scheme.

The three Swimming Baths are all the same length - viz. 75 ft. but each one varies in width from 45 ft. in the Males 1st Class or Gala Bath, 40 ft. in the Males 2nd Class Bath and 33 ft. in the Females Bath.

In the large Gala Bath (which has a gallery with tip up seats all round specially designed for the purpose of seating spectators at Swimming Galas) more Special Championships and International Events have taken place than in any other bath in Manchester.

Included in the scheme was a modern and up to date, well equipped Turkish and Russian Bath, whilst an innovation was tried of the provision of a Cycle store fitted with stands, chains and padlocks where bathers could leave their machines whilst bathing without risk of loss. This idea proved highly satisfactory and most successful.

In the original scheme an Establishment Laundry was included with modern machinery installed, but upon the opening of the Central Establishment Laundry at Moss Side this was closed down, all machinery dismantled and transferred and that part of the building converted into a general Stores for the whole of the Department large stocks of all commodities being held in readiness for any emergency.

It was at the Victoria Baths and the Whitworth Baths, Openshaw, that the first set of "Alpine or Sun Ray" Baths were installed, and considering that this treatment was something entirely new so far as Public Baths were concerned, the experiment proved highly satisfactory and well patronised for some time. After a few years, however, the attendances gradually declined until the Committee were compelled to close down completely this branch of their work.

This was most unfortunate for undoubtedly Sun Ray Treatment given by trained and experienced staff such as the Bath Department possessed was most beneficial and health giving, especially in Manchester where the climatic conditions did not allow the ordinary general public to gain real "sunlight" in any great degree.

Another experiment which has had its first trial at the Victoria Baths in 1922, was that of covering over the large Gala Bath with wooden flooring during the winter months, panelling the front of the dressing boxes, erecting a platform, and converting the same into a Public Hall to be let out on hire for Concerts, Meetings Dancing etc. This proved an immediate success and was well patronised until the outbreak of the war in 1939.

The results thus obtained were a great incentive to the

## CHAPTER 8.

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### Facilities provided for the benefit of the General Public by the erection of Public Wash Houses.

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You have a worried mother in a busy house of two or three rooms, struggling with a heap of dirty clothes which leave her at the end of the day with a breaking back and frayed temper, and you have a tired husband coming home to steaming, dripping washing, hung like banners across the kitchen.

In an age of science, machinery and labour saving devices, muscle and sweat, with hard work and hot water are the cleansing agents here. The crowded kitchen or perhaps on dry day, the smutty street is the drying ground. Washing obsesses the family for half the week. It is the housewife's nightmare, the regular event which puts years on her age, and takes the bloom off her cheeks. For all that civilization has done for her in the way of making washing easier in the home, she might as well have been born in the stone age, better indeed, for fashion prescribed less raiment then, and washing day, had they believed in washing which they did not, would have involved little more trouble than the rinsing out of a few handkerchiefs.

This is where the Baths & Wash Houses Committee has come in to redress the balance, and attempt to banish soap suds from homes like these by the erection of a number of Public Wash Houses, providing facilities whereby one person can do the weekly washing for a family of five persons in an average time of less than three hours. Each washer has the exclusive use of the most up-to-date equipment - viz: A washing stall which comprises a washing, rinsing and boiling trough along with separate drying rack, Hydro Extractor, Mangle and Irons etc. with a plentiful supply of hot and cold water and steam, together with the usual utensils such as Scrubbing and Foot Boards, Bucket, Lading Can, Dolly Tub, Posser and Boiler Stick, necessary for the purposes of washing.

These facilities were a great boon and removed from the home what in so many cases was one of the greatest discomforts of the week.

The Baths & Wash Houses Committee thus put at the disposal of the working woman such equipment that even the rich did not



posses in their own homes, but with all the facilities provided, it is a strange commentary on the nature of human pride that even with these temptations staring them in the face, many women took a long time before they would give up the dignity of slaving at washing in the primitive conditions of their own homes. However, vanity, if not commonsense sometimes comes to the rescue.

Working women find that in the communal Wash Houses they can turn out clothes as white as any Laundry could do, and gradually some of the drab underclothing that home washing made necessary was re-placed by white garments.

The pride which disdains the scientific use of the Public Wash House and prefers the primitive labour of the cramped kitchen with the drying properties of the dirty street to the clean magic of a Hydro Extractor and Heated Drying Chamber is giving way before the bare facts of the situation. The latest development is making "Wash Day" a pleasure, as the Soap Advertisements would put it, and is likely to break down the last piece of prejudice against washing in public and making the dwellers in semi-detached suburbia envious of the facilities afforded to their sisters in the more congested areas of the wage earning districts.

The provision of the latest and most up-to-date system of Mechanical Rotary Washing Machines which has now been installed in all the Public Wash Houses in the City, eliminates all manual labour and has revolutionised Washing Day to such an extent that a woman can now wash, dry and iron a large family wash in one hour and a half.

What would entail a whole day of long back breaking labour where washing is regarded as a sacred rite to be performed in the home, now means only absence of one and a half hours of the womans time from home if undertaken in the Public Wash House.

In the latest equipment - i.e. Rotary Washing Machines, all the essential appliances and utensils required for washing are provided to the same extent as for those washing on the Washing Stalls as outlined above, with the exception that in place of a stall with 3 compartments a special porcelain trough is installed, and the use of an extra Drying Rack is allowed.

The experience gained in the administration of a Public Wash House is that from the very large number of women who patronise the various establishments, there are a good percentage who are either very forgetful, absent minded, or have no idea of the articles of clothing they bringm or who have been using some of the appliances to which they have no right. This refers to the large quantity of articles left in the Wash Houses, which at the end of each day are collected, handed into the Ticket Office and entered in a book kept for that purpose.



Some of the reasons may be attributed to the "Professional Washer" who is not fully acquainted with the type or number of articles which she has brought to wash - or to the woman who has a large wash (far in excess of an ordinary one) and who consequently takes advantage - if she sees a vacant Hydro or Drying Rack of utilising the same without payment until the person who has actually booked the appliance comes along, finds the clothes, clears them off and takes the same to the Ticket Office. The person who has been trying to get something for nothing is either afraid to enquire about the clothes in case she gets into trouble with the staff, or she goes away from the establishment under the impression that the same have been stolen.

That idea is not true and is proved by the thousands of articles of clothing left and unclaimed during the period of a year's working. The system now in operation is that at the end of each six months all the clothes left in the various establishments are sold by Public Auction and from the results obtained a good revenue is credited to the Departments accounts.

To obviate a great deal of unnecessary trouble, the washers themselves can help considerably by the simple process of making enquiries at the Ticket Office giving a full description of the articles they believe to have been lost or stolen. In the event of such articles having been found and return to the office the rightful owner will receive the same upon signing her name in the book kept for the purpose.

In the year 1938 the City of Manchester celebrated the Centenary of the granting of a Charter of Incorporation, and an exhibition was held embracing the whole of the services of the Corporation in order to give the General Public first hand information and full details of what the City was doing to cater for their needs.

The Baths & Wash Houses Committee took advantage of this opportunity by bringing forcibly to the notice of the public the great advantages obtainable for "Wash Day" in a modern Public Wash House equipped with all the essential machinery and labour saving devices as against the drudgery and dreariness of washing at home, illustrating how the latter was injurious to the health of all the family and a burden to the housewife.

The exhibits were styled "Comfort" and "Discomfort" and a great deal of interest was shown by the public and was undoubtedly the means of a larger number of women becoming convinced that wash day at home (lasting so long) was not worth while when compared with the very short time required to do the same work in a Public Wash House, hence the patronage of this section of Municipal enterprise has been on the increase for some time.



Even in the year 1846 the importance of Wash Houses was appreciated, hence the interest which was shewn in providing the excellent facilities for the washing of clothes. An extract from an article on Public Baths and Wash Houses in a weekly newspaper dated June 17th of that year states:-

"The utility of Public Wash Houses is even greater than that of Baths. It is most desirable that washing should be rendered as cheap and as easy as possible, also that the discomfort of washing in the small dwelling house should be avoided. It is most desirable that the poor should be induced to wash their clothing much more frequently than at present, but this they will not do unless washing is rendered more economical and less inconvenient by providing means for washing clothes away from home. It is not improbable that washing of clothes will some time be carried out by the aid of machinery".

How true the sentiments contained in the last few lines were, has been proved by the present day equipment of Public Wash Houses, wherein the facilities provided include Washing Stalls and Washing Machines, and those pioneers will be respected and appreciated for their ambitions and ideas have borne good fruit and proved a blessing to the working class housewife.

In 1854 the provision of Public Baths and Wash Houses was very much to the fore and received a great deal of consideration and attention, for on December 18th a Public Meeting was held in the Manchester Town Hall under the chairmanship of the Mayor of Manchester and attended by a large number of influential citizens. The result of this and many other meetings was that a Company was formed under a Royal Charter called the "Manchester & Salford Baths & Laundries Company".

It was not long before the new Company got to work and a suitable plot of land was purchased in Boardman Street and Birmingham Street near London Road at a charge of 9.4 per sqr. yd. Upon this site was erected the "Mayfield" Baths and these were opened for public use on June 24th 1857. In addition, the above Company also built, and on the 27th August 1856, opened for public use a Bath in Rolla Street and Collier Street, Greengate, Salford.

In the year 1856, the Manchester & Salford Baths & Laundries Company purchased from the Guardians of the Chorlton Union the land on which the old Work House of the Union stood (in Stretford New Road) for the erection thereon of a bathing establishment.

Owing to financial difficulties, no steps were taken to proceed with the scheme for two or three years, but eventually the money requisite for the scheme was obtained and the old Work House altered in such a manner as to allow of its conversion into a bathing establishment, Public Wash House and Turkish Baths. This



was opened for public use, under the name of the "Leaf Street Baths & Wash House" in June 1860.

An examination of the old ground plan and the present building is most interesting for many sections of the old Work House are still to be found in the "Leaf Street Baths" of today.

The "Mayfield" and "Leaf Street" Baths continued to be used as bathing establishments under the jurisdiction of the Private Company until 1877.

In the year 1876 the City Council became interested in the question of the provision of Municipal Baths and Public Wash Houses in Manchester, and a special Committee consisting of 12 members along with the Mayor, was appointed to consider and report upon the subject.

Great consideration was given the question by this Committee and it was finally decided to approach the Manchester & Salford Baths & Laundries Company with a view to the purchase of the "Mayfield" and "Leaf Street" Baths by the Corporation of Manchester.

After numerous interviews, communications, and lengthy discussions had taken place, negotiations were entered into, agreement reached, and terms agreed to, for the transfer of the two above establishments from the Company to the Corporation as "going concerns".

The amount paid for the transaction was £19,000 plus Chief Rents of £168-2-6 per annum for both buildings. This was a splendid deal considering the equipment, capacity, etc. of the buildings. The Baths Committee agreed to the transfer on June 5th 1877 and the City Council approved the purchase on June 6th 1877. Possession was taken over on September 29th 1877 and the payment of the Capital Sum made on March 7th 1878.

The City of Manchester had now embarked upon an enterprise of Municipal activity which was to expand beyond the dreams of any of the members of the Special Committee who had been responsible for the favourable consideration and contemplation of either the acquisition or erection of Public Baths and Wash Houses.

The Wash House Section of Municipal Enterprise, has however, had an "up and down life". At the time the Corporation purchased the Mayfield and Leaf Street Baths in 1877, both these establishments had a public Wash House attached, yet as early as 5 years afterward (1882) the City Council decided to close down both these Wash Houses owing to lack of patronage and the abuse made of them by the professional washers. The cycle of usefulness, therefore, did not run a long course about this time, and it was not until the year 1902 that the small establishment laundry at New Islington Baths was converted into a more modern and up to date Public Wash House. This contained only Washing Stalls, Hydro Extractors, Drying Horses Mangles, Irons, etc.



This branch of service was the first of its kind to be instituted by the Corporation, and immediately proved to be a great success, so much so, that extensions had to be made to the existing Wash House by the conversion of the small Females Swimming Bath to increase the accommodation provided.

The experience and success obtained at New Islington gave the Committee the incentive to add other establishments to the list, and during the ensuing years no less than 19 extra Public Wash Houses have been erected and opened for Public use, making a total of 20 in all. The money expended on Capital outlay has been repaid many times over, especially where the health of the community is concerned, whilst the housewife's drudgery so far as "Wash day at home" is concerned has been eliminated, it is to be hoped for ever. In addition, the husband, wife, and family are spared the inconvenience and unhealthiness of having to live and take their meals in a house impregnated with steam and the odour from the drying of damp clothing.

It was not, however, until the year 1927, when the Moston Wash House, Dean Lane, was opened, that Rotary Washing Machines were first introduced in the City of Manchester. Since that date each of the Public Wash Houses has been equipped with a certain number of this most useful labour saving machine, until at the present time there are a total of 127 Rotary Washing Machines now installed. These are being used practically to full capacity, and it is contemplated that a further 20 machines will be purchased and erected during the next year or two.

Proof of the success of providing machinery for the washing of clothing is that no fewer than 700,000 women used these appliances at all the Wash House Establishments during the 12 months ended March 31st, 1944.

Overleaf is a summary of the building programme for Public Wash Houses under the control of the Manchester Corporation.

Establishment -----	Address. -----	Erected. -----
New Islington	Baker Street, Ancoats.	1902 (Extended 1923)
Pryme Street	Chester Rd. Hulme	1904
Bradford	Barmouth St. Bradford	1909
Harpurhey	Barnes Green, Blackley	1910
Armitage Street	Hyde Road, Ardwick	1911
Miles Platting	Grant St. Hulme Hall Lane	1911
New Quay Street	Deansgate, Manchester	1914
Leaf Street	Stretford Rd. Hulme	1918
Gorton	Hyde Road, Gorton	1923
Newton Heath	Oldham Rd. Manchester	1923
Osborne Street	Rochdale Rd. Manchester	1923
Mayfield	London Rd. Manchester	1924
Birch Street	Chancery Lane, Ardwick	1925
Moston	Dean Lane, Moston	1927
Moss Side	Caythorpe St. Moss Side	1931
South Street	Stockport Rd. Longsight	1931
Clayton	Bank Street, Clayton	1931
Workesleigh St.	Culcheth, Newton Heath	1931
Levenshulme	Barlow Road, Levenshulme	1931
Herbert Street.	Cheetham	1932



The question of children being allowed in the Public Wash Houses was brought prominently to the attention of the Committee following a serious accident which happened to a young child who had entered the Wash House with its mother, in 1912.

After due consideration it was decided that children should not be admitted to any of the Public Wash Houses except for the purpose of interviewing their parents for the purpose of obtaining advice and assistance on the questions of home management etc.

Unfortunately, some of the parents did not strictly adhere to the regulation in its entirety and after another serious accident to a youngster, it was definitely made compulsory that under no circumstances whatsoever must any child be admitted to any part of a Public Wash House and this regulation is still operative at the present time.

Baths and Wash Houses Historical Archive

## CHAPTER 9.

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With a desire to improve the health of the community the Baths & Wash Houses Committee decided to provide space and facilities for physical exercises and with this object in view the Women's Swimming Bath at the Leaf Street and Mayfield Baths was converted into a Gymnasia and equipped for use during the winter months. At New Islington Baths the basement was fitted up as a play room for children of both sexes under 12 years of age.

The charge for the use of the Gymnasia at Leaf Street and Mayfield was  $\frac{1}{2}$ d per person and for a monthly ticket 4d each.

The opening ceremony was performed by Alderman John Mark, the Mayor of Manchester in January 1891.

Free admission was granted to the children using the play room at New Islington and the opening ceremony for this centre was performed by Alderman Alfred Evans, Chairman of the Baths Committee in February 1891.

Although everything possible was done by the Committee in providing such splendid facilities for health giving exercises and providing a trained Instructor in attendance, the attraction soon fades away, and both Gymnasias were closed down a few years later owing to lack of patronage.



## CHAPTER 10.

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A most generous and thoughtful act of thanks and appreciation took place on August 13th 1903, whereby R.G. Lawson Esq. a well known Solicitor and Member of the Manchester City Council and Baths Committee offered to the latter a sum of money to be expended at the rate of £5 per annum for prizes towards the encouragement of breast stroke swimming in boys and girls under the age of 13 years, resident in the Parliamentary Division of Manchester.

The reason given by the Donor for this generous act was that as a boy he had learnt to swim in the Leaf Street Baths, and as he had now the honour to be on the Committee the gift was made as a token of appreciation.

The offer was accepted with hearty thanks, and conditions for such races and prizes drawn up and put into immediate operation. Competitions for these prizes were held annually until the outbreak of war in 1939 with great success.

## CHAPTER 11.

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The first complete system of having Electric Call Bells fixed in all the Private Wash Baths was adopted in 1897 and ever since has been a permanent part of the equipment of modern bathing establishments. This feature has proved a wise safe-guard upon many occasions since that date, the reason for the original innovation in Bath equipment being due to a fatal accident which occurred in a private wash bath at the Mayfield establishment, whereby a bather (subject to fits) lost his life by drowning.

The duties of Bath attendants are many and varied in character but the most important is that of watching over the safety of bathers both young and old, and preventing, if possible, accidents from drowning, particularly in the Swimming Baths. With this object in view the Baths & Wash Houses Committee deemed it advisable that all attendants should be proficient swimmers and capable of rendering immediate assistance in cases of emergency. In an endeavour to attain this object it was decided that the staff should endeavour to gain the necessary knowledge and experience in the method of resuscitation of the apparently drowned as recommended by Dr. Sylvester (an acknowledged expert at that time) and thus make themselves proficient to put the same to practical use at any time if so required. The whole of the staff took advantage of the facilities provided for obtaining the necessary instruction, and practically all passed the tests made at the termination of the classes. The examination taking place in December 1900.

Since that date it has been compulsory that all employees engaged as Bath Attendants must be Swimmers, whilst to be the holder of a Life Saving Award is an added advantage to anyone applying for this particular position in the Baths Department.

It has always been the aim and desire of the Baths Committee and its Officials to encourage in every way and to induce both children and the adult general public to patronise the Baths and make themselves proficient in the art of Swimming and Life Saving. It was therefore, decided on April 15th 1903 to grant a free season ticket, available for 12 months, to all children who were winners of the various competitions promoted by the Manchester & Salford District Schools Swimming Association; also to all members of the Manchester City Police Force and Fire Brigade who were successful in passing the tests of the Royal Life Saving Society, a ticket admitting them to any of the Corporation Baths as long as they remained members of the Force or Brigade. This generous action the Committee has been greatly appreciated by all those who have been the recipients of these free tickets.

In May 1903, a resolution was passed asking for a report from the General Superintendent upon the practicability of establishing classes for teaching Life Saving in connection with the Baths.

A scheme was prepared and accepted by the Committee and put into operation in August 1903, thus "Citizen's Life Saving Classes" were



initiated and became a great and instant success.

Manchester, but more particularly, the Baths Committee, have therefore, the distinction and honour of being the pioneers in the promotion and formation of Citizen's Life Saving Classes, and in later years their scheme was copied by a number of other Municipalities.

The following were the rules and conditions attached to the scheme as first drawn up :-

Classes were to be formed with a qualified instructor or instructress in attendance, the requisite books etc. provided, and free admission to the baths granted during the time the classes were being held.

These classes to be divided into 2 sections - adults over 16 years of age and juniors under 16 years of age - for both sexes.

At the termination of the course of instruction the candidates would be examined by a representative of the Royal Life Saving Society, and if successful, a special presentation ticket would be granted admitting the bearer to any Bath for twelve months, free of charge. In addition to these free passes a medallion and certificate would be presented to the successful candidates by the Royal Life Saving Society.

The awards offered for proficiency in Life Saving, were not however, easily won, as the following outline of the examination tests indicate.

Each candidate must have a general knowledge of circulation, respiration and resuscitation, in addition to proficiency in rescue and release drill on land and in the water. Each candidate must carry the patient 20 yards in the water, and show perfection in four methods of release. Each competitor must swim 100 yards on the breast, and 50 yards on the back without using the arms; and be able to bring from the bottom of the Bath at the deep end an object, to prove they are able to get to the bottom in an emergency demanded it, and bring the body to the surface.

This branch of the Committee's work proved most successful, right from the start and has been a recognised part of the activities of the Department right up to the present time.

The inauguration of these Citizen's Life Saving Classes have been the means of many thousands of Males and Females making themselves proficient in the knowledge and practical application of assistance in cases of drowning, and large numbers of lives have been saved by the prompt application of the principles of resuscitation of the apparently drowned in cases of emergency.

The appointment of fully qualified instructors with the requisite knowledge of Life Saving and ability to impart the same

to others especially in class formation, was of considerable importance and demanded serious consideration especially as the success or failure of the whole scheme would be proved by the results of the examination held at the end of each course of instruction.

The Committee, were however, fortunate in obtaining the services of 4 fully qualified and proficient members of the Manchester City Police Force, by kind permission of the Watch Committee and the Chief Constable, These instructors consisted of 1 Inspector, 2 Sergeants and 1 Constable and all thanks and credit must be accorded to them for the manner in which they carried out their duties and for the results obtained. Their efforts made the scheme a lasting and brilliant success and are still bearing good fruit and carrying on in 1944 - a period of 41 years from the institution of these classes - a splendid and praiseworthy record.

Owing to the keen interest shown by the General Public and the large demands made for instruction in the various methods of Life Saving which could not be met by the 4 Police Instructors it was decided that as many classes should be formed as possible and that members of the Baths Staff who were fully qualified should be requested to act as Instructors, and that those carrying out these extra duties should be remunerated by a payment not exceeding 15/- per week in addition to their ordinary wages.



Committee, and six other establishments have been likewise converted and are all proving successful in meeting a long felt want in many districts where there are no other Public Halls available.

An interesting item which will not be out of place at this juncture was a resolution passed by the Parks Committee dated June 26th 1889 which was placed before the Baths Committee and which read as follows:-

"That in the opinion of this Committee it is desirable that when Open Air Baths are provided in any of the Public Parks under the jurisdiction of this Committee they should be provided by and at the expense of this Committee, and that the Communication from the Baths Committee be acknowledged with an intimation that this Committee are now giving the subject their careful consideration."

This minute was passed because the Baths Committee had made the request that any Bath, Open or Closed, should be under their control and jurisdiction.

This suggestion did not receive very much support because the Parks Committee proceeded with a scheme whereby the first Open Air Swimming Bath in Phillips Park was opened in June 1891 and since that baths erected in all the Public Parks have been under the control of the Parks Committee.

## CHAPTER 12.

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### PROGRESS IN THE ERECTION AND EQUIPMENT OF THE PUBLIC BATHS.

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The improvement in the general design, construction, elevation, equipment, material use and internal fitting since the Baths & Wash Houses Committee took over the bathing establishments in Manchester in 1877 have been, in many ways, of a varied character; whilst a comparison of present day buildings with the first set of baths erected by the Corporation, shews what strides have been made to cater for the health and cleanliness of the general Public on more modern lines, whilst the materials now used inside are certainly more servicable and hygienic than in the older establishments.

The elevation and exterior appearance are of a more pleasing, varied, and inviting character, and a distinct change for the better from the plain, drab looking buildings of years ago. In addition it is attractive, and the means of the public patronising the establishments in larger numbers.

Another valuable asset is that the area of land utilised for the erection of Baths in the City is now much greater than that covered by the establishments built between the years 1856 to 1890, which undoubtedly gives greater scope in providing those essential adjuncts which otherwise could not be taken into consideration on smaller sites.

When Public Baths were first erected in the City, no consideration was given to the question of providing facilities for females to bathe, either in the Wash or Plunge Bath Sections, the general scheme being that the Swimming and Slipper Baths provided were divided into two sections, 1st and 2nd class, for Males only.

After some years, owing to the great demands that were being made to the Local Authorities to provide bathing facilities, in all branches, for use by Females, the Baths & Wash Houses Committee decided to set apart a section of each establishment upon one day each week for their exclusive use.

For a long time this concession was sufficient to satisfy the demands then made, but eventually the use being made of the facilities then available for females had increased to such an extent that special consideration had to be given to the question, particularly as regards any new buildings which were to be erected

The experience thus gained, convinced the Committee that in all future schemes there should be provision of equal facilities for both sexes both as regards Swimming and Wash Bath sections, and in all the later establishments this has been carried out,



and the wisdom of this decision fully justified and appreciated.

In addition, the greater interest taken during the past number of years in competition swimming races by females, has had a tendency to bring the subject to provision of plunge baths for the fairer sex more prominently forward, whilst Mixed Bathing has become so popular that larger accommodation must be considered in any scheme concerning Public Baths.

The internal equipment of Swimming Baths has so much improved and advanced in recent times, that the comparison with baths even a few years ago, is most marked.

In the earlier buildings, the use of woodwork was very prevalent, but this has now been eliminated and replaced by glazed bricks, tiles, terrazzo slabs for dressing box partitions and enamelled ware, whilst the gangways are now of red, ribbed, non-slip tiles or terrazzo in lieu of concrete, slate and stone, the former being recognised as the best and most suitable flooring where so much water is present. Some steps leading into the swimming pool have superseded the old style of the wooden staircase system.

In the place of the old wooden washing troughs in the pools, there are now built in, white and green glazed troughs with running water (hot and cold) which always keep the same clean. In one establishment, these troughs were not included in the scheme, but separate compartments provided with a hot and cold water shower attached to each, and in some places, automatic showers are fitted. Porcelain handrails and scum troughs have been and are rapidly replacing the old metal type.

The difficulties experienced in catering for a large number of bathers where there is a restricted number of dressing cubicles has been greatly overcome by the installation of the system of "Locker" arrangements, which can easily be fitted in a conveniently adjacent room and so allow a larger number of persons to be able to use the plunge bath. Another system adopted in the later baths was that of having collapsable dressing boxes which could be folded flush up to the wall and thus extend the width of the Swimming Bath when the same was converted into a Public Hall.

The system for emptying, refilling and heating the water in the Swimming Baths prior to the year 1906 was that upon certain days each week, the pool was emptied of water after the bathers had left at night, "cleaned out", refilled from the towns main and then the fireman or stoker had to work all night heating the large quantity of water by means of direct steam injection, which had to reach a temperature suitable for bathing purposes and be ready for 6 a.m. the next morning when the baths were opened to the General Public, that being the recognised time in Manchester at that period.



This process usually occurred upon two occasions each week, so that for two days the water was nice and clean, whilst for the remaining five days, well, sufficient thereof, especially if there had been a large number of persons using the same.

Consequent upon this system being in force, it became a common practise for bathers when attending the baths to ask "Is it clean water day?", hence this expression became a general one all over the town.

The latest and more modern apparatus and appliances which are now an acknowledged and essential part of Swimming Bath Equipment in Manchester, is the Filtration, Aeration and Chlorination system.

By this process there is a continuous circulation of the water during the whole time the baths are open, the same being drawn out of the pool from the deep end by pumps, passed through a filter, then an Aerator and finally through a Calorifier or Heater to regain the temperature lost by the process, after which it is returned back to the bath at the shallow end. On the return journey it is chlorinated by means of either Chlorine Gas or Liquid Chloros which is forced into the water at a point nearest the entry to the pool. By this process the water is kept in a clean, fresh and inviting condition, free from bacteria and fit to bathe in at any time without risk of contamination, disease or danger of infection. The system also ensures that the water is always in a constant state of purity and clarity and the circulation is continuous from morning until closing time at night.

These plants have greatly revolutionised the system regarding the emptying and refilling of swimming baths and in place of the old stereotyped expression of "Is it clean water day" the answer is now "Every Day".

In addition, the installation of the filtration system in Swimming Baths has been the means of a great saving in the total consumption and cost of water to the Baths Department, less hard work for the staff, and more satisfactory conditions prevailing than when the old system was in operation.

The possibility of filtration plants for Public Baths first took shape by the rough experiments carried out from the ideas originated in the mind of the then Chairman of the Manchester Baths Committee, during the period that the Victoria Baths were being erected (these were opened in 1906).

The improvement in later years which has been effected with respect to the Wash Bath section is most marked, and has certainly proved beneficial and more hygienic from the bathers point of view.



The internal equipment now consists of white porcelain Wash Baths fitted flush up to the glazed brick walls, and so prevents any cavity being available for the accumulation of dirt. Previously the Wash Baths were of iron or other material, glazed or enamelled, and fitted with a wooden casing over the top, sides and front, the same being a harbourer of dirt and articles left by the bathers. In addition, the fittings and appliances have improved out of all recognition. In the place of lead and iron piping, iron valves and fittings used largely in the earlier built baths, these are now being replaced by light copper and galvanised piping and brass fittings with chromium plated valves, mixing boxes, showers and other up-to-date appliances.

Another improvement which has been effected is the dispensing with as much timber as possible owing to the humid atmosphere and quantity of water always prevalent in baths which caused the wood to rot and decay, the same having to be renewed at heavy cost. This has now been replaced by the use of glazed bricks and terrazzo slabs for wash baths (partitions) having a much more inviting appearance, being easier to keep clean, and in addition, lasting for many years without requiring attention or renewal.

In like manner the old concrete flooring has been replaced by tiles and terrazzo.

The ventilation of baths is another section which has received very careful consideration and attention and it can safely be said, that so far as the Manchester Baths are concerned, they are now in such a condition that no genuine complaints could be made against them regarding humidity, oppressiveness or coldness. They are in fact, in a condition suitable for any occasion.

Electricity has played a big part in improving conditions in many directions, both for illumination and driving power. It has replaced "Gas" for lighting purposes, giving a much brighter and attractive appearance, and is certainly more pleasant to the bathers.

The running of all the Machinery, including pumps, motors, etc. is now all done by electric power as against the old style of Steam Power. This is much easier to control, cleaner to use, and certainly far more economical than having to drive by means of steam engines, the power for which was obtained from large steam boilers fired by coal, and which had to be kept at a high working pressure in order to be able to run all the machinery, continuously and with satisfaction.

Turkish Baths are termed "Luxury Baths" and only provided



for the better classes, but this is not true as they are most beneficial in more ways than one and applicable to all classes of the community. It is, therefore, essential that the same should be organized on modern lines. Originally the system of heating for this class of bath was by "Coke Ovens" which had to be kept fired up, burning both day and night, a most unsatisfactory procedure. During the last few years this system has been abolished and a thermostatic controlled heating apparatus is now installed for heating the Turkish Baths by means of Steam, with a resultant improvement not only in the saving of fuel, man power, cleaning of ovens etc. but most important a constant level of temperature, greater satisfaction to bathers and greater advantages to the administration.

The issue of tickets of admission to bathers according to the class of bath required has also been improved with saving in costs and many other directions. The old style of the "Railway Ticket System" has now been abolished in this Department and replaced by the "Roll Ticket" system. In addition to the fact that the cost of roll tickets is much lower than the "Railway" type, the system has the advantage that larger stocks can be carried and stores kept in a much smaller space.

Still further up to date methods have been provided at several establishments in lieu of the "Roll" or "Railway" tickets by the installation of "Cash Registers". These machines record all receipts for cash, the number of bathers, and prints the correct ticket for the various classes of baths required. The advantages accruing from this innovation are threefold:- Turnstiles for recording purposes are redundant. The necessity for maintaining large stocks of printed tickets (which immediately become so much waste paper in the event of any variations in the scale of charges) is obviated. A complete record of the receipts and total bathers is contained in the machine and available at any time.

The tall chimneys attached to the various baths of the older type are now conspicuous by their absence and in lieu thereof only a low one is now necessary. This has been made possible by the use of low pressure steam boilers and other improvements and gadgets, the burning of coke instead of coal to generate steam and likewise the adoption of electricity for driving power for machinery. This system has been the means of eliminating "Black Smoke" to a great extent.

In many districts the customers at the various establishments live a considerable distance away, and so use a pedal cycle to travel to the baths. This requires some place being allocated in the building where the same may be stored. To meet this demand, bathers can now store their cycles in a locked room, at



a small charge. The bathers can then have their swim or wash bath in comfort, knowing their machines are safe and will be there when they come out, but they would not have this confidence if accommodation were not so provided. They would have to leave their cycles outside the building and run the risk of the same being stolen during the period they were in the building.

Weighing machines, Hair Drying Machines, Hair Cream Machines, and Costume wringers are amongst other innovations provided for the benefit of persons patronising the Public Baths and are great appreciated and utilised.

## CHAPTER 13.

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In the latter part of 1903 a washer at the New Islington Public Wash House, after washing her clothes was mangling them on the mangle provided, and whilst trying to get a thick article under the rollers trapped her fingers, severely injuring them. She claimed damages from the Corporation on the grounds of negligence of the Corporation or their servants. This was repudiated and liability denied. A test case was therefore made of the accident, an action entered in the High Court, and the case brought up for trial at the Manchester Summer Assizes on July 14th 1904 before Mr. Justice Jelf and a special Jury.

The hearing lasted two full days, during which many legal arguments took place, and much expert evidence was tendered for both sides.

The result of the trial was that the Jury returned a verdict for the Corporation and the Judge gave judgement with costs stating that the "Corporation have established the principle and I think the Corporation have done their duty to the ratepayers in what they have done".

Counsel who appeared on behalf of the Corporation were Mr. Sutton and Mr. Gordon Hewart (later Lord Hewart - Chief Justice of England).

Following on the result of this test case which had proved favourable to the Department, it was decided to try to make all Mangling machines in use at the various Public Wash Houses as "fool proof" as possible, to avoid accidents in the future, and with this idea in mind an Engineer employed by the Baths & Wash House Committee experimented and eventually was successful in devising an appliance which, when fixed, satisfied all demands. It was attached along the front of the rollers and so regulated that immediately anyone tried to force a thick article under it the slightest pressure against the front plate threw the driving strap off the pulley and the machine instantly stopped.

This patent was at once tried out under actual working conditions and proved highly successful, with the result that the whole of the Mangling Machines under the Committee's control were equipped with this highly successful appliance and accidents largely eliminated so far as this class of machinery is concerned. A monetary grant was made to the employee who was the instigator of this patent being brought into practical use.

A favourable report was received from H.M. Senr. Lady Inspector of Factories upon these new and satisfactory 'safety guards' affixed to the Mangling Machines in the Public Wash Houses.



## CHAPTER 14.

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In the early period of Baths each establishment did its own washing of towels, but with a view to reducing maintenance charges on the working of Baths, and of centralising the work, a system was adopted about 1900, whereby extra machinery was purchased and erected in the Mayfield Establishment Laundry to undertake the washing of towels, bathing drawers, costumes etc. for the Leaf Street, New Islington and Mayfield Baths. Arrangements were also made to reduce costs and produce better results by

Cheetham	to wash for	Red Bank
Osborne Street	" " "	Newton Heath
Gorton	" " "	Whitworth

(It will be noted that at this time there were only nine sets of Public Baths in the City.)

This system operated for two years, during the whole of that period all the cartage of clean and soiled towels to and from the various Baths being carried out by private contractors. This proved very expensive and unsatisfactory and after careful consideration of all the aspects and the advantages which would accrue, the Committee decided to purchase a Horse and suitable Conveyance to carry out this very essential work. The capital cost of this transaction, wisdom shown, and the charge made, was highly successful. In later years the mode of transport was altered the horse and van being sold and superseded by the purchase of a Motor Van. This was in the year 1910.

Owing to the progress made by the erection of new baths, during the following years it became necessary to re-consider the whole question of the washing and transport of the articles required by all the establishments.

By this time the accommodation provided by the Municipality for bathing etc. had by 1930 increased to 20 Public Baths and 15 Public Wash Houses, a total of 35 establishments, or 22 separate buildings, and owing to the difficulties and inconveniences which were constantly being experienced it had to be recognised that the old method of the washing arrangements at several establishments and the constant supply of clean articles required was a question which must receive very careful and serious consideration.

For some time the General Superintendent had been giving this branch of work great attention, due to the difficulties which he had experienced in keeping all the establishments supplied with towels and other articles to run the establishments smoothly and without complaints. He, therefore, submitted a comprehensive

and detailed report with the recommendation that a Central Establishment Laundry should be erected on land which was adjoining the Moss Side Baths and owned by the Baths Committee. This would centralise the whole of the washing of the many and varied articles required to service the various establishments, and in addition, would be able to cater for any new Baths contemplated in the future. This scheme was agreed to and entailed the purchase of a large amount of new machinery, but a proportion of the equipment was provided by utilising the Washing Machines, Hydro Extractors, Drying Chambers etc. removed from some of the Baths where the washing of these articles had previously been undertaken.

The building was erected, fully equipped and ready for use on February 14th 1931, and comprised:-

5	Rotary Washing Machines.	4'2" x 3'.
1	"	" " " 18" x 26"
6	Hydro Extractors	31" dia.
1	"	" " 21" "
1 - 8	Roller Drying & Finishing Calender	
1 - 4	"	" " " "
2	Continuous Drying Chambers (made into one)	
		27' x 10' x 10'
1	Wringing and Mangling Machine.	

along with other necessary equipment essential to carry out the washing required.

This Laundry proved capable of turning out well over 5,000,000 clean towels etc. per year for the various Bathing Establishments. To carry out this stupendous task a staff of over 35 was necessary. In addition the process of "collection of soiled" and "delivery of clean articles" had to be taken into account, and this entailed the purchase of 3 large Motor Vans and the engaging of 3 Drivers whose time was practically fully occupied by this work.

After a few years working of the Central Establishment Laundry the experience gained, proved that the Machinery and Equipment were capable of meeting further demands if necessary, and it was decided to contact the other Departments of the Corporation with the intention of obtaining the business of undertaking the washing of towels etc. used by the staffs - at reasonable charges.

This suggestion was favourably received and agreed to by each Department. Up to the present time the Central Establishment Laundry has been able to carry out this work and has given satisfaction in addition to keeping the staffs at the Laundry fully employed, and this service has proved most remunerative to the Baths & Wash Houses Department.



The extra work undertaken is in excess of the usual requirements of the Department and has caused no dislocation in the smooth working so far as supplies are concerned.

Baths and Wash Houses Historical Archive

## CHAPTER 15.

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In 1878 arrangements were made whereby a party of 12 or more juveniles, if accompanied by a Teacher or some other responsible person were admitted to either the Leaf Street or Mayfield Baths at any time at one half the usual ordinary charge. Tracing this onwards, it was the forerunner of the splendid scheme now operative between the Baths and Education Committee's for the bathing and instruction in swimming of School Children which has proved so successful and beneficial to the health of the children.

The first co-ordinated attempts to arrange for the bathing of School Children in batches was decided upon in March 1886, when an arrangement was made with the School Authorities whereby the latter could purchase tickets of admission on the basis of 500 at 1d each, admitting to the 2nd Class Baths, and 250 at 1d each admitting to the 1st Class Baths.

Times of attendances of scholars could be fixed with Masters or Managers of the Schools, but it was compulsory that one or more teachers or other adult persons should accompany the children and hand over one ticket for each child as they entered the building, the bath used being in accordance with the ticket forfeited.

In the year 1886 the first effort was made by the Baths Committee to induce the Education Committee to send scholars in batches during school hours, and to induce the children to attend the baths after 4-30 p.m. upon payment by the youngsters of reduced rates of admission.

About the year 1896 the question of granting further facilities to scholars to attend the baths after school hours was again under consideration. The idea was to try and foster in the children an incentive to visit the various establishments after school hours and encourage the ambition to learn to swim. By so doing they obtained healthy exercise and it inculcated in them habits of cleanliness which accrued from such sport and which it was hoped would grow with them and continue through manhood or womanhood and married life, and continued by any family which they might have.

It was therefore, decided that children after school hours should be granted admission to the 1st Class Baths at a charge of 1d each, and the 2nd Class at ½d each. The success of this experiment surpassed all expectations and is proved by reference to the Annual Reports issued by the Baths & Wash Houses Committee, wherein is outlined the number of Boys and Girls who attend the baths each year under the scheme.

This small beginning, however was the means of finally



bringing into operation the splendid and well organised scheme eventually agreed to between the Baths & Education Committee's for the bathing of school children which is still working so smoothly at the present time, although it must be remembered that now approximately 400,000 boys and girls attend the various bathing establishments each year under the scheme.

In the year 1904 a new experiment was tried at a certain number of baths which was an innovation to existing schemes. It referred to Scholars who attended the baths during school hours in charge of a teacher, but for whom no provisions had previously been made during the period the schools were closed for the Summer Holidays, other than by paying the ordinary juvenile rates of admission. To a very large number of children the question of getting the money to take them for a swim was beyond the means of the parents and the health and cleanliness of the youngsters was being affected, to say nothing of the disadvantage to inculcating the spirit of partaking in this most healthy sport and pastime.

In an endeavour to remedy this state of affairs it was decided to admit children of school age to certain baths upon 2 days each week (1 day at others) between the hours of 9-30 a.m. and 4-30 p.m. free of charge during the period of the Annual Summer School Holidays - viz. from July 15th to August 15th on the principal of "go as you please".

The experiment proved most successful and was greatly appreciated by the youngsters, the attendance during the month mentioned reaching the splendid totals of:-

Boys	...	...	...	...	...	95,993
Girls	...	...	...	...	...	39,713
						<u>135,706</u>

The generosity of the Committee was well repaid especially by the knowledge that so many thousands of youngsters had been afforded the opportunity of having a wash, who otherwise would have been unable to realise the pleasure of cleanliness or the joy experienced by splashing about in clear water.

The experiment thus tried in the year 1904 was continued for a great number of years, and was always most successful and greatly appreciated.

For a great number of years it has been the recognised custom for the Baths Committee to allow free admission of Scholars to the various Baths and in addition provide qualified instructors to give lessons in swimming to both boys and girls attending the establishment.

Taking into account the fact that there were approximately 400,000 Scholars attending the Baths each year without any charge and the fact that Swimming Instructors were in attendance it will be realised that the cost borne entirely by the Baths Committee was very heavy. With a desire to reduce the cost of this very essential service an application was made to the Education Committee in 1911 asking for a monetary grant towards the expenses incurred in teaching swimming to scholars. It should be noted no request was made for any payment for each scholar admitted to the Baths.

This application did not meet with any sympathy at that time, because the request for payment was not acceded to.

No progress was made so far as obtaining a grant towards the cost of bathing and teaching swimming to school children until the year 1923 when, after many conferences between the two Committees it was finally decided that the Education Committee should appoint qualified Swimming Instructors - Male and Female - and bear the whole of the cost of the salaries of these employees. In addition it was also agreed that a grant of £750 per annum should be made to the Baths Committee towards the expenses incurred in providing the bathing facilities, towels etc. for all the scholars, boys and girls who attended the baths under the arrangements already in existence.

At a later date - viz. 1935 the above amount was increased to £1,500 per annum by a decision of a Special Expenditure Committee and approved by the City Council.



## CHAPTER 16.

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Previous to the year 1895 the administration of the respective establishments had been under the control of the Superintendent who lived on the premises. Each Superintendent was solely responsible to the Committee for the Management, Conduct, etc. of his own establishment. As the Department increased, however, it was decided (after full consideration had been given to the matter by the Baths Committee) to appoint a General Superintendent to take over the control and management of the whole of the Baths owned by the Manchester Corporation. His duties would be to attend all the meetings of the Sub-Committee and General Committee, and he would be held entirely responsible for the conduct of the business of the various Baths, his position to give him the rank and status of "Head of the Department".

This decision resulted in the appointment of Mr. Joseph Derbyshire as General Superintendent along with his wife as Matron, and this proved a most highly successful choice with excellent results. Mr. Derbyshire did much to bring the Manchester Baths to the front rank, and proved himself a most conscientious and painstaking Official, later becoming a recognised authority and expert on Baths in all parts of the country. He was looked upon with great respect and his advice and opinion were eagerly sought and acted upon.

Great advancement in the erection, equipment and other essential details connected with Baths were made during his term of office as General Superintendent, a position which he held until his death (a period of 24 years) during which time he gave good and faithful service to the Committee and the General Public.

At the time of his appointment as General Superintendent there were only 8 Public Baths and no Wash Houses, but upon his demise this number had increased to 16 Public Baths and 7 Public Wash Houses, a total increase of 15 buildings, during his term of office.

The vacancy caused by his death was filled by the appointment of Mr. Albert Teasdale (the writer of this history) to the position of General Superintendent. He entered the services of the Committee on March 31st 1896 as a Junior and by promotion had risen to and gained the honour of becoming Chief Clerk when he was elected Head of the Department on November 2nd 1920.

It is interesting to note the advancement made in the provision of Bathing and Wash House Establishments up to 1945 when the second General Superintendent retired as compared with the number available in 1895, the figures being:-

- 24 sets of Public Baths
- 20 sets of Public Wash Houses
- 1 large Central Establishment Laundry
- 1 Engineering, Maintenance and Repair Workshop
- 1 large Central Stores.

It is rather unique, when considering that from August 1895 up to May 1945, Manchester has only had two Officials filling the position as Chief Official of the Baths Department, a period of 49 years from the date of the first appointment of a General Superintendent.

Both Superintendents held the office for over 24 years, each having practically the same length of service.



## CHAPTER 17.

This history being spread over such a great number of years, constant changes in Rules and Regulations have taken place during that period, and it may be interesting to outline some of the more important and even amusing decisions arrived at by those in Authority for the benefit of both the General Public and the Department.

To allow the reader to follow the same clearly all the actions and episodes have been compiled in yearly sequence.

1878 It was not long after the Corporation of Manchester had taken over the Mayfield and Leaf Street Baths & Wash Houses that alterations in the charges were made by the issue of a "Special Season Ticket" admitting the individual owner to any Plunge Bath at a charge of 12/6d each, available for 6 months from the day of issue. The request for these tickets came from the Young Mens Christian Association. Since that time, Season Tickets have always been on sale.

An amusing extract from the minutes of the Committee dated August 1st was to the effect that the Engineer at the Leaf Street Baths be paid 1/- each time the baths were emptied and 6d for cleaning each bath, on condition that he came 2 hours before the time of opening the baths. Certainly not a very remunerative job.

1879. A Mangling Ticket issued at a charge of 1d per dozen or part of a dozen articles, when a Mangling Machine in the Public Wash House was used.

On June 26th the first set of Bye Laws for the Management, Use and Regulation of the Public Baths & Wash Houses of the City of Manchester were submitted to the Committee. These bye laws contained 30 clauses for the Baths Section and 15 for the Wash House section. The same were approved, and the City Council recommended to adopt the same under the Corporate Seal and to authorise the Town Clerk to take the necessary steps required by the Acts of Parliament for the purpose of giving validity thereto. These Bye Laws were eventually agreed to by the Local Government Board and became operative as and from October 1st 1879.

1879  
Cont.

A Season Ticket issued to any Association at a charge of 10/6d, provided the number purchased was not less than 50, whilst special Season Tickets were issued to individuals for the Season at a charge of £1/-/-, admitting the holder to either the Wash or Swimming Baths. The request for the Association Ticket was made by the Bennet Street Sunday School - New Cross.

The first application received from a private individual applying for the use of a 1st Class Plunge Bath for the purpose of holding a Swimming Gala was granted upon payment of a fee of £1/-/- to be paid in advance, and the hirer to provide 4 Policemen to preserve order. It was also a condition that no person be allowed to enter the bath unless the charge of 6d for a Swimming Ticket was paid for at the Ticket Office. The person to take these fees was not outlined. From the conditions attached to the use of the Bath it was evident that trouble was anticipated. Whether everything passed off smoothly or the Policemen had a busy time there is no record.

The following special regulation was passed:-  
"No Male Attendant allowed in the Wash Houses or Laundries".

1880.

The Public Wash House at Leaf Street was closed down owing to lack of patronage and a Ladies Swimming Bath erected on the site in lieu thereof.

1881.

Swimming Teachers were appointed to the Leaf Street and Mayfield Baths to give tuition in Swimming and Physical Education to the General Public - both Male and Female, at a charge. They were allowed a "Free Season Ticket" endorsed with the title "Authorised Teacher of Swimming".

Land and premises in Osborne Street, Abercrombie Street and Victor Street, Rochdale Road, purchased from a Mrs. Sissons for the sum of £2,600 for a residue of 998 years.

Even at this time Deputations from Local Authorities went visiting, for there is a resolution in the minutes of this year authorising the Chairman, when he thought fit, to visit other Towns for the purpose of inspecting appliances which might appear to him to be of use to the Committee in their future



1881  
Cont.

arrangements for Baths, also to request a few members of the Committee to accompany him for such purpose. A comparison of the wording of resolutions on the subject of Deputations at the present time is most interesting.

The famous Captain Matthew Webb, the first person to swim the English Channel gave a series of 6 performances in the Manchester Baths (2 at Leaf Street - 2 at Mayfield - 2 at New Islington) for a fee of £18-18-0 plus a first class return Railway Fare from and to London. What a splendid attraction for such a small fee.

Owing to a fatal accident which occurred at the Leaf Street Baths, the Committee decided in September to provide a Rake suitable for rescuing bathers in danger of drowning, also a suit of clothes for any attendant in charge, in the event of them having to enter the water to rescue a bather.

The reason for the decisions taken was that the attendant on duty at the time could not swim, although other employees who were swimmers were in other parts of the building, but when called they were too late in arriving on the scene to be of assistance.

It should therefore, be a strict regulation that all Bath Attendants should be capable swimmers, qualified in Life Saving Methods, so as to be able to render immediate and valuable assistance in emergencies, and in many cases, be the means of saving a human life.

A proof in favour of this course is to be found in the offer of the Humane Society for the Hundred of Salford, which was made to the Baths Committee - viz. "That for the encouragement of the Art of Swimming with the special object of saving life, and the promotion of the best methods of rescuing drowning persons, the Society offered the sum of £5 to be given as a prize or prizes to youths under the age of 18 years, who are sons of Burgesses of the Town and who display expertness and proficiency at an Annual Competition". This offer was immediately accepted with thanks and appreciation by the Baths Committee.

1882. The public Wash House at Mayfield was closed down at the end of August owing to the abuse by small laundresses (The same trouble has been experienced during recent years and drastic steps taken to combat the same). At a later date the portion used as a Wash House was remodelled and turned into a Central Establishment Laundry for the washing and drying of Bath Towels for the various Baths.

Bath Attendants at Leaf Street authorised to give Swimming Lessons at 6d each, each day except Saturday afternoons and Sundays, and at the end of the Season half the receipts to be handed over to them, the Corporation retaining the other half.

The making up of Ladies Bathing Costumes was in operation as early as 1882 when the Chairman of the Leaf Street Baths was authorised to purchase material and the Female Bath Attendants instructed to make the same up into Swimming Costumes.

A tender from the "Manchester Guardian" amounting to £10 per annum for advertising on the Mayfield Baths building was accepted.

1883. A claim for loss of valuables and money by a bather in the Turkish Bath at Leaf Street was heard at the Manchester Assize Courts on April 23rd, when a verdict was given for the Corporation on the grounds that they were not liable.

After the result of the trial a notice was posted in all baths to the effect that the Corporation will not be responsible for any articles belonging to frequenters of the Baths.

The same regulation, with very slight alterations is still operative in the year 1945.

An unusual incident occurred this year, for it is recorded that on September 26th the Baths Committee had before them two bathers, against whom complaints had been made that they refused to wear bathing drawers, used offensive language, and insulted bathers in the 2nd Class Plunge Bath at Leaf Street. They were fined 5/- each, to be paid the following Saturday. What would happen if the same action was taken at the present time?

1885. From a resolution passed this year it was evident that about this time complaints had been received regarding the water in the Swimming Baths not being kept at a



1885.  
Cont.

the water in the Swimming Bath not being kept at a uniform heat, for it was decided that the Superintendent at each bath must take the temperature of the water in the respective plunges at 9 a.m., 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. each day, the same to be recorded.

1888.

Special facilities granted to Swimming Clubs carrying with them reduced charges to members of Bona Fide Clubs to gain admission to the bath on 2 nights per week on production of their Membership Cards. (The charge was 2d instead of the usual 3d.) A Season Ticket for Club Members on similar lines was also instituted at the charge of 7/6d each, but these were only available during the Summer Months.

1890.

The question of working hours of Bath Attendants was brought forward when the staffs concerned made an application for a reduction of the same. Although no alterations were granted it was clear they had great cause for complaint when it is realised that they worked during the Summer Months from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. each week day, including Saturday, and on Sunday from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. and were only allowed half a days holiday per month - a total of 94 hours per week. What a change for the better has taken place when it is realised that the present hours are 47 per week and extra double payment if they work on Sunday.

1891.

The habit of pilfering from the Baths is not applicable to the present period only, for the minutes of the Committee for May 13th 1891 contain the following interesting resolution:- "That notices be printed and posted in the Baths offering a reward of forty shillings for the conviction of any person taking brushes, combs, towels, bathing drawers etc. from the Baths".

There is nothing on record to denote whether the Committee were successful or otherwise in their endeavours to check such stealing.

A rather unusual request was contained in a letter dated August 19th 1891 from "The Practical and Recreative Evening Classes Committee of Middleton", wherein they stated that they were desirous of adding to their present list of studies a "Laundry Work Class" as a special subject for their students during the

1891  
Cont.

Winter Months, and asked for the use on one evening each week, of the Public Wash House at New Islington, Mayfield, or Osborne Street (as they state "gratuitously of course") for the purpose.

The following surprising resolution was adopted i.e. "That the application now made be complied with in regard to the New Islington Baths".

An application of this character for the free use of a Public Wash House at the present time would receive rather short consideration and the result a foregone conclusion.

An unusual application was received from "The Apprentice House" Manchester, for permission to exhibit advertisement cards in various Baths regarding "Lodging Houses for Young Lads".

All kinds of wonderful suggestion are made from time to time by the General Public, one being to the effect that it would be a great boon if by so arranging the appliances each bather could make his own bath, also that every bath room should have in addition to the Wash bath, a steam and shower bath, the charge for which should be a uniform one of fourpence instead of the usual eightpence. The writer finishes his application by stating he feels confident that "this would meet with the approval of the Public". No doubt it would have done so if the Committee had agreed to the scheme, but this was not the case.

Due to complaints received from some bathers using the Leaf Street Turkish Baths, to the effect that they were not receiving proper attention so far as massage was concerned, owing to the Shampooer undertaking other duties for his special customers, it was decided to publish the following rather unusual notice which reads

#### NOTICE TO BATHERS

The shampooers engaged in these baths are not allowed to undertake any corn cutting, nail paring etc. or any work outside the duties of a shampooer.

The Committee appeal to the bathers to assist them to carry out this rule.



1891.  
Cont.

Whether any of the bathers gave much assistance to carry out this appeal and regulation is not ascertainable, but it is rather doubtful because the majority of the patrons of that establishment may not have been favourably disposed. They may have been 'special customers'?

1892

It was decided that all Male & Female employees of the Department be granted one half days holiday each week (2 years later this was altered to 1 full day off each week)  
Considering that the staff worked from 6 a.m. until 9 p.m. the time allowed off was very necessary. It was also decided that Female Office Attendants should not work on Sundays.

1894.

The Committee censured a Bath Attendant for using bad language to a bather. There is no record of what words the employee used, or even the purport of his remarks.

1895.

The Libraries Committee made an application for the use of the Westham Baths as a delivery station for books and cards, but the same was not granted.

"Under Water Swimming" and "High Diving Exhibitions" were considered "dangerous practice" and the Committee decided that no such events should be allowed to take place in any Corporation Swimming Bath.

1896.

Owing to the Wash Baths at New Islington and Leaf Street not being fully used, it was made compulsory that the Office Attendants at those Baths, in addition to their ordinary duties must make Ladies Bathing Costumes. Why the Office Attendants had to carry out this duty is not quite clear, unless at that time they had to act as Wash Bath Attendants in addition to Ticket issuing.

Assistance ropes were fixed in the Wash Baths for the use of elderly persons using the baths. A very sensible and necessary regulation.

1897.

The Osborne Swimming Club, having won the English Water Polo Championship for a continuous number of years, the shield presented by the Amateur Swimming Association became the property of the Club and as a token of appreciation of the many kindnesses and facilities granted them for practice purposes, the Club presented the said shield to the Baths Committee. This was accepted with thanks and fixed in the

1897  
Cont.

entrance of the Osborne Street Baths with an explanatory tablet.

A complete system of Electric Call Bells was installed in all Wash Baths so that a bather in distress could at once call for the assistance of the attendant. A splendid idea which has been the means of preventing many fatal accidents.

1898

Interest in bathing and swimming was evidently on the increase about this time, even amongst the Aldermen and Councillors, for on February 15th the City Council passed the following resolution:- "That the Baths & Wash Houses Committee be requested to take into consideration the advisability of opening to the Public - free of charge - the 2nd Class Wash and Swimming Baths." The Committee, however, after due consideration decided that in their opinion it was neither expedient or advisable to carry out such resolution. The Council later confirmed the action of the Committee.

Up to the year 1898 the Superintendents of the various Baths wore a special uniform which was provided by the Committee, but the City Council decided this year that no Superintendent or Chief Clerk, except those connected with the Police Force, be provided with Uniform Clothing.

Wages of Male Bath Attendants were fixed on and after April 1st at 23/- per week, after 2 years service advanced to 25/- and after 5 years to 27/- per week.

An application was received from a number of bathers requesting that they be allowed to store bicycles at the Baths. The same was agreed to conditional upon the Committee not being held responsible for loss or damage. In the following year this facility was cancelled owing to the damage which had been done to the property, and there being no proper storage for same.

1899

Owing to the several baths being largely used by Swimming Clubs for Galas and other entertainments, a definite rate of charges was made for such purpose.

1900.

The first complete set of rules and regulations for the governing and guidance of Swimming Clubs requiring to use either the 1st or 2nd Class Swimming Baths was put into operation on June 20th.



1900. Attendants engaged in the various Baths were required to make themselves proficient in the Dr. Sylvester method of resuscitation of the apparently drowned. This was most essential and a splendid decision of the Committee.

The "Building & Sites Sub Committee" was first appointed by the Baths & Wash Houses Committee

Electric Lighting was first installed at the Gorton, New Islington and Osborne Street Baths.

1903. The first experimental Filtration and Aeration Plant for the purification of Swimming Bath water was installed at the Newton Heath Baths. This was the forerunner of the present Filtration and Aeration system now universally adopted all over the country. Manchester once more led the way, and the saying that "What Manchester says today the country says tomorrow" was true in this direction.

1904. A well equipped workshop for Maintenance and new work was inaugurated in the basement at New Islington Baths. The plant comprised Steam Engines, Drilling, Screwing and Pipe Cutting Machines, Pipe bending appliances, smithy hearth and other equipment requisite for the Engineering work carried out at the various Baths and Wash Houses, also any new engineering work necessary for the installation of the essential plant at new buildings under the Committees control.

The question of the use that was being made by the Telegraph Messengers engaged at the general Post Office was further considered upon an application being received from the institute concerned. The existing arrangement was that tickets were purchased by the G.P.O. from the Baths Authorities at 1d each. These were given out to the boys and upon presentation at the Ticket Office window admitted the holder to the Swimming Bath. It appeared however, that a large number of the tickets were not being used by the Telegraph Messenger Boys, but sold to friends. In order to stop this practice the Post Office Officials suggested that a lump sum of £30 should be paid to the Baths Department each year, and all Messenger Boys in uniform upon production of a card issued to them by the G.P.O. be admitted to the 2nd Class Swimming Baths only.

1904.

Cont.

The scheme was agreed to and has proved both successful and beneficial to all parties.

Six special Wash Baths were removed from a room over the Ticket Office at Leaf Street to make an additional cooling room in the Turkish Bath to meet the demands which were being made upon that section of the establishment.

Owing to the crowding of the gangways and balconies around the Swimming Baths by spectators during the time the same were being used for Swimming Galas, Polo Matches etc., also the amount of damage done to woodwork, rails etc. it was decided to make a regulation which was put into force in 1904, fixing the maximum number of spectators allowed on the Gallery and Gangway of each Bath during any of the stated entertainments.

This idea was an excellent one, and besides obviating a lot of damage being done to the property, was also a safeguard against accidents by overcrowding.

1905.

An application dated March 15th was received asking that Season Tickets for Turkish Baths at Leaf Street and Whitworth be issued. The request was not granted, the opinion being that the charges for that class of bath was very low.

1906.

The Committee decided that the Official Residence of the General Superintendent of the Baths & Wash Houses Department should in the future be at the Victoria Baths, High Street, Manchester. (This establishment had been opened on September 9th 1906.)

1908.

It was decided as an experiment that during the months of February and March, the washing troughs in the Females Swimming Bath were to be opened for the washing of school girls - free of charge. This however, did not prove successful and was not patronised to any extent, consequently the scheme was abandoned.

A bather in one of the Turkish Baths was so forgetful that he left half a sovereign in a cubicle. This was found by the Shampooer, and being of an honest disposition he handed the same into the Ticket Office. At the end of 12 months there had been no claim made, so the Committee decided that the same be given to the



1908.  
Cont.

Shampooer subject to him agreeing to repay such sum should the loser at any time claim it. The employee benefitted by 10/- for his honesty.

A report was submitted by the General Superintendent upon the advisability and practicability of the Department making its own Soap for use in the various Establishment Laundries. Although it would have been possible to carry this out, the Capital outlay for the purchase and erection of the necessary plant, machinery etc. plus the cost of the raw materials required for such purpose was much too high, as compared with the amount paid each year the quantity of soap supplied by outside firms, hence the scheme was abandoned.

With the idea of brightening up the interior of some of the Public Baths, it was decided to approach the Art Gallery Committee with a request that a number of suitable pictures (no statues were mentioned) should be loaned with a view to their exhibition in various buildings under the jurisdiction of the Baths Committee. The request was not acceded to.

To reduce the cost of running the Baths, an application was made to the Electricity Committee for them to consider the question of reducing the price paid for electric current by the Baths Committee. This was turned down, likewise a similar application made years later.

1910.

The great interest in Swimming and Water Polo shewn by the Members of the Baths Committee was proved by their attendance at the various Swimming Entertainment held in the various Public Baths in the City under the auspices of the many Clubs hiring the establishments for the purpose. Unfortunately, some of the Officials of the Clubs refused to allow the members to enter the galas without payment, thus causing unpleasantness and irritation. To put an end to this a regulation was passed in August making it a condition of hiring of the Baths for Galas and other entertainments that the Members of the Baths Committee shall have the power of entry during the term of such letting.

1912.

A most revolutionary request was made to the Baths Committee in a petition received from a certain section

1912.  
Cont.

of the community requesting that facilities should be provided at the Baths for Mixed Bathing. This suggestion came as a great shock, as the idea of allowing Males and Females to bathe together was unheard of, thought to be against all rules of decency and should under no circumstances be allowed. The Committee promptly decided not to accede to this request.

Two years later a further application was received by the Committee for facilities for Mixed Bathing. This time however, the opposition was evidently not so great as in 1912 when the original request was received and so promptly turned down, and after lengthy and wordy discussion in Committee the question was put to the vote and resulted as follows:-

For allowing Mixed Bathing .....	8
Against " " " .....	7

thus the advocates of this new class of bathing won by one vote only, a very near thing.

Upon the above vote it was therefore decided that Mixed Bathing be allowed upon one day each week at the Withington Baths, the same to become operative from July 15th 1914.

The list of charges was fixed on the high side considering the ordinary charges then in force - viz.-

Adults (Male & Female).....	6d each
Juniors (under 16 years of age)	3d "
Hire of costumes .....	2d "
" " caps .....	1d "

Regulations and conditions as to the make and colour of costumes which could be worn, rules as to dressing accommodation and other restrictions as to admittance etc. were very strict and rigid.

Fortunately, ideas have changed considerably and Mixed Bathing is now fully recognised all over the country and has proved most popular and successful, the original ban as to the colour of costumes being abolished.

1913

With a desire to get the General Public to patronise the various Public Wash Houses in great numbers, and save the worry and trouble of women having to carry their bundles and baskets of clothing through the



1913  
Cont.

streets, an agreement was reached between the Baths and Tramways Committees whereby the latter granted regular washers a free carrying permit on all trams, upon application being made for the same at the Ticket Office of the Wash House used.

1915.

It was decided that in order that efficient oversight might be secured for the whole of the Baths & Wash Houses by Members of the Committee, and with a view to affording Members an opportunity of obtaining an intimate knowledge of the work of the Department, one member be appointed to each establishment who shall be authorised to exercise a special knowledge of the Bath or Wash House set opposite his name, and bring before the Sub-Committee any question affecting such place, as he may consider desirable.

A Works Supervising Sub-Committee consisting of seven members was first appointed by the Baths Committee.

The first charge of  $\frac{1}{2}$ d was instituted for extra towels required by bathers, over and above those included in the usual charges.

The clock in the tower of the Victoria Baths, was scheduled as a 'Public Clock'.

1916.

It was decided that when vacancies occur in the Department for a position of Superintendent or Resident Manager at any establishment, all employees must be given an opportunity of making application for the position.

Adequate facilities to be made for Female Bathing, also the Swimming Bath at each establishment must be open for the use of Females one day or a portion of one day each week during the Winter Months.

1918

The Public Wash Houses were opened at 6 a.m. instead of 7 a.m. owing to the large number of washers waiting for admittance. In addition they were to remain open until 10 p.m. for a period of 3 months as an experiment.

The first electrically driven Hydro Extractor was installed in Manchester at the Leaf Street Public Wash House.

During the war of 1914-1918, the Baths Committee held a Swimming Gala (under their auspices) at the Victoria Bath High Street, Chorlton on Medlock in aid of the Manchester Prisoners of War Fund, and the result was the sum of £117-1-2d was handed over. A very fine effort and thanks were extended to those who were responsible for carrying out the same.

1918.

Cont.

A suggestion was forwarded to the Baths Committee by Sir Edward Tootal Broadhurst asking whether it was possible for a portion of the Swimming Baths to be converted into Assembly Rooms. Again the following year a similar request was made that the Females Swimming Bath at Harpurhey should be converted into a Public Hall.

Both proposals were rejected, yet within a few years from this date the idea was eagerly accepted and proved most successful.

1919.

A proposal was submitted to the Committee dated January 8th to the effect that they might consider the desirability of converting the Ladies Plunge Bath at Harpurhey into a Public Wash House in order to meet the urgent demand for additional accommodation by the washers, the establishment being well patronised at the time. The suggestion was not acceded to.

1920.

The offer of a firm of Engineers near Manchester to be allowed to fix a trial equipment for the Chlorination of water used in the Swimming Baths at Victoria was accepted. The plant was installed with successful results. This was the first installation of this kind of plant to be put into use for Bath purposes in England. Since it has become an essential part of the Filtration, Aeration and Chlorination system all over the country.

Linen bathing caps could be hired by girl bathers who did not possess their own at a charge of  $\frac{1}{2}$ d because it had been made compulsory for all females using the Swimming Baths to wear bathing caps.

Owing to the large dimensions to which the Department had grown it was decided to purchase a Motor Car for use by the Chairman, Members of the Committee and the General Superintendent to visit the various Baths and Wash Houses, also other establishments outside the District to obtain information on Bath erection and equipment.

During this period a number of changes were made in the regulations in force in the Public Wash Houses, the following being some of the more important:-

No washer allowed the use of any Public Wash House for



1920  
Cont.

more than six hours on any one day.

System of booking the washing stalls in advance for a period of three months, tried out as an experiment at the Leaf Street establishment.

To relieve congestion of the queue in the early morning the Public Wash Houses to be opened at 5 a.m. during the Summer months. (This was discontinued on September 7th 1920)

Each washer to be allowed the exclusive use of a Hydro Extractor in the Public Wash House, and not made to share such machine with another washer.

Unclaimed articles of clothing left in the various Public Wash Houses to be disposed of at the end of three months.

Various other rules were also put into operation amongst them being that no Junior under 14 years of age be allowed to use the Wash Baths after 10 a.m. on Saturdays. This rule was necessitated by the large numbers of boys and girls visiting the baths on that day filling the establishments so that when adult bathers arrived from work they had often to wait for considerable periods to gain admission.

1921.

The General Offices of the Baths & Wash Houses Department were transferred from the Osborne Street Baths (where they had been situated for 25 years) to new premises at 38 Lloyd Street, Albert Square, Manchester.

The position of Matron at several of the Public Baths was abolished and the designation of 'Superintendent' of Branch Establishments altered to 'Manager'.

A fire occurred in the Establishment Laundry at the Victoria Baths whereby a large portion of the Towel Drying Chamber, other machinery and building were badly damaged.

A registration fee was first instituted, making it compulsory for Swimming Clubs using the 1st Class Baths to pay 10/6d per year and those using the 2nd Class Baths 5/- per year, plus each member paying the ordinary Club Rates of Admission.

1921  
Cont.

The charge for the use of extra towels was increased from  $\frac{1}{2}$ d to 1d each.

Facilities provided for the storage of cycles at a charge of 2d each at the Cheetham, Harpurhey, Moss Side, Newton Heath and Victoria Baths.

Books of 10 Tickets for use in the Turkish Baths were issued at reduced charges.

An Official Receipt from the City Treasurer for the Hire of the Baths to be produced to the Baths Official before the establishment is allowed to be used.

Boys over 8 years of age prohibited from bathing in the Females Swimming Baths. (Mixed Bathing however changed this when it was eventually allowed at most establishments.)

The first experiment was inaugurated of opening a Swimming Bath on Sunday mornings at the Victoria Baths for the exclusive use of Females. Previously there had been no such facilities provided in Manchester and needless to say the scheme was a success. Since then it has been a recognised part of the regulations to make the same arrangements at other baths each year.

The first sale of clothing left by washers in the Public Wash Houses took place. It was later decided that sales of such articles in future be held every three months. This system was continued until the year 1944 when it was decided that at the end of each six months a recognised Auctioneer should be engaged and a Public Sale by Auction should be held under his direction. The first occasion when this system was put into operation resulted in an immediate success.

An Oil Burning Apparatus was fixed to the Steam Boilers at the Harpurhey Bath as an experiment, but was very soon discarded as it was found to be too expensive and unsuitable.

The two wheels on the valves connected with the 2nd Class Wash Baths were removed, and a key provided for the exclusive use of the Attendant in charge for the supply of Hot and Cold Water. Another very important instruction which was issued to employees was to the effect that when preparing Wash Baths cold water must



1921  
Cont.

always be turned on first. Any bathers requiring additional hot or cold water must on no occasion be given a fresh supply until the door is opened and the bather completely out of the bath.

The use of the New Quay Street Wash House reserved upon one day each week for the use of Manchester Residents only, for a period of one month as an experiment.

This was consequent upon complaints having been received that the establishment was being occupied by Salford women to the detriment of the Manchester Ratepayers, this Bath being on the borders of Salford. The trial did not prove a successful proposition as the Wash House was only partly occupied on the special day, so the old arrangements were reverted back to.

1922

Consequent upon a fatal accident having occurred in the Swimming Bath at Bradford, the following special regulations were introduced:-

Attendants must be continually present in the Swimming Bath when there are bathers present.

No Swimmer shall, under any circumstances, be allowed to undress in one bath and swim in another.

On all occasions when Swimming Baths adjoin one another, and one is out of use, the communicating door must be kept locked.

Managers themselves, must, whenever necessary, carry out staff duties when members of the staff are temporarily absent from their duties.

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Lockers in Club rooms at the Victoria Baths allowed to be hired by Clubs, Schools and Individuals at a charge of 2/6d per annum.

Spectators only admitted to Mixed Bathing at the full rates of admission, and a charge of 3d made to Spectators during other bathing times at all Baths excepting Victoria, where the charge was 4d.

Free admission first granted to the Unemployed for the use of the 2nd Class Wash and Swimming Baths.

1922 No Dolly Tubs to be provided in future at any new  
Cont. Public Wash Houses opened, but wooden posers  
introduced instead.

No further contracts to be accepted for the winding  
of time pieces in the various Public Baths & Wash  
Houses, and in future all clocks to be attended to  
by the Baths Staff.

Water in the wash troughs in the Swimming Baths must  
not be more than 8" deep and the temperature not  
more than 90°.

All buckets and lading cans used in the Public Wash  
Houses to be handed over to the individual washer  
by the Ticket Office Attendant at the time of booking  
on, and no person to be booked off until the said  
articles have been returned to the office.

1923 The Baths Department was registered and authorised to  
use the official die on all stationery under the  
"National Scheme for Disabled Ex-Service Men".

A concert organised under the auspices of the Baths &  
Wash Houses Committee was held at the Victoria Baths  
Hall in aid of the Lord Mayor of Manchester's Unemployment  
Fund, and resulted in the sum of £139 being handed over.

The free issue of soap to all bathers discontinued and  
a charge of 1d per piece made.

Illuminated signs advertising Public Baths were fixed  
on Gas, Electricity and Tramway Standards in various  
parts of the City.

The posting of bills or posters of any kind on the  
outside walls of the baths prohibited in the future.

No articles of jewellery or money belonging to bathers  
to be taken charge of in the Ticket Office or by any  
person employed by the Committee.

All money found in the Baths to be paid into the City  
Treasurers Office and credited to the Baths Department.

Articles of any description which were left in the  
various Baths to be handed over to the Police Department  
and sold at the Annual Sale, the amount obtained to  
be credited to the Department account.



1923  
Cont.

No washer to be permitted to leave their clothing on the racks in the Public Wash Houses over night, and no person allowed to use more than one washing stall.

A system was first adopted whereby "Roll Tickets" were issued to bathers in lieu of the "Railway Tickets" previously in use. This was the means of a great saving in cost being effected.

All Male Attendants must wear White Jackets when on duty in the Wash or Swimming Baths.

Automatic Personal Weighing Machines were first installed in eight Public Baths.

1924

An application was received requesting that the Gorton Wash House be allowed to be used by Unemployed Mens Wives free of charge, but the Committee decided that they were unable to accede to the request.

Applications were also received for the use of the Victoria Baths Hall for Political Meetings on Sundays and for Whist Drives, but neither were granted.

A special regulation was adopted making it compulsory that "All persons using the Public Wash Houses must have a deposit of not less than 6d at the time of booking". This only referred to Washing Stalls, because no Rotary Washing Machines were installed in any of the establishments at this time.

1925.

A special deputation appointed to visit London for the purpose of inspecting Rotary Washing Machines in use in Public Wash Houses. The result of this visit was that the Committee decided that this class of machine was a great improvement on the old system of washing stalls, and a great labour saving device for women using the Public Wash Houses. It was also decided to purchase six Rotary Washing Machines and instal the same in the New Moston Public Wash House (then in course of erection). The result of the experiment eventually proved highly successful as will be seen from the previous chapter on Public Wash Houses. Moston, however, was the first establishment so equipped in the City.

The Chairman of the Baths Committee and the General Superintendent attended the first Conference of the Baths Superintendents Association held in the Leeds Town Hall.

1925  
Cont.

In an endeavour to relieve the acute distress of unemployment amongst the women during the Winter Months, it was decided that work should be found for a number in making up bathing drawers and bathing costumes, also undertaking various kinds of sewing. For this purpose the Committee received a monetary grant from the Ministry of Labour to purchase the necessary materials.

This was the commencement of the "Sewing Section" of the Department being inaugurated.

In like manner, work was found for a number of unemployed men to undertake cleaning and other duties in the Baths during the winter months and so help to relieve distress, even if only in a small way.

Scholars from outlying districts of the City allowed to use certain baths on payment of 1d each.

Wicket Gates were fixed to the entrances of Public Wash Houses to prevent persons and children obtaining admission without authority.

1926.

Permission granted to the Colne Urban District Council to copy the Proficiency Certificate issued by the Manchester Baths Committee to children passing certain Swimming Tests.

All receipts for the use of Public Wash House facilities to be placed by the Washer in boxes provided for the purpose in the entrances to the establishment.

1927

The first issue of Tickets for Wash Baths in book form at a reduced charge covering both 1st and 2nd class and available for 3 months from the date of issue.

The Education Committee took over the control of fixing the times of attendance of school children at the various Baths.

No employee to be allowed to receive gratuities from the General Public.

1928

The use of the Swimming Baths by Professional Swimming Teachers restricted between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Later in the same year the permits for admission of these teachers were discontinued, the Committee deciding to appoint their own Instructors in the future.



1928  
Cont.

This decision resulted in the Town Clerk preparing the necessary Bye Laws for this purpose, and these were eventually approved by the Ministry of Health.

In the following year 2 Male and 3 Female Swimming Instructors were appointed.

1929

In the 2nd class Swimming Baths no doors were fixed to the dressing boxes, and with the idea of giving more privacy, especially to adults and perhaps obtainin more patronage it was decided to apply to the Finance Committee for the necessary amount of money to carry out these alterations. The application however was turned down on the ground of "Economy" and the "time inopportune".

1930.

Sun Ray Baths opened at the Whitworth and Victoria Bat for use by the General Public. All the staff engaged were fully qualified operators.

Unfortunately the number of persons who patronised this section did not warrant the continuation of the same, and both establishments were closed down within a very short time - viz. in 1933.

The General Superintendent delegated to attend the fir Conference of the Royal Life Saving Society in London.

The question of the appointment of a Deputy General Superintendent was first considered, but later it was decided to appoint an "Outdoor Inspector" instead. Th was done in 1931 .

A Rota was formed in order of Seniority of Members of the Committee for the purpose of attending Conferences etc.

A Resolution was passed to the effect that no Physical Training or Games Instructors engaged by the Private Schools be allowed to teach Swimming in Public Baths to the Scholars under their control.

This was consequent upon the Committee having barred a Professional Swimming Teachers from using the Baths for their own Private gain.

1931

Proposed scheme for new Establishments on Kingsway, Wilbraham Road and Blackley Estates - also Turkish Baths at Harpurhey agreed to by the Baths Committee -

1931  
Cont.

but rejected by the Economy Committee.

A comprehensive and descriptive report prepared by the General Superintendent with regard to the question of the provision of a Bath in the centre of the City, (termed "Central Bath") was considered by the Committee who were unanimously in favour of such a scheme, and a special Sub-Committee were appointed to report on the matter. Unfortunately the Economy Committee of the Council put an end to any further consideration of the same. Perhaps the decision was right to those concerned, but was a very short sighted policy.

A new regulation became operative restricting the admission of School Children on Free Passes after 5-30 on Fridays and 12-30 noon on Saturdays owing to the congestion at the Baths after those times.

The Annual Conference of the National Association of Baths Superintendents (Incorporated) was held in Manchester during May. Mr. A. Teasdale, General Superintendent of the Manchester Corporation Baths & Wash Houses Department was the President of the National Association during this year.

1932.

The first time in Manchester that Mixed Bathing was allowed to take place on Sunday morning was at the Victoria Baths.

1933

A charge of 5/- per hour or part of an hour was made when Swimming Clubs required the use of the Baths after regulation hours for the purpose of practice or Polo matches.

Application for the free use of the Baths on two days per week by Old Age Pensioners upon production of their Pension Book was not acceded to, but free bathing facilities were extended to include non contributory Old Age Pensioners.

The General Office of the Department were removed from 38 Lloyd Street, Albert Square, to 1, Brazennose Street Deansgate. This was consequent upon the site in Lloyd Street being required for the Town Hall Extension.

1935.

A Conference took place between the Baths & Parks Committees in an endeavour to come to some arrangement regarding the responsibility for the erection and control of Open Air Swimming Pools. No satisfactory decision was arrived at so far as the Baths Committee were concerned.



1935  
Cont. A telephone Call Box for Public use was erected in the Entrance Hall at the Victoria Baths as an experiment, but did not prove successful and the same was quickly removed in 1936.

1936. A suggestion was made that all Clocks fixed in the various establishments be altered to electrically controlled, but owing to the cost which would be involved the same was not agreed to.

Red Bank Baths which had been poorly patronised for some years were finally closed down so far as use by the public was concerned and eventually sold to Messrs. W.E. Cary Ltd. for business extensions.

1937. The General Offices of the Department were transferred from 1 Brazennose Street, Deansgate to the Town Hall Extension - Rooms Nos. 217, 219 and 220 - 2nd Floor.

The Harpurhey Baths Hall was let on a 6 months tenancy during the Winter Months at an inclusive fee to a private individual for the purpose of holding dances. This was consequent upon that Hall not having been booked and a very favourable offer having been received from the person to whom it was leased.

Hair Drying Machines for use of bathers first installed at several of the Baths establishments.

An unusual application was received asking to be allowed to use one or more of the Corporation Swimming Baths for the purpose of fishing with rod and line. Needless to say this was not agreed to.

A serious occurrence took place at the Mayfield Baths whereby, owing to the negligence and carelessness on the part of the staff, 50 bathers were affected by Chlorine Gas Fumes due to the Filtration, Aeration and Chlorination Plant not having been used in a proper manner. A full enquiry was held and drastic action taken regarding the staff who had been found guilty of such a serious lack of oversight and inattention to duty.

1938. A scheme was instituted whereby Clubs, Associations, Works etc. could have the exclusive use of a Swimming Bath for one hour at a specified time upon payment of a fee of 10/- per session plus the ordinary Club Rates of admission - the minimum attendance must be not less than 20.

1938.  
Cont.

A Charter Centenary Exhibition was held at the City Hall, Deansgate, the Baths Department having a Stand and exhibiting a comparison between the use of the modern Public Wash Houses and the old fashioned wash day at home. Models, photographs and plans of various equipment etc. were also included.

The General & Parliamentary Committee requested to include in the next Parliamentary Bill a Clause granting powers to provide a service for the collection and delivery of clothes in connection with the Public Wash Houses.

Hair Cream Vending Machines installed at several of the Bathing Establishments.

A vacant plot of land in Barlow Road, Levenshulme, belonging to the Baths Committee allocated for allotment purposes.

1941

An application received for the use of the Broadway Baths as a retention post for lost dogs, not agreed to.

The Hiring of Bathing Costumes at the various baths on a deposit system was first instituted.



The Overseers empowered to levy as part of the Poor Rate, such sums as the Vestry shall deem necessary to pay expenses.

All monies raised and the Income arising from the Baths & Wash Houses in the Parish to be applied towards defraying expense

Councils with the approval of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury may from time to time borrow at Interest on the Security of a Mortgage of the Borough Fund or the Rates for the Relief of the Poor of the Parish, the money which they may require.

The Council may from time to time on any lands purchased, rented, contracted or appropriated, erect any buildings suitable for Public Baths & Wash Houses, and as to such Wash Houses either with or without open Drying Grounds, and make any Open bathing places and convert any buildings into Public Baths & Wash Houses and may from time to time alter, enlarge, repair and improve the same and fit up, furnish and supply with all requisite furniture, fittings and conveniences.

No contract above the value of one hundred pounds to be entered into unless fourteen days notice shall be given in one or more of the Public Newspapers published in the County in which the Borough or Parish is situated.

Councils may purchase or lease any existing Baths & Wash Houses. Power granted to water and Gas Companies to supply Water and Gas to Baths & Wash Houses either without charge or on such favourable terms as they shall think fit.

When Baths & Wash Houses are considered too expensive, they may with the approval of the Treasury be sold and the proceeds of sale carried to the Borough Fund or Poor Rate.

The Council may make Bye-Laws for the Management, Use and Regulation of the Public Baths & Wash Houses which must be approved by one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, otherwise they are not of any Legal force.

Printed copy of the Bye Laws shall be put up in every Bath Room or open Bathing place, also in some convenient place near every Washing Tub or Trough or every pair of Washing Tubs or Troughs in every Wash House.

The recovery of the charges at Wash Houses, any Officer, Servant or others having the Management thereof may detain clothes brought to be washed or other goods and chattels of any person refusing to pay the charge. Such people may be liable, until full payment be made and if not paid in seven days may sell such clothes, Goods and chattels or any of them returning the surplus proceeds of such sale, after deducting the unpaid charge and the expenses of such detention and sale and the unsold articles, if any on demand to such person.

Any Clerk or other Officer, or any servant, taking fee or reward on account of anything done or forborne in pursuance of this Act, other than his Salary, Wage or Allowance, as shall have been appointed by the Council or be concerned or interested in any bargain, or contract made by the Council, shall be incapable of ever serving or being employed under this Act and for every



offence forfeit the sum of £50. This Act also refers to any person during the time he holds the Office as Member of Council or as a Commissioner.

Schedules referred to by the foregoing Act were:-

Schedule A. Bye Laws to be made in all cases. For securing that the Baths & Wash Houses and Open Bathing Places shall be under the due Management and Control of the Officers, Servants, or others appointed or employed in that behalf by the Council or Commissioners. For securing adequate Privacy to persons using the Baths & Wash Houses and open Bathing Places and security again accidents to persons using the open Bathing Places.

For securing for Men and Boys above eight years old shall bathe separately from Women and Girls and Children under eight years old. For preventing Damage, Disturbance, Interruption and indecent and offensive language and behaviour and nuisance.

For determining the duties of the Officer, Servants and others appointed by the Council or Commissioners.

In Parishes, for regulating the Procedure of the Commissioners.

Schedule B. Maximum charges during the first seven years after the Establishments are opened for Public use and after such seven years except only so long after such seven years as higher charges may be necessary for defraying the current expenses of the Establishments

Baths for the labouring classes, supplied with clean water for every bather or for several children together:-

	<u>Cold Bath</u>	<u>Warm Bath</u>
For one person above eight years old, including the use of one clean towel.....	One penny	Two pence
For several children, not exceeding four, including use of one clean towel for every child.	Two pence	Four pence

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Wash Houses for the labouring classes, supplied with conveniences for washing and drying clothes and other articles:-

For the use by one person of one washing tub or trough or one pair of washing tubs or troughs:-

For one hour only in any one day .....	One penny
For two consecutive hours only in any one day...	Three pence.

Such charges to include the use of the Drying Apparatus, for drying all articles washed. The time occupied in drying not to be included in the hour or two hours. A fraction of an hour, exceeding five minutes to be reckoned one hour.

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Open Bathing Places where several person bathe in the same water. For one person.....One Halfpenny



2nd July 1847  
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ANNO DECIMO & UNDECIMO  
VICTORIAE REGINAE  
CAP. LXI  
-----

9 & 10 Vict. C. 74.  
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AN AMENDING ACT TO THE ACT OF 1846  
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The principal item being that Local Authorities were allowed to make a charge for a higher class of Bath than those outlined in the 1846 Act i.e. not exceeding in any case three times the charges for the several kinds of baths for the labouring classes previously fixed.

For Wash Houses any time over the one or tow hours respectively if not exceeding five minutes not to be reckoned.

For two hours not together, or for more than two hours in any one day, such charges as the Council and the Commissioners respectively think fit.

For the use of the washing conveniences alone, or of the Drying Conveniences, such charges as the Council and the Commissioners respectively think fit, but not exceeding in either case the charges for the use of the washing and drying convenience for the same time.

27th May 1878  
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Chapter 14 -- 41 Vict.  
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AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW RELATING TO  
PUBLIC BATHS & WASH HOUSES A.D. 1878  
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The Chief amendments to the Act of 1847 extended the power of Local Authorities to enable them to make special charges for Covered Swimming Baths - viz. 1st & 2nd and 3rd Class. It also allowed Swimming Baths to be closed for a limited period and to convert the same into Gymnasiums between the months of November and March inclusively. No covered or open air Swimming Bath when closed could be used for Music or Dancing.

It also gave Councils authority to make Superannuation allowance to Officers employed about Baths within the Metropolis and also refuse admission to any offenders against the By-Laws.

24th July 1882  
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Chapter 30 -- 45 & 46 Vict.  
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AN ACT TO AMEND THE BATHS & WASH HOUSES  
ACTS A.D. 1882.  
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This was a short amending Act with special reference to Sections 24 and 27 of the Principal Act (1846) and gave permission to Councils to purchase or rent lands in the "immediate neighbourhood" of their parish or borough.

14th August 1896  
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Chapter 59 -- 59 & 60 Vict.  
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AN ACT TO AMEND THE BATHS & WASH HOUSES  
ACT. A.D. 1896  
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The amendment in this Act specially referred to Section 5 of the Baths & Wash Houses Act of 1878 with the following provision

Section 2. "Provided always that no covered or open Swimming Bath when closed may be used for Music or Dancing shall be repealed so far as the administrative county of London is concerned."

Provided always

(a) That the Commissioners appointed under the Baths & Wash Houses Acts 1846 to 1896 or any sanitary authority or other representative body to whom the powers of the said Commissioners shall have been transferred by any order of the Local Government Board made under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1894 which Commissioners, Sanitary Authorities or representative body are hereinafter referred to as "such Commissioners" shall before any such bath is used for Music or Dancing obtain a Licence from the London County Council in the manner hereinafter prescribed.

(b) That no portion of the premises in respect of which the Licence is granted be let otherwise than



occasionally to any person or persons corporate or otherwise and that no money for admission be taken at the doors.

- (c) That such Commissioners be responsible for any breach of the conditions on which the Licence is granted which may occur, during any entertainment given on such premises by their permission.

Section 3.

That any Annual Licensing Meeting or at any other Meeting duly convened with fourteen days previous notice, the London County Council may grant a Licence for music or dancing or for both purposes to such Commissioners, subject to the provisions of the Disorderly Houses Act 1751, as amended by the Local Government Act 1888.

9th August 1899  
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Chapter 29 -- 62 & 63 Vict.  
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AN ACT TO AMEND THE BATHS & WASH HOUSES  
ACT A.D. 1899.  
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This act was passed so as to grant to all Local Authorities the same powers as those already possessed by the Administrative County of London, of using the covered and Open Air Swimming Baths, when closed, for music and dancing, and was an extension of the 1878 and 1896 Acts.

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During the period extending from the year 1846 when the first Baths & Wash Houses Act was passed, and 1906, this section of Municipal Undertaking was treated as a separate and distinct Department of Corporation Service, but in 1907 the Government decided to include this part of Municipal enterprise under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health, and all Acts automatically came under this heading.

The following amending Act was, therefore, passed and termed:

28th August 1907  
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Chapter 53.  
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An Act to amend the Public Heath Acts. A.D. 1907  
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7. Edw. 7.  
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Under Part X General of this Act. Miscellaneous  
Section.  
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The effect upon Baths & Wash Houses was as follows:-

Part IV. Paragraph 55. Infected Clothes not to be sent to Laundry  
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- (1) A person shall not take or send to any Public Wash House or to any Laundry for the purpose of being washed, any bedding, clothes or other things which he knows to have been exposed to infection from any infectious disease, unless they have been disinfected by or to the satisfaction of the Local Authority or their Medical Officer, or of a legally qualified Medical Practitioner, or are sent to a Laundry with proper precautions for the purpose of disinfection with notice that they have been exposed to infection.
- (2) If any person acts in contravention of the foregoing provision of this section he shall be liable in respect of each offence to a penalty not exceeding forty shilling.
- (3) The Local Authority may, on the application of any person pay the expenses of the disinfection of any such bedding, clothes or other things, if carried out by them or under their direction.

Part X. Section 92. Bathing Places.  
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The Local Authority.  
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- (a) May make bye laws with regard to any public bathing, whether from bathing machines or not, for any of the purposes mentioned in Section 69 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 and also for the purpose of regulating the hours of bathing and enforcing the provision and



maintenance of any life saving apparatus or other means of protecting bathers from danger by persons providing accommodation for public bathing; and

- (b) may, if they think fit, provide and maintain on or at any place within their district which abuts on the sea or any river, bathing sheds or other conveniences with all necessary appliances and may charge for the use thereof.

Part X. Section 93. Provision of Life Saving Appliances.

The Local Authority of any district may provide and maintain Life Saving Appliances at any place in their district where they think those appliances are likely to be of use.

1925.

Public Health Act 1925.

Baths & Wash Houses Section - 85, 86 & 87.

This amending act to that passed on August 28th. 1907 extends to all parts of England & Wales including London (S.2 (1) (4) and came into operation on September 8th 1925 (S 1 (5)).

Section 85. Charges for the use of Baths & Public Wash Houses.

The rates of charges were governed by the 1878 Act for Wash and Swimming Baths, but by this new Act it abolishes the charges limit and allows Local Authorities to fix such rates according to a scale fixed and authorised by Local Authorities for Baths & Wash Houses as they think fit.

Sub. Section 2. Section 85

requires that any such scales shall be published in a Local Newspaper and in such manner as may be thought necessary at least a month before it is adopted by the Local Authority.

The scale of charges must be authorised by resolution of the Local Authority but is not necessary to get confirmation of the Ministry of Health thereto.

Section 86. Amendement of S. 34 of the Baths & Wash Houses Act 18

This amendment gets rid of a requirement in Section 34.

of the 1846 Act that the Bye Laws of the Local Authority should provide certain matters mentioned in the Schedule to that Act. One of these was for securing that men and boys over 8 years of age should bathe separately from women and girls, and children under 8 years. This statutory prohibition of Mixed Bathing is now removed.

Section 87. Closing and use when closed of Swimming Baths.  
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Section 87 (1) of the new Act extends the maximum period of closing to the period from the 1st October to the 30th April following and widens the purposes for which closed baths may be used.

A Swimming Bath, while closed, may be used by the Local Authority for such purposes, or allowed by them to be used, or be let for such purposes and upon such terms and conditions as in their absolute discretion they may think fit and proper.

Proviso (b) which was to the effect that no money could be taken at the door was repealed. Previously admission had to be by tickets purchased in advance.

Where a closed Swimming Bath is used for the public performance of a stage play for public music or public music and dancing or other public entertainment of the like kind or for cinematograph exhibitions, subsection S. 87 provides that any necessary licence shall be obtained and notice given.

The provisions of the Public Health Act 1936 which came into force on October 1st 1937, affected the functions of the Baths & Wash Houses Act in the following sections:-

Section 221 Power of Local Authority to provide Baths, Bathing  
----- Places and Wash Houses.

under the 1846 and 1882 Acts, now repealed, a Local Authority could only take over Baths or purchase or lease land for that purpose, within their own area, or within the immediate neighbourhood. No such restrictions as to place appears in the New Act.

Baths & Wash Houses may now be "either open or covered this addition has been made in order to make it clear that open Air Baths can be provided whether as forming part of a recreation ground or not.



Section 222. Charges for the use of Baths etc.  
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This section replaces section 85 of the Public Health Act 1925, but adopting the more modern and less expensive procedure, replaces an obligation to publish the proposed scale of charges in a local newspaper by an obligation to deposit it and advertise the place where it may be inspected.

Section 223. Bye Laws for Regulation of Baths etc.  
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This Section reproduces the existing Bye-Laws making powers for the regulation of Baths & Wash Houses, but slightly extends them by enabling bye-laws to be made providing for the exclusion from Baths of undesirable persons.

Section 225. Use of Baths and Bathing Places for Swimming Contests etc. or by schools or clubs.  
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under this section which is a new general provision, though based on Local Acts, a local authority may close temporarily to the public any Swimming Bath or Bathing Place under their management, and may grant exclusive use of it, (free of charge or otherwise) to a School or Club or Organizer of Swimming Contests etc. They may also use the bath etc. themselves for such contests and make (or authorise to be made) charges for admission to or use of the Bath etc. when so closed to the Public. There is no limit of the hours during which the Bath may be so closed to the public.

Section 226. Closing of Baths and Bathing Places during Winter Months and use for other purposes.  
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The law here has been altered only in one particular. Previously films could only be shown by a Local Authority in a Swimming Bath if they related to "questions relating to health or disease". This phrase has been amended to films relating to the "functions of County Councils or Local Authorities".

Section 227. Power of Local Authority to lay pipes for purposes connected with Baths etc.  
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This section incorporates in the general law a power previously granted only in Local Acts. Under it the "Local Authority" "may provide" lay down, and maintain

such pipes and apparatus as may be necessary for conducting water to or from Baths, Wash Houses, Swimming Baths or Bathing Places which are under their management, or which they propose to provide.

Section 229. Powers of Statutory Undertakings to supply to Baths on favourable terms.

The last Act granting power to statutory undertaking to supply to Public Baths etc. on favourable terms or without charge, was the Baths & Wash Houses Act 1846. It, therefore, referred only to gas and water electricity has now been added.

It will be seen from the previous pages of this Chapter that the first Public Baths & Wash Houses Acts were passed in the year 1846, but it was not until October 1st 1879 that the City Council approved a set of Bye Laws governing the establishments of Manchester. These were approved by the Local Government Board on the 13th November 1879.

The reason for such a long period elapsing between the first Act and the passing of the Bye Laws was that until the purchase of the Leaf Street and Mayfield Baths & Wash Houses had been effected, the Corporation had no use or need for any such regulations.

An elaborate set of Bye Laws for the Management, Use and Regulation of the Public Baths and Public Wash Houses was drawn up and consisted of no less than 30 items for the former section and 15 for the latter.

These remained in operation for a period of 51 years, and it was consequent upon the Manchester Extension Act of 1930 that the existing set of Bye Laws were repealed and a more condensed form decided upon, consisting of 5 sections only and 13 paragraphs. The City Council passed these on May 31st 1933 and the Ministry of Health approved the same on August 9th 1933.



INDEX TO FILE NO. 1.  
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This is a Historical Record of Baths & Wash Houses  
in the City of Manchester from the year 1845.

INDEX TO FILE NO. 2.  
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Tabulated Events in yearly form of the History and  
Administration of the Bathing Establishments in the  
City from 1876 when the Corporation of Manchester  
commenced active Management.

INDEX OF FILE NO. 3.  
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Opening dates of the various Baths & Wash Houses,  
along with the Lists of the Committee at that time  
and names of those who performed the Opening Ceremony.

also

Record of the various Chairmen, Deputy Chairmen and  
Members of the Baths & Wash Houses Committee from  
1876 to 1945 inclusive.

INDEX OF FILE NO. 4.  
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Reports of the Proceedings of the General Meeting of  
Shareholders of the Manchester & Salford Baths &  
Laundries Company from January 7th 1857 to February 3rd  
1876.

INDEX TO FILE NO. 5.  
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The City of Manchester publication of "How Manchester is Managed". A record of Municipal Activities with special reference to the City Baths & Wash Houses.

INDEX TO FILE NO. 6.  
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Articles upon Public Baths & Public Wash Houses by Albert Teasdale, M.N.A.B.S. - Published in the Municipal Year Book during the years 1934 to 1941 inclusive.

INDEX TO FILE NO. 7.  
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Copies of Special Reports submitted to the Baths & Wash Houses Committee from 1898 to 1939.

INDEX TO FILE NO. 8  
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Various Reports on all aspects of the Provision and Maintenance of Public Baths & Wash Houses.

INDEX TO FILE NO. 9.  
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Miscellaneous items re. Baths and Wash Houses including extracts from various booklets on these subjects.



INDEX FOR FILE NO. 10.

Miscellaneous items and articles upon:-

Swimming, Life Saving and Water Polo - Public Baths & Wash Houses Section of Municipal Exhibition - Design and equipment of Public Baths - Progress of Manchester Corporation Baths and Wash Houses - Heating of Swimming Bath Water - Treatment of Swimming Bath Water - Employees serving in 1914-18 War - Regulations re letting of Public Baths Halls - Brief survey of Turkish Baths - Life Saving for Manchester Citizens, Police and Fire Brigade - Bathing of School Children - Notices exhibited in Public Baths.

INDEX FOR FILE NO. 11.

Miscellaneous data and statistics regarding :-

number of bathers - number of washers - income from various sections - annual costs - staff - inventory of plant and other items relative to the working of the Department.

INDEX FOR FILE NO. 12.

A History of the Manchester Corporation Baths & Wash Houses Committee from its first inception being extracts from the Minutes of the Committee from the first meeting held on August 17th 1876 in 5 sections.

- |         |    |   |
|---------|----|---|
| Section | A. | August 17th 1876 to September 27th 1900.  |
|         | B. | September 28th 1900 to January 21st 1914. |
|         | C. | January 22nd 1914 to June 17th 1925.      |
|         | D. | June 18th 1925 to March 14th 1928         |
|         | E. | March 15th 1928 to June 1st 1932.         |

INDEX FOR FILE NO. 13

A Photographic record of Manchester Baths & Wash Houses in 2 sections.

- |         |      |                          |
|---------|------|--------------------------|
| Section | A -- | Manchester Public Baths. |
| "       | B -  | Other Photographs.       |

Baths and Wash Houses Historical Archive