



June Martland Hues.

JAMES MARTLAND AINSCOUGH
BY MARGARET AINSCOUGH



J. M. Mansfield

JAMES MARTLAND
AINSCOUGH

1854 - 1937

A MEMOIR BY HIS DAUGHTER
MARGARET AINSCOUGH

WIGAN :
JAMES STARR & SONS, LTD.
DAWBER STREET WORKS
1937

TO MY MOTHER, WHO
WAS FOR NEARLY
THIRTY YEARS HIS
DEVOTED COMPANION

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Foreword	9
I. Boyhood at Standish	11
II. Business Life in Wigan	19
III. Public Life in Wigan and District	27
IV. Mayor of Wigan	34
V. Antiquarian Interests	45
VI. Church Life	59
VII. Summary	65

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

J. M. Ainscough	Frontispiece
J. M. Ainscough in Mayoral Robes	34
Standish Market Place before Alterations	53
Standish Market Place after Alterations	55

FOREWORD

THERE are, I think, many of my father's old friends and acquaintances who will be glad to read this short memoir of his life and work ; therefore no further apology is necessary. I am, of course, aware that there is nothing of peculiar interest in his life to relate. He was a typical product of his time and district, but his interests were wide, and his unselfishness and high sense of duty made him stand out amongst his contemporaries in the neighbourhood as a man of honour and good works.

My special thanks are due to the Reverend T. C. Porteus, B.D., of Chorley, who first suggested that I should write this little book. He has given me much valuable help and information throughout, and he has been good enough to write Chapters V. and most of Chapter VI. I am also greatly indebted to Alderman Farr, J.P., of Wigan, who has sought out

a good deal of the material for the chapters on my father's public work in Wigan, and has helped in the writing of these chapters.

Mr. A. J. Hawkes, F.S.A., Borough Librarian of Wigan, Mr. J. McKinlay, Actuary of the Wigan Savings Bank, and Mr. G. Bennett, Director and Secretary of Messrs. Pendlebury & Co., Ltd., have all spared of their valuable time to assist me in this tribute, and I am most grateful to them, and also to the Proprietors of the Wigan Examiner and the Wigan Observer for permission to use many quotations from their publications.

M. MARGARET AINSCOUGH.

LINDLEY MOUNT,
PARBOLD.

July, 1937.

CHAPTER I.

BOYHOOD AT STANDISH, 1854-1869.

AINSCOUGH is a name which has been peculiar to South West Lancashire for several hundred years. The origin of the name is doubtful. The form Ansculf, which is probably the Anglo-Saxon equivalent, is to be found in the Domesday Survey of 1086. During that year a man of that name was one of the Sheriffs of Buckinghamshire. Ainscough and the variant Ainscow, however, suggest derivation from a place name, the second element of which is Scandinavian, with the meaning Ain's wood. Ain in certain names is a shortened form of Aegenveald or Aegenwulf. In the Standish Parish Registers from 1560 onwards there are a number of Aynescoughes mentioned.

About 1785 John Ainscough married Mary (surname unknown), and their son Robert married Eleanor Pemberton, daughter of Thomas Pemberton, of Heskin.* (See note on Pemberton family

at the end of the chapter). Their son James, who was the father of James Martland Ainscough, was born in 1812. He was educated at Heskin, and lived in that district until his marriage in 1853 to Sarah Martland, daughter of William Martland, of Wrightington.

The Martlands, like the Ainscoughs, were a local family. The name is a corrupted or alternative form of Markland, a place in Wigan, and it is mentioned in the Assize Rolls of the thirteenth century. For many generations members of the Martland family had been yeoman farmers in the neighbourhood of Heskin, Standish and Wrightington. During the seventeenth century, however, records are found of one Abraham Markland, who was Warden of the ancient Almshouse of St. Cross, in Winchester. There was also a Richard Martland who served as ensign in the Duke of Wellington's Army during the Peninsular War (1808-1814), and the War Office notification of his death during the campaign in Spain is to be found at Chester.

In 1752 another Richard Martland married Jane Lea at Eccleston Church, both of them being twenty-three years old at the time. They had four sons and

four daughters, and William, who was born in 1762, married Sarah Anderton in 1796, also at Eccleston Church. They had five sons and four daughters, and it was their daughter Sarah, born in 1808, who married James Ainscough.

After their marriage at Eccleston Church, James and Sarah Ainscough went to live at Standish, in a house on the north side of the Market Place. This house, now much altered, has an interesting history. In 1755 it was the home of Mistress Mary Smalley, niece of the Reverend Edward Smalley, curate and afterwards Rector of Standish. Miss Smalley's wealth, administered by the Reverend Richard Perryn, a later rector, resulted in the foundation of a School of Pious Learning and Useful Industry for girls. In 1853 a row of old sycamore trees stood in front of the house, and behind the house and farm buildings were the fields which James Ainscough farmed. These included the Kirk Croft, Great Field and Yarn Croft. In addition to the care of his farm he was Overseer and Assessor of Taxes for the Township of Standish. At this house his only child, James Martland Ainscough, was born on February 25th, 1854.

Standish, as he remembered it in his young days, was a prosperous little village, and much more picturesque than it is to-day. There were quaint old thatched cottages in Church Street, Preston Road, and in the Grove, with old-fashioned gardens, where now there stand ugly rows of brick houses. The old Court House in Cross Street, which still stands, had a triangular green and a large overhanging beech tree in front of it. The Malt Kiln Pit, the delight of the village boys and girls in a long frost, has now been filled in, and the Wesleyan Chapel is built on the site.

Thomas Booth was the proprietor of the village smithy at that time, and many happy hours the school children spent in watching him at work. When they had exhausted the old smith's patience he used to chase them away with a red hot iron! At other times the children would gather round the old Standish veteran, Bibby. He had served with Sir John Moore at the battle of Corunna, and with the Duke of Wellington throughout the Peninsular War, and he was the proud possessor of a Peninsular medal with seven clasps. His great delight was to tell the children stories of the battles of Corunna, Salamanca, Vittoria and Badajos.

The Market Place was then the centre of Standish life. There the people of the surrounding district gathered for the Whitsuntide Fair, and for the Cattle Fair on St. Cecilia's Day, in November, which had been founded by Mrs. Cecilia Strickland in the eighteenth century. She also restored the ancient Market Cross, which, like many others in the neighbourhood, had probably been broken down by the iconoclastic fury of our Puritan forefathers. But the great day of the year was Whit Monday, when the whole Market Place was filled with Aunt Sallies, Merry-go-rounds, and swings. The various Friendly Societies of the village paraded the streets with bands and gaudily painted banners, and much good old Standish ale was consumed. On the following day was the "Mayor Choosing" ceremony, the man selected being chosen for his capacity to consume a larger amount of ale than his fellows. The story is told that one of these "Mayors," a man called John Baron, who was for many years the village cobbler, explained to the magistrates at Chorley that he had been Mayor of Standish for thirteen consecutive years, or as he described it, "thirteen years hand-running."

Dominating the village was the old sixteenth century church, the one and only building in the village with any pretention to architectural style, "beautiful in itself, and revered and beloved by the parishioners on account of its hallowed associations." Rebuilt during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, it is a monument of the patriotism and skill of that generation of Standish men who witnessed the great struggle with the Papacy, the compilation of the new liturgy and the defeat of the Spanish Armada. The external structure of the church was in 1854 just as it is to-day, except for the vestries at the east end, which were added in 1913. Inside, however, there was a gallery at the north end of the church, the old box pews were still standing, and there was no screen across the choir.

In these surroundings James Martland Ainscough grew up, and at an early age he was sent to the infant School in Rectory Lane, and also became a member of the Standish Church Choir. Later he went to the old Grammar School, where most of the boys paid 2d. a week, but if, as in his case, they wished to learn Latin and Mathematics, they had to pay an extra 4d. a week. Until 1865 the Rev.

John Price, a former curate of Standish Church and Vicar of Douglas Church, Parbold, was the head master. In 1865, however, Alexander Richardson was appointed, and it was from him that the young scholar gleaned the rudiments of learning which were to prove to him such a valuable background in the years to come. The schoolmaster's son was his great rival for the top place in the form and for the prizes at the end of the year.

During his school days his mother, then over fifty years old, learnt Latin so that she could help him with his lessons. She also taught him to play the harmonium and gave him a real appreciation of good music, which was a great joy to him throughout his life. Two of his closest companions at this time were his cousins, Ted and Tom Martland, who also lived in the village. Later on they went to Manchester Medical College and became doctors, but the old friendship remained.

Much of his time was spent in reading, for from his early years he was a keen reader, and before he was ten years old he had read most of Scott's novels. Often his father, who was a Radical of the old school of Cobden and Bright, and one who took a deep interest both in

national and local government, would get him to read aloud Gladstone's speeches from the daily papers. He also gave him "The Man of Ross" to read, which is a life of John Kyrle, a man who did much good in his own district out of a very small income. Thus as a boy his interest was awakened in politics and local government.

At the age of fifteen he left school and was sent as an apprentice to Mr. John Pendlebury, a Draper in Standishgate, Wigan. Later on he spent several years in Liverpool with Messrs. Ray and Miles, and in Leeds with Messrs. Denby and Spinks, but his love for Standish remained. His roots were deep in the soil of his native place, and the old church and village of his boyhood days continued to provide his happiest memories to the end of his long life.

† NOTE ON PEMBERTON FAMILY.

The most notable member of the Pemberton family of Heskin, was James, who went up to London during the sixteenth century as an apprentice to a goldsmith. Later he became the Prime Warden of the Goldsmiths' Company and Lord Mayor of London during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. In 1603 he received a Knighthood from James I. He it was who founded the Pemberton Grammar School at Heskin, in the Parish of Eccleston, in 1597.

CHAPTER II.

BUSINESS LIFE IN WIGAN, 1869-1924.

THE business to which James Martland Ainscough was apprenticed in 1869 had been founded about 1780 by a man named Michael Milligan, at number seven, Standishgate. From him the business passed to James Marsh, and he took into partnership John Pendlebury. Mr. Marsh died in 1869, and three years later Mr. Pendlebury purchased the premises known as Crawford House. He moved his business from number seven, Standishgate, to Crawford House, and went to live in the house at the back of the buildings. The young apprentices lived there too, and they were kept under strict supervision by Mrs. Pendlebury.

In those days it was a serious affair to become an apprentice. An agreement had to be drawn up between the child, his parents and the person to whom he was being apprenticed. The apprentice-

ship indenture which was made between John Pendlebury, who is described as a Linen and Woollen Draper, and James Ainscough, senior, and James Ainscough, junior, is dated May 6th, 1869. By this deed he bound himself to Mr. Pendlebury's service until he attained the age of twenty "to be taught, instructed and employed in the service or business of a draper." He also had to promise not to do "any wilful damage or injury to the said John Pendlebury, nor knowingly suffer the same to be done by others without acquainting him." His father had to promise to provide his clothes and to have his washing and mending done, also to pay for any medicine or medical attendance. In consideration of this Mr. Pendlebury undertook "to teach and instruct him in the trade or business of Drapers and in all and every the matters and things incident or relating thereto. And also shall and will at his own costs, charges and expenses find and provide for the said James Ainscough at all times during the said time all necessary and convenient meat, drink and lodgings suitable for such an apprentice."

The food they were given was plain to say the least of it. Often they only had

bread and syrup for supper after a strenuous day in the shop. In those days the hours were long. Usually it was after 10 p.m. on a Saturday night when he had finished, and on one occasion he was asked to deliver a parcel at Standish Hall on a Sunday morning! Yet he was healthy and contented and he had many happy memories of his apprenticeship days. He often recollected the practical jokes he and his fellow apprentices played on various people.

Mr. Pendlebury was a man of strong character and one who did much good in the town through his generosity. He was closely associated with St. George's Church and Schools. He was also keenly interested in politics, and local government, though he never became a member of the Town Council. In business he was an upright and honest man, his chief aim being to give his customers value for their money, and not to make large profits. As a young man James Ainscough learnt to admire his principles, and a friendship was formed between them which lasted up to the end of Mr. Pendlebury's life.

After his years of apprenticeship he spent a short time in Liverpool and Leeds, and later established a furnishing business

of his own in Wigan. In 1882, however, at Mr. Pendlebury's most urgent request, he went into partnership with him, and the furnishing side of the business was opened in Crawford Buildings under the style of Pendlebury and Ainscough. The drapery side of the business remained separate, under the management of Mr. Pendlebury. For many years it was a hard struggle to make the furnishing business pay, but with his characteristic determination he managed to win through. In 1898 the drapery and furnishing businesses were amalgamated and formed into a private limited company, under the title of Pendlebury and Company Limited, but on December 4th of that year Mr. Pendlebury died suddenly, and the company was reconstituted as a public company. The first Directors of this company were J. M. Ainscough, who became Chairman and Managing Director, Dr. Macdonald, (Mr. Pendlebury's son-in-law), Colonel R. A. Farrington, (Manager of Parr's Bank), C. B. Holmes and William Johnson of the Abram Coal Company, with Jacob Whiston as Secretary.

Gradually the business developed and became firmly established, and in 1908 a

new shop front was built. As the years went by further alterations were made in the shop to make room for the necessary expansion. During the war trade in Wigan, as in most manufacturing towns, was booming. The cotton mills and coal mines of the district were being worked at full pressure. A few years after the Armistice, however, a depression set in, and many thousands of colliers and mill hands were thrown out of work. Yet in spite of this the business was able to maintain its position in the town, and further extensions have been made.

J. M. Ainscough, carrying on the Pendlebury tradition, always made it his main object to give good quality and value to his customers. Mr. G. Bennett, the present secretary of the firm and one of the directors, in speaking of their former chairman at the Shareholders' Meeting, in March, 1937, said, "his code of honour, especially in the conduct of this business, was of a very high standard—subterfuge of any kind was alien to his nature. As a business man I think there were few men in the district his equal, certainly none better. He had such a fine personality, vision, imagination, and above all a very fertile brain." It was his foresight and

also his broad outlook which helped to establish the business and to maintain its prosperity.

Amongst the wholesale firms he dealt with he made many personal friends, and derived much pleasure from his friendships. Alexander Morton, of Darvel, in Scotland, was a man for whom he had a genuine admiration. In his early years Mr. Morton had been a hand-loom weaver, but he was a man of great ability and before long he had established one of the most flourishing lace curtain and fabric manufacturing businesses in Great Britain. Another old friend was Mr. Moat, of the Linoleum Manufacturing Co., for whose estate he acted as an executor until his death. Mr. McKinlay and Mr. McEachran, of Templetons, the carpet factors, of Glasgow, were also friends of his, and Mr. Clague, of Jenners, Edinburgh, who often met him in the wholesale houses in London, when they were buying. Another friendship with the head of wholesale business was that with the late Mr. John Hall, of Bury. For three generations, Halls, the blanket manufacturers, have had an account with Pendlebury's.

In 1924, when he was seventy years

old, he retired from the active management of the business, with which he had then been associated for over fifty-five years. He retained his position as Chairman of the Directors, and up to the very last days of his life he not only attended the meetings with regularity, but also spent a good deal of time going over the details of the business with Mr. Grundy and Mr. Bennett, his co-directors. Throughout his life he gave of his best to the business, and it always took firstplace. He had seen it develop from small beginnings, and then gradually grow and become firmly established. He too had grown and developed with the business, and as the years went by it had become a very real part of him.

With his staff he was strict, and often they were subjected to his stern disapproval, but they knew he soon forgot and forgave, and they appreciated the fact that he treated them all fairly. Sometimes when his anger was aroused he would give a man a week's notice, but nothing was said when the man turned up as usual on the following Monday morning. Once when a new assistant came to the shop he greeted him with the following words: "Young man, you will

make mistakes." The poor young man was somewhat astounded and replied : " I hope not, sir." Again he was told that he would make mistakes, and again he replied that he hoped he would be able to avoid doing so. Then his chairman, with a twinkle in his eye, said : " See that you profit by your mistakes."

All the old servants of the firm loved him as well as respected him ; to many he had been a kind friend and they felt his passing deeply. He had been associated with the firm for sixty-seven years, and had been the Chairman of the Directors for thirty-eight years ; a record of which he was justly proud.

CHAPTER III.

PUBLIC LIFE IN WIGAN AND DISTRICT.

SOON after forming the partnership with Mr. Pendlebury, in 1882, J. M. Ainscough began to take part in the public life of the town. Like his partner he was intensely interested in the work of the local Church Schools, and in 1886 he became a manager of St. Catharine's and Whelley Schools. He continued this work until 1893 when he left Wigan and returned to his native village, Standish. He was also associated with St. George's School, together with Mr. Pendlebury. He was present at the opening of the school on January 15th, 1896, and he was a manager of the school for thirty years.

He joined Wigan Conservative Club and took an active part in the work of the party for a great number of years, especially at general or municipal election times. On many occasions he spoke for

Mr. Neville, when he was Parliamentary Candidate for the Borough of Wigan. From 1894 to 1913 he acted as Treasurer for the Club, and his co-operation with Alderman Thomas Ashton the Chairman, contributed to the successful management of the Club's affairs for many years.

On August 22nd, 1900, he became a Magistrate for the Borough of Wigan, and attended his rota assiduously until within a year or two of his death. He took a great interest in his work on the bench, for he was keenly interested in legal procedure. He sometimes said that if he had been in more fortunate circumstances when a young man, he would have studied law. For a great number of years he was the virtual Chairman of the Licensing Committee. He also acted as an Income Tax Commissioner, where his business ability was of the utmost value. In January, 1923, he was appointed as one of the three members of the Advisory Committee for the selection of Justices of the Peace in the County Borough of Wigan. After his death in January, 1937, Mr. J. C. Gibson, on behalf of the Solicitors practising in the Wigan Borough Police Court, paid a tribute to his work as a magistrate. "It has been my privilege," he

said, "to appear before Mr. Ainscough during the whole of the thirty-six years he had been a member of the Bench ; he had an innate sense of justice, and was respected and admired by all."

During the seventeen years he lived at Prospect House, Standish, he associated himself with the Conservative Party in Standish. He became a Vice-President of the Conservative Club, and was for some time a member of the Parish Council. On several occasions he addressed meetings for the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres (then Lord Balcarres), when he stood as Candidate for the Chorley Division, which at that time included Standish.

In December, 1905, he was elected a Trustee of Wigan Savings Bank. He was appointed to the Sub-Committee of the Bank in 1919, which decides all matters to be put before the general meeting of Trustees, and under the Savings Bank Act of 1929, he was appointed a Custodian Trustee. He watched the growth of the Bank with interest, having been a depositor during his early years in Wigan, when the Bank was in its infancy. He was present at the meetings which sanctioned the Special Investment Department in 1905, the first purchase of

Home Safes in 1907, the first Branch Bank, which was opened at St. Helens in May, 1930. Three other Branches were subsequently opened during his trusteeship, at Ashton-in-Makerfield, Hindley and Pemberton. He was present at the Custodian 'Trustees' Meeting on January 6th, 1937, two days before he died, so that his interest in the work of the Savings Bank was maintained up to the end of his life.

He was elected as an Honorary Arbitrator of the Lancashire and Cheshire Miners' Permanent Relief Society in March, 1913, and the tribute paid to him by the Board stated that "he worthily maintained the high traditions of this office. The duties of arbitrator call for much tact, patience and ability, and the late Mr. Ainscough being happily possessed of a generous measure of these gifts, his wise exercise of them in cases appearing before him, made his services peculiarly acceptable to the general body of the Society's members."

During the Great War he acted on the Wigan Tribunal, which he always regarded as the most responsible work he ever undertook. He gave much time and thought to the difficult problems which

came before them, for he realised full well what the decisions of the Tribunal meant to these men.

The business kept him fully occupied during the war years, and it was not until November, 1918, just before Armistice was declared, that he went into the Town Council as member for St. George Ward. It was most appropriate that he should represent this ward, as he had resided in it for over twenty years when a young man, and he had been associated for fifty years with the firm which was the largest ratepayer in the ward. He had also been a manager of the Church Schools for over twenty-five years. He took an active part in the Council meetings and did a good deal of useful work on the various committees.

In 1921, when he sought re-election for St. George Ward, he was opposed by Mr. J. Horne, a member of the extreme Socialist party. In his letter to the electors he writes: "For fifty years I have daily gone in and out amongst you. I am not out to gain your votes by making lavish and vain promises. What I do promise is, that if again entrusted with your confidence, I will endeavour to ease your burdens and to ameliorate the con-

ditions in which you live. It may be asked under what political banner do I range myself. My reply to this is, that the introduction of party politics into municipal affairs is one of the greatest dangers from which we suffer, but I should describe myself as distinctly Progressive, but decidedly opposed to Socialism." He was successful in his contest and he remained in the Council until 1924, when, at the age of seventy, he retired. It was during his second period on the Council, namely, from 1922 to 1923, that he acted as Mayor of the Borough.

He always took a great interest in the Borough Library, and after he had retired from the Council he remained an honorary member of the Library Committee until the time of his death. Although he did not attend the meetings very regularly in his later years, his presence was always welcomed by members of the Committee. He had a special interest in local history and antiquities, and he was instrumental in obtaining several collections of ancient deeds and manuscripts belonging to local families, as well as other objects of interest for the Library.

For many years he was Chairman of the Governors of Heskin School, which, as has been explained in a previous chapter, was founded by Sir James Pemberton in the sixteenth century. He always attended the annual Founders' Day celebrations, which were held on St. James' Day.

From this brief survey it will be realised that his interests in the public life of Wigan and the surrounding district were varied and far-reaching. His sound common sense, business ability, and keen sense of justice proved of value in many different spheres. He always gave of his best when he undertook to do anything, whatever it might be, for his sense of duty was one of his most out-standing characteristics.

CHAPTER IV.

MAYOR OF WIGAN, 1922-1923.

ALTHOUGH so much of his time had been spent in public service during the fifty-three years he had been in business in Wigan, yet at the age of sixty-eight he considered it his duty to render yet another service to the town. He had previously been asked to become Mayor in 1919, a year after he had been elected as the representative for St. George Ward, but at that time he was not able to accept as Mrs. Ainscough was seriously ill. Now, however, seemed a fitting time before he retired from the business. At first he was diffident about undertaking the mayoralty. He felt he would be unable to take as much part in social functions as befitted the office. On the other hand, he realised his indebtedness to the town of his adoption, and he finally consented. So in November, 1922, he became the 676th Mayor of the Ancient and Loyal Borough of Wigan.

Although the political party to which



J. M. AINSCOUGH IN MAYORAL ROBES

he belonged was in a considerable minority in 1922, yet he received a unanimous invitation to become the Mayor. For many years the business of the town had been conducted on strict party lines. This seems at first sight to be a strange way of conducting the business of a borough, but the most unhappy period in the recent history of Wigan had been when the leaders of the political parties had worked together instead of in opposition. The Council in 1922 consisted of twenty-eight Socialists, twenty-three Conservatives, and five Liberals. They were the representatives of a large working-class town of eighty thousand inhabitants, and they were at times a difficult team to handle. The new Mayor had been a determined supporter of the Conservative party throughout his life. For many years he had taken a most active part in political warfare, and had neither given nor accepted quarter. It was, therefore, always a pleasure to him in after life to remember that when the offer of the mayoralty was made, it received the unanimous support, not only of his political friends, but also of the men with whom for many years he had violent differences of opinion.

he belonged was in a considerable minority in 1922, yet he received a unanimous invitation to become the Mayor. For many years the business of the town had been conducted on strict party lines. This seems at first sight to be a strange way of conducting the business of a borough, but the most unhappy period in the recent history of Wigan had been when the leaders of the political parties had worked together instead of in opposition. The Council in 1922 consisted of twenty-eight Socialists, twenty-three Conservatives, and five Liberals. They were the representatives of a large working-class town of eighty thousand inhabitants, and they were at times a difficult team to handle. The new Mayor had been a determined supporter of the Conservative party throughout his life. For many years he had taken a most active part in political warfare, and had neither given nor accepted quarter. It was, therefore, always a pleasure to him in after life to remember that when the offer of the mayoralty was made, it received the unanimous support, not only of his political friends, but also of the men with whom for many years he had violent differences of opinion.

On November 9th, at the Mayor Choosing Ceremony in the Council Chamber, Alderman J. T. Grimshaw proposed that Councillor J. M. Ainscough be elected Mayor for the coming year. In his speech he said that "Councillor Ainscough's name was a household word, and there was no one who could suggest any irregularity in his character or any deviation from the path of duty, honour and respectability. His position in the commercial life of the town carried with it a consciousness that the great affairs of the borough would be in very safe and secure hands." Alderman Benson, in seconding the motion, said they knew that in his position as a magistrate Councillor Ainscough had difficulties to contend with, which perhaps only those who did the work could fully realise, "but he was a gentleman who courageously expressed his opinions, and, without hesitation, gave his decided views. He was a man of knowledge, he had read a great deal and studied a great deal, and he possessed a fund of knowledge which made him very entertaining to listen to."

In supporting the resolution, Alderman Hilton said he thought it was vitally important that the head of the civic

corporate body for the time being should be a man whose commercial ability, and whose integrity were above reproach, and who, by the exercise of tact and good judgment, would at all times overcome difficulties arising in connection with the municipal undertakings. He felt able, he said, to place such confidence in their new Mayor.

After the Council Meeting and the civic procession through the town, a banquet was held in the Empress Hall, where many personal friends, as well as the Council and the Member of Parliament, were present. The Rector, the Reverend C. C. Thicknesse, who had recently come to Wigan, proposed the Mayor's health. He spoke of the need for new houses and the disaster of unemployment, which at that time was so very urgent. He said that they relied on the Mayor's integrity and courage to tackle these problems, and he could rely upon them to support him at a time when improvements were so sorely needed.

In replying, the Mayor recalled how many years ago Nathaniel Eckersley, who had been Mayor of Wigan six times, and had twice represented the Borough at Westminster, had spoken to him of the

town and its possibilities. He had also told him of the difficulties he had encountered in the Town Council. When excited Mr. Eckersley had a way of breaking into the vernacular, and suddenly he had exclaimed, "If tha ever goes into Wigan Town Council, don't be a self-seeker." Later when he was leaving Mr. Eckersley he had been called back and told once more to remember the things he had spoken of that evening. "Many times since," said the Mayor, "have I recalled those words, and tried to profit by them."

Dr. H. Brierley, Registrar of the Wigan County Court, an old friend of the Mayor's, and one who shared his keen interest in antiquities, in estimating the Mayor's characteristics said, he would "compare him to a rapier, for he is a gentleman who would cut his way with a sharp sword of speech and method through every obstacle." He would warn the members of the Town Council to look for a glint in the Mayor's eye, and if they saw that glint, to look out for the squalls. "The Mayor," he said, "was a man of quick repartee, and could grasp facts and circumstances and conditions more quickly almost than any man he knew." One thing about the Mayor that he very

much liked was the fact that whilst he was *au courant* with all that was going on around him, he was also interested in the ancient history of Wigan and the surrounding districts.

Two of the most important and lasting features of Councillor Ainscough's Mayoralty were the purchase of the Elms Estate for the Borough, and the inauguration of the War Memorial Fund. In both these undertakings he received valuable help and support from his old friend, the Town Clerk. Through the acquirement of the Elms Estate it was made possible to improve the entrance into the town on the north side, to construct an additional through road and a delightful little park at Marylebone. The scheme was skilfully handled, and strangers passing through the town by road, many of whom, no doubt, have always associated Wigan with tip heaps and collieries, are delighted with the broad roads and pleasant trees running to the borough boundary. A good deal of the land was cut up into building sites and became quite the most lucrative investment the Corporation had ever made.

Through his determination the War Memorial Fund was started, and a com-

mittee was formed under his chairmanship to discuss what form the memorial should take, and where it was to be erected. After long and anxious deliberation it was decided to place it in front of the Parish Church, in the very centre and heart of the town. The committee then asked Sir Giles Gilbert Scott to submit a design. The first design did not meet with the approval of the Committee, as they did not think it was in keeping with the Church. It fell to the Mayor's lot to tell Sir Giles Scott that they did not like his design, and to ask him if he would let them have a design on similar lines to one of the old Queen Eleanor Crosses. A sum of £4,400 was raised by subscription in the district, and in October, 1925, the memorial was unveiled by Lieutenant General Sir Herbert Lawrence. As Chairman of the Committee, J. M. Ainscough called upon General Lawrence to perform the unveiling ceremony. The memorial is one of which Wigan may be justly proud. It has been admired by many visitors to the town, and H. V. Morton, in his book, "In Search of England," says that it is one of the finest in the country.

In June, 1923, the Mayor entertained

the Lancashire Authors' Association, and arranged for them to visit the Library and Parish Church. The ancient Municipal Regalia was brought out for their inspection at the Town Hall. Mr. A. J. Hawkes, the Borough Librarian, showed the members many of the ancient deeds and other curios in the Library.

During his year of office the Mayor was appointed President of the Chamber of Trade, and in a speech he made at a dinner in his honour, he urged his fellow-tradesmen to co-operate through the Chamber of Trade for the good of the town and the people.

The usual round of Bazaars, Dances and other social functions kept the Mayor and Mayoress busy during their year of office, and on one memorable occasion the Mayor performed the ceremony of "Kicking-off" at a football match in the mayoral chain and a top hat! An amusing incident, which is worth recording, occurred just before the year of office expired. In the Mayor's engagement diary at the Town Hall for November 9th, 1923, he wrote, with his familiar touch of humour "ICHABOD," (Hebrew — The glory is departed). A few days before November 9th someone called at the Town

Hall and asked the Mayor's attendant if the Mayor would be able to attend some function on that date. The attendant returned with the diary and a puzzled expression upon his face, and finally said that he presumed "the Mayor must be going to one of those tin chapels up Lamberhead Green way!"

On November 9th, Councillor Ainscough handed over the chain of office to Councillor Cavey. Councillor Pagett submitted a resolution that the warmest thanks be extended to the retiring Mayor for his excellent and valuable services. He said, "no one could have done greater credit to the dignity and the great business requirements of the office. Councillor Ainscough's year as Mayor would be remembered for the many important transactions which had taken place, for instance the acquirement of the Elms Estate, which would enable great improvements to be made for Wigan, and remain a memento of the business capabilities he had exercised for the town." He had also been successful in launching the War Memorial Fund. "His attendance, day in and week out, at the Mayor's Parlour, conducting the affairs of office, and the many kindnesses in service and financial

assistance that he had privately given were characteristic of his great and unassuming personality. In a quiet, sincere and thoughtful way the Mayor had been generous to the highest degree. His work as chief magistrate had been a continuance of that faithful, honest, dignified service he had always rendered in a magisterial capacity. His duties in presiding over the Council Meetings had been carried out in an impartial manner. The amount of time and the wonderfully keen interest he had taken in the work of the different committees had been to every member of the Council an astonishing factor in his year of office."

Alderman Grimshaw, in seconding the resolution, said they were "delighted with the services the Mayor had rendered, and for the kindly, thoughtful disposition he had manifested, for the super amount of intelligence he had brought to bear upon the administration of the town; the quiet, perfect manner he had in allaying discordant, unruly temperaments of members of the Town Council."

And so came to a close his year of office. His long experience in business in the town had proved of incalculable value in

committee work and in conducting affairs at the Town Hall. He had enjoyed going about amongst the people of Wigan, and seeing, in many of the places he visited, old friends and acquaintances. For him they had been twelve very happy months. The thought that he had done something to ameliorate the conditions of life of many of his poorer fellow townsmen brought him deep satisfaction and lasting joy.

CHAPTER V.

ANTIQUARIAN INTERESTS.

LANCASHIRE has been described as a County of contrasts. "Scenery more diversified," wrote a close observer, "does not exist in any English County." The contrasts lie close together; factory and moorland, coal-pit and moated grange, smoky street and restful pleasance.

Lancashire character often reflects these contrasts, practical and mystical elements exist side by side in a surprising fashion, business acumen and romantic sentiment, zeal for progress and care for the past.

This diversity of disposition is well represented in James Martland Ainscough, the shrewd man of business and yet the antiquary. Even in the board room or council chamber, and even on the bench, his utterances would reveal qualities which found full scope in his leisure hours—love of old words, the old legends, the old customs, love of the old places, church and manor-house and guild-hall.

His concern for records and memorials was no surface sentiment. He had a genuine knowledge of history, not merely of kings and statesmen and periods, but of institutions, of industries, of education, of the franchise, of the growth of freedom, of the coming of sweeter manners, purer laws. He loved his country,

“ With love far-brought
From out the storied Past and used
Within the Present.”

His intense patriotism manifested itself both in local forms, as we see in the service that he rendered to the Borough of Wigan and in his benefactions to Standish, his native place ; and also in a wider field, his membership of the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Monuments, and his response to the appeals of the National Trust. He joined the first-mentioned Society in 1927, took a keen interest in its work, and displayed a really wide knowledge of the subject. He assisted the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest and Natural Beauty by subscribing to various appeals in the Lake District, which he loved so well, notably Gowbarrow, Derwentwater and Buttermere.

He had a real love for the Lancashire

dialect, and could use it very happily on occasion to illustrate some point under discussion. It was most entertaining to listen to him exchanging story for story with Dr. Henry Brierley, Canon J. B. Stopford, or some other old friend, discussing dialect words, examining their various shades of meaning, and tracing in them vestiges of middle English or older forms of speech.

The Lancashire Parish Register Society owed its inception in 1898 to the enterprise of his friend, Dr. Henry Brierley ; and he was a member almost from the beginning. He contributed generously towards the publication of various volumes especially to the Register of Standish Parish Church in 1912, when he and three others shared the cost of printing this volume.

After his retirement from business, he was asked to help in the task of transcribing Registers ; and at once he undertook the work of deciphering the parish register of Rufford. His transcription was placed in the archives of the Society ready for publication.

He joined the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society in 1902, and continued to take a keen interest in its activities.

Although he did not contribute papers, he rendered much active help. When a large party of members and friends visited Standish in 1920, he acted as guide, pointing out the chief antiquities of the historic Church and giving a racy account of its patrons and rectors. On various occasions he was the chosen spokesman of the Society in acknowledging its thanks to hosts who entertained the members to show to their guests the historic treasures of their homes ; as, for instance, at Browsholme Hall, in 1926, and at Hoghton Tower on another occasion.

The mystery of Miles Standish, the Colonist, who accompanied the Pilgrim Fathers in the Mayflower, when they sailed to Plymouth and founded the colony there in 1620, has attracted and fascinated many minds. The problem of the colonists' "lost lands" mentioned in his will, and the related problem of his ancestry, led J. M. Ainscough to invite his friend the Reverend T. C. Porteus to accompany him on an antiquarian quest to the Isle of Man in the year 1920. They visited the Rolls and Record Offices, made a pilgrimage to Ellanbane in Lezayre, the former home of the Manx Branch of the Standish family, had many adven-

tures, some successes, and some disappointments. What harvest they gleaned has been printed in "Captain Myles Standish," published by Longmans, and Manchester University Press in 1920.

Seven years later Mr. Porteus published his "History of the Parish of Standish." From beginning to end J. M. Ainscough took the keenest interest in this work, lending manuscripts and photographs, supplying and checking information, reading proofs, and giving valuable advice. In his foreword the author makes special mention of his friend, who personally obtained subscribers for sixty-five copies. Indeed the book would hardly have been published but for his encouragement and help.

As an antiquarian, and as a native of Standish, he felt very keenly the partial demolition of Standish Hall. On the death of Henry N. W. Standish, at Con-trexeville, France, in 1920, the long line of the manorial family came to an end. The estate was put up for sale in 1922, and sold in parcels. Standish Hall, which had long been leased to various tenants by its owners, was dismantled; the oak panelling and fireplaces were removed, the private chapel demolished,

and the Manor-house reconstructed to form two separate residences. J. M. Ainscough loved the old hall very dearly, and he endeavoured to secure the preservation of various mementoes of its ancient dignity. Through his good offices, the purchasers of the fittings, Messrs. Robertson, of Knightbridge, presented a shield bearing the Standish Coat-of Arms, with numerous quarterings of allied families, to Wigan Public Library. The shield was originally an overmantel in the Hall. In addition to this he purchased, from a dealer, a stone clock-face and clock-gong, formerly in the domestic chapel at Standish Hall, and presented these to Wigan Library. The gong or bell is inscribed, "R. S. 1743." The Initials are those of Ralph Standish, the Jacobite, who married Lady Phillipa Howard, daughter of Henry, Duke of Norfolk. Ralph Standish was captured at Preston in 1715, sentenced to death but reprieved. Another point of interest in the gong is that it bears the name and mark of Luke Ashton, Bellfounder, of Wigan.

About the same time the Deeds and Papers of the Standish Family were presented to the Wigan Public Library by Madame Standish, in memory of her

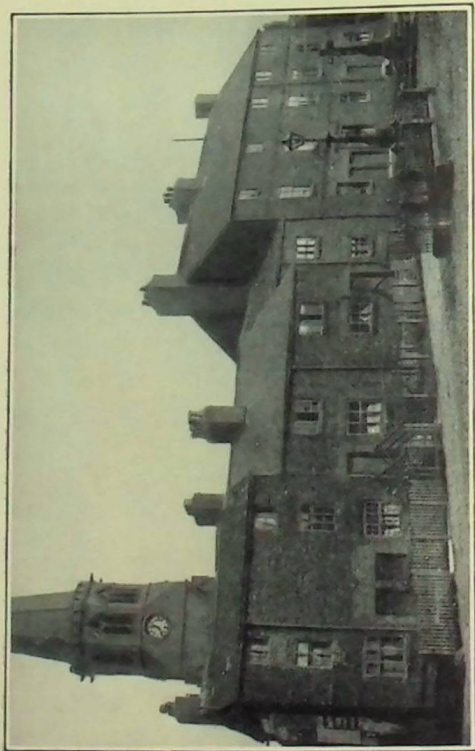
husband, and as a token of the long connection between his family and the locality. In 1923, whilst Mayor of Wigan, J. M. Ainscough learnt from Mr. Porteus of the whereabouts of the muniments, and he joined with the Borough Librarian of Wigan in a request to the executors of H. W. N. Standish, Esquire, that a deputation from the Library might be allowed to examine the deeds, and report on their historical value and local interest. Permission was given; Mr. A. J. Hawkes and Mr. Porteus went to London, saw the documents, and made earnest representations that the family papers, letters, etc., should not be separated from the deeds, but that all should be secured if possible, for the Library.

When the documents were presented to the Corporation, Alderman Farr, Vice-Chairman of the Library Committee, made special mention of their obligation to the Mayor (J. M. Ainscough), and to the Town Clerk (W. H. Tyrer), for their good services in obtaining the gift. In responding, the Mayor said that the donation had given him a great deal of personal pleasure, for the Deeds related in the main to the history of Standish, his native place. They regretted the death

of the last of the Squires, the break-up of the estate, and the partial destruction of Standish Hall ; but they would have, for all time, relics of the family history in Wigan Public Library.

He accurately described the Standish Deeds and Papers as of inestimable value to historians. Since they were deposited in Wigan Public Library, much of the information which they contain has been made available to the general reader. "The History of the Parish of Standish," published in 1927 ; the "Calendar of Standish Deeds," in 1933 ; "New Light on the Lancashire Jacobite Plot," in 1936, owe very much to the material found among the Standish muniments. Moreover, the donation of the Standish Deeds to Wigan has paved the way for other gifts of a similar kind, so that Wigan Library has become rich in such treasures.

One of the additional donations is that of the Dicconson of Wrightington Deeds and Papers, presented by Captain C. R. T. M. Gerard, which was entirely through the instrumentality of J. M. Ainscough. This collection is of rare value to historians, and like the Standish Papers, helps in the elucidation of the Lancashire Plot of 1692-'94.



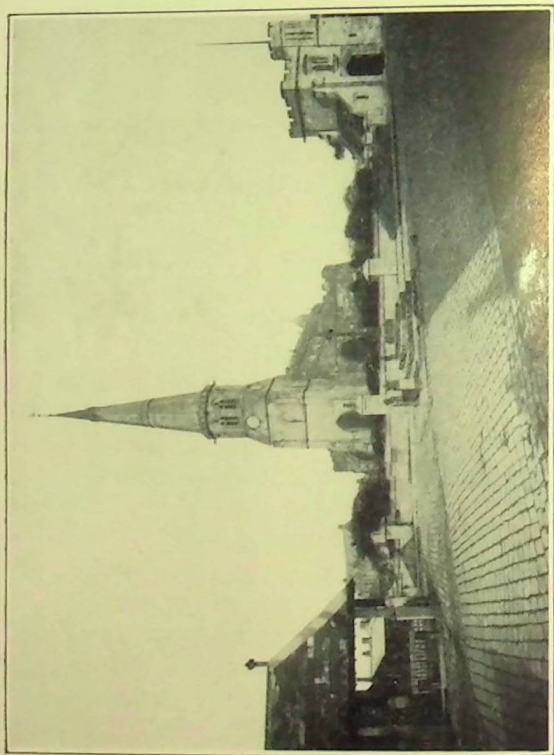
STANDISH MARKET PLACE BEFORE ALTERATIONS

His love for his native place was a leading trait in his character ; with a jocular allusion to Queen Mary Tudor's statement about Calais, he once said that the name "Standish" would be found graven on his heart. This local patriotism of his found practical and generous expression in the improvements which he effected in Standish Market Place.

A row of houses, known in the eighteenth century as the "Great Houses" (some of them were three-storied) had been built at the west end of the churchyard, abutting on the Market Place. For several centuries they had hemmed in and hidden the Parish Church on this side. Locally they were known as "Spite Row," for tradition said that when the Standish family, as Roman Catholics, were forbidden by law to nominate a Rector, they had built the big houses to spoil the approach to the Church. It will be seen, however, from the "History of Standish" (page 82) that the Standish family evaded the Act of 1714 by leasing the advowson to various members of the Church of England ; it is hardly credible, therefore, that they would diminish the value of the advowson. The buildings were mainly shops and warehouses placed on

this site because of its proximity to the market. A similar position is seen in Wigan, where the Church is closed round with shops adjacent to the old market place.

In time people realised that the Great Houses were a disfigurement. As early as 1880, Mr. Maskell Peace, then Town Clerk of Wigan, and residing at Ashfield House, Standish, proposed that the buildings should be removed, offering £500 towards the purchase of the property. His proposition was not accepted. How the plan at last matured can best be told in J. M. Ainscough's own words, when he handed over the deeds of the property to the Standish Urban District Council in 1930. He traced the growth of the proposal in his own mind to the disappointment felt by his father, then resident in Standish, at the rejection of Mr. Peace's offer ; and in part, perhaps, to a book which he had received from his father : " He also put into my hands to read the life of John Kyrle, 'The Man of Ross,' who did so much for his own district. John Kyrle has been dead for two hundred years, but the beautiful walks he laid out, and the avenues of elms he planted are still the pride and glory of the beautiful old town of Ross,



STANDISH MARKET PLACE AFTER ALTERATIONS

and the magnet which draws to it many visitors. And so through all the years in which I have been immersed in business this has been with me a dream, and at the break-up of the Standish Estate on the death of the late Squire, I found the opportunity to purchase the whole block of houses. During the erection of the Wigan War Memorial I became acquainted with Sir Giles Scott, the Architect of Liverpool Cathedral, and I explained to him what I wished to do. He very kindly sent to me from London the gentleman who made the sketch of the proposed lay-out which I submitted to you along with my proposal four years ago, which you have so fully and so admirably carried out."

The Great Houses, having been demolished, the aspect of the venerable Parish Church of Standish was opened up. The site of the houses was covered with greensward and fenced with a low stone wall. The little old Market House was restored, the appearance of the Town's Well improved, the Stocks (which he had discovered) were removed to their original position at the foot of the ancient Cross. The dream that he had long cherished was now fulfilled at last.

Many have a love for antiquity ; few are as fortunate as James Martland Ainscough in expressing their zeal in practical service to the community. His care in securing the public custody of valuable documents provides material for authors and historians in days to come. The improvement in Standish village is one of lasting value, and an outstanding example to others, to redeem from disfigurement and hand down unimpaired to posterity the legacy of places of historic interest and charm, which we have inherited from our fathers.

EXTRACTS FROM AN APPRECIATION BY
A. J. HAWKES, F.S.A., WIGAN BOROUGH
LIBRARIAN, PUBLISHED IN THE LANCASHIRE
AND CHESHIRE ANTIQUARIAN JOURNAL.

“ James Martland Ainscough, J.P., died suddenly at his residence, Lindley Mount, Parbold, on January 8th, 1937, at the age of 82. Two days previously he had attended a business meeting of the Wigan Savings Bank, of which he was a trustee. Always keenly interested in local antiquities, he had been a member of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society for thirty-four years.

“ His knowledge of the history and antiquities of St. Wilfred's Church, Standish, was second to none, and one of his outstanding acts of public generosity was the purchase in 1926 of a block of ten houses which obscured the view of the ancient Church from the Standish Market Place. These houses were called Spite Row, and legend has it that they were built soon after the Reformation, with the express purpose of hiding the Church from public view. As soon as all the houses became vacant in October, 1929, demolition commenced, and in November, 1930, the open space, together with the restored stocks and well, were handed over to the authorities. The ancient stocks were recovered in a romantic manner and restored to their original position near the Market Cross. A new shelter was erected over the well and butter market slab, exactly corresponding to the old prints, supported by stone pillars and enclosed in a cast iron railing.

“ Although Mr. Ainscough never contributed to the proceedings of the Society, he was at the back of several pieces of research, encouraging and rendering aid. His interest in the story of Captain Myles Standish, the Pilgrim Father, led him

to accompany the Reverend T. C. Porteus, on a tour to the Isle of Man, to discover proof of Captain Standish's association with the island.

“He presented the stone-dial clock (with its Wigan cast gong) of Standish Hall to the Wigan Library Committee in 1926; he was mainly responsible for procuring the gift of the Wrightington Muniments to the Public Library in 1928; his incidental gifts to further antiquarian research or to preserve some object of tradition were numerous.”

CHAPTER VI.

CHURCH LIFE.

ANCESTRAL and parental influence brought J. M. Ainscough into close touch with the Church from his earliest days. His forbears had held office in several neighbouring parishes ; and his mother, who was one of his first teachers, did not fail to instruct him in the Bible and Prayer Book. A friend of the family wrote to him in 1864—" My dear James I often think I see you sitting by your mother's side in your comfortable room getting your lessons. My dear boy, you cannot sufficiently value your kind mother's attentions. I sincerely hope you will repay them all, by being kind and obedient to your father and mother ; not forgetting that we have a Father above who requires our first and greatest services."

Many years afterwards (in 1922) Dr. E. W. Martland, a cousin and also a native of Standish, stated that in his opinion Mr. Ainscough's success in life

was attributable in large part to his mother—"a woman of exceptional character."

During his boyhood days at Standish the Rector was Canon W. H. Brandreth, who soon after his coming had the first organ installed in the Church. James Ainscough became a choirboy, and his interest in Church music was awakened. Miss Brandreth, the Rector's daughter, was the organist, and often she would get him to blow the organ when she was practising. His mother first taught him to play the harmonium, and Miss Brandreth sometimes gave him a lesson on the organ. Some years later whilst he was living in Wigan he became organist at the King Street Methodist Church. His love of music brought him many happy hours in later years. Well rendered Church music was a great joy to him. He delighted to sing and play on his organ at home, while others accompanied him with piano and violin.

It was through his partner, Mr. Pendlebury, that he first became interested in St. George's Church, Wigan. He acted as a Manager for St. George's Schools, Windsor Street, for over thirty years. Later on he became associated with St.

Catharine's, Wigan, and from 1886 to 1893 he was a churchwarden. He was also a manager of St. Catharine's and Whelley Schools, during this period. His interest in the Church and parish remained after he had left Wigan, and he often returned to attend some special service or parochial function.

In 1893 he returned to his native village and took a great interest in the Church to which he had become so firmly attached in his early years. After a short time he was elected People's Warden and he also represented the parish at the Manchester Diocesan Conference. There he became acquainted with Bishop Knox, a churchman after his own heart, and for him he had a very great admiration. During his churchwardenship at Standish many improvements were made through his initiative. The clerestory windows were glazed, the churchyard put in order, all the gravestones being set upright, and new chimes were put in the clock at his own expense. He took a keen interest in the history of the Church and spent much time searching for old records and points of interest, such as the churchwardens' accounts (dating from 1679), and old brass memorials, etc., in the Church.

After Prospect House, Standish, had been destroyed by fire, he went to live in Parbold in 1910, but he always attended Standish Church on Christmas Day, and often on Easter Sunday too. He also retained a close association with the Church and Parish, and when the opportunity came it was a great delight to him to be able to purchase the property in the Market Place, which had for so many generations obscured the west end of the Church. When the scheme was completed by the Standish Council, he was more than satisfied, for the new lay-out adds greatly to the appearance of the Church. Now his ashes lie in the old churchyard, where they were scattered on January 12th, 1937, after his peaceful passing four days previously. The Market Place improvements will be a lasting monument of his reverence and devotion to his old parish Church for all time.

During his twenty-six years at Parbold he attended Douglas Parish Church regularly, and took an active interest in parochial work during the earlier years. He was a Diocesan representative, and attended the conferences at Blackburn frequently. Not only did he take an interest in his own Parish Church ; for

many years he gave liberally to Wigan Parish Church and to many other Churches, of all denominations, in the surrounding district.

A few years after he had retired from business he was asked to stand as a candidate for the Church Assembly, as a representative of the Wigan Area of the Liverpool Diocese. He was successful in the election ; and, during his five years of office, went up to London regularly to attend the meetings of the Assembly.

He was always opposed to excessive ritual, and loved a simple service with good congregational singing and the old familiar prayers. It would, however, be a mistake to conclude that he was narrow-minded. When somebody remonstrated with him on account of his association with a High Church clergyman in certain enterprises, he replied, " He is an earnest and devoted man ; he shall have my support."

Although a convinced Protestant, he lived on excellent terms with his Roman Catholic neighbours at Standish and Wigan. Once when Messrs. Pendlebury & Co. were commissioned to provide curtains for a reredos in a Roman Catholic Church in the district, it was necessary for some-

one to stand on the altar, which was difficult of access, to obtain certain measurements. The priest-in-charge declared, "Mr. Ainscough must do it, I will not allow anybody else to stand there." The priest knew that he could confide in his reverence and care.

When he resided at Standish, the priest of St. Marie's had in his possession an ancient chasuble, believed to have been taken away from the Parish Church at the Reformation. He was very friendly with the priest, who proudly showed him the vestment, and playfully placed it over Mr. Ainscough's head and told him to survey himself in the mirror. It amused him very much to relate how he had once been arrayed in a priest's vestment.

While he held tenaciously to his own convictions, his principle was to show friendliness and charity to all, which is after all the truly Christian attitude to life.

CHAPTER VII.

SUMMARY.

THE previous chapters have dealt with the various aspects of J. M. Ainscough's life. Now, in conclusion, it seems fitting to give some idea of his character. During 1922, when he was Mayor of Wigan, there was printed in the Wigan Examiner and Wigan Observer a personal impression by Mr. H. Barnes.

“His Worship's lineaments betoken character. There is the firmly set jaw, the sternly moulded features which, though they give an impression of a keenly determined character, yet readily melt into a genial, kindly smile. The keen eyes are set under heavy, bushy brows—eyes which tell of a strong sense of duty and an iron resolution to perform it. Yet eyes which light up with a kindly, humorous gleam when merriment stirs the Mayoral mind. His whole outward personality conveys an impression that the man inwardly is an admixture of dauntless resolve where duty is concerned,

combined with kindly benevolence when charity and courteousness become the scene wherein he plays. Such an impression has always caused me to think that I would not like to be the object of His Worship's censure. Yet I have always thought I would love to be the object of His Worship's approbation.

“ One of the charms of Mr. Ainscough's personality is his conversation. There again his personality displays itself. Let the subject of the Mayor's discourse be a matter of serious moment, then one is aware at once of a firm resolution to carry his conviction. The resolution depicted in his features becomes realised in his speech. He is never domineering or dogmatic in argument ; nor is he at all self-opinionated or one-sided in his views. He will patiently listen to what others say and then firmly reason out his reply for or against, according to his conviction. This trait should stand him in good stead as chief magistrate. But let the matter of His Worship's conversation be of less serious moment, then one appreciates willy-nilly the charm of the Mayoral humour. A study of his facial expressions at such moments is a pleasure in itself. The eyes light up with a kindly

mirthful gleam, his every feature exemplifies the joke he is endeavouring to impart, and the delightful finale to it is His Worship's resonant laugh which gives his hearers' dull care a knock-out blow, and they invariably join in His Worship's merriment.

"It is a truism in human nature that where a strong sense of humour prevails there is an equally strong sense of sympathy. This truism finds its example in Councillor Ainscough. His is a nature that one will not have to appeal to for long without obtaining a sympathy of a gentle, kindly nature mingled with sound practical advice. All this makes a direct appeal to the heart which may be distressed, and the person usually goes away with the impression that Mr. Ainscough is

"The kindest man,
The best conditioned and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies". . . .

"But the subjects most of all I love to hear His Worship dilate on are history and antiquities. On these subjects he is a veritable mine of information. Many a time and oft I have sat an entranced listener when he has been in his historical vein. Stories of the past come and go ;

anecdotes of worthies long since forgotten by the man in the street become real and vital scenes when sketched by His Worship's eloquence ; exploits of this or that scion of families generations gone by are detailed by the Mayor with a graphic power of depiction that awakes his hearers' interest and holds it in a vice-like grip. My own regret is that His Worship does not take pen in hand and compile a volume or two—for sure he has material enough—and revive for his fellow townsmen some of the ancient glories of Wigan's past. In dwelling on this side of His Worship's personality there is method in my madness. It must be obvious to anyone that if Mr. Ainscough displays such keen interest in his town's traditional history he will, as a natural sequence, seek to maintain worthily the traditionary dignity associated with the Mayoral chair.

“ Most especially will the Wigan townsmen find the Mayor's long, hard training as a business man of benefit during his year of office. He is a keen appreciator of the value of time. He will stand no trifling with business that demands dispatch. What he thinks necessary to be accomplished will have to be carried into

effect without delay. Any desultory work will arouse the Mayoral ire, from which I fervently pray to be delivered. That stern resolve which his outward self betokens will rapidly carry into action any designs he wishes to see an accomplished fact."

All who knew him well will agree that this is an excellent pen portrait. His strong will and stern determination were mingled with a deep sympathy and power of understanding. As La Rochefoucauld says, "It is only those who have firmness of will who can possess true sweetness of character." The twinkle in his eye was a visible sign of his keen sense of humour, which is indeed a great asset in life.

It is pleasant to recall his happiness and joy in giving to others. He helped many by his wise, considered judgments, and his cheerful, optimistic outlook on life often imparted fresh confidence to those less fortunate than himself. His strength lay in his simplicity; he was completely unassuming and devoid of all pretence, and he had friends in all branches of society. He never at any time sought popularity, but always acted according to his own conscience. His

good qualities were numerous and widespread ; his interests included politics, religion and antiquities, and in all he took a broad-minded view and kept up-to-date to the very end of his life. He had a good sense of proportion, coupled with an active intelligence and sound common sense ; these qualities being the secret of success in business as well as in life in general.

He was a great lover of beauty. Beautiful scenery, beautiful old abbeys and cathedrals, and good music, all appealed to him intensely. Here he found much food for thought and during his years of retirement he spent many happy weeks touring the countryside visiting old abbeys and churches, and seeking out their chief points of historical interest.

He was a great believer in education. He had not had the advantages of higher education in his youth, but he was always anxious for his children to have every available advantage, and he saw three of them successfully through their university careers. From his boyhood days he read abundantly and did much to educate himself in this way. He had a remarkable faculty for retaining what he had read very many years later. He had

therefore an extensive general knowledge, and he was well acquainted with history and general literature, as well as with local antiquities.

For many years of his life he gave unstintingly of his time and energy to the public life of Wigan, even when he was hard-pressed at his business during the war from 1914 to 1918. To charities far and wide, and of every description, he gave generously, yet on himself he spent next to nothing. He preferred a simple home life, and he was very abstemious in all things.

Beginning with few early advantages he worked hard, proved his worth and made a noble thing of life. Perhaps Good Fortune smiled upon him, though he was never a believer in luck. He always maintained that success came only through seizing the opportunity when it occurred. He certainly had the ability to seize his opportunities. He was blessed with mental vigour and bodily health up to the very end of his life.

“ Yet the strong man must go :
For the journey is done and the summit
attained,

And the barriers fall.”

