

Phillips Park:

Its history and development



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Introduction

Philips Park has been a public park for a mere 60 years. For the previous 150 years it was the private estate of 3 generations of the Philips family of Manchester-based manufacturers and merchants. For 170 years before that it was the farm estate of the Crompton family and probably for 300 years before that part of a deer park belonging first to the Pilkington family and then to the Earls of Derby. This booklet tells the story of land and owner and how the park came to be as it is.

1.1 Geology and geomorphology

The Park is located on a natural promontory bounded by the Irwell valley and two tributary stream valleys, North Wood and Mere Clough. Much of the site is glacial sand, gravel and clay deposits, but beneath this there is red (bunter) sandstone, from which St Mary's church (Prestwich) is largely built and further down, coal measures, exploited for use in local factories but most notably by the former Agecroft Colliery and power station.

1.2 Biodiversity

Much of Philips Park is now a Local Nature Reserve and 'Site of Biological Importance'. Ancient woodland survives in and around the Park, particularly on valley slopes. Although there are no 'veteran' trees, the ground flora is richly distinctive. Flatter land was cleared in the 17th and 18th centuries for grazing animals or growing crops, but as it was only partially improved, it too has a good range of wildflowers.

During the nineteenth century Mere Clough was noted for its rare and varied flora. It was a regular haunt of local botanists, many of them handloom weavers. At this period many artisans were enthusiastic in improving their knowledge, studying subjects such as mathematics and botany. Weavers interested in the study of plants would pin on to their handlooms copies of the botanical classification tables of Linnaeus, and study them while engaged in the repetitive work of weaving. Such men formed local botanical societies, and meetings of members were held sometimes at the *Ostrich* public house in Rooden Lane in Prestwich, and at the *Lord Nelson* at Ringley. The *Railway and Naturalist* still survives in Prestwich as a reminder of these activities. John Horsefield of Besses o' th'

Barn has an imposing tombstone in the churchyard at Prestwich reflecting the regard in which he was held by his fellow botanists, and James Percival and Richard Buxton, other prominent naturalists, are buried nearby.

Local plants found by visitors to the Clough included marsh marigolds, wood sorrel, spotted orchids, red-flowered avens, marsh violets, butter bur, angelica and wild raspberries, as well as many sedges and ferns. Wood anemones were said to bloom by "tens of thousands" in late April and early May. Ringley woods were once noted for the masses of bluebells which flowered in the spring, and thick carpets of bluebells and wild garlic are still to be found each year.

2. Pre-Philips history

2.1 Prehistoric

Although there is no physical or artifactual evidence for prehistoric activity in the Park itself, there is evidence of Iron Age settlers at nearby sites such as Rainsough Brow, Kersal Moor and Radcliffe Ees. A promontory site such as Philips Park is a good location for early settlers and it may be that evidence will be found in the future.

2.2 Roman

The main evidence of Roman activity near the park is the Manchester to Ribchester road, Watling Street. Higher Lane and Dales Lane are on the line of Watling Street..

2.3 Anglo Saxon and Viking

Although there is no evidence of Anglo Saxon or Viking occupation of the park, the word ‘mere’ as in Mere Clough, is normally derived from the Saxon word for ‘boundary’.

2.4 Medieval

In the Middle Ages Pilkington was a large vill or township on the east bank of the River Irwell in the parish of Prestwich. The township had three divisions: Unsworth, Whitefield and Outwood. The estate of Pilkington was a manor, and held a manorial court, although none of the court records has survived for periods earlier than the seventeenth century.



Pilkington and adjoining townships. Outwood, Whitefield and Unsworth are divisions of Pilkington.(DW)

Although there is no documentary confirmation, it is likely from map evidence that the medieval hall at Pilkington was on a site at the centre of the township which became known as “Old Hall”, and was still so named in the nineteenth century, at the junction of the present Old Hall Lane and Ringley Road. Lying at the meeting of local routes, it probably remained the site of the demesne hall until the early 1400s, at which time a new hall was built opposite the top of what is now Stand Lane. The new hall was a fine timbered building with the main hall open to the roof. It stood until the 1960s, but was succeeded as the lord’s residence about 1513-8 when a new hall was built behind it by the then manorial lord of Pilkington, Thomas, 2nd Earl of Derby. The preceding building was then put to use as a cowshed and part of a carved timber window-frame from this hall is on permanent display in Whitefield Library. Later, the site at Old Hall was used for several dwellings.



Drawing of Pilkington ‘New’ Hall, built in the early 1400s, used as an agricultural building for much of its life and demolished in the 1960s.(BAGM)

One of the outstanding features of Pilkington was its very large deer park. The date of the establishment of the park is not known, and unfortunately there are no known documents to establish its presence before the 1500s, but it is highly likely that it existed at least two hundred years before that date. Hunting was a very popular pastime for the gentry, and additionally provided a source of food, not only venison and wild boar meat but also smaller game such as rabbits and birds. The Pilkington family certainly had an early interest in hunting, because in 1291 they obtained a charter of free warren from king Edward I giving them the right to hunt small game (that is, rabbits, partridges and so on but not deer or wild boar) on their manor of Pilkington. There is no known grant allowing the family to establish a park, but at some

unknown date a park was certainly enclosed and continued to be so managed until the early 1600s.



Photograph of 1291 Grant of free warren (by kind permission of the Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge) This grant was made by Edward I to Roger de Pilkington, allowing him to hunt certain game within his lands of Pilkington, Whitefield, Unsworth, Cheetham, Crompton, Sholver and Wolstenholme in Lancashire.

The park stretched from the north side of Rhodes in the south to what became Stand in the north, reaching westwards to what is now Lower Heaps farm and eastwards to Mere Clough. It included the area that later became Philips Park. It was surrounded by a fence, known as a pale, which was pierced by at least three deer leaps – hurdles so devised that stray (fallow and red) deer could get into the park but could not get out again. Within the park there were two deer houses, one for bucks, one for does. The very name of “Stand” derives from a construction near the hall in which the lord of the manor and his guests could hide while servants drove deer past to be shot with bows and arrows.



Extract from John Speed's map of Lancashire. Originally drawn in 1610 and published in 1611, a number of additions were made and shown in later editions. One added name was 'Ye Stand' on the edge of Pilkington Park. Ringley Chapel was another, wrongly placed close to Wardley. As Ringley Chapel was not built until 1625 the date of this edition must be after that date.

2.5 Post-medieval

The Pilkington family was active in politics throughout the middle ages, but Thomas Pilkington was on the Yorkist side in 1485 and he fought for Richard III at Bosworth. The Yorkists were defeated there and Thomas was subsequently attainted for treason by the new king, Henry VII. His Lancashire lands, which besides Pilkington itself included Bury and several outlying places such as Cheetham, were granted to Thomas Stanley, created the first earl of Derby. The Derby family do not appear ever to have lived at Pilkington, but members of the family visited for a few days at a time to oversee the management of the estates. Until the late eighteenth century the land was largely rural, but then the coal mines at Pilkington and Bury became an extremely valuable source of income for the family and industry became increasingly important, although a great deal of open country still remains.

The second earl's new hall (built about 1513-18) was a grand house, also built of timber, which had a great gallery on the top floor. One of the halls may have had some conspicuous stonework attached, because a famous antiquarian and traveller, John Leland, came past about 1539 and described a “stone howse” belonging to the earl of Derby there. In about 1835 this third hall caught fire, and was subsequently demolished and replaced by another house on the same site.

From 1521 to early in 1531 Edward, 3rd Earl of Derby was a minor, too young to inherit the management of his own estates, and was in the care or “wardship” of the crown. The crown had to produce accounts to show the financial state of the lands, and the account for 1529-30 gives a good picture of the nature of the park and manor. In addition to rents, many local tenants were required to do labour services on the manor, mowing in early summer and doing other work in the autumn. They also had to pay “hen rents”, that is, provide an allotted number of birds to the lord of the manor. These services were no longer required to be performed in kind, but had been commuted to a money payment.

By the 1520s the park was producing a variety of items. Grazing was let out, and in the year of the accounts was worth £12 10^s. There were also rabbit warrens, which brought in 16^s 8^d and 13^s 4^d was taken for pannage of pigs; pannage was the right to allow pigs to forage for acorns in the autumn. Coppice wood and bark were saleable items, and although the accounts do not specify that this was coming from the park, at least some of it probably was. There was a parker, William Radclyffe, and a sub-parker, Roger Walwerke; the sub-parker had

the particular duty of maintaining the park pale. Lengths of the bank which carried the park pale can still be traced in Mere Clough.



Photograph of Mere Clough. The Bradley Brook through Mere Clough separated the townships of Pilkington and Prestwich. The south-eastern boundary of the Park estate followed the medieval line of the Pilkington deer park pale, in the form of a linear earthwork with a wooden fence on top. The earthwork survives to this day. Mere Clough was renowned amongst botanists in the Victorian period for the variety and profusion of its flora.(IP)

No deer are mentioned in the accounts, but the park certainly had deer in the 1580s when gifts of venison were taken by the then park keeper to the Shuttleworth family of Smithills and Gawthorpe, then living at Smithills Hall in Bolton.

1627-1654: Disparkment

At the turn of the sixteenth century, as part of a wider financial plan to generate cash and revenue for the Earl of Derby's estate, much of the park of Pilkington was parcelled into separate land units for renting to farmers who settled on the land, turned the units into productive farms and paid rent to the earldom.

Farms established then which have survived until recently include Heaps, still known and run as a farm although probably only part of its original area, the adjacent Hurst Farm and the farm at Mullineux Brow. Surrounding areas outside the pale had been farmed while the park was still in being, two long-standing and important examples being Rhodes Farm, now the site of a disused sewage farm between the park pale and the River Irwell, and Seddon Fold at Prestolee. There were also scattered farms throughout the remaining area of Unsworth and Whitefield, though the less productive moorland/heathland areas were probably only enclosed in the sixteenth or early seventeenth century.

The largest of the new farming units would eventually become Philips Park and Lawrence Crompton, a yeoman of Clifton, became the first tenant. Prestwich parish records indicate that he began to occupy the tenement a few years before

his formal, long lease was granted on 20th December 1627. In return for an entry premium, an annual rent of £5.9.0d and two capons at Easter, Earl William granted him the tenancy of 54 large (Cheshire) acres of land enclosed from the southern part of the former park of Pilkington. That was equivalent to roughly 120 modern, statute acres.



Drawing of Pilkington Park and Park estate c1627 (DW)

Lawrence Crompton died in 1640 leaving a widow, Alice, and numerous children (see Crompton family tree) of various ages. According to the custom of the manor of Pilkington, Alice became the legal tenant after her husband's death and the Crompton family held the land until 1776, first as tenants and then as freeholders. During their ownership it became known as "the Park Estate". They transformed the former parkland into arable and pastoral fields and closes, built a farm house, outbuildings, and gardens, managed the ancient woodland of the former park and replanted trees.



Portrait of James Stanley, 7th Earl of Derby by Van Dyck (Wikimedia commons)

During the English Civil Wars, 1642-1651 Earl William's son and successor, James, Earl of Derby, was a Cavalier. Many of his Pilkington tenants were non-conformists and resented his Royalist influence and his attempts at forced conscription to the Royalist side. The Cromptons seem to have kept a low profile.

Earl James was executed in Bolton in 1651 as a traitor to the Commonwealth and his lands, including Pilkington, were confiscated by the republican government. The Crompton family, headed by Lawrence's widow, Alice, took their opportunity and by a deed of 5th September 1654 she relinquished her tenancy to enable her middle sons James and Thomas to purchase the freehold for £130 from Messrs Meadowcroft and Shacklocke who had bought it from the Commonwealth and were selling on. This enabled James and Thomas Crompton to do what they wished with their own land. After the Restoration, subsequent Earls of Derby recovered most of Pilkington, including other units carved from within the former park, but the Cromptons had purchased the freehold and the earldom never recovered The Park Estate.

1654-1776

The Crompton family prospered, made prudent marriages and acquired the neighbouring Prestwich Wood estate through marriage. By about 1760-76, Thomas Crompton, the last of the line, was living there rather than at The Park. According to the recollections of a future owner, the farmhouse of the Park estate was occupied by a Mr. Siddal, who was Thomas Crompton's agent.

Timber was in high demand at that time and the woodland at the Park was managed and sold as it matured. The Park woods doubled as an unofficial playground for local boys and scholars at Stand Grammar School, then situated on Ringley Road.

There was speculation that the Park had a "*...valuable Mine of coals under the estate which would be worked at easy expense*" and between 1760-1776, Thomas Crompton frequently mortgaged The Park and raised large sums on unsecured loans which were not repaid. What he spent it on is a mystery. If he was looking for large deposits of coal, he failed to find them.

In 1776, just after Thomas Crompton's death without an heir, The Park was advertised as "*a compact, improvable freehold estate ...consisting of a good Farm-House, with suitable outhousing all in tolerable good repair with 41 large acres of arable, meadow and pasture and 20 acres of wood ground all within a ring fence, pleasantly situated*

at a convenient distance from the turnpike road. Thomas Crompton's executors quickly found a purchaser for the Park for a price of £2560 but before the sale could be completed, a Mr Hanson, a distant relative in London made an inheritance claim, which Crompton's creditors and executors successfully defended. The effects of the litigation and the unravelling of Crompton's debts took five years to resolve.

Change at the Park 1776-1799.

In 1781, the Park was again advertised for sale, this time as:-

" Park House, a capital messuage or dwelling house with barn, stables, shippon, court yard, orchard, gardens, and other appurtenances; commanding an extensive prospect at a convenient distance from the turnpike road about 6 post miles from Manchester and 2 from Radcliffe"; there was " Wood Ground which had been long famous for growing fine timber on which stood many thousand young oaks, and a large quantity of Ash, Alder" and " 260 fine large oak trees, regularly marked ready for falling"

Much of the felled timber had been sold off as an independent lot before the Park was sold to Edward Hobson, a rich Salford merchant who, like others of his class and occupation, was transferring cash from commerce into property. In 1781, he paid £2150 to Crompton's executors for the Park and they were only too glad to dispose of it. When, in 1784, Hobson's daughter Ellen married Mr. Barron, also a merchant, Hobson settled the Park Estate on her.

In 1790, after improvements, it was said to comprise *2 messuages (dwellings); 1 Barn, 1 stable; 1 garden; 1 orchard 30 acres land, 30 acres meadow, 30 acres pasture; common of pasture for all cattle and common turbary with the appurtenances in Outwood.*

By now, as well as a turnpike road to Manchester on the east of the Park (Bury Old Road) there was the Manchester, Bolton and Bury canal beyond the west boundary.

On 20th January 1798, the Barrons let the house and park on a 21 year lease to local farmer William Hulme at the rent of £105 a year.

3. Robert Philips (1760-1844)



Painting of Robert Philips (Trevelyan collection, University of Newcastle library)

abundant streams of income and reservoirs of capital for some of their descendants to three or four generations. One of their consistent business strengths was co-operation within the family.

By 1747, Nathaniel and John had set up a successful smallware (linen and cotton tapes, ribbons and laces) manufactory centred on Tean Hall, J & N Philips, which later became the biggest manufacturer of tapes in Europe. It originated as an outworking system and they invested capital in technology to provide specialist looms and training for indentured weavers. There was a bleachery on site on the banks of the river Tean and in the early 1800s the Tean manufactory was developed into a central weaving mill.



Drawing of Nathaniel Philips (BAGM)

3.1 Acquisition of the park

Mr. Barron died on 7th October 1798 and, his solvency in doubt, his widow put the Park up for sale subject to the lease. At the auction in January 1799 the highest bidder at £2,960 was a rich businessman and industrialist who, as a scholar at Stand, had played in the Park woods a quarter of a century earlier and was now looking for a home. He had recently married and their first child was expected. The Park would be an ideal prospective family home for Robert Philips. His father, Nathaniel, elder brother John, Uncle Thomas and cousins lived nearby and he had business interests in Whitefield, Radcliffe and Manchester. On 24th June 1799 he completed the purchase of the freehold Park Estate, subject to the 1798 lease to William Hulme.

3.2 His background

Manchester was a magnet for entrepreneurs in the 18th century and Robert Philips' father, Nathaniel (1726-1808), and his brothers John (1724-1806) and Thomas (1728-1811) from Tean in Staffordshire were attracted there. They arrived in Manchester at the right time to prosper. The 3 brothers were all living there by 1757. They created the core Philips businesses which provided

In 1823 the next generation of Philips cousins built a steam powered, fire proof mill building on the Tean site which continued working until the 1990s. In 2008 Tean Mill was converted to apartments with many of the original features retained and enhanced.



Photographs of Tean Hall and Mill, (Creative Commons)

The three founding Philips brothers diversified into hat making, smallware manufacture, bleaching, silkware and warehousing (wholesale) businesses. Eventually the main warehouse was at 35 Church Street, Manchester. The brothers often worked in partnership with each other and sometimes individual brothers had non family partners for specific schemes.

Before the 1780s they had smallware manufactories and bleachworks in Whitefield and Radcliffe and warehouses in Manchester, London and Whitefield. They had a thriving export business to America with many social and business contacts in Leeds, Bristol and Liverpool; they had agents and business interests in Russia, the continent, Ireland and Philadelphia. They loaned money on interest to other businesses and gave loans to and bought shares in infrastructure works like the Stand Turnpike Trust, the Staffordshire Canal and the Ashton Canal. They also had an interest in West India sugar.

Nathaniel, with three sons John, Robert and Samuel, and only one daughter seems not to have been as adventurous in business as his brother Thomas, who had five daughters and one surviving son, the ambitious George Philips (1766-1847), later an MP and baronet. However when George married his cousin, Sarah Anne, the family's business interests were woven tighter.

Nathaniel's notes for his capital assets from the 1780s to 1808 show a complex web of interconnected family investments, drawings and loans with other partnerships as well as those between the brothers, sons and nephews. His accounts also show his huge capital investment in the Salford Cotton Twist Spinning Mill, built in the 1790s. It was a very early factory for mass production, built with cast iron to minimise fire risk, designed for efficient, mechanised cotton spinning and fitted out with steam powered machinery. It became a tourist attraction, especially when lit with gas in 1805/6. Constant light maximised the workforce's available working hours and the owners' profitability.

The Philips family formed part of Manchester's business elite. Nathaniel was attracted to Unitarianism. One of his business partners in warehousing was G.W.Wood, whose father, a Leeds Unitarian, preached that to increase material wealth was part of man's fulfilment on earth.

In most years, the Philips family made profits on all of their various businesses but the effect of war with America and France was to restrict trade and reduce profits. This branch of the Philips family preferred peace and disliked the taxes and duties

that governments introduced to fund war.

On paper, for the years 1802-4, Nathaniel made £26,517.8s.9d income from the Salford Twist Mill alone but the notes to his accounts indicate that he had manipulated figures, perhaps for tax avoidance reasons, as he wondered, in writing, whether there would be "peace next year".

Until his death in 1808 Nathaniel shared his profits with his eldest son John and middle son Robert who seem to be junior partners for profit sharing purposes but in reality, from their maturity, they and their cousin George were probably the soul of the business, in fact if not in name. Their youngest brother, Samuel, seems to have gone his own way.

3.3 His business and political interests

Manchester and its cotton lords like Robert Philips created national wealth and paid hefty taxation and yet until the Reform Act of 1832 they and towns such as Manchester and Bury had no representation in Parliament. Robert Philips for years pressed for Parliamentary reform and representation.

Nathaniel, the father of Robert Philips, was a religious dissenter. Robert was baptised at Cross Street Unitarian Chapel, Manchester where his father was a member. They suffered civil disabilities and limited citizenship as a result of their non conformity. This discrimination, as well as the governing establishment's reluctance to give the industrial merchant class a Parliamentary voice, probably contributed to making Robert and other well-off Unitarian entrepreneurs radical. They set up the Manchester Constitutional Club of which Robert Philips and his cousin, George Philips (1766-1847), were members. It was an age of rapid change, new philosophies and science and Robert was an early member of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society.

Robert Philips supported the Americans in their War of Independence (1776-1781). He admired the ideals of the French Revolution and in 1792 his Constitutional Club sent congratulations to the revolutionary Paris Jacobin Club. The same year George Philips published a pamphlet in Manchester, "The necessity of speedy & effectual reform of Parliament ", in some ways more radical than Paine's "Rights of Man" and advocating, amongst other things, universal, including female, adult suffrage, equal electoral districts, secret ballots, annual parliaments, the right of anyone to stand for election, payment of M.Ps and the right to get rid of unsatisfactory ones.

At that time politics was almost tribal in

Manchester and the two camps were divided into the "radicals" like Robert Philips and the "conservatives" who supported the political and religious status quo. Some of the latter formed a "Church and King" club and, in 1792, a mob set up by their supporters rioted through St Ann's Square Manchester, attacked Cross Street Unitarian Chapel, and destroyed Robert Philips property. He had to hide for his life. When Britain and revolutionary France were at war in 1793, Robert Philips, with others, founded the Peace Movement, but it was powerless. Ideals apart, war hurt trade and Robert was a merchant and industrialist.

Although George Philips wrote radically in 1792, he acted pragmatically. From 1812 onwards he bought himself into Parliamentary seats for 'pocket' boroughs. Where it did not clash with his patron's interests he spoke, unofficially, for Manchester's merchants and industrialists, including himself. He was a major partner and driving force in the Philips' family businesses and until 1831 owned a very large share of the Salford Twist Mill. He did not speak for the workers and opposed proposed Tory reforms intended to ameliorate conditions for industrial workers.

The Philips family is less well known as coal and iron entrepreneurs. Before 1819 Robert Philips began to buy land in Monmouth, South Wales, around the Varteg Iron works and coal mines in which he and his wife's family were investors.

In the early 1800s the family bought development land in Manchester and in 1826 they completed a large new warehouse on Church Street.



Drawing of the Warehouse of J. & N. Philips & Co. Ltd., Church Street, Manchester. Built in 1826 and greatly enlarged, the warehouse became the centre for a worldwide trade in 'Manchester Goods'. It was demolished in 1969 and replaced by the present multi-storey car park. A war memorial from the Philips warehouse survives as plaques on the corner of the car park.(Manchester Central Library)

In 1830 J&N Philips, of which Robert was a lead partner, took over the compatible business of James

Chadwick and Brother, cotton thread spinners and smallware manufacturers at Eagley Mills near Bolton, a big investment and eventually one of the largest cotton spinners in the world.

When Robert Philips addressed a meeting at St Peter's fields, Manchester, in 1832 pressing once more for Parliamentary reform he was introduced as "the venerable Robert Philips, a veteran of 1792" and "a friend of liberty".

3.4 His family and social circle

Robert Philips of Manchester and Ann Needham of Lenton, Nottinghamshire were married on 2nd August 1798. Both were from Unitarian families, wealthy from trade and industry and both families moved in the same radical social and political spheres. Anne brought to the marriage a settlement of £6,500 which was used as a charge on The Park.

Their first, temporary home was 32 King Street, Manchester, also one of Robert's places of business. On Sundays, they visited Robert's elder brother John, then living at the Dales, Stand and they dined with his father, Nathaniel, who lived nearby on Stand Lane. Compared with Manchester's unwholesome dirt and smoke, which shocked Ann's family, Whitefield passed for country and the air of Stand was fresh.



Photograph of The Dales, Stand. Nathaniel Philips III (1726-1808) bought this house in its large garden c.1780, retaining his family home at 10 St. James' Square, Manchester, as his town house. The Dales was converted in 1904 to the Stand Golf Club House and a 9-hole course laid out across the grounds. (IP)



Photograph of Sedgley Hall, Prestwich, late 19C. Thomas Philips (1728-1811), Robert Philips' uncle, purchased 98 acres of land in 1785, and had Sedgley Hall built within its park. His son, Sir George Philips, often entertained the celebrated wit and cleric, Sydney Smith, who wrote from Sedgley in 1820: "Everything here is prosperous beyond example. Philips doubles his capital every week." (IP)

Robert and Ann's first child, Mary, was born on 29th May 1799 at King Street, Manchester. Their second child, Mark, was born at the Park on 4th November 1800, as were their nine subsequent children.

It would be unthinkable for the girls to join the family business and they were educated at home. From 1811 to at least 1819, Rebecca Reid, sister of a family friend and business associate, joined the Philipses at the Park to take charge of and instruct the children at a salary of £80 a year rising to £120. She describes their life at the Park as without artifice, remote from fine society with plenty of fresh air, rambles and riding. Mrs Philips was content that her girls were growing up unconstrained by artificial town life and Mr. Philips was often away on business so at such times a cousin, Mr Burton Philips of the Dales, sent trusted servants up to the Park to help. A letter of 16th February 1808 from Nathaniel Philips of Stand Lane to Ann Philips, daughter in law, of the Park shows the family connection.

*Dear Ann,
Singleton family* dine with us on
Saturday at 4 o'clock and we hope you
and Robert can make it convenient to meet
them.*

*Affectionately
N. Philips*

**("Singleton Family- George Philips, son
of Thomas Philips, living at Singleton
Brook, Prestwich- Nathaniel's daughter,
Sarah-Anne was married to George.)*

In 1815, Robert Philips purchased a large agricultural estate with a grand mansion from the trustees of the Earl of Coventry at Snitterfield in

Warwickshire. A few years later, he purchased the nearby manor of Wolverton near Stratford on Avon and small farms in between to consolidate the estates. Whether he thought of this as a luxury, an entrance into the establishment, a source of rental income or merely as financial diversification and a safe bank for industrial profits is unknown. However, he and later his sons sank more money into building works on those estates and aggressively continued to buy up land. The Park in Pilkington continued as the family's main home until much later.



Robert Philips bought and demolished Snitterfield House in Warwickshire, then developed a property called Park House (above) as the Philips' Snitterfield residence. The Philipses also rebuilt many of the cottages in the village. (Creative Commons)

As well as estates in Warwickshire, Robert Philips also bought an estate and house in Monmouth, Pen Moel, where his two unmarried daughters Isabella and Priscilla and later his widowed grand-daughter Margaret lived. He also had a town house in London, 47 Berkley Square.

Harriet Martineau, the free trade economist and writer and her family were Unitarians and friends of the Philips family. She was deaf. Whether her condition influenced him is unknown but in 1823 Robert Philips called a meeting in Manchester to discover the number of deaf & dumb children in Manchester and next year the Manchester Royal Residential school for the deaf was founded on a shared site with Henshaw's asylum for the blind. The family continued its association with Henshaw's for 2 generations.

In 1824, Robert's daughter Mary married Robert Hyde Greg, of Quarry Bank Mill, Styal (now a National Trust property), heir to a parallel industrial patrimony. Sarah and Hester married and Sarah moved to London and Hester to the south coast for her health. Philips marriages were endogamous in that all the husbands, if not genetically related, were of a similar class and Unitarian and radical political pedigree to their wives.

Ann Philips died in 1830 aged 57. There is no portrait of her and the little that is documented

about her indicates a modest, unpretentious person, keen to ensure the happiness of her children. Her daughters, Elizabeth, Jessie and Clara, died before her. Hester died not long after her mother. From correspondence between the sisters and Rebecca Reid, it seems as if 'consumption' was the cause of their deaths. Caroline, the youngest daughter died in January 1844 at the Park. Isabella and Priscilla did not marry and lived to old age, eventually at Pen Moel, South Wales.



Photograph of monument on West Path by Thomas Baddeley, 1944 (Manchester Central Library). The monument was turned round and the inscription re-cut. Elizabeth and Jessie Philips were born in 1808 and died in 1824. "To the sweetest sisters snatched away by a premature death the surviving sisters have placed this here. Farewell."

After Ann died, Robert Philips and the unmarried children continued to live mainly at the Park with visits to Snitterfield and holidays abroad and at home

The following extract from a letter written from the Park by an elderly Robert Philips to Mary's husband, R.H. Greg at Quarry Bank Mill during the Chartist riots of 1842, gives a domestic insight into Philips' lifestyle at the Park during civil disturbance. A mill owner in Stalybridge had reduced his workers' wages. In response, Chartist-inspired mill workers marched through the countryside and towns, using force to stop mill machinery and cause a strike.

*Dear Greg,
.... Robert has been an invalid all week with pain in his head ... to which leaches have been appliedhe is now better ...it is not however prudent he should go out or exert himself. Isabella has been a little ailing but by having recourse to the shower bath she could ride out on the road as usual were it prudent to do so on account of the stragling parties that meet you on the road*

As Robert cannot go to Manchester I ought to visit Church Street [J & N Philips warehouse] occasionally But I dare not be seen to be lolling at my ease in my carriage when there are so many people thrown out of work by the Chartists.

*Priscilla & I are quite well
We had 4 or 5 gangs yesterday of persons shouting relief. We got rid of them with fair words and a little money but we expect now all the mills, bleacheries and printing shops are stopped that we shall next week be inundated with sturdy beggars. Whilst writing this, my butler informs me that there are scores if not hundreds of people in Park Lane that have obliged my groom to turn back and would not let him proceed with his horses that he was taking to exercise. I expect any minute they will pay me a visit. Horrid Shouts are now rending the airI really think the attempt to lower wages in Staly Bridgewas infamous.....All the Mills at Bury are stopped.....When [Mark] hears what dreadful work is going on I think we shall see him at the Park in 2 or 3 days.....*

*With our love to you all and
praying for an end to all these convulsions.
I am truly yours
R.Philips*

Robert Philips died at the park on 6th March 1844. The Mayor and Aldermen of Manchester attended the funeral at Stand Unitarian Chapel together with sixty-seven of Robert's business partners and also his close male relatives. Stand Unitarian Chapel had been the focus of much of his life and of his father's. The members acknowledged that he "*had ...been the father of their religious Society; [they] felt deep gratitude for the pecuniary services he had provided which endeared him toall who knew him*" His coffin was interred in the family vault next to his wife's.



*Postcard View of Stand Unitarian Chapel, Ringley Road. (IP)
The first chapel was built as a Presbyterian meeting house in 1693 on land leased from the trustees of Henry Siddall's charity and was used as a schoolroom until 1713, when a separate school was built in the chapel yard. The chapel was rebuilt in 1818 and it was in this chapel that three generations of the Philips of The Park worshipped.*



*Photograph of the south front of 'The Park', 20C. (IP/BAS)
The Georgian architecture depicted in Hester Philips' drawing of 1819 had been modified later in the 19C by the insertion of plate glass windows and the creation of a bay window to the dining room. The small enclosed garden had been replaced by a lawn coming right up to the steps of the ground floor rooms, as the formal gardens to the north were extended.*

3.5 His development of buildings

From 1798 until January 1819, the Park estate was rented to a farmer who lived in one house while the Philips family lived in another. According to Robert Philips' remembrances as recorded by his eldest daughter, the Philips family first lived in Park House, the farm house which in 1781 was described as a "capital messuage or dwelling house". It was situated on the site of the present conservatory and had existed in the 1770s. By 1818/19 Robert had built a bigger replacement house at the Park, on the site until recently used as the middle car park. He also built an ice house which his son, Mark, records filling with ice early in January 1820.



Drawing of the south front of 'The Park' by Hester Philips, July 1819 (BAS). The earliest known description of the house built for Robert Philips in the early 19C. It is of particular interest in showing the extent of the garden behind its post and chain fence, with plants growing against the house named as acacia, hops and jessamine. The ground floor rooms are identified as the Breakfast Room, Drawing Room, and Dining Room. Above the Dining Room is the Twins' Closet, with the room of their governess, Miss Read, in the East Wing. Robert and his wife, Anne Needham, had nine children including twin daughters, Elizabeth and Jessy.



Detail of a Plan of the Hamlet of Outwood in the Township of Pilkington (BAS). The plan dates from before the building of Outwood Lodge in 1833. It shows the outline of the Park mansion as built for Robert Philips. The quadrangle and outbuildings are clearly shown, with the carriage drive from the East Lodge at Ox Gap cutting across the drive from the north to the house. The formal gardens did not then extend up the slope to the north, but consisted of a lawn with flowerbeds and a circular feature, walkways and a pond. The building shown where the conservatory now stands might have been the house present on the site when Robert Philips purchased the estate in 1798. Behind it is a structure set into the banking, which was used to force early vegetables.



Photograph of the Park from the Grass Walk, late 19C.(IP)
This view south encompasses the conservatory, the holly on the mound in the lawn, the carriage circle in front of the mansion, the ward blocks of the annexe to the Prestwich Asylum, the reservoir keeper's house at Prestwich Hills and the spire of St. Paul's Church, Kersal. The splendid beech trees and the immaculately kept gardens form the setting to the north front of the Park mansion. The Italianate style of the north front bore a strong resemblance to Charles Barry's Manchester Athenaeum on Princess Street of 1836-7. This first palazzo in Manchester, on which many warehouses were modelled, epitomised the view of 'merchant princes', like the Philips', that Manchester was the Florence of the 19C.



The West Lodge, The Park (BAS). The millpond in front of the Lodge supplied the Molyneux Bleach Works. Miss Philips' last head gardener, Henry Jackson, lived here with wife and 6 children until they moved to Outwood Cottage in 1920. Mr. Jackson retired in 1948 after 64 years service to the Philips family



Watercolour drawing of the Drawing Room, The Park, attributed to Margaret Philips (BAGM). Tania Rose (Margaret Philips' granddaughter) wrote in 1996: "The drawing room ran the whole length of the house. It was pretty awful, I think. It had two bad pictures of the Italian Lakes. I have got a watercolour that my grandmother did of it. It had mid-Victorian furniture and too much." Mirrors fitted to either side of the window looking out onto the back lawn reflected light from one end to the other of a double room, each compartment fitted with a chandelier and furnished in a mix of Georgian, Regency and Victorian styles.



Photograph of the Front Drawing Room, The Park, 20C (BAGM). The layout of furnishings and pictures is identifiable from the earlier watercolour. The large painting on the wall behind the sofa and cabinets was bequeathed by Miss Philips in 1946 to the Corporation of Manchester. This oil painting, 'Lago Maggiore' by J.B. Pyne, was not accepted by Manchester and its whereabouts is not known.



Photograph of the Library, The Park, 20C (BAGM). Robert Philips ordered from Gillows of Lancaster several pieces of furniture prior to his marriage to Anne Needham on 2 August, 1798. He purchased a wardrobe, a library bookcase, a mahogany sideboard, a set of dining tables, a writing table and bookshelf and a mahogany dining room chair. Tania Rose recalled: "The library was connected with the front hall by a very dark corridor, which was lined with huge and most intimidating ceremonial lances." These lances had been presented to Robert Needham Philips following his term of office as High Sheriff of the County of Lancaster, and were bequeathed by Miss Philips to the Lord Mayor of Manchester. They are untraced. The middle painting to the right of the library door is 'Lady with a Fan' by the Dutch painter, H. Bol, and was bequeathed by Miss Philips to the National Gallery.



Photograph of statue and panels in the hall, The Park, 20C (BAGM). Tania Rose recalled the inner hall: "It was a big hall and had two huge statues in it. One a sort of Greek type with a toga and the other an Italian type with a sort of headdress... Uncle Bob [W.R. Price], who inherited the house in 1946, said he could never find anyone who would take them off his hands and he feared when the house was demolished they made a hole in the floor and they dropped down and they might still be excavatable." Miss Philips bequeathed 'both the large statues now standing in the Inner Hall at The Park' to Manchester Corporation. The statues were not accepted, nor were they revealed during the excavation in 2008.



Photograph of the Gold Room Bed, The Park, 20C (BAGM). Named for the gilt bronze mounts to the canopied bed and other furnishings, which were bought in Paris by Mark Philips. The wallpaper is a William Morris pattern, of which a fragment was found stuck to plaster during the archaeological excavation of the house site in 2008.



Photograph of 'The Trossachs' by Copley Fielding in the Drawing Room, The Park, 20C (BAGM). Bequeathed by Miss Philips to Manchester Corporation, along with two other watercolours from the drawing room; 'Dinan' by W. Callow and 'Gordale Scar' by G.A. Fripp. All three paintings are in the collection of Manchester Art Gallery.

3.6 His development of parkland

Samuel Mason - Tenant of the Park

The Park estate was often occupied by tenants and they had an influence on the Park's development. Lawrence Crompton was the first tenant in the early seventeenth century. Robert Philips bought the Park from Mrs Barron subject to William Hulme's 21 year agricultural tenancy. By 1812 Samuel Mason of Poppythorn, Prestwich, had taken over the remainder of Hulme's lease. Of all the tenants, most is known about Mason because he kept a journal which has survived.

His son, young Sam Mason ran the Park's farm under his father's supervision and lived with his wife at one house at the Park while Robert Philips and his growing family lived in the other. The Philips Family lived in the farm house that, according to Robert Philips' recollections, had been occupied by Mr. Siddal and which was situated in the present gardens just a few feet to the south east of where the conservatory is now. Where Young Sam's house stood is conjecture. The 1798 lease from Mr. and Mrs. Barron to Hulme refers to buildings with thatched roofing but it does not specify which buildings were thatched.

The Masons were progressive farmers, helping to feed the growing industrial Manchester population. Textile workers' wages were low and food prices were high. In 1815 corn laws were introduced to protect the pockets of English farmers from cheaper, imported food.

Sam Mason improved the Park's agricultural yield. Ox Gap was drained in 1812. The following year they grew potatoes there and in Hillox (previously waste) and in 1814, they grew wheat. There had been a pit between Plane tree field and Little Ma(rl)d field and Samuel supervised its levelling and setting a fence through it for Mr. Philips.

To condition the soil, they experimented with the wool detritus from industrial carding machines and at Mr. Philips' request, whale blubber. Sam was obliged by the lease to keep a valuable herd of cattle on the land to keep it manured and he was often on the look-out to buy good quality additions to his herd. Unlike Lawrence Crompton, who two centuries previously had used oxen, Samuel used only horses for farm work.

The Park's produce included potatoes, wheat, barley, turnips and dairy products and young Sam kept a few pigs. Samuel sold straw to ostlers at Manchester inns. There is no reference to a milk house at the Park but they sent cans of milk to Manchester from there and Mrs. Mason sold butter

and cheese at Manchester Market.

Samuel was a member of a Cow Club, a kind of local bovine veterinary self-help group and private members' compensation scheme. In 1813, a cow at the Park got sick and swelled. Samuel consulted the Club and bled the sick cow. However, as it nearly recovered, he was not compensated. He also insured his cattle and crops with a London insurer.

Although farming in a progressive age, young Sam was still obliged to attend the Pilkington Manorial Court and Samuel senior had to pay the tithe, which was resented by all the local farmers, dissenters and Church of England alike. Sam, like his landlord, was a dissenter and spent every Sunday morning at the Stand Unitarian Chapel.

His lease of the Park was not renewed when it expired early in 1819 and Young Sam moved out. In due course both Robert Philips and Samuel Mason were buried at Stand Unitarian Chapel of which they were both leading members. The Mason family gravestone has survived but the Philips' family vault has not.



Photograph of Mason family grave at Stand Chapel.(SG)

There were subsequent lessees from time to time. Tithe schedules indicate that in the 1830s and 1840s Robert Philips kept about 103 statute acres in his own hands, mainly woodland with some pasture and meadow and he let the rest in three blocks of land to three lessees.



Photograph of Cobster Meadow, The Park, early 20C (BAGM). W.R. Price recalled: “Inside the belt of woods are grass fields, all but the upper one undulating and often steeply sloping... Cobster Field, my favourite name, was the large rough field below the house. This name goes back for over 200 years.”



Photograph of entrance to Stable Yard, early 20C (BAGM). Dense planting of holly and rhododendron screened the Quadrangle from the drive to the mansion, separated by an iron gate and distinctive stone gate piers. The Park Lane scholars were treated every Whit Friday from the 1840s to tea in the stable yard, where they each received a jam pasty, and the girls, a handkerchief and the boys, a pair of braces. In the early years of the Second World War a barrage balloon crew was stationed at The Park, lodging in the stables until their huts were built. Miss Philips wrote “No joke to have to feed ten hungry lads and their leader. They used to call me Granny, but I didn’t mind.”

4. Mark Philips (1800-1873) and Robert Needham Philips (1815-1890)



Engraving of Mark Philips by S.W. Reynolds (BAGM). Engraved after the painting of Mark Philips that formerly hung in the Dining Room at The Park. Mark Philips (1800-1873) was elected M.P. for Manchester following the 1832 Reform Act. He was active in campaigning for public parks in industrial Manchester. Philips Park, Bradford, is named after him.



Detail of Portrait of Robert Needham Philips, 1875 (BAGM). R.N. Philips had been M.P. for Bury for ten years, in his second term of office, when this portrait was painted by W.W. Oules. Miss A.M. Philips bequeathed the portrait of her father to Bury Art Gallery in 1946



Portrait bust of Mark Philips by Patric Park, 1855, in Manchester Town Hall (IP). This marble bust was bequeathed to the Lord Mayor of Manchester by Miss A.M. Philips in 1946, and formerly stood in the entrance hall at The Park. Patric Park had been commissioned by Robert Needham Philips in 1853 to carve a portrait group of his daughters, Caroline and Margaret.

4.1 Their upbringing

After attending Stand School, Mark was prepared for a life of business and social and political leadership and was sent away to Unitarian academies in Nottingham, York and then a Scottish university, not because his father could not afford a more prestigious education, but because dissenters such as the Philipses were debarred from Oxford and Cambridge. Many sons of wealthy mill-owning dynasties, such as the Gregs at Quarry Bank Mill, Styal, had similar educations. Robert, fifteen years Mark's junior, attended Stand, then Bristol Unitarian Academy and then Rugby School before entering the family business.

4.2 Their business and political interests

"Millbank was the son of one of the wealthiest manufacturers in Lancashire. His father, whose opinions were of a democratic bent.....reiterated dogma that he belonged to a class debarred from its just position in the social system"

Disraeli's model for 'Millbank' in his novel 'Coningsby' could easily be Mark Philips.

Robert's eldest son Mark was at the right age and of the right political pedigree to stand for one of Manchester's two new parliamentary seats after intense public pressure brought about the 1832 great Reform Act. He was elected with a big majority.

After becoming a Manchester MP Mark played an effective role in furthering the economic future of the cotton industry. Although he had visited Robert Owen's New Lanark Mills in 1820, Mark was no proto-socialist. He had a house in Mayfair as well as property in Manchester and his speeches show he thought that success was tied to being able to produce more cheaply than America or Germany.

Reports of his 1832 election addresses from the hustings indicate his views then. He was for the complete emancipation of negro slaves in the colonies; reduction of the national debt by reducing standing armies in peacetime and selling off the Duchy of Cornwall; only those of the working class who could read should be allowed to vote; the total abolition of tithes; he would not vote for the total abolition of the corn laws (duties on imported grain and staple foods) but he pledged himself to their revision. When asked whether he would vote for the ten hour bill (to impose maximum working hours in mills for children and adults) he said no, he would not vote for legislation that would come between masters and men; "the worker's capital was his labour", he said; he wanted a reduction in government spending and taxation. Idealistic free trade and minimal government intervention seem to be his touch stones.

Some of the crowd mounted the hustings and said that Mr. Philips was rolling in luxury and had expressed opinions of his own superiority. He was a detestable hypocrite for being in favour of negro emancipation while he was not opposed to the system of white slavery at home, they said.

Mark Philips believed it was only possible to maintain Britain's rank as a great manufacturing nation if there was cheap food and therefore cheap labour costs. The Chartists opposed this view. In 1838, the Manchester Anti-corn Law League, which lobbied for no duty on imported food and for free trade, was supported by the Manchester Chamber of Trade and Mark, now, also supported the movement. The corn laws were repealed by a parliament with a Tory majority headed by Robert Peel in 1846. Mark had visited Peel before the vote. The repeal of the corn laws was a victory for industrialists and set a lasting trend for cheap imported food. Also in 1846, Mark Philips voted against the 10 hour bill, which was passed in any event. He represented the mill owners and middle classes.

In 1847, he stood down, after 15 years as MP for Manchester and although he was not a gifted speaker in the House of Commons, behind the scenes he worked diligently for Manchester's mill owners and middle classes and the cotton industry's interests by lobbying for repeal of duty on raw

cotton, excise duty on printed calico and reform of bankruptcy law as well lobbying for the provision of public parks for Manchester and the repeal of the corn laws.

When he died in 1844, Robert Philips left his entire estate, including the Park, subject to settlements and business interests, to Mark. To Robert he left £50,000. The following year Mark bought the Welcombe Estate, near Stratford on Avon. Mark estimated his own financial worth at £312,811 in 1845, not including any accruing income. He estimated the value of the Park at £20,000, Snitterfield £100,000 and Welcombe £50,000.

Mark was an accomplished and visionary businessman, with many business interests. In later years, even when living the life of a mogul on his Warwickshire estates, he was conscientious about his business duties, attending meetings, litigating and doggedly seeing things through, such as the sale of Varteg Iron and Steel works. Between the 1820s and 1847 Mark took an active role in the South Wales works, visiting often and staying as long as he could bear. It was plagued with violent industrial disputes. The Varteg works was floated as a joint stock company and Mark was a director. He seems to have finally disposed of most of the family's managerial interest in the works in 1847 but he was still a land owner there and left some capital outstanding on a mortgage.

Manchester was a two-seat Parliamentary constituency. Bury had a single seat and Mark's younger brother, Robert Needham Philips (RNP) held that seat as a "moderate" liberal from 1857-1885, apart from a gap between 1859 and 1865. He was popular with the local Liberal associations and maintained a good public relations machine. After his first term as MP the women of the Reform Party of Bury, who of course did not then have the right to vote, presented him with a silver centre piece with the Philips crest as a token of their respect and esteem.

In 1875 he paid for the Philips Hall in Bury as a local Liberal Headquarters and dedicated it to his father and brother. He opened the Liberal Club in Prestwich in 1879 and he was first president of the Manchester Reform Club in King Street.



Drawing of Prestwich liberal club. (IP)

He supported further parliamentary and electoral reform yet opposed Gladstone's plan for Home Rule for Ireland. He regarded *"the whole squad of Gladstonian politicians [as] disgusting humbugs or time serving Snobs .."* Gladstone offered him a baronetcy in 1874. In his letter of refusal, Philips, true to his dissenting roots, replied *"Individually I look with a certain amount of contempt upon titles....."*. His father had also refused a baronetcy offered by Lord Melbourne in 1838.

Mark never married and Robert Needham Philips, 15 years younger than his brother Mark, had no sons. In the Philips empire, only sons qualified as partners so after Robert Needham there was no direct line of inheritance for Mark and Robert Needham's business interests.

Robert Needham was 58 when Mark died in 1873 and he did not become senior partner until after then. The businesses gave him a handsome income and he had other investments, including investment land in Kent and other parts of England and South Wales. He continued to buy up land in Warwickshire but the agricultural rental income from the Warwickshire estates was comparatively insignificant and he could not have lived in the style he did without the stream of income from his mercantile and industrial profits. In 1890, his estate for death duty purposes alone was £458,548.18s.11d.

Parliamentary representation was just one part of the Philips' family political work. They saw education as a stepping stone to self improvement and a benefit to society as a whole. Nathaniel and Robert are said by their descendants to have set up Sunday Schools in Whitefield in the late 1700s teaching children to read. From 1847, Robert Needham was involved with the Lancashire (later national) Public Schools Association and financed and set up the British School in Park Lane. Robert Philips bought up land to set up a school near their

coal and iron works at Varteg, South Wales, in 1828. Mark was involved with setting up the Mechanics' Institute in Manchester in 1830s. In the later nineteenth century Robert Needham could not resist improving the minds of the agricultural workers on his estate at Snitterfield where he built and financed a village hall with a reading room.



Photograph of a page of the Philips Testimonial, 1885 (BAGM/IP). This finely bound and illuminated testimonial was presented to R.N. Philips, M.P. by the Members of the Liberal Association & Liberal Electors of the Borough of Bury to celebrate his 70th birthday. "We gratefully recognize the fact that your mental energy is still unimpaired, your enthusiasm in support of the good old cause of LIBERALISM unabated, and that your zeal for the welfare of the people, and your desire for their progress towards the utmost possible freedom is in no wise relaxed."

Mark and Robert Needham were trustees of Stand Grammar School. Mark Philips was involved with Owen's College and encouraged William Gaskell, minister at Cross Street Chapel and husband of the novelist, to give lectures. Both Robert and Mark Philips were presidents of the Unitarian Academies from time to time

As far as civic duties were concerned, Mark was president of the Royal Manchester Institution in 1843 and Robert Needham represented it at meetings. They were both J.P.s and sheriffs. In 1851 Mark was appointed sheriff of Warwickshire. When Robert Needham was invited to be High Sheriff of Lancashire in 1856, he accepted grumpily with

"I am anxious you should inform the

Chancellor of the Duchy [of Lancaster] that notwithstanding much personal inconvenience I have accepted the duties of the office considering that through my person a compliment is intended to the City of Manchester"

4.3 Their families and social circles

Mark was able, energetic, talented, conscientious and meticulous about money. When younger, he had played cricket and chaired a local cricket club; he bet on horses, went racing and to horse sales and was particular about his personal grooming and appearance. In middle age he was interested in architecture, appreciated white port and suffered badly with kidney stones and gout. He never married. He held the family purse strings until he died and treated his younger brother as a subordinate, instructing him, for example, not to use such vernacular language as "coom up, lad".

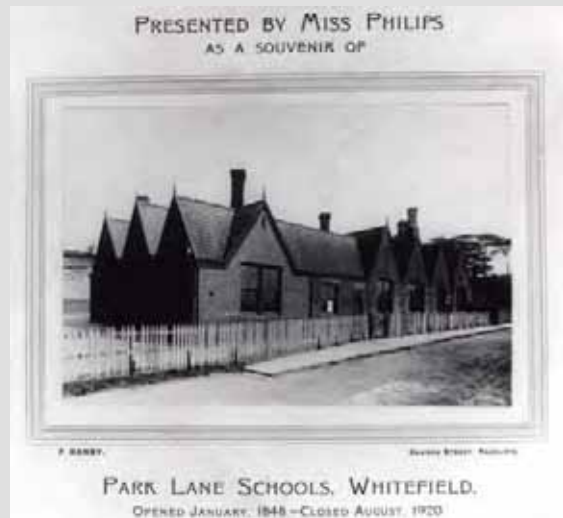
Even before 1847 when he retired from Parliament, Mark lived increasingly on his grand Warwickshire estate of Snitterfield and later on his Welcombe estate, hunting, shooting and hosting business and social meetings. The Earl of Derby's Pilkington agent, Statter, was a guest at Snitterfield on many occasions, as were certain members of both houses of legislature such as, for example, Ducombe, the MP who submitted the Chartists' petition to Parliament in 1842. Mark travelled to the Park when required for business or family reasons or when he presided over events such as the Radcliffe Agricultural and Cattle Shows (1849 & 1854), which he enjoyed, or meetings of the Stand School Trustees and he kept his hand firmly on the tiller of the family businesses in various parts of the country and abroad. According to his great nephew, R. W. Price, he travelled across part of Russia to Moscow in a sleigh.

The Park remained the family's northern headquarters and Mark's younger brother Robert Needham Philips, when he was not in London for Parliament or the season, was the family member in residence.

After his Father's death in 1844, Robert Needham married Anna Maria Yates, a daughter of a wealthy Liverpool Unitarian merchant. Family tradition is that she encouraged Robert in 1848 to build and fund the school on Park Lane (now demolished).



Photograph of Welcombe House. Late in life Mark embarked on a grand new project. He demolished the 18th century manor house at Welcombe he had acquired in 1845 and commissioned a neo-Jacobean mansion from architect Henry Clutton. It was completed in 1869 and originally known as Welcombe Lodge. The house became a hotel in the 1920s and continues to be so.



Photograph of Park Lane Schools, Whitefield. (IP) R.N. Philips married Anna Maria Yates of West Dingle, Liverpool, in 1845. She was shocked by the conditions of the inhabitants of Park Lane and persuaded her husband to build a school, which opened in January, 1848, with an initial intake of 56 pupils. The school had its own brass band, which regularly entertained guests at The Park. The band also played at the laying of the foundation stone of the new Agecroft Bridge in 1862 by R.N. Philips, and on his appointment as High Sheriff of Lancashire in 1856. The school was non-denominational and non-political and served Park Lane until closure in 1920, when Miss Philips presented this souvenir photograph.

Their daughter, Caroline, was born in London in 1846 and Margaret was born at the Park on February 26th 1849. Their third daughter, also called Anna Maria was born on 24th March 1850, but soon died followed by her mother. Both mother and daughter were buried at Stand Chapel.



Portrait of Mrs. Anna Maria Philips and her daughter, Caroline, 1849 (National Trust Wallington). The elegantly dressed first wife of R.N. Philips and her pretty daughter are portrayed in an interior with a draped wall, to the side of which can be seen the fountain basin in an outdoor setting. Mrs. Philips died in childbirth in 1850.



Photograph of the Back Drawing Room, The Park, 20C (BAGM). Tania Rose recalled: "It had a statue of Aunt Caroline and my grandmother... But the best thing was a Broadwood grand piano, which she kept very well tuned. I sat in the drawing room and played the piano with her [Miss Philips]." A large mirror reflected light from the window in the front drawing room through the double doors. A letter written by Mrs. Gaskell in March, 1852, describes the crowded social activity that took place in the rooms of the Park: "Friday evening we took Hannah to The Park dance. A large house with very small rooms but any number of them. There were nearly 300 there. There was a crush & crowd into supper. Mrs. Schwabe and I tried three times before we got in; it was such a little room. The hosts were two Mr. Philips- very kind & good natured not very gentlemanly- we came home about 3." It would seem that the cream of Manchester society was there as Mrs. Gaskell noted: "Rathebones, Caton and Norcliffe Gregs, Murrays... Potters (the fat Sir John), Fairbairns..."

the Park Dance in March 1852, over 300 guests were there; everyone who was anyone in Liberal Manchester attended, including Mrs Gaskell, the controversial novelist whose husband, William, was a colleague of Mark's.

In 1856 Robert Needham married Mary Ellen Yates, his late wife's paternal cousin. Their only child was born at the Park in August 1857 and she, too, was named Anna Maria.

In 1857 Robert Needham was first elected to Parliament for Bury. In the 1859 election, he withdrew his candidature for a second Parliamentary term because, he said, local Tory electioneering was becoming personal.

The 1861 census shows Robert Needham, the second Mrs. R. N. Philips, and only young Anna Maria at the Park without her sisters. There is a cook, kitchen maid, two house maids, a lady's maid, and a nurse (nanny). There is a gardener living in Oxbap (lodge) and there is a coachman at Outwood Lodge, where Robert Philips Greg, Robert's nephew, was living with his wife and three servants. Mark, now at Snitterfield and no longer needing it, had rented it to him. As well as servants at the Park, the family also had servants living and working in their other homes and estates around the country ready to serve them when they were in residence there.

Some few years later, Robert separated from the second Mrs R.N. Philips. He put her away, he said, because she was "funny in the head". She and her family maintained she was quite normal and resented his treatment of her. She wrote him tragic letters which were found in a drawer at the Park after her daughter's death in 1946. In her will, executed in 1897, Anna Maria's mother left nothing to her only daughter, not even a single item of personal jewelry or a memento. Anna Maria's relationship with her mother had been severed and she was devoted to her governess Miss Wickstead who remained with Anna Maria until Miss Wickstead's death.

On census night 1851, Robert Needham and his two daughters, twelve members of staff and a mature female visitor from Liverpool, Miss Green, were staying at the Park. As a young widower, Robert managed to keep the Park socially alive. There was



Photograph of Mrs. R.N. Philips (BAGM). Mary Ellen Yates married R.N. Philips in 1856 and their daughter, Anna Maria, was born in 1857. The second Mrs. R.N. Philips was the cousin of his first wife. The marriage was not a success for reasons that are unclear. R.N. Philips died in 1890 and his wife is mentioned only in a codicil to his will. Mrs. Philips died in 1897, with probate granted to her nephews, Sir Richard Musgrave and Edmund Tennyson d'Eyncourt. She made no provision in her will for her daughter, Anna Maria Philips, as she was entitled to the trust funds on the settlement made at the time of her parents' marriage.



Pastel drawing of Anna Maria Philips (BAGM). This charming portrait, along with other family memorabilia, was gifted to Bury Art Gallery in 1975 by Mrs. J. Davidson (née Price), who was the great-niece of Miss Philips.



Photograph of marble statue of Anna Maria Philips. (IP) Anna Maria was nine years old when the London sculptor, J.G. Lough, carved this statue in 1866. The statue originally stood in the inner hall at the Park and was transferred, after the demolition of the mansion, to the Stand Unitarian Chapel. The chapel committee did not want this gift so offered it to the Philips Park Joint Committee, which placed the statue in the Conservatory at Philips Park.

In September 1869, just before Caroline's wedding to George Otto Trevelyan (Liberal MP and later Lord Trevelyan), the ladies of the Bury Liberal Association were invited to walk in the Park gardens and enjoy a cold buffet with champagne "judiciously administered so as not to get into their heads". Many other associations and worthy causes were invited regularly. From the 1840s the Philips family invited schools and members of specific organisations to enjoy the gardens at the Park, with refreshment suitable to the occasion. The children of Stand School came for tea and games every June and the pupils of Park Lane School came every Whit Friday. It was not the tradition, at this time, for anyone to wander without specific invitation in the Park, as it became in the twentieth century.



Portrait of Caroline and Margaret Philips (NTW). This painting hangs at Wallington in Northumberland, the home of the Trevelyan family. Caroline Philips fell in love with George Otto Trevelyan whilst he was helping her father with his 1865 election campaign. They married in 1869 and in 1886 George inherited Wallington and the title of 2nd Baronet of Wallington. Sir George and Lady Trevelyan's youngest son, George Macaulay Trevelyan, was a noted social historian.

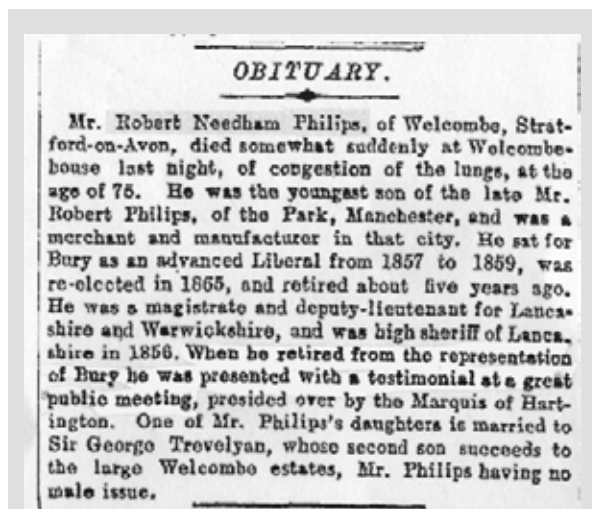
Mark died at Welcombe on December 23rd 1873 and he was buried there. Mark left a very large residual estate to his brother, Robert Needham, who was 58 when he inherited all the landed estates his father had left to Mark, which Mark had improved and extended and which Robert Needham himself continued to improve. He also acquired Mark's share in the family businesses. Up till his death, Mark, according to Robert's daughter, Caroline, not only had held the family purse strings but had even tried to interfere with her choice of husband.

In 1878 Robert's middle daughter, Margaret, married Major Edwin Price, also a Liberal MP and she went to live in Gloucestershire. After her husband's early death, she and her two sons went to live at Pen Moel as her aunts, Isabella and Priscilla had by then died. Her eldest son, Morgan Philips Price, was the foreign correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian* and reported from Russia at the start of the Revolution in 1917. His daughter was Tania Rose. Margaret's youngest son was Robert William Price who inherited The Park from Miss A.M. Philips.

R.N.P. enjoyed being an agricultural landowner. He spent wealth earned from industry and commerce on improving the lot of his agricultural tenants on

his Warwickshire estates. He kept up the Park as the family's northern home, sending peaches from his Welcombe estate hot houses to his friends and supporters in Stand and staying at the Park when he visited his Bury constituency, his Manchester businesses and out of the season. He was even chairman of the Stand Cricket Club in 1877. By now, the railways had made it easy and quick to travel long distances. Mark, until his late middle age, in order to fulfil business obligations, had to spend consecutive days at a time travelling in coaches or on horseback.

After he stood down from parliament in 1885, Robert lived mostly at Welcombe with his youngest daughter Anna Maria, who did not marry.



Obituary of Robert Needham Philips, The Times, 1 March, 1890. R.N. Philips died at Welcombe, Stratford-upon-Avon, the country estate he inherited from his brother, Mark, in 1873, where had spent his retirement. In the park at Welcombe is a tall stone obelisk, erected in 1876, to the memory of Mark Philips: "In token of the deep esteem and warm affection of his only brother Robert Needham Philips." The monument is also inscribed to the memory of Robert Philips and to R.N. Philips: "He will be remembered as a public spirited citizen a strenuous politician and a warm hearted neighbour."

4.4 Their development of buildings and parkland

Mark, an MP for Manchester by 1832 and active in business, was frequently in London for parliament or away on business. In 1833, needing his own establishment near his Manchester power base, he had Outwood Lodge built at the Park by the architect Johnson of Lichfield. It was demolished in 1884.

It would appear from comparing 1833 and 1841 plans with the Ordnance Survey plan of 1890 that Mark and/or Robert Needham were responsible for constructing the conservatory and extending the formal garden up the escarpment to the north,

perhaps with money they inherited from their father.



Drawing of Outwood Lodge by Graystone Bird, Bath, 1871. (IP) This mansion was designed for Mark Philips by Thomas Johnson of Lichfield and built in 1833 on a hilltop facing north within the grounds of the Park. It was demolished in the late 19C and fragments used to build the current North Lodge.



Photograph of the Conservatory, The Park, early 20C. (IP) Guests of Miss Philips pose at the entrance to the conservatory, with its flower-filled urns, original sliding windows and glazed roof with cast iron ribs. To the left of the conservatory is a brick chimney flue smothered with rambler roses, all, according to Moorman and Price, that remained of “the little red-brick house where Mr. Siddall, the farming agent lived” when Robert Philips purchased the estate.



Photograph of the Conservatory, The Park, early 20C. (IP) The conservatory was built mid 19C and was noted for its camellias, which were grown against metal trelliswork around the walls. At the centre was a stone fountain basin set into a moss-lined apse. Water cascaded into the basin from a bronze jet adorned with dancing figures. It is said that Mark Philips bought the fountain basin in Florence.



Photograph of the grass walk.(BAS)



Photograph of the Long Border, The Park, early 20C (BAGM). W.R. Price recalled: "Here was a wide herbaceous border under a lovely old brick wall covered with climbing plants. The feature here and in two large round beds opposite was a show of carpet-bedding which we always felt was a credit to the gardeners. The edge of the border was lined always with the same plants, first a row of Echeverias, then Ageratum, then a Viola and finally Geranium. It was very bright in summer." A newspaper report titled "A Prestwich Beauty Spot" in the Manchester Evening News, 22 July, 1929, describes "This charming old English garden in Philips' Park, Prestwich, though privately owned, is open to the public three days a week. Although the garden is almost surrounded by works, the skill bestowed upon it gives it the natural freshness of gardens that never see an industrial smut."



Postcard view of The Drive, The Park, early 20C. (IP) The gravelled carriage drive, with its edge of white granite setts, is shown lined with specimen trees above hedges of rhododendron. The stone retaining wall is followed by iron railings defining the top of the slopes down into Cobster Field



Photograph of Robert Needham Philips and his daughter, Anna Maria (BAS). This photograph taken at the Park on the drive above Cobster Field some time before 1890 came from an album of Prestwich views belonging to Leonard Sumner of Butt Hill, Prestwich. The footman, Harry Frankton, leads the invalid carriage drawn by a donkey. The Georgian planting of the parkland is seen in its maturity.



Photograph of Molyneux Brow Station, early 20C (BAGM). The line from Manchester to Bury was created by the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway in 1846, crossing the River Irwell at Whitefield on the Clifton Viaduct. The station at Molyneux Brow was used by visitors to the Park and then, in the late 19C, by workers at the industrial complex at nearby Clifton Junction. Shown in this photograph are the station master, Mr. Ashworth, and Miss Philips' nephew, Morgan Philips Price.



Photograph of the Viaduct, Philips Park Road, 1965.(IP) The viaduct was built in 1852 at a cost of £8,000 to provide a more direct, private coach road from Bury New Road to the Park and Molyneux Brow station. The cost was shared between R.N. Philips, the Earl of Derby and the East Lancashire Railway. The parapet of the viaduct, some 80 feet above ground, was an attraction to daring young men, who rode bicycles across it and pushed friends in wheelbarrows. By 1965, the viaduct had started to collapse and was blown up in spectacular fashion in November that year.

(Bradford, Manchester) was conveyed to the newly incorporated town of Manchester; the designs were put out to tender and the parks were purpose built. Peel Park in Salford was named after Robert Peel the recently resigned Tory prime minister who had contributed handsomely towards the project and who had strong local industrial interests.

Philips Park, Manchester, named after Mark, was opened on 22nd August 1846 with speeches from the mostly mill-owning great and good including Mark Philips. Thirty thousand people attended the opening including scholars from Stand School.

4.5 The ‘other’ Philips Park

Industrialisation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries left Manchester densely populated and with no green spaces. The operatives were trapped in an unhealthy environment. One of the first things Mark Philips did when he entered Parliament was to lobby for public parks.

In 1833, a select committee on public works targeted Manchester for having no recreational public walks and for the drunken idleness and the degrading sensuality of its workers. Mark Philips MP gave evidence to the select committee about the need for public parks. The Philips Family owned polluting mills and employed operatives in both Salford and Manchester. The select committee recommended outdoor recreation on moral and physical grounds with open areas set aside for recreation near centres of population.

By July 1844 the campaign had gathered pace and the Manchester Guardian complained that Manchester was the only important town in the kingdom destitute of parks. All it offered its toiling citizens was dirt and dusty highways. In August, Tory and Liberal mill owners attended a meeting; some said that it was their duty to contribute generously towards the fund for the creation of public parks because they owed a debt to the working class who had given them their wealth, so they must give something back.

In September 1844, six hundred people attended a public meeting and by March 1845, £30,198 had been collected in public subscriptions from the poor and the rich. Land was purchased for all three parks and the land for Queens Park and Philips Park

5. Anna Maria Philips (1857-1946)



Photograph of Anna Maria Philips (BAGM). Robert Needham Philips left the Park estate to his youngest daughter including the mansion house and “all its furniture, plate, plated goods, linen, china, glass, pictures, drawings, prints, statues, bronzes, objects of vertu and ornament, books, musical instruments, wines, stores and other household effects... all the carriages and carriage and saddle horses, harness and stable equipments and contents of conservatories and greenhouses.” Miss Philips was 49 when she came, in 1906, to live permanently at the Park.

5.1 Her upbringing

In old age, Anna Maria Philips, Robert Needham's youngest daughter, described life at the Park when she was a teenager in the 1870s. Indoors, she remembered, there were three kitchen staff, three housemaids and three men. Baking and brewing was done at the Park and the servants drank beer twice a day. Breakfast was 8.30 – 9 with porridge, three hot dishes, hot rolls and toast. There was no afternoon tea until years later. Before then, tea and thin bread and butter were served in the drawing room after dinner. She had been educated, in part, by a German governess and Mr. Herford, the Unitarian Minister, gave her literature lessons and Antoine Roche, a French Refugee, taught her French. The family spent the season in London and when back at the Park, they attended the theatre and Halle concerts in Manchester on a Thursday evening wearing full evening dress; their horses were put up at stables in town.

Robert Needham Philips died at Welcombe on 28th February 1890, where he was buried. Anna Maria was thirty-two. His extensive will gave all three daughters £100,000 charged on his share of the business. Welcombe was left to Caroline. Anna Maria inherited five farms in Lancashire and Kent as investments, together with the Park and

everything in it. She kept it as her home but was there for only part of the year as she spent much time visiting relatives and often stayed in the Home Counties with Miss Wickstead, her former governess.



Photograph of Miss Wickstead, Governess at The Park, early 20C (BAGM). Miss Wickstead was Governess to Caroline and Margaret Philips in the mid 19C. In later years, she became companion to R.N. Philips, and then, after his death in 1890, to Anna Maria Philips. Miss Philips rented a house in Tunbridge Wells, where she spent the winter months with Miss Wickstead, returning to the Park for the summer. Following Miss Wickstead's death in 1906, Miss Philips made The Park her permanent home.

5.2 Her interests and social circles

Anna Maria's grandfather had been called a political radical. Anna Maria was traditional; not involved directly with politics, nor connected with the Women's Suffrage movement on which her views are unrecorded. She expanded the practice of inviting groups to the Park on set days to enjoy the gardens and devoted time to good works and was involved with the Gentlemen's Employment Society, Princess Christian Society, the Noel Society (which gave Christmas presents to poor children), Manchester Women's Hospital, Stand School and the Stand Unitarian Chapel. She did a lot of kindly and effective good work and avoided the limelight, thrice refusing an honorary MA from Manchester University.



Photograph of Park Lane School Treat, early 20C (BAGM). Pictured is headmaster, Mr. Swithinbank, and Miss Philips' nephew, Morgan Philips Price. It was the custom for the schoolchildren, having been welcomed by Miss Philips, to be taken by the head gardener to the top of the Grass Walk and down the zigzag paths to the south lawn. W.R. Price recalled: "Here everyone went wild, distributing themselves among various games and amusements. The girls crowded the large boat-swings at the far end, and the switchback in the middle of the lawn... and the boys made their cricket pitches".



Photograph of Lawn and Switchback, The Park, early 20th C (BAGM). Mary Moorman observed that, after 1906, the Park became for Miss Philips the 'centre of association' for social workers. "So the lawns were kept mown and the flower garden charmingly bright, so that special parties of both young and old could enjoy them, and the public as well at weekends." Miss Philips' work for hospitals, homes and many charitable organizations gave the opportunity to use "her beautiful home as far as possible in the summer as a place for recreation and pleasure-giving for those for whom she worked." Tania Rose recalled: "Three sort of outdoor toys for children there (on the South lawn). One was a gigantic switchback, they were all painted a very dark green which didn't show the dirt. It had a sort of trolley which was kept in a shed at the bottom of the switchback and you had to run it up to the top and then-oh, it was such a joy!"



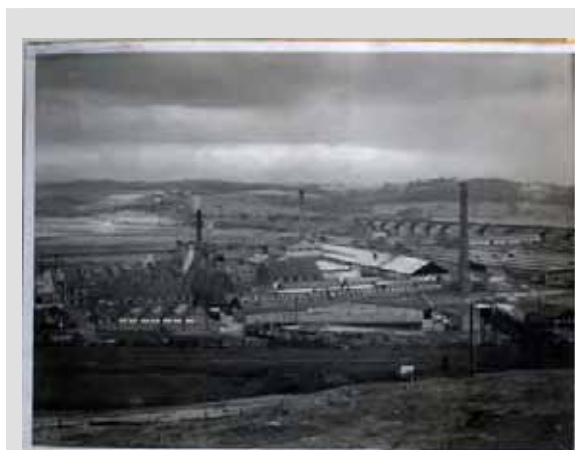
Stand Chapel Whit walk outside Park House, 1932 (IP)



Photograph of Miss Hayne, Head Housemaid at The Park (BAGM). A gravestone at St. Mary's Church, Prestwich, is inscribed: "This stone is placed here by Miss A.M. Philips of The Park in memory of Elizabeth Hayne, who died at The Park on August 31st 1913, aged 87 years, having been for 68 years the most faithful servant and friend of the family of Mr. R.N. Philips." Buried with her is her sister, E. Smith, "a very faithful servant at The Park for over 30 years."



Photograph of Tablet in Stand Boys Grammar School, 1938 (BAGM). “This tablet is to place on record the faithful service, wise counsel and unfailing devotion to the life of the School given by Anna M. Philips of The Park, Prestwich, during the thirty years (1907-1937) in which she represented the University of Manchester upon the governing body of this School....” Miss Philips’ primary interest in education for the children of the working classes began in 1878 when she became a Manager of Park Lane School. In 1903, she became a member of the first Lancashire County Elementary Education Committee. In 1913 she bought land from the Earl of Derby for a play area on Park Lane. She commissioned and presented a Challenge Shield for good attendance in Prestwich and Whitefield schools (see image 89) and was instrumental in the building of a separate Girls Grammar School, which opened in 1937.



Photograph of the view from Clifton Junction to Whitefield, 1930s.(IP) In the foreground is the railway line from Manchester to Bolton and beyond that the kilns and chimneys of the Pilkingtons’ Tile and Pottery works. The Clifton viaduct, with its 13 arches, carries the Bury line to Molyneux Brow station. Below the Brow are the Bolton Corporation sewage works at Rhodes Farm. In the distance are the woods and farmland around Old Hall, Stand, with the tower of All Saints Church prominent on the horizon. The wooded high ground of the Park estate is seen to the right. Miss Philips was a regular visitor to the annual sale held at Pilkingtons’, which had an international reputation for its lustre glazed pottery.



Photograph of Arts and Crafts style, repoussé copper shield (BAGM). This shield was found by Ian Pringle in a derelict farm at Bowlee Common near Simister, Prestwich.



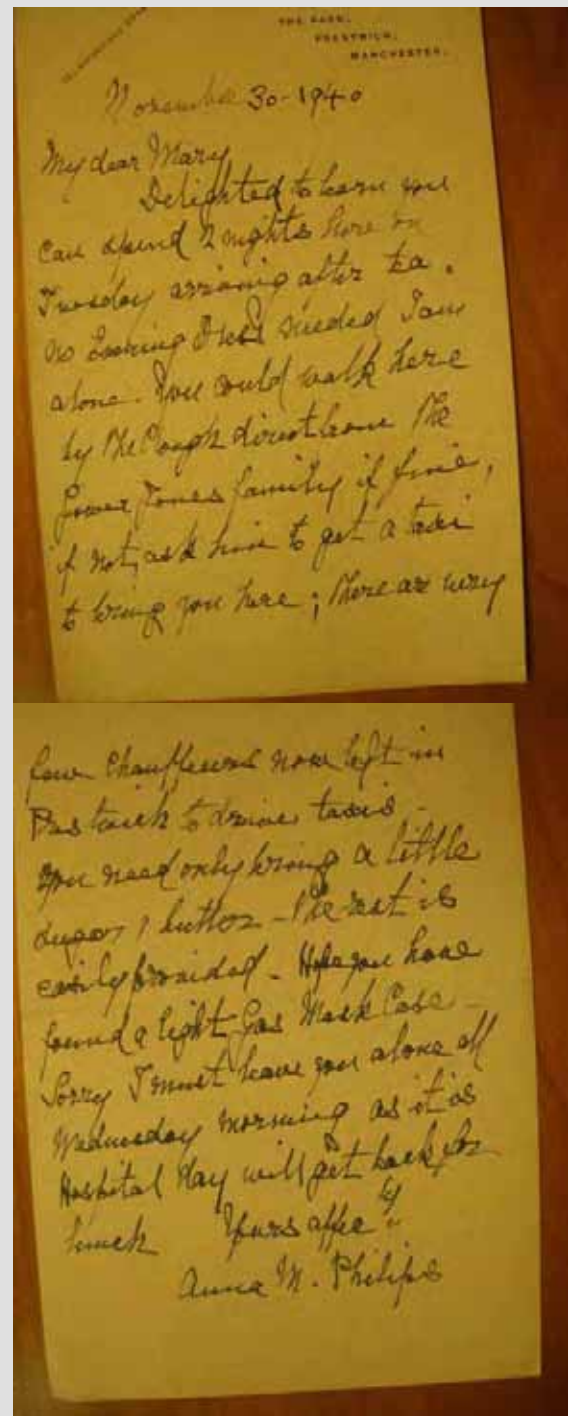
Photograph of The Park Wanderers Cricket Team, 1930s (BAGM). On the back row, left, is the butler, Frankton, and on the right, second head gardener, Jackson. Miss Philips is on the middle row, second left. In front of her is Jacqueline Price, who, in 1975, presented this album of photographs to Bury Art Gallery. W.R. Price described the scene: “They were great matches, enlivened especially by the waggish antics of some footman, and by the hysterical laughter at the ladies’ maid going out to bat in high-heeled shoes. Our star player, much to be competed for, was little Jackson... an excellent and often very fast over-hand bowler.”



Photograph of Harry Frankton, Butler, at The Park, early 20C (BAGM). Mr. Frankton joined the staff at the Park as footman in 1885 rising to the position of butler, which he held at the time of Miss Philips' death in 1946. He recalled that, in the time of R.N. Philips, the year followed a fixed pattern. The family moved to Welcombe in October, with Mr. Philips decamping in January to his London house at 47, Berkeley Square, for the Parliamentary Session. The ladies of the family joined him in May and then took a month's holiday in July. The family returned to the Park in August.



Photograph of Anna Maria Philips, South Lawn, The Park, early 20C (BAGM). Miss Philips is shown reading, seated on an ingenious portable bench on the lawn where, in 1925, she entertained the Lord Mayor of Manchester in connection with her intention to convey the Park estate to Manchester for the "Recreation of the Public". The conveyance was revoked in 1944 as Miss Philips was afraid that, if she died during wartime conditions, Manchester Corporation might refuse the gift.



A 1940 letter from Anna Maria to Mary Moorman

5.3 Her development of buildings and parkland

Before the 1st World War, Anna Maria extended the Park estate and, in 1900, built North Lodge. She also constructed a path and strip of planting between the south lawn and Cobster Field. She had a water supply piped to the house. There was never a mains gas or electricity supply.

After the First World War, any potential heir would consider the Park a liability. Anna Maria therefore intended to give it to the City of Manchester to preserve the lands as a place of natural beauty dedicated to the recreation of the public. In 1925 she made an arrangement by deed with the City of Manchester whereby, on her death, her executors would give Manchester £1,500 out of her estate for the upkeep of the Park and Manchester would take ownership of it as a natural public park or nature reserve where hunting was not allowed.



Photograph of watercolour drawing by Richard Joyce, 1920s. (IP) Richard Joyce (1873-1931) was employed by Pilkingtons as a designer of studio pottery. In his spare time he sketched the scenery in the Irwell Valley around his home in Prestwich. Here is a page from his sketchbook showing the view from above North Wood, the Park, to the cottage on Molyneux Brow.

By the 1930s, her inheritance had dwindled and this was accelerated, she said, by the great depression and heavy burden of taxation. She could not maintain the Park adequately and the hardships of World War II exacerbated matters.

By the 1940s, the writing was on the wall for the Park. In January 1944, Anna-Maria revoked the agreement with Manchester. In October of the same year she signed a 21 year lease to let the Park's grazing land to the Prestwich Mental Asylum.

She survived the War with the help of her servants and died on 26th January 1946. Her funeral was at Stand Unitarian Chapel which was packed, as the minister said, to "salute the passing of a great soul" and to mark the passing of "the last link of a great and noble family". Local people lined the route of

the cortege.

Anna Maria was sole mistress of the Park from 1890 to her death in 1946. Her social work, kindness and strong connection with the Stand Unitarian Chapel kept the family's local reputation high and a memoir of her life, written by her heir, William Robert Price, was popular with the public and local schoolteachers until the 1970s. Streets on new housing estates in Besses o'th Barn, Whitefield were named after Miss Philips' servants, Jackson and Frankton. A school and library rooms were also named after the family.

Her estate was less than £30,000. She left Stand Unitarian Chapel £1,000 and £500 to the Sunday School. She gave specific bequests of relics of her family's past glories to public bodies- for example she gave a marble bust of her uncle Mark, the town's first MP, to the Mayor of Manchester and a portrait of her father to Bury art gallery. She gave legacies to her loyal staff.

The residue of her estate, including the Park, she bequeathed to her late sister Margaret's youngest son, Robin (William Robert Price). In April 1946 he held a three day auction of the contents. Robin Price badly wanted to sell the Park. A year after his aunt's death, he wrote from his new London home to his cousin Mrs. Moorman,

"The Park things look lovely here.... I owe my present good fortune to dear old Aunt Anna.....The Park is not sold yet. The Asylum turned it down...As no one else was interested I was in despair. It soon transpired that Prestwich Council were keen to acquire it, Whitefield was uncertain -they are referring to the Ministry of Health. I hope & feel that the Ministry ought to loan the money to enable the Park to be acquired for a joint public park."

OBITUARY

Miss A. M. Philips

We regret to announce the death, which took place on Saturday, of Miss A. M. Philips, of The Park, Prestwich. Miss Philips, the eldest representative of a notable Manchester family, was born in 1857, the daughter (by her second wife) of Robert Needham Philips, for many years M.P. for Bury. An elder sister married Sir George Otto Trevelyan, O.M., the Liberal statesman and biographer of Macaulay, and was the mother of Sir Charles Trevelyan and the Master of Trinity, Professor G. M. Trevelyan. Another sister married Major Edwin Price, former Liberal member for Tewkesbury, and was the mother of Mr. M. Philips Price, M.P.

From early womanhood Miss Philips took a great interest in the education of the district in which she lived for so many years, being made a manager of the Park Lane British Schools at the age of 21. She was the representative of the Manchester University on the board of governors of the Stand Grammar School, of which she was, until her retirement from the office, vice-chairman for nearly thirty years. Another of her interests was the Manchester Northern Hospital, the ladies' committee of which she joined some forty years ago, becoming a member of the board of management a few years later. She was on the committee of the Gentlemen's Employment Association of Manchester for many years and was treasurer of the Ardwick Nursery School for over twenty years.

The Philips family came from Tean, Staffordshire, and were engaged in textile manufacturing and merchandising (first in smallwares) there and in the Manchester district from the early eighteenth century. The firm of J. and N. Philips was founded at Tean in 1747 and later developed in the present great home-trade house. Nathaniel Philips, one of the early partners, was Miss Philips's great-grandfather. His son Robert (1760-1844) built the house The Park, Prestwich, in which Miss Philips was born and died. Of his sons the elder, Mark, was one of Manchester's first members under the Reform Act of 1832; the other, Robert Needham, sat for Bury from 1837 to 1859 and from 1865 to 1883. Mark Philips was active in the movement for acquiring public open spaces and his name was given to one of the first Manchester parks, Philips Park, opened in 1848. R. N. Philips married the daughter of yet another M.P., J. Ashton Yates.

Some time before her death Miss Philips recalled to a "Manchester Guardian" reporter some episodes in the life of Victorian Manchester, with its keen merchant politicians, its political parties at The Park, and its leisurely transport. The Philipses had a trap, a brougham, an open carriage, and an

emulphus. Her father usually used the brougham with a pair of horses to get to Manchester, six miles away, but there were times when he and his three daughters, attended by a groom, rode on horseback to Kerall. Here there was a cabstand, and her father would take a cab on to town while the daughters rode back to The Park with the groom and the led horse. No young lady ever rode alone.

In days before the refrigerator was known The Park had its own ice-house, supplied from a pond in the garden, and its own brewery. In winter the family went sometimes to the theatre in Manchester, either the Theatre Royal or the old Prince's Theatre, at one or other of which "good Shakespearean plays" were presented, to the Hulks Concerts, and, once a year, to the pantomime.

Miss Philips noted one great change for the better that has come over Manchester since her father used to go there daily to business, to lunch at the Union Club, and return home to dinner in the very early evening: the comparative absence of fogs. "They used to be blinding. Though you shut your eyes they made them smart. Not only were the fogs of those days much worse, but we have not so many of them now. It comes of the greater consumption of smoke in those days. And it was very cold—here." She indicated the spacious rooms of The Park. "There was no central heating then."

Miss Philips retained her interest in affairs until the end. She was the last survivor of a great period in Manchester history and with her pass many memories.

By direction of the Executors of the late Miss A. Maria Philips (deceased).
KENDAL MILNE & CO.,
Auctioneers, Valuers, and Estate Agents,
have received instructions to sell by Public Auction at **THE PARK, PHILIPS PARK, PRESTWICH**, on **TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, and THURSDAY NEXT**, the 9th, 10th, and 11th **APRIL**, commencing at 11 a.m., the remaining
FURNITURE, CARPETS,
AND EFFECTS, including **BEDROOM SUITES**, bedsteads and bedding, tallboys, chests of drawers, and linen cupboards, bookcases, desks, sets of chairs. **CARPETS** as laid practically throughout the residence, curtains, china and glass, ornamental brassware. **SILVER & E.P. GOODS**. Couches, easy chairs, and occasional furniture, odd robes, writing tables, hall chairs, ottomans, bedding chests. **ANTIQUES** consisting of chairs, chests, card tables, marqueterie writing tables, occasional tables, sideboards, robes and tallboys. **PICTURES**, oil-paintings, water colour drawings, engravings, prints, plaques, statuary marble and parian figures. **LARGE QUANTITY OF LINEN**, blankets, covers, and rugs, &c., kitchen requisites, dressers, chairs, tables, kitchen utensils.
On view Monday, 8th April, 1946, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Further particulars and catalogues apply the Auctioneers, 35, King Street West, Manchester 3. Tel. BLA. 6666, or to the solicitors, Messrs. DENDY & PATERSON, 5, Cross Street, Manchester 2. Tel. BLA. 0827. Catalogues 1s. each.

Advertisement for the Sale by Auction of the remaining contents of The Park, April, 1946. (IP) The sale took place over three days and doubtless included many items recognizable from the historic photographs of the interior of the mansion. In his book *Victorian Period Piece*, published in 1954, J. Stanley Leatherbarrow wrote of the Park: "Such was the domestic Victorian period piece which so strangely had survived, and some of us were able to see, as we drew near the middle of the twentieth century. All of a piece it was, for when Robert Philips built the house he had it furnished throughout by Waring and Gillow of Lancaster, and so the whole outfit presented a unity of period until the very end... 1800 solid mahogany throughout... (Could it have been true that that solemn and impressive dining-room sideboard 'went for £6?')"



Stand Unitarian Chapel 1960s. (IP) The chapel was gutted by an incendiary bomb during an air raid in December, 1940. Miss Philips wrote of the incendiary bombs lighting up the area as bright as day and guns firing hour after hour and she began to "want an hour's sleep before tea to make up for the noisy broken nights." Miss Philips was happy to preside over the celebrations for the 250th anniversary of Stand Chapel in 1943. In her will she left £1,000 for the maintenance and repair of Stand Chapel. A new chapel, designed by Young & Purves of Manchester in the New England style, was opened in June, 1955, on the original site.

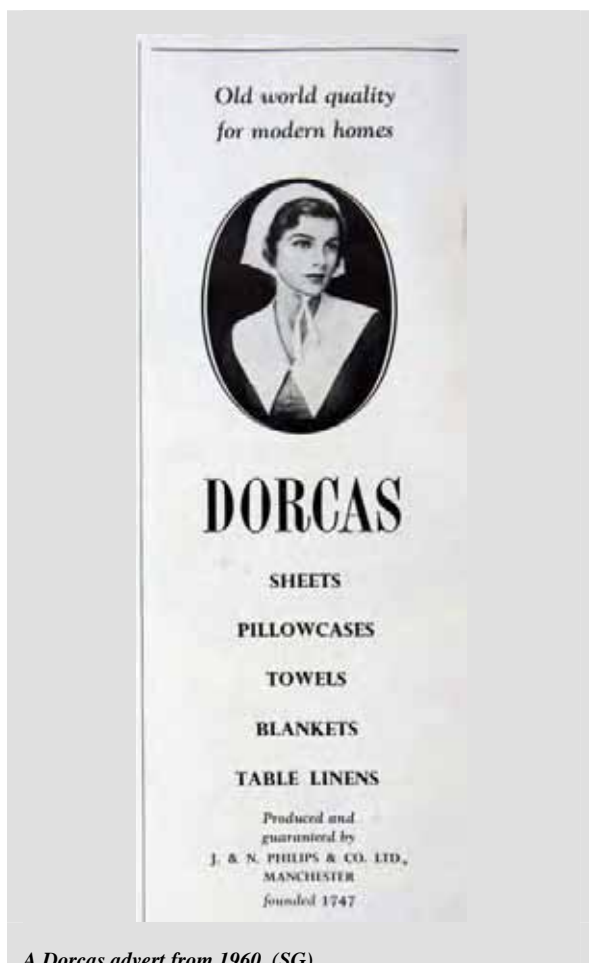
Obituary of Miss A.M. Philips, *The Manchester Guardian*, 29 January, 1946. Miss Philips passed peacefully away in her bedroom at the Park on 26 January, 1946, in her 89th year. The inscription on her gravestone in the yard at Stand Chapel reads: "Her friendship and her freedom from all selfish considerations made her very dear to three generations of her relations and friends. She bent all her powers to the good of others, in which she found her chief happiness." In her will of 25 January, 1944, Miss Philips stated that "owing to the great depreciation of my capital investments and the heavy burden of taxation I have been reluctantly obliged to revise my previous Will and the pecuniary legacies which it had been my intention to leave to both relatives and charities." She left the Park estate to her nephew, W.R. Price, and legacies of £500 each to her gardener, Henry Jackson, her butler, Harry Frankton, and her housemaid, Amy Waters, along with six months' wages to all her indoor servants and three months' wages to all her outdoor servants. Amongst her charitable legacies was the sum of £100 to the Manchester Northern Hospital for Women and Children, "as I have during my lifetime given considerable sums to it."

5.4 What happened to J&N Philips in the 20th Century?

Early C20th expansion

In the early C20th most people in Britain and the Empire would have been familiar with textiles made or wholesaled by J&N Philips & Co. On the manufacturing side, the company continued textile manufacture at Tean and expanded, acquiring other mills and businesses. Between 1914 and 1930 it bought shirt factories in Newton Heath, in Congleton and an interest in blanket makers, Smiths of Witney, Oxfordshire and in the firm of John Ormond Taylor in Lanarkshire who were nightwear manufacturers.

As well as manufacturing new ranges of tapes and small ware at Tean, the Philips mills were turning out ready made clothing, shirts, cambric and other woven fabrics and household goods, such as sheets and towels under the Dorcas brand which was targeted at the discerning masses.



A Dorcas advert from 1960. (SG)

On the complementary wholesale and distribution side of the business, the main warehouses were in Church Street, Manchester and Ludgate Hill,

London. The Philips' warehouse was the centre of a great distribution network serving retail, usually credit, drapers throughout the nation. Retailers placed orders through the network of J&N Philips & Co's. travelling salesmen and the goods were delivered by road, rail or sea. A typical example for which records exist was for J&N Philips & Co. to send a bundle of corsets price 3s.2d. via sea to Portmadoc harbour to be collected by one of its army of shop-keeper customers, in this case, the Beehive Stores.

There was a large Philips workforce in the various mills, warehouses and offices and it is said that the employees thought they were treated fairly.

Even after R.N. Philips' death in 1890, it remained a family firm and most of the partners in the C20th. were descendents of the original C18th Philips founder brothers. A sample of just some partners' names in the early C20th includes John William Philips, William Morton Philips, John Cyril Philips, Edward Mark Philips, William Lees Philips, George William Wynter Blathwayt, Godfrey Grant Astel, Frank Morison Seafeld Grant.

Two of those partners, W.M.Philips & GW Wynter Blathwayt were executors and Trustees of Robert Needham Philips' will. In it, he provided an option for his vast partnership capital to remain in the firm if required and for interest to be paid to his daughters until the capital was paid out to them. The business was then providing good income and returns.

Between 1915 and 1917 the partners changed the firm's legal status to that of a private limited company then to a public limited company but it still had a family firm majority ownership and feel. It also had a valuable property portfolio, including an additional property in High Street Manchester, near to its existing Church Street warehouse which it had acquired in the 1920s when it bought out Isaac Thorpe & Co. Ltd.

Later C20th terminal decline

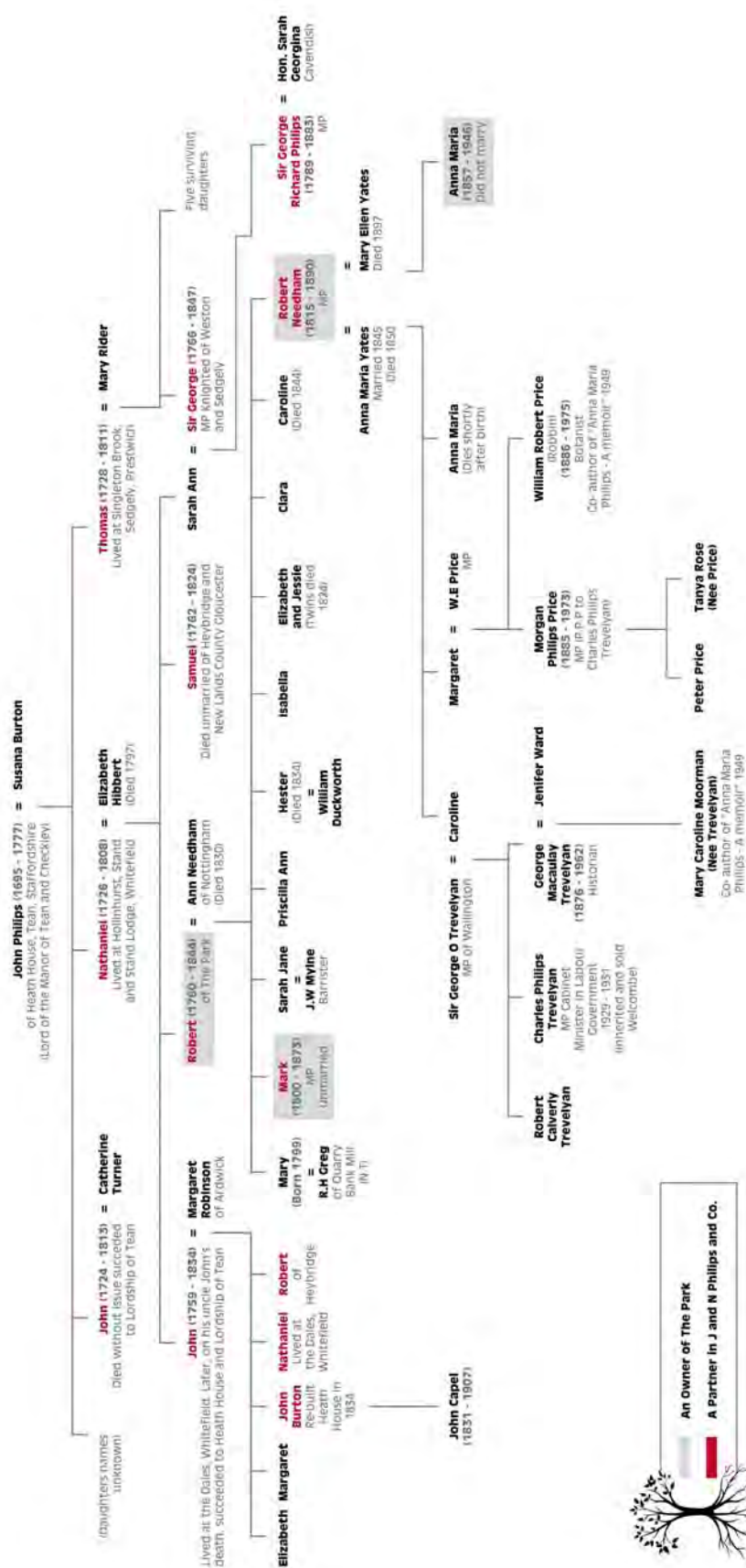
During World war two, the Church Street warehouse was requisitioned and in post war Britain, the Philips wholesale business model was old fashioned and unprofitable. It ceased trading before 1970 and the Dorcas brand and production, which was strong on household goods, was acquired by the David Alliance group of Companies, (later merged with Coates Vyella).

The manufacturing side of J&N Philips & Co. at Tean was suffering decline but it continued working under J&N Philips & Co. Ltd's. ownership until 1968 when J&N Philips & Co Ltd. sold the

Tean Mill to Rykeld (later Marling Industries) under whose ownership the mills continued production of specialised tapes and belts until the early 1990s. Marling sold the Tean site in 2004 to Bovale for residential development and they converted the historic former J&N Philips & Co. Tean Mills and Hall to apartments.



The war memorial from the Philips's Manchester (Church Street) warehouse has been erected on the corner of the multi-storey car park that took its place in the 1970s.



6. Prestwich and Whitefield municipal park era

Whitefield and Prestwich Councils bought the Park estate in 1948 and the site became a public park. The purchase price of the 131 acres was £7,250 and a 2d rate was introduced to cover the costs of future maintenance.

On the 7th April 1948 the councils set up the Prestwich and Whitefield (Joint Committee) to run the 'Park Estate', for that is what the Joint Committee called it. For many years a sign near the Park Lane Entrance informed 'the public' that the Joint Committee

"welcomes the public to the Park Estate ...it hopes the public enjoys the gardens and woodlands and that the public are informed that their presence is on sufferance."

The councils presumably wished to keep their options open.



Photograph of the North front of The Park, by Mr. T. Edgar, 1950.(IP) A report in October, 1949, found that the lead roof of the mansion was leaking in several places in the west block and that broken sash cords and rotten cills made it difficult to keep windows closed. The joint committee advertised the mansion to let. Manchester Welfare Services Dept. were interested in adapting it to an old peoples' home at a rent of £250 per annum, but eventually withdrew on grounds of cost. Various other attempts were made to let the mansion at local and national level. In the end, the joint committee decided to have the mansion demolished. It was sold to Messrs. Walter & Co. Ltd. of Oldham for £3750 and in March, 1950, the demolition contractor sought permission to hold an auction of the fixtures and fittings of the mansion. Demolition progressed but slowly and by November, 1950, a three month extension was granted to the period of demolition. Work was delayed by climatic conditions and difficulties in finding suitable labour and this was again the reason for demolition continuing up to Whitsuntide, 1951! The site was finally covered over with 80 tons of soil by the end of 1952. As J.S. Leatherbarrow noted: "Shades of the commercial aristocracy brooded over its dissolution soon after Hitler's war had come to an end."

The work of the Joint Committee is recorded in detail in a book of its meeting minutes held in Bury Archives. At first Anna Maria's gardeners Jackson, Bowers and Reeves agreed to carry on working,

living in the Park at Outwood Cottage, North Lodge and the Quadrangle, respectively. The Thatch Cottage was occupied by a Mr Williams and Damshead Lodge by the Whittakers for 8 shillings a week.

Mr Jackson, who had been at the Park for sixty-two years soon retired and Mr. Trill was appointed as head gardener. Most of the greenhouses were demolished and dead trees were felled. The Joint Committee was unable to find a tenant for the Philips' formerly grand house so it was demolished in 1950 and the salvaged building materials were sold.



Photograph of the Thatched Cottage, Philips Park, by Mr. T. Edgar, 1950. (IP) This charming Regency cottage ornée was the original north entrance lodge to the Park and consisted of two bedrooms, a combined parlour and kitchen and a wash house. A Mr. Williams lived there rent free in 1948. In 1949, the thatched roof was in a state of disrepair and the brickwork of the ground floor walls had perished causing dampness. However, it was decided to try and have the cottage preserved as an ancient and historical building.

During the 1950s and 1960s the gardens were well maintained under the supervision of Mr Trill (who became foreman then parks superintendent). In 1959 the escarpment of the formal garden was replanted with rhododendrons and azaleas from the Exbury collection. A limestone rockery was constructed behind the lily pond by head gardener, Tommy Dawson.

In 1953 one of the Quadrangle cottages was converted into a café. For a while there was an aviary next to the conservatory.

In 1960 Lancashire County Council's grounds maintenance team used the Quadrangle coach houses for garaging. They also brought electricity to the buildings and to the park's staff living in the

two remaining Quadrangle cottages. In 1962 mining subsidence necessitated the reconstruction of the café and a new single storey extension was built containing toilets.



Photograph of the Conservatory, Philips Park, by Miss M. Newbold, 1959.(IP) The Prestwich & Whitefield Joint Committee had the conservatory repaired and painted in 1949. The herbaceous border had been thinned out and replanted in January that year, the foreman gardener being Mr. F.B. Trill. The climbing roses had been pruned and re-tied against the screen wall behind the herbaceous border. It was reported that, in June, 1954, the large herbaceous border had been divided for a new path to form an entrance to the café in the Quadrangle. Miss Newbold's photograph captured the vivid late summer colour of the formal gardens that would have been familiar to Miss Philips. Renewal of the plants in the herbaceous border took place in 1961, when plants up to 50 years of age were removed.



Photograph of The Grass Walk, Philips Park, 1968.(IP) The linear beds to each side of the Grass Walk are shown planted out with bright annuals against an evergreen background. In the foreground is one of a pair of marble basins on stone pedestals at the foot of the Grass Walk. The renowned collection of rhododendrons and azaleas, which thrived in the damp climate and sandy soil, despite the smoke of Manchester, was replanted in 1959 with specimens from the estate of Edmund de Rothschild at Exbury, Southampton.



Photograph of the Garden Temple, Philips Park, November, 1971. (IP) The Garden Temple was sited at the highest point of the Park estate at the top of the Grass Walk. It housed a marble statue of the muse, Erato, which had been carved in Rome, in 1856, by Isaac Jackson of Liverpool.



Photograph of the View to Agecroft from the Top of the Grass Walk, Philips Park, 1966.(IP)

In 1965 Seven Arches viaduct, which carried Philips Park Road was unsafe and demolished and this was the precursor to a major change. Anna-Maria's nephew, Robin wrote to Mary Moorman on 17th March 1970:-

..."I have heard devastating reports of the Motorway being built across North Wood... access has been made difficult...people will not come so much.."

The construction of the M62 (1966-72) had a major impact on the Park. With the main drive severed, park tenants moved out and public access was restricted. The motorway was routed through North Wood and this severed the park woodland walk and entailed the loss of the thatched cottage. Spoil excavated from the motorway construction was deposited on Cobster Field and Waterdale.



Photograph of the Drive, Philips Park, 1966 (PWG). Of interest in showing the burnt out shell of the Thatched Cottage, following an arson attack. The trees forming an avenue to either side of the drive are marked for felling in advance of construction of the M62. IP recalls the absolute quietness of the parkland on the approach from the Philips Park Road Viaduct through mid-wood to the Thatched Cottage.



Photograph of construction of the M62, Philips Park, July, 1969.(IP) Massive earth works were taking place in the park, with most of North Wood swept away and steep embankments created for the motorway corridor. The line of trees on Philips Park Road can be seen in the distance.



Photograph of the South Lodge, Philips Park, by Mr. B. Proctor, 1970.(IP) South Lodge, along with all the other surviving structures of the Park estate, had been listed Grade II in 1966. It was then occupied by the lady who ran the café in the Quadrangle. The Lodge had no gas, electricity, or running water, and was still lit by oil lamps. The property was demolished in 1974, having been declared a dangerous structure after it had stood empty and vandalised for a number of years.



Photograph of the back of the Quadrangle, November, 1971 (IP). The small greenhouse was all that remained of extensive cold frames and two large glass houses that stood in front of a tall brick wall, under which were stove pits to heat the vineries. In the gable end of the back range of the quadrangle is a bricked-up, pointed arch, similar to features of the Drinkwater Park Farm buildings. Irwell House and its park had been designed in 1794 for Peter Drinkwater by Charles McNiven of Manchester. The Quadrangle, then a listed building, was converted to a restaurant/nightclub and opened as 'Philips Park Hall' in 1975.



Photograph of view from Philips Park to Molyneux Brow, 1972 (IP). The writer took this photograph shortly before the M62 was opened to traffic. At the time he was not aware of Richard Joyce's earlier depiction of this view!

On completion of the motorway in 1972 Whitefield Council let the empty Quadrangle buildings for use as a restaurant, with a condition that the tenant offer a café and toilets to park users. Whilst the tenancy generated an income for the council, the traffic generated, the development of a nightclub, associated building works and the 'disappearance' of the café caused problems for the park for many years.

7. Bury Council era and plans for the future

In 1974 local government reorganisation saw Whitefield and Prestwich become part of the area administered by the new Bury Metropolitan District Council.



Photograph of the Gardens, Philips Park, May, 1974 (IP). The horticultural skills of Parks Superintendent, F.B. Trill, are evident in this view taken from above the lily pond looking to the top of the Grass Walk. The atmospheric pollution that ravaged much of the park during World War II had abated: "Atmospheric pollution is so severe that no one species of tree is immune... Oak, Beech, Ash and some Horse Chestnuts in the Garden have been killed outright. Even common ivy appeared to be damaged by this pollution which emanates from nearby factories just to the west of the park." (Joint Committee Minutes Book, May, 1948).



Photograph of the view from Philips Park to Agecroft, August, 1977 (IP). The iron gates at the former private entrance to the Park mansion have more recently been stolen for scrap value. Two majestic beech trees can be seen to the left of the lamp post. They stood at either end of an enigmatic landscape feature, a long grass mound. The chimney of the Annexe to Prestwich Hospital can be seen, with the cooling towers of Agecroft Power Station in the distance. Steel towers were erected by the Central Electricity Board to carry transmission wires from Agecroft to Chadderton in 1932. Miss Philips was compensated for damage to planted areas and fencing on her land



Photograph of view looking east across Cobster Field, Philips Park, 1970s (IP). Vast quantities of spoil from the construction of the M62 had been tipped onto the undulating landscape and levelled to form rugby pitches. The resulting slope into Mere Clough was planted with trees, later augmented by the creation of an arboretum of willows by Greater Manchester Council (G.M.C.) on the flat boggy ground where the rugby pitches had stood. In the foreground the grass mound is still visible, with one of the specimen beech trees to the side of a thicket of broom.



Photograph of the conservatory, Philips Park, May, 1980 (IP). The statues of Caroline and Margaret Philips and of Anna Maria Philips had been placed in the conservatory in 1954, having been cleaned following removal from Stand Chapel where they were in danger of damage from building operations.



Photograph of the Conservatory, Philips Park, July, 1984 (IP). This view shows the lush planting of the conservatory, with the four cast iron columns supporting the roof and framing the statue of Anna Philips. Plants were originally displayed on staging, but this was replaced in 1953 by an ornamental rockery bed to either side of the central walkway with potted plants plunged into the soil. The writer remembers the scent inside the conservatory in winter, when the mimosa was in bloom and camellias were flowering against the back walls.

From the late 1970s to the mid 1990s Philips Park was one of the bases of the Croal Irwell Ranger Service, with a countryside ranger and two-man estate team based at Outwood Farm. Outwood Farm barn was used as a parks store by Bury Council.

In 1977-80 trees were planted below the night club (bottom) car park and to the west of South Wood in an area known on the tithe map as Casey Meadow.

In 1985 North Lodge was bought by its tenant and in 1986 Outwood Farmhouse was also sold.

Around 1990 an initiative to create a Greater Manchester arboretum with each district responsible for a limited number of species saw a variety of willows planted on the edges of Cobster Field.

In 1994, Compulsory Competitive Tendering was introduced in local authorities and a private company, Continental Landscapes, took over the maintenance of the park.



Photograph of vandalized statue of Erato, Philips Park, April, 1991 (IP). The remains of the decapitated statue lie next to one of the marble basins from the foot of the Grass Walk.



Photograph of the Conservatory, Philips Park, June, 1990 (IP). The architectural stone-work of the Grade II Listed conservatory was reconstructed at a cost of £140,000 in 1990. Unfortunately, the 'wrong kind' of roof was installed and inappropriate lighting introduced. There were calls for the retention of the cast iron columns and floor grilles as important features of the listed building. The conservatory has yet to be put to use!



Photograph of forcing tunnel, Philips Park, April, 1995 (IP). This row of three brick-faced chambers (shown on the pre-1833 plan) was exposed during ground work for the Philips Park Management Plan of 1995.



Photograph of rear wall of Vineries, Philips Park, April, 1995 (IP). There was a public outcry about much of the work undertaken at this time, in one particular case about the clear-felling of the holly trees on the bank above the vineries site.



Photograph of a vista, Philips Park, March, 1995 (IP). The vista created by poorly-supervised wholesale felling of the rhododendron revealed the car park on the site of the Park mansion and the new roof of the conservatory. A number of hybrid specimens were lost at this time.

In 1996, with funding obtained from the Countryside Commission, the shippon and hay loft of Outwood Farm were converted into a countryside centre comprising offices, classroom and workshops. They became the north Manchester base of the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers and a part-time base for Bury Council staff.



Photograph of the Barn Countryside Centre, converted from the former shippon and hayloft of Outwood Farm.

After the construction of the motorway, the only fields fenced for livestock were those between Outwood Farm and the motorway, fenced by the tenant of Outwood Farm in 1980. In 1995 the council entered into a 10-year countryside stewardship agreement which helped to fund improved fencing and hedge planting around the remaining sections of Plane Tree Field and the replanting of Outwood Farm orchard. The fields were then let for grazing. In 2001 the stewardship agreement was extended to include a part of Cobster Field.

Also in 1996, as part of the Waterdale 2 derelict land reclamation scheme adjacent to the park, the remains of South Lodge were excavated and consolidated.

In 1997 Bury Council obtained funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to produce a restoration plan for the park. A key proposal of the consultants engaged was the relocation of car parking away from the historic core to a site near the park entrance. The nightclub lease made this impossible to implement, so the proposals were not pursued. A further blow at this time was a review by English Heritage of its Register of Historic Parks and Gardens which resulted in Philips Park being de-listed.

In 1999 a large part of the park and adjacent land at Waterdale was declared the Borough's first Local Nature Reserve.

In 2002 Bury Council entered into a 5-year woodland grant scheme with the Forestry Commission which helped fund thinning work in North and South Woods, repair of retaining walls and the removal of invading sycamores in Mid Wood.



Photograph of the Garden Temple Statue and Statue of Caroline and Margaret Philips, The Barn, Philips Park, September, 2004 (IP). These statues were transferred to Bury Art Gallery and fully restored before being displayed in the entrance hall of the Art Gallery. In 2004, they were moved out of Bury Art Gallery as part of a reorganization of displays and placed in the Barn Countryside Centre.



Photograph of statue of Anna Maria Philips, The Barn, Philips Park, September, 2004 (IP). The statue of Miss Philips has had an equally chequered existence since it was stolen from the Conservatory in 1994. Bury Council offered a £1,000 reward for the return of the statue, then valued at £10,000. Damage caused by the statue being wrenched from its plinth was estimated to cost £2,000 in repairs. The statue was fully restored, displayed at Bury Art Gallery and, in 2004, moved to The Barn. The statue was again broken off from its plinth during removal.

In 2006 the quadrangle buildings were re-possessed and in 2007 Bury Council obtained further funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to engage

consultants to work up restoration proposals for the park. The resultant proposals included the refurbishment of the quadrangle buildings, the restoration of the formal garden, the consolidation and relocation of car parking to the park entrance, the presentation of the remains of the Philips' house and the provision of extra staff. A partial demolition contract restored the quadrangle buildings to their original form and a major (£3.8m) park restoration proposal and £1.9m grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund followed in February 2009. However, it was not successful.



Photograph of archaeological excavation, Philips Park, August, 2008 (IP). Bury Council engaged Oxford Archaeology North to excavate the site of the Park mansion. The Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit oversaw the project, which consisted of eight mechanically-dug trenches to establish the extent of the mansion. This photograph shows a trench dug from south to north across the body of the house.



Photograph of an excavated cellar, Philips Park, August, 2008 (IP). The depth and extent of the cellar network with its flagged floors and brick vaulted passageways running the entire length of the mansion and its west and east wings expressed the hidden world of the house 'below stairs.'



Photograph of excavated stonework, Philips Park, August, 2008 (IP). The demolition contractors in 1950 certainly carried out a thorough job in smashing the mansion to bits and backfilling the cellars. Amongst the rubble were substantial pieces of architectural stonework, including these keystones from the windows to the side of the north entrance door. Other evocative finds included a plaster Ionic capital, glazed hearth tiles by Pilkingtons', a gas bracket, a wall sconce, a bell push, a fire basket with urn finials and part of a Victorian lavatory. The whereabouts of the two marble figures from the inner hall of the Park remains unknown!



Photograph of Philips Park, May, 2009 (IP). This view from near the top of the Grass Walk shows the park in its present day green setting. The cooling towers of Agecroft Power Station have been replaced by the low wings of the Forest Bank Prison and the Agecroft Colliery by a large business park. Beyond, are the tower blocks of central Salford.



Photograph looking across the Grass Walk, Philips Park, May, 2008 (IP). The pine tree at the top of the Grass Walk is the sole survivor of a number of pines planted in Miss Philips' time as part of the Italianate feel of the gardens. The paths winding through the rhododendrons form a circuit across the principal axial feature of the landscape.



Photograph of The Drive, Philips Park, April, 2009 (IP). A scheme, funded by the Pilsworth Environmental Company, to restore the parkland landscape of Cobster Field has involved the removal of invading brambles, scrub and trees adjacent to the drive. As a result, an astonishing panorama of Prestwich in its forest, the cityscapes of Manchester and Salford and the distant Pennines has been revealed. In early 2010 specimen beech, oak and lime trees were planted in an attempt to recreate the parkland appearance of the field .

At the time of writing, Bury Council's restoration plans for the park still stand, though funding, particularly for key elements, such as the refurbishment of the quadrangle buildings, has yet to be found. The park offers a range of pleasant natural and designed environments, very close to the centre of Manchester and is a gateway to the extensive open spaces of the Irwell Valley. The story of the park shows that it has much to tell about economic, political, social and environmental change, both locally and nationally. However, for present the park remains a fascinating asset known by a few, but for the many, still waiting to be discovered.

8. Chronology: Significant local and national events

<i>Date</i>	<i>event</i>
Unknown	Pilkington Park created
1291	Charter of free warren
1415 approx.	Stand/Pilkington Hall built
1485-87	Sir Thomas Pilkington loses Pilkington to Thomas Stanley Earl of Derby after battles of Bosworth and Stoke
1593-1627	William Earl of Derby disparts Pilkington Park piecemeal and gives temporary leases/licences to tenants
1627	Lawrence Crompton leases 54 large acres from within the late park of Pilkington. His tenancy later formed Phillips Park.
1642-49	English Civil Wars. Charles 1 executed 1649
1651	James Stanley, Earl of Derby executed. Commonwealth takes his estates including Pilkington, which were sold to middlemen
1654	Thomas and James Crompton purchase freehold of the 54 large acres for £130. Estate passes down the Crompton generations and is known as Park Estate. It is let to tenants in 1700s.
1747-76	J & N Philips set up in Tean and in Manchester and Whitefield
1760	Robert Philips born in Manchester
1776	Thomas Crompton dies without heirs. Litigation follows.
1770s/1780s	Philips connection with Stand Grammar School and Chapel begins. Nathan Philips living in Whitefield.
1781	Park Estate is purchased by Edward Hobson for £2150
1784	Estate settled on Hobson's daughter, wife of Mr Barron. Improvements carried out.
1788	George Philips marries Sarah Ann Philips, Robert Philips' sister
1790s	Salford (incombustible) Twist Mill built by Philips and Lee
1793	War with revolutionary France
1798	Robert Philips marries Anne Needham
1798-1819	Barrows grant an agricultural lease for 21 years of park and buildings
1799	Mary Philips born in King Street, Manchester
1799	Robert Philips purchases Park Estate for £2960 subject to 21 year agricultural lease.
1800-1815	Mark Philips and rest of Robert and Anne's children born at The Park. Youngest was Robert Needham
1800-1818/19	Robert Philips living in one house at the Park and tenant farmer in another
1815	Robert Philips buys Snitterfield, then buys other Warwickshire agricultural estates and in south Wales
1815-19	Robert Philips builds the Philips Park house on new site. Old house demolished
1815	Corn Laws introduced
1819	Philips invests heavily in South Wales coal and iron
1819	Peterloo
1823	Fireproof mill built at Tean
1824	Robert Philips buys 'Rawstorn Fields', 3 lives leasehold from Matthew Jones. Landlord Earl of Derby. Mary Philips marries R.H. Greg of Quarry Bank, Styal
C1818-30	Ox Gap Lodge, estate buildings, conservatory, thatched cottage (?) built.
1830	Anne Philips dies
1830	J&N Philips takes over Eagley Mills
1832	Robert Philips addresses parliamentary reform meeting
1832	Great Reform Act
1832-1847	Mark Philips elected MP for Manchester
1830-51	Outwood Lodge, estate buildings, farm and outbuildings built
1835-38	Municipal Reform Act and Manchester Council elections
1840s-1939	Schools have party in Park grounds
1840s	Part of Park's land rented out

1842	Hundreds of striking mill workers picket the Park from Park Lane
1844	Robert Philips dies. Wills everything to Mark, including the Park
1852	New extension to Park Road – 7 Arches viaduct built
1846	Philips municipal park, east Manchester opened. Corn Laws repealed.
1847	Mark Philips retires from parliament
1846-50	Robert Needham Philips (RNP) marries. Caroline and Margaret born. First wife dies.
1851	Mark Philips appointed Sheriff of Warwickshire
1856	RNP appointed High Sheriff of Lancs.
1856/7	RNP marries second wife. Anna Maria born
1857-59	RNP MP for Bury. Withdrew candidature for 1859
1865	R.P Greg living at Outwood Lodge
1866	Statue of Anna Maria made
1868-85	RNP MP for Bury
1869	Caroline marries G.O Trevelyan
1871	RNP President of Manchester Reform Club
1873	Mark Philips dies. Leaves Park and everything else to RNP
1879	RNP lays foundation stone and opens Prestwich Liberal Club
1875	RNP pays for Philips Hall, Bury, the local Liberal HQ, dedicated to his father and brother.
1878	Margaret marries Captain Price, MP
1885	RNP retires from parliament
1890	RNP dies at Welcome. Leaves Park and contents to daughter, Anna Maria
1892-1907	New gatehouse, North Lodge built. Water piped to house (but never gas or electricity!)
1890-1906	Anna Maria spends part of year in Park. Normally Summer.
1914-18	World War 1
1919	Limited women's parliamentary suffrage. Anna Maria can vote for first time.
1925-44	Deed drawn up. On Anna Maria Philips' death Manchester Council will take ownership of Philips Park and preserve the lands as a place of natural beauty for public recreation
1928	Women's suffrage on same terms as men
1929	Wall Street crash followed by financial depression
1939-45	World War 2
1944	Deed of dedication of Park to Manchester revoked.
1944	Anna Maria Philips acknowledges her finances are low
1944	Lease of land to Prestwich mental hospital
1946	Anna Maria Philips dies and leaves Park and most of contents to nephew, Robert Price. Some pictures, statues, bust of Mark Philips and Sheriff's spears left to Manchester, some portraits to Bury
1946	3 day auction at The Park of various contents
1948	Park Estate conveyed to Whitefield Urban District Council for £7250. Joint Committee set up with Prestwich Metropolitan Borough Council and special rate levied to fund maintenance
1948	Dead timber cleared
1950	House demolished, site becomes car park. West Lodge demolished. Statues moved
1952-63	Public park – gardens, trees, tea shop, toilets
1965-71	7 arches blown up, motorway built through fields and North Wood, thatched cottage demolished, spoil from motorway spread on park, bridge over motorway from Park Lane built.
1969	Manchester warehouse of J&N Philips on Church Street demolished
1972	Buildings leased as nightclub
1974	South Lodge demolished
1977-80	Trees planted below bottom car park
1990	Conservatory re-built, willows planted on Cobster Field,
1995-2009	Barn converted to countryside centre, fields under Stewardship agreement, woodland grant scheme, some garden work
2009	Night club closes
2009	Archaeological investigation of Philips house site

9. Sources and further reading

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ILLUSTRATIONS – abbreviations used

Bury Archives Service (BAS), Bury Art Gallery and Museum (BAGM), National Trust Wallington (NTW), Ian Pringle (IP), Sara Gremson (SG)