



The inauguration of the Corporation tramway system took place on the 26th August, 1901. The first Corporation tramways opened by the Corporation were from Mersey Square to Sandy Lane, from Lancashire Bridge to Woodley Station, and from Mersey Square to the Robin Hood Inn, Brinksway. The Reddish section was extended to the "Houldsworth Arms" in June, 1902, and to the "Bull's Head" (Gorton boundary) in November, 1903. The Cheadle section was extended to Cheadle Green on the 1st August, 1903, and from Cheadle Green to the "Horse and Farrier," Gatley, in March, 1904. The Woodley section was extended from Woodley Station to Pole Bank (Hyde boundary) on the 17th July, 1902, and through running from Stockport to Hyde Town Hall commenced on the 1st January, 1903. The horse car undertaking of the Stockport and Hazel Grove Carriage and Tramway Co., Ltd., consisting of tramways from St. Peter's Square to Hazel Grove and Edgeley, was purchased for £24,000. The tramways were reconstructed, equipped for electrical working, and opened for public traffic on the 5th July, 1905. The total route mileage of the tramway undertaking is now 18 miles 7 furlongs 1.68 chains (of this length 2 miles 3 furlongs 6.50 chains is leased to, and worked by, the Manchester Corporation, and 1 mile 7 furlongs 0.45 chains in the Borough of Hyde is worked jointly with the Stalybridge, Hyde, Mossley and Dukinfield Tramways and Electricity Board). The rolling stock consists of 65 double-deck tramcars (59 of which are top covered) and three petrol omnibuses. The current for the working of the tramways is purchased from the Electricity Committee of the Corporation. A length of line from St. Petersgate to the borough boundary at Offerton (1 mile 5 furlongs 6.4 chains) was equipped for working by railless traction, and opened for public traffic on March 10th, 1913. A motor omnibus service replaced the railless traction service on October 8th, 1919, and is now in operation.

The sewage disposal works at Cheadle Heath were opened on July 26, 1899, by the late Alderman William Lees, the then chairman of the Sewage Disposal Committee. The sewage of Reddish was brought into the works on June 24, 1902, and from the Adswold district in November, 1908. The method of treatment adopted is chemical precipitation, followed by intermittent land filtration and oxidation in bacteria beds. A scheme has now been adopted for a large extension of the works at an estimated cost of £220,000, and this will include taking in at Cheadle Heath of the Heaton Norris sewage. A scheme whereby Manchester was to have taken and dealt with the whole of the Stockport sewage was under consideration, but Manchester refused to proceed with it and it fell through.

The town has up-to-date free libraries, the Central Library on the Wellington Road, occupying the site of the old Mechanics' Institute, being the gift of the late Mr Andrew Carnegie. It was built at a cost of £15,000, and was opened on October 14, 1913. The lending library is on the open access system. A branch library and newsroom were opened on the Gorton Road, Reddish, in June, 1908. The first free library in the Market Place was opened on September 20, 1875, and this was closed on removal to the new central library. The Museum in Vernon Park was built in 1860, by Mr James Kershaw and Mr John B. Smith, the then members of Parliament for the borough, and a wing was added by the Corporation in 1866. It contains a valuable collection of natural history and geological specimens, antiquities and art. It also houses a valuable collection of pictures, several of them being the paintings of old Italian masters.