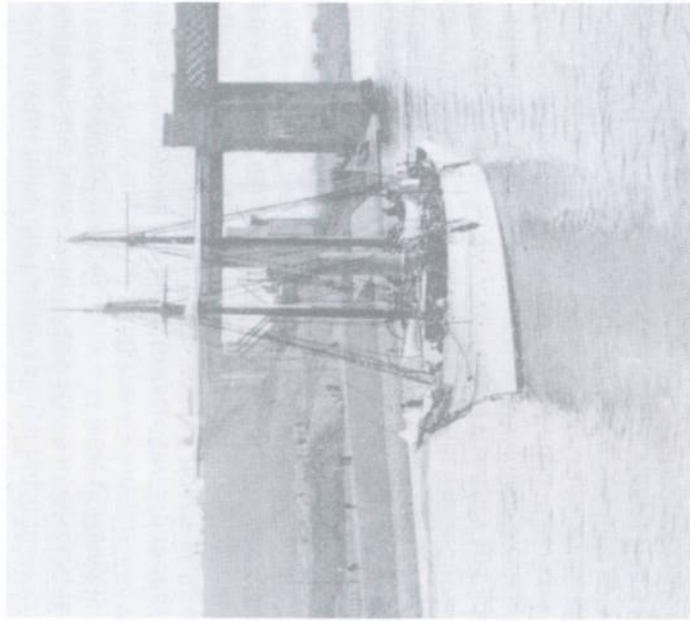


company was incorporated, with Samuel Radcliffe Platt as the Chairman of the Board of Directors, to take over the earlier (1868) company as a going concern but preserving the name.

Samuel Radcliffe Platt was at the helm of Platt Brothers for thirty of the most momentous years of its existence yet he found the time, as his father and uncle had done before him, to play an important part in the wider affairs of Oldham. He was a magistrate, councillor and Alderman and for the consecutive years, 1887-9, was the Mayor of the Borough. He became the first president of the Oldham Chamber of Commerce after it was founded in 1882, an office he held for a number of years. When Oldham Corporation was gathering its civic regalia he presented the mace, by consensus the centre piece of the set. He maintained John Platt's keen interest in providing technical education and following the Technical Instruction Acts of 1889 and 1891, supported the arrangement under which the School of Science and Art was to be managed by a committee comprising representatives from the Corporation, School Board and Lyceum Trustees. This arrangement provided for the Corporation to give a sum of money to produce the revenue for



Sam Platt's yacht "Norseman" in the Manchester Ship Canal

a series of annual scholarships, tenable at the School, of which four were to be known as "Sons of John Platt Scholarships" and one to be known as "William Richardson Scholarship". William Richardson had been the Vice-chairman of Platt Brothers; he was one of the three senior employees taken into partnership in 1854. When, in 1897, the new technical school was built in Ascroft Street (later to be named Oldham Municipal Technical College) Samuel Radcliffe Platt organised the Platt family to donate the machinery for the textile department of the new school, as once before he had done to provide the new building for the School of Science and Art in commemoration of John Platt. Thereafter, Platt Brothers & Company regularly replaced, gratis, the machinery in the College with specimens of its current models; the College was, after all, tantamount to a second showroom. In affairs beyond Oldham Samuel Radcliffe Platt was Deputy Lieutenant of Lancashire and, in 1897, was High Sheriff of the county.

Sam Platt did not marry until 1884, when he was 38, and had had no inclination to own a country estate preferring, when not needing to be in residence at Werneth Park, to turn to the sea as the place to spend his leisure hours. This he did, often in the Mediterranean, cruising aboard his steam yacht, "Norseman", a vessel larger than those owned by his brothers and so exquisitely fitted out that it was valued at £30 000. He and James Edward Platt had given strong backing to the construction of the Manchester Ship Canal and it was "Norseman", with Sam Platt's fellow directors of the Canal Company on board, which headed the convoy of ships through the canal when it was opened to commercial traffic on New Year's Day 1894. Later, in the May of that year, when Queen Victoria officially opened the canal, Sam Platt's yacht was the first vessel in the symbolic procession of ships to pass through Mode Wheel Locks. On the fifth of September 1902 Sam Platt died on his yacht which, at the time, was moored at Bangor, he was 57. With his death the eighty-seven year span of direct involvement by the Platt family in the direction and management of the Company ended, a span which had seen the Company reach its zenith and its ownership re-distributed sensibly both for the Company and the Platt family. Samuel Radcliffe Platt was buried, with his father, in the family tomb in Chadderton Cemetery as was his mother, Alice Platt, just three months later, and, later still, his widow, Helen May (nee Roberts) in 1926. The tomb also carries commemorations of Sam Platt's two sons who perished in the first world war. The elder, Lieutenant John Brookhurst Platt, fell at Ypres, in 1916, and was buried at Zillebeke. The younger, Maurice Cedric Platt, died in Holland, where he had been interned, from whence his remains were brought and interred in the tomb in 1919.