**Walter Maynard Rushworth, 1870–1945**

In 1828 William Rushworth, a Yorkshire cabinet maker, founded an organ-building company in Liverpool. It subsequently also developed as a large retail concern selling musical instruments, music and records, eventually as Rushworth & Dreaper Ltd. By the early 20th century the main shop premises also had a cafe and a ‘Rushworth Art Gallery’ to help draw people in. Local artists exhibited in the gallery and the Rushworths continued to play a significant part in Liverpool cultural life over five generations until the business closed in 2002.

Walter Maynard Rushworth was a grandson of William. His father Walter was born in 1832 and his mother Emma Taylor in 1845. He was born on 15 October 1870, later married Edith Margaret Smith (b. 1876) and they also had two children; Edith Maynard Kemlo Rushworth (1898–1992) and a son also called Walter Maynard (1902–66).

Walter Maynard senior was an organist and sometime cellist. He had become organist and choirmaster at Holy Innocents Church, Myrtle Street, Liverpool by 1896, and held the same roles at other times at All Hallows, Allerton, and Maghull. He joined the Freemasons in 1909 and held several senior lodge and provincial roles with them including sometime ‘Provincial Grand Organist’. Through his local musical reputation he became ‘for many years the honorary local representative of the Royal College of Music, the Royal Academy of Music and the local examinations of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. In 1933 he was awarded the honorary diploma of R.C.M., … was a member of the Organists and Choirmasters Association and was a past president of the local branch’ (*Liverpool Echo*, obituary, 21 March 1845).

Rushworth was also a keen and competent amateur landscape painter in watercolour, exhibiting a number of works in the Walker Art Gallery’s autumn exhibitions. The Royal College of Music has an example showing a view across fields towards All Saints church, Childwall, now within the Liverpool conurbation. It probably predates the 1930s, when the area shown began to fill with housing development. One of Durham Cathedral, dated 1904, was also sold at Christies on 13 May 1991. It is not yet clear what role Rushworth had in the firm but in 1942 he completed an unpublished history of it, reported as still in family hands. Rushworth died at home in south Liverpool on 20 March 1945, after several months’ illness. His local obituary (as above) mentions his wife and daughter as survivors but not his son.

*Summarised from Art UK discussion on Rushworth’s view of Childwall church in the RAM*

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