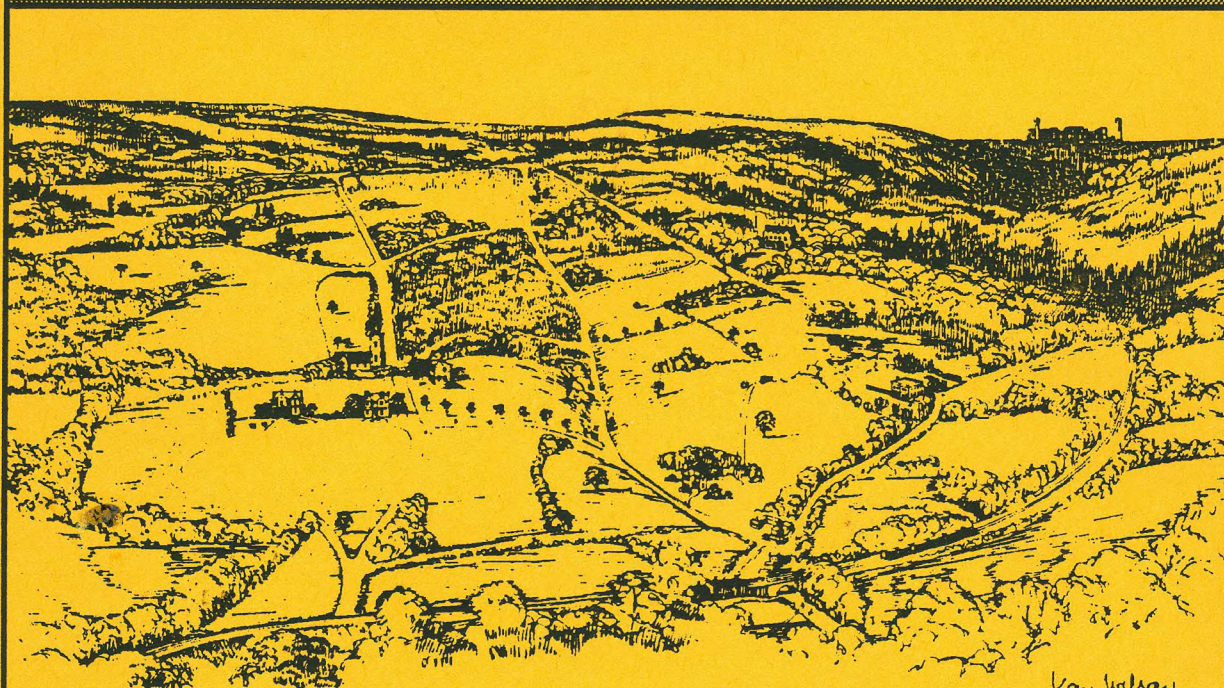


SHORTLANDS



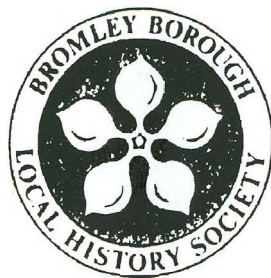
Kear Wilson 80

The Shortlands Estate - Bird's Eye View · FROM A PRINT CIRCA 1870 ·

Len Hevey

SHORTLANDS

Len Hevey



1992

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1992

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THE STORY OF SHORTLANDS

Len Hevey

INTRODUCTION

My interest in the history of Shortlands arose in the early Sixties, when as Headmaster of Highfield Primary School I decided that a knowledge of the history of the neighbourhood ought to be part of the curriculum. In order to obtain information to fulfil this aim I consulted Borrowman's History of Beckenham which provided brief references to Shortlands House, The Oakery, Dr James Scott, and Toots Wood. My next source was The Story of St Mary's, (1926), by Canon Knight, who was then the vicar of St. Mary Shortlands. His Introduction was not encouraging, for in it he stated that the History of Shortlands is like the famous lecture on "Snakes in Ireland", although what followed belied this. For whilst it is true that there are no snakes in Ireland, it is not true that there is no history in Shortlands. His book is mainly concerned with the history of the church, but it also included valuable information about the Nichols, excavations at Toots Wood, and the development of the Shortlands Estate. In the seventies, encouraged by Michael Rawcliffe, lecturer in History at Stockwell College, we investigated nineteenth century primary sources for the area: Eighteenth century maps, Ordnance Survey maps, The Tithe Map of 1832; The Tithe Apportionment Schedule; The Tithe Commissioners Report; and the Censuses from 1841 to 1881. These provided a wealth of information about the development of the area during the nineteenth century, during the middle of which the Shortlands Ecclesiastical District was established following the death of Mr William Arthur Wilkinson, in 1865, when he left funds for a church to be built.

In 1980 Dr Peter Moore, of King's College, London, whose children attended the school, conducted a survey and pollen analysis of Toots Wood; which confirmed Mr Nichols analysis that the remains of a small Iron Age fort was located there; and also provided an interesting profile of the wood's development over a period of 2000 years.

When I retired in 1984 we knew a lot about Shortlands circa 100 BC, and more about Shortlands in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; but very little was known of the period in between. I have tried to fill a little of that gap through my research of the private papers of the late Geoffrey Tookey Q.C, which are held by the Local Studies Department of the Bromley Central Library; and from original sources at the Public Record Office Chancery Lane, The Church Commissioners, the House of Lords Library, the Centre for Kentish Studies Maidstone; and the Guildhall Library, London. Most of these findings relate to the parish of Beckenham as a whole; but where they relate to the part of that parish now known as Shortlands I have combined them with information from the sources referred to earlier.

From my researches it seems inescapable that the earliest farmers were Celts from the continent circa 100BC, who built a fastness at Toots Wood to which they could withdraw when under threat from their enemies. We do not know what happened to these settlers when the Romans arrived in AD 45; but there is evidence at Toots Wood and Keston that implies a Romano-British settlement. We also know that at sometime after the Roman legions withdrew to the continent in AD 410 the Anglo Saxons settled in Beckenham, but we are not sure when. It seems likely that it was at sometime between the sixth and eighth centuries, and from Dr Moore's pollen analysis it seems reasonable to conclude that some of their settlements were in the region of Toots Wood.

The Norman Domesday Book records that there were 30 settlements in the Manor of Beckenham at the time of the Norman Conquest, and it would appear that the holders were Anglo-Saxons. Twelfth century land charters refer to landholding in Shortlands, and confirm that Anglo-Saxons held land there or nearby. During medieval times the land in Shortlands appears to have been farmed by families that were independent of the two large estates: Beckenham Manor and Foxgrove.

A major development took place at the beginning of the sixteenth century when John Style, a mercer, and a citizen of London acquired extensive landholdings in Beckenham and its environs, and developed part of the Langley Estate into a gentleman's seat called Langley Park. Most of Shortlands was part of the

Langley Estate. Another significant event was the break up of this estate in 1820 when it was auctioned following the death of Lord Gwydir. The replacement of farming by residential property began later in the nineteenth century following the coming of the railway, and the building of the Shortlands Estate; and continued into the twentieth century when the last farms were replaced by houses. Further development took place in the twentieth century, but that's another story.

PREHISTORIC, ROMAN, & SAXON

Toots Wood - The Nichols' Excavations

The first evidence of human settlement in Beckenham is provided by the findings of Mr. W.J. Nichols, of "Woodside", Kingswood Road, Shortlands, who on March, 14th 1889 reported his recent discoveries at Toots Hill Wood, Shortlands, near Beckenham, to the Society of Antiquaries. He reported that the area was of some importance in pre Roman times, as so many interesting discoveries of early British remains had been found within the comparatively short distance between it and Keston on the one side, and Addington and Shirley on the other. The site was situated near the crown of the north-west side of the hill, and consisted of six inverted conical pits opening out to a diameter of, in one case, 100 feet x 250 feet. The depth was about 20 feet, and the lowest portion of each pit was occupied by a small pool of water, and a large quantity of partially decayed vegetable matter.

In the dry summer of 1885 Mr Nichols dug a two foot deep trench into the soil at the bottom of the largest pit, and at a depth of less than two feet, about thirty or forty fragments of Roman and Medieval pottery were found. The fragments of Roman pottery were of a dark bluish grey colour, and similar, in general appearance, to Upchurch ware, but of coarser texture. The fragments of medieval pottery were of two or three large pieces of a large mouthed jar, with a capacity of approximately two gallons. There were also fragments of partially baked pottery, molar teeth of a horse (much blackened and hardened), burnt bone, a James I silver penny, wood (bog oak), and flint stones (possibly an arrow head), were also found in the same pit. There were considerable traces of iron, but the only piece resembling form appeared to be a spear head. There was also a flint arrow head.

The nearby Toots Wood Road follows the ancient way to these pits and points eastwards towards the old mill pond spring head [Glass Mill pond], and westwards towards Addington Heights. Similar pits existed near the site, but had been modified or filled in by housing development. Mr Nichols opines:

"they were perhaps stockaded, and thus formed a place of sufficient size and strength to afford refuge and protection for a large body of men and cattle, in fact a fastness."

Dr Peter Moore (below) agrees with this opinion and has classified it as a small Iron Age hill-fort. Mr Nichols drew attention to the fact that within two or three hundred yards of the site runs the roadway to Hayes and Keston, on the right hand side of which, within the fence of Langley Park, may be seen the ancient road leading to these places. So there was a means of communication between the site, and the well

known Iron Age settlements at Hayes and Keston. At the latter, in the grounds of Holwood House, can be seen a large Iron Age fort. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the area was of some importance in pre Roman times. He did not mention that the Roman road from Peckham to the iron workings at Lewes also passed through what was then Langley Estate, and what is now the residential district known as Park Langley.

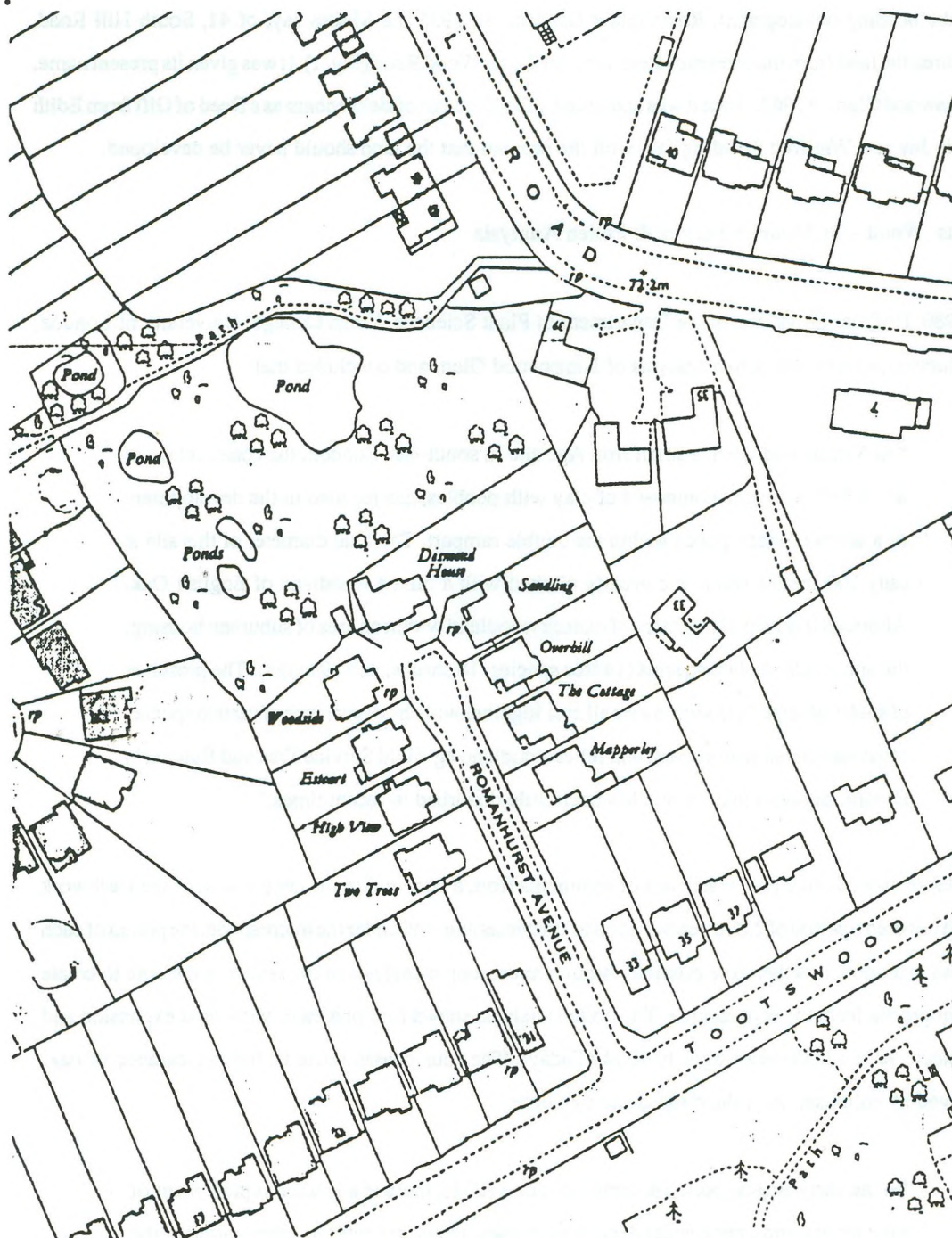


Fig. 1 - Kingswood Glen (Toots Wood)

He also drew attention to the fact that the word "Toot or Toote" is of British or Saxon origin, and is generally used in connection with tumuli, or a watch or beacon point. He also mentioned that the site was used in 1887 as a beacon, as part of the Jubilee celebrations of Queen Victoria's reign. He pointed out that the larger pits would shortly be enclosed as private grounds attached to the residences now being erected. They became enclosed in a large property known as Romanhurst, in Tootswood Road. This was later demolished for the housing development, Romanhurst Gardens. In 1935 the Misses Jay, of 41, South Hill Road, acquired the land from the owners of Romanhurst. Toots Wood Road (Fig. 1). It was given its present name, Kingswood Glen, in 1962, when it was acquired by the Borough of Beckenham as a Deed of Gift from Edith Annie Jay and Winifred Spalding Jay, with the proviso that the land should never be developed.

Toots Wood - Dr Moore's Survey & Pollen Analysis

In 1980 Dr Peter D. Moore, of the Department of Plant Sciences, Kings College, University of London, conducted a survey and pollen analysis of Kingswood Glen, and concluded that:

"At Kingswood Glen, a small Iron Age site in south-east London, the construction of a hill-fort on a ridge composed of clay with pebbles, has resulted in the development of a series of small ponds within the double rampart. The total diameter of this site is only 100 metres and it is currently clothed with a mixed woodland of English Oak. Although it is a small fragment of mature woodland within an area of suburban housing, the site is rich in plant species (14 tree species, 18 shrubs, and 49 herbs). The presence of such a diverse flora within a small area together with the occurrence of certain species often associated with ancient and relict woodland eg. Wild Service Tree and Butcher's Broom, suggests that the site has been little disturbed in recent times."

Dr Moore carried out a pollen analysis of sediments from a core within the central area of the earthwork which covered a period of 2,000 years. Pollen is indestructible, and under the microscope, the pollen of each species is unique. It is therefore possible through microscopic analysis of the pollen in the core to create a plant profile from the core sample. The pollen analysis shows four phases of woodland expansion and clearance: KG1 (2,000 years ago) to KG4 (Today). The four phases relate to forest clearance of oak, followed by colonisation of the cleared site by birch:

"In the early stages (pollen assemblage zone KG1), there is a gradual replacement of birch by oak and a concurrent decline in grasses, which reflects the colonization of the open ground of the abandoned site by first, birch and then oak. The successional process

is interrupted at the onset of zone KG2 by a phase of woodland clearance in which oak especially suffers, and birch invades the openings thus created, together with grasses. The sediments at this point become rich in silts and clays, indicating the soil erosion from the ramparts resulting from the local clearance of trees. Recovery proceeds through KG2 and oak expands once more, only to suffer a further setback in KG3. Again, oak is depleted and birch gains a temporary advantage and again there is a phase of mineral soil inwash which accompanies the disturbance episode. Finally, in zone KG4, oak assumes dominance and the forest stabilizes."

It was not possible to use carbon dating so the following dates of the phases are very approximate:

KG1 c. 20 BC to c. 510 AD,
KG2 c. 510 AD to c. 980 AD,
KG3 c. 980 AD to c. 1200 AD,
KG4 c. 1200 AD to 1980 AD.

This suggests that the site was abandoned before the beginning of the Roman occupation, and that its colonization by birch and replacement by oak took place during it (43 AD to 410 AD). The second phase covers the period of Saxon and Danish invasion, and the Kingdom of Wessex. The third phase includes the Norman Conquest. The fourth phase shows that this part of the woodland has been little disturbed for approximately the last 800 years.

Life in the Iron Age.

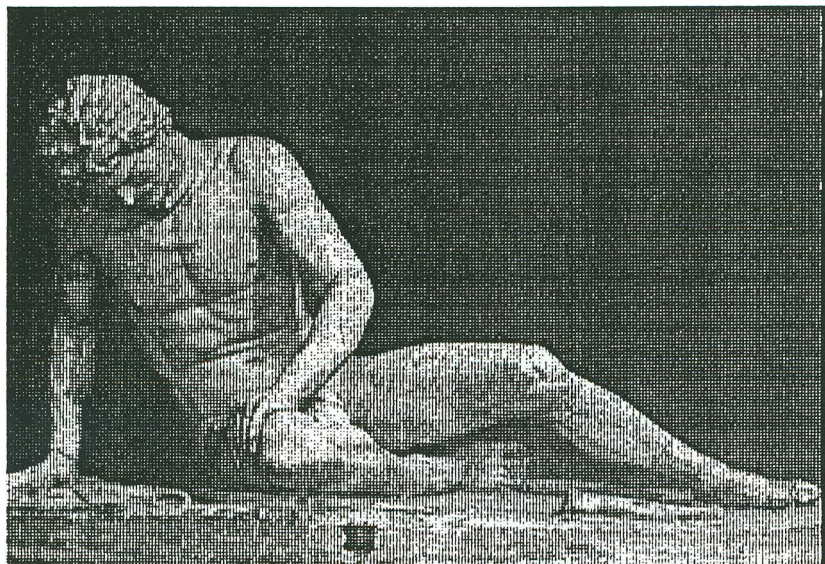


Fig. 2 - Dying Celt

Hill-forts existed in Britain from about 500-450 BC to the Roman occupation, and vary greatly in size. There are large ones at the so-called "Caesar's Camp", at Keston (covering 43 acres), Hulberry

at Lullingstone, and Oldbury at Ightham. They were the fortified settlements of a warrior aristocracy. The use of iron for weapons, and tools, spread from the continent about 700 BC. It was a tribal society based upon chieftains, the chieftain's warriors, priests (the Druids), craftsmen, peasants, and slaves. The farmsteads grew wheat and barley, and raised cattle, sheep and pigs. The tribes which covered large areas had different names. They were Celts and had political relations and trade with the Celts on the continent who were known as Gauls. Fig. 2 is a photograph of a Roman marble copy of a bronze original called The Dying Gaul which is housed in the Museum of the Capitol, Rome. A characteristic of the Celts was that they were given to inter tribal warfare. A Roman writer Strabo wrote that "the Celts are war mad." Their military organisation comprised charioteers, cavalry and infantry. Their weaponry was sword, shield and spear.

According to Roman writers, the Belgae, a Celtic tribe from north-west Gaul settled in south-east Britain during the first century BC. It would have been these people who tilled the soil and raised their cattle in Shortlands, and who built the small fort at Toots Wood, the highest point in the district, in which they sought refuge when under threat from their enemies. In Kent the Romans named them the Cantiaci, from which the county name of Kent was eventually derived. They appear to have been dominant until the Roman Invasion, under Claudius in 43 AD. From then until 410 AD, Southern Britain became a province of Rome. There is evidence of Romano-British settlements at Keston and Hayes; and as there were fragments of Roman pottery at Toots Wood, and as the Peckham to Lewes Roman road ran nearby, it seems reasonable to suppose that there was a Romano-British settlement in the neighbourhood of Toots Wood.

Saxon Charters

We can only speculate what happened to the Romano-Britons in Beckenham after the departure of the legions in AD c.410. It would seem likely that initially they would have been unaffected by attention from Anglo-Saxons. The Anglo-Saxon settlement of Kent started about AD 450 when Vortigern invited Hengist and his mercenaries to settle in the Isle of Thanet. Between then and AD 500 there was steady immigration of Jutes from the continent; and according to the Venerable Bede a battle took place in AD 500, at Crayford, between Hengist and his followers and the Britons, at which the latter were defeated and fled to London. The settlement of West Kent took place under the leadership of Oisc [Aesc or Esk] from c.488 to 512 AD. There is no direct evidence of the date that an Anglo Saxon settlement at Beckenham was established. The place name ending -ham suggests early Saxon settlement, but K.P. Witney in his Kingdom of Kent does not include it as a true *ham*, which implies later settlement. The origin of the name is either the settlement of Biohha's people, or Biohha's water meadow. As Dr Moore's pollen analysis suggests that Toots Wood was cleared circa sixth century; it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that the clearance was made by the incoming Anglo-Saxons, and that there was a settlement nearby. An artist's impression of agriculture in Saxon times is given in Fig. 3.



Fig.3 - Saxon Scene

The first written evidence of the place Beckenham is contained in the four following Anglo-Saxon charters relating to Bromley: AD 862 - Grant of Bromley by Ethelbert, King of Wessex, to his minister Drythwald, AD 955- King Edgar to St Andrews's Priory, Rochester, AD 987 - King Ethelred to his minister Ethelsige, and AD 998 - King Ethelred to St Andrews Priory, Rochester. These charters define the land grant in terms of its boundaries; and Beckenham is mentioned in the following extract: "Then from BYPPLE STYDE TO ACU STYDE (and so) to the boundary of the people of BIOHHAHAM." So that by the middle of the ninth century the people of BIOHHAHAM were well settled and had established their boundaries. We can only speculate on the basis of indirect evidence when settlement was first established.

MEDIEVAL

Domesday

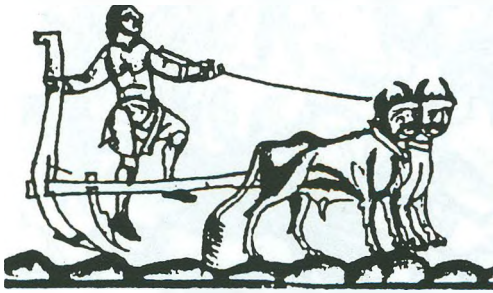


Fig. 4 - Thirteenth Century Ploughman

The next piece of written evidence we have is the Domesday Book which records that the Manor of Beckenham was held by Anglo-Saxons in 1066 and 1086. It states that the manor of Beckenham, in the Hundred Bromley, and the half lathe of Sutton at Hone was valued at £9, and held in 1066 AD by Ascell, a Saxon, who also held the manors of Stoke in the hundred of Hoo, and Howbury in the hundred of Little.

He also held the right of sac and soc within the lathe of Sutton at Hone, which meant that he was entitled to have full jurisdiction. In 1086 the manor was valued at £13, when it was held by Ansgot of Rochester, a Saxon, who also held eight other manors in Kent, of which Beckenham was the largest. He was a tenant of Odo Bishop of Bayeux, who in turn was tenant in chief to the King; although at the time of the Domesday survey Odo was imprisoned; and was reluctantly released by William in 1087 as part of an amnesty. Soon after William died Odo's lands were forfeited and he was exiled. The manor was assessed at two sulungs, originally a measurement of land, but by the time of the Domesday survey it had become a unit of taxation. The Lord of the Manor had two plough teams, probably manned by the four slaves on the demesne lands, which was probably managed by a reeve. It is stated that there is land for eight plough teams, but the total number of plough teams is ten and a half: two on the demesne lands, and eight and a half plough teams which were owned jointly by the 22 villagers and 8 smallholders. This would indicate a possible population of about 170. The villagers and smallholders with eight and a half plough teams, comprising 68 oxen would give an arable acreage of 1020, making a total for the manor of 1260 acres under the plough. A typical 11th century plough and ploughman is shown in Fig. 4. The amount of arable land in the parish of Beckenham as shown by the Tithe Survey of 1832 was 1681 acres. There is no mention of a church, but that does not mean that one did not exist. A villager's holding was normally between 30-35 acres, whilst smallholders had only 5 acres. The smallholders also hired themselves out as swineherds, cowherds, carpenters, wheelwrights and smiths. There were 12 acres of meadow; a mill; and the pannage (a tax payable to the Lord of the Manor, for the use of the woodland by the villagers and smallholders pigs), was 60 pigs. This would indicate that excluding the demesne, there would be about 600 pigs in the manor. It is not known what happened to the manor after it was taken into the King's hands following the forfeiture of Odo's lands; although early twelfth century records show that Henry I held court in Beckenham on two occasions, and Stephen held court there once.

Ancient Deeds

The next known mention of its ownership is in the thirteenth century when it was held of the king for a knight's fee by Richard de la Rochelle (alias de Rupella) at his death in 1222. His family's ownership of the manor was challenged, circa 1272, by Edward I, whose counsel claimed, at the Great Assize of the King, that the manor of Beckenham had been held by King Edward's grandfather, King John, and his father, Henry III, and that he was entitled to the manor as his father's son and heir. The jury found that Philip de Rupella had a better right to the manor than the King. However the evidence on which they made their judgement is not available.

The first documentary evidence of landholding in Shortlands is contained in a confirmatory deed during the brief reign of the Empress Matilda, in 1141 AD, which confirmed an earlier grant of land to the Holy Trinity Priory, Aldgate, by Picot, Empastorator. The Priory of the Holy Trinity was founded in 1108 by Matilda the wife of Henry I, and received grants of land from noblemen which provided a substantial income in the form of rents from the tenants to whom they leased the land. A copy of the deed is shown in Fig. 5.

As can be seen from the following extract part of the grant refers to "the land of Claihurst":

W. impatrye. h. reg filia 7 angloy dñā. Baronib. Justiciar. Vicecom. Et
minist. 7 omib. fidelib. suis francis 7 anglis de kent sat. Scias me concessisse
ecclie xpi lund 7 canonis do ibidem seruicib. in elemosinā in ppetuū pātib.
pact 7 maris mee 7 p salute anime mee. Item qm Picot empastorat eis dedit in
uilla de Beckenham 7 vii. solidatib. qe Picot emit de homib. eiusde uille 7 vii.
solidatib. qe Astmundi 7 tñm de claiherste. cū omib. reb. locis. cūctudinib. 7 libtatib.
ad easde tñas ptenentib. libatib. qetā ab omib. reb. excepto seruicio di. Preterea cōcedo. eis
pasturā decē bouū int̄ meos boues in plana 7 in bosco 7 x. porcos sine pāthnagio. 7 sup hoc
phibeo sup fouffactū meū ne Aliqs iuratus hoib. ut reb. ad pdictā eccliam ptenen-
tib. aliquā inurriā ut cūmētiā. inferre qā nolo qd extra ius suū ut libtatē in aliq
tēpore mee pdat. Testm. Rodric com. de glo. 7. 10.

Fig. 5. - 12th. Century Land Charter

"Grant by M[Matilda] the empress daughter of King Henry, and lady of the English, to the canons of Christ Church, London [Holy Trinity Priory, Aldgate] in frank almoin for the souls of her father and mother and for the welfare of her own soul, of the lands which Picot, Empastorator gave them in Bekahem [Beckenham], and lands to the value of 7s. yearly which Picot bought from the men of that town, and Aestmund's land to the value of 8s. yearly, and *the land of Claihurst*, together with pasture for ten oxen among the grantor's oxen, and 10 hogs without pannage. Witness: Robert Earl of Gloucester, the chancellor".

A subsequent confirmatory deed by King Stephen, for the same grant of land, gave the rent for *the lands of Clahurst* as 5s. per year. The total annual rent of the land grant, excluding Picot's was therefore 20s., which was a large holding. Other twelfth century deeds refer to this landholding, from which it is clear that the land was held of the King for half a knight's fee by William de Insula, knight. It is not possible to identify "Aestmunds's land", nor "the land that Picot bought from the men of Beckenham", but it is clear that Aestmund was a Saxon; that the land lay outside the manor of Beckenham, and that part of it lay in the district that is now known as Shortlands.

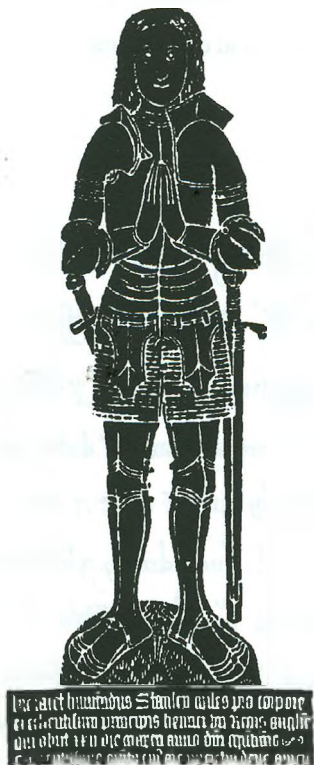


Fig. 6 - Norman Knight

In the Thirteenth Century three influential Norman families held land in the parish of Beckenham: the de la Rochelles, who held Beckenham Manor, the Aguillons, and the Malmains, who in turn held Foxgrove. A typical Norman nobleman is shown in Fig. 6. All of these families granted land in *frankalmoin*(i.e. free of feudal service), on lease to the Hospital of St. Katherine at the Tower of London. This religious institution leased the land to tenants for twice the value of the rent it paid the owners, which provided it with a regular source of income. Thirteenth century deeds also showed that freemen, who were probably the descendents of the original Anglo-Saxon settlers held land outside of these estates, which they farmed; leased; and on occasions, sold. Some of this land lay in what is now known as Shortlands.

“lying between the land of Simon de Cleyhurst on the north, and the land of Simon Sweyn on the south, and extending in length from the land of Ralph de Cleyhurst and John de Langley on the east to the King’s highway leading from Beckenham church towards Langley on the west.”

Cleyhurst was a place referred to earlier as Claihurst. The word cley is an obsolete form of the word clay, and hurst means, wooded slope. It is interesting that in the eighteenth century, Shortlands House and the



Fig. 7 - Peter Burrell's Lands. 1723

district around it, was known as Clay Hill. It can also be seen that the lands of Robert de Langley lay to the south west of Cleyhurst. From this it is evident that the Cleyhursts's farmed in the northern part of the area that is now known as Shortlands, and that it contained land referred to in the deed of 1141 AD, as Claihurst. The Cleyhurst's and Langley's (alias de Langele) were still farming in the fourteenth century; and the Tax Assessment Return for Beckenham in 1334 shows that the tax assessment of their personal wealth, was well above average for the Hundred, from which it is reasonable to conclude that they held above average sized farmsteads.

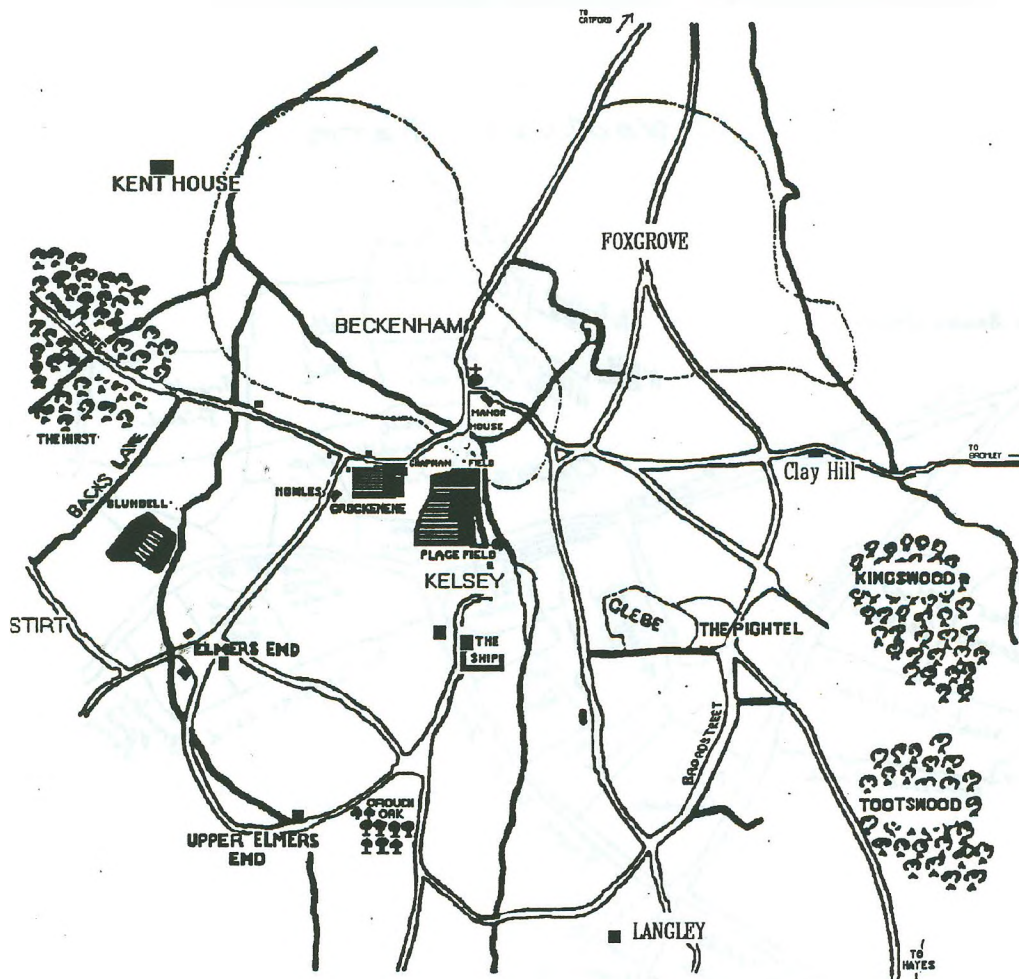


Fig.8 - Beckenham c. 1500

The "lands of John Shoram" are referred to in a deed of 1411, which lay in the area of Short Lands Green. The site of this farm can be seen on the map of Peter Burrell's lands in 1723 (Fig. 7). The fieldnames: Upper

Shorehams, Lower Shorehams, Middle Shorams, West Shorehams, and South Shoreham, took their names from their owner. It seems likely that these lands were previously farmed by the Cleyhurst's who took their name from the land they farmed. A deed of 1468 refers to a grant of houses and ten acres of arable land from an Essex yeoman, to William Clerk, citizen and brewer of London, William Stephen and William Cote, gentlemen. The deed defines the position of the property well; it was situated on the northern corner of Scotts Lane and Hayes Lane. The status of the parties acquiring the property suggests that the arable land and houses were acquired as an investment, and that the property was probably let to a tenant farmer. In 1562 a will, proved in the Court of Hustings, showed John Swanne, draper, of Bromley, owned a leasehold farm called Shorhams.

A deed of 1473 refers to: "the King's highway leading from Uleys place to Langleys place." Uleys place was later known as Woolsey's Farm, at the top of Clay Hill on the road leading from Beckenham to Bromley. The Langley family, (alias de Langele) had left Beckenham by then, but their residence was still known as Langley's place. This highway which is shown on the sketch map of Beckenham c. 1500 (Fig 8) linked the Langley and Foxgrove estates. It is the route of the present Whitecroft Way, Scotts Lane, and Downsbridge Road. Reference is made in the same deed to the transfer of the following land:

"lying between field of the Manor of Foxgrove called Highfield on the east and the land late of the heirs of Robert Sympson called Totus (Toots) on the south."

This is a large part of what is now known as the parish of Shortlands, and it was acquired by Alexander Curtays of Bromley; and later became the property of John Style.

MODERN

Langley Estate.

John Style, a mercer and citizen of London bought land in the region of the present Whitecroft Way, Scotts Lane, and Foxgrove, in 1501 and 1502. In 1504 he acquired Robert Sympton's extensive estate, which was previously held by the Bankwells, of Lee. Through these acquisitions John Style became the owner of land in Bromley, Lewisham, Keston, Orpington, Croydon, and Beckenham. In the same year, with others, he acquired the estate of Henry Kyng which included Kingswood in Shortlands. In 1510 he bought the Langley Estate, and thus most of Shortlands became part of this estate. He developed part of the estate into a gentleman's seat comprising 423 acres, called Langley Park, the residence of which stood in the grounds of what is now the Langley Park Girls' School. Adjacent to it, and also part of the estate was Langley Farm which occupied what is now the site of Burroughs Wellcome Research Foundation. This would appear to be where the farmstead of the de Langele family was located in the thirteenth century; and which was referred to in the fifteenth century as Langley's place.

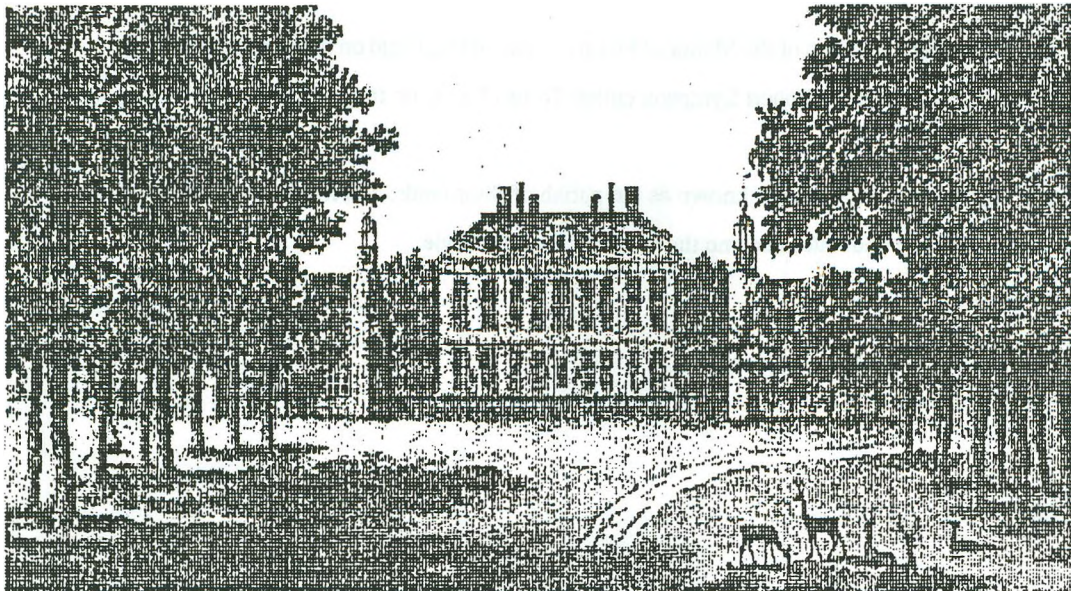


Fig. 9 - Langley Park 1776

At the beginning of the eighteenth century most of the land, in what is now Shortlands parish, was still part of the Langley Estate. The rest was mainly part of the Burrell estate. The Langley estate remained with the Style family until it passed to the Elwill family when Elizabeth Style carried it in marriage to Sir John Elwill, who died without issue in 1727. The property then appears to have been transferred to an Edmund Elwill, who in 1732 sold it to Hugh Raymond, an Essex merchant, and a director of the East India company and

the South Sea Company. When the *South Sea Bubble* burst in 1720 his estate was valued at £64,375 of which he was allowed to keep £30,000; the rest was his contribution to make good the shareholders losses. He had a son, Jones, and two daughters, Amy, and Bridget. Jones inherited the estate on his father's death in 1737; and bought Foxgrove Manor and land in Shortlands in 1765.

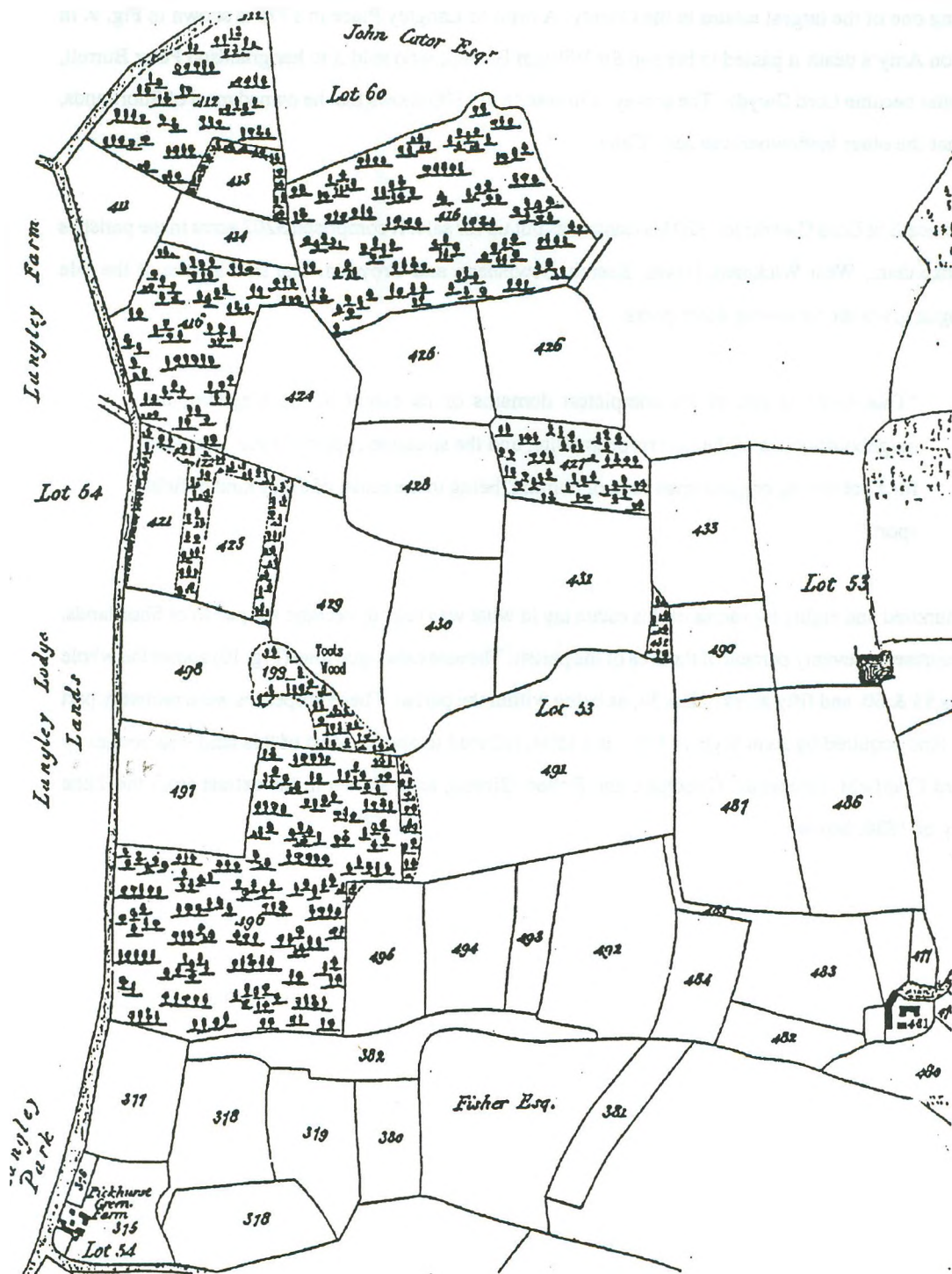


Fig. 10 - Plan from 1820 Sale Catalogue

On Jones Raymond's death in 1768, which is commemorated in a medallion on the south wall of the south aisle of the Beckenham Parish church, the estate was inherited by his sister Amy (who was then the widow of Peter Burrell), and his other sister Bridget. Upon Bridget's death in 1789, Amy Burrell purchased this share of the estate, and so the ownership of the estates of Foxgrove, Kelsey, and Langley were merged, creating one of the largest estates in the County. A print of Langley Place in 1776 is shown in Fig. 9. In 1794 on Amy's death it passed to her son Sir William Burrell, who sold it to her grandson Peter Burrell, who later became Lord Gwydir. The survey of his estate in 1809 shows that he owned most of Shortlands, and that the other landowner was John Cator.

On the death of Lord Gwydir in 1820 his estate was put up for sale. It comprised 3202 acres in the parishes of Beckenham, West Wickham, Hayes, Keston, Lewisham, and Croydon. The frontispiece of the sale catalogue gives the following description:

"This estate is one of the completest domains of its extent in the kingdom; the neighbourhood is of the first respectability, and the situation is particularly desirable for a nobleman, or gentleman fond of hunting, being in the midst of every kind of field sport."

Two hundred and eighty two acres of this estate lay in what was later to become the parish of Shortlands. This represents seventy percent of the area of the parish. The sale catalogue map (Fig. 10) shows the whole of Lots 53 & 60, and fifty acres of Lot 54, as being within the parish. These properties were probably part of the land acquired by John Style in 1501 and 1504, referred to above. Most of this land was bought by Edward Cranfield, Emmanuel Goodhart, and Robert Gibson, as is shown in the extract from the Tithe Survey of 1838, below.

Tithe Survey 1832

Following the Commutation of Tithes Act in 1836 the Tithe Commissioners arranged for every parish to be surveyed, and each plot subject to tithes was recorded in a Tithe Apportionment Book. Originals of these are deposited in the Public Record Office, at Kew, and The Kent Archives Office, at Maidstone; and copies of these are kept in the Local Studies Department of the Central Library, Bromley. The entries for Shortlands show that there were two substantial seats: The Oakery and Shortlands House, and two farms with their homesteads in the parish: New Farm, 170 acres, and Shortlands Farm 80 acres. Part of Gibson's Farm, 46 acres, was located in Scotts Lane. The New Farm homestead was at the end of the present New Farm Avenue, and the Shortlands Farm homestead was at the corner of the present Shortlands Road, and Bromley Road, and is still standing. The homestead for Gibson's Farm was in Bromley Road, between Scotts Lane and Oakwood Avenue. The size of what is now know as Shortlands' Parish was 402 acres, which was owned and tenanted by the following:

Owner	Tenant	Place	Acres
Edward Cranfield	William Skinner	New Farm	175
Mrs Palmer	In Hand	Shortlands House	83
Mrs Palmer	A. Perkins	Smallholding	19
Emmanuel Goodhart	William Rogers Jnr	Part of Stone Farm	17
Emmanuel Goodhart	In Hand	Part of Langley Park	34
Robert Gibson	Gibson & Lodwicke	Bromley Road	46
R.B. Rawes	W.J. Rawes	Smallholding	15
James Scott	In Hand	The Oakery	13
		Total	402

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the land in what is now the parish of St. Mary, Shortlands was owned by two men: Humfrey Style and Peter Burrell. It was owned at the beginning of the nineteenth

century mainly by Lord Gwydir (Peter Burrell); but the area around Shortlands House was owned by John Cator. The auction of Lord Gwydir's estates in 1820 had extended landownership from two men to five men and one woman.

Shortlands House

It is believed that Shortlands House was built circa 1702, although there is no documentary evidence to support this. It is shown on an estate map of 1723, (Fig 7), as part of Peter Burrell's property in Shortlands. Also shown are: Short Lands Lane, Short Lands Green, four houses which are unnamed, and Bromley Mead Farm. These houses later became known as Shortlands Lodge, Shortlands House, The Oakery and Oakery Cottage. Bromley Mead Farm, was later renamed as Shortlands Farm. The farmstead of this farm is still standing on the corner of Shortlands Road and Bromley Road; and I am indebted to Brian Morris, the present occupant, for the information that it is a Grade II listed building, and that when classified it was considered to have been built not later than 1620. It is therefore the oldest house in Shortlands. Peter Burrell, great grandfather of Lord Gwydir, was a London merchant who held extensive landholdings in Beckenham, which included Kelsey Park.

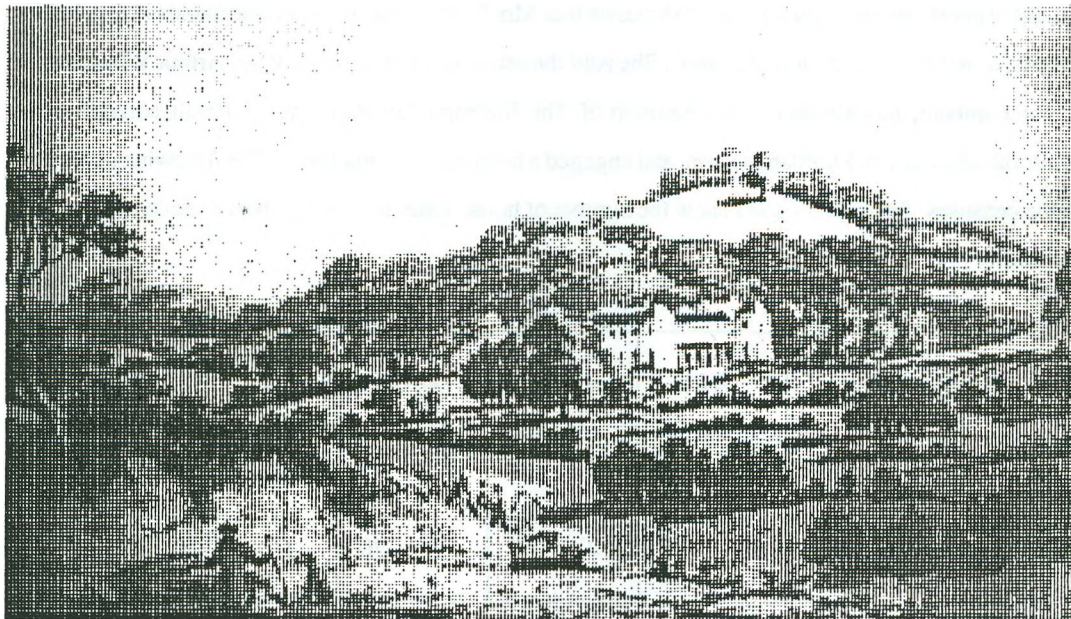


Fig. 11 - Shortlands House c. 1800

"Shortelonds and Longelonds" are medieval descriptive field names. It can be seen from the 1723 map (Fig.7) that the fields adjoining the Short Lands Lane are short. The district was known not as Shortlands, but as Clay Hill, which was the name given to the house, although it appears on the Tithe Survey of 1838 as Shortlands House. A map of the landholdings of Jones Raymond (1776) shows that he owned the property, through an exchange of property between him and Peter Burrell. An estate map (1808) shows it

as the property of John Cator; and the Tithe Apportionment Book (1838) shows it as the the property of Mrs Palmer. A photograph of a painting c. 1800 (Fig 11) shows the house and its rural surroundings. The first known resident was George Grote, Historian and politician who was born there in 1794. He worked as a clerk in a bank, in Threadneedle Street, of which his grandfather was the founder. He remained there for thirty two years, and became head of the bank in 1830. He devoted his leisure to literature and politics, and was an authority on the history of Greece and an advocate of radical political reform. He was returned to the House of Commons in 1832 as Member for the City of London, and during the first session brought forward a motion for the adoption of the secret ballot at elections. At that time votes of those entitled to vote were recorded in Poll Books, and were open to public inspection. He continued to advocate this measure until he left parliament in 1842. The Ballot Act was passed thirty years later, a year after his death. He retired from the bank in 1842, and devoted himself exclusively to literature. His major work was the History of Greece. He was vice-Chancellor of London University (1862), foreign associate of the French Academy (1864), and president of University College, London (1868). He married Harriet Lewin who was a writer. When he died in 1871 he was buried in Poets Corner, Westminster Abbey.

The Tithe Apportionment Schedule of 1838 shows that Mrs Palmer, the owner of Shortlands House held 102 acres, of which 82 acres was “in hand”. She sold the estate in 1848 to Mr William Arthur Wilkinson, M.P. for Lambeth, Stockbroker, and Chairman of The Metropolitan Railway, who built cottages for agricultural labourers on Shortlands Farm, and engaged a farm bailiff to manage it. The following extracts from the censuses from 1841 - 1881 show the number of households and the number of residents in each household:

Census	1841		1851		1861		1871		1881	
Place	H	R	H	R	H	R	H	R	H	R
Shortlands House	6	52	4	2	3	20	3	15	5	26
Shortlands Farm	1	7	6	29	2	16	4	12	1	4
Total	7	59	10	31	5	36	7	27	6	30
H = Households N= Number of Residents										

From this it can be seen that at Shortlands House the number of households ranged from 3 to 6; and that the number of residents ranged from 2 to 52. For Shortlands Farm the range for households was from 1 to 6 and the number of residents from 4 to 29. The heyday of the farm appears to have been around 1851

following Mr Wilkinson's decision to build agricultural labourers' cottages, and employ a farm bailiff. However, the coming of the railway and the consequent possibilities of selling land for housing development began the farm's decline.

In 1863 Mr W.A. Wilkinson sold 136 acres at £500 an acre, which was divided into two building plots for the construction of the Shortlands Estate. At that time he built two cottages in Hayes Lane called Kingswood Cottages. These were to house woodcutters for the clearance of Kingswood prior to the development of the Shortlands Estate. They still stand on the corner of Hayes Lane and Kingswood Road. He died in 1865, and through his gift, the church of St Mary, Shortlands was built. The family moved to Ightham Mote, and the property was bought in 1876 by W.E. Mc. Andrew, who sold a considerable part of the estate for building development.

The following are the remaining known owners: 1882, Sir Stevenson Arthur Blackwood, Secretary General, Post Office; 1889, L.P. Ford, Attorney-General for the Transvaal; 1900, W.G. Dawson. It was used as a private hotel from early in the twentieth century until 1949. In 1950 it was founded as first, an Infant School and then, as a Primary School, by the parish priests of St. Edmund's, Beckenham, and St. Joseph's, Bromley. By 1958 it had developed into a Secondary Grammar School, and the name of the school was changed from Shortlands House to Bishop Challoner School, in honour of the eighteenth century Catholic bishop, scholar, and educationist.

Cromwell's Head.



Fig. 12 - Cromwell's Head

For a number of years the embalmed head of Oliver Cromwell, Fig. 12, was kept in his household and shown to all important visitors. It had been acquired by W.A. Wilkinson's father, Dr Josiah Henry Wilkinson c. 1814. After the Restoration the body of Oliver Cromwell was exhumed and hanged at Tyburn, and buried there. Later the body was exhumed, and the head was embalmed, and set up on the top of Westminster Hall, where it remained exposed to the elements for twenty five years. One stormy night the head was blown down, and a sentry picked it up; put it under his cloak; and took it home. His family, after his death sold it to a Cambridgeshire family, from which it passed through several "hands" to be exhibited in Bond Street,

at the time of the French Revolution, where the public were charged half a crown per person to see it. When the owner died he bequeathed it to his three nieces, who being of a nervous disposition, asked their doctor, Josiah Henry Wilkinson to look after it for them. He eventually bought it, and bequeathed it to his son William Arthur, who became the owner of Shortlands House. It was kept in a mahogany casket, on the outside of which was an engraved brass plate, giving full particulars of the relic. It moved with the family to Ightham Mote, and was donated to Oliver Cromwell's college Sydney Sussex, Cambridge, in March, 1960, by Dr Horace Norman Stanley Wilkinson, a great grandson of William Arthur Wilkinson. It was interred in an unspecified place in the college grounds. A scientific examination of the head in the 1930's concluded that it was Cromwell's head. This was based on an examination of the embalming techniques which had been used, the evidence of decapitation after death, the size and age of the man whose skull it had been, the moustache and small beard, and finally the depression in the skull above the left eye where Cromwell was known to have had one of his famous warts.

Sir James Scott

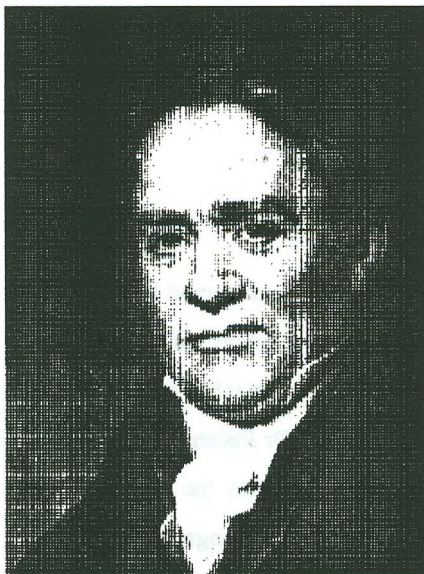


Fig. 12 - Sir James Scott

Short Lands Lane was renamed as Scott's Lane after the death of James Scott, surgeon, who lived at The Oakery, Bromley Road, in his retirement. He came to Bromley about 1794 as a young surgeon, and through his skill and genius for healing became known as "Scott of Bromley". His renown spread nationwide which brought people flocking to Bromley for treatment, which brought consequent prosperity to tradesmen, inn-keepers, house builders, and to Rawes Academy, the boys' school. He was born on 8th January, 1770, and was orphaned whilst still a boy. He only had a rudimentary education, but was fortunate to be taken as an apprentice by a Royston surgeon. Upon completion of his apprenticeship he studied at the London Hospital under Sir William Blizard.

As his financial resources were limited he supplemented his income by working as an assistant to the surgeons. One of these engagements was with a Bromley surgeon called Bradshaw, whose surgery was a redbrick house, the site of which is opposite the Bell Hotel. He was so impressed with Scott that he urged him to return and join him as a partner, upon the completion of his studies. Shortly after Scott joined the partnership, Bradshaw retired, and Scott and his family moved into the house. He took Robert T. Taynton into partnership to deal with the general practice so that he could give all his time to his specialism.

The distinguishing feature of his career according to The Lancet, Vol II, 1848, page 675, was:

“the seizing hold of the principle of mechanical support, working it out in its various details, and applying it with extraordinary dexterity, judgement and success to the various forms of chronic disease to which it was applicable.”

As Scott's reputation grew sufferers from the chronic conditions which he treated came to London and Bromley. The former stayed in London hotels and travelled to Bromley in the special coaches that ran from Charing Cross and Gracechurch Street. The latter stayed in local inns, or rented houses. The landlord of the Swan & Mitre reported that when he took it over in 1855, he found a large collection of crutches in the loft!! Scott was totally dedicated to the work of healing, possessed great self confidence, and could quickly diagnose his patients ailments and prescribe their treatments. He was a man of fine friendly personality, though too brusque for some. He had a deep feeling of sympathy for his patients; and possessed the faculty of inspiring confidence in them (Fig. 13). Everyone, rich and poor received the same treatment.

In 1829 he retired to a house name The Oakery, Clay Hill, [now Bromley Road], Shortlands. His son John became an ophthalmic surgeon, and died in 1846. His daughter Mary died in an accident in 1801, and his daughter Ann inherited the Oakery on his death in 1848. She and her husband James William Ogle, demolished The Oakery, and built Oakwood.

The Shortlands Estate

On Monday, 3rd May, 1858 the West End and Crystal Palace Railway Company extended the railway line from Beckenham to Shortlands, at first named Bromley. The departure of the first train was described in the first issue of the Bromley Record as follows:

"The first train left Shortlands station at 8.40 a.m., and consisted of four carriages and but few passengers. A goodly number of the inhabitants were on Martins Hill to witness the starting of the first train."

The coming of the railway made the development of a residential housing estate feasible. The Bromley Record for July, 1864 states:

"The Shortlands estate is now being transformed into a fashionable neighbourhood. Till the railway reached it, it was only known as a gentleman's seat, with picturesque surroundings, a farmstead, and a few neat cottages built by the proprietor Mr A.W. Wilkinson. An excellent road has been made [Shortlands Road] leading from Shortlands station through Kingswood to Hayes and Beckenham Lanes".

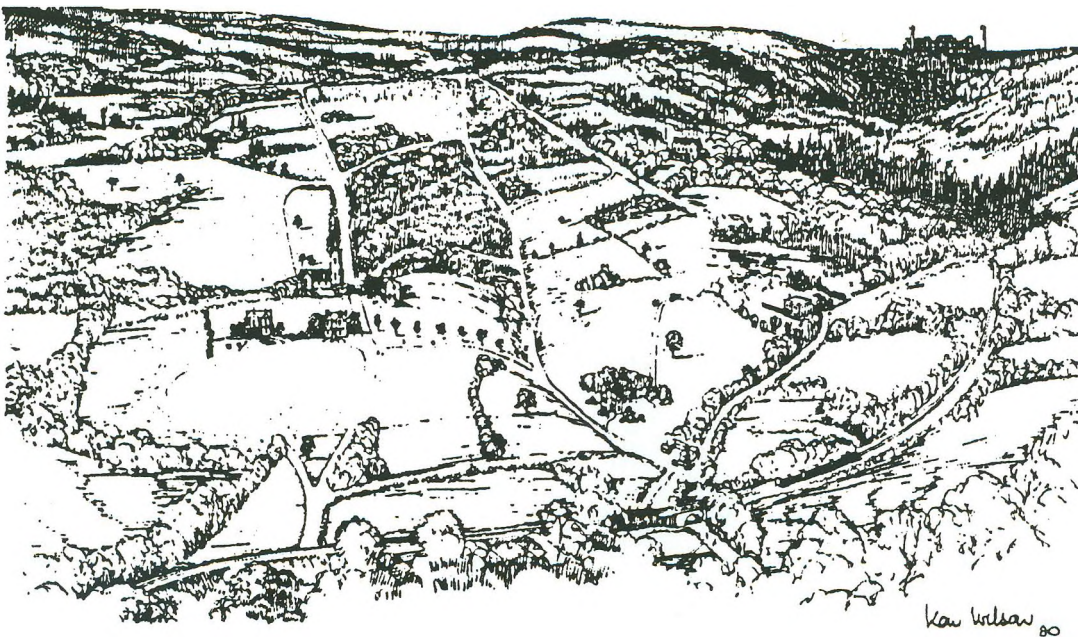


Fig. 14 - Pen and Ink Drawing of a Print of the Shortlands Estate c. 1870

A print of the district as seen from Martin’s Hill, is shown in (Fig. 14). The first constructions took place in Shortlands Grove, Bromley Grove, Valley Road, and Station Road. Building continued next in Kingswood Road, and Shortlands Road. A start was made on Beckenham Grove in 1882, and in Toots Wood Road, and Durham Avenue in 1890.

The census returns for 1871 and 1881 give some idea of the rate of development:from 1871 to 1881, from which it can seen that the number of houses nearly trebled; and that the average number of residents per household fell from 7.5 to 5.4.

	1871		1881	
Place	H	N	H	N
Shortlands Road	2	13	2	12
Bromley Grove	9	68	20	98
Shortlands Grove	5	40	10	35
Kingswood Road	5	44	17	118
Kingswood Cottages	2	8	2	9
Valley Road	3	40	18	89
Scots Lane	3	32	4	34
Church Road			3	12
Den Road			1	6
Total	33	250	80	437
H = Households R= Residents				

In 1864 the North West Kent Water Company sank a shaft in a meadow near Shortlands Station.The pumps that lifted the water to the surface and drove it to the resevoir at Sundridge Park. were worked by two engines of 50 and 70 horse power respectively. One of the consequences of the inauguration of the waterworks was the disappearance of a small fishpond in the grounds of the Glen, a large house in Shortlands Road .

St Mary, Shortlands

On the death of Mr W.A. Wilkinson in 1865 his family carried out his wish for the building of a church. A site for the church and vicarage was conveyed to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and the entire cost was borne by the Wilkinson family. The church, with seating for 428, was built of Kentish ragstone, and faced with Bathstone (Fig. 15). It was completed in nine months; and the first divine service was held on Sunday, 5th July, 1868.



Fig. 15 - St Mary, Shortlands 1890

Consecration took place on 21st September, 1870. The foundation stone was laid by Miss Sarah Wilkinson who was the first patron of the living, on 5th October, 1867. In 1888 the church was enlarged and this provided an additional 100 seats. The consecration of the enlargement took place on 7th July, 1888. The parish was designated an Ecclesiastical District.

During the second world war a land mine in September, 1940 and a flying bomb in July 1944 damaged the church, and brought to end seventy six years of worship. The plans for rebuilding the Church were launched in 1948. The cost was raised by house to house collections, money raising events, war damage claim, and grants from the Church Commissioners, and the Diocese. The church was consecrated on 20th November,

A Map of
the proposed Particular District
of
ST MARY
SHORTLANDS.



Fig. 16 - The Original Parish bounds of St. Mary, Shortlands.

1955 by the Bishop of Rochester, Dr Christopher Maude Chavasse. At its inception the population of the parish was 290.

The vicars of St Mary, Shortlands have been:

Date	Incumbent
1870	Canon H.F. Woolley
1913	Canon H.T. Knight
1934	Canon D.N. Spafford
1936	Canon J.F. Thornhill
1953	Prebendary R. Dauntton Fear
1955	Reverend A.N.B. Sugden
1967	Canon D.B. Runcorn
1980	Reverend D.S.R. Redman

A Sunday School was established in 1868 in a barn behind the Old Farmhouse near Shortlands station. Later that year Conrad Wilkinson provided accommodation on a site that in 1902 was to become the site of the Mission Room.

The original Parish bounds are shown in (Fig. 16). In 1881 the Vicar of St Mary, Shortlands came to an agreement with the Vicar of the parish church Bromley to take responsibility for Bromley Gardens, Bromley Crescent and Gwydir Road. The bounds of the parish were changed again following the establishment of St Mark's as a chapel-at-ease to the Bromley parish church. In 1907 an Order in Council transferred part of the parish of SS Peter and Paul to St. Mary. In 1938 another Order in Council arranged a mutual exchange between SS Peter and Paul, Bromley and St. Mary, Shortlands.

Southhill Park Estate

About 1880 a new road was built linking Bromley High Street to Hayes Lane, which was called Southhill Park Road, which was later changed to Westmoreland Road. On each side of it, large villas were built, a print of one is shown in Fig 17, and it became known as the Southhill Park Estate. The 1881 Census lists seven residences on the estate with 63 occupants, of which 22 were servants. Strong's Street Directory for 1890 shows 33 houses on the estate; and the 1891 edition shows two houses in Cumberland Road, and one house in Queen Anne Avenue.



Fig. 17 - A villa on the Southhill Park Estate c. 1880

Shortlands Ward

Shortlands Ward was created when the Beckenham Urban District Council was formed in 1894. The Electoral Roll for the ward shows 196 residents entitled to vote. These were males over the age of 21, who owned property in the ward. A number of those entitled to vote are shown not to be resident in the ward. They were men who owned property in the ward, but had rented it to tenants. The bounds of the ward were: Westmoreland Road, Hayes Lane, Scotts Lane, Bromley Road, Valley Road, and Queen Anne Avenue.

CONCLUSION

For centuries the district that is now known as Shortlands was a quiet rural backwater of the parish of Beckenham. The earliest evidence of human settlement in the area dates from before the Roman Conquest; and there is indirect evidence that the Jutes cleared Toots Wood before the Norman Conquest. It would not seem unreasonable to suppose that one, or maybe two of the thirty settlements referred to in the Domesday Book of 1086, were located in the area.

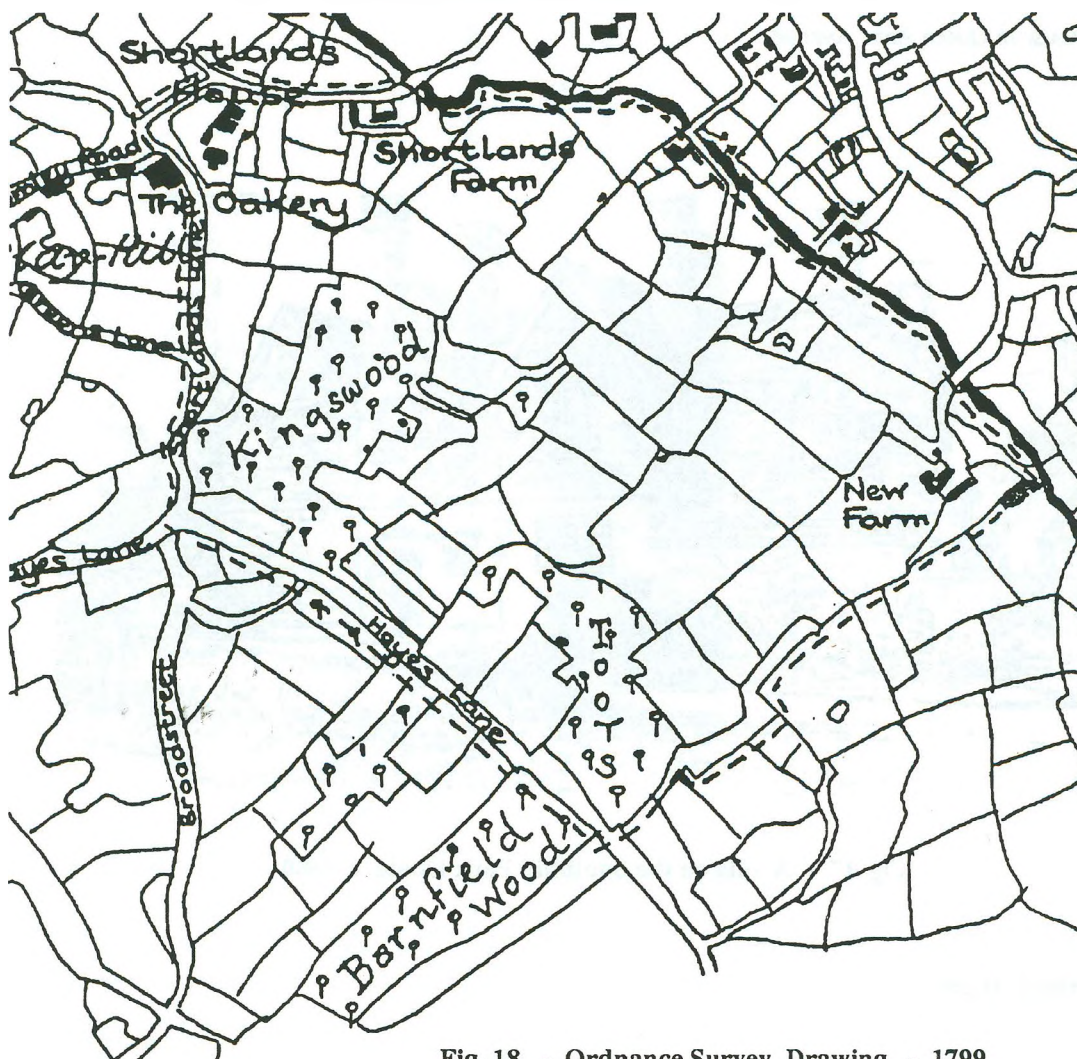


Fig. 18 - Ordnance Survey Drawing - 1799

The first documentary evidence shows that farming was being carried on in Shortlands at the beginning of the twelfth century, in the area known as Claihurst, the area referred to on eighteenth century maps as Clay Hill, which is the district around the junction of Bromley Road, Scott's Lane and Downsbridge Road. This land was held, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, by the Clayhurst's. The southern part of the area belonged to the extensive estate of the Bankwell's of Lee, and in the sixteenth century it was part of

the Sympson Estate. In the fifteenth century it became fashionable for London merchants to buy land in Beckenham; and one of the consequences of this was the development of the Langley Estate, (of which most of Shortlands belonged), into one of the largest estates in the county. In the early part of the eighteenth century Shortlands consisted of several gentlemen's seats, two farmsteads, and agricultural labourers cottages (Fig.18); but the coming of the railway in 1858 changed that, and enabled its transformation from a rural backwater to a metropolitan, middle class, suburb, through the construction of the Shortlands and the Southhill Park Estates (Fig 19).

Although it's true that there are no snakes in Ireland; there is plenty of history in Shortlands.

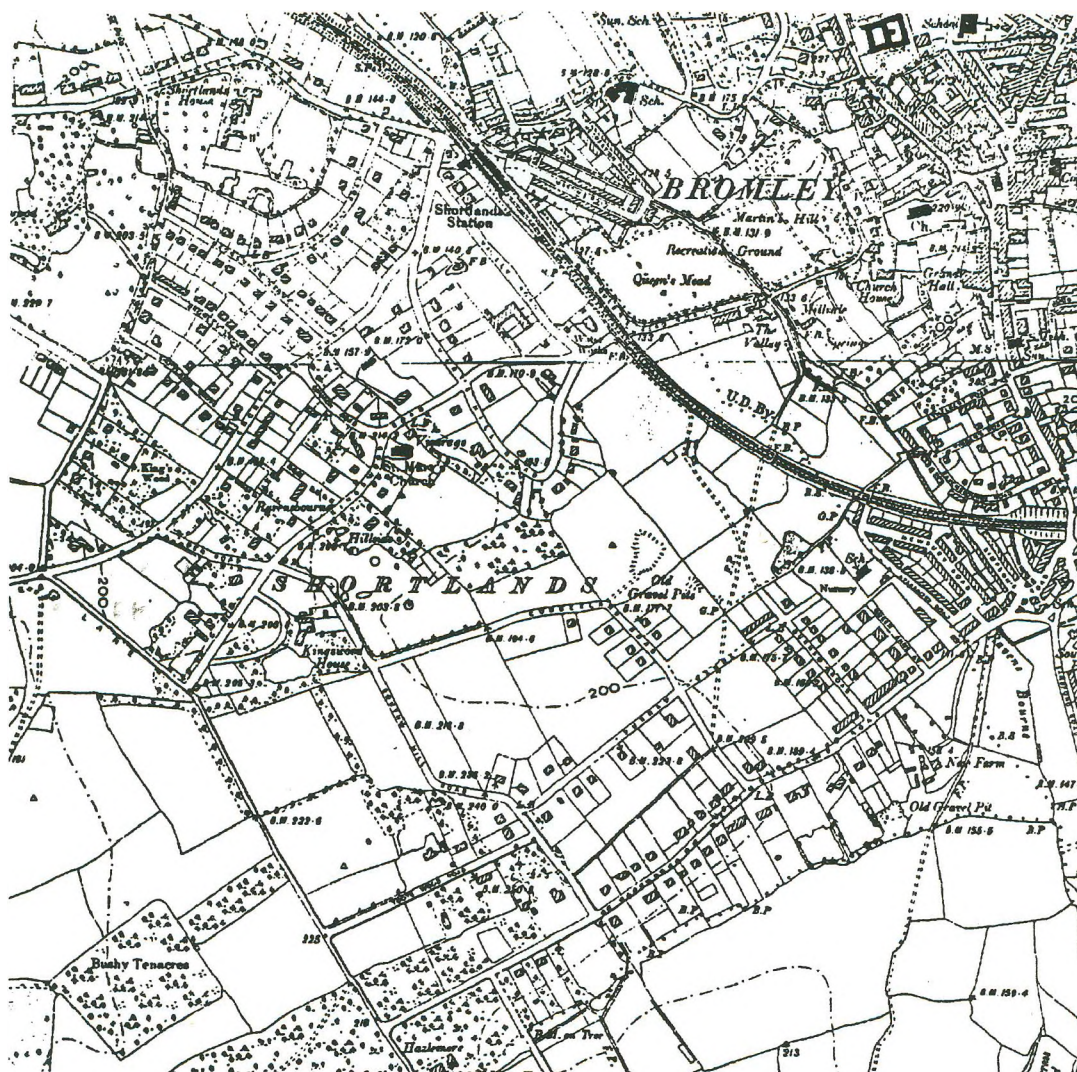


Fig. 19 - Ordnance Survey Map 1898