

## Burnham Villa

The following is in regard a recent on-line enquiry

The area where Burnham Villa once stood, pre enclosure of Feltham, [1802] was owned by the Duke of St Alban's and had the name 'Ray Close' – \*generally a place where Rye was grown which is a type of grass, usually grown as a grain or forage for cattle and the like.

On the below post enclosure map it is shown 'red 159' (old inclosure) at the junction of today's Sunbury Road and Feltham Hill Road (Snaky Lane) It was in fact two areas, 1 partly in Vicarage Road and a much smaller piece in Feltham Hill road; the approximate area was 3 acres 1 rod and 30 perches.



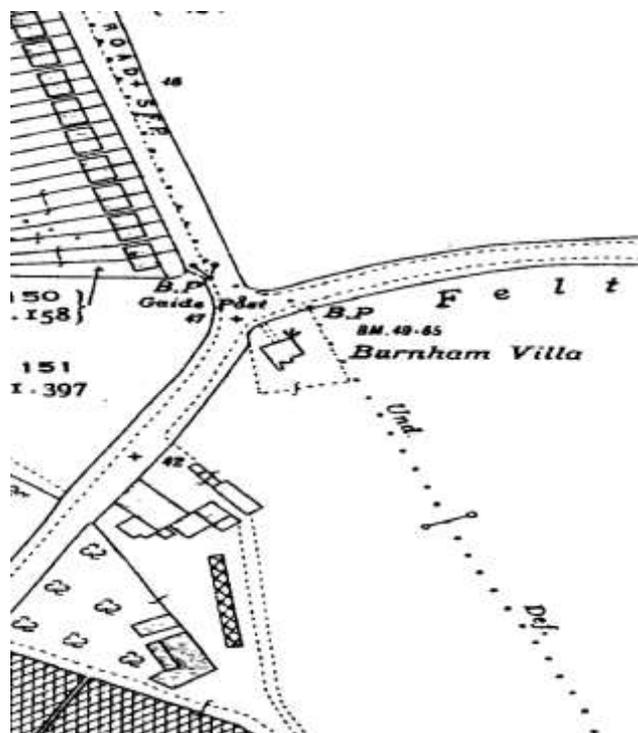
The land has always been used 'as said for grazing/crop growing' and still so today' albeit mainly Rape Seed and the oil that can be produced from it.

The build of the house is difficult to establish but it would seem to be sometime in the 1850's as the census of that decade has one John Burnham aged 27 an 'agricultural labourer' in residence together with his wife and three children, also noted on the same census is Moses Burnham aged 33 a Powdermaker [Gunpowder] and wife Jane nee Spong aged 34, also her mother an 'agricultural labourer' this seems like a separate house nearby or was it that the original house was split 'semi-detached'?

On the 1861, 1871 and 1881 census John Burnham is still in occupation, as a Labourer – the term labourer, in those days, usually encompassed someone who

worked farm land and the duties there associated. Please note the above information is somewhat speculative as the places of abode were not [census] particularly named and certainly not numbered, therefore it is by matching census returns, i.e. names/buildings either side of the entry, where it is known that a certain person lived, e.g. W. Lodge Spring Road farm and Grovelley Farm where the farmer was a Henry Fegent – which would have been in Vicarage Road.

The Ordnance Survey map of 1932 provides an indication as to the size and shape of the house; the letters 'BP' shown the position of 'boundary posts' - the parish boundary ran through the centre of the house, shown via 'dotted lines on map' together with the words "und-def" undefined boundary also indicated is a 'guide post'



The dates on the below image is conclusive as to the existence of the house and indeed its resident.



BURNHAM VILLA  
The home of Henry Smith in Feltham c. 1887-1892  
Later the home of A. W. Smith

The image is circa 1960 as can be evidenced by the style of the 'keep left' sign. Burnham Villa came into the possession and occupation of the 'great' AW Smith sometime about 1900, he was a prolific market gardener in this district from 1890 until his death in 1927. Briefly he worked 1000 acres in the locality and grew all manner of fruit and vegetables, some under a large glass house which is today's Grosvenor Park, he employed hundreds of men and women and Burnham villa was his office until he moved, in the early years of the twentieth century, to Feltham Farm in the High Street Feltham.

There was a government house and land survey carried out between 1909/13 which evaluated all premises in the country for taxation purposes, unfortunately Burnham Villa, seems to have eluded the inspector! therefore, we are deprived as to knowing the internal layout of the house and indeed a year of 'last sold' and its value. The lack of inclusion in the above noted 'evaluation' may well be the fact that the Hanworth and Feltham Boundary ran through the middle of the house requiring this anomaly to be adjudged to be in Hanworth, therefore any assessment was included in the Hanworth evaluation.

The below map is circa 1894 and clearly shows Burnham Villa surrounded by fields 'the fields of Feltham'.



Left is a view of the 'back garden' in the same image the building to the right was the packing shed of Market Gardener AW Smith, which is still in use today albeit as a car mechanics etc and the image on the right 'amongst the undergrowth' up to twenty years ago the remnants of the brick gate post could still be seen.



The whole area today is as virgin and fresh as it was when first created.

I do hope I have supplied enough information that will bring back personal memories and in that same token perhaps you could provide me with any images of the area that you may have taken over the years and of your recollections, particular may I ask about the guide post when you lived locally and the date when you were in the area and indeed where you lived.

Alan Rice, Hon Secretary  
Feltham History Group  
4<sup>th</sup> April 2021