

Sector L – Feltham Fields

Two hundred years or so ago the legal physical means of entrance to the parish of Ashford was, at its Eastern entrance and was regulated by a gate known as 'Ashford Gate' The gate straddled the Ashford Road and had an area known as Ashford Common to the south.

From the west or Ashford side, it was known as Feltham Gate

This was one of the ways into the Village of Feltham and particularly Middle Field.

Prior to enclosure the area was made up of many small fields - under the Enclosure of 1802, however this Sector was reduced to 4 Parcels - 2 of which '105 & 106' were extraordinarily large with the remaining 2 parcels '104 & 107' small by comparison. It would seem there was obvious favour towards the Church under the guise of The Dean and Chapter of Chichester.

The Sector is enclosed by Ashford Road 'bottom of image' and on its west the Parishes of Ashford and of Bedfont and on its north Bedfont Road with the Village Road of Feltham St Dunstan's on its east.

This Sector however also held 4 'old' inclosures, nr 69, nr 71, nr 127 and 128 the latter being remote from the village and being deemed Church or Glebe and known "*Broada hegge*" or Broad Hedge Close.

Of recent times **six** additional roads have been constructed, 3 are to be found in the southwest corner of the Sector on Parcel 106 and/or Parcel 107 - They were associated with the Middlesex Industrial School cum Borstal and were built around 1900 and namely 'The Clumps' 'Field View' 'Portland Crescent' and Southgate Avenue. It appears originally they were for the industrial school staff but now most are private residences. Some of the houses of the Clumps front Ashford Road.

Not here included or assessed although within the current boundary of the London Borough of Hounslow are Challenge and Shield Road.

The other roads, with houses erected recently (2002) are Elvedon Road, Norbury Road and the new link road from Ashford Road to Bedfont Road named Chertsey Road although none of the houses actual front Chertsey road.

It could be said that this new link road [Chertsey Road] has been particularly beneficial to those who live near the church as the volume of traffic, in particular heavy goods vehicles, has decreased by almost 75%

Around this sector is evidence of the few remaining field ditches of old.

The developers have, again as part of 'planning gain' re-ditched, and where necessary, re-culverted the ditch along the Ashford Road. They have also constructed a cycle track 'inside the hedge' running the complete perimeter of Sector L.

Old Inclosures. As mentioned these [old enclosures] are small in comparison to the areas which were the main subject of the Enclosure and they appear to have been for a mix of dwellings, storage and/or public use!

Commencing with Parcel 69 – The parcel is situated on Bedfont Road opposite Cromwell Lodge. Its size was but 11 perches (**sixteen feet**) and was where the cottage and garden

occupied in 1802 by one William Weekley Shore 'Farmer of the Parish' was situated -- here also stood a Barn.

This fairly large Barn is remembered by members of the history group who recall a Barn being in-situ as late as 1965. Parcel 69 now forms part of St Dunstons Park.

Parcel, red 71; situated southwest of the Village and close to Ashford Road on the southern corner of Sector L - this parcel consists of little more in area than Red 69.

Occupied at the time of enclosure by John Morris 'where he had a 'House and Garden' and although small this parcel had a long period of activity or use; situated as said at the southern entrance to the Village its significance 'due its long period of use' may well be the site of the Village well mentioned in the year 1307.

The two small dwellings were known as Burgoyne Cottages so named after the Solicitor who lived at The Grange which stood in Private road number 2 or Browells lane. These cottages were removed in the 1940's.

Burgoyne graves

Many members of the Burgoyne family are buried in St Dunstan's Church graveyard.

Parcel, red 127 (and 128); an old inclosure 'tithe bound' was given in exchange by Reverend Kilgour to William Shore for land of equal value elsewhere, it was known as Broad Hedge Close and contained 2 acres & 25 perches it is situated north of the double bend of the Ashford Road. Its purpose is, as with 128, yet to be positively established but it may well have served as an 'enclosed' storage area for Summer produce prior to transfer to the main Barn or more simply for gravel extraction

Parcel, red 128; containing 1 acre 3 rods & 8 perches and similar in shape to 127 and also known as Broad Hedge Close was noted [enclosure] as being the subject of exchange via Reverend Kilgour and The Duke of St Albans for land elsewhere.

These 2 parcels, although not defined today are identifiable today 'as ever they were! Near to the 'S' Bend in Ashford Road

We now come to the parcels that were set out and admeasured by the Commissioners. Parcels 104 & 105 and were 'in part' prior to enclosure, known as 'Shot before Church'

Parcel 104; the first allotment of 4 in this sector containing 5 acres 2 rods & 10 perches of freehold land. Bounded on the north by Bedfont Road, on part of the east by the aforementioned old inclosure red 71 and on the other part of the east by the Ashford Road, and on the west by Parcel 105.

This parcel was also Glebe and devoid of buildings until a small park was prepared and laid out circa 1960 'St Dunstons Park'. The park is fairly featureless except one or two ancient trees, 'Yew and Pine' and little else until an attempt of 1995 when a children's play area was laid out and the 'pocket park' given landscaping treatment, however most of the shrubs had to be removed because of fear of attack.

Within the park until recent times was a small public toilet.

Also on parcel 104 is Feltham Hill Junior School which opened in the early 1930's

Feltham 'Hill' you may well ask 'me thinks' no other explanation than there were other Junior Schools in Feltham.

Parcel (green) 105; was an area before enclosure that consisted of many smaller allotments with names such as 'short and long lineage' where now stands the Infant School on Bedfont Road - 'spittal butts' (mentioned in a Will of 1676 as Spittal Farm; this is in due deference to the Hospital of St Giles who were owners of much of Feltham from earliest times) - 'broad hedge butts' opposite today's Larchcombe (Larkham) Close, 'long twelve acres' (possibly the old 'long meadow') and north of that one simply called 'Bedfont Way' Included in all this is the pre enclosure parcels known as Broad Hedge Close.

All of which at enclosure were combined into freehold land of 76 acres & 2 perches

Parcel 105 was used only for farming and market gardening - the 1895 O/S map shows a track from Ashford Road to a small house with 'out buildings' and a small glasshouse set centre of the parcel.

This large parcel still held by the Church saw little activity until the Church (St James Homes) built a number of houses and Maisonettes at its northeast corner in 2002.

The hedge and tree to the right is the boundary line with Feltham Hill Junior School. Note the tractors levelling the scalping and Redford Close in the distance.

The major part of this parcel, however, is still open space.

The new road that now cuts across the field (continuation of Chertsey Road) begins generally where the tree 'left of image is situated.

Parcel 106; combined to amass to 93 acres 1 rod & 13 perches slightly larger in area than the previously described parcel. It has to its north the road to Bedfont its east parcel 105, with on the south the Ashford Road with to its western flank the Parish of Bedfont.

Pre enclosure this parcel consisted of no fewer than 7 allotments of various sizes. The first, near to Ashford Gate, was an allotment called 'teslen stain' then 'short twelve acres' together with 'middle twelve acres; long length furlong, short length furlong and one called, curtly I suggest, 'shot over Bedfont Way'

Acquired by and used as Glebe by the Church until 1854 when application was made to build a school for boys and young men who were, through one reason or another, somewhat wayward. Opened in 1859 the Middlesex Industrial School occupied a vast area of this parcel. This place has been under various appellations since then.

Parcel 107; situated close to Ashford Gate and freehold to the Dean and Chapter of Chichester for tithes and known, as previously noted 'teslen stain' it sits neatly in the southwest corner of Middlefield - Until the middle to late 19 century it was farmed but since early twentieth the houses of 'The Clumps' 'Field View' 'Portland Crescent' and Southgate Road together with houses fronting Ashford Road.

Although there has been some intrusion 'of late' onto Sector L it is hoped that this natural barrier will remain as a testament to the forgotten fields of Feltham

I, therefore, encourage you all to visit and spend time on this tranquil area - for quietude is still to be found, beyond the Ashford Road where the Skylarks still sing behind "Brodhegge"

		
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