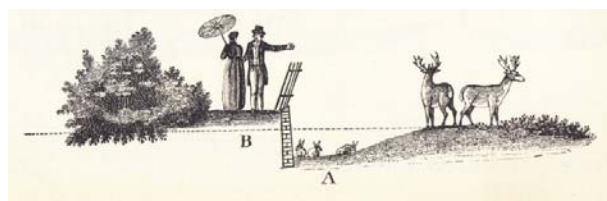


*Appraisal of Historic Designed Landscape
at
The Canons, Mitcham*

*Fiona Green – Garden Historian
for
Southern Green Ltd*

February 2016



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1.0 Commission

This report was commissioned by Southern Green Ltd. on behalf of Merton Council in preparation for an application to the Heritage Lottery Parks for People Fund for funding to conserve and restore the park.

1.1 Acknowledgements

Merton Heritage and Local Studies Centre

Surrey Record Office

E. N. Montague's *The Cranmers, The Canons and Park Place* (2011) has been a very useful resource for this report.

Mitcham Gardens and Gardeners of the 18th Century E. N. Montague produced by Merton Historical Society (2000) has also been referred to.

2.0 History of the Designed Landscape

2.1 *The Canons prior to and including the 18th century*

The Lordship of Mitcham, which included a house and parcels of land, was purchased by a London merchant, Robert Cranmer¹, c.1650 during the Commonwealth.²

The Canons (Grade II) was built on common land, The Three King's Piece. This enclosure was referred to in 1382.³ The name of the house is believed to have derived from an association with the canons of Southwark Priory as the land was surrendered by them at the Dissolution.



Fig. 1 Mitcham Common Cranmer Green c.1800s

The Cranmers retained ownership of the land on which The Canons was built. A lease was granted for the building of a house on the site by John Cranmer, Robert Cranmer's son. John Odway (later Otway) built a house in 1681 having been granted a lease on a 'parcel of Ground called Canons (heretofore 'The Grove') with the orchard, gardens,

1

¹Archbishop Thomas Cranmer (d.1556) died without issue and had no connection with the Cranmers at Mitcham. (Montague 2011 p. 19)

2

²The Commonwealth of England lasted from 1649-1653 during which time England was ruled as a republic. This followed the end of the Second English Civil War and the execution of Charles I. In 1653 Oliver Cromwell was made Lord Protector of England, Scotland and Ireland. The monarchy was restored in 1660.

3

³ Cited Montague (2011) p. 75 VCH IV (1912) 234 quoting Feet of F Surr 44 Hen III no 18 (1906) 63

fishpond, dovehouse and appurtenances containing together 12 acres.' There are no plans of the gardens during this period. The layout of the 'gardens' may have been a formal arrangement with linear paths bordered by grass plats, lines of trees and beds of flowers, clipped shrubs and possibly fruit trees grown against the walls. The orchard, fishpond and other productive areas were probably of utilitarian design. Fishponds were commonly incorporated into post medieval gardens.

By 1717 James Cranmer had taken over the estate having bought out his brothers. He kept an estate and account book. Mrs Cross was recorded as occupant in 1725 when she was mentioned in connection with a visit from the Bishop of Winchester. She died in 1727 and was succeeded by Firman Van Fleet who lived at The Canons for the following ten years.

John Manship took over the lease in 1737 and negotiated a new lease in 1741. Manship received a reduction on the rent for 'repairs and improvements' and remained at The Canons until his death in 1749.⁴ Whether the works were carried out in the gardens as well is not known.

James Cranmer (I) died in 1752 and his son, also James, took over the estate. Although he had a town house at Tottenham he appears to have retained The Canons, possibly as a country retreat. In 1761 he built or rebuilt a garden wall, marking the event with a limestone plaque built by James Cranmer Esq Anno 1761 (Fig.2). The stone was reset in the east wall during renovation of the garden in 1969.



Fig. 2 Date stone in garden wall at The Canons

After the death of James the estate was passed to his wife Rebecca and subsequently one of their daughters Esther Maria Dixon who was expected to take the name of Cranmer after the death of her mother, although this happened earlier than planned.

2.2 Park Place during the 18th century

Park Place was built on a site known as 'Almonds' or 'Allmannesland' possibly on the site of a former Tudor house.⁵ A copyhold tenure on 1704 mentioned '*a barn, two gardens, orchard and four acres*'. The property was leased until 1772 when it was sold to an attorney, Francis Gregg. He was given permission to demolish and rebuild but it was not clear exactly how the earlier building was altered. Gregg also leased part of the common along the south-east and south west boundary of the estate. The additional land remained as grounds to the house safeguarding views across the common and to the Surrey Hills. Land north of the house, towards Cold Blows Lane was added in 1840.⁶ The house is believed to have been completed in c.1780.⁷ Edwards described it as a

5

⁷ *Montague p.114*

6

'handsome house, built of grey stock-bricks and finished in the present taste' he also mentioned it was bordered by elm trees (1789).

Gregg was a flamboyant character who was supposedly descended from Oliver Cromwell. He entertained numerous dignitaries in London and Mitcham. Lord Carlisle was a close friend who visited Park Place. Having resolved Carlisle's financial problems he held the seat of MP for Morpeth until Carlisle's son came of age.

Gregg sold the house in 1784 to William Pollard, a London wine merchant, who was less popular, being of an obstreperous nature.

2.3 *Eighteenth century gardens in Mitcham*

Mitcham was a popular retreat from London and by the early eighteenth century the village, in common with many on the Surrey London border, was well on the way to being suburbanised. Large houses such as Colliers Wood House - not extant, Biggin Grove (or Tamworth House) - not extant, The Firs - not extant, Mitcham Villa (or The Rectory or Cranmers) - demolished 1928 and the Canons were among many establishments developed with large gardens and often parkland.

Descriptions of some gardens in Mitcham were published by James Edwards whose *Companion from London to Brighthelmston* was published in 1789. Colliers Wood House was 'finished in the refined taste' and 'adorned with suitable plantations and good gardens'. The Firs was recorded in 1835 as having a good selection of exotic trees which were planted by Charles du Bois a famous plant collector who lived there at the turn of the eighteenth century. Edwards appears to have ignored The Canons although the 'high elm trees' at Park Place were mentioned.

The Cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*) was introduced to Britain in c.1645 ⁷. A specimen has survived adjacent to the pond at The Canons and may date from the late eighteenth century.

2.4 *The Canons and Park Place during the 19th Century*

By 1812 Esther Maria's son Richard was in residence at The Canons as was his grandmother Rebecca who died in 1815.

7 ⁷ *Montague p.118*

7

⁷ *Montague p.116*

8

⁷ *Hillier's Manual of Trees and Shrubs (1977) p. 466*

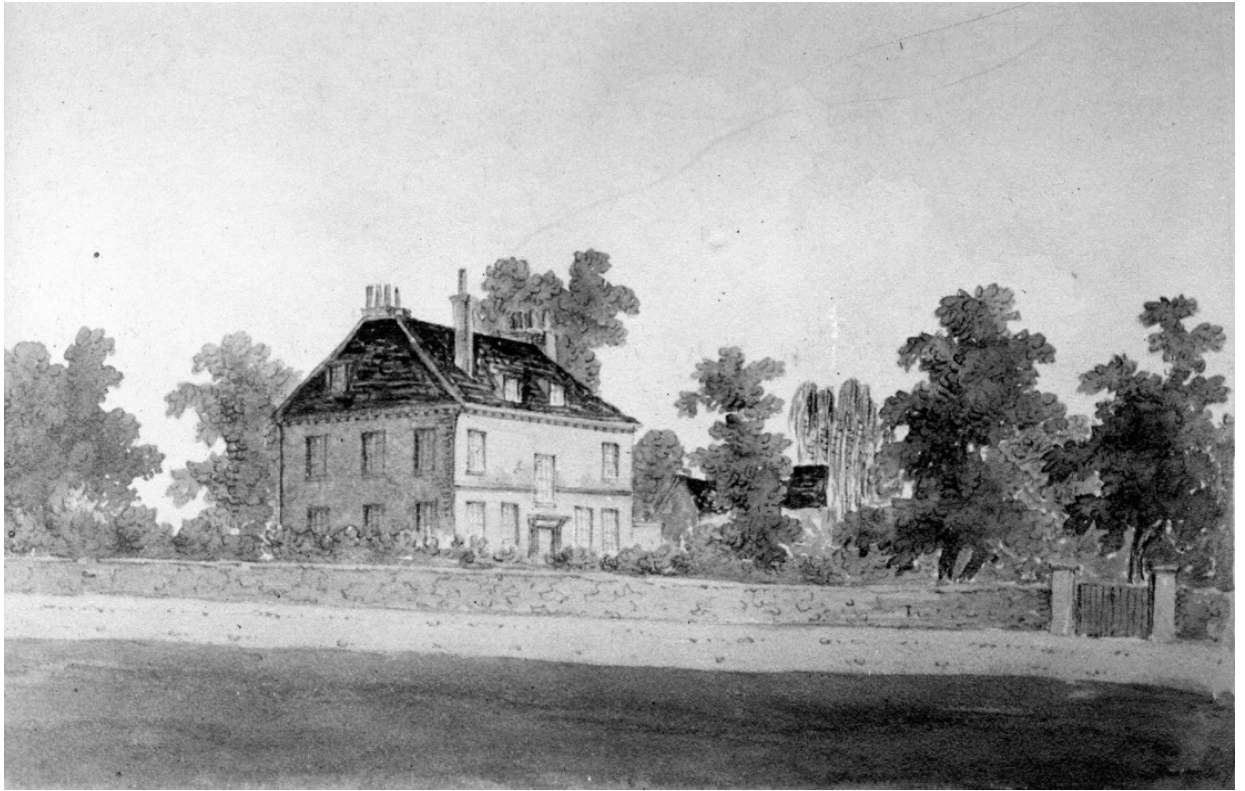


Fig. 3 The Canons 1823

Although Ester Maria Cranmer, a widow, does not appear to have resided at The Canons, having stayed at her marital home, she instructed that a tablet should be inserted in the eastern boundary wall with the inscription 'This wall is placed at the boundary and built by Mrs E M Cranmer in the year 1816'. The stone was reset by the Borough Council during the 1970s.



Fig. 4 Date stone placed in wall for Mrs E M Cranmer in 1816

After Esther Maria's death the estate passed to her son the Rev. Richard Cranmer who lived at The Canons until about 1826. He was responsible for the obelisk in the grounds which commemorates the rising of a spring during a particularly bad drought in 1821 and 1822. The rising of the spring was felt to have been influenced by divine intervention. The obelisk constructed with brick faced with 'Roman Cement' was dated 25th September 1822 and inscribed '*In Grateful recollection of the goodness of God through whose favour water has been provided for this neighbourhood*'. A number of psalms are also inscribed. The water supply appears to have continued in use and overflowed into a channel outside the grounds of The Canons. This is marked on the 1895 OS, within the boundary of The Canons, after a new wall was built in 1850, and flowing into the fishpond. During the 1950s the wall was demolished and rebuilt at the back of the obelisk and the area was laid out as a small garden.

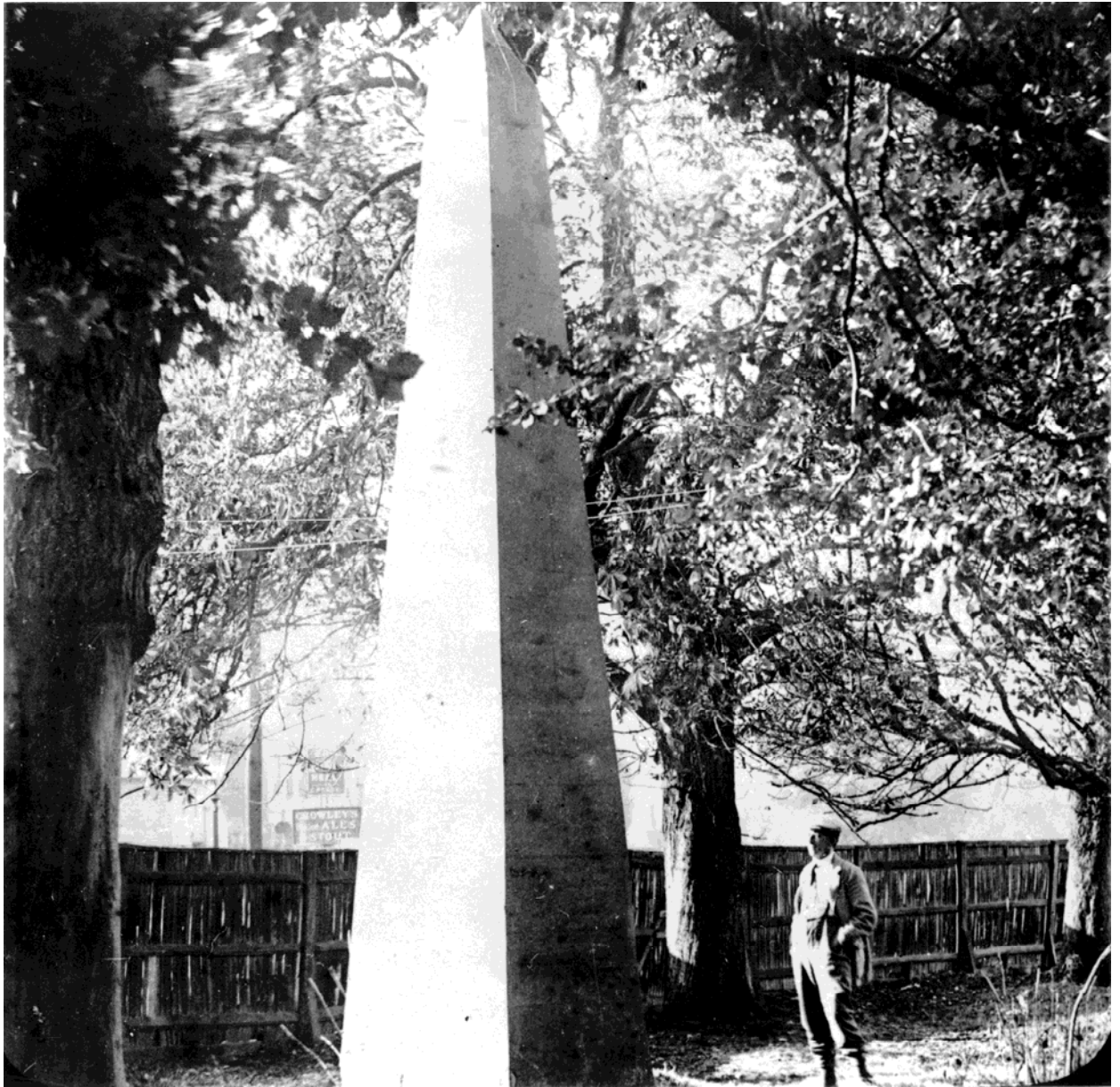


Fig. 5 The Obelisk built to commemorate the source of a water spring

After the death of Richard Cramner in 1828 the estate passed to his brother in law William Simpson. The Canons remained a family house but was frequently leased out and by 1843 was leased by Osborne Delano Osborne for a period of 21 years. However in 1846 Henry Wingrave was the occupant and the tithe of that year recorded '*nine acres*' including a garden, late pleasure ground' a pair of meadows, sheds, yards and dovecote.⁹

⁹

In 1851 Charles Hugh Hoare took the lease and is believed to have built the lodge. It is not known whether he made any other improvements in the grounds of the house.

2.5 *Park Place during the nineteenth century*

William Herbert, a man of prodigious intellect, moved to Park Place in 1808. He was elected as an MP in 1806 and became a Doctor of Civil Law in 1808. After being ordained in 1814 he left Mitcham. His horticultural interests are discussed below (please see 3.0).

By 1815 Park Place was occupied by Lieutenant General Forbes Champagné who died the following year. Park Place was then leased to a number of short term tenants by Richard Cranmer and unsuccessfully auctioned following his death. Following various occupants the estate was leased by the Cranmers' trustees to Revd. Hyam Burns who moved his Academy for Young Gentlemen there in 1837. The 1841 census recorded 21 boys between the age of eight and twelve who were cared for with the assistance of seven servants. The grounds of 11 acres included walled gardens and sufficient pasture to keep a small herd of dairy cows.

The school was located away from unpleasant aspects of London and had a good reputation with many of the pupils pursuing successful careers. Frederick Lygour sixth earl of Beauchamp progressed to Christ Church Oxford and was fellow of All Souls from 1852 to 1856, he then became MP for West Worcester. Herbert Murray was governor of Newfoundland from 1895 to 1898. The Berkeley brothers were all noted in Burke's peerage after being educated at the school during the 1840s.

Revd. Hyam Burns' successor was a gentlewoman and fund holder Mrs Louis Boyce who retired abroad in 1873. From 1874 the house was leased by the McMaster family until 1890. By 1895 the property had passed down to William Simpson, by descent.

2.6 *The Canons and Park Place during the twentieth century*

The Simpsons moved to Church House Mitcham, at this point and none of their descendants lived at The Canons before it was finally sold in 1939 to the Corporation of Mitcham. Their intention was to open a community centre and to use the grounds for sports and athletics but war intervened. At this point the fields between the house and Cricket Ground were turned into allotments for the war effort and covered an area of approximately 5.3 acres. In 1948 the allotments were removed and the recreation grounds were reinstated.¹⁰ The ornamental gardens were badly neglected during the war.

Park Place (Grade II) was passed by descent through the Cranmer family and was sold by William Simpson to the News of the World Ltd. in 1922. In 1963 Surrey County Council purchased the land by compulsory order but later abandoned their original plans to rebuild the Mitcham County School for Boys on the site.

After the war the Parks Department initiated the reclamation of the grounds at The Canons. A nursery was established in the kitchen garden, the lawn west of the house

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⁷ *Mitcham History Notes. The Canons Minutes June 10th 1948 reinstatement of recreation grounds.*

was restored and a playground was added. The grounds north of the house were laid out as bowling greens and tennis courts. Montague states that the east garden was laid out to reflect a late 17th century garden with a terrace. ¹¹ The carp pond was cleaned and restocked during this period and a walk was made round the edge. A yew walk was also made at this time in order to provide a link between the pond and walled garden. Within the walled garden, brick paving was laid around a lily pond and flower beds; a millstone, from a Mitcham flour mill, was incorporated as a feature. The lily pond was filled in 1993. In 1970 during the laying of gas pipes, an investigation was undertaken to find a 'tunnel' between The Canons and the Rectory. This proved fruitless although a brick culvert feeding the fishpond was discovered.

The 'News of the World' sports ground became a training venue for Mitcham Athletics Club between the 1920s and 1930s. Notable sporting figures associated with the site included Dorothy Tyler, a local resident, who won a silver medal for the High Jump at the 1936 Berlin Olympics and competed at the 1948 London Olympics. The original 300 yard cinder running track remains today but is neglected. The ground is reputedly where the first women's road race in the world took place in 1934. It was also believed to be the first venue in the UK for korfbal which was played there in 1946, although this may have occurred on the Canons site. The London to Brighton Road Race is also thought to have started from The Canons.



Fig. 6 The Canons 1936

The Council constructed plant nurseries in the grounds, after the end of the Second World War, and subsequently installed two bowling greens, tennis courts and a children's playground with swings and a slide. The gymnasium was built next to The Canons with changing rooms, toilets and rooms which were let to local voluntary organisations.

The north boundary of the sports ground formed by Cold Blows, an historic lane which connected Mitcham Common and the Cricket Green through open fields before the area was developed. The recently planted Bellamy's Copse screens the leisure centre and provides a woodland component to the Conservation Area.

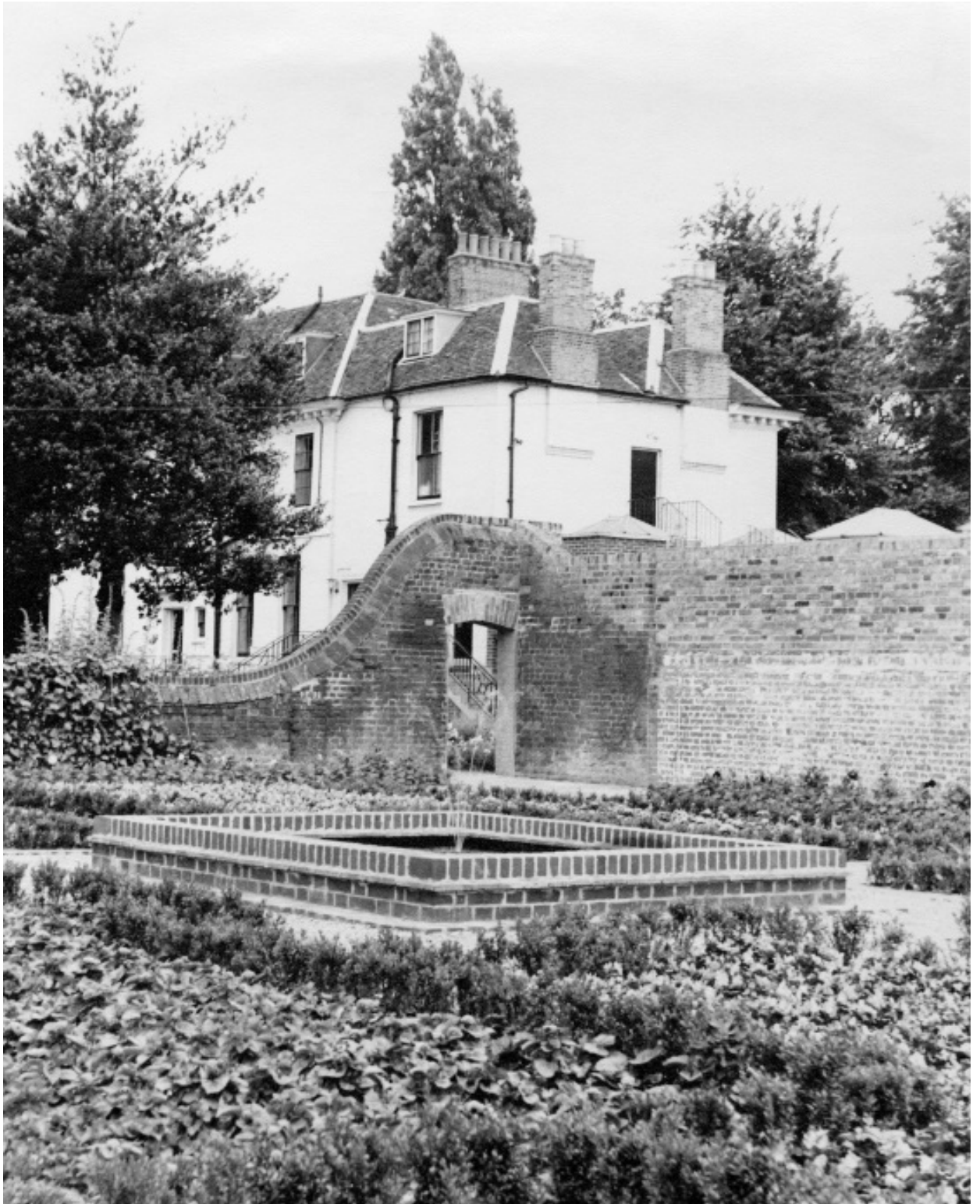


Fig. 7 The Canons Walled Garden

3.0 Horticulture in Mitcham

Mitcham was an important area for horticulture and the physic gardens were one of the principal industries in the area until the mid-nineteenth century. Roses, camomile, white poppies, liquorice, peppermint, angelica and lavender were grown in abundance.

Edward's Companion from London to Brighthelmston(1789) described James Potter's 'Botanical Gardens' as very extensive. His property adjacent to Figges Marsh had equipment for 'extracting the essence of all his botanical herbs'. After his death his son Ephraim developed the business of cultivating medicinal plants and by the time of his death in 1799 was reputedly the 'premier grower in England'.¹²

The Reverend William Herbert (1778-1847) is linked to Park Place. He was a descendent of the Simpsons. Herbert was well known for his cultivation of bulbous plants and he also experimented with hybridisation. His contributions to botany were recognised by Robert Sweet (1783-1835) a distinguished botanist who named the *Herbertiagenus* of ferns after William Herbert.

4.0 Changes to the site illustrated by mapping

4.1 *Extract from plan of Mitcham Common 1709 Surrey Heritage Centre 470 /1 (dated 1743 at foot)*

This plan was produced by James Cranmer. He indicated only the dovecote and pond with no reference to the house built supposedly by John Odway in 1681.

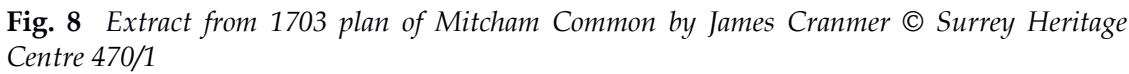


Fig. 8 Extract from 1703 plan of Mitcham Common by James Cranmer © Surrey Heritage Centre 470/1

4.2 Roque plan of 1741-5

This plan omits features which were recorded on site by that time; such as the pond, dovecote, meadows and manor house. The detail is poor and deciphering the layout of the garden and buildings is inconclusive. One feature which appears to be clearer is the suggestion of a wavy plantation in the field west of the house. This would concur with woodland known as a 'wilderness' being located there. Such plantations were fashionable during the eighteenth century and formed by planting dense shrubs and woodland entwined by serpentine walks. The centre was often left open allowing a view of the open landscape beyond, in this case the Green.



4.3 Estate plan of The Canons c.1840s. Surrey Heritage Centre 298/6/3

This plan shows the house and grounds during the second quarter of the nineteenth century when the property was tenanted. The plan shows a shelter belt on the west side of the meadow with a secondary belt sheltering the carriage drive. Dense trees and shrubs are shown east of the drive. A sinuous circuit walk progresses around the edge of the garden, and is enclosed by shrubberies. East of the pond an orchard is indicated in an irregular shaped area. North of the pond the lawn is articulated by irregular shaped shrub beds. The dovecote appears to be screened by shrubberies and may not have been appreciated as a garden feature at this time. The pond is shown as a rectangle with curved corners. A culvert leads into the pond from the west and flows underneath a bridge supporting the carriage drive. The carriage drive bridge is shown with scrolled ends as is the garden bridge and balustrade on steps to the house. The circuit walk includes a feature at the south east corner of the pond, possibly a summerhouse but not labelled in the references. A pair of rectangular formal gardens is shown north of the lawned garden.

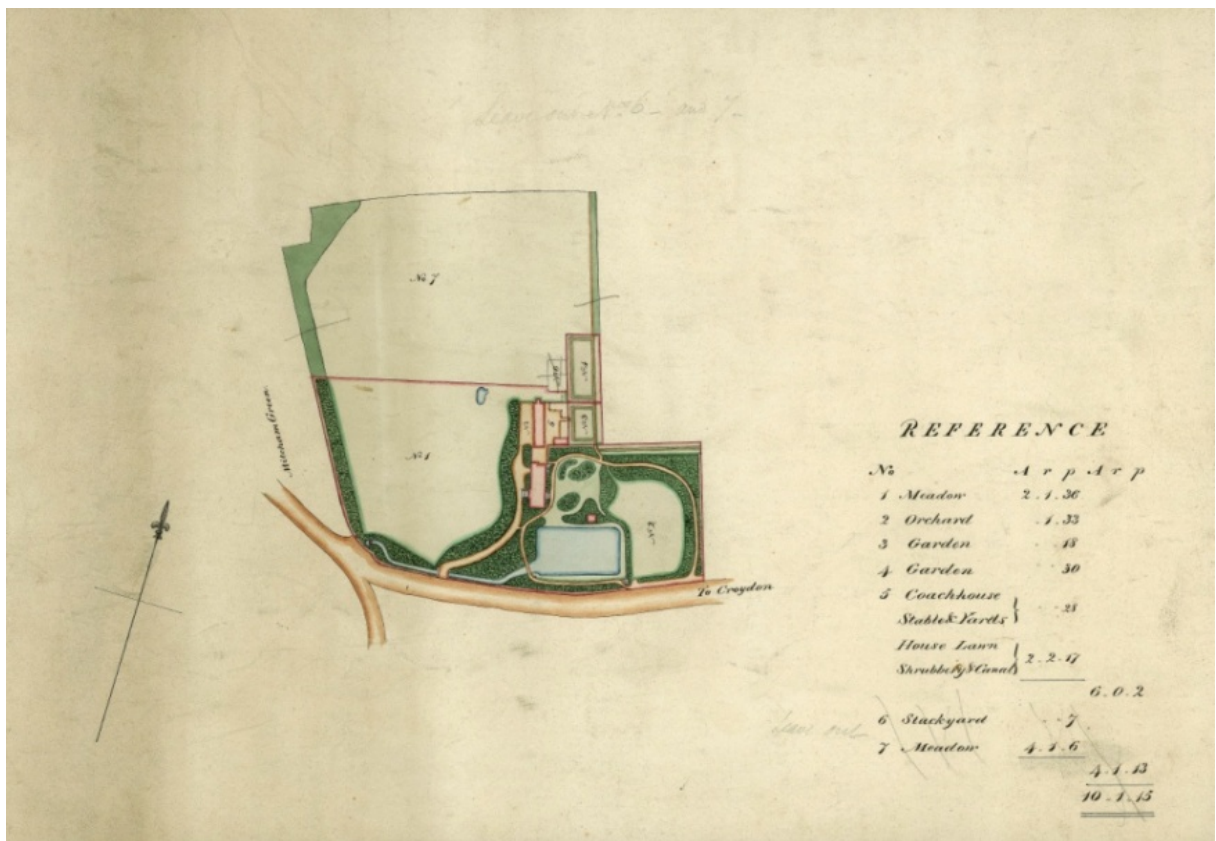


Fig. 10 Estate plan showing The Canons c.1840 © Surrey Heritage Centre 298/6/3

4.4 1867 Ordnance Survey

The 1867 ordnance survey shows The Canons adjacent to Park Place. Both properties are located between a network of lanes Commonside West to the east, Cold Blows Lane to the north, and The Causeway to the west. The entrance to The Canons is shown at the south end of the grounds. The drive leads north towards the house, over a bridge past mixed plantation on either side. The west front of the house overlooks a small curved forecourt adjacent to a field which is screened from The Causeway by a line of trees; the field is dotted with individual trees and denser woodland at the south end. A pond is located on the boundary between the two fields. The obelisk is not marked, although a well outside the property boundary is marked south of the drive.

A large rectangular pond lies to the east of the drive and is linked to a channel which leads under the bridge towards the obelisk, another bridge nearer the pond links a circuit path through shrubberies towards the drive and the house. North of the pond, a lawn bordered by shrubberies is overlooked by the east front of the house. The dovecote is shown at the south end of the lawn. A boundary which is defined by an erratic north-south line of either fence or wall, is shown between the lawn and orchard which is also partly divided by another fence or wall.¹³ North of the orchard ground an enclosure contains a number of glasshouses at the north end; fields lie north of this. West of here an area is divided into a number of enclosures which contain service buildings for the mansion.

Park Place also belonged to the Cranmer family and was let out when this edition of the ordnance survey was made. The kitchen garden to Park Place, located east of the orchard at The Canons, was linear in shape and dominated by glasshouses. Further east a pair of fields are dotted with trees and separated from the pleasure ground by a ditch. The south front of the house overlooks the garden and fields. Service buildings are shown grouped around a courtyard. The drive, from Commonside West, is planted with shrubberies and arrives at a turning circle located at the north front of the mansion. Additional fields are shown north of the buildings and a pond is shown in the furthest one.

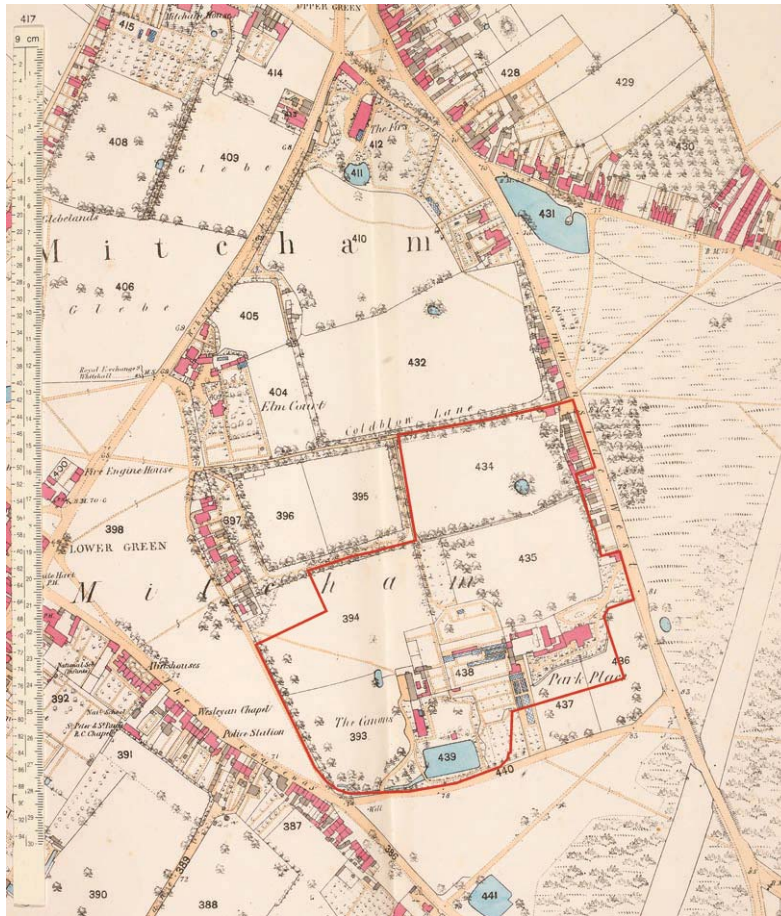


Fig. 11 1867 Ordnance Survey

4.5 1897 Ordnance Survey

This map shows far less notation for vegetation, although whether this was the case on site is unclear.

Madeira Road is marked at the south end of the property, as is the entrance lodge. The service buildings north of The Canons have changed with the enlargement of one at the north end. A well is shown in the East Field, north east of The Canons. The pond has changed in shape after the removal of the north west corner and it is also marked adjacent to the dovecote. The footprint of the glasshouses has enlarged. This is also the case in the grounds of Park Place. A small building is shown in the south garden and the ditch has been removed. The lawn has been extended south on the east side.

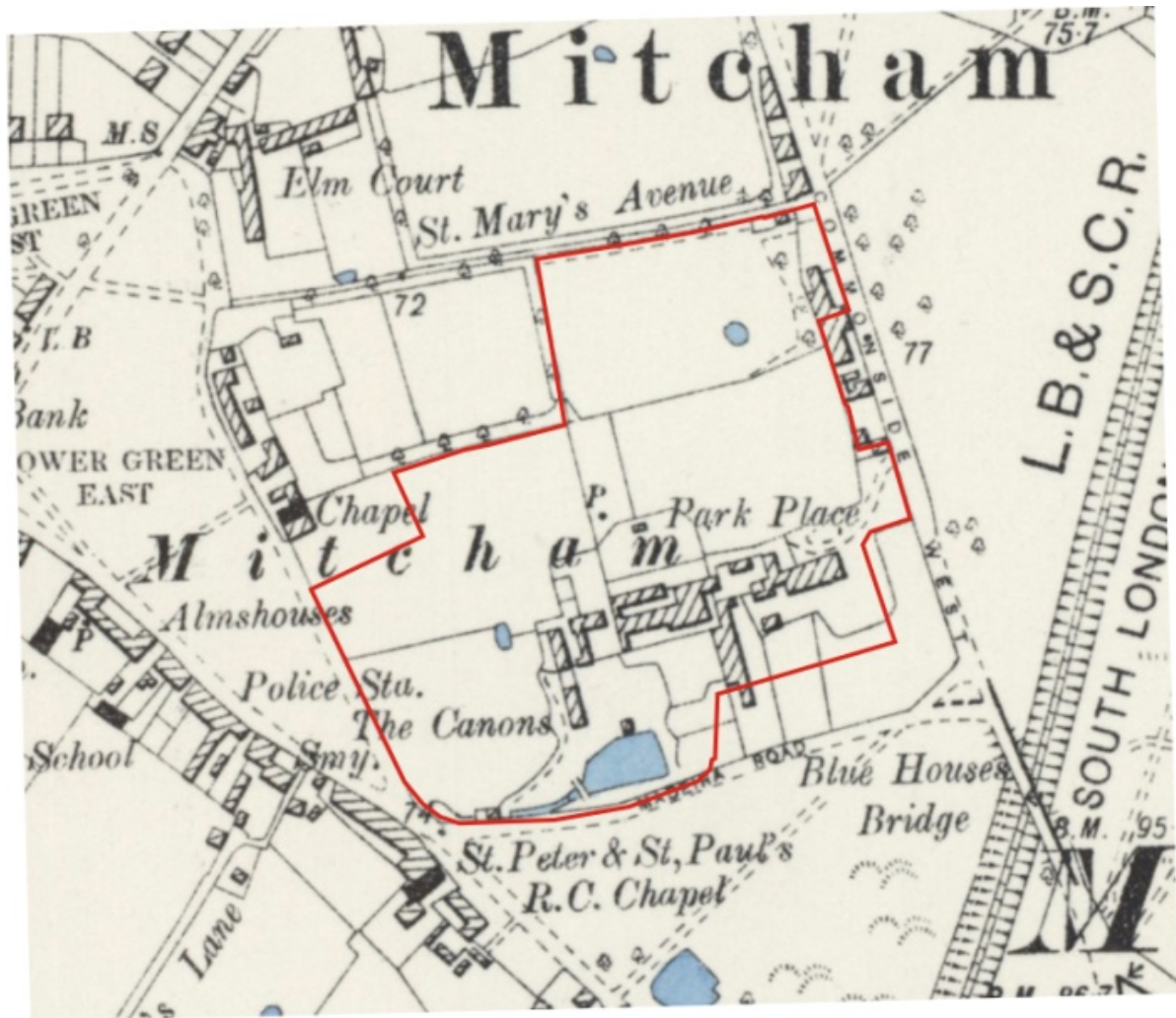


Fig. 12 1897 Ordnance Survey

4.6 1914 Ordnance Survey

The 1914 map shows the stock pond in the west lawn has gone. Service buildings next to the mansion have been altered again with a division between the middle one. The glasshouse range at Park Place has been reduced and the footprint of the mansion has also changed at the north west corner. Field boundaries are now marked by trees north of Park Place. The turning circle appears to have been removed from Park Place and the lawn south of the building has been enlarged towards Commonside West.

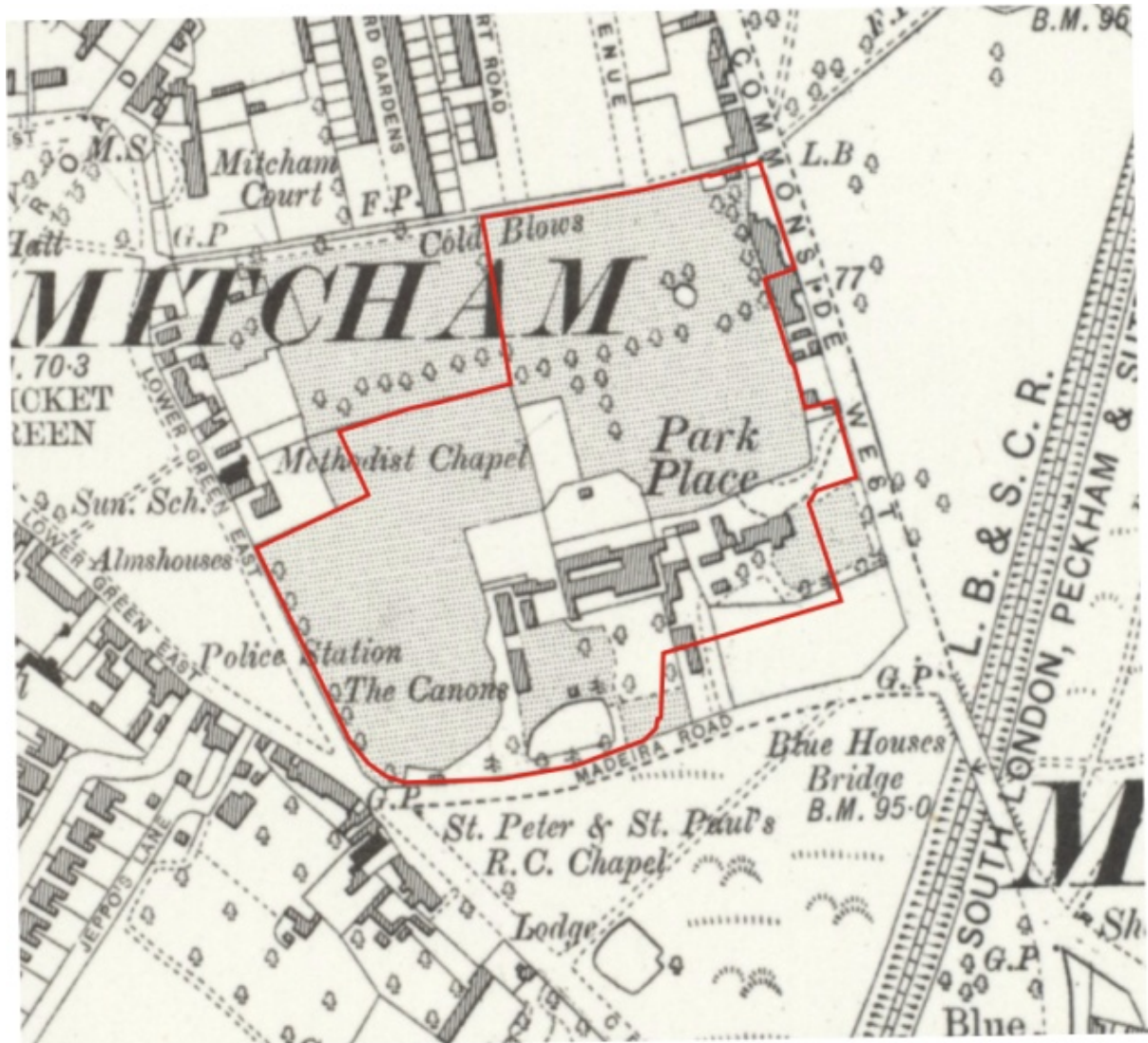


Fig. 13 1914 Ordnance survey

4.7 1936 Ordnance Survey

The 1936 survey shows the introduction of the sports ground in the north gardens and fields at Park Place. A running track is shown at the north end. The south and east boundaries of Park Place have been greatly reduced by the introduction of housing. The footprint of the glasshouses has decreased considerably.

At The Canons the dividing fence in the field has been removed. The boundaries in the east garden have been rationalised and are now straight.

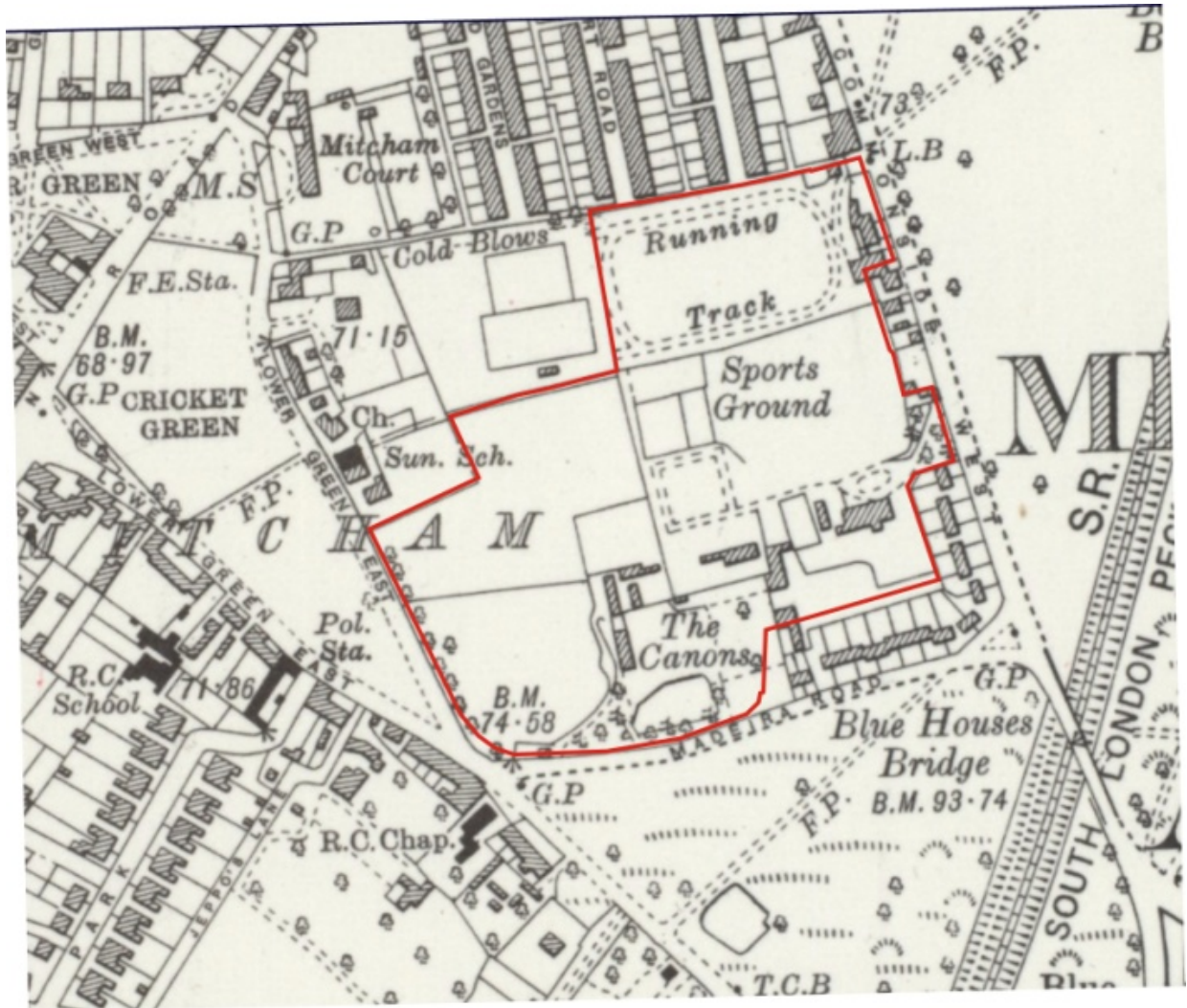


Fig. 14 1936 Ordnance Survey

4.8 1947, 1954, 1971 Ordnance Surveys

The 1947 plan shows no change to the layout shown on previous surveys.

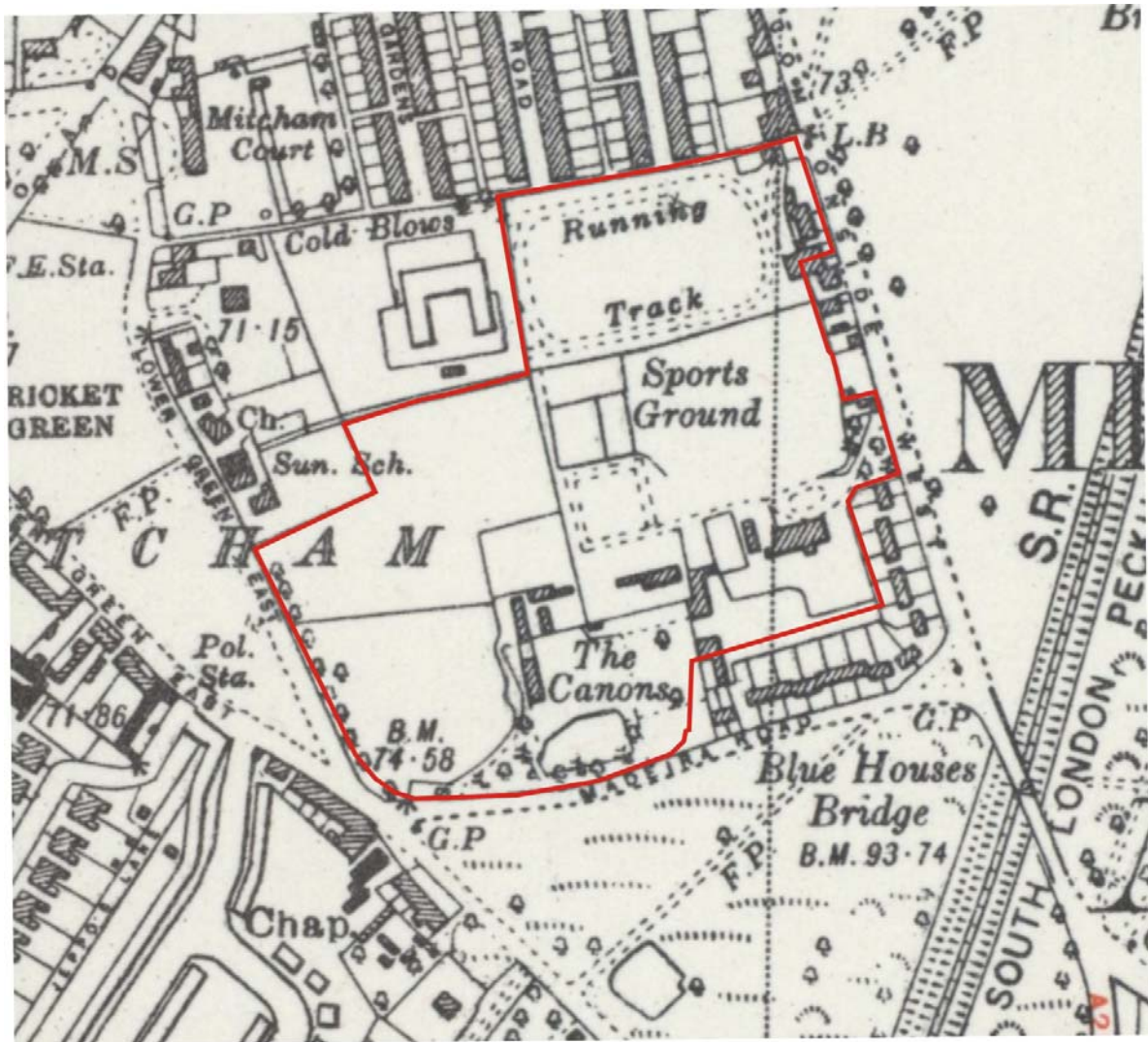


Fig. 15 1947 Ordnance Survey

By 1954 the survey shows changes made to the park after World War II. The west lawn remained as allotments originally set up for the war effort. Glasshouses were added north of The Canons and on the site of the orchard east of the mansion. Various small structures were also added in this area. A pair of long thin linear structure is shown in the compound north of the nursery; these may have been cold frames. Similarly glasshouses were added to the kitchen garden of Park Place and ground east of there is marked Canons Nursery.

The 1971 survey (not reproduced owing to copyright) shows the west lawn has been returned to grassland for the public park and a path has been added to the perimeter. The old carriage drive of The Canons has been re-routed and extended to provide access to the new Gymnasium north of The Canons. A Council Depot is shown north of the Gymnasium and the newly laid out walled garden is shown on the east side of the Gymnasium. The Bowling Green which is located north east of the Council Depot has a pavilion. Additional Tennis Courts, a shelter and another Bowling Green with pavilion are shown north of the Canons.



Fig. 16 1954 Ordnance Survey

5.0 Assessment of Cultural Significance

5.1 Evidential Value

There is evidential value at The Canons derived from the below-ground archaeological deposits. This is discussed in the Archaeology Report.

5.2 Historical Value

5.2.1 Illustrative

There is historical illustrative value at The Canons derived from the landscape as well as the buildings.

In some areas the garden continues to illustrate the layout of typical eighteenth century grounds to a mansion. Although much has been altered there remains a strong sense of the relationship between the mansion and the gardens, particularly in respect of the west lawn, east lawn, pond, dovecote and large numbers of mature trees.

5.2.2 Associative

The associative historical value of The Canons is derived many influences. There is associative value derived from the fact that the estate was the seat of the Cranmer family, from medieval times until the mid-nineteenth century and that their gardens were status symbols and reflected their social standing in the area. The garden features were listed in 1680. The remains of the layout and features such as the dovecote, obelisk and commemorative stones reinforce the association of the Cranmer family. Despite considerable alterations, the gardens continued to provide a place for retreat from the sporting activity elsewhere in the grounds.

The gardens are associated with a strong horticultural tradition in Mitcham for the growth and extraction from physic plants mainly for medicinal purposes. A well known botanist and horticulturalist the Hon. Rev. William Herbert is associated with the property.

5.3 Aesthetic Value

5.3.1 Design value

There is aesthetic design value in the landscape, which has developed incrementally and mostly anonymously.

The relationship between The Canons, Cranmer Green and the Common is a significant aspect of the streetscape and an important contribution to the value of the conservation area.

5.3.2 Communal Value

5.3.3 Social value

There is social value associated with The Canons derived from its use as a park and sports centre. There is also some social value derived from the people who lived or worked on the estate in the past.

5.3.4 Spiritual value

There is no social spiritual value associated with The Canons.

6.0 Chronology

1680 The estate went through several ownerships before the Dissolution. Afterwards a lease was granted for the building of a house on the site by the son of Robert Cranmer. John Odway (later Otway) built a house in 1681 having been granted a lease on a 'parcel of Ground called Canons (heretofore 'The Grove') with the orchard gardens, fishpond, dovehouse and appurtenances containing together 12 acres.' by John Cranmer in 1680

1702 John Odway died and the house passed to other lessees, but remained in the ownership of the Cranmer family. The present Grade II* listed Canons House was extended in the 18th century and remained in the ownership of the Cranmer family

1761 Date stone in garden wall for James Cranmer

1808 Revd William Herbert lived at The Almonds (Park Place) and was a noted botanist whose interests included breeding narcissi and crocus.

1816 Date stone in boundary wall for Mrs E M Cranmer

1822 Obelisk to commemorate rising of new spring

1922 'News of the World' sports ground created. It became training venue for Mitcham Athletics Club during the 1920s and 1930s.

1939 Descendents of the Cranmers, the Simpsons, sold it for £25,093 to Mitcham Urban District Council. During the war it became an air raid wardens' control centre and a Home Guard post. The grounds between the house and Cricket Green were used as allotments. The house is built in brick with later coursed stucco, under a hipped tiled roof.

c.1945 The Council carried out many improvements after WWII including building nurseries.

1946 Korfball was first played in the UK (by visiting Dutch teams)

1947 Canons House was listed under the Town and Country Planning Act in 1947 (Grade II). The dovecote was listed as Grade II.

1963 The area passed into public authority ownership in 1963. Tradition of formal and informal sport and recreation continues today with the bowls club, leisure centre and host of informal uses of the open space.

1965 Merger of three local authorities to form the London Borough of Merton. Works

included dredging carp pond and restocking. Walk made round pond and a new yew walk linked with the walled garden. Entrance to walled garden changed to provide access from the back, lily pond installed in the walled garden.

1983 After various plans and schemes, new swimming pool and teaching pool were opened.

1984 Sports hall adjoining the baths opened, since then, further improvements such as a 'fitness suite' (gym), squash courts and a dance studio were added.

1993 Lily pond removed

7.0 *Historic Character Areas*

Please refer to Drawing Nr. 954_02_Historic Character Areas

The following character areas have been defined for both The Canons and Park Place estate. Each area has been described in terms of their historical development.

The Canons

1. East Lawn
2. Pond
3. Entrance Drive
4. Formal Walled Garden
5. North Walled Garden
6. Courtyard
7. West Lawn
8. North Meadow
9. Orchard

Park Place

10. Glasshouses
11. Drive
12. Gardens
13. Service yards/buildings
14. Glasshouses
15. Walled Gardens
16. Orchard
17. Meadow
18. North Meadow
19. Houses
20. South Meadow

7.1 The Canons

1. *East Lawn*

- Location of former building that predates the foundation of the manor and maybe contemporaneous with or predate the Dovecote and Fish Pond
- Possible formal garden related to the manor house
- 1840s estate plan shows a 'gardenesque' layout with lawn broken up by amorphous shaped shrub beds and shrub planting screening dovecote
- Subsequent OS maps show little change following removal of shaped shrub beds by 1867.
- In 1960s yew hedging was planted around the lawn and the alley by the car park formed

2. *Pond*

- The fishpond was first mentioned in a lease of 1681 relating to a 'parcel of ground' known as The Canons
- The extract from plan of Mitcham Common 1703 (Surrey Heritage Centre 470 /1) shows a pond and dovecote on the site of The Canons
- By the mid 18th century the grounds to the east of the house were made into gardens by James Cranmer II and the pond is likely to have been incorporated as a feature in the post medieval garden
- An estate plan of The Canons of c.1840 (Surrey Heritage Centre 298/6/3) shows the pond linked to a culvert from the west where a spring rose in 1822 (site of obelisk).
- The c. 1840 estate plan shows a feature at the south east corner of the pond, possibly a summerhouse but not labelled in the references. The seat would have given excellent diagonal views across the pond to the house (same view as the footbridge today)
- The 1897 OS shows the profile of the pond had changed with the removal of the north west corner and generally rounding of the original rectangular shape
- The former footbridge at west end was removed in mid-20th century
- The brick bridge in south-east corner is likely to be a 1970s addition
- During the 1960s the pond was cleaned out and restocked with carp and former circuit path recreated to a degree

3. *Entrance Drive*

- The carriage drive is first shown on the estate plan of The Canons of c.1840 (Surrey Heritage Centre 298/6/3). The drive was sheltered on either side by trees and shrubbery
- The drive crossed a bridge over the culvert which fed the pond
- The lodge and gates were added in the 1870s or 1880s
- The drive was re-routed during the 1960s, allowing access to a gymnasium built to the north of The Canons. The sycamore avenue was also created at this time

4. *Formal Walled Garden*

- The first reference to the garden wall is in 1761 when James Cranmer built, or rebuilt, a garden wall and inserted a date-stone.
- An estate plan of The Canons of c.1840 (Surrey Heritage Centre 298/6/3) shows the location of the formal walled garden
- Sections of the 3m high walls may be contemporary with house, some possibly adapted from rear of buildings, some added in 20th century.
- The 1953 OS shows glass houses in the walled garden.
- In 1969 the garden was altered to a formal design with new paving and planting, the glasshouses were removed, a central pool was added (removed 1993) and the 1761 date-stone was reset in the east wall.

5. *North Walled Garden*

- The North Walled Garden is shown separated by a wall from the Formal Walled Garden on a plan of The Canons c.1840 (Surrey Heritage Centre 298/6/3)
- The 1871 OS shows a building extruding into the north walled garden from the coach house and stables.
- The dividing wall and buildings to the west of the North Walled Garden were removed by the time of the 1914 OS.

6. *Courtyard*

- An estate plan of The Canons of c.1840 (Surrey Heritage Centre 298/6/3) shows the courtyard between the coach house and stables
- The courtyard area is opened up following the removal of the service buildings on the west side by the time of the 1953 OS

7. *West Lawn*

- This area of pasture was shown separated by shrubbery and possibly a shelter belt from the mansion on the estate plan showing The Canons of c.1840 (Surrey Heritage Centre 298/6/3) A small pond is also shown on the map
- The 1867 OS shows it was planted with individual parkland trees, suggesting it was part of the outlook from the mansion by then
- A line of trees, largely conifers, borders the drive to the house
- The 1953 OS shows the west lawn and north meadows were amalgamated. This probably occurred when both fields were used for allotments during World War II

8. *North Meadow*

- The North Meadow was shown divided from the west lawn on the estate plan of The Canons of c.1840 (Surrey Heritage Centre 298/6/3).
- The North Meadow was left as pasture until allotments were created during World War II.

9. *Orchard*

- An orchard at The Canons was mentioned in a lease of 1681, but it is not known where it was located.

- The plan of The Canons c.1840 (Surrey Heritage Centre 298/6/3) shows an area of orchard on the east side of the mansion garden.
- The 1897 OS shows the orchard was reduced in area by this time, occupying only the north end of the garden.
- Orchard trees are clearly evident in this area in a 1937 aerial photograph of the gardens.
- A nursery, including glasshouses is shown in the orchard by the time of the 1953 OS and again on the 1971 OS
- The brick boundary wall with Park Place is still evident bordering the access road to the car park. A stone plaque is set in the wall.

7.2 Park Place

10. *Glasshouses*

- The glasshouses are first shown east of The Canons on the 1867 OS.

11. *Drive*

- The carriage drive to Park Place is first shown on the 1867 OS, sheltered by trees and shrubs and opening to a large turning circle north of the house.

12. *Gardens*

- The pleasure gardens lay to the south of Park Place and are shown on the 1867OS.
- The area defined by a boundary with a field to the south remains unchanged until the extension of Nursery adjacent to Park Place and housing to the south. Car parking for the Toby Carvery was added west of the building during the late 20th century. Gardens remain on the east side.

13. *Service Yards/ Buildings*

- The buildings shown on the 1867 OS map are likely to have included stables and coach house as well as barns
- By 1956 OS the majority of the buildings were removed
- The 1971 OS shows the remaining buildings removed

14. *Glasshouses*

- 4 linear glasshouses are shown on the 1867 OS
- The 1937 aerials show a pair of long narrow linear structures (possibly cold frames) where the glasshouses were previously located

15. *Walled Garden*

- The Park Place walled garden is marked on the 1867 OS and was defined in that location until the advent of the Sports Ground in the 1920s
- The walled boundary of the garden was an irregular shape with an angled corners at the north end

- A small glass house is shown in the centre of the area
- A recess is visible in the north east corner but this had been removed by the time of the 1897 OS
- The walled garden was subsequently overlaid by a bowling green which is evident in an aerial photograph taken in 1937

16. Orchard

- Park Place orchard is shown on the 1867 OS
- The orchard was removed when the sports ground was built and is shown overlaid by a bowling green on the 1936 OS

17. Meadow

- The meadow was located north of Park Place. The 1867 OS shows trees planted along the southern edge and a block of trees adjacent to the west boundary
- Interestingly there are three trees shown backing each side of the recess in the north east corner of the walled garden
- The meadow remains unchanged until the sports ground was built in 1920s

18. North Meadow

- This area of pasture is shown on the 1867 OS with trees along each boundary. A stock pond is shown near the south east corner. A building and small enclosure are shown in the north east corner
- This meadow was also overlaid by the News of the World Sports ground in the 1922 and Mitcham Athletics Club – facilities included a cinder running track, tennis courts, putting green and a bowling green. A pavilion was built in the north east corner
- The bowling green and tennis courts were removed in the 1980s when the Leisure Centre was built and Bellamy's Copse was planted to assist in screening the building
- A play area was also built in 1990s, eating further into the adjacent grassland

19. Cottages

- The cottages were built along Commonside West probably during the early 19th century

20. South Meadow

- South Meadow was overlooked by the south front of Park Place and was planted with parkland trees which appear to have directed views further south across the common.
- Houses were built during the 1930s across the majority of South Meadow which originally allowed views across of the commonland towards the North Downs, an area that Gregg leased for this purpose.