

Focus: Cantlowes Manor

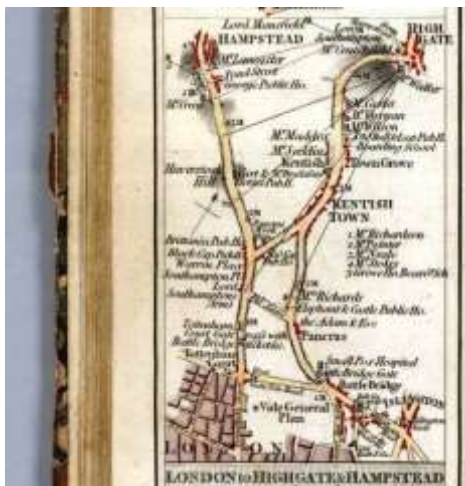
This Focus is on the corner of St Pancras Way where the Cantlowes Manor used to stand.

A record of the Museum of London Archaeological Archive Report, 1991, states: "Remnants of a medieval hearth or fire-place with a rough-hewn stone surround...Built of red roof tiles laid on edge... Post-Mediaeval wall foundations, basements and pits ... relating to houses on St Pancras Way and Baynes Street..."



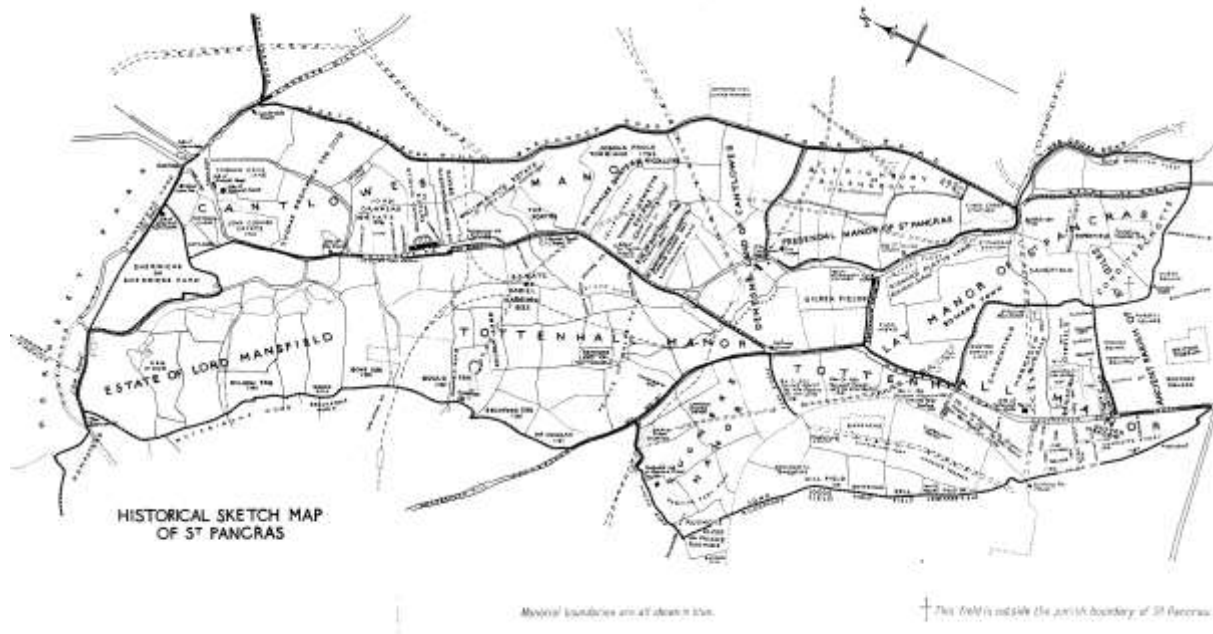
The Kings Road Forge on the corner of St Pancras Way and Baynes Street was rebuilt in 1991, presumably the reason for the excavation and finding. But why was a Mediaeval hearth there?

St Pancras Way (Kings Road) was an early road from the City of London, via Grays Inn Road, Battle Bridge (Kings Cross, crossing the Fleet) and St Pancras church, through Kentish Town to Highgate.



The Fleet, at this point, lies in the meadows – sometimes marshy, perhaps used for watercress beds, while the road turns uphill on firmer ground.

A 'Historical sketch map of St Pancras' was published in by the LCC in 1938. Primarily intended to show the estates and fields, it is anachronistic, incorporating aspects from different periods – eg main roads and railway with dotted lines.



Survey of London: Volume 19, the Parish of St Pancras Part 2: Old St Pancras and Kentish Town. <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol19/pt2/pp1-31>

While the Lay Manor and Prebendal Manor of St Pancras are shown separately, the land of Cantlowes is not separated. At the south is written 'Demesne Land of Cantlowes', without a boundary. But this land was, like the prebendal manor of St Pancras, of separate ownership and lease. The responsibilities of Cantelowes Manor reached to Highgate – the Manor Rolls show courts held until the late eighteenth century. But the manor house was at a corner of the King's Road (now St Pancras Way) within the Demesne lands.

But the land of Kentish Town had inhabitants whereas the demesne land had none. Many of the early documents use the word 'als' (= or), such as 'Cantlowes, als Cantlers, als Kentish Town'.

The prebendal manor of Cantlowes or Kentish Town

Canons of St. Paul's held landlord rights yielding a stipend from Cantlowes manor as Prebendaries, from Hubertus Vacca on 1150. Under the Cathedrals Act of 1840 as the prebends became vacated, the separate estates became vested in the Ecclesiastical Commission.

Thomas Randolph who died in 1870, was the last to hold the Cantlowes prebend. (St Paul's still has a prebendary stall for Kentish Town.)

The Parliamentary Survey of October 1649 describes

The manor house called Cantlers consisting of a little court yard, a porch entry, hall, parlour, kitchen, milk house, a little yard, washhouse, two little butteries, six chambers, a brushing room, two pairs of stairs, two little rooms next the parlour built with timber, an orchard, a fair garden with a brick wall on the south, a base yard, barn and two stables, carthouse, a little pightle adjoining, containing three acres one rood. Lands - Total acres 213a 1r.

Mr. King writes: *After the destruction by Fire of the old Workhouse situate in the Back Road the Poor were removed to a House at the southern end of Water Lane which was a handsome brick edifice once the Mansion of a Gentleman, afterwards an inn, and ultimately the Parish Workhouse and Chapel ... which stood until it began to decay, when it was removed to its present site in the King's Road, Camden Town.*

The St. Pancras Poor (1905) by Walter E. Brown describes the workhouses in St Pancras parish from 1718 to 1904. cf also: Walter Brown, *St Pancras Open Spaces & Burial Grounds* (Town Hall St Pancras), 1911.

This workhouse was superseded by one opened in 1809 in King's Road, and the old premises were sold in 1817. Camden Town Tube station now occupies part of the site.

Kentish Town Road

When St. Giles in the Fields was erected a line of road was formed from thence leading direct into Hampstead and ever since known as the Hampstead Road, passing the Britannia Tavern onwards, on the other side of the Halfway House called Mother Redcap was a very narrow lane leading into Kentish Town not passable either for Man or Beast in consequence of the frequent overflow of the River fleet which found its way thus connecting it with the flow of Water which continually passed at the back of the "Back Road" crossing Battle Bridge direct into the fleet ditch, hence then it derives its name as Water Lane, and continued to be so called until the present buildings were erected, then it was called "the Kentish Town Road."

<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol19/pt2/pp60-62#p9>

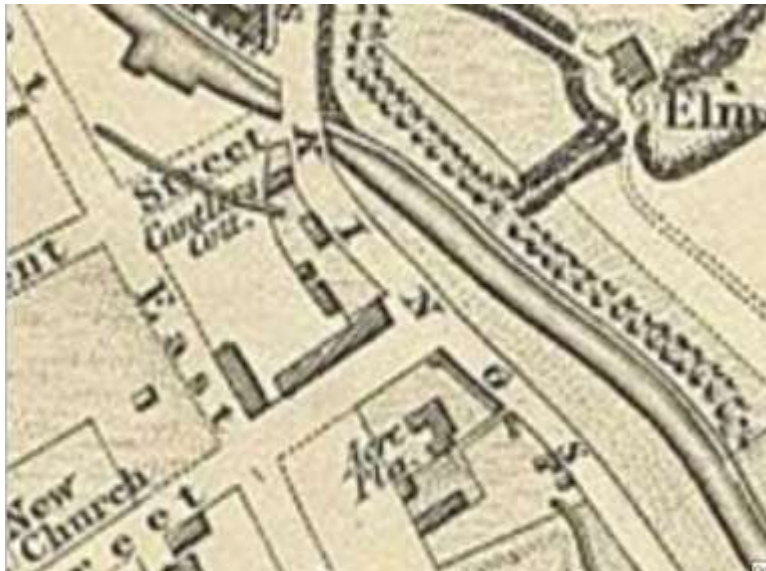
In 1809 St Pancras demesne land was bought by William Agar.

Elm Lodge property extended as far south as Cook's Row. On the road side an immense number of poplar trees were planted, which grew so high as completely to shade the Road, and in summer rendered it most pleasant and picturesque when in full foliage. William Agar was Counsellor Agar of Lincolns Inn, who purchased the lease of the mansion



The site of Cantlowes Manor

One argument in favour of the site at the River Fleet / King's Road junction is that the 1827 Greenwood map at this point shows 'Cantlowes Cott's':

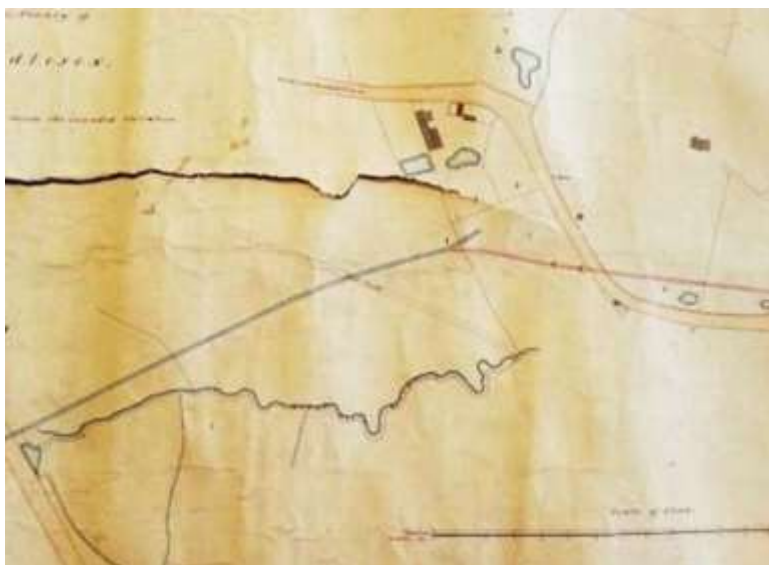


Greenwood 1827

The 1750s Roque map of London and Environs (there are various versions) show the farm buildings on the west of Kings Road, and a building opposite – which would fit with King's panorama.



A later (1815) map, of a 'proposed' route for the Regent's Canal (which was disputed by Mr Agar, who had bought Elm Lodge and the St Paul's prebendary land) shows the farm buildings, without any building opposite, on the corner of Kings Road, and the canal line and River Fleet below. (The upper serrated line is a tear in the paper.)



This fits relatively well with a picture looking towards “Mr Agar’s house and garden” ... “near Kentish Town”



Camden Local Studies Archive

Moreover, it is possible that the reverse view, now looking towards the farm up Kings Road and Hampstead in the distance, is seen in this undated print. If so, the building on the left could be the workhouse – although not recorded as such:



A view of a FARM HOUSE, and adjacent Country near Kentish Town, Middlesex.
Camden Local Studies Archive (no date)

A last perspective on the original location of the Canteloves Manor comes from the later development. The map below is of the early 1830s and shows the development of central Camden Town. The earlier buildings were around Jeffreys Street. With creation of the new Camden Road from 1826 came Brecknock Terrace and Brecknock Crescent. Jeffreys and Brecknock were the (second) Earl of Camden's titles; but the Canteloves demesne land was leased from the Church of St Pauls. The Prebendary, from 1812 Thomas Randolph, was also Lord of the Manor. As well as the initial St Paul's Terrace on King's Road, the corner where Canteloves Manor had stood was named after the prebend, with roads called Rudolph Street and Prebend Street..



1830s



1840s



Figure 10a:

St. Pancras Workhouse and the Agar Estate, c. 1850

<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol19/pt2/plate-10>

Elm Lodge, Mr Agar's house.



Collage 305446