

THE SERPENTINE and THE PADDOCK

This appendix is written in response to a request and should be read in conjunction with the published Short History of Curzon Park available on the CPRA website.

Prior to the most recent development both areas were owned by Mrs Dorothy Brown who was a member of the Browns of Chester department store family who had been prominent Chester citizens since the 1750's (see 'The Browns of Chester' in Chester library.) Their family house was Rivermeade, 18 Curzon Park North built in 1908. Dorothy Brown lived in 21 Curzon Park North until 1978.

THE SERPENTINE.

My guess is that The Serpentine was let out for grazing for the horses belonging to the various houses in Curzon Park North, none of which had sufficient grazing land of their own although several had stables and coach houses. The 1873 OS map shows a structure on the land now occupied by White gates which was variously known as an apple store or even a squash court but, in my view, was originally a stables. The Serpentine mere was originally a much larger dumb bell shape than at present extending to nos. 4 and 6 Curzon Park South. The mere would have provided drinking water for the horses. Viscount Curzon sold the land to William Brown in 1886 which is now occupied by nos. 1-5 The Serpentine. Nos. 6-8 occupy land that was the rear garden of no. 8 Curzon Park South belonging to the Hartley family. The present development was completed in 1986.

The 1873 OS map also shows a path leading from Curzon Park North across the farm fields through a pedestrian tunnel under the railway and on down to what was then the riverside wharves and railway sidings at Saltney. The first section of that path is now The Serpentine road which continued across the present day Paddock. A further section survives as the footpath out of Greenway to Mount Pleasant. The path still exists from that point on and continues down the escarpment under the railway, around the golf course and down to the river where bollards can still be seen. It must have been an important route for the railway to have built a tunnel to accommodate it but it can only have been a footpath because of the steep descent down the escarpment from Mount Pleasant. This route is also shown on the Thomas map of Chester dated 1853. What was its purpose?

THE PADDOCK

The present development was completed in 1980. Before that the area was a rough field except for the land now occupied by nos. 16 and 18 which was an orchard associated with no. 21 Curzon Park North. The Tithe map of 1839 describes the area now occupied by nos. 12-26 Curzon Park South as Windmill Fields and there are archival references to the existence of windmills in that area. I am told that at one stage The Queen's School had the use of tennis courts on The Paddock and that there was also a pavilion, although I have not found any documentary evidence to that effect.

I have no doubt that long term Curzon Park residents can add to these notes and I will be pleased to hear from them.

Clive Howard

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