

STAMFORD BRIDGE TO WALHAM GREEN



Stamford Bridge was the crossing point of the creek that marked the eastern boundary of Fulham with Chelsea. Fulham Road was originally known as the king's highway leading to London. Later it was called the London Road and it was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that its present name became established. It was a favourite route for coaches travelling to and from London to Guildford and the south.

Stamford Bridge is now closely identified with Chelsea Football Club. The freehold of Stamford Bridge Stadium, formerly an athletic ground, was purchased in 1904 by Mr H. A. Mears. He and others succeeded in putting together a football team and getting

it accepted into the Football League by the following year, despite the fact that the new club had not played a game.

The settlement at Walham Green (renamed Fulham Broadway in the mid twentieth century) lay in approximately the centre of the parish of Fulham at the junction of roads leading north, east, south and west. It was situated around the green and pond where St. John's church now stands. The Swan Brewery, established in the 1740s, and market gardening were the principal industries of the area. The building of St. John's church in 1828 and St. John's National Schools (boys, girls and infants) in 1836 were the start of the main period of development of Walham Green, and by the end of the nineteenth century it was a crowded working class area.

With the extension of the railway to Putney in 1880 a new station opened at Walham Green and further development quickly followed. A theatre and several cinemas established Walham Green as an entertainment centre. Its central position also made it a focal point for municipal administration and services. Fulham Town Hall was built here in 1888-90, followed by the Public Baths and Wash-houses in 1902. Recently, major developments at Fulham Broadway Station and Vanston Place have brought new commercial activity to the area.