

Back in Time - 31 - Cavendish Road Nursery and Sports Ground

by John Rabbitt

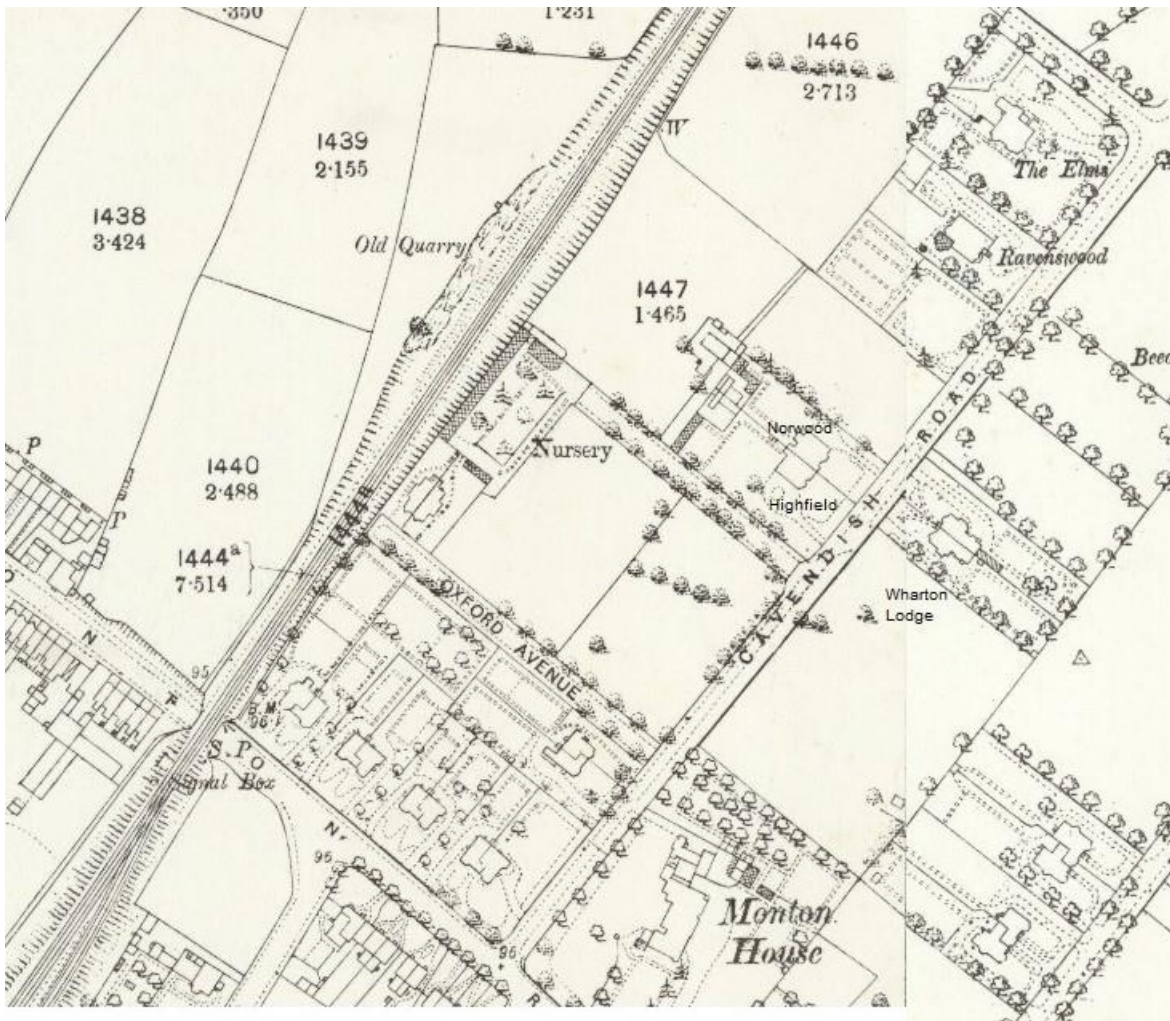
I thought it might be interesting to visit Cavendish Road again. I have one new photograph of Cavendish Road, four maps and some questions.

The photograph, Cavendish Road, shows Wharton lodge on the right, next to the open ground with the two boys looking at something interesting. For me, what is fascinating is the opening on the other side of the road. There are two large gate posts and what appears to be a significant sign which unfortunately we cannot read. The property on the corner of this entry, next to the lamppost, is Highfield, the next house along is Norwood. This driveway eventually became Bedford Road which now leads to Ravensdale Gardens. The site of Highfield and Norwood was developed as the Mistral Court apartments.



CAVENDISH ROAD, ELLESMERE PARK, ECCLES

Cavendish Road looking N.E. from Monton Road



Map of Cavendish Road 1893

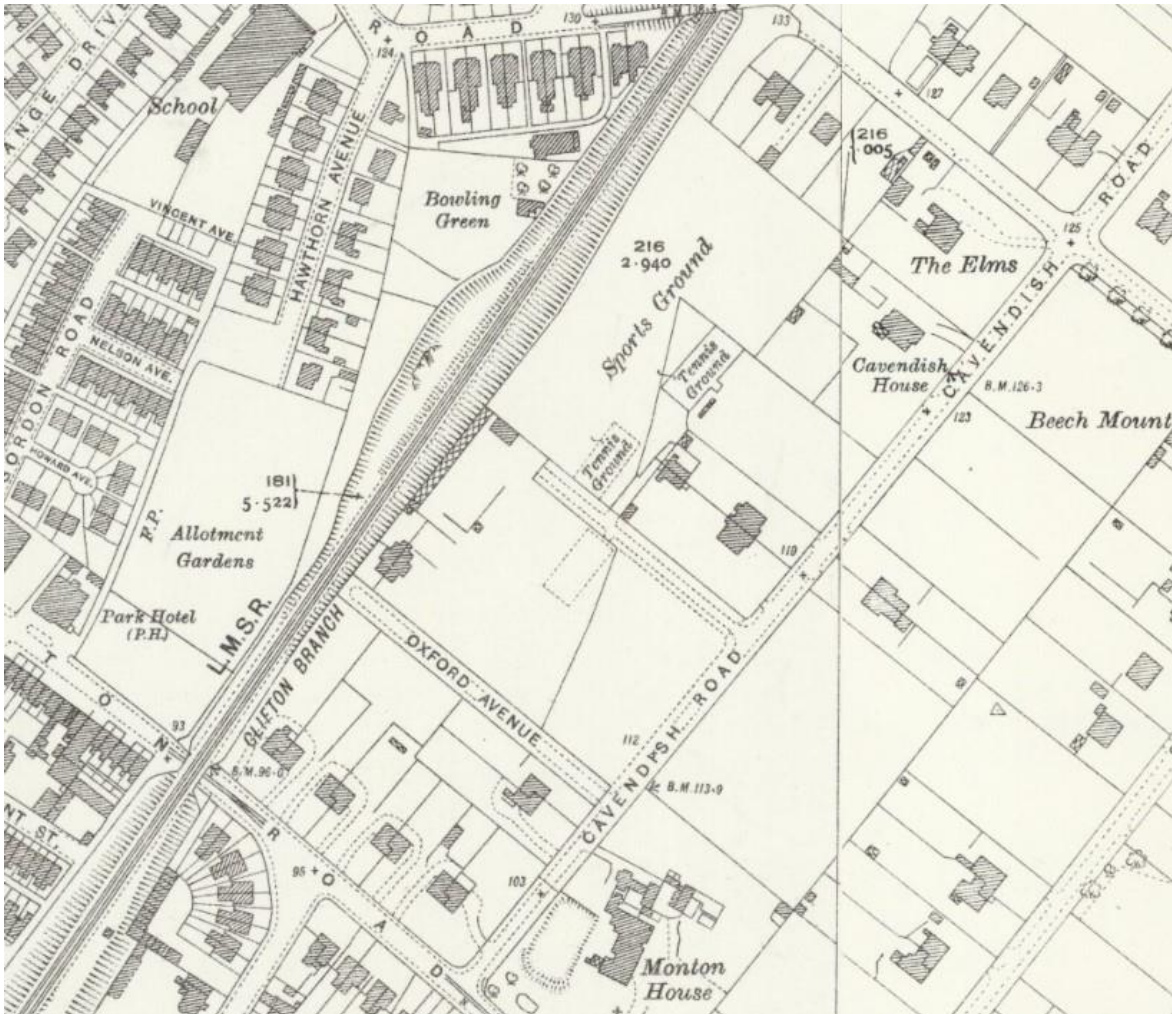
If you look at the 1893 map of Cavendish Road, the driveway to the side of Highfield leads to a site labelled 'Nursery'. This driveway is unnamed, unlike the road closer to Monton Road which is named Oxford Avenue and leads to a pair of semi-detached houses; Oxford Avenue was eventually renamed Dovedale Avenue. Was the nursery at the end of this driveway connected with the house on Oxford Avenue? Did Ellesmere Park have its very own garden centre? On this map the fields numbered 1446 and 1447 do not appear to be occupied apart from a small enclosure at the back of Norwood.

The house further up Cavendish Road, 'Ravenswood', was renamed 'Cavendish House' while it was owned by Thomas Henry Gardner the director of L. Gardners & Sons, the diesel engine company.



Map of Cavendish Road 1908

The 1908 map still shows an enclosure at the end of the driveway but it does not identify it as a nursery. This map also shows a rectangular enclosure in what is now field number 183.



Map of Cavendish Road 1929

The 1929 map becomes more interesting in that the land behind Highfield and Norwood is now identified as a Sports Ground with two 'Tennis Grounds' indicated. Also, the boundary fence of the house on Oxford Avenue is not shown, as if the owner owns all the large adjacent plot of land on which the outline of another tennis court can be seen. The curved line across this plot of land was a fence as it subsequently defined the rear boundary of the properties built on Cavendish Road in the 1930s.



Map of Cavendish Road 1936

On the 1936 map the driveway has now been named “Bedford Road”. The Sports Ground is still identified, but now with one tennis court, the identification of a ‘Nursery’ reappears, this time with a tennis court shown.

Tennis was certainly very popular in Ellesmere Park in the 1930s. The 1933 diary of Joseph Stevenson, found in Sameera’s loft with the Operatic Society Programme, contains numerous entries in the summer months of playing tennis, sometimes three or four times a week. The area shown as the Sports Ground eventually became the cul-de-sac we know today as Ravensdale Gardens.

It would be interesting if anyone knows the history of the nursery and sports ground located in this part of Ellesmere Park. Perhaps when the Salford Local History Library reopens after lockdown it would be interesting to see if they have any records of the nursery and sports ground off Cavendish Road.

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