



History Nugget for July 2016 : The Vicarage Wall Cut Corner

The National Library of Scotland have been digitising and publishing online Ordnance Survey maps that are out of copyright. These maps can be viewed on their website by themselves, or on top of, or even side-by-side, current maps.

The 1:1250 scale, surveyed in late 1940s, early 1950s, gives the most detail showing individual buildings, with house numbers and boundaries.

On the 1953 map showing the Vicarage on Church Road, the wall on the junction with Vicarage Gardens can be seen to be curved, as it is today. However the corner of the wall at Church Path is seen as a right angle, which it isn't today.

Opposite this corner is the building known today as the 'La Sporta Community Centre', which is shown on this 1953 map as a clinic. The Maternity and Child Welfare centre was built in around 1940 and took over from the Parish Rooms the ante-natal and post-natal clinics. It also offered mothercraft and parentcraft classes. Its corner wall is at 45 degrees.

At the southern of Church Path were a number of businesses, including the surgical instruments company of Down Brothers, Mayer & Phelps. In December 1958 they suggested to the Mitcham Borough Council that to improve the sightline at the junction with Church Road, the corner of the Vicarage wall be cut to 45 degrees. The company was prepared to pay for all the work, including paving the triangular piece of land exposed by the new wall, provided that the Council take it over and maintain it as part of the highway.

The Church Commissioners agreed to the proposal by Down Brothers, and the Borough Engineer recommended it to the Council.

Sources:

- 1) National Library of Scotland OS Map : <http://bit.ly/2aapY1t>
- 2) Proceedings of the Mitcham Borough Council Volume XXV 1958 – 59, page 513.

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