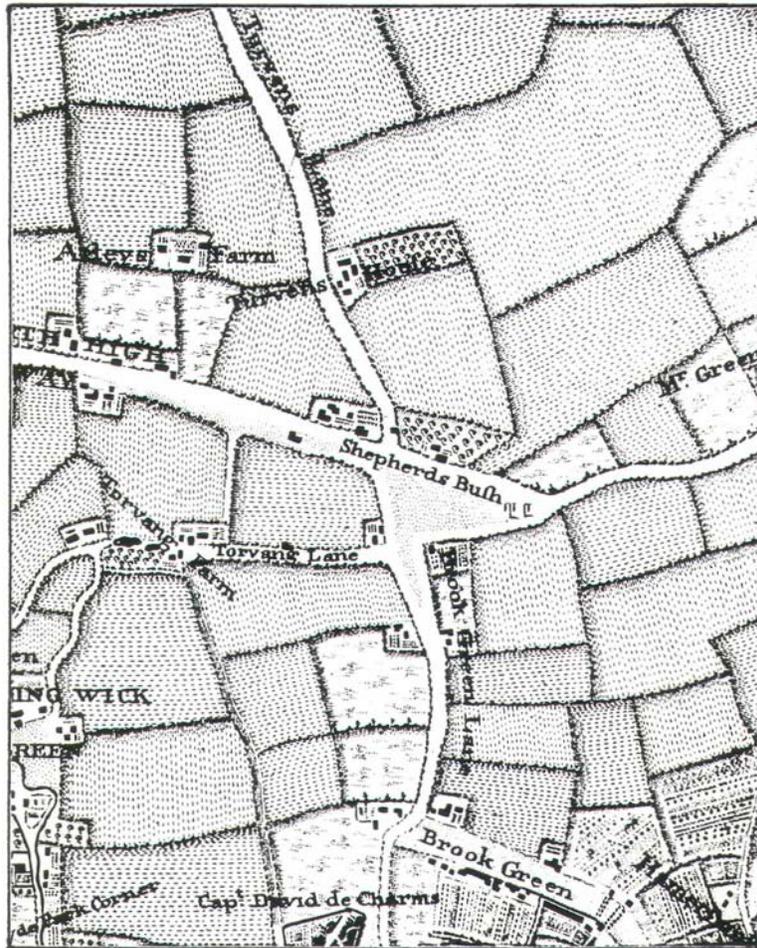


Chapter one

INTRODUCTION

The Road from Tyburn - Wormwood Scrubs
The Grand Union Canal - The Railway

THE FIRST mention of the road now known as Wood Lane, as far as can be traced, appears under the cryptic direction "To Wormhold Wood" on a map (1) of "the Great Road from Tyburn to Uxbridge", dated about 1769. But prior to this, a map of London of 1741-5 (1) refers to it as Turvens Lane and marks the presence of Turvens House on the site



Map,1743

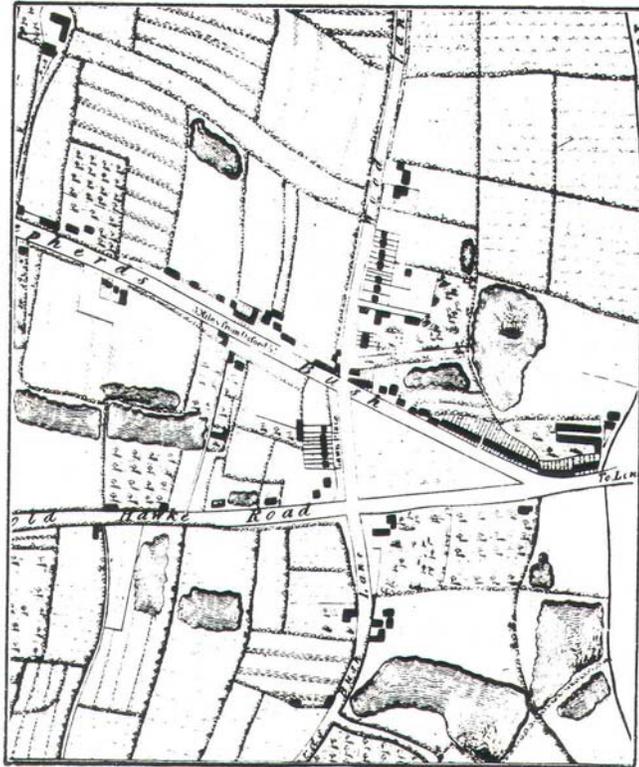
of the present L. T. E. Depot. At that time, the now well-known Lane couldn't have been much more than a cart track, bounded by open fields. No prominent buildings existed and the railway was yet to appear.

Chapter
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Another map (1) dated 1810 also marks Turvens House Farm, but on a plan of the Parish of Hammersmith (2) dated 1895, the name appears to have become Eynham House and Farm. Between these two dates, on a map of 1833 (1) the name of Wood Lane Farm appears, but on checking our facts most carefully we came to the conclusion that this was in fact the next farm "up the lane", being situated on what is now the site of Marks and Spencer's Warehouses. Unfortunately, we have been unable to determine to which of these farms the site we now occupy formerly belonged but it seems certain that it was the property of one of them, probably the former. Many years later, traces of the farming activities of the areas were to be uncovered (including a very wellrotted manure heap), during excavations under what is now Ariel Way leading up to the Research Laboratories, for the White City Underground Line extensions out to Acton.

In passing, it is of interest to note that the road known as Wood Lane, as distinct from the country lane which preceded it, was built in 1812 by "the Military", who had taken over Wormholt Scrubs (now Wormwood Scrubs) as a rifle range and exercise ground for the Guards (3).

About this time, i.e. the early 1800's, activities were springing up in the area. The Grand Union Canal was opened in 1801 and old prints of the occasion (1) make it seem as if the main use of it would be for pleasure, the utilitarian aspect being sadly neglected. In 1837 the "Sport of Kings" arrived on the scene with the opening of



Map,

1840

a racecourse on the side of Notting Hill (1). This course covered some 200 acres and was bounded on the east by Portobello Road, on the north by a line between the present

Cornwall and Lancaster Roads, and on the west by a "public way from Notting Barns Farm" which is now approximately covered by Clarendon Road.

Unfortunately (?) the venture only lasted five years and the Hippodrome Racecourse, as it was known, was closed down due, at least in part, to public feeling over the closure of a public footpath which ran across the course (Ref. (1) goes into considerable detail here).

The first railway systems were appearing at this time and the Great Western Line (as far as Maidenhead) was opened in 1838, to be followed by the West London Railway in 1840. In or about 1858 the Hammersmith and City Line (which is now the Metropolitan Line) was opened.

The latter part of the nineteenth century saw the erection of the West London Iron Works on the site now occupied by Marks and Spencer's Warehouses and signs of activity on the site which we now occupy.