

THE HISTORY OF YOUR AREA

Evidence of an early riverside settlement close to the Crabtree Estate was uncovered by archaeologists in the 1970s. Their finds included pottery and tools dating as far back as 3,000 BC. A decade later, an early Saxon settlement was discovered from the 5th century AD. On the grounds of the former Brandenburg House, the skeleton of a horse was amongst their finds.

First built in 1625, Brandenburg House was thought to be one of the most impressive houses in London and later had its own outdoor theatre. Positioned on the riverbank, the house sat roughly on the site of Winslow Road. Formerly Brandenburg Road, it was renamed to commemorate Dr Forbes Winslow, an expert in the treatment of mental illness, who set up an asylum in nearby St Dunstan's Road.

The Crabtree Estate was built on land previously owned by Fulham's last farmer, Edward Matyear, whose family had been market gardeners in the area for over a century. Crabtree Farm stretched from Crabtree Lane up to Colwith Road with the farmhouse situated on the corner of Larnach Road and Rannoch Road. The Crabtree Inn was popular with farm workers though there were numerous taverns along Fulham's riverside for them to choose from. In the 1760s it had been known as 'The Pot House' after a pottery operating in the area. It later changed its name to 'The Three Jolly Gardeners'. The only Fulham riverside inn to

survive, our photograph shows The Crabtree before it was rebuilt in 1898.

Crabtree Farm's orchards were well stocked with wild or crab apple trees from where the area takes its name - though Matyear himself was renowned for growing prize winning strawberries. When he died in 1910 he left his land to the King Edward VII Hospital Fund who sold it on to local developers Allen and Norris. Building work began on the 'Crabtree Lane Estate' the following year. When the houses were advertised for sale it was announced that every house on the Estate would cost the same - £285. William Gilbert Allen decided to leave an unusual mark on the estate by naming Nella Road after himself – it is his surname spelt backwards.

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