

## ABBNEYFIELDS

4 roads bound the area of Abbeyfields, and it cannot be seen easily as houses are built surrounding three sides of them and the old railway line on the 4<sup>th</sup> side. The roads are Crewe Road to the east, Middlewich Road to the north, Abbey Road to the west and Hind Heath Road to the south.

This large area of land was occupied by the "Order of Dieulacre" from the Leek area of Staffordshire. It started with the abbey and one field, then known as "Abbots Field". This area grew as donations of land to the Abbey were given by various people.

Richard De Sondbach's family had a certain control over this land, and upon his death, this control passed to his wife Elizabeth, who then was remarried to Richard Hassall. In 1423/24 Geoffrey Peek challenged them in law as to who owned it. The estate then consisted of 20 acres of pasture land and 20 acres of meadow, and one water mill in Hindheath.

To all their surprise the then Abbott also contested the rights of the land, and quoting from the Domesday Book as evidence, he won the law suite as belonging to the "Order of Dieulacres".

1538 / 40 at Henry VIII's command ( the dissolution of the Monasteries) it became a rented property of the Crown, for £1-4s- 6d with the change of the buildings name to "Fields House".

In 1686 the estate was described as in Hind Heath, and was purchased by Ellen, the widow of William Ford of Fordgreen in Staffordshire, from John Hassal and Edmund Turner from Covent Garden.

"Adam's Weekly Courant" printed in Chester 5<sup>th</sup> February 1771, records this :-  
"On Monday the twenty-first of January last, (at his own Hall formerly called Field House near Sandbach) died John Moss, Gentleman, aged eighty-two years and perfectly sensible to the last. He was an honest Man, a sincere Friend, a kind Master and a loving and peaceable Neighbour."

In the early 1800's the house was rebuilt by John Ford.

John was popularly known as Colonel Ford, as he was the force behind the raising of the Manchester and Salford Light Horse Volunteers, these were disbanded in 1802.

One year later he and Randle Wilbraham of Rode formed a corps of Volunteers in Sandbach and Rode. John Ford became Lieut. -Colonel Commandant, and Randle Wilbraham was Major. The regiment consisted of six companies, comprising 360 men in all.

The report of his death states John Ford of Abbey Fields died 14<sup>th</sup> April 1839 aged 72 years.

1872 the estate was purchased by Robert Heath of Newcaste-under-Lyme.

During the world war the house was used as a hospital.

Now the house has been turned into Flats.