



## THE QUEENS ARMS

# History of The Queens Arms and Pimlico

Our pub was built in 1846 as the Queens Arms, but it has gone through a few name changes since then. In 1944 the address changed from 11 Warwick Street to 11 Warwick Way; in the 1970s it was renamed the Royal Gardener, it then had a spell as the Slug and Lettuce until 2006 when it became the Page. In 2010 it returned to its original name 'the Queens Arms'.

The earliest resident recorded is from 1856, a Mr Thos Adams, although nothing much is known about him. A snapshot of life at the pub is illustrated a little better by the time we get to the 1881 when records show more about the residents there at that time. John Kirk Burch was 32 and the 'Licensed Victualler' or as we would call him Landlord. His wife Emma Burch was 29 and appears to have had a 3 year old son, John and a 2 month old daughter Emma Amelia. They were joined by two 'barmen' Maria Faulkner (22) and Sarah Ann Kimber (21), Rebecca Jane Dowse a 21 year old servant and two nurses, Emma Jessie Thompson (19) and Susannah Cunnington, a 'Ladies Nurse' of 59.



*Queens Arms, then the Page in 2006*



*Queens Arms, 11 Warwick Way, SW1 - circa 1963*

### Pimlico

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Manor of Ebury was divided up and leased by the Crown to servants or favourites. In 1623, James I sold the freehold of Ebury for £1,151 and 15 shillings. The land was sold on several more times, until it came into the hands of heiress Mary Davies in 1666.

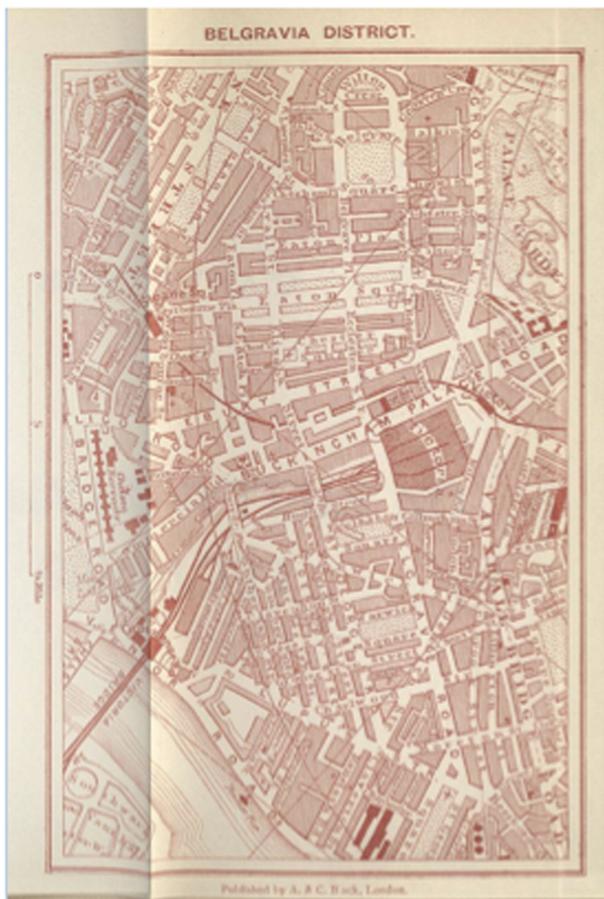
Mary's dowry not only included "The Five Fields" of modern-day Pimlico and Belgravia, but also most of what is now Mayfair and Knightsbridge. Understandably, she was much pursued and in 1677, at the age of twelve, married Sir Thomas Grosvenor, 3rd Baronet.



*Belgrave Road, Pimlico*

At some point in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century, the area ceased to be known as Ebury or “The Five Fields” and gained the name of Pimlico. Whilst the origins of the name are disputed, it is thought of as being from foreign derivation. Sometimes Pimlico is spoken of as a person and may quite probably have been the master of a house once famous for ale of a particular description. Supporting this etymology, Rev. Brewer describes the area as “a district of public gardens much frequented on holidays. According to tradition it received its name from Ben Pimlico, famous for his nut-brown ale.” His tea-gardens, however, were near Hoxton and the road to them was termed Pimlico Path, so that what is now called Pimlico was so named from the popularity of the Hoxton resort.

H.G. Wells in his novel *The Dream*, says that there was a wharf at Pimlico where ships from America docked and that the word Pimlico came with the trade and was the last word left alive of the Algonquin Indian language (Pamlico).



*Belgravia and Pimlico in 1903*

By the nineteenth century as a result of an increase in demand for property in the previously unfashionable West End of London, following the Great Plague of London and the Great Fire of London, Pimlico had become ripe for development. The land up to this time had been marshy but was reclaimed using soil excavated during the construction of St Katharine Docks.

The Architect Cubitt developed Pimlico as a grid of handsome white stucco terraces. The largest and most opulent houses were built along St George’s Drive and Belgrave Road, the two principal streets and Eccleston, Warwick and St George’s Squares. Lupus Street contained similarly grand houses as well as shops and until the early twentieth century, a hospital for women and children.

An 1877 newspaper article described Pimlico as “genteel, sacred to professional men... not rich enough to luxuriate in Belgravia proper, but rich enough to live in private houses.” Its inhabitants were “more lively than in Kensington... and yet a cut above Chelsea, which is only commercial.”

Although the area was dominated by the well-to-do middle and upper-middle classes as late as Booth’s 1889 Map of London Poverty, parts of Pimlico are said to have declined significantly by the 1890s. When Rev. Gerald Olivier moved to the neighbourhood in 1912 with his family, including the young Laurence Olivier, to minister to the parishioners of St Saviour, it was part of a venture to help the west London “slums”.

Proximity to the Houses of Parliament made Pimlico a centre of political activity. Prior to 1928, the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress shared offices in Eccleston Square and it was here in 1926 that the general strike was organised.

Pimlico survived the war with its essential character intact, although parts sustained significant bomb damage. Through the 1950s these areas were the focus of large-scale redevelopment such as the Churchill Gardens and Lillington and Longmoore Gardens estates and many of the larger Victorian houses were converted to hotels and other uses.

It wasn’t until late 1972 that Pimlico was connected to the underground as a late addition to the Victoria line.