

ADDITIONAL HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO JOSEPH SLOPER

This information is from an article by Michael Alpert entitled "West Hampstead's Railway Invasion". The 5 page article was published in 1979 and tells the whole story of the building of West Hampstead Station. I have a sincere apology to tender to the person who supplied me with this information - I have failed to keep a note of their name. Please write in and I will acknowledge in the next Bulletin.

For those who visited Sloper's Works, or know the area, you will recall that West Hampstead Underground Station is just round the corner from Blackburn Road, in which road is situated Sloper's Works.

One part of the article reads:-

"The land which the railway was to cross on its way from Finchley Road to West Hampstead was divided into fields. There were no buildings, except for odd sheds and piggeries lying where the line now curves after leaving Finchley Road. Most of the land was owned by the Lord of the Manor, Sir John Maryon-Wilson, though Blackburn Road, adjacent to the line, was occupied by Joseph Sloper.

Sloper owned the road which led to his engineering works, which still stands. He nagged the Vestry endlessly about encroachment and annoyance by the contractors for the line, the navvies and the vagabonds who camped out along the line of the works. He objected to West End Lane being raised for the bridge and refused the Vestry's offer to raise Blackburn Road and pay his

legal costs. Sloper's anger is puzzling. One would have thought that better transport could only be to his advantage as a factory-owner .

The only industrial buildings were Potter's Ironworks in West End, with West Cottages that were built for the workers, and Joseph Sloper's Works in Blackburn Road, probably est. in 1872".

There is a footnote in the original article that this information is from the Vestry of St. John, Minute 14 July 1881. The author comments that it might be interesting to investigate why Potter and Sloper opened factories in a semi-rural area.

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