

## **THE ATTFIELD HOUSE**

At the corner of High Road and Oakleigh Road North in 1486 John Doggett owned a cottage "with curtilage and three crofts called Beldam, Middlefield and Cokkefield". By 1796 Richard Attfield had replaced the cottage by three cottages running east down Oakleigh Road. Attfield, who came to Whetstone in 1790, was a grocer and a parish clerk. He had beautiful handwriting. It is in his hand that a moving entry in the parish accounts reads: "To burying a poor unknown boy 6d, and a box for putting him in 4d".

Attfield planted a row of elm trees along the High Road which were a feature that the Whetstone Society today seeks to emulate. The cottages were demolished after 1881 and the present row of yellow brick shops erected.

Attfield's grandson was Professor John Attfield, born in the family home in 1835. He was educated at Queen Elizabeth's School in Barnet and apprenticed to the Pharmaceutical Society for three years. He scored full marks in every examination paper and won first prize in every subject in his final year 1853/4. He was Professor of Practical Chemistry for the Society from 1862 until 1896 and was largely responsible for the acceptance of the sign BP as a complete guarantee of drug purity. His standard work "Chemistry - General, Medical and Pharmaceutical" ran to 19 editions and was for more than a century the pharmacist's bible. He died in Watford in 1911.

Source: "Finchley and Whetstone Past" by John Heathfield (Historical Publications Ltd, London, 2001, ISBN 0 948667 75 3), pages 122-123.