



Edmund de Langley
& Isabella de Castilla

THE POUND

The old village Pound was moved here from behind cottages in the High Street in 1835. A replacement was erected in 1959 and a complete rebuild in English oak was undertaken by the Parish Council in 2018, incorporating the ironwork reclaimed from the previous structure. It was first mentioned in the village records in 1305. Pound Cottage (opposite), was the pound keeper's cottage and is Grade II listed and dates circa 1600. At one time it was a 'charity cottage' for the poor of the parish.

The word 'pound' comes from the old English word 'pund', meaning pen or enclosure. In medieval times, most villages had a pound. The most common purpose was to impound stray animals until they were claimed by their owners. The owner would have to pay a fine which was claimed by the person on whose land they had strayed for any damage done and a fee to the pound keeper for feeding and watering the animals.

The man in charge of impounding stray animals was paid by the Lord of the Manor and was known as a 'pinder' or 'pounder'. Fines and disputes were documented in manorial court records.

In medieval times fields were open, so it would be easy for animals to stray on to neighbouring land. They were used up until farmland was enclosed in the 17th to 19th centuries.

If the animals were not claimed within a few weeks, they were taken to market and sold, the proceeds going to the impounder and the pound-keeper.

In some cases, the person onto whose land animals had strayed, cut a stick and made notches, one for every 'beast', and then split the stick down the centre of the notches so that half of each notch appeared on each stick; one half being kept, the other given to the pound-keeper. When the owner came to redeem his beasts, and had paid for the damage done, the impounder gave him his half stick. He took this to the pound keeper and if the two pieces tallied, it proved he had paid and the 'beast' was freed. Hence the word 'tally-stick' and the pounder being referred to as the 'tallyman'.

THE OLD POUND AND VILLAGE WELL

From THE PARISH OF KINGS LANGLEY:
"ITS ANCIENT CHURCH AND ITS HISTORIC ASSOCIATIONS"
by John Parker Haythornthwaite, MA
Vicar of Kings Langley, Herts
Published 1924

"These may still be seen from the lane leading to the Common, outside the Vicarage Spinney. The Pound has long been disused, and is falling to pieces, but the remaining woodwork and iron hinges of the gate show it was very substantially built. There was at one time a small lock-up for 'drunks', but happily it is no longer required! The old Village well at the entrance to the Common was regularly used until recently but is now closed. Up to 1897, Kings Langley was entirely dependent upon local wells for the supply of water. It was only in 1917 that the Vicarage well, 80ft deep and situate in the scullery, was finally closed."



Pre 1900



Early 1900



1905



Before the rebuild in 2017