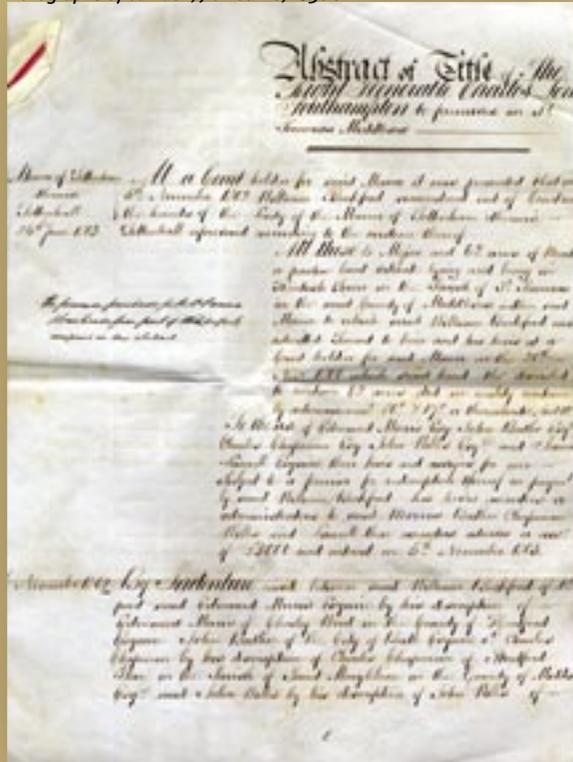


## 2 The coming of the railways and sale of the first site



Lithographs of Camden, J C Bourne, 1830's

National Railway Museum and Science Museum (Science and Sports Picture Library)



Abstract of Title & Indenture to lands on Wilkin Street dating back to 1802



Hand written Law Report 1857



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### Construction

In the middle of the nineteenth century Camden and Kentish Town became a bustle of transport-related engineering and labour; as the pace of the industrial revolution quickened the urban landscape of northwest London was ruthlessly torn up and re-fashioned.

### Threat

On the 4 July 1854 the St Pancras Almshouses Managing Committee received notice from the Hampstead and City Junction Railway Co. of their intention to seek permission to construct their new railway line on arches over the land on which the recently built Almshouses stood. A long legal battle ensued, but the proposed railway line was a vital link between the Midland region and London, and in the end the St Pancras Almshouses could not save their property from the new iron road.

### Compensation

That battle lost, the Charity began a second campaign – for proper compensation. The railways only wanted to pay for the bit of land they were actually going to use. But the new line would make the Almshouses uninhabitable, and the Charity very reasonably argued that they should be compensated for the loss of the whole property. A Law Report from *The Times* in 1857 set out the case that followed: *The bill in this case was filed by Lord Robert Grosvenor, Earl Talbot, Mr Benjamin Bond Cabbell, and Mr Donald Fraser, the Trustees of the St Pancras Almshouses Institution praying for an injunction to restrain the above named Railway Company (Hampstead Junction) from entering or interfering*

*with an acre of ground,... on which is built part of the almshouses or that, if they are entitled to take any part of the land, they may be decreed to take the whole.*

The case was important enough to end up at the Lord Justices' Court, the equivalent of the modern Court of Appeal. This time the St Pancras Almshouses Charity won. The Hampstead Junction Railway agreed to pay the Charity £6,000 compensation for losing their land and the Almshouses that had been so recently built on it.