

Building Report

192 Sutton Road, Kidderminster

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Introduction

This report has been undertaken as part of the Historic Kidderminster Project. This house is of great interest as part of a significant development of a row of cottages along the west side of Sutton Road in Kidderminster Foreign. The land was taken from a field belonging to Sutton Farm. It seems to have been a very early example of a private initiative to enable a number of individual owners to quickly build upon a line of plots. That it was successful is shown by a map c1840 surveyed by Court showing the complete row of developed plots. (WRO BA 12944) Situated in the area opposite Hume Street, many of these cottages survive and are distinctive because they are at a slight angle to Sutton Road, following the line of the plots. Numbers 192 and 193 Sutton Road were built c1839. Resources of Worcester Record Office have been used. We have also been able to make use of the deeds to the house held by the present owner of number 192, Susan Ridgeway.

History

Although this development might have some of the characteristics of a land society, it is almost certain that a club was not involved. In 1849, in an article which had already discussed such societies, the *Worcestershire Chronicle* went on to say:

“In other places enterprising individuals have bought a piece of ground suitable for building purposes, and retailed it to others at a profit averaging 1s a yard. Sutton Common, New Wood Street, York Street, Lark Hill, and many other places, were built in this manner.” (WC 26.12.1849)

The reference to Sutton Common must mean this group of houses being considered here, including number 192. Unfortunately Mrs Ridgeway's deeds do not make clear who the 'enterprising individual' might have been. The earliest deed we have is from 1839. Its brief description of the conveyance of 1825 refers to the involvement of Leonard Duncan, and it is possible he was the driving force behind the development. His name regularly appears on Kidderminster deeds. He was described by Ebenezer Guest as an agent of Lord Foley. (KS 13.5.1905) In the 1851 census he was a maltster living at Proud Cross.

The origin of the two houses 192 and 193 lie in the purchase of a piece of land in July 1825 by John Beavan, a labourer, and his wife. He built a house in which he lived, but his land was big enough to eventually take more houses. (This has been demolished along with one other house, formerly number 194 and 195. They have been replaced by one modern house.) Not being a wealthy man it is unsurprising that Beavan

mortgaged his property in 1835 for £80 to William Minifie of Kidderminster, maltster and baker. In June 1839 Beavan sold the spare land to John Baker, a mason, for £80 to pay off Minifie.



Numbers 192 and 193 Sutton Road showing side entry

Baker was Beavan's neighbour, occupying a house on the south edge of Beavan's property. (This house has been demolished along with two other houses. A new house, number 189, stands on this plot and there are no houses numbered 190 or 191.) The land sold by Beavan consisted of two plots, one on either side of his house. The plot on the north side had a frontage of 9 yds to Sutton Road. It is likely that numbers 196 and 197 were built here.

The plot to the south of Beavan's house had a frontage of 9yds 10in to Sutton Road. Immediately after he had purchased this plot, Baker mortgaged it to Messrs G. and R. Turton for £150. The mortgage deed refers to two houses 'now being erected'. These were the houses now numbered 192 and 193. Clearly this was an investment for Baker, in his capacity as a mason or builder. In March 1842 he cashed in on his investment by selling the two completed houses to the Turtons for £163.

The two houses continued to be held by the Turton family for some time. They are part of the property devised by George Turton, the ironfounder, in his will of 1879 before his death the following year. It was not until 1897 that his executors sold the houses (then numbered 86 and 87) to Martha Adelaide Lewis of Park Lane.

Description

A sales notice from August 1918 briefly described the two properties, by then having their present numbers 192 and 193. They were occupied by Messrs Webster and Smith at £27 6s per annum. Each house contained three bedrooms, parlour, kitchen and cellar, and at the rear which was approached by a party entry, there was a paved yard with two sculleries, wc and long plot of garden land.

The side entry now serves only number 192. It is likely to have been uncovered originally, with the first floor subsequently being extended over it.



Rear of the two houses



The Court map c1840 with numbers 192 and 193 highlighted. To the right of the map is Bewdley Hill with the start of the Summer Place row just visible going off to the right. The workhouse has been replaced by the hospital.
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