

# **HISTORIC KIDDERMINSTER PROJECT**

## **BUILDING REPORT No. 397**

### **WHITVILLE COTTAGE**

#### **Franch Road, Kidderminster**

**Grid Map reference: SO82327725**

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Material was accessed from the censuses, Kidderminster Library, Worcester Record Office and personal information supplied by the present owners, Mr. and Mrs. Dickins



**Front view of Whitville Cottage**

#### **HISTORY:**

The Poor Rate List of 1843 mentions the house as being owned by John Christie, but it is not mentioned in the list of 1838 so we think the house should be dated c1839.

The 1841 census lists the house as one of three houses at “Whitville Place”. The poor rate list of 1840 names the owner as Thomas Baker., and William Frost , clerk

(clergyman?) as occupier. He was living here with his wife, five children and two lodgers – an organist and a female servant. It seems to have been a large, genteel household.

The O.S. map suggests that also on the same plot as Whitville Cottage there were two detached houses in Marlpool Lane (Building report Nos. 395 and 396). There were also two stables in the garden.

### **Conveyance 28<sup>th</sup> September 1901**

Mrs. Alice Maude Howitt (nee Smith) widow of John Fitzwilliam Howitt, surgeon, of Denver Hall, Downham Market, Norfolk to Edward Parry for £620. Edward Parry was the founder of the Kidderminster Shuttle and lived in Whitville Cottage for many years up to his death in 1926.

### **Assent 31<sup>st</sup> March 1942**

Arthur Cyril Parry (son of William and also himself a newspaper proprietor) late of Whitville Cottage, bequeathed the property to Gertrude Parry, his wife. Gertrude was born at Springfield House and was the daughter of Jean and George Holdsworth, chemical manufacturer, (mayor of Kidderminster 1885 and 1902) who lived in Marlpool Lane. Her mother, Jean, came from Scotland. In 1968 Gertrude moved to a residential home and died a year later. In 1968 her granddaughter, Sue, moved in with her husband, Mike Dickins. So the house has been in the same family since 1901.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

The house is invisible from the road and is accessed by a long drive from Franche Road. It is a substantial white painted, double fronted property standing in its own large grounds with sash windows and an ornate porch. The garden has many mature trees and shrubs and is tended lovingly by Mrs. Dickins. Inside a hallway runs front to back with original tiles. There are three large reception rooms and a newly furnished kitchen; also a large cellar.

There is a theory that the house was originally divided into two- the roof was thought to have two gabled sections running east/west, encompassing two smaller houses (possibly for the coachmen of Whitville House), - but when Mr. and Mrs. Dickins moved in work was done on the house and the roof was, in fact, shown to be run north/south, making the two houses theory to be much less feasible. The house has always been one since the family have lived here. Also the Court map of c1840 gives no indication of a divide.

