

Project: Report No. 493

Building Record and Historical Research
on
YEW TREE HOUSE
45 Lorne Street, Kidderminster, DY10 1SX

This house was demolished between 1972 and 1988.

Report submitted April 2008 by Agnes Owen,
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on behalf of the Historic Kidderminster



1902 map of location

The Yew Tree House plot is within the triangle outlined in red.

NGR SO84017650

SOURCES - DOCUMENTARY

Kidderminster Reference Library

Census Returns 1841 to 1901 on microfilm
Parish Registers on microfilm
Electoral Rolls 1935 onwards
Aerial Photographs - AE SCH Acc 36; AE SCH Acc 73; AE 1 Acc10
OS Maps
Broadfield's map of 1859 – this is not accurate for the top of Yew Tree Road.
The houses shown should be further North – compare 1885 OS map.
Copy of Tithe Map 1842
Foley Map of 1780
Trade Directories
Newspapers on microfilm

The History Centre, Trinity Street, Worcester

Wills on Microfilm
National Probate Register
Newspapers on microfilm – obituary of Herring junior.

Worcester County Record Office, County Hall, Worcester

Deeds and other original documents (reference numbers given in text)

SOURCES – other

Margaret Bradley who began the research
Talk with people who live or lived nearby.
Deeds of 36 Lorne Street

CROSS REFERENCE

7 Yew Tree Road
Yew Tree Road /Oakland Place
St George's Fields



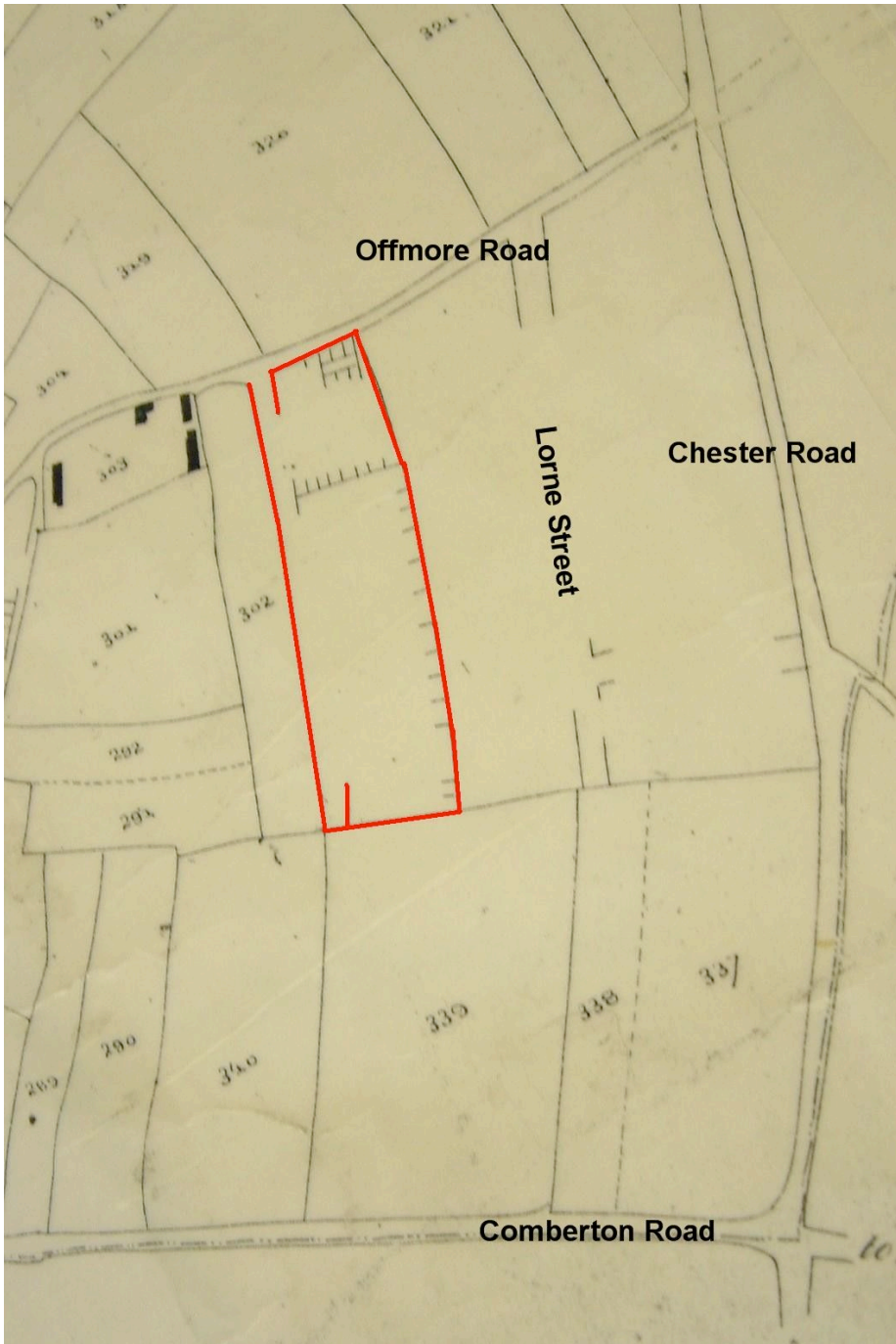
*Aerial photograph AE SCH Acc 73
Yew Tree House plot is in the pale triangle upper left.*

YEW TREE HOUSE

POSITION and STRUCTURE

Aerial photographs (1969 and 1972) and the OS Maps of 1885 and later show the house to have occupied a large triangular plot behind 33 to 44 Lorne Street.

The house appears from the photographs to have an “L” shaped floor plan, be two storied and without dormer windows. It was white, possibly painted on a rendered surface. The drive is now the entry to Lorne Grove, a development on the site of Yew Tree House and in position by 1988 when it appears on electoral rolls.



A section of Tithe Map of 1842

Offmore Road was known as Love Lane. Chester Road was Chester Lane or the Turnpike

BACKGROUND TO POSITION

Part of the plot is on land originally proposed for development in 1830s and now mostly under the railway line. This development is indicated in red on the photograph of the Tithe Map. It was accessed from Offmore Road then called Love Lane. The street may have been called Oakland Place. Nos 1 to 7 Yew Tree Road (at the southern end of the development) are the only properties on the original alignment. The remainder of Yew Tree Road runs south to Comberton Hill.

EITHER the Yew Tree House plot was very large (8 times the size of plot 20-No. 7 Yew Tree Road) and a large portion of it was lost to the railway when it came through in the late 1840s or early 1850s

OR the plot was purchased after the railway came through and it was the remains of several plots cut off by the railway. The land east of the railway would have lost its access to a road. The assumed owner in the late 1850s, Henry Herring, owned building plots on Lorne Street and could have used one of those to provide a driveway.

On the aerial photograph, what I assume to be the original western boundary line of the development is visible beyond the railway.

Its position in the plot, almost up against its eastern boundary can support either theory - it was built after the railway went through or perhaps was a rebuild like No 44 Lorne Street.

HISTORY

In Trade Directories and Censuses the address for Yew Tree House has several different definitions. It is associated with both Chester Road and Comberton Road but more definitely as 8 Oakland Place in 1861 census, 8 St George's Fields in 1871 census, 8 Lorne Street in 1881-1901 census and in electoral rolls as 45 Lorne Street after the re-numbering of the street in mid 1930s.

No deeds for Yew Tree House have yet been found so we rely on OS Maps, Census Returns, Electoral Rolls, Trade Directories and people's memories for our information. Any documents found at Worcestershire Record Office will have their reference numbers quoted. Dates quoted are those given for the Rolls or Directories but it is acknowledged that the details contained were collected at least six months and up to two years before publication.

William Southam and Arthur Grumbold bought the field in red on the Tithe Map photograph in 1835. They then sub-divided it into building plots and some of these were sold in 1837. [Ref: deeds of 7 Yew Tree Road]. The field was the un-numbered field East of Field 302 on the Tithe Map of 1842. It is also Field 98 on the Foley Map. A large portion of this development was lost to the railway when it came through in the late 1840s / early 1850s.

Henry Herring, a builder, came from Wiltshire in the 1820s. According to Pearsalls' Directory for Kidderminster in 1846 he built the Catholic Chapel (St Ambrose's?), Holy Trinity Church, Trimpley and St John's Church, Kidderminster. In 1839 he and Rev. Wm. Villers bought two fields on behalf of the St Georges Land Club. This land lay between the Southam/Grumbold field and Chester Road. From the 1840s to early 1870s the Land Club fields and the houses on them were called St George's Fields; they later became Lorne Street (north end) and Villers Street. At his death in 1863 Herring owned 11 rented houses in St Georges Fields (present day numbers 30 to 34, 48 to 51, 54 and 55). His other properties are not detailed.

In 1855 Herring was living in Swan Street, Kidderminster. According to an 1860 Poor Rate List Henry Herring was living in and owning a property in St George's Fields valued at £25 and owning 13 other houses.

1861 census – Henry Herring senior was living at 8 Oakland Place. A study of the 1841 to 1901 census returns shows that Oakland Place in 1861 and 1871 was what later became Yew Tree Road. Because of the positions of the other houses Number 8 had to be beyond the last house going north and was therefore probably Yew Tree House; when Herring's wife died in July 1861 her address in the burial register is Yew Tree Cottage. There was a footpath access to Yew Tree House from Yew Tree Road and the enumerator, being on foot, presumably followed the footpath and added it as Number 8 Oakland Place. The main carriage entrance to Yew Tree House (post railway) was from Lorne Street along what is now Lorne Grove.

A Deed dated 1843 to 1866 for 36 Lorne Street, which backs on to the Yew Tree house plot, names the owner before Herring was 'one Matthews' with no more detail.

As suggested above the Yew Tree House plot was either very large, then reduced by the railway and a new driveway to Lorne Street added or the triangular plot was all that was left of several plots after the railway cut through leaving them without road frontage. Either way Herring probably used one of his plots to give access. All guesswork until some documents turn up.

Herring died in 1863 and left his considerable property holdings and business to his daughter Ann and his son, another Henry; only the eleven houses in Lorne Street that were left to his daughter were identified by their occupants. Present day numbers are 30 to 34, 48 to 51, 54 and 55. [Ref: Probate copy of will is on microfilm in History Centre, Worcester].

The 1871 census and a Trade Directory of 1873 recorded a Ladies Seminary run by Mrs M Union at 8 St Georges Fields. In the 'Private Residents' part of the directory Mrs Union was at Yew Tree House, Oakland Place. This is the first time I have found the house by name. Henry junior was still living in the town centre in Swan Street.

In a directory of 1876 Henry junior is listed as farming at Caldwell Farm but living at Yew Tree House.

The 1881 census lists the occupiers at 8 Lorne Street are Henry Herring, his widowed sister Ann Ford and two of her children. The Herring occupation continued until Henry died still unmarried in 1904.

In his will (also on microfilm in the History Centre) he left much of his property, including Yew Tree House, to his niece Maud Amelia Granger.

The next recorded occupier found is John Findon and his family in 1912. He was probably the tea, coffee and provision dealer of Worcester Street. They are recorded there in directories and electoral rolls from 1912 to at least 1940.

I have been told that the Army Pay Corps was there during WWII.

In the 1960s Hollands Taxis run by George Mole used the yard to garage their taxis and furniture removal vans [information from an ex-taxi driver]. Two members of the family plus some others occupied the house. At this time a crisp factory – Tony's Golden Crisps is also recorded in the directories.

From 1964 there are no occupiers listed in electoral rolls although the aerial photograph of 1972 show signs of use and activity. Several cars can be seen round the house and a large single storey shed. The garages for the taxis are visible against the eastern boundary wall.

The house was demolished sometime between 1972 and 1988 when Lorne Grove appeared in the electoral roll.

This boundary wall to the east is still standing in parts. 'Norgrove Homes' developed No. 44 Lorne Street in 2006 and made breaks in the wall to give access to some new houses.