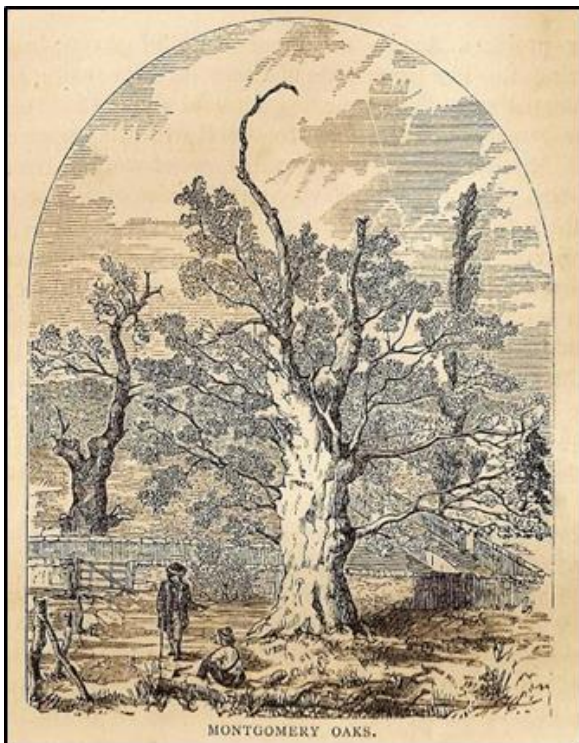


A Nether Edge Tree Trail to follow for your daily walk.

Peter Machan

We all love our local trees and over the last couple of years the threat to the street trees of Nether Edge has rightly received national attention. Even before George Wolstenholme directed the planting of the tree-lined avenues around Kenwood in the mid nineteenth century, however, there were a couple of monumental trees in Nether Edge that were locally famous; the so called 'Montgomery Oaks' that stood on the corner plot of land between Oakdale and Oakhill Roads, opposite Nether Edge Farm. They appear to have been named after the Montgomery Building Society which, in the 1870s, was busy dividing the area into building plots. By the late 1870s, when this engraving of the trees was made, these colossal trees would have been over a thousand years old, reduced to stag-headed veterans and destroyed shortly after. Their memory was, until recently, perpetuated by the name of the 'The Brincliffe Oaks Hotel' which incorporated the old farm buildings



that stood opposite them.

During the last century or so our originally rural area has been transformed by the building of homes and gardens, and several generations of gardeners have made their

own mark on the local landscape by planting trees of all kinds which have now matured into magnificent specimens that can be enjoyed by everyone and our area has become a sort of arboretum in which specimens of trees, of all shapes and sizes, coniferous and broad-leaved, from all over the world can be viewed from the streets. This short walk around our area highlights some of my favourites and I hope that it may add interest to your daily exercise.

1. Start at the tree that is planted by the benches **opposite the Oxfam bookshop**. This is a **JAPANESE MAPLE** that has beautiful lime green leaves bordered with orange in spring. They have the five fingered shape typical of all the Acer family which includes the huge **LONDON PLANES** that you can see down Sheldon Road.

2. In Sainsbury's car park is a lovely type of Ash tree called the **NARROWLEAF ASH**. Notice that each leaf has 7-13 very thin leaflets. This tree grows very quickly. It has very beautiful purplish foliage during autumn.

3. Look across the road to the lower corner of Montgomery Road. The huge rounded tree that hangs over the pavement is a **HORSE CHESTNUT**. Its huge leaves are like fingers. In May it is covered with white candle-like flowers and later it has conkers. Horse Chestnuts come from the Balkan areas and the 'horse' part of the name implies that the nuts are not edible.

4. Walk up Machon Bank, carefully cross and go up Edge Bank footpath to Meadowbank Avenue. At the right hand corner as you come onto the avenue stand two particularly attractive **SILVER BIRCH TREES**. These are very graceful native trees with thin branches that sweep downwards. The silvery bark is very distinctive. They grow very quickly and live for only 40 or 50 years. At this end of the green stands a large **COPPER BEECH**. In spring the leaves are a lovely colour like a shiny copper kettle but they go rather dark and dull before turning bright orange in autumn.

Walk along **Meadowbank Avenue**. The street trees here are shaped like lollipops because they are pollarded (the tops cut off) every two or three years. They are **LIME TREES** like most of the Kenwood street trees. Do you like them?



At the far end of the green stand two of the tallest **ASH TREES** in the area. How tall do you think they are? Next to them is a young **OAK TREE**. These two are native British trees and are the last of our trees to get their leaves in the spring. Ash wood is hard and light and used to have many uses for things like tool handles. Ashes are in danger from a disease at present called ash dieback.



7. Walk up towards Cherrytree Road. (I wonder if there were cherry trees here in the past?) Looking to your right, on the left of the road, stands an unusually tall narrow **HOLLY**. It was covered in berries last winter. It is worth walking up to it to look at the strange patterns on its grey bark.



8. Look across the road to the bottom of Kingfield Road. The small tree with white bark is a **HIMALAYAN BIRCH** grown for its snowy white papery bark that peels in bands revealing new skin in shades of cream. On dull winter days it really stands out. In early spring it produces yellow-brown catkins that look like caterpillars. The very tall tree is an **OAK**, of which there are surprisingly few in our area. This one is not a very good shape and we will see a better one later. Beside the 5 barred gate is a **LARCH**. Look at the small round cones. The larch is the only deciduous type of conifer.

9. Walk up Kingfield Road. The street trees have been planted on the wide grass verges. Reaching over the pavement on the left side stands a magnificent **JAPANESE MAPLE** that colours to a flaming red in autumn. On the right hand side of the road towards the top, the very dark rounded trees are **YEWS**, the first evergreen trees that we've seen on the trail. They keep their thin, needle-like leaves, in the winter. It has bright red poisonous berries in autumn.



At the top of the road, beside the bench, stands the best **SYCAMORE** in the area. It has a wonderful rounded shape. Look at the distinctive bark which is scaly, like a dragon's

skin. The large leaves have five points and in autumn the tree has winged seeds called 'helicopters'. Sycamores were introduced into this country in Tudor times when they were known as 'The Great Maple'.

10. Turn left down St Andrew's Road and then right up Osborne Road. Notice that there are no street trees but the road is completely shaded by the large trees in the gardens. **Turn left onto Cavendish Road.** There are many well grown old trees in the rather grand gardens here. Look for the tall **SCOTS PINES** on the left.

Stop at the corner of Lyndhurst Road. On the left behind the wall is the best **OAK TREE** in the area. Trees like these are very important for the



many insects and creatures that feed on the leaves and provide food for many birds. Next to it is a large **Blue Spruce**. On the other side of the road there is a very elegant and stately **LARCH** tree.

11. Walk up to Chelsea Road and turn left. Go into Chelsea Park on the right. Follow the path to the front of the house. Stand and wonder at the most impressive tree in our area, the massive **BEECH** tree. This tree has huge spreading boughs that cast a heavy shade and prevent anything growing beneath it.



Follow the path across the park. There



are some superbly shaped trees here. On your left is one of the finest **LIME** trees in the area. Look how tall it is. Limes are our tallest native trees. Beside the top gate is an **ELM** tree. There are a number of elms across in Brincliffe Edge Wood. All these have grown since Dutch Elm disease wiped out most of the large elms. It may be that these are resistant. Nearby is a large **HAWTHORN**, no doubt grown out from an old hedge.

12. Turn left and then left again down

Brincliffe Edge Close. At the end you will see a very well-shaped **MONKEY PUZZLE TREE**. Why do you think they got this common name? Their official name is **Araucaria**. They are ancient trees that come from Chile in South America.



13. Go down the ally next to this garden into **Brentwood Road**. On your right is a beautiful



CEDAR OF LEBANON. These come from the Middle East and are mentioned in the bible.



On the left at the end of the road stand two tall **SCOTS PINES**. Look down and you may find some cones on the ground. Can you tell which ones have been nibbled by squirrels?

14. Turn left down **Union Road**. Notice that this tree shadowed street actually has no street trees. On the right stands a row of beautifully trimmed and shaped **HOLLY TREES** but on the corner of Chelsea Road stands the most famous street tree in the area, the **HUNTINGDON**



ELM, a hybrid cultivar raised near Huntingdon in 1746 which is more resistant to Dutch Elm Disease than the English Elm. This tree came second in the national Tree of the Year competition but is still under threat of being felled.

Continue down Union Road. In front of the King's Centre chapel is a multi-stemmed tree with brown bark. This is a **ROWAN or MOUNTAIN ASH TREE**. It has red berries in autumn and in the past was associated with witchcraft.

15. Turn right down **Oakdale Road** (another tree-lined road) and when you get to Fountside on the left go through to **Byron Road**. On your left, behind the dark yews, is a colossal, billowing tree, an Australian **EUCALIPTUS**. These evergreen trees grow extremely quickly and are a big mistake for small gardens!

16. Carry on down to **Nether Edge Road** and turn left. Overshadowing the opposite corner top of Glen Road, beside the copper beech, stands our last tree, and one of the most unusual. It's an **EVERGREEN or HOLM OAK**. Look at the scaly bark and the small thick waxy leaves.



Bannerdale Osteopaths

We are still open!

Our physical clinic may be closed until we think it is safe to re-open, but that does not mean we have abandoned you. We are still treating patients and are now booking everyone in for Virtual Appointments.

Our specialist software allows us to see each other face to face, discuss your symptoms, carry out any movement tests and create you a bespoke treatment plan. Our ongoing care also means that we can communicate and track your progress daily to make sure your recovery is going as planned and solve any issues or concerns you may have.

0114 419 0173 | www.bannerdaleosteopaths.com