

**Historic Building Surveys**  
*of*  
**BUILDINGS AT DULVERTON,  
SOMERSET**

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For the Exmoor National Park Authority

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The following building surveys were undertaken on behalf of the Exmoor National Park Authority as part of the ‘Dig Dulverton’ project in April, May and June 2011. This project brought together archaeologists, historians and local volunteers to carry out a series of excavations and investigations of Dulverton, one of the principal historic settlements in this part of Exmoor. The building surveys aimed to improve understanding of the built fabric and development of the town through rapid visual surveys of selected historic structures. The buildings remain in private ownership and were selected on the basis of the willingness of the owners to participate in the project.

### 1.1 Method

An initial visit was made by the author in the company of Mary Siraut, formerly of the Victoria County History, in order to discuss the physical and documentary evidence for the development of the town and identify buildings of potential interest. Access to the properties was negotiated by staff of the National Park Authority. The buildings were visited by the author and the following brief descriptions were prepared, together with a limited photographic record of any significant features identified during the surveys. The work was non-invasive and the surveys were very rapid; the observations made below may therefore be subject to revision in the event of further physical or documentary evidence becoming available.

## 2. BUILDING SURVEYS: BRIDGE STREET

### 2.1 Rothwell & Dunworth’s Bookshop (Visited on Saturday the 14th of May 2011).

This building stands at the eastern end of Bridge Street, immediately west of the bridge over the mill leat, on the northern side of the street. The house occupies an unusual position in relation to the adjacent properties, standing well forward of the frontage of the buildings to the west (Fig. 1). These buildings appear to continue behind it, and it is conceivable that the front part of the property is an encroachment on a formerly open space, perhaps either gardens or a wider space at the bridgehead.



Fig 1. General view of the bookshop from the bridge over the Mill leat, showing the two distinct sections of the building and its position on the street frontage.

The house on the opposite side of the street also stands forward of the building line and, together, these provide a distinct constriction in the width of the roadway which is likely to have some significance in terms of the historic townscape.

The front part of the house looks to be of 19th-century date, with rendered walls pierced by sash windows with margin lights and horns, under very slightly segmentally-arched window heads, presumably of brick. There is no eaves cornice and the roof is hipped and slated, with scrolled angle-irons at the corners. The handsome 19th-century shop front has a fascia supported by carved brackets.

To the rear of this front section is a larger building of more industrial than domestic appearance, lying alongside the western bank of the leat. It is constructed of orange wire-cut bricks laid in 'English Garden Wall' bond, with one course of headers alternating with three courses of stretchers. The windows at the southern end have margin lights and segmental arched heads, matching those of the bookshop, but the northern section has larger openings, including pairs of round-arched windows and broad, horizontal openings designed to maximise light to the interior. Many of the windows have been replaced in plastic and their original character is uncertain. The roof is hipped and crowned with ventilators.

The interior of the front section only was visited. This has a 19th-century staircase, and some other features typical of the period. No evidence of earlier fabric or fixtures was observed. The roof structure is a king-post roof of one and two half bays. The king post is very tall with an expanded head and foot and diagonal braces to the principal rafters. The post is treated as a tension rather than a compression member, the tie beam being suspended from it and secured by a concealed iron strap or bolt. The purlins run over the backs of the principal rafters and are supported upon cleats.

#### *Summary.*

Both parts of the building appear to be of 19th century date. The front part might represent an encroachment upon an open space at the bridgehead, either upon gardens or an incline leading to a ford, dipping place or horse wash in the leat. The front part of the structure appears to be of earlier date than the brick building behind it, which may date from the late 19th- or early 20th century; however, both buildings may conceal or incorporate parts of earlier structures to the rear.

East of the bridge over the leat the building line is set well back, forming a triangle with its wider end towards the leat and the river beyond, from which lanes fan out to north and south, leading to Town Mills and Lower Mills respectively. This configuration of streets and buildings is sometimes found in the context of town defences. Though neither walls nor gates are known from Dulverton, it is possible that the leat bridge and the buildings on either side might have had some function in association with a barrier, if only for the collection of tolls, and this could explain a constriction in the roadway at this point (A similar constriction at the north end of the town, at the junction of Vicarage Hill and High Street, broadening into a wide area from which three lanes radiate, might possibly have been the site of a further barrier to control access to the town).

(With thanks to the proprietors of Rothwell and Dunworth's Bookshop)

### 3. BUILDING SURVEYS: HIGH STREET

To the west of the leat bridge the road turns abruptly towards the north-east at an angle of around 45°. The buildings on the north side of this part of High Street are initially set back from the street frontage, but resolve to the north-east into a terrace of two-storey buildings, all constructed on plots of a similar width and depth, as though part of a planned development.

At the rear of the properties is a distinct, though discontinuous boundary, which can be traced running south west in a gentle curve from the market place to a position on the other side of the leat near the eastern end of Barle Bridge. Buildings in this area are identified on modern OS maps as 'Castle Barn' and 'Castle Cottages'. The significance of this boundary and the 'Castle' place name is not known to the author.



Fig. 2 View of the properties on the north-western side of High Street from the leat bridge, showing the funnel shaped form of the street as it approaches the leat, with the building line to the north offset (left) and the High Street terrace projecting forward at centre.

### 3.1 **Number Seven** (Visited on Saturday the 14th of May 2011).

This is one of a terrace of houses standing on the north-western side of the lower part of High Street between the Market Place and the Mill Leat (Fig. 2). The houses are all of two storeys and have their ridges lying parallel to the street. Inspection from the rear showed that some of the houses have rear lateral chimney stacks, and therefore it was felt that they had the potential to contain early fabric.

No. 7 is the south-western house of the terrace and stands just north east of the break in the building line. It has a plain, rendered façade with a projecting shop front and a vehicular entrance under an archway at the north-eastern end giving access to buildings at the rear. The first floor is lit by two sash windows recessed into the wall plane and with exposed sash boxes. The end elevation of the house has two large stone-built chimney stacks. The rear stack has the remains of a short length of walling descending from it, suggesting the presence of two parallel roofs as though for a double-pile building. In fact the roof of the No. 7 is 'L'-shaped and slopes away from this boundary; this feature is therefore more likely to relate to the roofline of the adjoining houses (Nos 3 and 5) which may formerly have risen to a higher level, perhaps with a deeper, thatched roof covering. The rear of the property faces Town Mills and was not examined.

The interior of the ground floor has been gutted to form a shop, but the rear kitchen survives and contains a large fireplace, the lintel of which is obscured, making dating uncertain. There is a 19th-century six-panelled door in the east wall. In the entry a sawn-off beam end, decorated with the remains of a chamfer or a run-out stop, is visible in the party wall with the adjoining property. This may betray the existence of early fabric and also suggests that the original building had a lower first-floor level than at present.

The lower part of the staircase has probably been altered, but the plan of the building at first-floor level is intact. The first-floor rooms appear wholly of 19th-century date. Some simple features such as plank doors survive, and one undressed timber beam, which might be earlier, crosses the ceiling of a rear room. The roof space above this preserves an early roof structure, extending into two ranges, one over the front range lying parallel to the street and the other at right-angles to this, over the rear range.



Fig. 3. View of the roof structure over the front range of No. 7 High Street, showing the softwood roof trusses crossed and bolted at the apex and the junction with the contemporary roof over the rear range beyond.



Fig. 4 Detail of the gable at the north-eastern end of the front range of No 7 High Street, showing the evidence of an earlier and slightly steeper gable of cob underlying the later masonry associated with the present roof.

The roofs are supported by very crude softwood trusses, without collars and with their principals crossed and bolted together at the top, forming a cradle for a diagonally-set square ridge tree. The feet of the principals are presumably set in the tops of tie beams concealed in the ceilings, as there is no visible provision for collar beams or other horizontal ties. There are traces of a diagonal tie running across the building at the point where the roof structure turns the corner to extend over the rear range. The hip rafter and the rafter supporting the valley at this point are of smaller scantling. The purlins are crudely squared timbers running over the backs of the principals. These timbers appear to be contemporary with the main trusses, as are the common rafters in most parts of the roof. The character of the carpentry suggests a date for this structure in the very late 17th century at the earliest, and most probably in the 18th century.

Evidence of an earlier house on the site is provided in the north-eastern gable wall, where a steep triangular gable of cob underlies the later masonry supporting the timbers of the present roof. The earlier building must have had a lower roofline and, probably, lower internal floor levels. This conjecture is supported by the sawn-off beam end below first-floor level in the same party wall, visible within the arch of the vehicular entry.

### *Summary*

The building appears to be an 18th-century rebuilding of an earlier house of similar form. The date of the earlier building cannot be determined, but the possible run-out stop cut in the sawn-off beam built into the party wall could suggest that it was of medieval or early post-medieval date. The vehicular entry may thus perpetuate a feature of the early structure, though in its present form it dates from the reconstruction of the building. It is possible that further evidence of the early house remains concealed by later plaster or built into the floors and partitions of the present building.

The property appears to have been modernised in the 19th century and again in the 20th, when the staircase was reconfigured in its present form, probably when the shop was enlarged to its present dimensions. The depth of the property is relatively shallow (this is not a typical, long medieval tenement or 'burgage plot'), respecting the enigmatic boundary just to the north of High Street. It is possible that the terrace represents a speculative development in the form of a row or terrace established on land south of this boundary at a period of development of the town.

(With thanks to the proprietor of 'Number Seven')

### 3.2 **Lance Nicholson's** (Visited on Saturday the 14th of May 2011)

This building adjoins No. 7 on the north east and has a similar frontage with a plain modern shop front. Above this are two plain sash-windows lighting the first floor, without horns and with sash boxes recessed into the thickness of the wall. The building shares the vehicular entry with No. 7 and may be part of the same structure: its roofline is identical in pitch and height (though with a pronounced sag in the middle) and the floor levels are continuous in both houses despite the gradient of the hill. At the north-eastern end of the building a 19th-century axial chimney stack of orange, wire-cut brick has been demolished. The rooflines of the adjoining properties are higher and steeper, and are also continuous across several properties, which raises the possibility that each house in the terrace represents half the original width of an original tenement. This may reflect subdivision of the original larger properties to maximise rental income.

The rear part of the building has a peculiar plan form. The rear wing runs alongside the vehicular entry and terminates at a blunt, triangular point. To the north of this the property boundaries twist to the north-east sharply, breaking through the line of the enigmatic boundary noticed above. A large outbuilding in the ownership of the present proprietor stands with its rear elevation against the side wall of Town Mills and a further building, now a private house, stands at an angle to this, backing onto the High Street properties.

The interior of the building has been severely altered for commercial use in the 20th century and the layout of the original rooms is unclear. The line of the rear wall of the front range is represented by steps up to the rear part of the shop and by the base of a massive, stone lateral chimneystack, now lying between the front and rear ranges, which continues up through the building and is truncated below the roofline of the rear range. There is no visible evidence of a fireplace and it is not possible to date this feature, though it is probable that it is an early structure.



Fig. 5 The roof space at Lance Nicholson's premises, looking towards the front of the property from the rear range, showing the truncated lateral stack attached to the rear wall of the front range and the roof structure of the front range beyond.



Fig. 6 View within the rear part of the rear range at Lance Nicholson's premises, showing the 19th-century roof and the unusual angled end of the building with evidence of two further chimney stacks.

The first floor of the building has also been much altered. The existing staircase is modern and the position of the original stair is uncertain. Several four panelled doors of 19th- or 20th-century date survive, but there are no other visible earlier features.

The roofs are the best preserved part of the building and are similar in construction, and perhaps continuous with that of No.7. The roof of the front range was not inspected in detail as the loft was not boarded and the ceiling joists were concealed by insulation material. One truss only was visible, consisting of two principal rafters seated in the top of a tie beam lying close to the stump of the lateral stack (Fig. 5), which was large enough to contain several flues. The purlins ran over the backs of the principal rafters and were staggered rather than scarfed. Many of the original common rafters survive. As with No. 7, next door, the character of the carpentry would be consistent with a date in the late 17th or 18th century.

The roof of the rear range appears to be slightly later and may have butted against and oversailed the roof of the front range. Unfortunately much of the roof has been renewed in the 19th or 20th century and it is difficult to be certain of this relationship. The rear range roof has crudely-squared principal rafters crossed and pegged together at the apex to support a diagonally-set ridge tree. The feet of the trusses are seated in the top of a tie beam with a slight camber, and joist sockets cut into its upper surface to suspend a ceiling above the level of the soffit of the beam. The present ceilings are at a lower level and appear to have been replaced in the 20th century. The ridge, purlins and common rafters are all 19th- or 20th-century replacements.

The original limit of the range is not known. The base of a stone chimney stack is visible in the north-western part of the roof space (Fig. 6) and beyond this the angle of the roof changes. The base of a further chimney, of brick, is visible at the limit of the building. A small roof truss, of similar form to the originals (but of better-prepared timbers), stands close to the chimney stack. It is likely that this truss, together with the new purlins and ridge was added when the range was extended to its present extent.

### *Summary*

This property may be of the same date and construction as No. 7. The roof structures of both properties appear to be of similar character and the ridge and eaves line are also continuous. No definite evidence of medieval or early post-medieval fabric has been identified, but it is highly likely that this survives in the party walls and perhaps in other areas of the building now concealed by modern render and decorative finishes. The lateral stack at the rear of the front range may survive from an early building though its size suggests it may contain multiple flues and is thus, perhaps, later. It seems likely that the original building was a long, low structure spanning both properties, with a central entry now represented by the present vehicular entry. The property may have been in single ownership, though the cob wall dividing the properties may militate against this.

In the late 17th or 18th centuries the building was reconstructed in its present form, with a higher ridge and eaves and presumably also more generous headroom on each storey. The rear range might be contemporary with this rebuilding, or a slightly later addition, since the carpentry details are similar. The building appears to have been remodelled in the 19th century and then again in the 20th, when the ground-floor was gutted to accommodate the present shop and the ceilings of the first floor rooms were removed and reinstated at a slightly lower level.

(With thanks to Mr Nicholson and his staff)

### 3.3 **Brimblecombe** (Visited on Saturday the 14th of May 2011).

‘Brimblecombe’ lies in the upper part of the terrace and is without a lateral stack to the rear. The building has a rear wall of red wire-cut brick, suggesting a 19th-century rebuilding. This is confirmed by investigation of the roof space: the roof structure is entirely of 19th-century date. The only evidence of an earlier building is a reused timber lying close to eaves level in the rear part of the roof space, which appears to retain sockets for joists and may also preserve chamfers or mouldings. Close investigation of this timber was not attempted as the floor was unboarded. In the north-eastern gable evidence of a roofline at a lower level than the present one was visible. The roof may have been raised during the 19th-century rebuilding.

On the first floor a corridor runs along the back wall of the house from a very plain staircase at the northern corner. The two rooms to the front on this storey have moulded architraves and plain panelled doors, all of 19th-century date.

The outbuildings in the yard to the rear are also constructed of red wire-cut bricks and are very plain. These are also probably of late 19th-century date. The historic flooring of some of the rear buildings consists of areas of cobbling and brick flooring. A drain or gully is also visible which, bizarrely, lies above the level of some of the surrounding surfaces. This may be due to repair or patching of the floor.

### *Summary*

Although this building occupies the site of and replicates the form of an earlier structure, it is likely to be a late 19th-century rebuilding. There may be evidence of the earlier house in the front wall and in the gable walls shared with the adjacent buildings.

(with thanks to Jane Brimblecombe).

### 3.4 **Guvenor House** (Visited on Saturday the 14th of May 2011).

This large house lies on the south-eastern side of High Street and has a rendered elevation to the street rising to three storeys under a hipped slate roof. The double-fronted façade may originally have been symmetrical; however, it has been altered by the addition of a shop front to the left of the main entrance and the configuration of the windows may also have been changed. The main doorway lies roughly at the centre of the façade and opens into a large room heated by a large 19th-century fireplace. A beam running across the ceiling may betray the position of a partition dividing this room into a corridor and a room alongside, but this would result in a very long and dark entrance corridor, which is perhaps unlikely in a house of this status.

Towards the rear of the house an early 19th-century doorway opens upon the staircase, which lies at right angles to the axis of the main entrance and is lit by windows in the south-western wall of the building. The staircase has early 19th-century details to the balustrade with columnar newels and a ramped handrail, but the shaped brackets under the treads of the open string look earlier and may suggest that the balustrade represents the modification of an earlier stair.

On the first and second floors the plan of the house survives intact, with three principal rooms to north, east and west and a smaller one at the southern corner of the house alongside the staircase. The broad, flat architraves of the doorways to the principal rooms look earlier than the four-panelled doors hung within them and may also survive from an earlier phase. The fireplaces at this level are all modern replacements.

On the second floor the layout of the rooms is similar, but the doorways are all fitted with two-panelled doors with raised-fielded panelling, of a type common during the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Many have 'HL'-hinges characteristic of this period, though they must have been rehung in their present positions. It is possible that these doors were moved to this storey following the upgrading of the first-floor rooms with new, four-panelled doors in the early 19th century. The small eastern room retains a cupboard with raised-fielded panels and the match-boarded walls of some rooms have the potential to conceal historic wallpapers.

The roofs also show signs of modification. The roof structures were originally arranged in an 'U'-shape, with staggered purlins tusk-tenoned through the principals (Fig. 7) and a central gutter draining towards the rear.

At some point, probably in the early 19th century, the rear parts of the roof were dismantled and the timbers reused to create a further roof structure covering the rear of the house. The building now has four roofs forming a hollow pyramid surrounding a central well. This is drained by open, internal gutters running through the roof space towards the rear of the house. The details of the carpentry are not significantly different from the earlier fabric; however this may simply be a consequence of the reuse of materials. The alteration would be impossible to spot were it not for the redundant socket for purlins removed when the roof was modified.



Fig. 7 Guvenor House: detail of one of the four roof structures showing a typical joint of the staggered purlins with the principal rafters.

### *Summary*

Guvenor House appears to be a large late 18th or early 19th-century townhouse and must have been one of the grander houses in the centre of the town. The fabric appears to be timber framed; it is probably constructed of studs and braces of relatively slight scantling with lath and plaster rendered surfaces internally and externally. This is typical of the late 17th and 18th centuries, when techniques of slight timber framing braced with diagonal struts became popular. The survival of some broad, flat architraves and two-panelled doors, characteristic of the early to mid 18th century, may suggest that the house is in fact a rebuilding or a remodelling of an earlier property. This is perhaps borne out by the alterations to the roofs and by its relationship with the adjoining houses. Siraut suggests that the house might be identified as the 'General's House', constructed on the site of two earlier properties in 1748 (Siraut 2011). This date would be consistent with the early fixtures mentioned above, though in its present form the house represents an extensive remodelling of *c.*1800.

(with thanks to Frances Harisson).

### 3.5 **No.2 Lamb Back or Dubray Cottage** (Visited on Saturday the 14th of May 2011).

The former Lamb Hotel, now converted into housing and renamed 'Lamb Court' lies on the south-eastern side of High Street a little to the north east of Guvenor House. It consists of a large block of buildings of 18th- or 19th-century character on the street frontage, formerly with a portico supported by a pair of columns, traces of the plinths for which remain visible in the pavement. At the rear of this building the former inn yard is surrounded by buildings on three sides, approached by a lane. The three cottages in Lamb Back lie on the south-eastern side of the inn yard and are believed to have formed part of the inn complex before their conversion into private houses.



Fig. 8 Dubray Cottage or No. 2 Lamb Back, seen across the former inn yard, showing the highly irregular fenestration, which betrays unusual internal floor levels. The building may have been converted from industrial use.



Fig. 9 View within the southern part of the roof of Dubray Cottage, showing the unusual circular windows flanking the chimney stack in the south-western wall and the rough, rendered finish of the walls.

The cottages occupy a very tall, narrow range of buildings with a relatively low-pitched slate roof, the walls being constructed of random rubble and painted (Fig. 8). The cottages have no formal façades towards the inn yard, but have very irregular fenestration betraying unusual internal floor levels. No. 2 Lamb Back is a double-fronted cottage with a central doorway which opens upon a small lobby from which the stairs extend to the first floor. The southern room has a chimney in its south-western wall, serving a very large fireplace with an unmoulded, unchamfered timber lintel. On either side of the fireplace are cupboards with raised-fielded panelled doors. A similar door with raised-fielded panels closes the cupboard under the stairs. The room to the north is now a modern kitchen; the casement windows in its north-eastern wall have lintels at two different heights, suggesting either that one of the openings was formerly a doorway or that the room was at one time subdivided into separate areas.

On the first floor are two further rooms separated by a bathroom. The southern room is entered by a four-panelled door with mouldings to the interior only, set in a pegged architrave. The northern room is at a higher level and retains a small 19th-century cast iron fireplace.

The roof spaces above these rooms are distinctly different. The roof over the southern part of the building is supported by large, softwood principal rafters propped at the centre by a post, which presumably rests on a beam concealed within the ceiling of the first floor rooms below (Fig. 9). The purlins run over the backs of the principals and there is a small plank ridge. In the south-western wall are a pair of unusual circular windows, now blocked, flanking the chimney stack. The function of these windows is not known; it is possible that they were designed to function as ventilators. The walls are roughly rendered and whitewashed but there is no visible evidence of a ceiling and it is unlikely that this area was ever in domestic use. The northern part of the roof is entirely modern and is separated from the adjoining property by a brick wall.

### *Summary*

This house is of such unusual proportions and appearance that it seems highly unlikely to have originated as a domestic building. Its position in relation to the other buildings of the former Lamb Hotel might suggest a service building such as a stable range or a coach house; however, the narrow plan and the great height of the building militate against this interpretation and there is no evidence of wide doors for carriages or carts. It may well have had a more specific use, as a brewery attached to the hotel, or perhaps as a malthouse. Brewery buildings were often very tall, with high internal spaces and floor levels at different heights to allow for different stages of the brewing process. Malthouses often had large, uninterrupted floor spaces with relatively low ceiling heights to accommodate different stages in the processing and storing of the grain before and after drying in the malting kiln on different floors. Both processes could have been accommodated in this structure, in different areas and at different levels, possibly with storage in the roof. There is no visible evidence of a malting kiln; however it is possible that this occupied the central part of the structure and was replaced by the present modern roof after the conversion of the structure to domestic use.

The date of the building is uncertain. The form of the roof might suggest that it was constructed in the late 18th or early 19th century, but the structure is so simple that it cannot be dated with any confidence. The date of the conversion of the building is also uncertain. Some areas may have been converted early in the life of the building for either domestic or office use. The fielded panels of the existing ground-floor room might be evidence of 18th- or early 19th-century domestic use of this part of the structure, but it is equally possible that they have been recycled from elsewhere and inserted at a much later date.

(with thanks to Jennifer Haslam)

### 3.6 **The former White Hart Inn or ‘High Society’** (Visited on Saturday the 14th of May 2011).

This building lies near the south-western end of the block of buildings occupying the centre of the market place, between High Street and Fore Street. These buildings are irregular structures with many projections or recessions of their frontages towards the streets; they may well represent encroachment on an original triangular marketplace, which might have extended as far to the north-west as the boundary of the churchyard. Union Street may represent an early 19th-century improvement cutting

through this block of buildings to link High Street and Fore Street and may be contemporary with the widening of Lady Street.

The former White hart forms a 'C' or 'U'-shaped range extending around a small courtyard to the south-west of the Town Hall. Further buildings standing to the south west of this may represent later encroachments and it is possible that the building originally had three principal façades. Only a small part of the southern section of the ground floor was inspected; the other areas are in occupation as offices and as a private residence. Access was restricted to the parts of the building now occupied by the 'High Society' Hair Salon.

The southern elevation of the building facing High Street is irregular, set back from the street frontage and with a large projection with an arcaded ground floor. This part of the building strongly resembles a market hall or similar structure; the arcade has been enclosed but may formerly have been open to the street, providing shelter for stalls. On either side the recessed sections of the street frontage might represent parts of an original range, aligned from south west to north east, to which this projecting structure was added. Alternatively both these areas may represent later infilling, in which case the projecting section of the frontage may represent the gable end of a long range aligned from south east to north west. Unfortunately the south-western section was not accessible and could not be interpreted. The north-eastern and central sections could be examined and these areas showed early features suggesting that the building is indeed an example of market encroachment.

Examination of the interior shows that the projecting, arcaded, section of the building has been added in front of an earlier façade. This appears to have been jettied out towards the street, the jetty being represented by a broad plaster cove resolving a change in the height of the ceilings. The higher ceiling within the arcaded part of the frontage is plain, but the lower ceiling, to the north west, is supported by massive ceiling beams, with deep chamfers, running from north-west to south east. The original ground-floor frontage must have been aligned on a large beam, now clad in modern boarding, which receives the ends of the ceiling beams and may represent the jetty bressumer. The joists presumably run parallel with this frontage. There may well be sockets and markings on the underside of the original timber, now masked by the cladding, which might reveal whether the original frontage was closed by timber posts or mullions or, perhaps, open between widely-set posts in the manner of a timber market hall.

The north-eastern wall of the salon is formed by a very large chimney stack containing a wide fireplace. The stack appears to project into the adjoining room to the north-east as though this area was formerly external. It was not possible to establish whether the fireplace was an original feature or a later addition to the building as it is rendered and the lintel and jambs are wholly obscured. The fireplace is concealed by a late-17th- or early 18th-century chimneypiece with a very bold, moulded mantelpiece. This is of very high quality and demonstrates that the room was of high status. Over the fireplace is a curious feature, resembling a rack or towel rail, with flanking timbers shaped to form housing for horizontal rails. The function of this feature is uncertain; its relationship to the fireplace suggests that it may have been used for drying clothes, or perhaps for storing spits when not in use. Alongside the fireplace are the remains of a settle with a shaped arm rest and 'wing' to protect the face of the occupant from draughts.

Beyond the jetty, within the arcaded part of the frontage is a small cupboard with a two-panelled plank door with 'HL'-hinges. The date of the arcaded addition to the frontage is difficult to establish without further exploration of the building. As suggested above, it may have originally formed a 'loggia' or 'portico' outside the front wall of the early building. By the early 18th-century it seems to have been annexed by the property and enclosed; the lower parts of the openings of the arcade are infilled with raised-fielded panelling typical of the period.

The north-eastern room behind the fireplace is almost entirely featureless, apart from a doorway and a window recess in the rear wall, away from the street, which open upon a small room at the rear. Oddly the doorway is fixed to open away from the larger room and the window is arranged to look into it. It is suggested that the larger room may represent infilling of a former open area to the north of the chimney stack and that the smaller room was originally part of a larger structure. The south-eastern wall of the small room may thus be the front wall of an early building; it is relatively substantial and may well formerly have been an external wall. The other walls of the small room appear to be constructed of concrete blockwork, perhaps partitioning this room off from areas of the building now in separate ownership.



Fig. 10 View within the 'High Society' Hair Salon showing the evidence for a jettied frontage to High Street, represented by a later covered ceiling, and the 17th/18th-century features within the projecting part of the frontage..

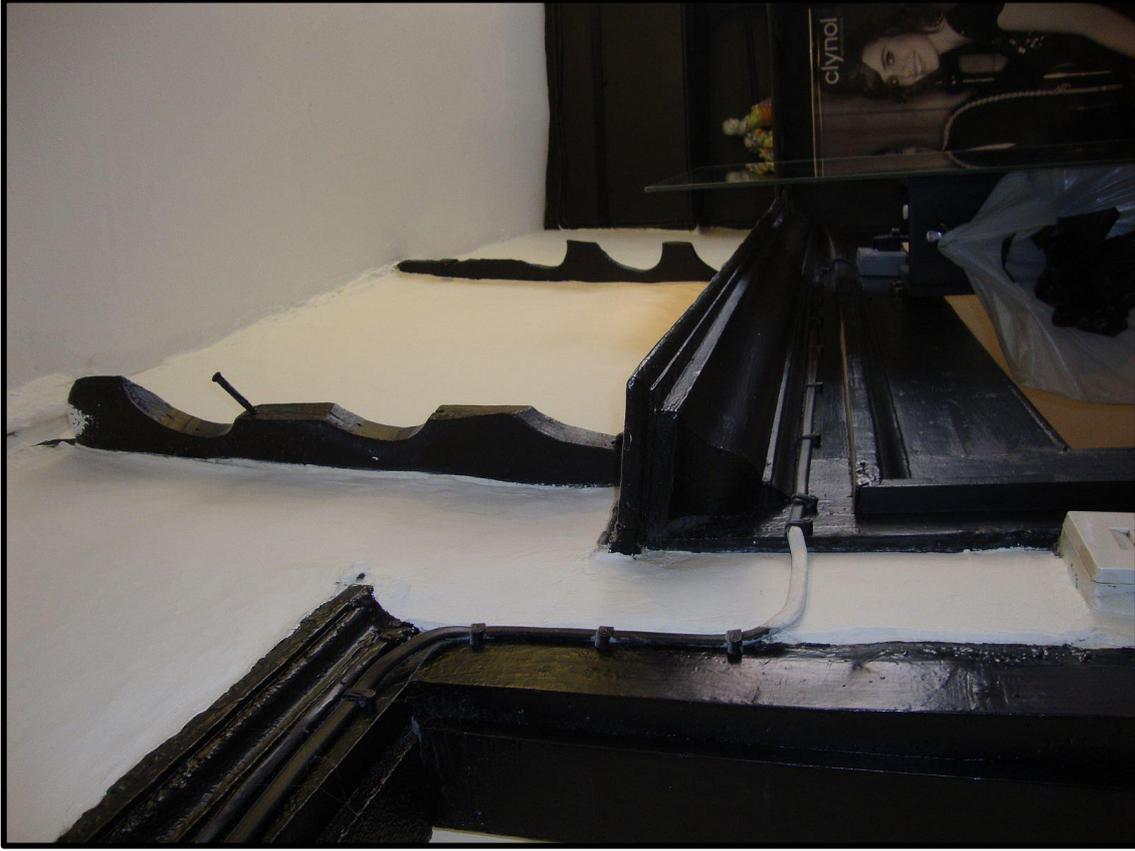


Fig. 11 Oblique view of the fireplace in the north-eastern wall, showing the moulded mantelshelf and the remains of a rack or rail above it, of uncertain purpose

### *Summary*

There can be little doubt that this building contains elements of an important medieval or early post-medieval building. The evidence of a jetty points to an early date, as does the massive scantling of the timbers. It is suggested that the building may preserve parts of a 15th- or 16th-century structure which has been heavily altered and partially obscured by later accretions. The addition beyond the original jettied frontage may have been made in the late 17th century, on the basis of the 18th-century raised-fielded panelling, which was presumably fitted within the openings of the arcade when the frontage was enclosed. It is possible that the panelling has been reset here and that the projecting 'loggia' is a much later addition than it appears, but there is no evidence of reassembly of the panelling and the survival of the chimneypiece, cupboard door and other high-quality fixtures suggest that the room has not been significantly altered since the 18th century.

Both the structures to the north-east and to the south west, including the chimney, are probably later accretions upon the original building. This may have been a long range aligned south-east/north west. The building was probably constructed in the middle of a former open market place and could have originated as a free-standing structure. It might represent an example of 'market encroachment'; the process by which initially temporary stall structures within a public space are, over time, replaced by more permanent and solid structures and the former public space annexed as private property. In this case, however, there is a possibility that the building may be of greater importance. The addition of a loggia or portico at one end of the building, and the proximity to a property formerly known from c. 1720 as 'The Cage' or 'The Bastille' (Siraut 2011), raises the interesting possibility that the former White Hart might have originated as a public building such as a Market House, or even a Guildhall; a predecessor of the present Town Hall, with a lock-up jail in close proximity.

Further examination of the building might clarify its original form and possibly its function. The large beams in the ceiling of the building may offer potential for dendrochronological dating.

(With Thanks to Jo Leighton)

### 3.7 **No. 42 High Street 'The Vet's House'** (Visited on Saturday the 14th of May 2011).

This house stands on the south-eastern side of High Street close to the entrance to the car park. Although the house has a very modest façade towards the street, with rendered walls and a slated roof, it presents a wholly different and far more interesting appearance from the gardens behind. The building is arranged in three ranges, with the front range lying parallel to the street and two gabled ranges extending to the rear to surround a small courtyard, now infilled with a lean-to structure (Fig. 12). The importance of the building is made clear by the large number of early chimney stacks, four in all, of which three lie on the line of the back wall of the front range and the fourth on the gable end of the north-eastern rear wing. This is a very large number of chimneys for a vernacular house and implies either a wealthy owner or possibly the use of the building as an inn. All of the chimney shafts are stone built, square in section and feature offsets and drip stones relating to earlier rooflines or roof coverings. The height of these above the existing roofs suggests the possibility that the property was formerly thatched. These chimneys cannot easily be dated, but they may well be of 16th or early 17th century date.

The property is currently divided into two dwellings. Only the north-eastern part of the house was accessible at the time of the survey, but this was rich in historic features. The south western room was originally the central room of the front range and may have been the 'hall' of the early house. This room has a ceiling supported by a very large hollow-chamfered beam with run out stops, and a fireplace in the south-eastern wall served by a very tall and thin chimney stack. A timber screen divides this room from the existing entrance passage, but its construction is completely concealed by modern plaster. The door is hung on 'HL' hinges. The existing entrance passage may have been carved out of the room to the north; entrance to the house may have been through a passage further to the south west, within the neighbouring property, or straight into the large central room. The northernmost room has a chamfered beam with stepped ogee stops, halved over and resting on the end of the beam previously described. There are no stops at the north end of this beam. The fireplace in the southeast wall has a slightly cambered chamfered lintel,



Fig. 12 Rear view of No 42 High Street ('The Vet's House') showing the two gabled ranges projecting to the rear and three of the early chimney stacks.

The ground-floor room in the north-eastern rear wing has two very substantial chamfered beams with bold, ogee stops. The lintel of the fireplace in the south east wall has a small chamfer and run-out stops, but has been much damaged by later enlargement of the opening.

The first-floor rooms are much altered. The southern room in the front range retains early 19th-century sash windows and a small 19th-century fireplace, now obscured. The door is also of 19th-century date, with four panels. This is hung in a double opening, which originally gave access to both of the front rooms. The doorways are separated by a post decorated with ogee mouldings, but the northern opening has been truncated by a late 18th-century door frame in which hangs a two-panelled door with raised, fielded panels hung on 'HL'-hinges. The northern room also has some cupboards of the same period, the doors being hung upon 'H'-Hinges. The central first-floor room in the north-eastern rear wing has a curiously constructed north-eastern wall with a series of vertical posts in the thickness of the wall. These suggest some form of timber framing, perhaps wall posts connected with the roof. The infilling seems to be modern and the wall is very thin. It is possible that this was some kind of open gallery at first-floor level, a feature which again may suggest an inn.

The roof structure of the front range consists of parts of an earlier roof structure which has been dismantled and reassembled, badly, to provide new trusses (Fig. 13). Among the timbers reused in this way are some of the original principal rafters of an early roof. These were supported by jointed crucks featuring deep sockets for very large rectangular trenched purlins and long sockets or housings for side-pegged cruck blades. Part of the head beam of a plank-and-muntin screen has also been inverted and reused and many of the purlins also survive reutilised in other parts of the roof. The original roof may have been of 16th- or 17th-century date. It was probably rebuilt in its present form in the 18th or 19th century.



Fig. 13 One of the trusses in the front range of No. 42, utilising parts of an earlier roof.



Fig. 14 View of the historic roof structure underlying the modern roof of the north-eastern rear range of No. 42, with carpentry details datable to the 17th or 18th centuries.

The roof of the rear range is modern, but overlies a much earlier roof structure, now in poor condition (Fig. 14). Only two bays survive, supported by two trusses with principals crossed and pegged at the apex, cradling a diagonally set ridge. This roof may date from the late 17th or early 18th century.

### *Summary*

This is an important building which may represent the remains of a large 16th- or early 17th- century mansion, or perhaps an inn. The building appears to have been arranged around a small rear courtyard flanked by projecting rear wings and contained an unusually large number of heated rooms or chambers. There may have been additional buildings towards the rear of the site, perhaps forming service ranges, of which no evidence is now visible.

Assuming the timbers of the original roof to have been reused when the present roof was constructed, we may conclude that the primary roof structure had substantial timbers of large scantling supported by jointed crucks. The very large squared and unmoulded purlins suggest that the roof had wide bays, with no evidence of wind braces. The severe character of the roof, without mouldings or chamfers might suggest that it was not intended to be visible; however, the quality of the carpentry is so high that it seems likely that the timbers were displayed, at least within the first-floor chambers. The timbers are painted black, which unfortunately disguises any evidence of smoke staining. It seems likely that the building was storeyed from the start, though a central hall as part of either this building, or perhaps an earlier structure on the site, remains a possibility.

The building retains many historic features, such as chamfered beams and historic fireplaces. Many other features are likely to be concealed by modern plaster and decorative treatments. These may include decorative treatments such as sgraffitto work in the fireplaces. The very modest façade of the building towards High Street is the result of later alterations and the rendered elevations may disguise features such as large windows and the original entrance.

There is some evidence of refurbishment of the house in the late 17th- or early 18th century, when the roof of one of the rear ranges was replaced and some of the internal fixtures and fittings were added. One of the most interesting features is the suggestion of a timber-framed side wall to one of the rear wings, perhaps an open gallery linking the main building to a rear wing or service block. The later alterations appear to have involved the destruction and reconfiguration of the original roof. There is no obvious context for such an alteration; the surviving joints of the early timbers are not shattered as though by structural failure and it does not appear that the accommodation was extended into the roof space, necessitating such a level of alteration. It may be that the front wall had to be rebuilt at some time, necessitating the removal and reinstatement of the roof.

This building deserves further investigation and its roof timbers and beams present opportunities for dendrochronological dating.

(With thanks to the tenants of No. 42)

### 3.8 **Sydenham House** (Visited on Monday the 20th of June 2011).

Sydenham House is a large house lying in the north-eastern part of High Street, close to the junction with Vicarage Hill. The building is of stone rubble construction, its unrendered façade showing many signs of alteration and repair (Fig. 15). The lower part of the façade is of local brown rubble but the upper part, under the eaves, is boarded over; it is clear that the existing eaves level is an alteration and that the original was much lower.

The windows in the upper part of the façade are modern replicas, possibly replacing mullion-and-cross windows like those which still survive in the garden elevation. These windows must have been inserted during a late-17th- or early 18th-century remodelling of the house. The original windows were wider, as can be seen from the evidence of blocking on either side of each opening, and may have been three or four-light mullioned windows. The windows of the lower part of the façade are sashes; the south western sash being tripartite, replacing a pair of smaller windows vertically aligned with those of the first floor and probably of the same period. The lintel of this window was evidently inadequate and the facade shows signs of distortion as a result. At the north-eastern end of the façade is a very large lateral chimney stack with two contractions or offsets. The doorway has a bracketed porch supported on shaped brackets.



Fig. 15 View of the south-eastern elevation of Sydenham House towards High Street, showing the large lateral stack and the replica mullion-and-cross windows.



Fig. 16 View of the rear elevation of Sydenham House showing blocked features and evidence of raised eaves.

The rear elevation of the building towards the garden (Fig. 16) shows similar features, with handsome mullion-and-cross windows replacing earlier and wider openings and evidence of a raised eaves line. Traces of a timber eaves plate remain visible, showing that the early roof is likely to be preserved. The windows retain very fine, ornate, casement stays and catches. One of the first-floor windows extends into the area of the raised eaves and, unless this window has been reset, it is likely that there was formerly a small chicket or half dormer window in this position, and there may have been others, giving the house a picturesque spiky roofline typical of the 17th century. The present back door replaces a wider opening which may betray the position of the cross passage.

The entrance hall has a staircase with an open string and shaped brackets beneath each of the treads. There is a door with raised-fielded panels to the understair cupboard. The kitchen, to the north east of the entry, has a ceiling supported on very large hollow-chamfered beams with straight-cut stops, this is possibly continuous with the ceiling of the entry, which may have been part of a larger north-eastern room heated by a large fireplace served by the lateral stack. This part of the building may have been storeyed from the start.

To the south-west of the passage are several smaller rooms whose character is derived from later 18th-century remodelling of the house. These rooms have doorways with six-panelled doors having raised-fielded panels. The windows have large window seats with carpentry of similar character. The south-western room has a rich early 19th-century cornice with honeysuckle ornaments and a window seat with plain moulded panels, which reveals a still later period of refurbishment in the years around *c.*1800.

On the first floor the northern room has a crude 17th-/18th-century chimneypiece with a planted pulvinated frieze, and is entered by an 8-panelled door with small-field panels hung on 'H'-hinges. These features might well date from the 17th century. The door to the first-floor room south west of the bathroom has two raised-fielded panels, but of a naïve type which might suggest a date in the 1670s or 80s. The chimneypiece in this room is of similar date with a very handsome bolection-moulded surround. The rooms to the south-west of this both have doors with raised-fielded panels, but have been inserted within a much larger room which appears to have been the original great chamber. This room retains a plasterwork cornice which respects the legs of the crucks or wall posts supporting the roof. In the southern corner is a small closet, with a ventilator, which may well represent a garderobe chamber or a closet for a close stool.



Fig. 17 View within the roof space of Sydenham House, showing an early (but secondary) partition of 17th-century date infilling an earlier truss.

The roof was inspected only briefly, and in its northern part, due to access constraints. It is supported by very large, un moulded trusses formed of principal rafters tenoned and pegged together at the apex, supporting a diagonally-set ridge tree and presumably linked by collar beams at the level of the existing ceilings. The blades of the principals have a curved form below the ceilings which suggests jointed crucks. The roof timbers are all of large scantling and the bay widths are generous. The purlins are trenched into the backs of the principals. The timbers are whitewashed to the apex, revealing that the rooms on the first floor were originally unceiled. There is no visible evidence of smoke blackening in the areas which have escaped the whitewash; any open hall which may have existed must thus have lain to the south-west, probably in the centre of the house where the roof cannot be inspected.

At the north-eastern end of the house a secondary partition defines the northern rooms and is supported by vertical studs with grooved rebates in their sides into which cleft laths are inserted to form an armature for plastering. This technique is known from Exeter in the late 15th and early 16th century and continues into the 17th century. The roof clearly predates this partition.

### *Summary*

Sydenham House may well be of late medieval or early post-medieval date. It is very well preserved and consists of a long low range of buildings parallel with the street. The house may originally have been a three room and cross passage house, with an open hall at the centre and storeyed elements at either end. The northern end preserves evidence of secondary partitions and was heated by a large fireplace, which may suggest that this was the service end of the house, with the cross passage roughly in the position of the existing entrance hall. The southern end of the house has early plasterwork at first-floor level, which may represent the great chamber of the house, presumably overlying a ground-floor parlour in the position of the existing large drawing room. Staircases to the en rooms may have existed in the south-western wall, where two small closets might represent a stair turret and a garderobe chamber, and in the south-eastern wall adjoining the large lateral stack, where curved masonry at first floor level might represent the survival of part of the interior of a turret.

The house has been refurbished on several occasions. The secondary partition and the plasterwork of the chamber, together with the naïve classical fireplaces, doors and mullioned windows might suggest a refurbishment in the third quarter of the 17th century. There are some later, 18th-century, features, but the next serious alteration seems to have been the remodelling of the drawing room and ground-floor rooms in around 1800. Subsequently, the eaves line was raised and dormers on the garden elevation (and perhaps elsewhere) were removed. Much of the early roof of the house remains and these areas, and the ground floor beams, may present opportunities for dendrochronological dating.

(With Thanks to June Day)

## 4. BUILDING SURVEYS: FORE STREET

### 4.1 **Dulverton Post Office** (Visited on Saturday the 14th of May 2011).

This building stands at the corner of Fore Street and Lady Street and has an unusual angled corner which suggests that it has been truncated at some period by road widening. The building appears to consist of three ranges: a front range facing the street, a longer middle range parallel with this and lying behind it and a rear range at right angles to these, extending into the gardens to the north west.

The façade projects forward of the street frontages to its south west but is on the same alignment as the properties in Bank Square to the north east. The projection of the frontage may indicate that the present front range is an encroachment on a former market area, and it is possible that the earliest part of the building was the middle range, perhaps part of a continuous terrace with the houses to the south west. Alternatively, the front range may have been continuous with the properties in Bank Square. There is a local tradition that the building bridged Lady Street with an arch (Christine Dubery pers. comm.).

The façades of the front range toward the street and the market square have a late 19th-century appearance with rubble walls and flat-arched window heads of wire-cut red brick. This façade masks a very much more complex structure containing architectural features which are earlier than the

façade. The present frontage may well have been added after the truncation of the building, to improve its appearance following the alterations.

The rear elevation of the middle range is rendered and its fabric is not visible. The walls appear to be of some thickness and it is likely that early fabric could survive.

The rear extension into the garden is constructed of light orange wire-cut bricks and is likely to be of late 19th-century date. The bricks are laid in 'English Garden Wall bond' with three courses of stretchers and a single course of headers; a brickwork bond noticeable in other buildings of the period in Dulverton. The sash windows are of the same period and have margin lights and shaped horns. To the north west the range drops to a single storey and appears to have been converted from a range of contemporary out buildings. Internally a two-panelled door with raised-fielded panels survives; this dates from the 18th century but is almost certainly reused in this context.

The plan of the front range now consists of two rooms, one used as the present post office counter and the other as a shop area. These rooms are separated by a very thick wall, pierced by a tall opening with panelled reveals. The thickness of the wall is such that it seems to have originally been an external wall, possibly the original south-western limit of the front range. The room to the south may have been added after the truncation of the building and might therefore represent a second phase of encroachment. This room preserves a small domestic fireplace of early 19th-century character, having a slate or marble chimneypiece with corner blocks.

The ground-floor rear rooms, within the middle range, have been severely altered for commercial use and there are now no visible features earlier than the 19th century.

On the first floor many of the rooms in the middle and front ranges are entered by handsome six-panelled doors with broad, flat architraves. These are also of early 19th-century date and may reflect alterations to the building following its truncation. The staircase to the first floor is of late 19th-century date and lies at the junction of the middle and rear ranges; it was probably inserted when the rear range was added. There is no visible evidence for the position of any earlier staircase, though it is possible that this was continuous with a second staircase which now rises from the first to the second floor only, at the north-eastern end of the building. On the second floor an unusually shaped attic room provides confirmation that the building did originally extend further to the north east. This room lies within the roof space, the structure of which is exposed below the ceiling. The room occupies two bays of an early roof structure consisting of un-moulded but very substantial 'A'-frame trusses, ceiled below collar level (Fig. 18). The roof is hipped to the south west, within the later roof structure of the present front range, with its eaves aligned on the thick internal wall dividing the ground-floor rooms. The roof trusses are linked by very substantial staggered butt-purlins, with long tenons threaded through the blades of the principal rafters from each side. The joints are pegged and there is evidence of pegging to secure the common rafters too. This roof quite clearly extended further to the north west and must have formed part of a longer building projecting into or bridging Lady Street. The character of the carpentry suggests a date in the 17th century.

The early roof is overlapped by a later roof structure which lies to the south west and oversails the earlier hipped gable of the original building (Fig. 19). This part of the roof is of much flimsier construction and consists of very large, crudely-braced trusses with principals crossed at the apex to cradle a diagonally-set ridge tree. The purlins are staggered over the backs of the principals. The character of the carpentry suggest a probable date in the late 18th or early 19th centuries. The roof has never been ceiled and it is plain that this area was never part of the domestic accommodation.

The brick shaft of a chimney is visible, which is probably also of late 18th- or early 19th-century date; however, this overlies an earlier masonry feature which, with its drip course and battered cap, clearly represents the summit of an earlier chimney now absorbed within the later roof structure. This chimney must have served a building with a roofline at a much lower level than the present front range and probably also of the middle range alongside it. Further, later masonry can be seen butting against the north-western side of this chimney stack, which may represent an addition to the middle range, raising the roof of the original structure.

The middle range has a roof of a similar date to this secondary roof, with principal rafters crossed at the apex and a diagonally-set ridge tree. This roof was probably renewed when the front range was rebuilt, though the relationship between the two roof structures could not be determined with any certainty. Brief inspection of the roof space above the rear range revealed no early fabric; it is likely that the entire rear range was rebuilt in the late 19th century.



Fig. 18 The early part of the roof of the front range, looking south, showing staggered purlins threaded through the principal rafters.



Fig. 19 View within the south-western part of the roof showing the later 18th- or early 19th-century roof structure and (right) the remains of an early chimney stack with a battered cap below the present roofline.

### *Summary*

The rapid survey of this building has revealed that the earliest fabric now recognisable lies in the north-eastern part of the front range. The building may have been constructed in the 17th century, with roof timbers of large scantling which appear to have continued to the north east across Lady Street.. This range may have lain in front of an earlier range, now represented by the middle range, but the only evidence of this is the chimney, now beneath the present roofline, which might have originally feature as a lateral stack on the front of a long, low building on the north-western side of the market place. Siraut notes that the building and adjoining premises were known as Hagley's or Town Tenement from 1669 and that by the mid 18th century the tenement consisted of two dwellings and shops, the east part being known as 'old' and the west part as 'new' (Siraut 2011).

In the late 18th century the building appears to have been extended to the south west by the addition of a two storey structure with a high-pitched roof which swallowed the south-western hip of the original roof and the early chimney. The most likely context for this alteration is the truncation of the original house to widen Lady Street, the additional rooms perhaps being added to compensate for the loss of parts of the original building. At this time the middle range was reroofed and many of the internal fixtures were inserted. Siraut cites map evidence that the building had achieved its present footprint by 1790 (Siraut 2011).

In the late 19th century the rear range of the building appears to have been built, or perhaps reconstructed, in red brick. The existing façades may also have been improved by the provision of new windows with flat-arched heads. Despite alteration in the 20th-century for commercial use some domestic fixtures of the period c.1800 remain and one earlier 18th-century door, reset within the rear wing.

(With thanks to Christopher and Christine Dubery)

#### 4.2 **Tantivy** (Visited on Saturday the 14th of May 2011).

This large and complex building lies on the opposite side of Fore Street from the Post Office and also appears to have been truncated, by the creation of Union Street to Link High Street, Fore Street and Lady Street. The building could not be examined in any detail at this stage due to private occupation but a brief inspection was made of the areas in commercial use, on the ground floor. The elevation and rooflines of the building suggest the potential for the preservation of historic fabric pre dating the 8th and 19th centuries, and this is confirmed by the presence of a moulded beam in the ceiling of the present shop, and of a fireplace with a chamfered lintel in the south-western wall. Both feature are of vernacular character and are likely to be of 17th-century date. The beam has mouldings to one side only and chamfers to the other, which may show that it stood over a partition (probably with an intergral headbeam, since there are no sockets) between front and rear rooms. Further investigation, with a survey of the roof structure, might reveal much about the origins and development of the block of buildings at the centre of the marketplace.

(with thanks to the owners and staff of Tantivy)

## 5. BUILDING SURVEYS: NORTH OF THE MARKETPLACE

### 5.1 **No. 2 Church Lane** (Visited on Saturday the 14th of May 2011).

This house lies near the north-eastern end of a long row of cottages lying to the east of the parish church, in a cobbled pedestrian lane linking Vicarage Hill to the churchyard. The houses are of stone construction and have plain façades with sash windows and flat-roofed projecting porches supported by shaped brackets. Although the houses appear initially to be a uniform terrace, closer inspection proves them to be irregular, and there are building breaks in their main façades (currently visible in the masonry due to building works) which show that the terrace was in fact constructed in several phases.

Siraut suggests that the house at the north-eastern end of the terrace may be identical with a house constructed within the churchyard, in 1612, by one John Atkins. By 1707 a house called 'Rawlins' at the east end of the churchyard, was divided into 'west or upper and east or lower parts each having 3 lower and 3 upper rooms (Siraut 2011). The northern parts of the present terrace may

represent houses shown on a map of Dulverton dating from 1820, described by Siraut as ‘One long house at the church end, set back and divided unequally into two and one adjoining house’. The rest of the terrace was constructed between 1810 and 1838, and appears on the Tithe Map of the latter date (*ibid.*).

Inspection of the terrace from the rear, oddly, reinforces the initial impression of unity (Fig. 20). The entire row of houses appears to be based on a similar plan. The main range of cottages appears to have been one room deep, with lateral chimney stacks in the rear wall, rising through the roof of a rear lean-to structure running across the back wall of the entire terrace and doubling the depth of the houses. The house at the northern end has a lower roofline and may be the least altered and earliest part of the terrace. No 2 to the south east of this has a gabled rear elevation with brick dressings which may represent alteration of the original low-level lean-to to provide first-floor rooms within a raised roofline. The three houses to the south east of this have a similar roofline, though without gables, but have been reroofed in a single phase in the 20th century; they have modern pantiled roofs to the main range and slating over the lean-to. The terrace may well represent a speculative development added to the south east of earlier structures near the churchyard gate and which were improved or upgraded *en bloc* by their landowner during the 19th and 20th centuries.

The interior of No. 2 Church Lane was inspected and proved to be extremely complex. The house has two front doors, both opening straight onto Church Lane and both of 19th-century date. One of the doorways opens into a through passage connecting with the back of the house, the other upon another passage alongside it. There are traces of a lobby inside the north-western front door. At the end of the north-western passage is a small two-panelled door with planted mouldings dating from the 1860s or 70s. Inside the second, south-eastern, passage is a chamfered six-panelled door with straight-cut stops. The main front room and the passage are separated by a match-boarded wall.

The fireplace in the rear wall of the front room has a timber lintel with stepped run-out stops and a small recess in the east jamb, perhaps for storing dry tinder. The hearth is a fine example of decorative slate work. In the rear room is a small fireplace of about 1910.

The stairs to the first floor have chamfered newel posts with domed tops and stick balusters. These lead onto a landing from which 19th-century four-panelled doors lead to the bedrooms. The position and configuration of the staircase is odd, resulting in an awkward and anomalous platform overlying the south-eastern passage. The roof could not be inspected.

### *Summary*

The houses in Church Lane are complex structures which cannot be fully understood without further investigation. It is likely that Nos 1 and 2 are the earliest parts of the terrace, possibly dating from the early 17th century. No. 1 was not accessible, but No. 2 retains some fabric, particularly the fireplace in the front room with its fine slate hearth and timber lintel, which could date from the 17th or 18th century. The house was much refurbished in the 19th century when many of the internal fixtures were added and the rear lean-to appears to have been remodelled to provide extra bedrooms under a higher roof line with gabled ‘chickets’. The anomaly of two entrance passages may suggest an element of shared accommodation, either a shared passage to the garden or some other division of the building between two families or tenants. The gardens also appear to have been shared, though these were in use as the vicarage orchard in the 1820s (Siraut, 2011)

The terrace of three houses to the south-east could not be inspected in detail. This terrace was probably constructed during the early 19th century but appears to replicate the basic plan form of the earlier structures. The houses in this part of the terrace may also have had rear lateral stacks, now represented by later chimneys or by patches in the slate roofing where chimneys have been removed.

The position and appearance of the buildings together with the possibility of shared accommodation, might suggest that the terrace was intended as a set of almshouses; however, there is no evidence of such a charitable institution in Dulverton (*ibid.*)

(With thanks to Suzanne Thompson)



Fig. 20 View of the rear of the houses in Church Lane, showing the lateral stacks to the rear of each house and the similarity of the rooflines and roofing materials, suggesting a common origin of the terrace or remodelling of the whole terrace uniformly by one landowner.

## 5.2 East Woodcote, No. 4 Jury Road (Visited on Saturday the 14th of May 2011)

This former hotel lies at the north eastern end of the town, just to the east of the vicarage. Only a portion of the building was accessible, most of which represents a 20th-century extension to the south east of the original structure. The original building survives at the centre of the present block and appears to be of 19th-century date. Its roof is a king-post structure of a standard type for the period. One small Edwardian fireplace remains. The eastward extension of the building, added after its conversion to a country house hotel in the 1920s (Mr Gunn pers. comm.), has much grander internal fixtures including large six-panelled doors and broad architraves with corner blocks. This appears to replace a series of sheds or outbuildings which are shown on early photographs

(With thanks to Ivan Gunn)

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