



Coleraines, North Hill, Little Baddow, Chelmsford, Essex.

Description and analysis of the timber-framed Stables.

Surveyed 22 01 2010 by Barry Hillman-Crouch MSt PA DipFA BSc HND.

Page | 1



Coleraines. The Stables is highlighted in red. The Outshot in blue.

Location

Coleraines is situated to the east of North Hill in the village of Little Baddow near Chelmsford. It is a large plot of approximately 8 acres dominated by a fine double pile Georgianised house which is listed:

'BADDOW NORTH HILL 5213 (East side) Coleraines TL 70 NE 10/326 II 2. A C17 timber-framed and plastered house with a C18 blue brick front with red brick dressings, with a parapet and a brick cornice. 2 storeys. Etc.' IoE Number: 112809.

There are two small outbuildings to the NE of the house and directly to the north is the Stables incorporating a coach bay. This is orientated almost E-W along its ridgeline and is located at 332391.04 E, 5735672.00 N. There is a small outshot to the eastern end currently used as a garden store.

To the north is a farmyard that has been converted to residential use and is in separate ownership. The north wall of the Stables is now the property boundary.



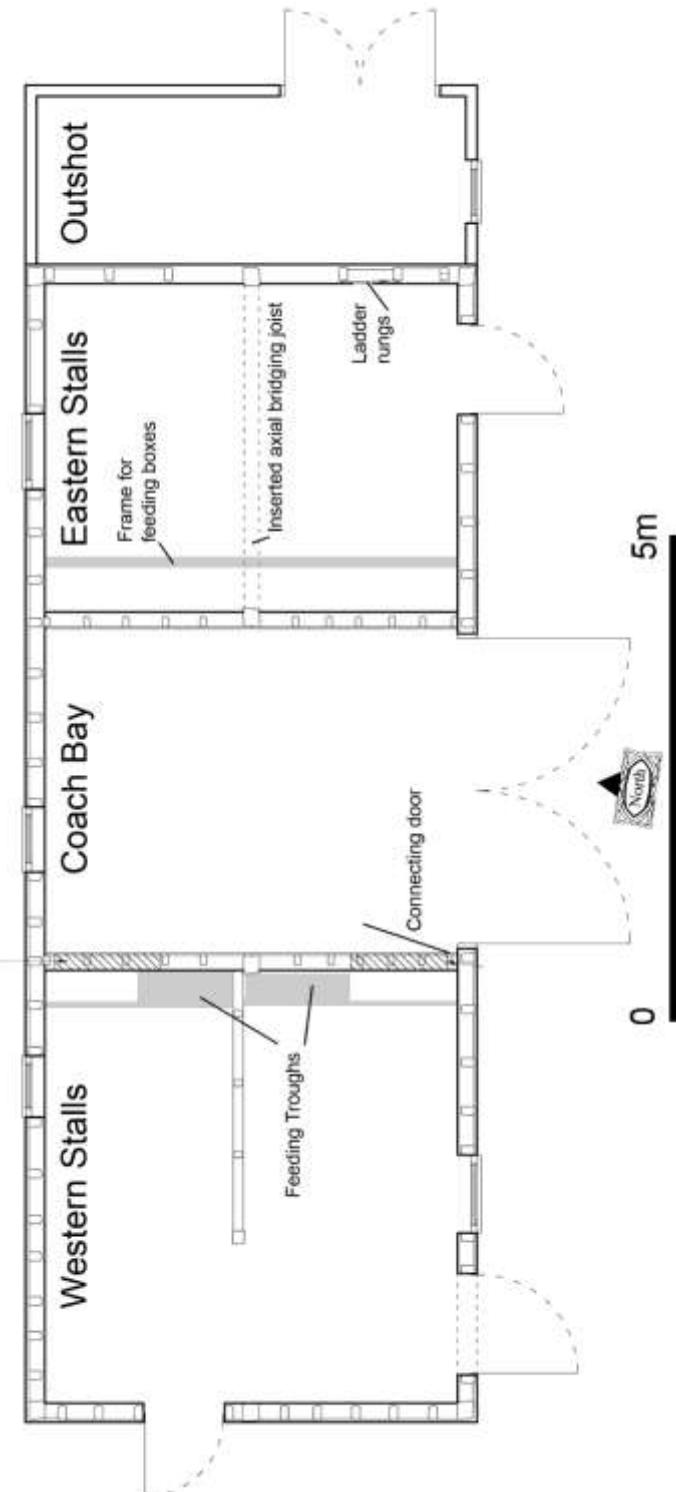
Barry Hillman-Crouch
Design & Recording Services



Page | 2

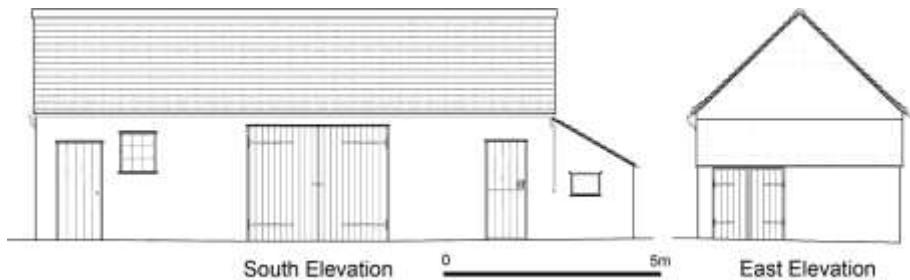
Location plan made by Kay Pilsbury Thomas Architects. Stables outlined in red is exactly 21m long. Outshot outlined in blue.

Description

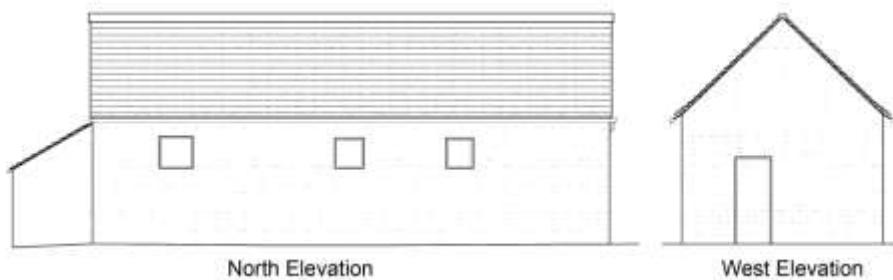


Page | 3

Annotated ground plan of the Stables from architectural drawings by Kay Pilsbury Thomas.



Page | 4



A full survey has been carried out by Kay Pilsbury Thomas Architects.

General Description

The building is timber-framed, the principals are mostly of straight, reused timbers with interrupted studwork nailed onto straight primary bracing. It is clad with weatherboarding on all elevations with a clay peg and pantile roof in good condition having been rebuilt within the last 20 years with C20th softwood rafters. All the external doors, with the exception of the lower leaf of the Eastern Stalls doors are very late C20th in style and construction.

The Outshot on the eastern end is built of reused bricks bonded with grey cement with a grey slate roof where most of the rafters are C19th but re-used. The southern elevation has been pargetted over the weather-boarding in a cementitious mortar and has been done to match the house and at the same time. The fact that it carries seemlessly over the brickwork of the Outshot shows it to be late C20th work. There are remnants of earlier pargetting.

In plan the building is not symmetrical. Externally the Stables is approx 12.0 x 4.7m wide (39ft 4in x 15ft 5in). The central bay is the same size as the Eastern Stalls measuring 3.3 x 4.3m (10ft 10in x 14ft) deep internally while the Western Stalls are 4.5 x 4.3m (14ft 9in x 14ft) deep and thus almost square given the tolerances of timber. The Outshot is 1.86 x 4.7m (6ft 1in x 15ft 5in) deep externally. The building is 2.77m (9ft) to the eaves and 5.86 (18ft 7in) to the top of the ridge.

The Western Stalls still retains the division boards and parts of the feed troughs. The Eastern Stalls has been modified by inserting a low floor reached by ladder. The floor has subsequently been removed leaving only the axial main joist and the four joists closest to the walls. There are no stall boards and the manger is a much later addition in machined softwood and is now mostly dismantled. The central bay is bare of fixtures save from some added shelves and the large double doors show this was the Coach Bay.



External Elevations



Page | 5

Southern elevation facing the house has two stable doors and central coach doors.

Southern Elevation

The southern elevation is asymmetrical about the central coach doors. There are stable doors positioned at each end to serve the horse stalls. The western stalls have an 8 light fixed window with heavy moulded timber astragals clearly visible on the inside but plastered over with putty on the outside. The glass appears old but is not crown glass. There is a small C20th fixed casement in the Outshot. There are drip courses in the pargetting over each door and window.



Two styles of pargetting are present on the wall between the coach and eastern stable doors.



From the inside it can be seen that the elevation is in fact weather-boarded and then pargetted over in two episodes. Most of the elevation is covered in a cementitious lime render, probably from when 10% white cement was a proscribed mix in the late C20th. However there is a section between the coach doors and the eastern stalls doors which is evidently earlier and to a different pattern. The later work is fielded in scribed panels and then dotted with a pointed roller in definite vertical strips. The earlier section is randomly imprinted using the end of a small cylinder leaving dozens of little circles.

Page | 6

The door to the Western Stalls is a late C20th gate and ledger door with mild steel fittings and Phillips head screws. It replaces the more typical split stable doors for which the fixings can still be seen in the frame as well as an iron drop bar which is described later. The Eastern Stalls door is a typical split stable door the upper leaf being a C20th replacement. The rest is further described in the section for this room.

The coach bay doors are C20th softwood with the original wrought iron strap hinges screwed in place. The rainwater goods are a mixture of painted metal and plastic with C20th cast iron downpipes which vent into water butts. There is also a redundant galvanised iron water pipe entering the building at the extreme western end near the ground. Sometimes these pipes actually carried electricity cables but this one has been blanked off with a plug and so may still be connected to the water supply.

The roof is composed of blue and red clay pegtiles matching the colour scheme of the brick front of the house. The northern elevation by contrast is roofed with orange pantiles.

A single square pattress plate is visible over the Eastern Stalls door but there must be two others that have been buried in the pargetting under the eaves of the Western Stalls.



Eastern elevation showing the Outshot.

Eastern Elevation.

The eastern elevation displays the plain, weather-boarded gable end of the Stables above the simple grey slated pent roof of the Outshot. The mortar bedded verge looks fresh and in good condition. The boards are cold brushed, in good condition and the lead work is modern.

The double doors into the Outshot are late C20th softwood gate and ledger design. The brickwork is pargetted in fields with rollered dots to match the southern elevation. The grey slate roof is covered in moss and there are a number of broken and slipped slates. The rainwater gutter is painted metal and appears to vent onto the ground without a pipe.



The northern elevation has a pantiled roof and C20th/C21st cladding.

The Northern Elevation

The northern elevation can only be viewed from the road or the neighbouring property. The timber-framed building is stood on an orange brick plinth heavily coated in hot tar. There are 8 lower courses of brick then a small step and 4 further courses. The bricks measure 55x110x220mm matching those in the plinths for the internal dividing walls. They are laid generally all as stretchers but there are a large number of bats giving a slightly random, vernacular appearance.

There are three plane, C20th square windows with softwood frames to light each bay. The weather-boarding is entirely late C20th or even early C21st and is marked up internally with BS numbers. It is fastened with modern French nails and has been cold tar brushed which has now worn thin.

There is also a small hatch door into the western stalls just above the brick plinth. This is of C20th softwood and is further described inside the room.

The Outshot wall can be seen to be pargetted in the same manner as the rest but the paint has worn off indicating that the other elevations have been more recently decorated (probably to sell the house).

In contrast to the northern elevation the roof is clad in orange pantiles. The rainwater gutter is of painted metal and has been recently repaired with bright galvanised brackets.



The western elevation is closed in by trees and runner beans sticks and not easily photographed.

The Western Elevation

The western elevation is featureless save for a C20th softwood gate and ledger door into the western stall. This is offset to the north in the feather-edged weather-boarding which is entirely C20th or early C21st and painted with cold brushing tar. Fastened with C20th French nails it is unusual in that it has been coated on both sides before being applied to the frame. It must be that the weather is particularly unkind to this facade.



The ivy covered door and water butts.

The door has been completely covered by ivy on the outside. There is a broken gate that has been laid across the doorway. The rainwater pipe is in painted metal and feeds into two water butts.

Internal Description.



Page | 10

The southernmost of the two horse standings in the western stalls. Feed trough and rail. Looking east.

The Western Stalls.

The carpentry in the Western Stalls typifies the whole building. All the principal timbers, the posts and plates are of reused timber from earlier buildings. The joints are unjowled. They are strengthened with primary bracing to which the interrupted studwork is fastened with wrought iron nails. Some of the studs are cut from reused timber but in the main they are fresh scantling that has been squared in the saw mill although some still bear the marks of the pit saw. There are quite a few quarter poles squared only on two sides.

On the inside of the frame are nailed half tree-trunks and various strakes to act as kick boarding for the horses. The room is divided down the centre with a large studwork partition clad in vertical one inch thick oak boards of up to 11 inches wide. On either side of the partition are the remains of two feed troughs which appear to have originally stretched right across the width of each stall. However each one has been modified so that only half of the trough remains although the front rail continues across the stall.

There are rough plates nailed onto the walls to take the manger rail which has long since been removed. However stored in the eastern stables is a drilled rail which may very well have come from here. There are also a large number of square staves lying about which presumably made up the bars of the manger.

In the southern stall the partition wall to the coach house has had a door inserted into it later in the buildings history. It can be seen that originally the wall was studded right through but two vertical studs and the diagonal primary brace have been truncated and a

door frame inserted. The wide planked door can only be locked from the coach house side (and is further described in that section).



Page | 11

The iron drop bar originally screwed into a fitting on the door jamb which has now pulled out.
Looking SW.

The reason for putting this in can be surmised by looking at the main door which has a large iron drop bar fastened with a large staple into the corner post. The drop bar was originally fastened with a screw thread into a socket on the door jamb. It would be very difficult to screw this in using a socket wrench from the outside so it seems more likely the door was barred from the inside and the ostler left the stalls through the coach bay door.

When the post pulled out and the bar could no longer be screwed in place a makeshift drop socket made out of wood was nailed in place. The bar itself is made of two strips of milled iron but is so corroded that it could be mild steel which would date it to after 1856.



Cut-outs for the drop bars in the principal post (left) and the partition post to divide the stalls.

The stalls were not only divided by the planked partition but also by two timber-drop bars now missing. The sockets for the bars are evident in the end post of the partition and also in the principal post in the middle of the western wall. Here it can be seen that the bars were dropped in on an arc and then secured with a strap or plate through slots cut horizontally in the timber. This allowed one of the horses to be walked into the rear stall and then secured from walking out again.

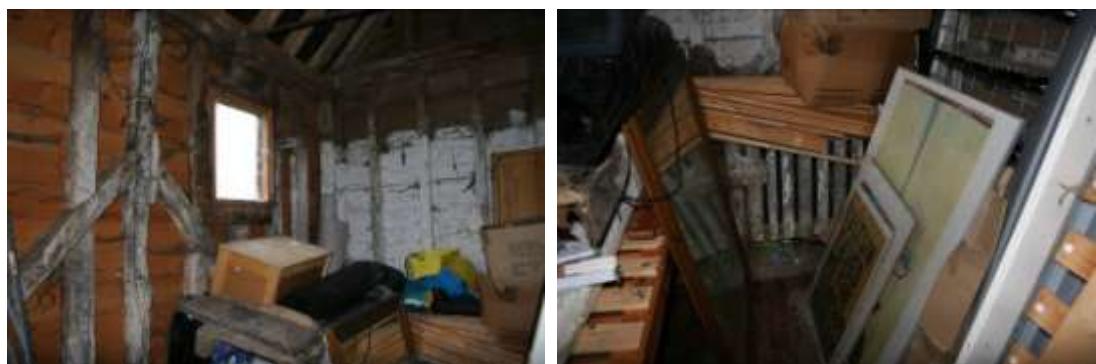
Page | 12

There was also a socket in the south wall near the door for a slide bar which was secured through a nailed on horseshoe on the partition. Only the ends of the shoe remained nailed in place. This bar prevented the other horse from backing out to the door.



Tie ring (left) over the feed trough and harness trees on the western wall.

There are a number of iron tie rings made of slender round section iron, much worn from constant chafing. Their small size suggests that small horses were kept here. On the southern wall there is a vernacular harness tree made of quite thin sticks would have only supported lightweight tack. There is also however the lower part of a much more robust harness tree nailed to the centre of the wall and this may have held the collar for a plough horse. It is too high to put a saddle on. There is no sign of the bespoke hangers, bridle rests, whip reels and the like beloved of the Victorian equestrians.



The northern stall was being used as a store but the half feed trough (right) could be seen.

At the time of the survey the northernmost stall was being used to store private possessions and the feed trough was buried under boxes and everyday items. It was however possible to excavate the feed trough to note that it was the reflection of the other one with a rail that spanned the bay. There was also the addition of a series of vertical battens on the front to prevent the horse getting its hooves under the trough. Unlike the other side there was no sign of a door into the coach house and on the other side of the wall the boarding could be seen to carry right across.

It is likely that in latter years there was a water trough inserted into the empty halves of the feed troughs. In the SE corner there is a galvanised water pipe which has been blocked off with a modern screw fitting which could have supplied them.

Floor.

Page | 13



Well made brick floor with built in gulley. Note patchy concrete to the left.

The floor of the stalls is carefully laid with 60x100x210mm hard red and purple paving bricks on edge arranged to drain into a gulley that passes across the floor from the entrance door to the northern wall. The vent for the gulley has been lost when the building was repaired in the C20th. Concrete has been spread over the bricks near the door and has subsequently worn away.

Doors and window.



Small hatch door in the north wall (left) and gate and ledger door in the west wall. Both C20th.

Adjacent to where the gulley should pass out of the building is a small C20th gate and ledger hatch door with vertical softwood boards. The modern hinges and lock have been reversed. In the western wall there is a C20th gate and ledger door with vertical softwood boards. The mild steel fittings are fastened with Phillips head screws and the small nailed on drop box is made of C20th scrap wood. The outside of the door is engulfed in ivy and evidently hasn't been opened for some years.

Page | 14

The main door is a C20th gate and ledger already described and replaced the more typical split stable doors for which the fittings and empty sockets can be seen.

The 9 light window frame has heavy moulded astragals in good condition on the inside but highly degraded on the outside and plastered with putty. The wall frame is formed to accommodate it and it is most likely the original C19th fitting. The window on the northern elevation is a C20th plain casement.



The Coach Bay is currently used as an equipment store.

The Coach Bay.

The centre bay was evidently used to store the coach. This can be confidently stated because of the wide double doors and the fact that there are no fittings whatsoever inside. The interrupted studwork can be clearly seen in the north wall where the exterior cladding has been replaced in the late C20th and a C20th plain glass light is set in the original frame position. The lower part of the north wall is clad inside with C20th tongue and groove fastened with French nails and there are two makeshift shelves similarly nailed. Most likely this was put in when the Coach Bay became a garage.



Page | 15

The west (left) and east walls of the Coach Bay clad in mill sawn boards and whitewashed to the eaves.

The east and west walls are clad to the apex with heavy, mill sawn variable width plain boarding fastened with rose headed wrought iron nails. Mostly 11 to 12in wide the boards are edge-butted up to eaves height where they are then overlapped like feather edge boards. Coincidentally the room is white washed to eaves height all round on the original boards - a feature common to all the bays.

Floor



The brick floor is mostly covered in cement.

The floor is mostly washed over with a thin layer of cement but some of the original brick floor is visible at the threshold. The bricks are similar hard red and purples to those in the stalls but are slightly larger at 110x220mm (the thickness could not be measured). The bricks are laid on their flats rather than their edges as in the other bays.

Doors and window.



Page | 16

The door jambs to the coach bay have sockets for drop bars.

The Coach Bay doors are late C20th softwood replacements hung on the original hand wrought iron pintle hinges. In the door jambs can be seen the sockets for the drop bar to secure the doors against the wind. There are also some redundant mortices from the original use of the timber.



The small door into the Western Stalls from the Coach Bay.



Hand wrought strap hinges (left) and flat bar bolt on the small internal door. NTS.



In the western wall is the small door into the Western Stalls. It is made of very wide 16-18in boards and hung on pintles with hand wrought iron straps with spooned terminals. There is a milled iron flat bolt fastened with square sectioned staples which is so rusty it may very well be mild steel. The door is smeared with oil paint and it is likely that it was used as a testing palette before the paint was applied to the coach or other machinery.

The off-centre window in the northern wall is properly framed but C20th. It can also be seen that there are a number of square holes cut in the dividing walls throughout the building at odd heights. These indicate that the building may have been used as a chicken house.

Page | 17



The Eastern Stalls are currently used as a wood store and bike shed.

The Eastern Stalls

The Eastern Stalls is markedly different in interior layout and materials used in its construction from the Western Stalls. There was an inserted floor of which the axial joist and only the four edge joists remain. This was supported on nailed in cheek pieces and afterwards reinforced off an unusual timber structure made of machined softwood.



Page | 18

The axial joist for the inserted floor is then later supported on a slotted (right) softwood frame.

The axial joist is a rustic pole that was rebated to accept the waney joists which were then nailed in. The machined frame formed a kind of large cabinet in which two long, round ended slots must have allowed sliding shutters to have been moved up and down. It has since been dismantled but it does resemble a hen coop. The removed floor is a little over head height and was reached by a rather vernacular ladder composed of rungs nailed to the eastern wall near the door.



Loft floor ladder nailed to the studs of the eastern wall now used as rack.

The two upper most rungs are likely original being wide, hand hewn half poles nailed with wrought iron nails. The others are later additions and two are the narrow rails from a manger, scarcely able to bear weight and have been put in to hang things on. These are fastened with French nails. Adjacent is a very old electrical isolator switch with wooden backing plate.

There is no trace of an upper door to bring in the hay to the loft so it must have been in the eastern gable which has since been reclad in the late C20th. In the centre of the gable on the ground floor the boarding has been opened up either side of the central storey post to make an entrance into the current outshot. The opening has been framed however with nailed on battens and was probably done in the late C19th or early C20th.

Page | 19

Floor

Most of the floor is under the gravel that has been dragged in from the driveway but sweeping it away reveals a neatly laid brick and cobble surface. A little cement has been washed over it near the door and in other worn patches.



The floor is made up of panels of pebbles divided by brickwork.

A drainage gully is made up of the same 60x100x210mm hard red and purple paving bricks on edge as elsewhere. The pebble fields are divided by white gault bricks of the same dimensions. The pebbles range in size from about 30mm to 100mm and appear to be set in asphalt. It must be assumed only the tips of the pebbles can be seen on the surface otherwise they would soon be displaced.

Doors and window

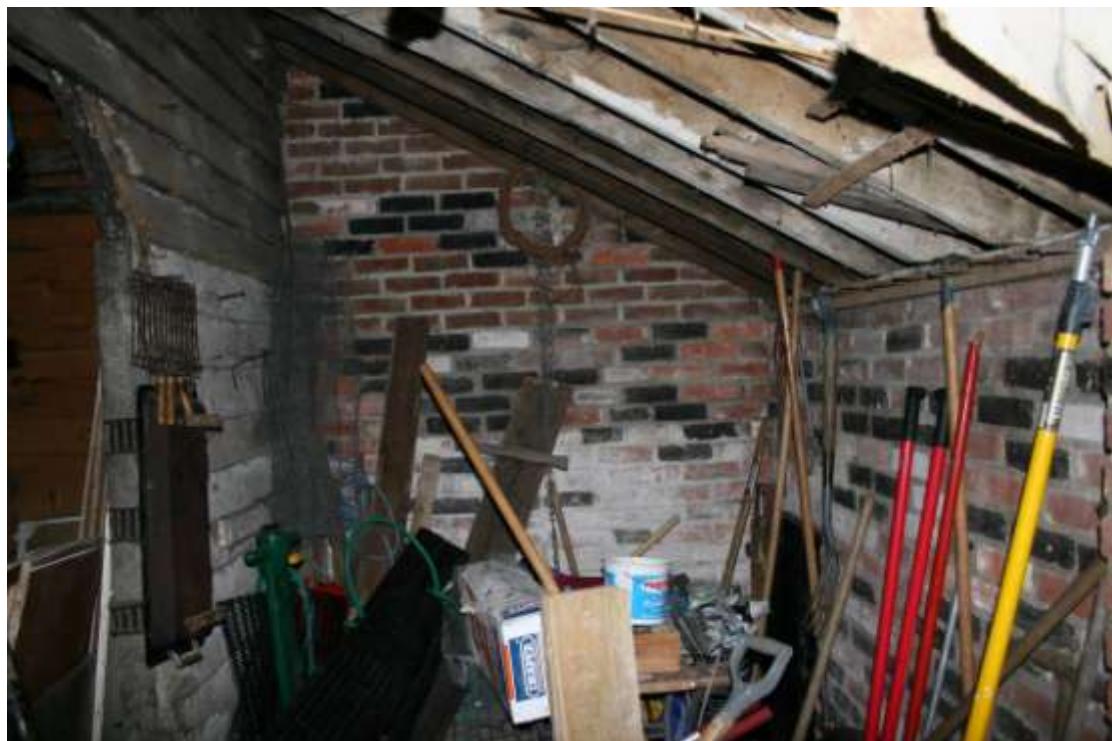


The eastern stalls doors. The lower leaf is original with its fittings. The latch is also early.

The eastern stalls door is the split stable type with the upper leaf being a C20th softwood replacement with screwed on mild steel T-strap hinges and padlock hasp. However the pull handle and drop latch and catch are probably the originals reused. The latch has the saltire cross stamped into it to ward off evil.

The lower leaf is original and retains its hand wrought iron strap pintle hinges with spooned terminals. The lower leaf is coated in hot tar whereas the rest of the doors are painted in modern cold brushing tar. The window is a C20th plain glass casement set in the original frame position.

Page | 20



Interior of the Outshot used as a garden store. Bricks are reused in the late C20th.

The Outshot.

The Outshot is built of reused bricks set in a 20mm thick grey cement bed. The bricks are variously painted, tarred or whitewashed and measure 65x110x220. The simple pent roof is composed of reused machine sawn 125 x 50mm (5 x 2 in) softwood rafters. There are no purlins.

The dividing wall with the Eastern Stalls is partly whitewashed and part bare wood showing that there has always been an outshot here because the weather boarding was not tarred for external use. The softwood gate and ledger double doors and windows are late C20th.

The brickwork of the plinth is also visible and is composed of 55x110x220mm orange reds in a 15mm lime mortar bed. The floor is washed over with concrete and buried in gravel from the drive.

Roof Structure



Page | 21

The roof structure is best expressed in the wall of the Eastern Stalls.

The roof has been almost entirely replaced in C20th machined softwood. In the Eastern Stalls there are some original rafters paired with new ones and the original collars for the side purlin roof. The purlins here are also original but are replacements throughout the rest of the building. The roof construction is entirely nailed together.



C20th British Standard marks on the cladding.

Carpentry Marks and Timber Marks

There were no frame assembly marks discovered but this is not a surprise. On late buildings (post 1700) the carpenter's marks are nearly always on the outside of the frame. There was a British Standard stamp on the cladding inside the Western Stalls.



Ironwork Repairs

There are three mild steel tie-rods spanning the building passing through the top-plates. These are actually steel tubes which are threaded at either end and secured with hexagonal headed C20th nuts against small square mild steel pattress plates. The only other ironwork repair visible is a mild steel strap across the failed scarf joint in the top-plate of the north wall of the Eastern Stalls which is painted with grey primer and secured with hex headed bolts. (See photo for roof structure extreme right).

Fixtures

The fixtures are the feed troughs and dismantled mangers already described in the room descriptions. Also of interest is the very old electrical isolator box positioned next to the ladder in the Eastern Stalls showing electricity was supplied early in the C20th.

Topographical Survey from Maps



Page | 23

Chapman & Andre 1777.

This map shows the area of North Hill then known as Wickhay Green. Coleraines appears to be above the 'Y' of 'hay' on the crank of the road.

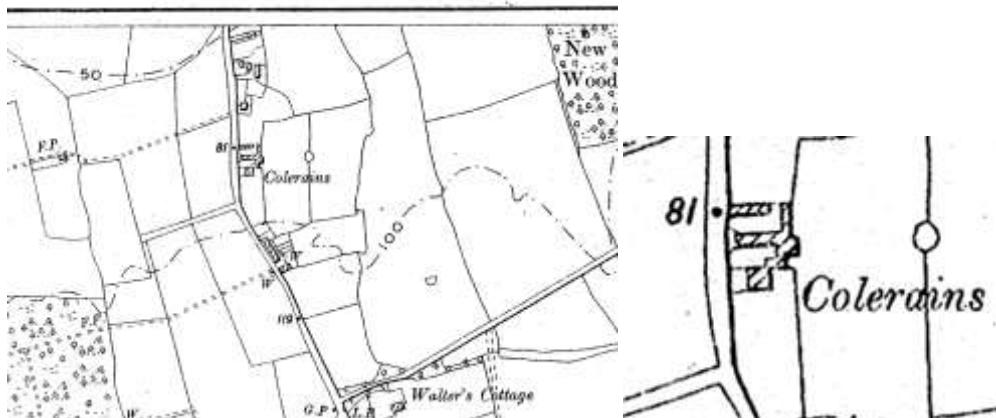




Page | 24

1st Edition OS map of 1874

In 1874 the house is known as 'Colerains' and the farmyard has developed into a 'high farming' style farm unit. The Stables is clearly in position. The site is fenced off from the farmyard.



2nd Edition OS map. 1897.

The Second Edition OS shows the Stables as part of a range connected to the house. Physical evidence for this connection is now lost.

Phasing the development of the buildings.

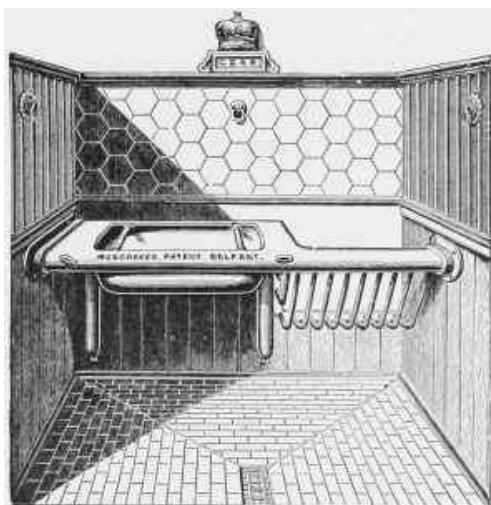
1. Early C19th

The Stables at Coleraines appears to be wholly Victorian in its design and construction methods. All the principal timbers are reused from earlier buildings and squared in the saw mill. The studs and diagonal primary braces are vernacular in character mostly being half or quarter poles also mill sawn. The nails are wrought iron and skew nail everything together. The roof is a clasped side purlin design with the collars nailed rather than lapped into place. The Tithe Map implies that the building was in position before 1843 but it would have been quite new then judging by the carpentry.

Page | 25

2. Later C19th

The internal function of the building was changed by putting a door between the Western Stalls and the Coach Bay and modifying the mangers to allow passage through. It can be surmised that it was necessary to thoroughly bar the Western Stalls doors with a screw fitted iron strap and so leave through the other way. The southernmost stall was altered by the addition of a slide bar passed through a nailed on horseshoe to prevent the horse getting near the door. Perhaps they had a troublesome horse or problems with horse thieves.



Manger design of 1905. (J. Wortley Axe, 1905. Fig 575).

Another reason may be that the best practice of the day was to have a feed trough and water bucket side by side. This was advocated in later guide manuals on horse husbandry. (J. Wortley Axe, 1905).

In the Eastern Stalls a low floor, probably a hay loft, was inserted using a rustic pole as the axial joist which was reached by rungs nailed to the existing frame. There must have been a loft door to the end gable but there is no trace of it now. The southern elevation was pargetted over the weatherboarding in fields decorated with small circles.

The 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey shows that the Stables was joined to another range of buildings at its eastern end by 1897.



3. C20th.

There is a machined timber frame in the Eastern Stall that serves to reinforce the hay loft floor. It has two long slots cut into it for sliding shutters of the type in a hen coop. There are a number of holes punched through the partition walls at various heights that also suggest the building was used as a hen house for a time.

Page | 26

That there are no chicken droppings can be explained by the fact that the building was badly damaged and largely reclad and reroofed after the gales of 1987. This accounts for all the new softwood cladding and machined timber roof structure. (Owner, pers comm.).

The Outshot was also built of reused bricks and reused timber and the whole of the southern elevation rendered over and pargetted to match the house. During the repairs three steel tubes were inserted as tie rods to prevent the walls spreading outwards. All the doors and windows were replaced save for the lower leaf of the Eastern Stalls.

Discussion.

The Stables at Coleraines is a very straightforward building that carried out its designed purpose until the advent of the motor car. When the horses left the building it seems to have done a stint as a chicken house before being blown down in the great gales and repaired to its current status. Most of the roof and weather boarding is therefore post 1987.

The stalls partition and feed troughs are still in situ in the Western Stalls but the manger rails have long ago collapsed and that which remains is worm eaten and unserviceable. The hay loft has also disintegrated. The Outshot is a C20th potting shed.

These buildings were once an essential part of country life housing the horses, their fodder and the carriage. With the advent of the motor car they became garages, stores or hen houses. When Coleraines ceased to be a farm the building became a store.

Acknowledgements.

I am indebted to Mr Walter Brinzer, owner of Coleraines for appointing me and providing the modern background. I also acknowledge Teresa O'Connor of Essex County Council HEM Archaeology Dept for her help with the project.

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Page | 27



ESSEX HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD/ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

SUMMARY SHEET

Site name/Address: Coleraines, North Hill, Little Baddow, Chelmsford.		Page 28
Parish: Little Baddow	District: Chelmsford	
NGR:	Site Code: LBCO10	
Type of Work: Building Recording	Site Director/Team: Barry Hillman-Crouch MSt PA DipFA BSc HND	
Date of Work: 02 02 2010	Size of Area Investigated: 60Sqm	
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: None	Funding source: Owner	
Further Seasons Anticipated?: No	Related EHER No.s:	
Final Report: Coleraines, North Hill, Little Baddow, Chelmsford, Essex. Description and analysis of the timber-framed Stables. Surveyed 22 01 2010 by Barry Hillman-Crouch MSt PA DipFA BSc HND.		
Periods Represented: C19th - C20th		
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS: The Stables at Coleraines is a very straightforward building that carried out its designed purpose until the advent of the motor car. When the horses left the building it seems to have done a stint as a chicken house before being blown down in the great gales and repaired to its current status. Most of the roof and weather boarding is therefore post 1987. The stalls partition and feed troughs are still in situ in the Western Stalls but the manger rails have long ago collapsed and that which remains is worm eaten and unserviceable. The hay loft has also disintegrated. The Outshot is a C20th potting shed. Due to be converted into living accommodation.		
Previous Summaries/Reports:		
Author of Summary: Barry Hillman-Crouch MSt PA DipFA BSc HND	Date of Summary: 09 02 2010.	

