

ART. XI.—*Paddock Hole : A Cumberland house with a lower-end parlour.* By PHILIP DIXON.

*Read at Hexham, July 15th, 1971.*

THE old house which stood in the yard of Burgh Head farm (NY 328591), immediately to the south of Burgh-by-Sands Church, had been empty for some years and was demolished in September 1970.<sup>1</sup> This article is divided into four parts: in parts 1 and 2 the house and its history are described; in part 3 it is shown that the house was built in 1707 and that the room at the passage-end was, most unusually, the parlour, and in part 4 the structural changes are analysed in detail.

### 1.

The house was a rectangular building of two storeys, measuring 54 ft. 9 in. from east to west and 21 ft. 9 in. from north to south, with a single storey lean-to 31 ft. 6 in. long projecting some 6 ft. from the south side. The walls were whitewashed and averaged 2 ft. 6 in. in thickness, and were composed of clay, which was laid in layers about 3 in. thick separated by thin bands of straw.<sup>2</sup> The roof was supported upon crucks whose feet rested upon large weather-worn boulders. The

<sup>1</sup> I wish to express my gratitude to Mr and Mrs Hewson of Burgh Head farm for allowing me access to the house. My thanks are also due to Mr E. Mercer of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England) for his advice on the structure; to Mr B. C. Jones of the Record Office, Carlisle, who allowed me to read his material on Burgh-by-Sands and who has made many helpful criticisms of the section on the history of the house; and to Mrs Janet Dixon who assisted in the survey and has suggested many improvements in the text.

<sup>2</sup> Houses of this type are common in Cumberland: compare R. W. Brunskill, "The Clay Houses of Cumberland", *Trans. of the Ancient Monuments Society, New Series*, X 57-80. One of the other similar houses in Burgh has been described by K. S. Hodgson, C. M. L. Bouch, C. G. Bulman, CW2 liii 149-159.

gable ends of the house had been rebuilt, the west gable in stone and the east in brick; in this rebuilding the end crucks (I and V) had been removed but there was evidence for their existence in the survival of the boulders which had supported them. The remaining crucks differed in their shaping. Cruck II was adzed to a rectangular section but Crucks III and IV had been dressed no more than was necessary to remove their branches, and were of irregular shape. Cruck II, furthermore, retained mortices for windbraces and purlins, and the sawn-off ends of a tie beam and a collar, none of which was appropriate in its then position. Since the house had never extended further to the east it is not possible to view Cruck II as the survivor *in situ* of a larger and more complicated house; the cruck must therefore have been re-used from an earlier structure. The rough crucks III and IV were prepared for the house when it was built.<sup>3</sup>

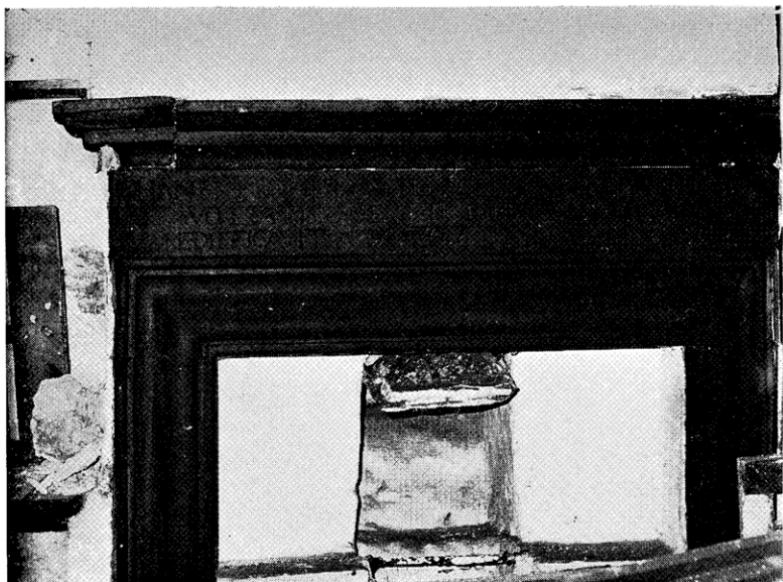
The three surviving couples were joined each by a yoke, fastened by wooden pegs. The roof covering of slate was carried on a ridge-piece which rested on the yokes and on a pair of purlins on each slope. The purlins were supported on pieces laid on the crucks and stopped against the walls. The purlins on the south side of Cruck II, however, rested upon collars which were half-lapped and pegged into the cruck. The north ends of these collars were supported upon the purlins on the north side, and this caused an irregularity in the relative heights of purlins on each slope.

Almost all the original openings were in the north wall of the house. The ground-floor rooms were lit by windows with stone surrounds cut to plain broad chamfers; in each sill and lintel were sockets for a central mullion and glazing bars. Two of the three

<sup>3</sup> The insertion of crucks into standing clay walls is implausible: see C. Williams-Ellis, J. & E. Eastwick-Field, *Building in Cob, Pisé and Stabilized Earth* (London, rev. ed. 1947), 41.



Paddock Hole from the North-west.



Inscribed fireplace in Room A.

first-floor windows had wooden frames while the third had roughly-cut stone jambs and lintel; all these upper windows appeared to have been inserted. Access to the ground floor was by a door which opened into a cross passage: this door, with its slightly chamfered mouldings, was surrounded by a disturbance in the walls, and was clearly a replacement, as was the corresponding door at the south end of the cross passage, where part of the earlier, wider door survived inside the jamb of its successor.

The ground-floor rooms were entered from this passage. Room A, to the east of the passage, measured 14 ft. 8 in. by 11 ft. 5 in. and was separated from it by a brick wall. The room was lit by a broad window in the north wall and by a rough loop, probably an insertion, in the south. Stone dairy benches ranged the walls, and DAIRY had been cut in a Roman hand on the window lintel, but the room was heated by an imposing stone fireplace 5 ft. 1 in. broad and nearly 5 ft. high, clearly intended for a parlour rather than a dairy. The fireplace was cut with bold classical mouldings, and upon it was the inscription whose interpretation is important in the analysis of the house; it fell into two halves separated by IM in a heart. On the left-hand side it read:

**IOHANES MATHEWS ANNO VICESIMO  
OCTAVO ETATIS SVAE HANC DOMVM  
EDIFFICAVIT A.D. 1707**

and on the right-hand side:

**ET CATHERINAE  
EIVS VXORIS : AN  
ETATIS SVAE 23.**

The implications of this fireplace and its inscription are discussed below.

The west wall of the cross passage was of clay, and contemporary with the main walls of the house. In

its centre was a blocked brick insertion.<sup>4</sup> At the south end of the passage a door led into the hall, room B.

The room measured 14 ft. 5 in. by 17 ft. 6 in. and was lit by three windows in the north wall, the eastern-most of which had been blocked before demolition and made into a cupboard. Originally this had been a firewindow, lighting the space inside a firehood; the hood had been replaced by a brick stack containing an iron kitchen range of 19th-century date. In the south wall inserted doors led to the staircase to the upper floor and to what had probably been a washhouse in the lean-to. The hall was divided by a board partition from room C at the west end of the house. This room was lit by a single window in the north wall and was featureless apart from an inserted brick chimney breast.

The first floor was carried on five widely spaced beams supported, where investigated by stripping, on vertical pieces let into the walls. Two of the beams were rough and were clearly replacements; the other three were older, with narrow chamfers and run-out stops. The floor covering was of narrow modern boards, much decayed. At the west end part of an earlier flooring with 9-in. wide boards had been preserved.

A staircase of 12 risers led to the first floor, whose walls stood 5 ft. above floor level. The space above the hall had been divided by modern partitions into three units: to the south, reached directly from the staircase, was a passage from which the rooms of the upper floor were entered. Above the old firehood was a small room, 9 ft. 8 in. by 6 ft. 6 in., lit only by a skylight. To the west was a larger room lit by a window in the north wall. At the west end of the house

<sup>4</sup> Probably a back boiler from the 19th-century kitchen range: compare, for example, the inserted boilers at Woodhead (NY 577739), Peel o' Hill (NY 558743), or High House (NY 573727).

was a room similarly lit, and heated by an inserted brick fireplace in the west gable.

The clay cross wall to the west of the cross passage rose through the first floor to form a screen wall beside the firehood. From the staircase a door directly above that into the hall led to a windowless corridor above the cross passage, divided from the room at the east end of the house by a modern wooden partition. This room was heated by an inserted brick fireplace; the upper part of the chimney breast, however, was of clay and represented the stack from the ground-floor fireplace, adapted to warm the first floor.

## 2.

The old name of the house was Paddock Hole.<sup>5</sup> There used to be two adjacent tenements of this name; that occupied by a family of Hodgsons, now called Fort House, retained its old name until recently. That now called Burgh Head was occupied by the Matthews family.<sup>6</sup> In 1589 the Matthews' property of Paddock Hall amounted to 12 (customary) acres of land and 5½ acres of meadow, with other lands, and was occupied by John Matthew at a customary rent of 19s. 8d.<sup>7</sup> John Mathew de Paddock-hole, perhaps the son or the grandson of the tenant of 1589, held in 1638 over 30 (statute) acres of land, 3 acres 1 rod of which comprised "the house yarde and croft".<sup>8</sup> This man may have been John Matthew II who died in 1663, bequeathing "tow corne arkes one chist one frame bunke one table and frame" to his eldest son John

<sup>5</sup> I owe this point to Mr B. C. Jones. Variants are: Paddock Hall (1589), Paddock-hole (1638), and Hole (1703, 1740). Paddock signifies toad.

<sup>6</sup> The genealogy of Matthews has been drawn up with the advice of Mr Jones, and shows the descent of the property by arrows.

<sup>7</sup> P.R.O., London, E.164/42, f. 5.

<sup>8</sup> C.R.O., Arundel's Survey, Burgh volume, 31. Mr Jones tells me that a customary rod of 7 yards was used in 1681 for a survey of the Drumburgh Estates in the Lonsdale MSS.; conversion to a statute rod would change the 1589 figure to 29½ acres, which approximates to the 1638 figure.

Matthews III.<sup>9</sup> When John III died without issue ten years later, Paddock Hole passed to his brother Joseph, who was admitted in 1676 after a tenant right dispute.<sup>10</sup> Joseph was churchwarden in 1684,<sup>11</sup> and died in 1703,<sup>12</sup> leaving eight children. The eldest of these, John Matthews IV, is the man whose inscription was cut on the lintel of the fireplace at Paddock Hole. On 25 August 1706 he married, at Kirkbampton, Catherine, daughter of Thomas Storey, rector of Kirkbampton 1681-1739 and vicar of Burgh 1680-1739.<sup>13</sup> John Matthews IV died in September 1740.<sup>14</sup> In his will he bequeathed to his daughter Catherine his "marish" lands which he valued at £170, and the sum of £100 sterling; the heir to the rest of his lands was Joseph Matthews, his eldest son (who received "my Great Ark standing in the west end of my great Barne at Hole and my pump Trough").<sup>15</sup> During the next century the history of the tenement can be followed in the Land Tax Assessments. The elder Catherine lived at Paddock Hole during her widowhood, and paid the largest share of the tax, varying between 9s. 4d. and 8s. 6½d. Her daughter, Catherine junior, paid 3s. 6d., presumably for her marshes, and the remaining 1s. 2d. was paid by the heirs of the male line of the family, Joseph Matthews and later his son Richard. By 1777 Catherine Matthews junior had acquired Richard Matthews' share and was paying 4s. 7¾d.<sup>16</sup> In the next year her mother died;<sup>17</sup> she

<sup>9</sup> C.R.O., will of John Matthews, Burgh, 1662.

<sup>10</sup> Document in possession of Major E. Calvert of Rindle House, Burgh. Joseph's mother, Jane Matthews, then had, as was customary, one-third of the messuage during her widowhood.

<sup>11</sup> C.R.O., DRC 6/Burgh-by-Sands transcripts, 1684.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 18 March 1703 (burial).

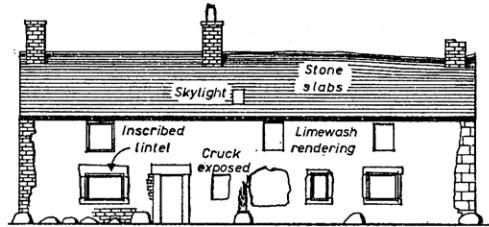
<sup>13</sup> C.R.O., DRC 6/Kirkbampton transcripts, 25 August 1706. Her father's calling may explain the Latin of the inscription, though not the spelling. Catherine was baptised at Kirkbampton 3 December 1683 (*ibid.*), which agrees with her age on the inscription.

<sup>14</sup> C.R.O., DRC 6/Burgh-by-Sands transcripts, 28 September 1740 (burial).

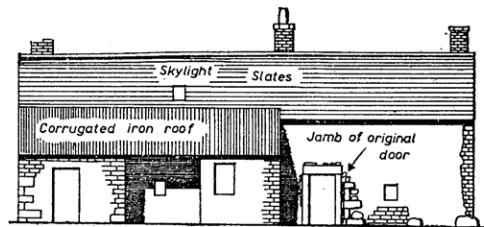
<sup>15</sup> C.R.O., will of John Matthews, Burgh, 16 July 1740 (proved 4 October 1740).

<sup>16</sup> C.R.O., QRP 1/11. Richard died 7 May 1769 (tomb, Wigton).

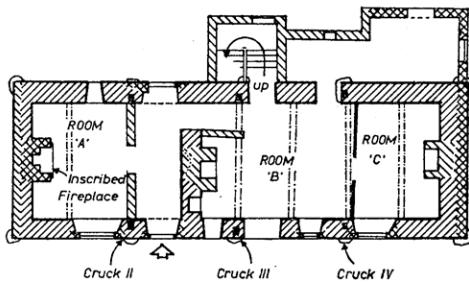
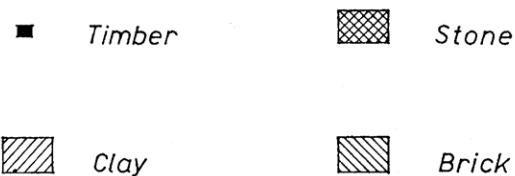
<sup>17</sup> C.R.O., DRC 6/Burgh-by-Sands transcripts, 22 March 1778: "vid John Mathews Yeoman, Burgh 97 years". Her age in fact was 94.



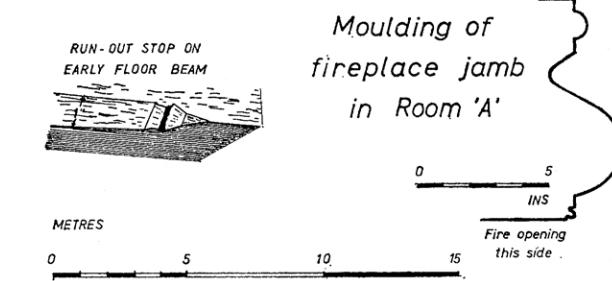
NORTH ELEVATION



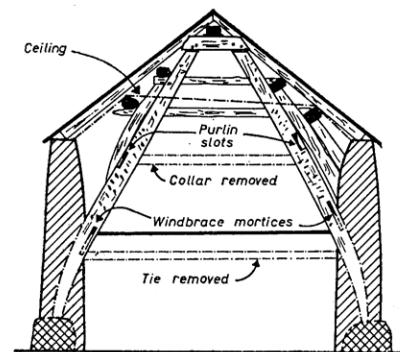
SOUTH ELEVATION



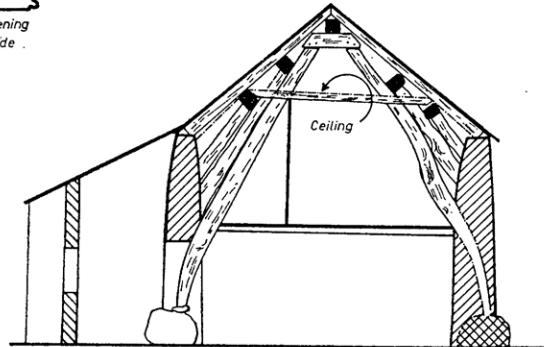
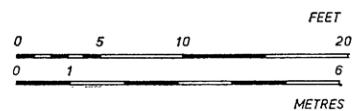
GROUND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



CRUCK II FROM EAST



CRUCK IV FROM EAST

PADDOCK HOLE

BURGH BY SANDS

CUMBERLAND

PWD - EM

had lived in the house at Paddock Hole for 71 years, and during this period the younger members of the family moved away from Burgh-by-Sands. Her daughter Catherine was styled "of Carlisle" and her son Joseph and his sons Richard and John lived in Wigton. The Matthews family now became absentee proprietors of Paddock Hole and their history can be briefly summarised. Old Catherine's share in the property passed to John Matthews VII of Wigton, who acquired the whole tenement when the younger Catherine died in 1788;<sup>18</sup> he was succeeded in 1800 by his son, the Rev. Richard Matthews, who died without issue at Wigton Hall in 1846, leaving the residue of his property to his sister Jane Matthews.<sup>19</sup> At her death in 1854 the property passed to her niece, Elizabeth Aglionby, who owned Paddock Hole at least until 1872.<sup>20</sup>

After the death of old Catherine Matthews, Paddock Hole was farmed by tenants. The Land Tax Assessment of 1781 records that John Matthews' share was occupied by John Lonsdale, and the younger Catherine's by Robert Matthews, perhaps her cousin, son of the Thomas Matthews, who died in 1743.<sup>21</sup> Lonsdale became sole tenant between 1787 and 1794,<sup>22</sup> and remained at Paddock Hole for the rest of his life. He was born about 1760,<sup>23</sup> and on 12 February 1792, when tenant of Paddock Hole, he was married at Burgh to Mary Wills. By his will he left his "freehold

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 30 November 1788.

<sup>19</sup> C.R.O., QRP 1/(1810); C.R.O., will of Rev. Richard Matthews, Wigton, 1846. A short biography of Rev. Richard Matthews is in H. Lonsdale, *Worthies of Cumberland*.

<sup>20</sup> C.R.O., QRP 1/(1872). Inscriptions of the later Matthews family are preserved in Wigton, and are published in Rev. J. Wilson, *Monumental Inscriptions of the Parish Church and Churchyard of Wigton*.

<sup>21</sup> C.R.O., QRP 1/15; will of Sarah Matthews, Burgh, 1747; will of Thomas Matthews, Burgh, 1742.

<sup>22</sup> C.R.O., QRP 1/28.

<sup>23</sup> C.R.O., DRC 6/Burgh-by-Sands transcripts, 23 September 1792 (marriage) aged 30 = born 1762; *ibid.*, 16 June 1844 (burial) aged 84 = born 1760.

messuage and tenement" to his eldest son Robert:<sup>24</sup> at this time Rev. Richard Matthews is described as the proprietor of Paddock Hole, and Lonsdale's free-hold was presumably another, so far not identified, property. Robert Lonsdale continued as the farming tenant at Paddock Hole.<sup>25</sup>

### 3.

It is clear that during the last period of occupation of the house room A, beyond the cross passage, was used as a dairy, and from its position it would normally be considered that it was originally intended as such a service room or as a byre. And, indeed, this might seem to be supported by the fact that the brick wall which divided it from the cross passage replaced an earlier partition for whose appearance there was no evidence, although it was presumably of timber and supported by Cruck II. It therefore remains possible that this was a byre wall.<sup>26</sup> It is, however, highly implausible that room A was ever a byre, for its large north window was original and identical to those of room B, with sockets for a mullion and glazing bars. Was it then perhaps originally a service room? If this was so it is necessary to suppose that its imposing fireplace was not original in that position and was only inserted after losing any pretension to grandeur.

The inscription on the fireplace states unequivocally that John Matthews built "this house". Clearly it must be established that the house referred to is that under discussion if the inscription is to provide evidence for dating. The question cannot be settled by purely architectural considerations, for although the clay stack appeared original and there were no visible signs

<sup>24</sup> C.R.O., will of John Lonsdale, Burgn, 21 May 1843 (proved 30 November 1844).

<sup>25</sup> C.R.O., QRP 1/(1849) "late Rev. R. Matthews".

<sup>26</sup> For examples see Sir C. Fox and Lord Raglan, *Monmouthshire Houses*, I, figs. 10, 48; II, figs. 6, 7, 11.

of disturbance around the firebreast, any traces which there might have been in the outer wall were effectively obscured by the rebuilt facing of the gable.

It cannot, however, be argued that the fireplace was moved from elsewhere in the house, for the chimney in room C was a complete insertion and there was no evidence that the room originally contained a fireplace; room B was heated by a fire in a firehood, for which the inscribed chimney-piece would be unsuitable, and the upper floor, when first constructed, was apparently an unheated loft.<sup>27</sup> It might, then, be suggested that the fireplace was moved from another house. But this is not an easy position to maintain: even if the dated inscription is ignored, the other datable features of the house suggest a date of c. 1700;<sup>28</sup> but Paddock Hole was John Matthews' only tenement, and so his house of 1707 must then have been the predecessor of the recently demolished farmhouse. The quality of the fireplace is sufficient indication that Matthews' house was not insubstantial, but one is now committed to the view that his house of 1707 was replaced by a new clay house, which by the middle of the 19th century had suffered extensive rebuilding and had in turn been superseded by the present farmhouse of Burgh Head: contemporaries considered the life expectancy of a clay house to be 150 or 200 years.<sup>29</sup>

Furthermore, even if any of these hypotheses themselves was likely it would not explain the main problem. It is implausible that the parlour fireplace was

<sup>27</sup> See below, p. 148.

<sup>28</sup> The broad chamfers of the original windows are paralleled by dated houses from the late 16th to the late 17th centuries: with mullion they seem generally to fall towards the end of this period. The very small chamfers of the inserted doors are paralleled by houses with dates from 1750 to 1795: see Brunsell, *op. cit.* in note 2 above, p. 74.

<sup>29</sup> Hutchinson's *Cumberland* ii 515 n. It must be noted that between 1703 and 1778 Paddock Hole was occupied by Matthews himself and by his widow Catherine; it is not at all likely that the house of 1707 was replaced during their time, and yet the later in the 18th century the more difficult it is to explain away the datable features and the shorter the period into which the changes in the farmstead have to be fitted.

built to fit a service room; it is equally implausible that such a fireplace was inserted into a dairy. The natural place for the fireplace to stand is the parlour, and so on the insertion thesis the fireplace should have been inserted into room C which, whatever its original function, after the rebuilding became the parlour. As this was not done the evidence is overwhelming that room A was designed as the parlour, and declined in status. Two important conclusions follow: that the clay house can be dated with confidence to 1707, and that the house demonstrates that the standard view that the lower end of such a house was a service room or byre is oversimplified.

#### 4.

The construction of the house falls into two main periods, which can be dated to 1707 and to *c.* 1800. To the first phase belong the crucks and roof timbers, the clay walls and fireplace, and the ground-floor windows in the north wall. The existence of the clay cross wall of one build with the main walls, and the distribution of windows shows that the division into three rooms was original.<sup>30</sup> Room B, the hall, had a firehood; room C was apparently unheated, and was presumably a service room. The main walls, about 3 feet below the wallheads, were inset slightly and had perhaps been raised; the upper windows were probably insertions, and the floor and at least some of the beams had been renewed: all this indicates strongly that the upper floor had originally been a loft, presumably reached by a ladder. The loft need not have been continuous, but there was no evidence for its original size.

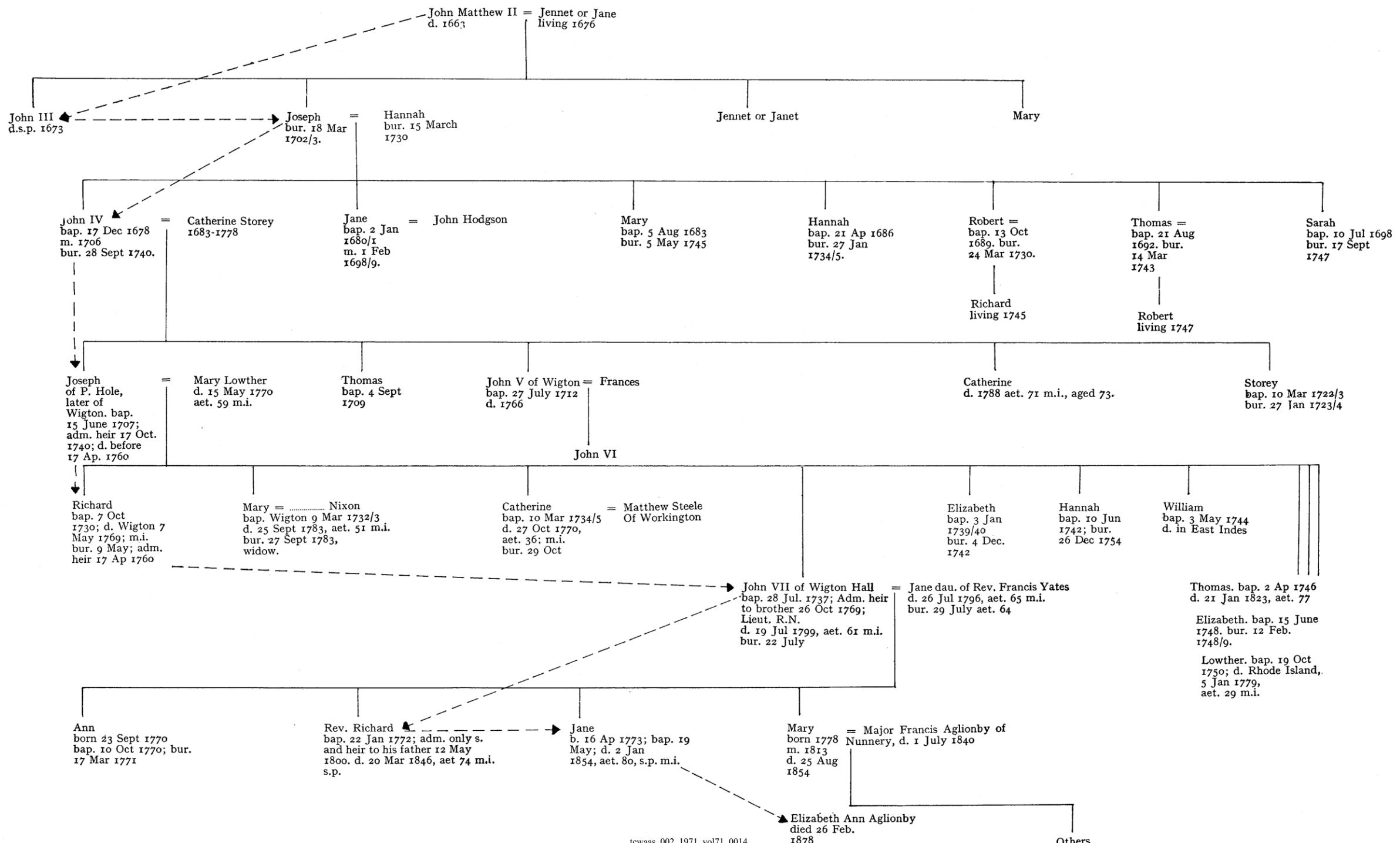
The rebuilding was extensive and, as the variety of

<sup>30</sup> Even though the partition west of the hall was not original, the west window on the north side was set to light a room in the position of room C. The absence of any other light to this room suggests that it was never further subdivided.

# MATTHEWS OF PADDOCK HOLE.

John Matthew of Paddock Hall, tenant 1589.

John Mathew de Paddock-hole tenant 1638.



materials used suggests, could represent piecemeal alterations over a number of years. The upper storey was altered and subdivided into bedrooms, to which access was provided by the building of a staircase in a lean-to outside the line of the original house. The addition was built partly of brick and partly of stone: if this is an indication of a difference in date the stone-built portion of the lean-to must be seen as a replacement of one in brick, since the position of the change from brick to stone precludes the assumption of an earlier, smaller brick structure. The openings to the staircase and to the lean-to were broken through the walls of the house, and so it is not likely that the lean-to replaced an earlier wing of the first period. At about this time Crucks I and V were removed and the gable ends were rebuilt, presumably to take the stacks from fireplaces which were now inserted to heat the upper floor. The east gable was of brick and the west of stone; whether or not this indicates a difference in date is impossible to show. At any rate the west end of the lean-to, stone at this point, was later than the stone west gable, against which it abuts. The design of the staircase and of the inserted fireplaces suggests that this rebuilding should be dated to the period in which John Lonsdale was tenant of Paddock Hole, perhaps to the years after his marriage in 1792, when he was raising 12 children in the house. The kitchen range inside the old firehood, however, seems later and may perhaps date to a period after the building of the present farmhouse of Burgh Head c. 1850, when the old house was given over to farm workers.

Much interesting information about the Matthews family is contained in A. E. Terrill's *Memorials of a family in England and Virginia A.D. 1771-1851*. Mr Terrill prints letters written by some of the family from Wigton Hall. C.R.H.

### Appendix.

Inventory of the Goods of John Matthews (IV) 2 October  
1740 (Record Office, Carlisle).

	£	s.	d.
First his purse and apparel	12	0	0
Also Bedd Bedding and Table Linnen	8	15	0
Also Pewter Brass Iron Geer & Houshold furniture	3	11	6
Also a cupboard Tables Chairs and Benches	3	7	0
Also a Glass and china ware	1	16	0
Also Horses Cows & young Cattle	38	10	0
Also sheep a Hog and Poultry	5	7	6
Also Plows Carts and Ark and Husbandry geer	3	16	0
Also Fuel & Manure	1	15	0
Also Corn and Hay	21	0	0
In all	<b>99</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>

Appraisers John Hodgson

Richard Matthew

Exhibited 4 October 1740 by Cath Matthews.