

OLD HOUSE MUSEUM, BAKEWELL

By J. MARSHALL JENKINS

Old House Museum is owned by the Bakewell and District Historical Society. That the building exists at all is entirely due to the enthusiasm that members of the Society contribute to its maintenance. This situation has resulted from the generosity of the Harrison family who gave the property to the Society in 1955 and 1957. Investigation of the house and essential reconstruction were started immediately upon the Society's receipt of the four cottages contained in the first deed of gift, but the Society was precluded from carrying out a detailed enquiry into the remaining two cottages until they were vacated in 1966. Since then these have been examined, and it now seems opportune to attempt an appreciation of the house and its history. This is done in the consciousness that the full story of Old House Museum is not yet available to us and in the hope that present deductions will elicit further evidence for consideration.

THE evidence upon which any appreciation must be based is of two kinds, documentary and architectural. In both these categories time has created significant omissions, yet one over-riding conclusion can be reached in regard to the house and its history — it may well be unique in the way that it reflects social development in England from the 11th to the present century. This is not to say that the house has no significance in its own right nor to imply that any part of the existing structure was built in the 11th century, but merely to place the peculiar historical quality of the house to the forefront at the outset of our discussion. The composite expression of five distinct social phases is an essential part of the character of Old House Museum and these may be symbolized by the church (pre-1549), landed gentry (1549-1778), industrialists (1778-1860), property investors (1861-1955) and preservationist society (1955-).

The earliest document to give positive reference to Old House Museum is the notice of the sale of a freehold estate in Bakewell and Holme on 30 June 1796.¹ The property was leased to Richard Arkwright for a term of twenty-one years from 25 March 1778 at a yearly rent of £242. The first four lots are as follows:

	No. in the Plan		A.	R.	P.
LOT 1	—	Three Dwellings and Gardens	0	0	15
LOT 2	—	Barn, Yard and Garden	0	0	25
LOT 3	—	Barn, Kiln-house and Croft	0	1	16
LOT 4	78	Parsonage House (in 10 Dwellings, Barn, Gardens, Croft and Yard)	8	3	10

¹ A copy is available for inspection at Old House Museum.

Lot 4 provides us with a description of Old House Museum and its barn, already converted into the cottages which were existing when the Historical Society took control of the house. The name given to the property, Parsonage House, suggests a link with the church, and this can be established more clearly by reference to the conditions of sale:

5. There is an annual Fee-farm Rent of £16. 3s. 11½d. issuing out of the Lots above-mentioned, and out of other Lands late of Philip Gell, Esq., deceased, in the County of Derby, and payable to the Dean and Chapter of Lichfield; against which Payment the Purchasers and their Heirs are to be indemnified by the Covenant of Philip Gell, Esq., Son and Heir of the said Philip Gell, deceased. And there is to be reserved to the Vendors a perpetual Annual Rent of £10. 10s. clear of Taxes, out of this Estate, which is to be apportioned amongst the several Purchasers by Mr. JOHN NUTTALL. And the respective Purchasers are to have deducted out of their Purchase Money 25 Years purchase on the Rent to be reserved, which Rent to be reserved is intended to answer the Payments to the Dean and Chapter of Lichfield for the Lands above-mentioned.

This condition makes it clear that the land being sold, a small part of which was the site of Old House Museum, was held by Philip Gell on a fee-farm rent from the dean and chapter of Lichfield, and was part of a larger area of land rented at £16. 3s. 11½d.

At what date did the Gell family come into possession of this property? It was in 1549, when the dean and chapter of Lichfield had decided that it would be expedient for them to part with the lands within the High Peak appropriated to them by Bishop William of Cornhill in 1219.² They included the glebe land of Bakewell, Hope and Tideswell and involved property which had previously been part of the prebendary emoluments of the priests of Bakewell collegiate church.³ There can be little doubt that it was the collegiate content of the Bakewell rectory held by the dean and chapter which prompted the decision — in the face of the Act of Parliament passed under Edward VI to confiscate the property of collegiate churches and chantry chapels.

Ralph Gell of Hopton obtained the fee farm of Bakewell at a rent of £16. 3s. 11½d.⁴ It surely cannot be coincidence that the land upon which Old House Museum stands, owned by the Gell family, should have been part of a separate fee-farm rent payable in 1796 to the same dean and chapter, the rent being to the nearest half penny the same. We must conclude that the site of Old House Museum was part of the land in the 1549 contract. This document states that Ralph Gell shall hold the glebe lands of the rectories of Bakewell, Hope and Tideswell with other land in Holmesfield, Ashford, Birchills, Monyash, and Chapel en le Frith. All burgages, houses, cottages, edifices, gardens, orchards, waterways, fishponds,

² Lichfield muniments, B4, charter of Bishop William; F199b, confirmation by Bishop Alexander de Stavenby 1230.

³ Lichfield muniments, F116. The prebendary entitlements were granted to the dean and chapter in 1192 after Bishop Hugo de Nonant received the Peak churches from John, count of Mortain. The third prebend did not pass to the dean and chapter until the death of the incumbent.

⁴ Lichfield, D26.

pastures, meadows and woods were specified as part of the lease but there were two notable exceptions. The land and properties held by the vicars were to be retained by them and such benefits as were included in another lease between the dean and chapter of Lichfield and George Vernon were not to pass to Ralph Gell. The contract with George Vernon was for the fee farm of Nether Haddon⁵ and, in fact, was the lease of the tithes of corn, hay and minerals for the rectory of Bakewell; the tithe barns and the land upon which they stood were part of this.

Two points are worth emphasizing from these two documents: the vicars did not occupy any of the houses or land which passed to Ralph Gell and the present "barn" to Old House Museum was never a tithe barn. If the name given to Old House Museum as lot 4 of the 1796 auction, i.e. Parsonage House, is to be taken at face value, this suggests that at some time before 1549 there existed in Bakewell a house for the parson or rector, or his agent, and in addition a vicarage-house. Since the tithe barn for the rectory of Bakewell would most likely originally have been built in proximity to the parsonage or rectory-house the fact that an area of land suitable in size to house a large barn and immediately to the north of the site of Old House Museum is held by the duke of Rutland (fig. 1), descendant of George Vernon, may cause us to conclude that Old House Museum stands upon the site of the original rectory of Bakewell church. Certainly, its position, to the north-west of the church, is a traditional situation for such buildings.

There was nothing unusual in a parish having both a rectory or parsonage-house and vicarage-house. This often occurred when the advowson of a church had been given to some corporate body or individual other than the priest responsible for the cure of souls. When this happened it became the prerogative of the recipient of the gift to dispose of the emoluments of the parish by taking them to himself or to his own nominee. The recipient became the rector or parson, being entitled to the glebe land and the tithes of the church, and it was his responsibility to appoint a priest to care for the cure of souls in the parish. This was normally achieved by the ordination of a vicarage and the entitlements of the vicar were specified in the ordination. Inevitably some mention was made of a house for the vicar, and the vicar of Bakewell was to be provided with a house, garden and adjacent enclosure, according to the ordination of Bakewell vicarage, which followed Bishop William of Cornhill's gift of the rectory to the dean and chapter of Lichfield in 1219.⁶

It is certain that the vicarage-house was not part of Gell's lease of 1549, but what other documentary evidence have we, other than the name Parsonage House in the auction list of 1796, for presuming that the site of Old House Museum was that of the rectory-house of Bakewell? The *Valor Ecclesiasticus* (1535) contains a list of the values of tithes, land and stipends within the dean and chapter of Lichfield's holdings in Bakewell, which reads:

⁵ Lichfield, D25.

⁶ J. C. Cox, *The churches of Derbyshire*, II, appendix no. 1, 583-5.

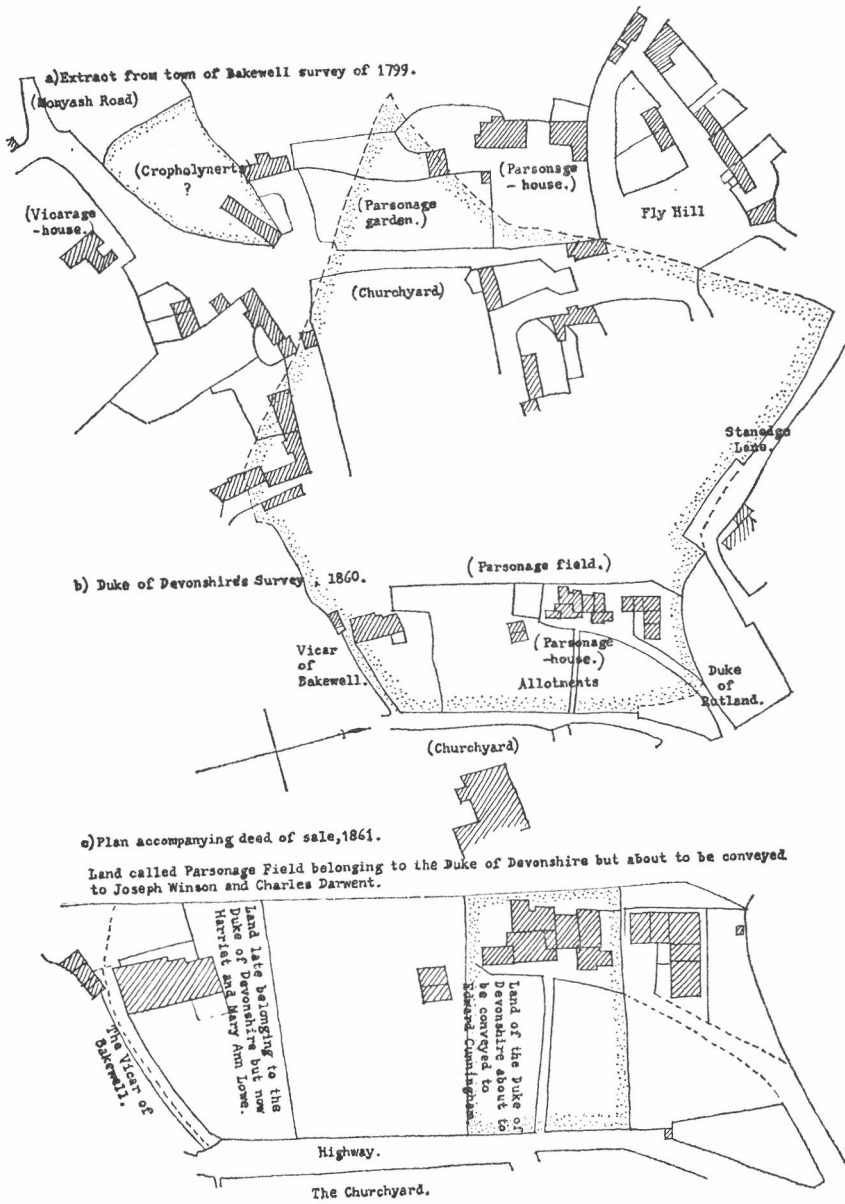


FIG. 1.

	£	s.	d.
For the site of the rectory with glebe land and holdings in Bakewell and Holmes in the county of Derbyshire	7	10	4
For the site of the rectory of Hope with land and holdings in that same place in the said county and diocese	5	0	10½
For the site of the rectory of Tideswell with land and holdings in the same place		15	1
For a garden in Chapel en le Frith in the county afore-mentioned	—	0	6
For land in Over Haddon in the said county	—	1	4
For land and holdings in Monyash in the said county and diocese	—	7	4
For land in Birchills in the said county and diocese	—	3	4
For land in Mornsall in the said county and diocese	—	2	0
	<hr/>		
[Total for land	14	0	9½]

This is apparently a list of the land leased to Ralph Gell minus that of Ashford and Holmesfield. The author has failed to find reference to either of these in the Valor Ecclesiasticus, but Cox tells us that according to that account the value of Ashford was £2. 1s.⁷ It did not follow in every case that the assessment of the value of tithes or land in the Valor was the amount charged as a perpetual lease when the land was disposed of by the church. The value of the tithes of corn and hay with minerals in Bakewell was given as £43. 18s. 4d. and the emoluments of the church of Kniveton in Derbyshire as £5. The lease of the tithes of corn, hay and minerals to George Vernon in 1549 was for £37. 16s. 10d. On the other hand the church of Kniveton was first leased to Ralph Gell for 40 years in 1537 at a rent of £5 and in perpetuity to “Thomas (second) son of Ralph Gell” at the same rent in 1549.⁸ The difficulty in tracing exact amounts of land and locations through accounts of this sort is extreme.

However, one fact emerges from the list — in the case of each of the rectories of Bakewell, Hope and Tideswell the “site of the rectory” is specifically mentioned as a separate item to the glebe land. This may be taken to imply that these sites were separate from the vicarage and the valuation of the vicarages of these three parishes, which is given later under the deanery of High Peak, suggests that this was so. For the vicarage of Hope there is listed a house with garden 16s. 8d., and for the vicarage of Tideswell two roods of the glebe with a house 4s. Unfortunately the vicarage of Bakewell is supplied with no such detail: it is simply recorded that Richard Gwent the vicar was not present and that the vicarage was valued at £20.

There is no reason for us to presume that because Richard Gwent was absent from the commission establishing the value of his Bakewell vicarage a detailed account of the valuation would not have shown evidence of a vicarage-house as in the accounts for Hope and Tideswell. On the contrary the similarity of the description of the land appropriated to

⁷ Cox, II, 49.

⁸ Lichfield, D21, D27.

the dean and chapter of Lichfield in Bakewell, Hope and Tideswell, together with the conditions of the lease of 1549 and the vicarage ordination, presents a case for concluding that the vicarage-house was not the same as the parsonage or rectory-house. This case is supported by the character of Old House Museum itself for, as one can reconstruct it in its medieval form (fig. 2), it consisted of a parlour with bay extension and buttery separated off by a timber screen; at right angles to this wing and thus forming a T-shaped plan was a large house-place (with a cooking-hearth) to which led the entry through a porch and off which the staircase led to the bedrooms above. There is no evidence to suggest that there was ever a hall of two-storey height in the building; this and the older, timber mullioned, shuttered windows of the house — a humble expression of medieval architecture — suggest that the house was built as a yeoman's farmhouse and not as a mansion of the church. W. A. Pantin quotes several examples of priests' houses both parsonage-houses and vicarage-houses in one parish and explains the differences in qualities of design by reference to the income and position of the individual clergyman within the hierarchy of the church.⁹ He says, "The frequent mention of granges, barns, hay-houses, etc. in medieval records and in later terriers reminds us that every rector had some glebe land to cultivate either himself or through a farmer, so that the parsonage-house was likely to take the character of a small farmstead."

Bearing in mind the probable disassociation of the vicarage-house from the parsonage-house at Bakewell and the character of the building we need not be surprised, therefore, to read in another section of the Valor Ecclesiasticus that Ralph Gell received £5. 13s. 4d. as the bailiff of the dean and chapter — for the land that he later leased from them — as early as 1535. He was, of course, in the best position to take over the land when it came up for disposal, a situation which was repeated in many places throughout the country during those years of ecclesiastical reform. There was also a steward for the rectories of Bakewell, Hope and Tideswell, Edward Allen on a salary of £2 per annum. Whether either of these employees of the dean and chapter lived at Old House Museum (even for short periods — for Ralph Gell had his own house at Hopton) we cannot tell, but it seems not unlikely that this was the case and that the incumbent of the rectory might have reserved one or two rooms for an occasional visit.

At the beginning of the 16th century the Peak land of the dean and chapter was rented to some twenty people, and Ralph Gell was not one of these. It seems that he acquired the post of bailiff, if we take his age into account, between 1515 and 1535, but that even before this time the glebe lands had been in the hands of lay farmers. This situation and the architectural quality of Old House Museum lead to the conclusion that it might have been built initially towards the end of the 15th rather than at

⁹ W. A. Pantin, "Medieval priests' houses in south-west England", *Medieval Archaeology*, I (1957), 118-46.

the beginning of the 16th century. If we accept that Old House Museum stands on the site of the rectory, we may ask why a new house should have been built during this period. Pantin says, "It is clear from visitation records that parsonages were often in decay, especially, one suspects, through non-residence."⁹ By this he means that the rectors or parsons — in our case the dean and chapter of Lichfield or their lessee — were responsible for the maintenance of the parsonage, although it might be occupied by a lay tenant, and that they neglected such maintenance. Such a situation may well have occurred at Bakewell.

Pantin adds, "In a vicarage, the responsibility for building and maintaining the vicar's house was usually laid on the appropriator"⁹ — again, in our case the dean and chapter. Yet at Bakewell this responsibility was clearly not laid upon the appropriator but was the responsibility of the vicar. On 9 March 1481 the vicar was ordered to repair the vicarage, its houses and buildings by Passion Sunday.¹⁰ Had the rectors been held responsible for this maintenance of the vicarage such a document would not have been drafted. Furthermore, if the vicar had been housed in the rectory or parsonage-house the rectors would certainly have been responsible for the repairs. This reference, coming as it does well before the Reformation, stresses that the parsonage-house and the vicarage-house were separate entities before that time and implies that this separation took place — as happened in innumerable cases — when the appropriation of the emoluments of Bakewell church was made to the dean and chapter of Lichfield and the vicarage ordained. That is to say that there was a vicarage-house separated from the parsonage-house from 1219 to the present day.

Whether the vicarage-house occupied its present site from that time to this is a matter which does not concern us here, although the existence of two buildings holding the name parsonage, i.e. Parsonage House (Old House Museum) and Parsonage Cottage (which is one on another site) might imply the removal of the vicarage-house from the site of the latter to its present position. The current use of the word parson to mean any parish priest is a result of the increasing lack of precise definition which has progressively devalued our language. Hamilton Thompson is quite definite in his opinion that "to medieval ears, and indeed until a much later period, the parson, the *persona*, was a rector, the incumbent of the great tithes of the parish".¹¹ We may take it that the words "the parson/s" or "the rector/s" refer to the dean and chapter of Lichfield, the corporate rector or, perhaps, to an individual granted the rectory by that body for a limited term. Similarly, when the vicar or the vicar's mansion is mentioned, it is solely the vicar or his house which is described. Thus, a document of 1330 describing the position of a plot as "one curtilage, which is called Cropholynyerts, lies opposite the mansion of the vicar of Bakewell, and abuts upon the garden of the parsons of Bakewell . . ." ¹² suggests that

¹⁰ Lichfield, Chapter Act Books, II (F6).

¹¹ A. H. Thompson, *The English clergy and their organisation in the later middle ages*, 1947, 102.

¹² W. A. Carrington, "Illustrations of ancient place-names in Bakewell . . .", *D.A.J.*, XV (1893), 56.



a. Small medieval window and oyster shell pargetting.



b. Exposure of the porch door.



c. View into the "secret chamber".

OLD HOUSE MUSEUM, BAKEWELL.



a. Upper part of the medieval stud partition during restoration.



b. South front of the house.



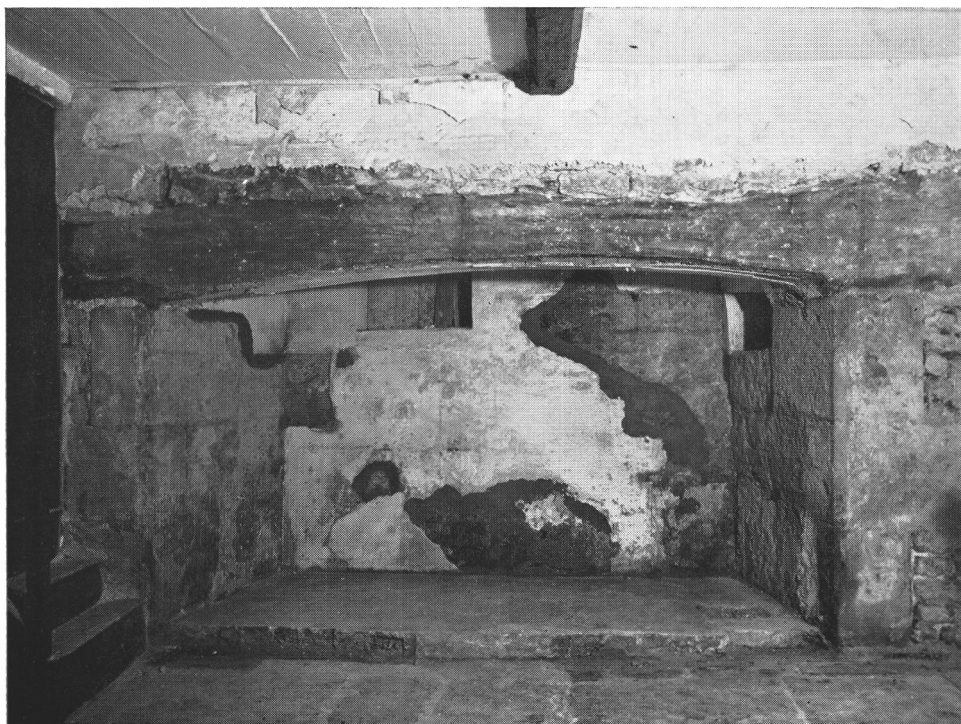
a. Medieval hearth in the parlour and stud partition.



b. East front showing Arkwright's lean-to cottage, Cunningham's "improvements" and Longsdon's reconstruction.



a. Hatch to the roof chamber over the buttery.



b. Hearth in the house-place.

the site in question, which was a small irregular enclosure and not a strip warranting the normal use of the term "abut" (larger areas of farming land were also included in the document), was across the Monyash road from the vicarage-house and adjacent to (or abutting) the garden of the parsonage-house. This would place the two houses in the same relationship as the present vicarage is to Old House Museum today with a piece of land ("Cropholynyerts") and Monyash Road between — allowing for the break-up of the parsonage garden during the 18th and 19th centuries. In addition to the garden to the south there was also an enclosure to the west of Old House Museum, called Parsonage Field and listed as an ancient enclosure in the rating survey of 1847¹³ — the name for the enclosure being used until quite recently. Parsonage-houses had their gardens and enclosures as well as vicarage-houses, and it was these three items which comprised lot 4 in 1796 (fig. 1). The presence of these three elements together, i.e. Parsonage House with garden and enclosure, to the north-west of the church and adjacent to land which may have held the tithe barn, supports strongly the view that Old House Museum is on the site of the ancient rectory-house of Bakewell. The weight of the evidence is such that Parsonage Cottage may be excluded from further consideration.

Another hypothesis that has been put forward — without evidence of any kind — is that the house was part of the possessions of the chantry of the Holy Cross at Bakewell. This can be quickly dismissed. The chantry was richly endowed, and the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* states that it held ten houses and 203 acres of land (the acreage somewhat similar to that of the glebe) and gives the value with deductions as £6. 6s. 1d. This valuation was too low for, in the Chantry Rolls of Edward VI (1549), the value is given as £10. 9s. 5d.¹⁴ The land is described as "in various tenures, without occupation" and with sixteen tenants, including George Vernon, who held two plots, one valued at 9d. and the other at 4s., and Ralph Gell who held the lease on one plot worth 13s. The document proceeds "Notwithstanding that, they (i.e. the 16 tenures) were leased, among other things, to Edward Pease and William Wynlove, and to their heirs and assigns from the feast of St. Michael the Archangel last, in perpetuity, as through letters patent of the said Lord King dated 20 December in the third year of his reign . . ." No chantry land passed to Ralph Gell: therefore, Old House Museum could not have been a chantry house.

This does not mean that some former house which stood at one time on the site of Old House Museum was not occupied by clergy of Bakewell church. But documentary evidence implies that this was prior to the ordination of the vicarage. It may well be that the two priests of the Domesday church had their residence there, that the three prebends of the later Norman foundation also lived on that spot and that they continued to do so after John, count of Mortain (later King John), had granted the advowson of the Bakewell rectory to Hugo de Nonant, bishop

¹³ Information from Mr. R. W. P. Cockerton.

¹⁴ PRO. S.C. 6 Edw. VI, 112. A copy may be seen in the museum.

of Coventry and Lichfield in 1192. Hugo continued to support two priests with salaries and left one in possession of his prebendary income. The other two prebendary incomes he granted to the dean and chapter of Lichfield and, although the transfer of the whole of the rectory to the dean and chapter was done in stages by subsequent bishops, no provision was made for a vicar until the dean and chapter received the whole rectory in 1219. Presumably up to this time the priests of the parish occupied the rectory or parsonage-house, or at least part of it. The ordination did away with the prebendary priests and established a vicar, deacon and sub-deacon in place.

We may speculate about the type of house which might once have stood upon the site of Old House Museum for the use of the priests of the parish, but no evidence of any kind remains for us to draw enlightened conclusions. We can only surmise that the house was of timber construction — as was normal at Bakewell at that time — and that it was probably a sizeable establishment, for it held the priests and servants of a rich parish. In Domesday Book the church was recorded as possessing three carucates of land (presumably the bulk of the glebe land), and in the Taxation Roll of Pope Nicholas IV (1291) the church valued at £260. 13s. 4d. was the third richest living in the land. Undoubtedly it was one of the biggest assets of the cathedral of Lichfield, and from first receiving the gift, the dean and chapter made the most of it — even to the extent of being miserly with the vicar's salary.¹⁵ Under these circumstances it would have been surprising if the original parsonage-house had been adequately maintained.

Until the 16th century when Ralph Gell acquired the land of the dean and chapter's assets in the Peak and it was re-assembled under one heading in his lease, there was a gradual dispersal between an increasing number of tenants. From 1245 to 1254 Henry de Lexinton, dean of Lincoln, was leased the rectories of Hope and Bakewell.¹⁶ He sub-let lands in Bakewell to Ralph Vernon of Haddon Hall.¹⁷ On his appointment as bishop of Lincoln his brother Robert took on the lease. In 1275 William Foljambe of Wormhill covenanted not to alienate any of the lands that he held in Bakewell under the dean and chapter,¹⁸ and as late as 1508 Holme in Bakewell was leased to Canon Richard Delves for five years at a rent of £5. 11s. 4d. p.a.¹⁹ By this time there were some twenty tenants of the Peak estates.²⁰ From these records it will be seen that the need for a focus for the estates fell into the farm-house category rather than that of a priest's house. This does not help us to decide exactly when and under whose direction Old House Museum was built; indeed this may never be determined. The building may have followed the visitation of 1481, when

¹⁵ Cox, II, 7. At his visitation in 1280, John Peckham, archbishop of Canterbury, ordered an increase in the vicar's income.

¹⁶ Lichfield, D2. The lease was for life at an annual rent of £84, with reversion to his brother Robert.

¹⁷ Lichfield, D1.

¹⁸ Lichfield, D4.

¹⁹ Lichfield, D15.

²⁰ Lichfield, D13. Rental roll of the Peak jurisdiction, total £151. 17s. 6½d. Ralph Gell was not a tenant at this time.

the vicar was warned to repair his house. At this time also an inquisition was taken at the death of Sir William Plompton, son of Alice née Foljambe, who appeared to be "seized not only of the manor of Bakewell but of the advowson of the church".²¹ We must ask whether the church lands of Bakewell had been held by the Foljambe family from 1275 and passed by way of Alice, heir to Sir Godfrey (founder of the chantry of the Holy Cross) to Sir William Plompton. The covenant of 1275 undertaking not to alienate suggests a long-term lease. The termination of such a long tenancy may well have stimulated the building of Old House Museum. The history of Old House Museum is still interspersed with question marks, but the form of the building as erected first is relatively clearly defined.

The plan of the house in 1549 was roughly T-shaped (fig. 2). The leg of

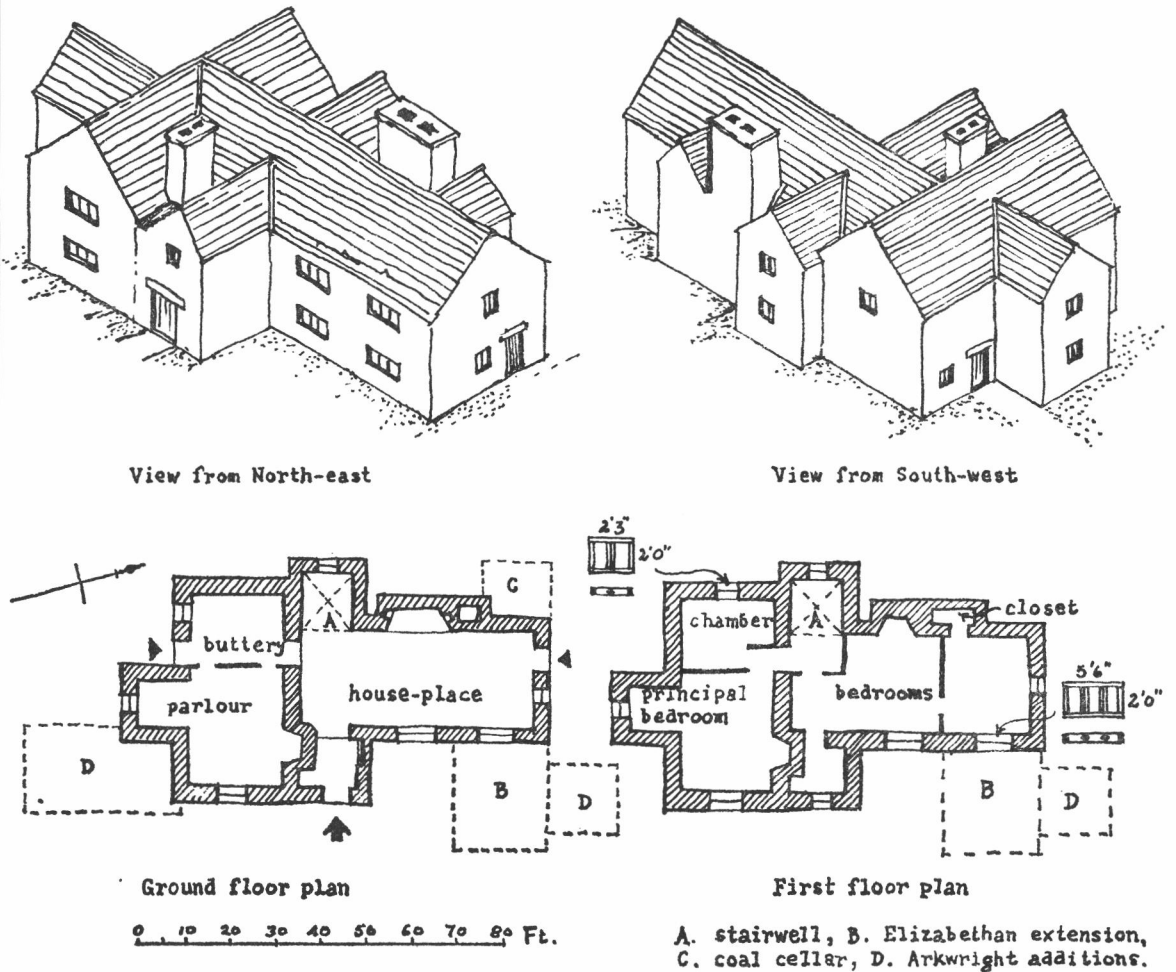


FIG. 2.

the T, which runs north-south, contained the kitchen or house-place on the ground floor and two chambers, one with a fireplace, above. The measurements of this wing are approximately 40 x 20 ft., and it may be that the ground floor consisted of one large area but it may have been divided into house-place and dairy. In addition, it had a passage running across from the porch to the staircase. At least one beam with mortices for framing (now ludicrously placed from kitchen fireplace to opposite wall) suggests that there was originally a division of this area. The cross wing of the T held the parlour and buttery at ground level and the principal bedchamber and a small chamber above. Over this chamber was a roof room which could be reached from the bedroom side of the dividing half timber partition. Some people contend that this loft was for the use of a personal servant; the window to this room is repeated to the other end of the wing, which throws some doubt upon this suggestion. The size of this wing is approximately 34 x 20 ft., and so both wings indicate adherence to a dimensional tradition of the medieval period when proportions composed of squares and the diagonal or "overthwart" line of the squares were combined in architectural design.²² In this case the house-place wing had two squares of 20 ft. and the parlour wing one square of 20 ft. plus half the diagonal of the 20 ft. square, namely 14 ft.²³ At the junction of these two main areas the porch occupied the east corner and the staircase well the west corner of the T. One other offshot completed the plan — a small upstairs closet off the end room to the north wing, projecting alongside the north face of the houseplace chimney stack, which may have been the garderobe with a sump and aperture to the open air for cleaning out below. All the existing walls of this plan are bonded with puddled mud and pointed; the existence of vertical joints between projecting elements — a common feature in local building — need not cause us to conclude that these were later additions.

The plan is typical of yeomen houses built in Derbyshire and Yorkshire during the 15th, 16th and early 17th centuries. It stems from the convenience of placing accommodation on two levels across the end of a medieval hall of two-storey height. The plan type reached fruition in buildings such as Unstone Hall (1653)²⁴ and Old Hall Farm, Youlgreave (1630).²⁵ Old House Museum seems to fall in the centre of this three hundred years of development. A second element which supports this theory is the timber window in the wall upstairs to the west gable of the parlour wing. This window, oak framed, with oaken mullion set at right angles in the centre of the frame is also typical of the type of window used in smaller houses during the same period of time. Such a window would have been shuttered internally and unglazed, which suggests that the builder was not as wealthy

²¹ Cox, II, 11. The priests of the Holy Cross chantry may have lived in the house under Foljambe patronage; by tradition it was once called the Priests' House.

²² J. M. Jenkins, *Folk Life*, V (1967), 65-91.

²³ The "rational" diagonal of a square, side 20, is 28 units.

²⁴ N. Lloyd, *A history of the English house*, 1931, 219, plan of Unstone Hall.

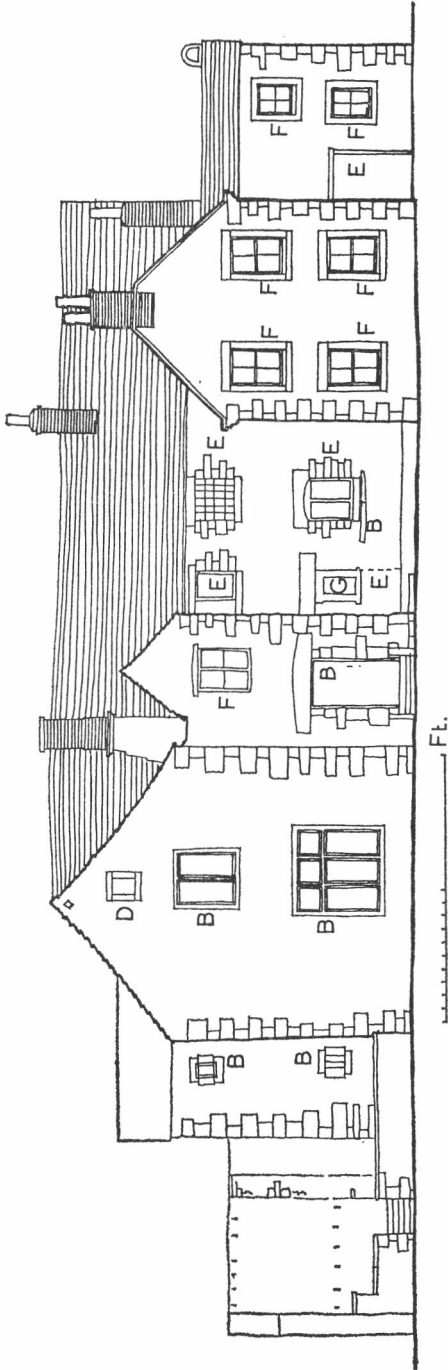
²⁵ M. W. Barley, *The English farmhouse and cottage*, 1961, 170, plan of Old Hall Farm, Youlgreave.

as might be supposed from the size of the building. Alternatively it implies, in a stone building area such as Derbyshire, where the use of stone mullions was of early date, that the building was relatively early in the time limits set by its plan form. Part of a second window of this type has been found to the west of the house place on the upper floor, used as the top of a door opening made when an extension was added in the late 16th century. Before members of the Gell family occupied the house, this fenestration was changed for stone-mullioned windows or small stone dressed apertures with leaded lights. The new mullioned windows were higher and narrower than their timber antecedents, set off-centre to the gables and the side spaces filled in (figs. 3, 4). This initial improvement was followed by the insertion of a new and larger window to the staircase well — the first change in this area having been the insertion of a small stone dressed window of approximately the same size as the original, smaller timber window. When the new stone windows had been installed, the random rubble walls were given additional protection by a pargetting oystershell finish (plate Ia).

Ralph Gell had two sons by his first wife.²⁶ The eldest, Anthony, inherited the family estate at Hopton when his father died in 1562. At that time Thomas, the second son, was settled at Bakewell and the third son John had been given estates at Wirksworth and Duffield (Shottle Park). The intention of settling his family on their own farms had been fulfilled by Ralph at the time of his death and we may safely conclude that Thomas Gell had occupied the old parsonage from the time of its lease in 1549, since that building was the only one of substance to be included in the glebe lands in later records. Anthony did not marry and Thomas was left heir to the family possessions upon his brother's death in 1586. He was himself unmarried but hastened to remedy this omission, marrying Millicent, daughter of Sir John Sacherevel of Stanton Juxta Parva, two years later. They had two sons, John and Thomas, the first born the year before and the second the year after their father's death in 1594. This left the estates without men of the family to manage them, and Millicent married Sir John Curzon of Kedleston where the boys were brought up. They reached their majorities in 1614 and 1616, respectively, John who was to become the famous commander of the parliamentary forces in the civil war succeeding to the estate at Hopton and Thomas, we may assume, taking over the Bakewell land.

During the occupation of the property at Bakewell by one of the two Thomases an addition was made to the house at the north end of the west front. This was in the form of a two-storey extension measuring 17 feet square internally and linked to the dairy and the room above by doorways in the position of the old timber windows previously mentioned. The fact that these windows at the working end of the dwelling were still in place when this extension was added implies that not all the timbers frames had been changed previously for stone dressings. The windows to this

²⁶ P. L. Gell, "The Gells of Hopton", *D.A.J.*, XXXV (1913), 103-10.



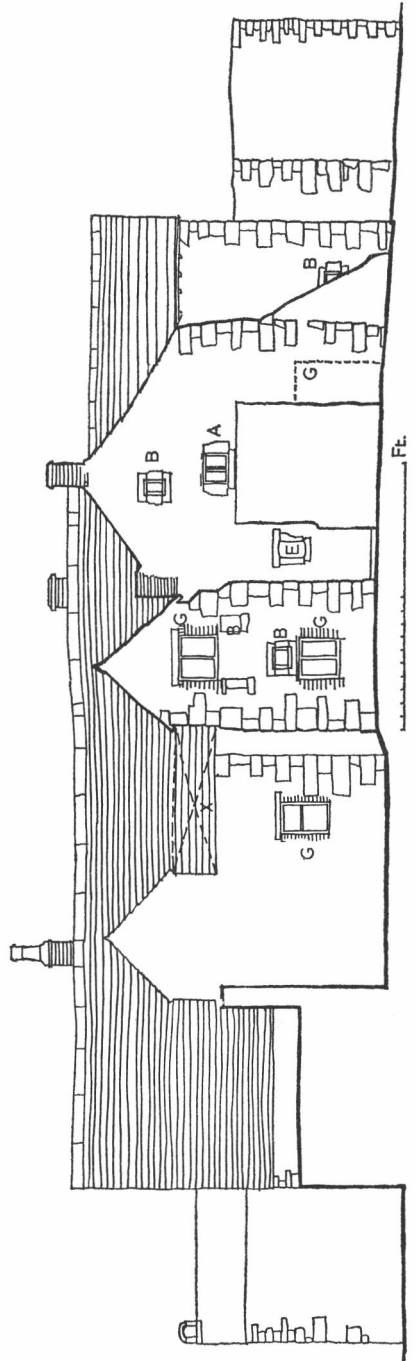
a. East elevation.

Key to windows and door openings:

- A Medieval timber
- B Tudor, 16th century
- C 16-17th centuries

- D 17-18th centuries
- E Arkwright, late 18th century
- F 19-20th centuries
- G Modern

X — position of chimney stack



b. West elevation.

FIG. 3.

extension (now filled in) had hollow mullions typical of late Elizabethan or early Jacobean work.²⁷ The plasterwork around the new doorways is the same as that for the room adjacent in the old part of the wing; we may conclude that the interior was re-plastered at this time and a cornice run around the rooms of the building. The design of the cornice is Early Renaissance. One most interesting feature of the building which stems from this period is the secret chamber which was made within the small offshot next to the house-place chimney; this has already been referred to as the original garderobe of the house. It appears that the first floor, probably originally of wood, was removed, the external ground-floor



a. South elevation.



b. North elevation.

FIG. 4.

²⁷ Compare North Lees Hall, Hathersage.

aperture to the sump plastered and a stone, corbelled chamber created within the original walls of the sump (plate Ic). The entry to the chamber was from the first floor level through a central hatch. The small room was provided with a built-in cupboard at ground level, a stone seat and a ventilation hole to the outside. We are told that Sir John Gell practised a "vindictive brutality towards his own kinsmen in the Civil War — (they appear to have been Royalists to a man)".²⁶ His brother, Thomas, may have felt the need of a hide-away during those unsettled years. The recent removal of the filling of the chamber under the direction of Mr. J. Marchant-Brooks and the discovery of a metal candlestick holder, tallow candle and a stoneware bottle dating from the 17th century suggest that the chamber was used at that time even if it had been built some years earlier.

The men of the Gell family had a facility for putting off marriage until it was too late to raise occupants to all their estates. During the following years of ownership of the Bakewell property by the family an occupant on the male side did not appear, although it is possible that one of the daughters of the family and her husband may have lived in Old House Museum at one time or another. Certainly, this feature of the family character may have resulted in the preservation of much of the medieval qualities of the building for the improvements made to the house during the 17th and 18th centuries were slight. New windows were installed in the bay projection to the parlour and the bedroom above, each with internal recesses to the floor, panelling and shutters. In the south-west corner of the bay coal-burning fires were installed on each level — these had cornice mantle-shelves (plate IIa). The large window of the staircase well had decayed and been stoned up so extra lighting was provided by small side windows where the well joined the body of the building. A similar window to those of the bay was set in the south wall of the chamber over the buttery (plate IIb). At the north end of the house a lean-to addition provided a vaulted coal cellar (with wood store over) alongside the closet offshot. All these improvements were made at the end of the 17th or the beginning of the 18th centuries at a time when it is unlikely that a member of the family lived full time in the building. However, it must be remembered that the Gells were one of the owners of a large estate in the town and their interest in Bakewell affairs was maintained. As late as 1719 Philip Gell of Hopton presented the church of Bakewell with its no. 2 bell which weighed 8 cwt. 2 qts. and the gift was the largest personal contribution to be made to the chime. Could it be that Old House Museum was used as the Bakewell house of the family at that time? It was another Philip who was to introduce the next change of circumstances to the old parsonage some years later by leasing the property to Richard Arkwright. Arkwright built several water-mills in the Derbyshire valleys including the mill at Holme, Bakewell.²⁸ It was for the purpose of the

²⁸ M. H. Mackenzie, "The Bakewell cotton mill and the Arkwrights", and Robert Thornhill, "The Arkwright cotton mill at Bakewell", *D.A.J.*, LXXIX (1959), 61-79, 80-7.

establishment of this mill that the Gell estates at Bakewell had been leased by him.

In his customary way Arkwright provided houses for his workers in Bakewell; he built cottages in Mill End, New Street and Anchor Lane and converted Parsonage House into six cottages and the barn of the house into four; the garden of the house was divided into workmen's allotments. When Sir Richard took over Parsonage House, it was in a poor state of repair; crumbling quoins had to be made good and some buttressing applied to the rear of the parlour wing. Window openings were inadequate for his purpose to convert. Where new stone dressings were required, we can see the mark of his conversion in the form of herring-bone tooling to the stones, and this decoration was also used to the lintel of the parlour hearth when he reduced the wood-burning grate to a size suitable for the use of coal (plate IIIa). Other hearths were filled in and the kitchen or house-place hearth used as a pantry. Sir Richard's experience in the building of factories had been considerable; such buildings were the most advanced of the age in terms of "modern" techniques involving fire resistance. Cast iron played an important part in the construction and structure of such buildings, and it followed that the new windows Arkwright installed were made of cast iron. Three types were employed, a small opening light for larders, etc. (still to be seen in the extreme south wall of the building), a larger flat-headed window with the small opening light as part of it (still in position over the house-place) and a curved headed window which was used on the ground floor (one example is stored in the museum but they have since been replaced by timber windows). It is difficult to imagine that these windows were specifically designed for the house, and one must conclude that they were left over from industrial buildings under erection elsewhere. Where possible Arkwright used the existing windows and doors as part of his conversion and bricked up those which were not required.

All the cottages contained a ground-floor living-room with cooking range and a food store with one bedroom upstairs, but in some cases a small kitchen was possible on the ground level and an additional chamber above. To make the maximum use of the building as cottages a 9 feet square extension was added to the north of the Elizabethan wing and a cottage built with a lean-to roof in the south-east angle between the parlour and the bay projection. Many houses of this type received such additions around this time — the last referred to here is now mostly demolished and what remains forms the screen to the present terrace entrance to the house.

The sale of the estate by Philip Gell's trustees may have been facilitated by Sir Richard's death in 1792. His son was prepared to part with much of the estate when the auction took place but purchased those parcels of land which were essential to the welfare of the Holme Mill and the workers employed there. In 1840, shortly before his death in 1843, Richard sold the factory and associated property but re-purchased when the new owner went mad in the following year. So the mill and land at Holme, the town

cottages and Old House Museum passed to Sir Richard Arkwright's grandson, Robert, when his father died. He sold the whole of the property to the duke of Devonshire in 1860. The duke had no intention of holding on to the land and immediately set about placing it on the market. He had a plan drawn up (fig. 1) and the areas drawn up into lots for auction — the deal was purely a land speculation.²⁹

In 1861 the land attached to Parsonage House was sold in five lots: to the west, parsons' field, to the extreme south a plot and house, between that and Parsonage House the croft and garden, the barn and the land adjacent and, lastly, Parsonage House and the land between it and the road to the west of the church. The house itself was purchased by Mr. Edward Cunningham and promptly renamed Cunningham Place. The Cunninghams occupied the cottage which had been made from the parlour and rented the others. They no doubt felt that pride of ownership demanded that their home should stand out from the other cottages. The entry through the old porch was closed and a window installed, the porch being made into a kitchen, and a new front door in a timber surround, with cornice and brackets, was made alongside the window in the east gable (this window may have been enlarged at this time). To complete the impression bargeboarding was added to the gable and the front of the cottage plastered (plate IIIb). Some improvement was also made in other cottages — in particular the replacement of window frames, which had rotted, with windows of the same type used for the Cunningham conversion.

Edward Cunningham's widow, Sarah, sold the house in 1900 to Mr. E. M. Longsdon, a local architect who held the property for nineteen years. He improved the Elizabethan extension in a way which epitomizes an architect of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. No expense was spared to improve the façade, and no doubt the original character of the building was meant to affect the design but Longsdon could not shake off his neo-classical dogma. The mullioned windows on the south wall were filled in and formed internal recesses, whilst the front was graced by sash windows in heavily punched rusticated stone surrounds. Quoin stones were replaced to match this rustication and capped by corbel stones and copings to the gable — no cheap bargeboarding here (plate IIIb). The iron larder and staircase windows were exchanged for delicate pivoting wooden lights. But, alas, the result, whilst interesting, was completely out of context with the original building although it must be said that it is in harmony with much of the refacing and new building that was applied in the area around Old House Museum at that time.

Longsdon sold off the frontage of land that the Cunninghams had bought for new development, which meant that the old drive from the church side to the house was reduced to the existing footpath and the carriage entry had to be through the new buildings past the old barn. After Longs-

²⁹ The deeds of the transfer of parts of the parsonage property since 1860 are in the custody of Brooke-Taylor, solicitors, of Bakewell.

don, Albert Dennif owned the house for four years and did little to change the building. However, from 1921 to 1955 the Harrison family took their responsibilities seriously and some improvements were made. Amongst these can be listed three windows in the rear of the house at upper and lower levels of the staircase well and in the wall of the house-place hearth — at that time a pantry; these windows have brick surrounds. The occupants of the buttery cottage also installed a new glazed doorway at the rear and fixed the old medieval door to the buttery from the outside. All these improvements were of a superficial nature and only had the effect of detracting further from the original character of the building. When the Bakewell and District Historical Society received the property into its care in 1955 considerable structural repair was needed.

The Society recognized that it had a threefold objective in taking over Cunningham Place; firstly, it had to make safe an old property already condemned by the local authority as unfit for habitation; secondly, it had to investigate the house with care and to record and preserve the historical evidence contained in it; thirdly, the Society was concerned to provide access for the public to the building and to use it as a museum. Fulfilment of the first objective involved a considerable amount of reconstruction. The gable end of the parlour wing was rebuilt, roof slates replaced, chimneys and valleys reconditioned and, as the walls and staircases of Arkwright's cottages were systematically removed, new floors, plasterwork and innumerable extra items of building were needed to make good the building. The task was the difficult one of investigation, removal and consolidation. Windows and doorways which seemed irrelevant to the present function of the house and to have no great historical significance were walled in, e.g. Cunningham's front door, the new door to the rear, the door between the porch and the parlour and an Arkwright window in the upper, south end of the house-place wing next to the porch and the doorway below this window. In some of these cases small windows have been inserted in the new walls to provide light for displays in the interior.

The lean-to cottage, which was unsafe and out of character with the old house, was largely removed and an entrance terrace made to a new doorway into the parlour next to the bay projection. This provided convenient access for the reconstruction parties and later for the public. In this wing the investigations revealed a fine stud partition with wattle and daub infill which runs from bottom to top of the house (plate IIIa), the two large fireplaces with chamfer-stopped surrounds, straw lathing to the ceiling of the rear upper chamber and the small timber window of that chamber set in the wall behind later stonework. The old doorways, when stripped down, were also found to be of medieval or Tudor type. The removal of the ceiling of the main bedroom exposed a most interesting roof construction and the hatch into the roof chamber (plate IVa) — these have been left unceiled. When the house-place wing was cleared the old porch entry was opened up (plate Ib), the house-place hearth with its salt cupboard and chamfered timber beam (plate IVb) was returned to its pride

of place, and a further stud partition was found in the upper floor between the south and north bedrooms of this wing.

There was at one time a connection between these two bedrooms to the east of the Arkwright chimney stack through the partition and, if a similar partition existed below, the same must have occurred there. The equivalent rooms on ground floor level are divided by a limestone wall, lime mortar jointed, clearly not part of the original walling and probably part of the Arkwright conversion. To the north of this wall are the two cottages recently vacated, one in the north end of the house-place wing and the other in the Elizabethan extension. At one time these were joined by doorways which replaced the larger timber windows already described. Also a store-room above the cellar had been linked to the original garderobe and had for years agglomerated rubbish; here the old front door to the house was recently found — studs and hinges complete.

Such discoveries will perhaps become less frequent in future, but nonetheless may occasionally be made. Many minor finds have been made to date but it would be quite wrong to list these items in an article dedicated to a general survey of the house and its history. After all this last change in function for Parsonage House or Cunningham Place is a radical one. It is now open house to all and as such reflects the current reverence for the antique and for historical enlightenment through display. It can hardly be surprising, therefore, that the new owners, in their enthusiasm for the good work they are doing, should have decided to baptize the house anew with the name of Old House Museum, a title which so admirably describes its historical nature and new status.

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