

**Rectory Farm, Dodderhill  
Common, Hanbury,  
Worcestershire**

**An Historic Building Record  
2004**

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**Rectory Farm, Dodderhill Common, Hanbury, Worcestershire**

**An Historic Building Record 2004 (WSM 33548)**

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## **Rectory Farm, Dodderhill Common, Hanbury, Worcestershire An Historic Building Record (WSM 33548)**

### **Summary**

*In February 2004 Birmingham Archaeology carried out historic building recording at Rectory Farm, Hanbury, Worcestershire, a former glebe property. The work was commissioned by Fell Estates in connection with a planning application to demolish the farmhouse and outbuildings and to erect a replacement dwelling. The farmhouse dated from c. 1820, but had been refenestrated and had a new wing added to it in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. A number of early 19<sup>th</sup> century timberwork details survived internally, notably doors, including cupboard doors, architraves and skirting boards, but little else of interest. In the farmyard was a well-preserved brick and timber Worcestershire (open-fronted) cowhouse of similar date.*

### **1.0 Introduction**

In February 2004 Birmingham Archaeology carried out historic building recording at Rectory Farm, Hanbury, Worcestershire for Fell Estates. The work was commissioned in connection with a planning application to demolish the farmhouse and outbuildings and to erect a replacement dwelling. The farmhouse is unlisted but is registered on the County Sites and Monuments Record (WSM 32894), and appears on the Hanbury title map. In line with guidance given in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15, Section 2.11 (DoE 1994), the planning authority was advised that further information was required about the site before a decision could be made on the application. This was to fulfil the aims of the County Structure Plan (Worcestershire County Council June 2001, Policy CTC16-18) and Wychavon District Local Plan (1993, Policy CB18).

The work was carried out according to a written scheme of investigation prepared by Birmingham Archaeology (Hislop 2004), which was itself based on a brief supplied by Worcestershire County Council (Glyde 2004). Staff adhered to the Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

### **2.0 Site Location (Figs 1 & 2)**

Rectory Farm is situated at Dodderhill Common, Hanbury Worcestershire, at NGR SO95795 64714 (Figs 1 & 2). The farm buildings lie on the south side of an unmetalled lane leading west from the B4091. The farmhouse itself backs directly onto the lane, whereas a contemporary cowhouse of interest lies to the southeast on the east side of the farmyard (Fig.3).

### **3.0 Objectives**

- A detailed photographic survey.

- A detailed descriptive and analytical written record.
- A phased ground plan of the farmhouse.
- A brief record of other historic features or structures within the farmyard complex.

#### **4.0 Methods**

A written description was made, including structural analysis, and a room by room inventory of significant features compiled.

The photographic survey was carried out with 35mm cameras using monochrome and colour print films. In addition some colour transparencies were taken for presentation purposes.

The measured survey was carried out by hand, and a ground plan of the farmhouse drawn up at a scale of 1:50, depicting the principal phases. In addition, a number of moulding profiles were drawn at a scale of 1:1 using a profile gauge.

A search of published and unpublished sources, including maps, was undertaken at Worcestershire Record Office and at the library of the University of Birmingham.

#### **5.0 Historical Notes**

An estate map of 1733 (Fig. 4) shows that although there was nothing on the site of the present farmhouse at that date, a group of buildings lay immediately to the southeast on part of the existing farmyard complex.

By 1840, when the tithe map was drawn up (Fig. 5), these buildings had gone, there had been a reorganisation of the field patterns, and there was an enclosure containing five buildings in the position of the existing Rectory Farm. A building on the site of the current farmhouse is depicted on the map as having an L-shaped plan with a range against the lane to the north aligned east-west, and a wing projecting from the south side. A north-south aligned building in the southeast corner of the yard can confidently be identified with a surviving cowhouse. This plot, as well as a number of other properties in the vicinity is described in the tithe apportionment as glebe land, occupied by the Reverend William Vernon, presumably a sibling of the lord of the manor in whose gift the living lay (Post Office Directory 1850). The Rectory itself was a separate building that lay to the southwest of Rectory Farm close to the east end of the church.

The 1903 Ordnance Survey map describes the farm complex as 'Glebe Farm' (Fig. 6). By this time the farmhouse had been extended to form its present rectangular plan, and a new rectory had been built to the south of the farm, and the old one demolished. By 1925 the name of Glebe Farm had been changed to Rectory Farm (Fig. 7).

## 6.0 Descriptive Notes

### 6.1 The Farmhouse (Fig. 8)

#### Exterior

Two-storey farmhouse of c.1820-30 with a late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup>-century east wing, and later alterations (Plate 1). Original build of white brick (9" x 4 " x 2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" ), some with parallel skintling marks, laid in Flemish bond (Plate 2), hipped Welsh slate roof and brick chimney stacks; red brick extension wing with slate roof. Originally L-shaped in plan, the main house aligned east-west facing south, away from the access lane, with low east-projecting annexe set back from the front of the house.

*South Elevation* – Original three-bay house to the left (west) and single-bay gabled extension wing to the right (east). The main house has a central 19<sup>th</sup>-century six-panelled door with raised and fielded panels (Fig. 9, Plate 3). The windows have been replaced with mid-20<sup>th</sup> century metal-framed casements with concrete sills, the original openings having been opened out to accommodate them. However, the segmental-arched heads at ground level, and the wooden lintels at first floor level, have survived. The central first floor window is blind. There is a clear staggered building break between the main house and the wing. Segmental-arched windows with chamfered red brick sills. 20<sup>th</sup>-century metal framed casement to ground floor and wooden casement to narrower first floor window. Dentilled gable cornice with short returns at eaves level to suggest a pediment.

*East Elevation* (Plate 4)–The two phases of brickwork are also visible on this side. At the right hand (north) end is the white brick of the single-storey former annexe, and to the left (south) the red brick of the later wing (Plate 5). Half-glazed door to right of centre, the right hand (north) jamb formed by the southeast corner of the former annexe. The door itself is later 20<sup>th</sup>-century in date, but the opening with its narrow overlight appears to be original. Segmental arched window at first floor level above the door.

*North Elevation* – The rear wall of the main house and annexe is of a single build. Main house to right (west) has windows to ground floor left and first floor left and right. The former annexe has a small window to right (east) of centre. The ground floor windows are wooden-framed and have chamfered brick sills like the later wing, and the first floor windows are mid-20<sup>th</sup> century metal-framed casements with concrete tile sills.

*West Elevation* (Plate 6) – 20<sup>th</sup>-century door to left (north) with concrete lintel. Immediately left of it a metal-framed casement with concrete tile sill. Although these features are insertions it is possible that there was an earlier doorway in this position; the outline of a gabled doorcase or porch is visible on the brickwork above it. At first floor level is an early 19<sup>th</sup>-century casement with leaded lights, the only original window to survive (Plate 7).

## Interior - Ground Floor

Access from the front door was to a north-south aligned entrance passage (G1) which gave access to two reception rooms (G2 & G3) at the front (south) of the house, and to a kinked east-west aligned passage (G4), which serviced the rear rooms. These included, from west to east, a tack room (G5), stairs (G6), a pantry under the stairs (G7) and a dairy (G8). There would have been an external doorway at the east end of the passage, giving access to a yard, and thence the annexe. The extension contains a kitchen and an eastward extension to passage G4 (G9).

*G1 (Entrance Passage)* (Plate 8) - Skirting board on each side, but of different patterns (Fig. 9). Six-pane window on east side with ovolo-moulded glazing bars containing old glass. Doorway on each side leading into G2 and G3.

*G2 (Parlour)* - Access from the west side of the entrance passage through an early 19<sup>th</sup>-century six-panelled door with brass handle and moulded architrave (Fig. 9). Few original details inside. Late 20<sup>th</sup>-century skirting boards throughout. Chimney breast against west wall with late 20<sup>th</sup>-century brick fireplace. North-south cased ceiling beam with roll-moulded edges.

*G3 (Dining Room)* - Access from the east side of the entrance passage through a plain four-panelled door with brass knob but no architrave. 19<sup>th</sup>-century skirting boards (Fig. 9) with breaks in the one against the north wall, possibly indicating the position of a former doorway. Chimney breast against the east wall with late 20<sup>th</sup>-century brick fireplace. Alcove to north of chimney breast containing, at the top of the wall a wire for a bell pull, extending through the north wall. On the south side of the chimney breast an early 19<sup>th</sup>-century two-tier built-in cupboard with panelled doors, the panel mouldings matching those on the architrave of the door to G2 (Fig. 9, Plate 9).

*G4 (Service Passage)* - Skirting boards down both sides but ill-fitting, and there are no breaks corresponding to those in G3. On the south side a wire for a bell pull system. At the east end of the passage is a stable-type board door, now giving access to the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century extension.

*G5 (Tack Room)* - Entered from an early 19<sup>th</sup>-century doorway with moulded architrave and overlight containing leaded lights and old glass. Late 20<sup>th</sup>-century skirting boards. Wooden harness hooks on north, east and west walls.

*G6 (Stairs)* - Early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Original skirting on west side, board partition on east side.

*G7 (Pantry)* - Door to cupboard under stairs immediately to east. Two steps down. Quarry-tiled brick bench against north wall on two segmental arches. Blocked window in west wall, towards G 5, with two bars.

*G8 (Dairy)* – Entered from north side of G4 through an opening with shallow beaded surround and board door. Stone and quarry-tiled brick bench against west wall and the west ends of the north and south walls. North-south beam with wide chamfers, possibly reused.

*G9 (Passage)* – Doors to north and south giving access to G10 and G11.

*G10 (Wash house)* – Board door with moulded architrave. Northeast corner partitioned off for a lavatory in the mid to late 20<sup>th</sup>-century.

*G11 (Kitchen)* – Board door with brass handle. Fireplace in centre of east wall containing a Rayburn stove. The alcoves to either side of the chimney breast have been fitted with cupboards. The doors of those to the north have been relocated being early 19<sup>th</sup> century in date and made to the same pattern as those still in G3 (Plate 10). Those to the south are plainer and probably contemporary with the room. Various hooks protruding from the ceiling.

#### Interior – First Floor

At first floor level the original house contains a large landing (F1) giving access to two front bedrooms (F2 & F3) one rear bedroom (F5), and an eastward leading passage (F4). The passage leads to another rear bedroom (F6) and continues into the extension, which contains a bedroom at the front (F8) and a bathroom (F7) at the rear.

*F1 (Landing)* – Original landing balustrade of stick balusters Doorways to north (two) leading to F2 and F3, east leading to F4 and west leading to F5. All four are early 19<sup>th</sup>-century board doors with strap hinges (Fig. 9); the western one has a rectangular overlight like that to G5.

*F2 (Bedroom)* – Directly above G2. 19<sup>th</sup>-century skirting boards. Blocked fireplace in chimney breast to west.

*F3 (Bedroom)* – Directly above G3. 19<sup>th</sup>-century skirting boards. Blocked fireplace in chimney breast to east. Fitted cupboards in alcove to north of chimney breast with board doors and moulded architrave, probably 19<sup>th</sup> century.

*F4 (Passage)* – Directly above eastern part of G4. 19<sup>th</sup>-century skirting on south wall, board partition on north side.

*F5 (Bedroom)* – Directly above G5. 19<sup>th</sup>-century skirting.

*F6 (Bedroom)* – Directly above G8. Board door with brass handle. Blocked fireplace in northeast corner, the hearth tiles of which are still exposed. A length of skirting has been inserted over the opening.

*F7 (Bathroom)* – Directly above G9 and part of G11. No significant features.



F8 (Bedroom) – Directly above G11. No significant features.

### The Pump

Immediately to the east of the farmhouse is a 19<sup>th</sup>-century cast iron pump (Plate 11).

## **6.2 Cowhouse**

Worcestershire cowhouse (Plate 12). Early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Red brick (9" x 4¼" x 2¾"), some with parallel skintling marks, laid in Flemish stretcher bond, with some timberwork and hipped plain tile roof. Aligned north-south facing west. Brick walls to south and east, three-bay open front articulated by timber posts on stone stylobates (Plate 13), and open north end. Tie beams supported on jowelled heads of posts to west and brick piers to each. King-post roof, jointed and pegged, supporting a plank ridge.

## **7.0 Discussion**

### General

The map evidence shows that there were structures on the site of Rectory Farm by 1733. None of these, however, appears to have survived, and there would seem to have been a reconstruction of the farm during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, probably around 1820. Two of the buildings from this reconstruction survive, namely, the farmhouse and the cowhouse. The former was originally an L-shaped structure, comprising a square two-storey house with a single-storey wing containing a self-contained wash house, directly accessible from the yard to the east of the house.

### The Farmhouse

There are certain curiosities about the house that suggest it was not intended simply as a working farm. Aesthetics were undoubtedly important, and outward symmetry has been the main influence on the design; in addition the 'white' bricks have been imported into the region and make a striking contrast with the more traditional Worcestershire building materials. The cowhouse, for example, which is broadly contemporary, uses the more normal red bricks.

Regarding the interior of original building, the details that survive are of a standard and character in keeping with the polite exterior, though there is a clear distinction between the living rooms at the front and the service/ work rooms at the back. However, one peculiarity is that none of the rooms could be identified unambiguously as a kitchen. Indeed the main improvement to the house was the addition of the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century kitchen extension. At ground level only the two front rooms were provided with fireplaces. If one of these rooms served as a kitchen, then it is likely to have been G3, which has a larger chimney stack than G2.

G3 is also worthy of note owing to the probability that the partition between the current entrance passage (G1) and G3 is an insertion. The reasons for suggesting this are that it is much thinner than the wall between G1 and G2, that the skirting boards on the two sides of the passage do not match and are therefore unlikely to be contemporary, and that the door within the wall is not an original feature. G1 and G3, then, may have formed a single room originally directly accessible from the front door.

It is possible that the introduction of the partition may have taken place at the time that the kitchen extension was added. One reason for supposing so is that early 19<sup>th</sup>-century cupboard doors, which match those in G3, have been reused in the late 19th-century kitchen. It is probable that these doors came from the now vacant alcove on the north side of the chimney breast. Perhaps it was at this time too that the bell pull mechanism was introduced.

If the interpretation above is correct, it is difficult to reconcile the polite characteristics of the house with the unusual plan, whereby the formal entrance gave access directly to the kitchen. One answer, perhaps, is that it played two roles, having been built both for architectural effect and as a working farmer's home. Whatever the solution, it is probable that it lies in the unusual status of Rectory Farm as a glebe farm in close proximity to the rectory.

### The Cowhouse

In contrast to the farmhouse, the cowhouse is very much in the vernacular tradition. It is a Worcestershire cowhouse, that is to say a local, open fronted, type of structure, to a great extent unaltered. The timber posts on stone stylobates are typical of this type of building, and represent a distinct regional type of construction.<sup>1</sup> The jointing and pegging of the roof trusses points to a date of before c.1830 (Peters 1988).

## **8.0 Acknowledgements**

The fieldwork for this project was carried out by Malcolm Hislop who also wrote the report. The illustrations were prepared by Nigel Dodds. Thanks are due to the staff of Worcestershire Records Office for their assistance.

## **9.0 Sources**

### **9.1 Original Sources**

*An Exact Terrier to a Book of Maps Containing all the Estates of Bowater Vernon Esq.* (1733).

*Hanbury Tithe Apportionment* 1840

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<sup>1</sup> A larger but less well-preserved Worcestershire cowhouse has been recorded at Mayhouse Farm, Hadley, near Droitwich. See Hislop 2002.

*Post Office Directory of Worcestershire 1850.*

*Post Office Directory of Worcestershire 1876.*

## **9.2 Secondary Sources**

Glyde, M. 2004, *Requirements for an Evaluation, Historic Building Recording and Interpretation of Rectory Farm, Hanbury, Worcestershire.*

Hislop, M. 2002, *Mayhouse Farmhouse, Hadley, Worcestershire: A Programme of Archaeological Work 2001* (BUFAU Report No.875).

Hislop, M. 2004, *Written Scheme of Investigation for Historic Building Recording and Interpretation of Rectory Farm, Hanbury, Worcestershire.*

Peters, J.E.C. 1988, Post-Medieval Roof Trusses in Some Staffordshire Farm Buildings, *Vernacular Architecture* 19, 24-31.

VCH, 1913, *Victoria History of the County of Worcester*

## **9.3 Cartographic Sources**

1733 Vernon Estate Map (No.6 in *A Book of Maps Containing all the Estates Belonging to Bowater Vernon Esq.* By John Dougherty)

1849 Hanbury Tithe Map

1903 Ordnance Survey 1:2500

1925 Ordnance Survey 1:2500

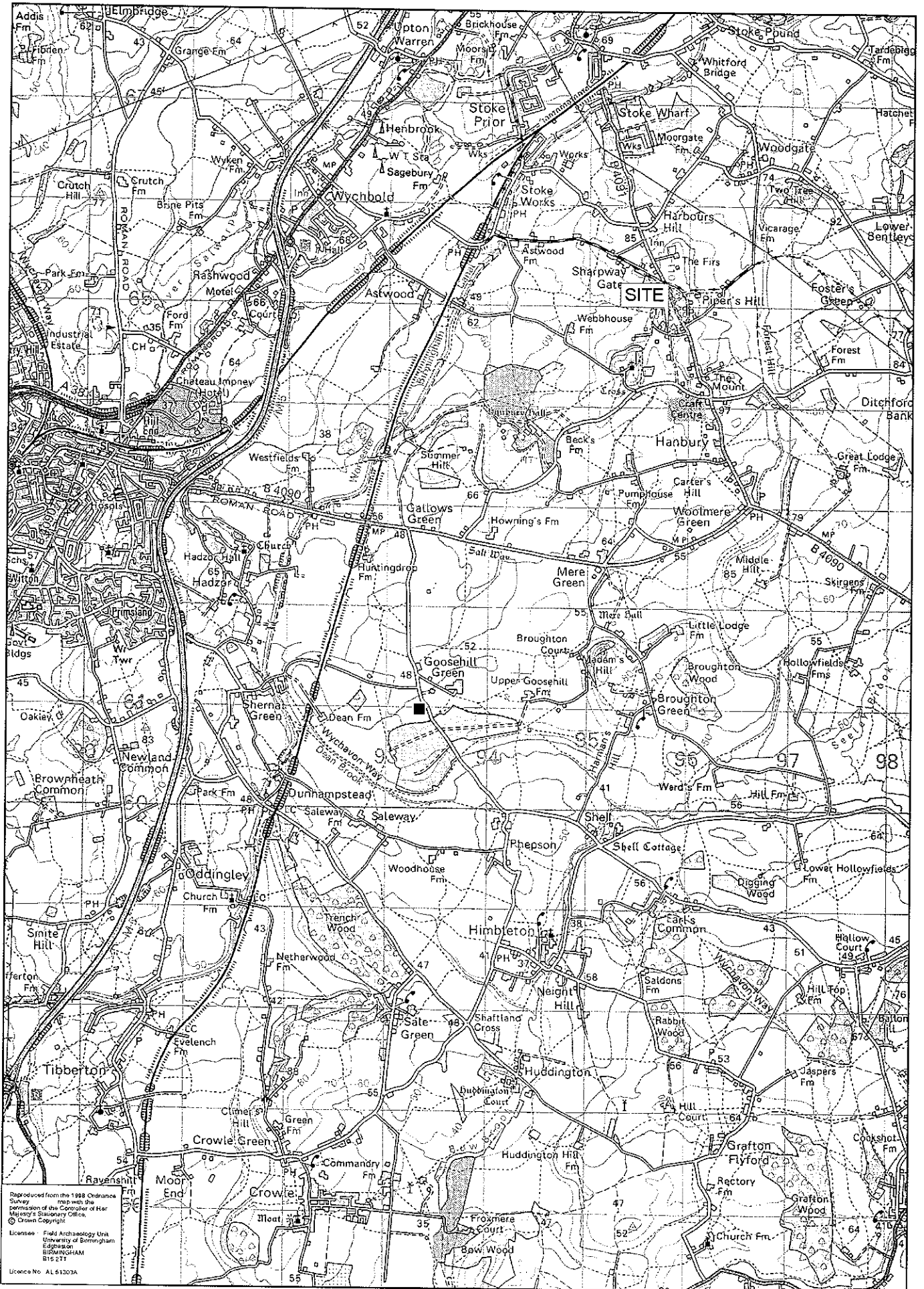
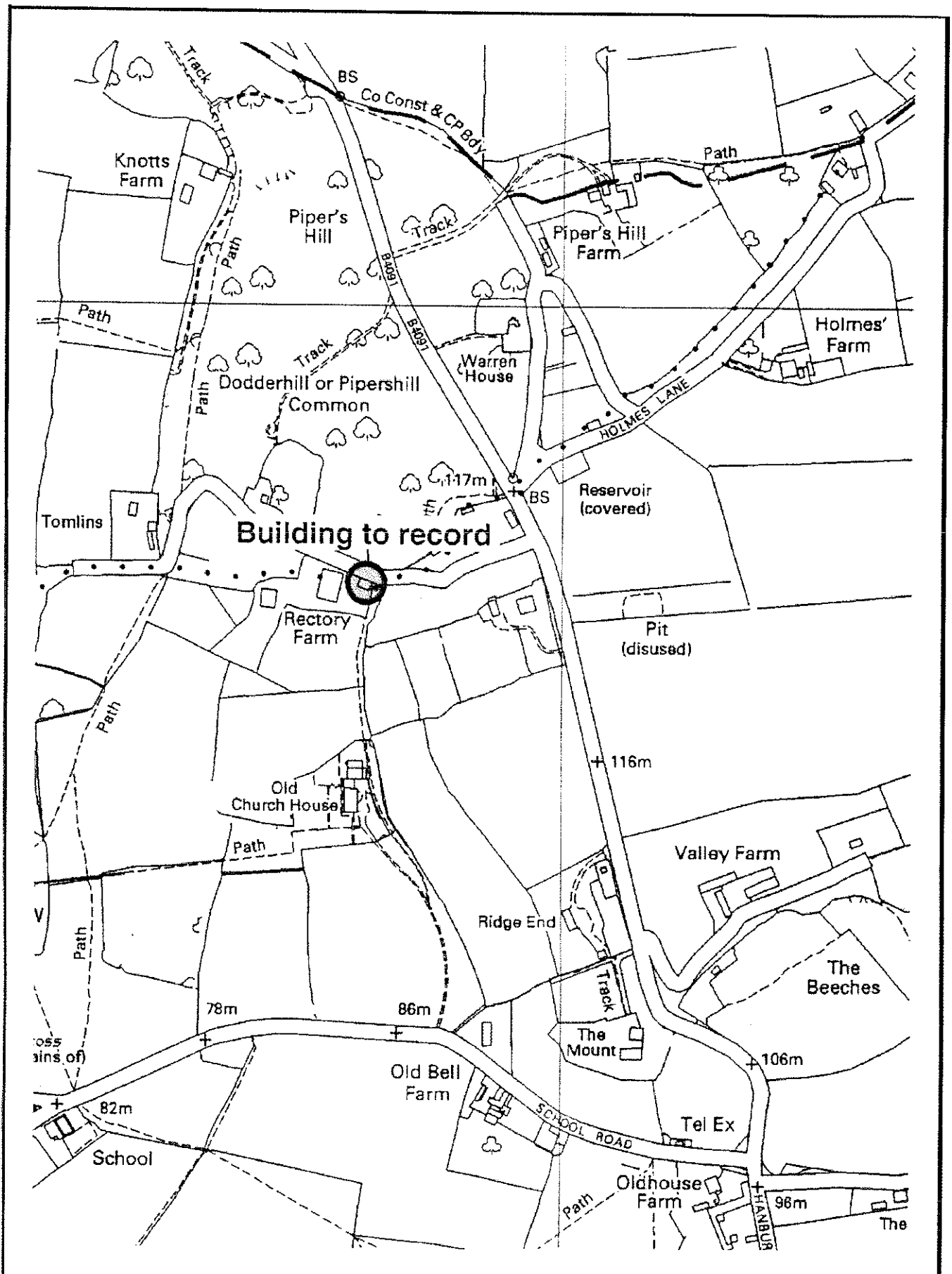


Fig.1



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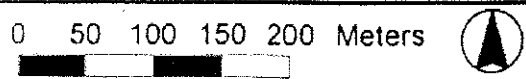


Fig.2

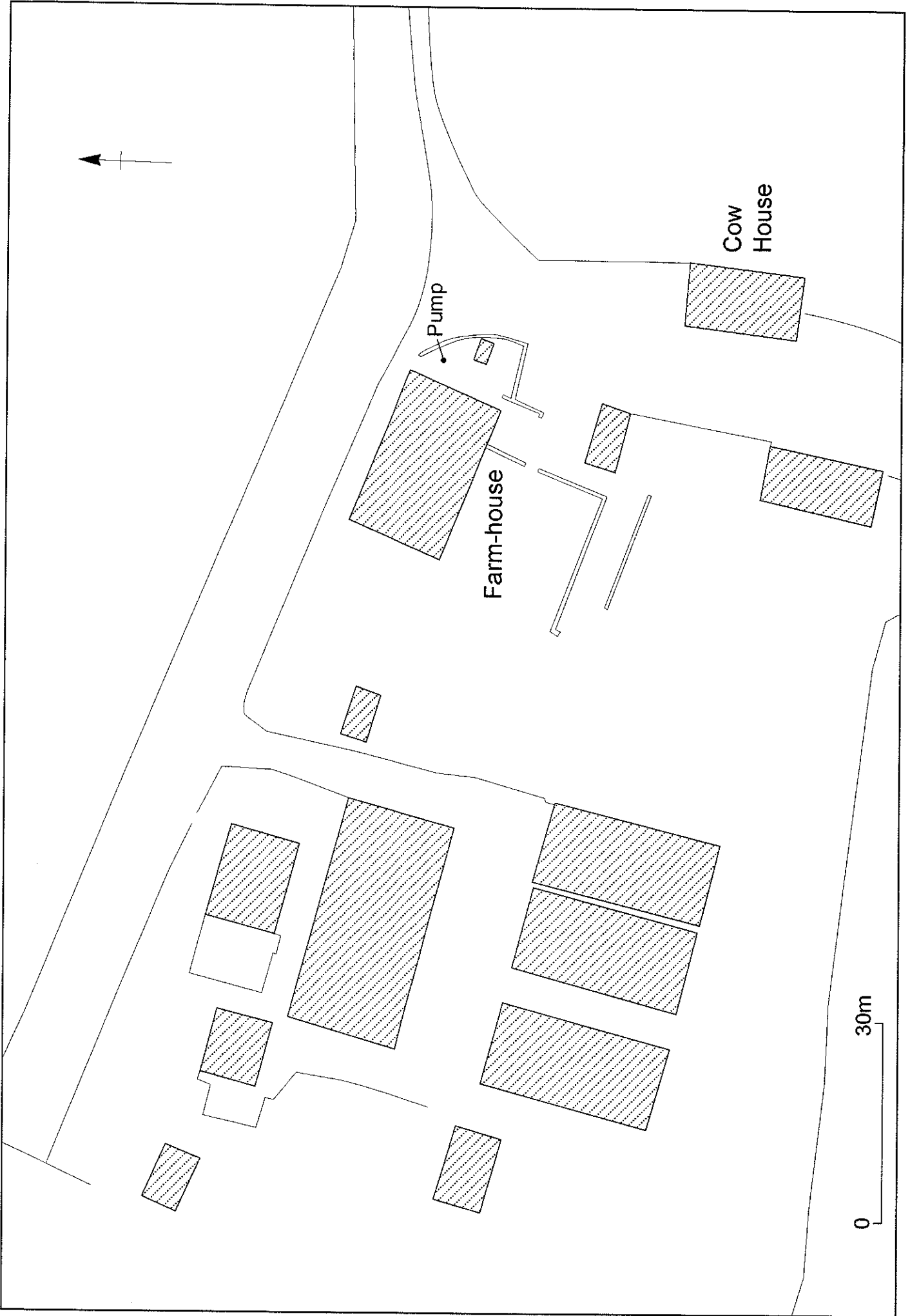


Fig.3

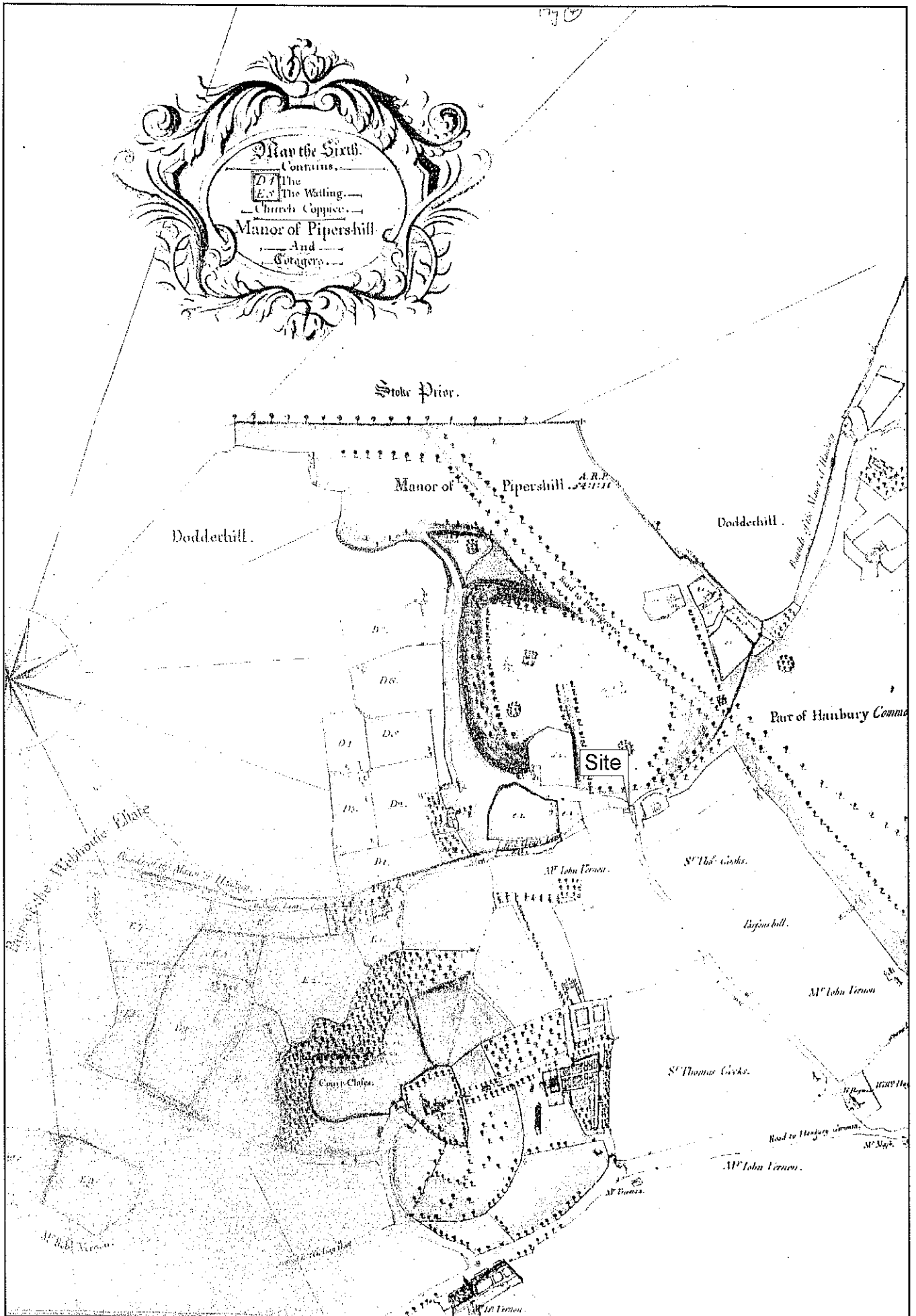


Fig.4 (1733)

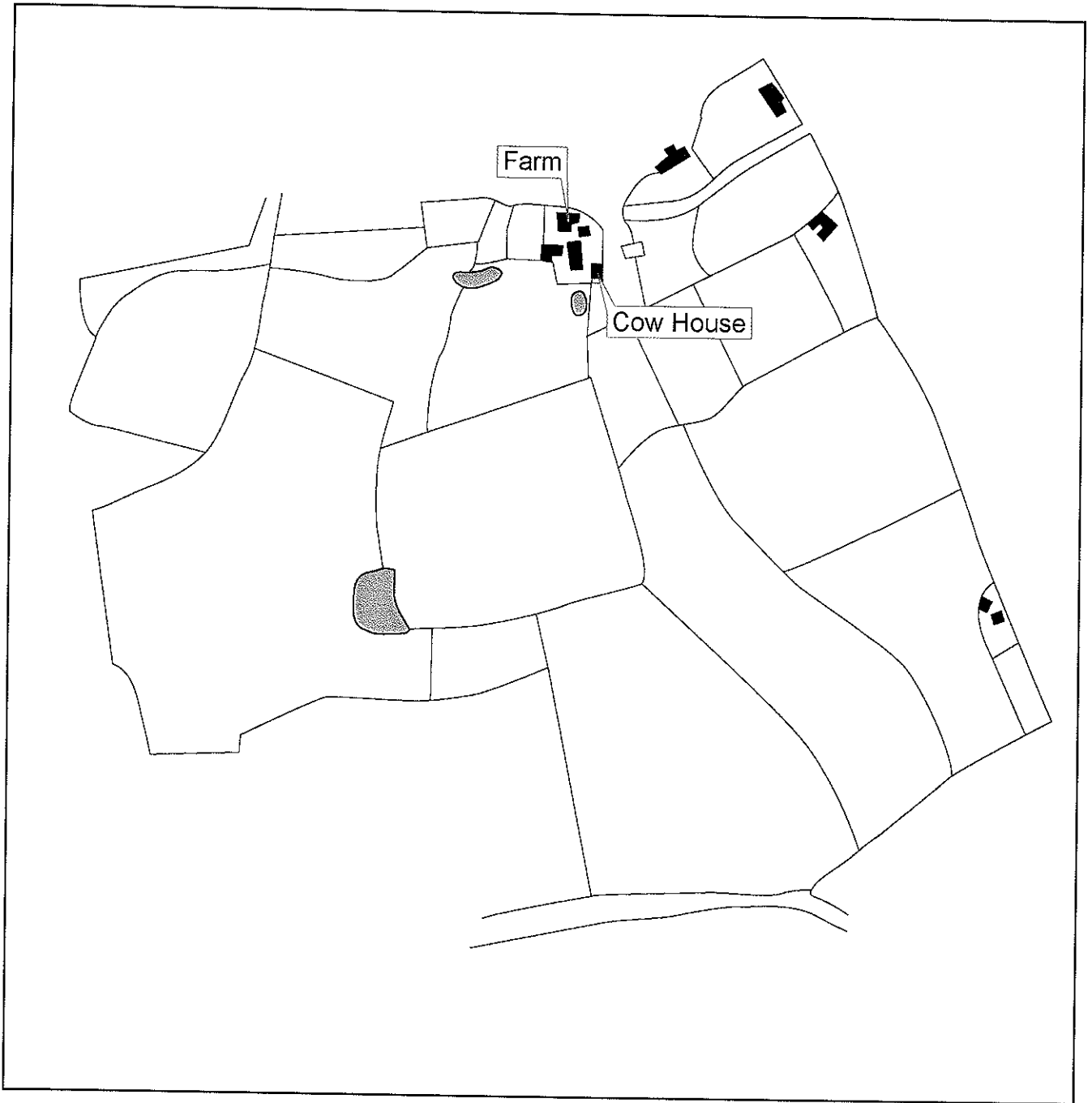


Fig.5 (1840)



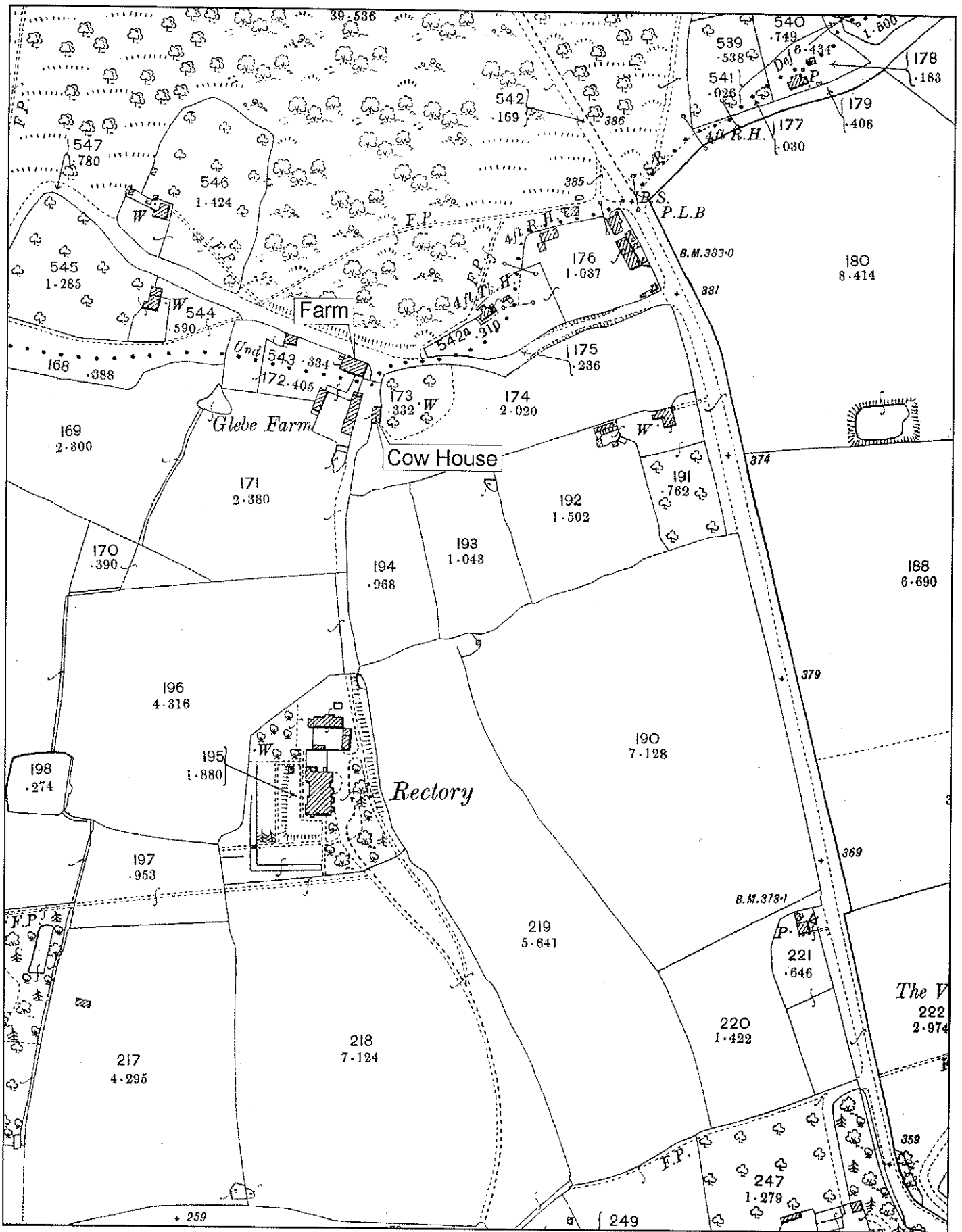


Fig.6 (1903)

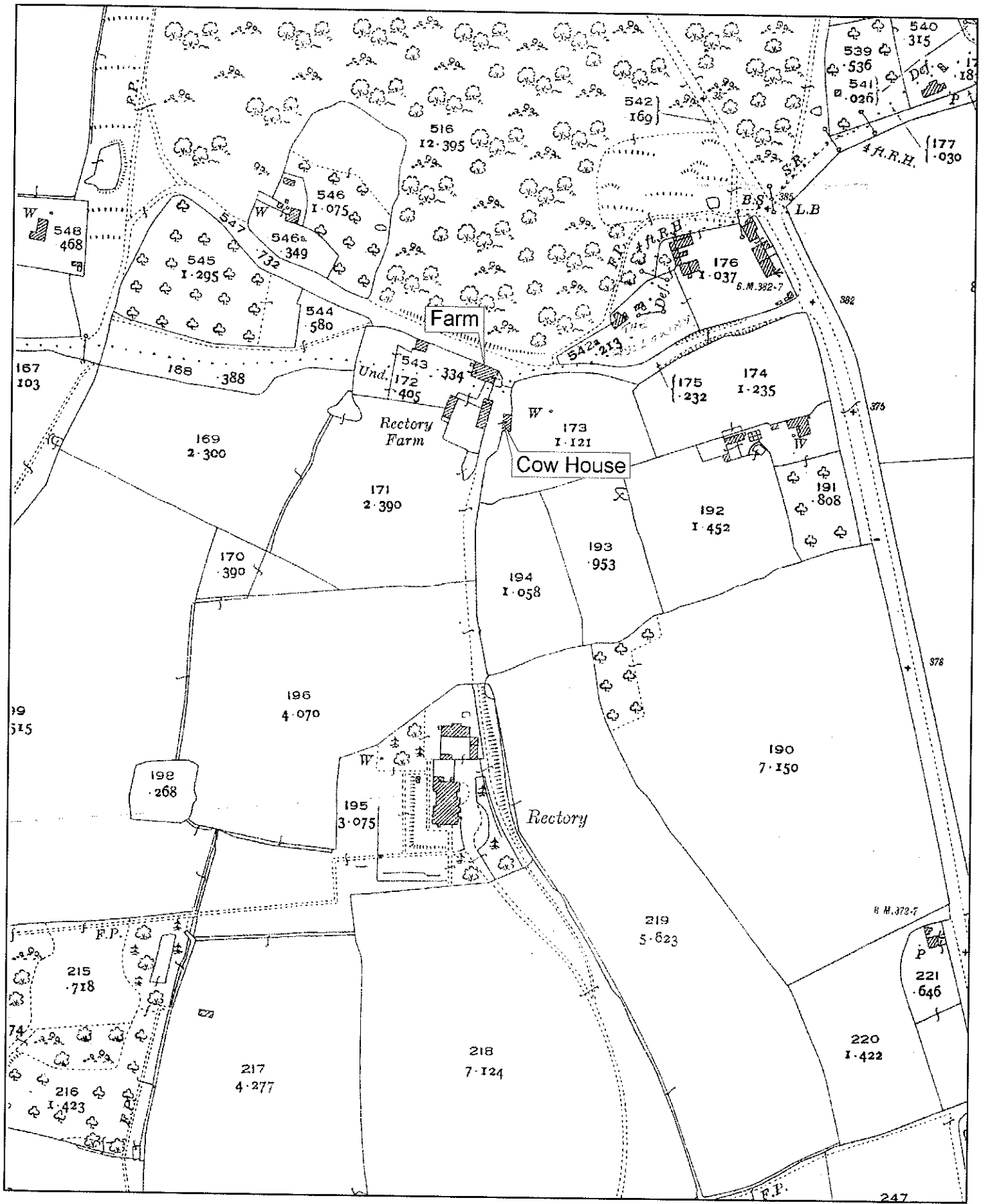


Fig.7 (1925)

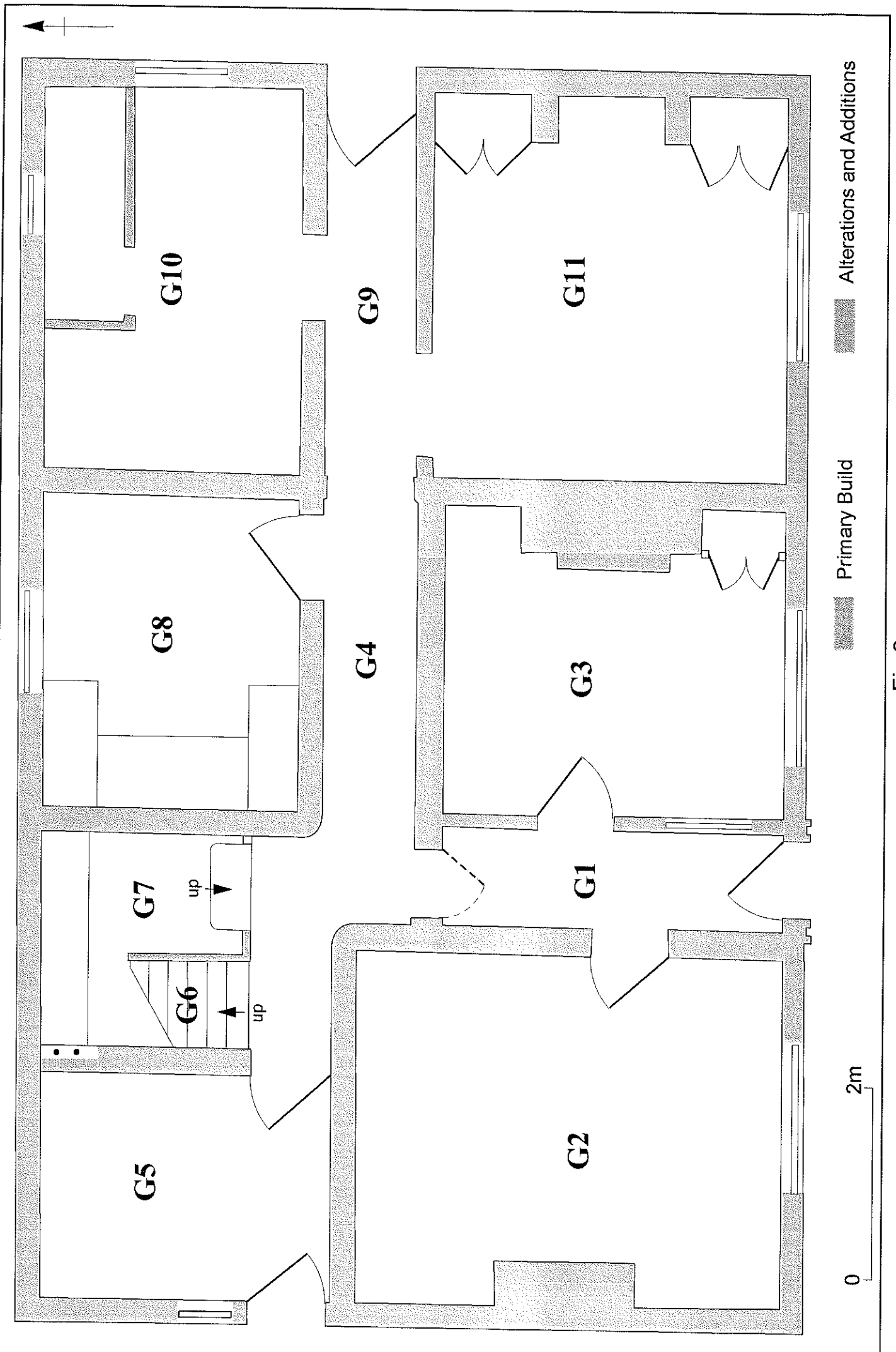


Fig.8

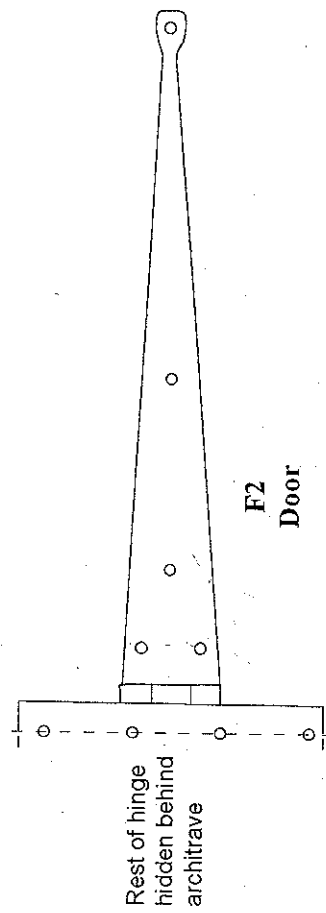
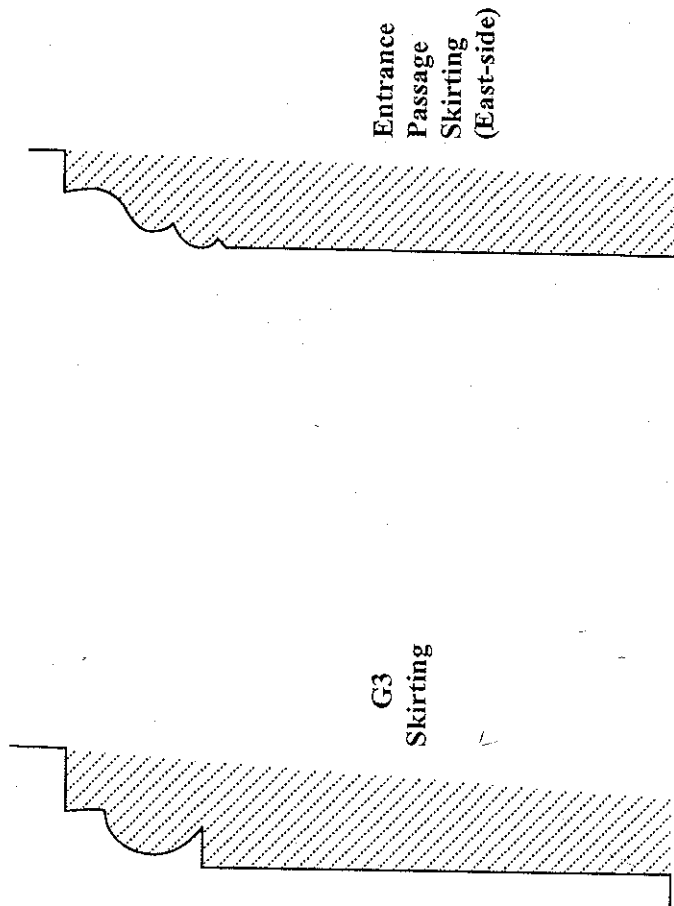


Fig.9

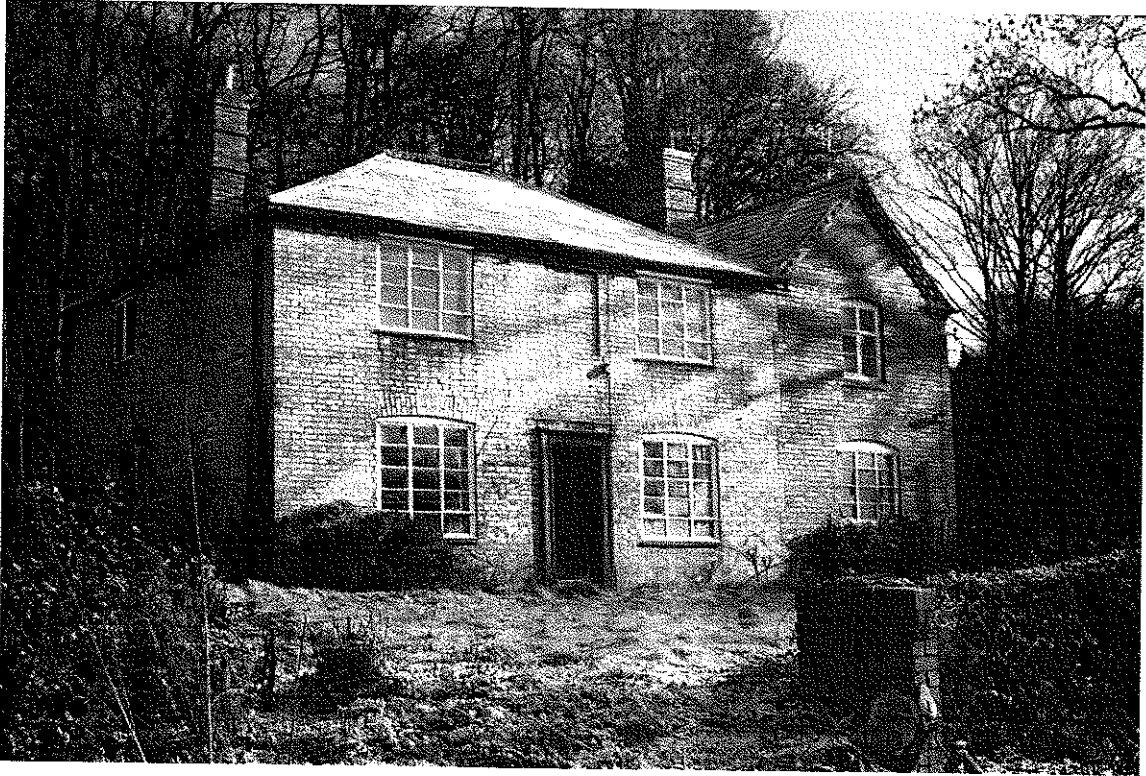


Plate 1

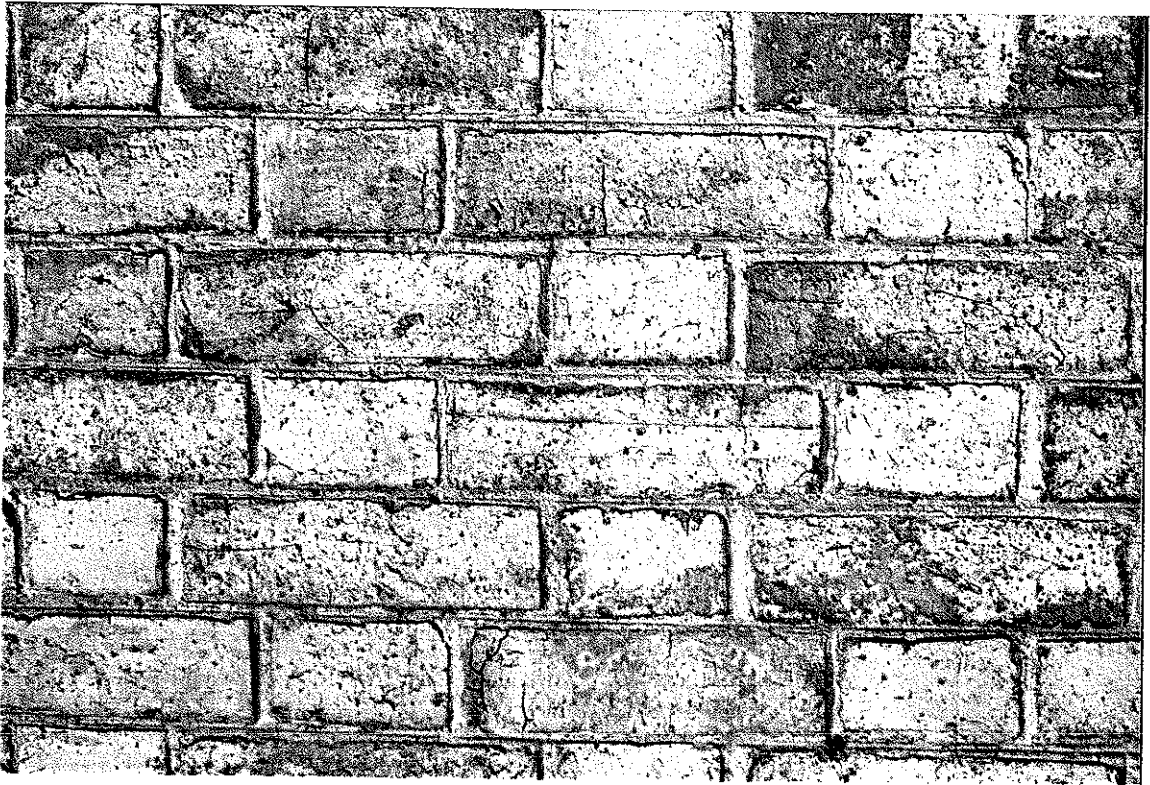


Plate 2



Plate 3



Plate 4



Plate 5



Plate 6



Plate 7



Plate 8



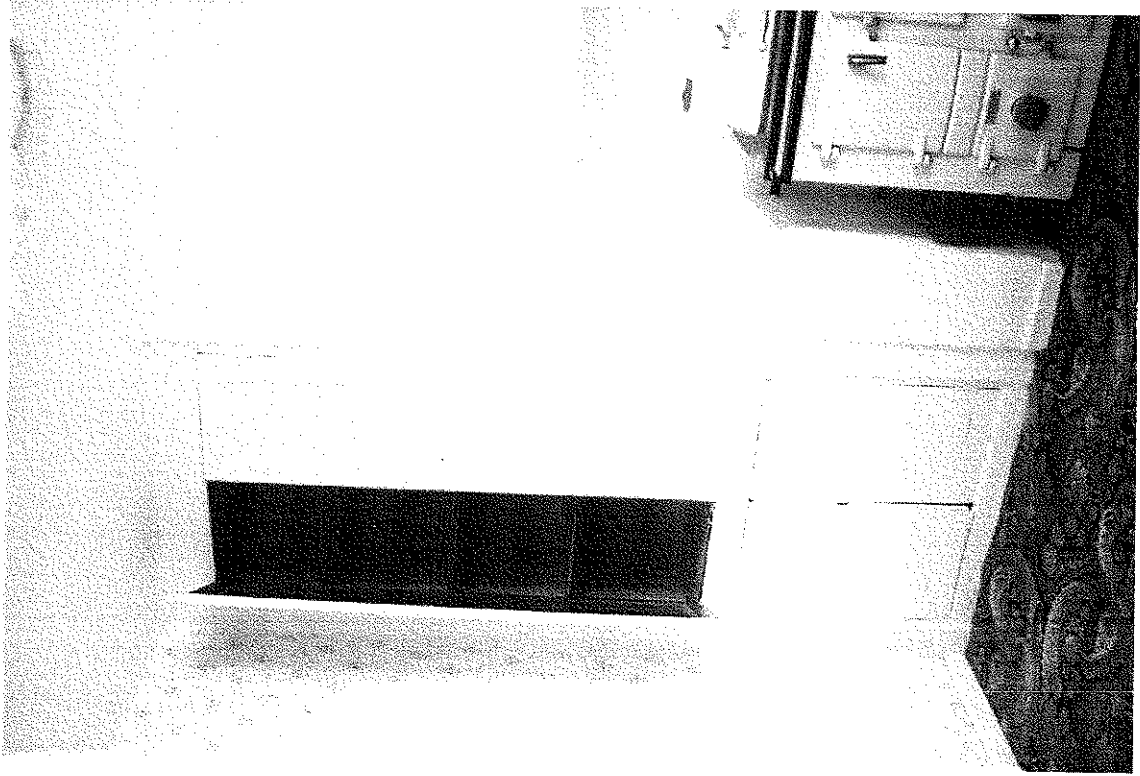


Plate 10



Plate 9

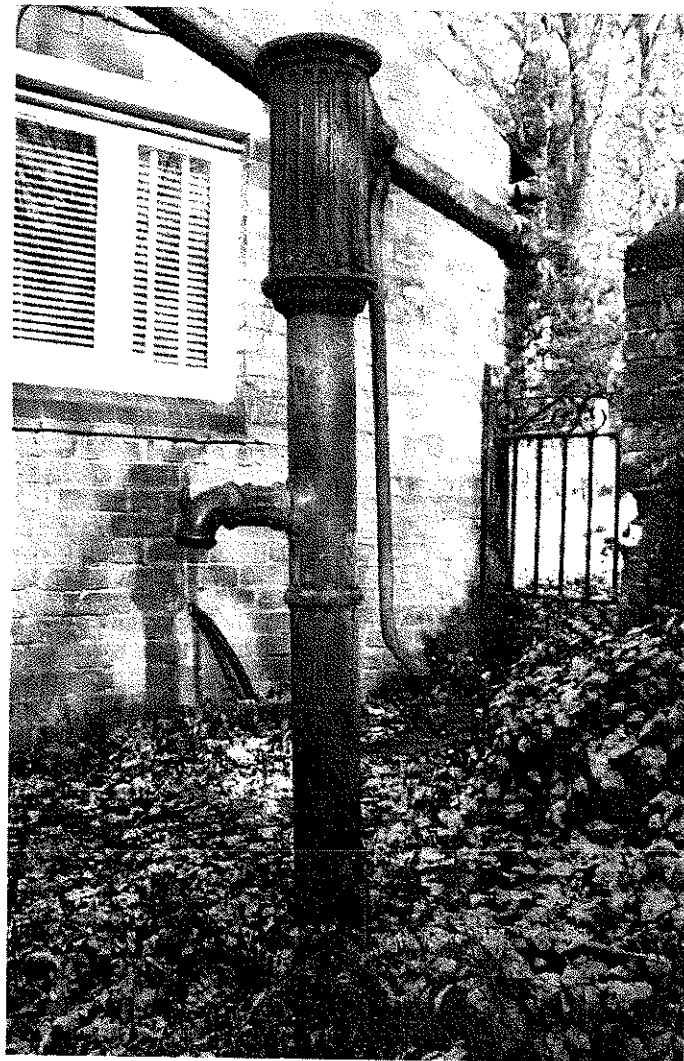


Plate 11



Plate 12

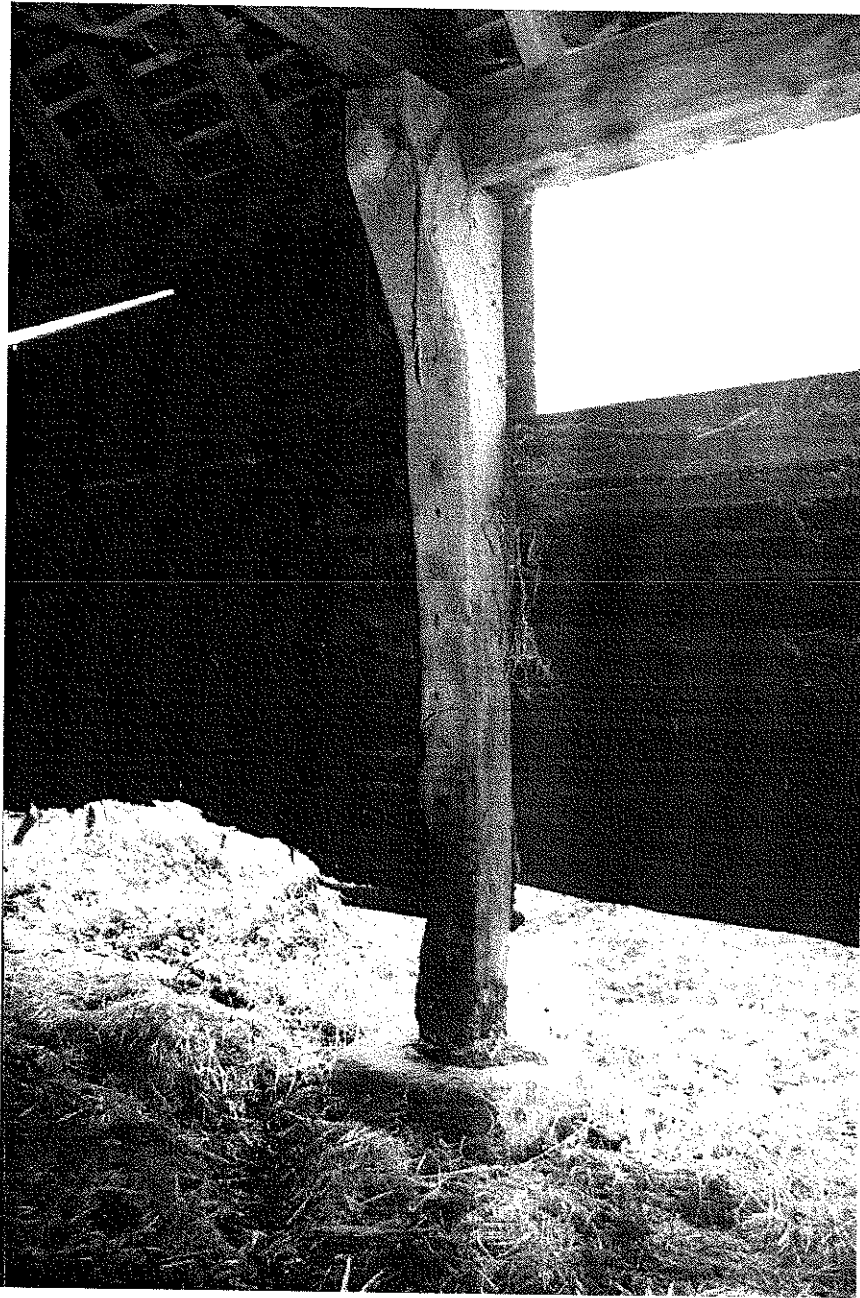


Plate 13