

**The Old Dairy,
Valley View Cottage,
Middleton, Suffolk
MDD 018**

Historic Building Record

OASIS Ref: Suffolke1 - 119807



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The Old Dairy, Valley View Cottage (Valley Farm) Leiston Road, Middleton, Suffolk

(TM 427 668)

Historic Building Record

This report provides a written and photographic record at English Heritage (2006) Level 2 of a redundant dairy building. It has been prepared to a brief written by Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (Edward Martin, 18th March 2010, ref. SpecHBR(EM)_ValleyVwCott_Middleton_1742_09), and is intended to fulfil a condition of planning permission for conversion (Suffolk Coastal District Council consent C/09/1742, condition 5).

Introduction

The report is accompanied by a CD containing a photographic record in the form of 38 digital images (Appendix 1), but also includes 8 printed photographs of key features to illustrate the text (Appendix 2). Each image is described in a separate schedule and wherever possible includes a scale rod with half-metre divisions in red and white. The site was inspected on 14th April 2010.

Summary

Valley Farm lies in open countryside on the northern side of the Leiston Road (B1122). The farmhouse is a grade II-listed rendered building with a timber-framed structure of the late-16th or 17th century and the unusually well-preserved early-18th century thatched and weatherboarded barn of three bays to the east is separately listed at the same grade. The farm buildings to the east and north of the site, including the old dairy, are understood to remain in the same ownership as the farmhouse and it is unclear why the dairy is assigned for planning purposes to Valley View Cottage. The old dairy is a single-storied shed of poor-quality brick rubble with a pantiled roof that incorporates a number of miscellaneous re-used carved stones in the manner of a folly. It is not shown on the tithe map of 1839 or the first edition Ordnance Survey of 1884, but appears for the first time on the second edition of 1904 and was built in *circa* 1900. The building lies in close proximity to the farmhouse (1.7 m from its gable) and retains a fragmentary hot-water copper. It was probably designed as a wash-house for domestic or agricultural purposes, but was much altered in the mid-20th century when an internal partition was inserted to divide the copper from an area that is known to have operated as a dairy and retains a stone shelf. There is evidence of a blocked original door and window to the east, but a second door and two additional windows are later insertions. The internal lime render of the southern gable retains a number of incised apotropaic (evil-averting) symbols that are often found on both domestic and agricultural buildings from the late Middle Ages onwards. These take the form of the Marian letter 'M' (i.e. for the Virgin Mary). Designed to protect against 'evil spirits' their appearance in a relatively late context such as this demonstrates the longevity of the superstition in Suffolk. The dairy is a relatively late addition of *circa* 1900 to an otherwise well-preserved historic farm complex. Its wall fabric was of poor quality from the outset, with irregular brick bonding more usually found in boundary walls, and it has been much altered in the 20th century. The building is not therefore of special architectural or historic significance.

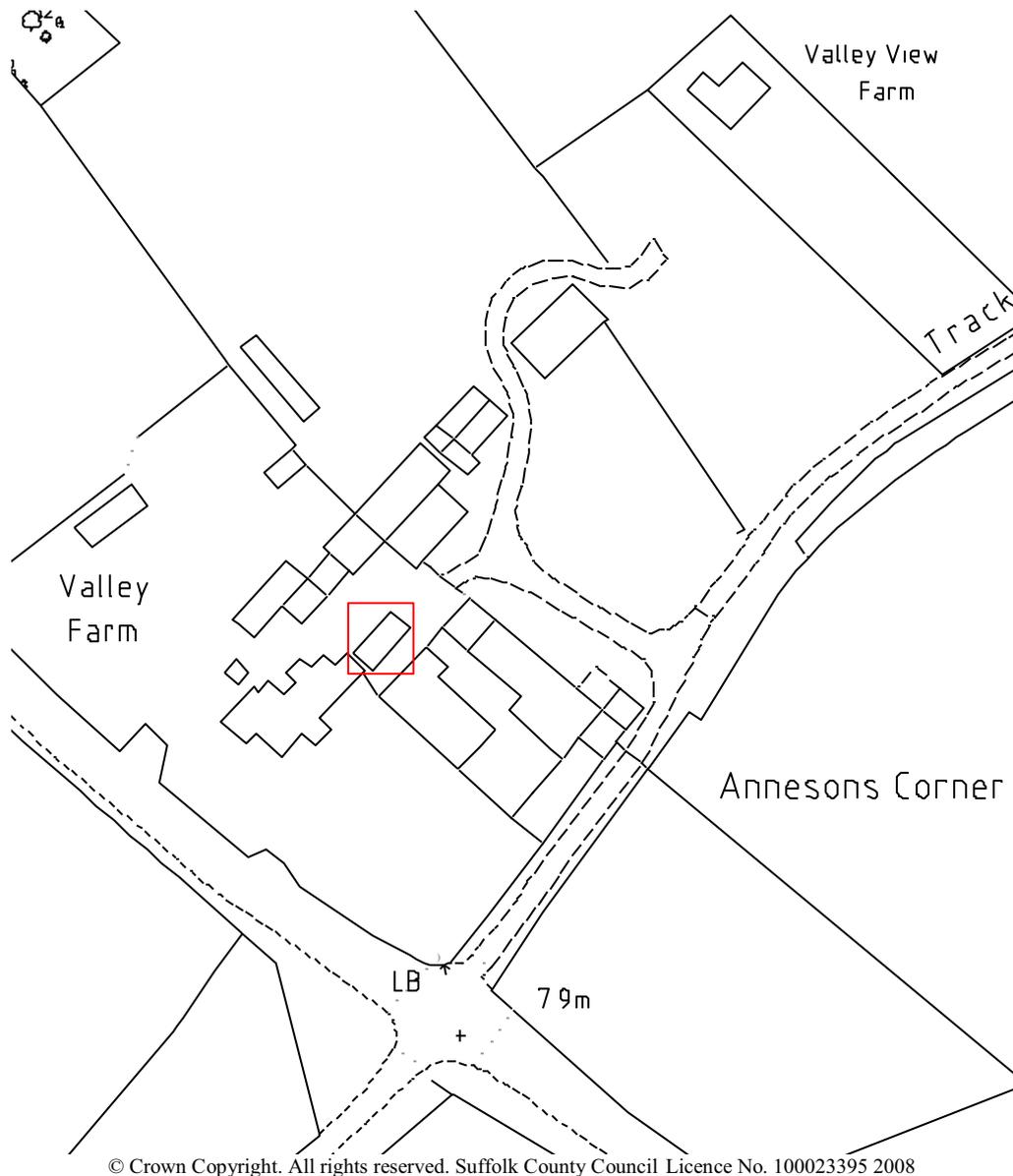


Figure 1
Current Ordnance Survey Site Plan
Enclosing the old dairy in a red square and showing the grade II-listed farmhouse and the Leiston Road to the south-west. The modern brick wall which adjoins the northern corner of the house and divides its garden from the dairy and farm yard is not shown.

Historic Context: Documentary & Cartographic Record

Valley Farm lies in open, arable countryside on the northern side of the Leiston Road (B1122) approximately 1 km south of Middleton village. The farmhouse is a grade II-listed rendered building with a timber-framed structure of the late-16th or 17th century (not inspected), and the unusually well-preserved early-18th century thatched and weatherboarded barn of three bays to the east is separately listed at the same grade. The farm buildings to the east and north of the site, including the old dairy, are understood to remain in the same ownership as the farmhouse and it is unclear (even to the owner) why the dairy is assigned for planning purposes to Valley View Cottage. A separate 20th century dwelling to the north is known as Valley View Farm (figure 1).

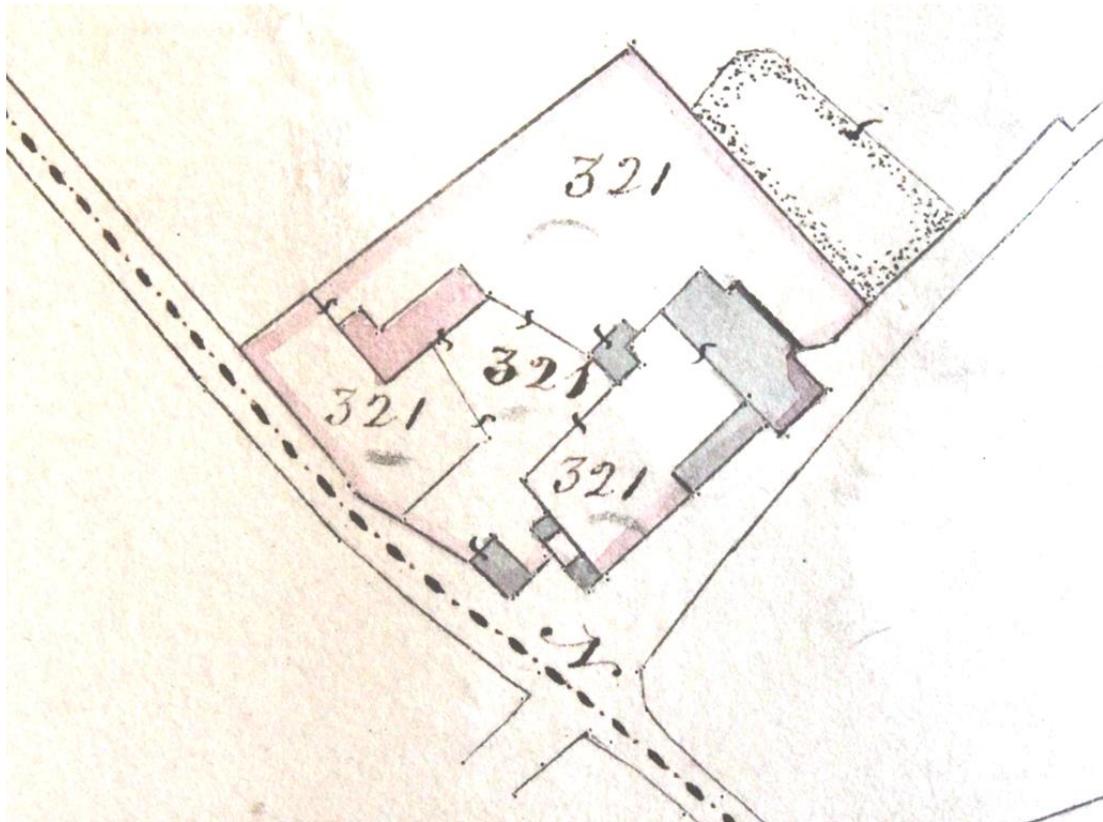


Figure 2
The Middleton parish tithe map of 1839 (Suffolk Record Office)
Showing the L-shaped farmhouse in red and the thatched barn adjoining the track to the east (prior to the addition of the stable to its northern gable). The dairy is conspicuous by its absence. The dotted line on the Leiston Road indicates the boundary with Fordley parish

The dairy is not shown on the 1839 tithe map of the parish, at which time the Leiston Road formed the boundary with the separate medieval parish of Fordley to the south-west (figure 2 above). The two parishes are now united as Middleton-cum-Fordley. Fordley church stood in the same churchyard as Middleton but, according to White's Suffolk Directory of 1844, 'was suffered to go to decay many years ago'. Both churches were standing in 1620 when a complaint was made to the bishop of Norwich that as the services in each church began at different times 'the bells and steeple of one disturbed the congregation of the other'. The tithe map shows the house and thatched barn (without its thatched stable) but not the dairy or the northern range of farm buildings. The accompanying apportionment describes the farm as a modest tenanted arable holding of 64 acres (of which just 5.5 were pasture), although more land may have been in Fordley parish which has a separate tithe survey. It was owned by Timothy Fellowes and occupied by Edward Reynolds Annison.

The first edition Ordnance Survey of 1884 (figure 3) shows the present thatched stable and the brick and pantiled shed to the north-west of its gable (photo A1.37) but the new building on the site of the dairy is far smaller than the existing building. The second edition of 1904 (figure 4) shows its current outline, along with additional sheds to the north, and the latter had been extended still further by 1927 (figure 5). There is now no trace of the small structure of 1884, which was evidently replaced by the present dairy between 1884 and 1904. The corner of the Leiston Road and the track to the south of the farm (which probably represents a medieval road) was named as Hogs Corner in 1884 and 1904 but by 1927 was known as Annesons Corner after the farm's tenant of 1839.

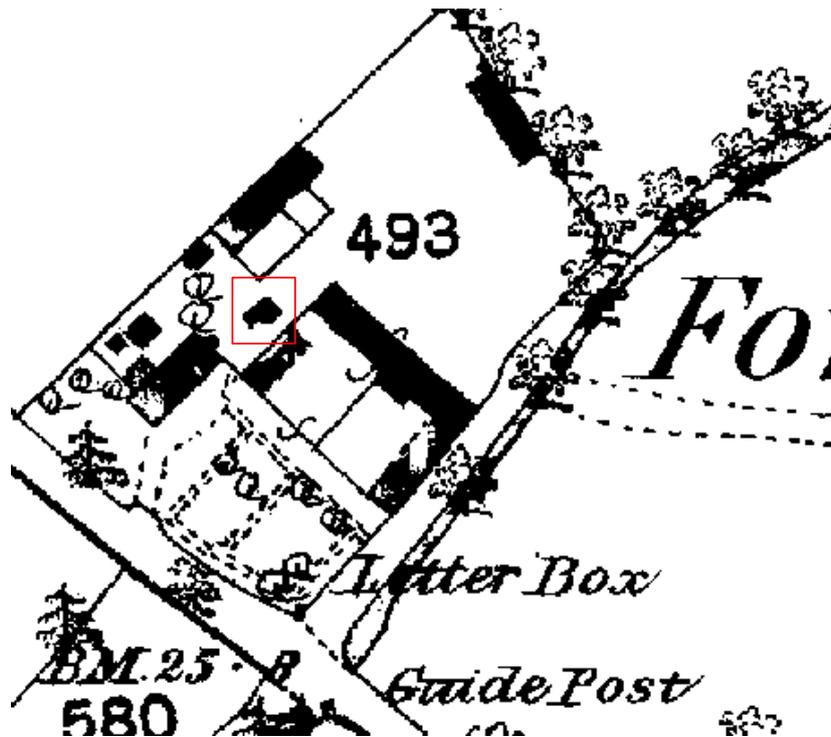


Figure 3

The first edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1884.

The thatched stable had been added to the north-western gable of the barn since 1839 and a new group of sheds and yards built to the north. A detached shed is shown for the first time on the approximate site of the present dairy (in the red square) but this is significantly smaller than its successor and lies further from the farmhouse. The site is labelled 'Fordley' and 'Hogs Corner', as in 1904.

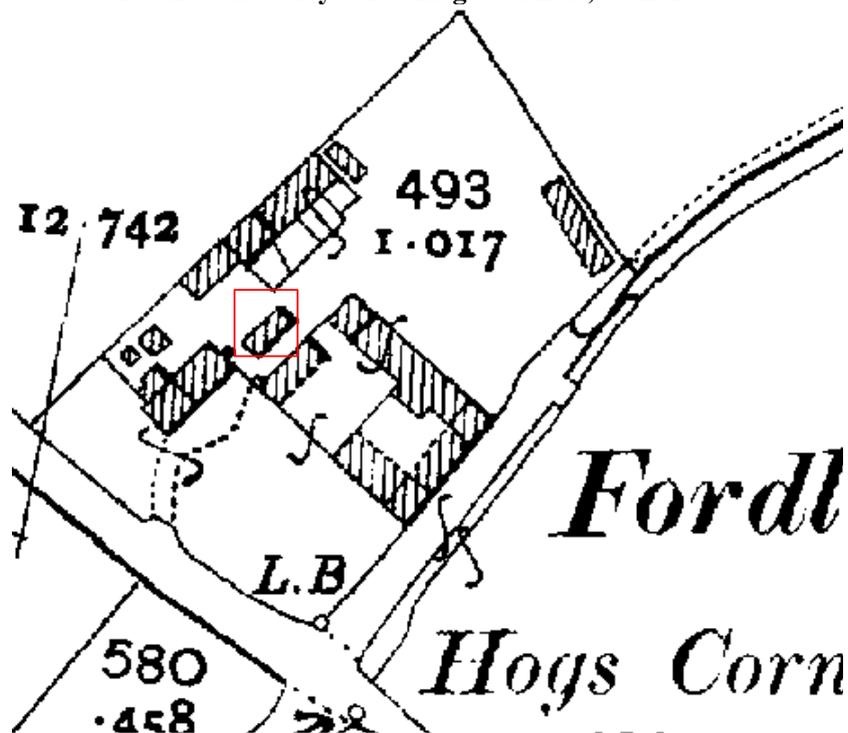


Figure 4

Second Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1904.

The dairy building is shown with its present outline for the first time and had evidently replaced the smaller shed shown in 1884.

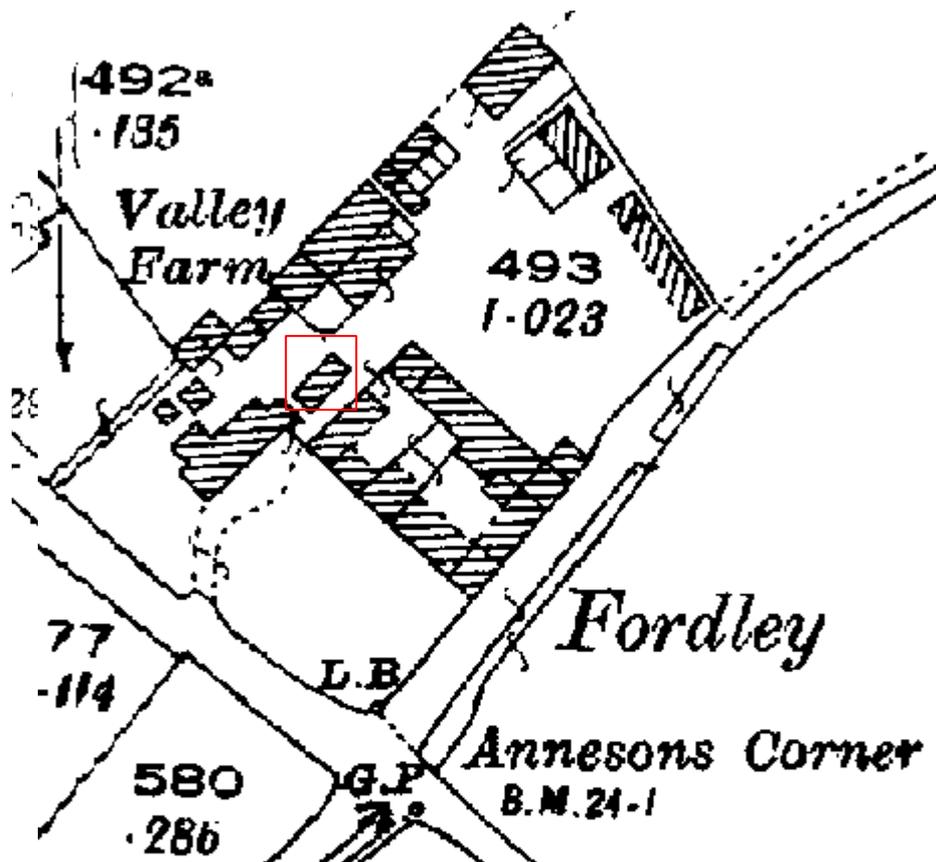


Figure 5
Third Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1927, showing additional farm buildings to the north but the dairy had remained unaltered since 1904. The corner had been renamed Annesons Corner after the farm's tenant of 1839.

Building Analysis

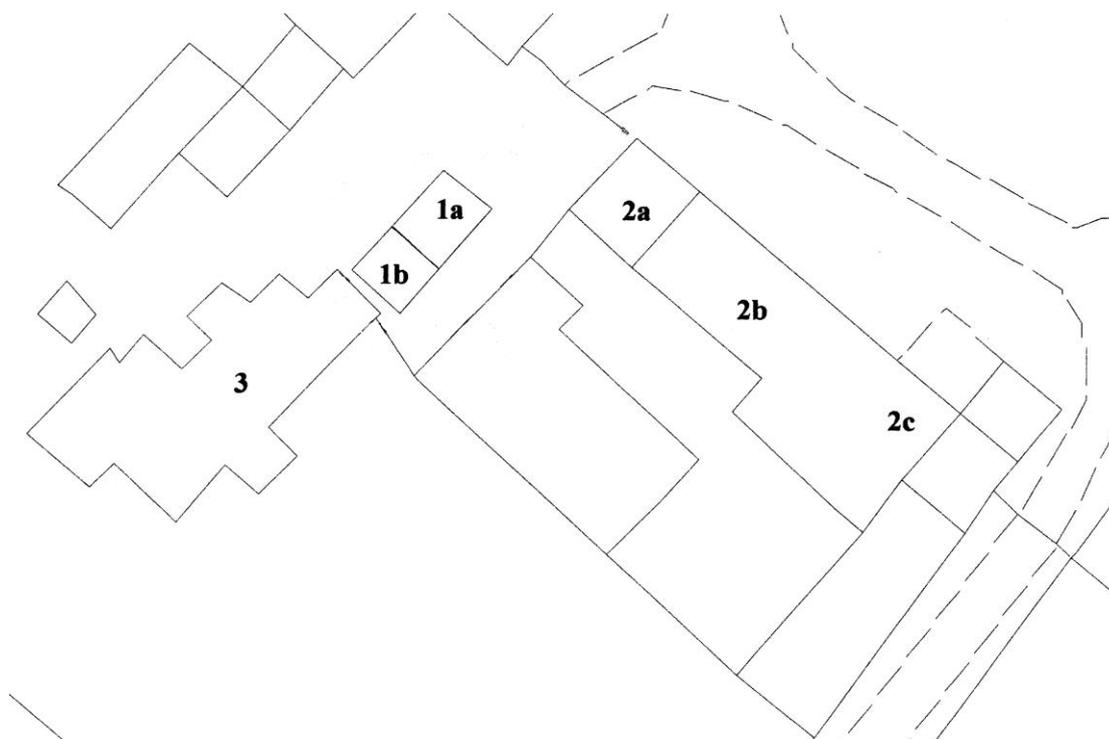


Figure 6
Block Plan of site, identifying each relevant building with a number for ease of reference in the text and photographic record.

Key

- 1.** Single-storied pantiled shed of brick rubble. *Circa 1900*. Probably built as a wash house and retaining a copper in its south-western corner. Divided by a partition of cement blocks into two compartments during the mid-20th century: the northern section (1a) used as dairy and the southern section as a storage shed.
- 2.** Timber-framed and weatherboarded early-18th century three-bay barn (2b) with mid-19th century stable, chaff box and hay loft to north and late-19th century cart lodge and granary to east. The stable and barn thatched. Listed at grade II.
- 3.** Farmhouse. Listed at grade II and dated to the late-16th or early-17th century in the Schedule of Listed Buildings. Not inspected.

Structure and Date

The old dairy is a single-storied shed with a pantiled roof that extends to 6.2 m in length by 4.7 m in overall width (20.25 ft by 15.6 ft) and rises to 1.8 m at its eaves. The roof retains fragments of original decorative trefoil ridge tiles and the walls consist of poor quality brick rubble with irregular sections of random headers and stretchers. Several re-used carved stones have been incorporated into the external wall fabric, all ostensibly later insertions, including a large section of 18th century-style cornice carved with swags and bows beneath an original semi-circular window in the northern gable. The shed is aligned on a north-east/south-west axis and lies just 2.1 m (7 ft) from the gable of the farmhouse, which shares the same axis (simplified to 'north-south' for the purpose of this description). The building is not shown on the tithe map of 1839 (figure 2) or the Ordnance Survey of 1884 (figure 3), although the latter

shows a smaller shed on the same site. It appears for the first time on the Ordnance Survey of 1904 (figure 4) and a date of *circa* 1900 is consistent with the structural evidence. A pantiled brick shed of similar size to the north that was shown in 1884 is distinguished by the much higher quality of its brickwork, and suggests the 'dairy' was erected cheaply at a later date and possibly made use of rubble from its demolished predecessor.

Original Layout and Function

The shed appears to have been undivided when first built as the present internal partition which divides the interior into unequal compartments is a cement-block insertion of the mid-20th century (1930-1950). It is possible, however, that this replaced a boarded partition as the double doors to the south of the eastern elevation appear to be original features. The resulting northern compartment extends to 3.6 m in length and the southern compartment to 2.4 m (12 ft and 8 ft respectively). A blocked original door lies at the northern end of the same elevation but a similar door in the western elevation is secondary (the former is respected by closers (quarter bricks) in the bonding pattern). The presence of an ostensibly original hot water copper with a fragmentary chimney in the south-western corner indicates the shed was designed as a wash house, either for domestic purposes or (more probably) for agricultural use in association with the neighbouring cattle yard. Such a purpose is not inconsistent with activities associated with dairying. A post in the secondary partition alongside the copper contains a vertical groove for a grain bin, but this may have been imported from elsewhere. The northern compartment was evidently used as a dairy from the mid-20th century, as recalled by the present owner, and has been rendered internally and provided with boarding beneath its softwood rafters (which remain exposed to the south). A stone slab in the north-western corner of this space was probably used as a stand for milk churns. The window alongside the blocked eastern door is original to the fabric, but both the western window and the narrow window in the northern gable are secondary insertions.

Graffiti

The internal lime render of the southern gable retains a number of incised apotropaic (evil-averting) symbols that are often found on both domestic and agricultural buildings from the late Middle Ages onwards. These take the form of the Marian letter 'M' (i.e. for the Virgin Mary). Designed to protect crops and stock against 'evil spirits' their appearance in a relatively late context such as this demonstrates the longevity of the superstition in Suffolk.

Historic Significance

The dairy is a relatively late addition of *circa* 1900 to an otherwise well-preserved historic farm complex with a good thatched barn and linear stable. Its wall fabric was of poor quality from the outset, with irregular brick bonding more usually found in boundary walls, and it has been much altered in the 20th century. The building is not therefore of special architectural or historic significance.

Appendix 1 (on accompanying CD): Full Photographic Record

Descriptions of Photographs in Appendix 1

Photograph no.

1. General view of site from north-east showing thatched barn (2) to left and dairy (1) to right with farmhouse (3) in rear.
2. General view of site from south-east showing facade of farmhouse (3) to left with roofs of dairy (1) and barn (2) to right.
3. General view of site from B1122 to south showing farm entrance to right.
4. General view of site from farm entrance to south (Annesons Corner on the 1927 Ordnance Survey) showing farmhouse (3) to left and barn (2) in rear.
5. General view of exterior from north-east showing proximity of dairy to farmhouse in rear.
6. Exterior from east showing blocked original door to northern shed (1a) with farmhouse to left.
7. External northern gable showing narrow secondary window.
8. Detail of re-used stone panel in northern external gable.
9. Detail from east of original trefoil ridge tile surviving at northern end of roof.
10. Exterior from north-west showing secondary door to northern shed (1a) to left.
11. Detail of secondary door and window at northern end of western exterior (interrupting brickwork).
12. Door in wall dividing farmhouse garden from dairy seen from north-east and showing dairy to left.
13. Exterior from north-east showing boundary wall between farmhouse (1) in rear and dairy to right, with farmyard shelter shed to left.
14. Eastern exterior from north-east showing double doors to southern shed (1b) to left and original door to right.
15. Detail of blocked original doorway and window at northern end of eastern exterior (respected by closer bricks at bottom right).
16. Detail of re-used stone column base set into western exterior.
17. Interior of southern shed (1b) from east showing copper to left and vertical groove of grain bin to right.
18. Interior of roof structure in southern shed (1b) seen from east.
19. Copper in south-western corner of southern shed (1b).

20. Detail of copper in south-western corner of southern shed (1b) showing iron door to fire-box.
21. Upper part of southern internal gable showing softwood roof structure.
22. Lower part of southern internal gable showing window towards farmhouse lighting southern shed (1b).
23. Detail of internal render to southern gable showing 'M' apotropaic graffiti.
24. Detail of internal render beneath window of southern gable showing 'M' apotropaic graffiti.
25. Additional detail of internal render beneath window of southern gable showing 'M' apotropaic graffiti.
26. Interior of southern shed (1b) from west showing double doors with southern gable to right.
27. Interior of southern shed (1b) from west showing internal door in 20th century block-work partition to northern shed (1a).
28. Interior of northern shed (1a) showing secondary door and window with stone shelf to left.
29. Interior of northern shed (1a) from north-east showing stone shelf to right and door to southern shed (1b) to left.
30. Interior of northern shed (1a) from west showing blocked original door to left.
31. Lower part of northern internal gable showing narrow 20th century window.
32. Upper part of northern internal gable showing original semi-circular window.
33. Boarded interior of roof in northern shed (1a) seen from east.
34. Exterior of northern gable of dairy (1 to right) showing proximity to listed barn & stable (2) to left.
35. Exterior from north-east of listed early-18th century barn with 19th century stable (right) and granary. Included for site context.
36. General view of site from north-east showing western range of farm buildings with pre-1884 shed with barn (2) to left.
37. Exterior of pre-1884 brick shed to north of dairy showing good quality brickwork.
38. General view of site from south-east showing northern range of farm buildings to left and Valley Farm Cottage to right.

Photographic Appendix 2 follows on pp. 11-14

Appendix 2 (pp. 11-14): Selected Printed Photographs



Illus. 1. General view of site from north-east showing thatched barn (2) to left and dairy (1) to right with farmhouse (3) in rear.



Illus. 2. General view of site from south-east showing facade of farmhouse (3) to left with roofs of dairy (1) and barn (2) to right.



Illus. 3. Exterior from east showing blocked original door to northern shed (1a) with double doors to southern shed (1b) and farmhouse (3) to left.



Illus. 4. Detail of re-used stone panel in northern external gable with narrow secondary window below.



Illus. 5. Exterior from north-west showing secondary door to northern shed (1a) to left and close proximity to farmhouse (3) to right. The listed thatched barn and stable are visible to the left.



Illus. 6. Interior of southern shed (1b) from east showing copper to left and vertical groove of grain bin in post to right. The internal partition to the right is a 20th century block-work insertion, and the apotropaic 'M' symbols are incised into the plaster of the southern gable to the left.



Illus. 7. Interior of northern shed (1a) showing secondary door and window with stone shelf to left.



Illus. 8. Interior of northern shed (1a) from north-east showing stone shelf to right and door to southern shed (1b) to left.