

**White Wheat Farm,
Baylham,
Suffolk**

Archaeological Record



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Upper Street,
Baylham, Suffolk**

(TM 1063 5175)

An Archaeological Record

This report provides a written and photographic record at English Heritage (2006) Level 2 of a complex of farm buildings at White Wheat Farm. The report has been prepared to a brief written by the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (Dr Jess Tipper, 16th May 2008, Reference: /WhiteWheatFarm_Baylham2008) and is intended to fulfil a condition of planning permission domestic conversion (Mid Suffolk District Council application 2885/06).

Introduction

The following report is accompanied by a CD containing a full photographic record in the form of 76 8.2 megapixel digital images (Appendix 1) but also includes printed photographs of key features (Appendix 2). Each digital image is separately described in the written report, and the CD includes the report in MS Word format. The site was inspected on 4th July 2008.

Summary

White Wheat Farm lies on the northern side of Upper Street, approximately 0.5 km north-east of St Peter's church. It consists of a 15th or early-16th century grade II-listed farmhouse and a complex of 20th century agricultural buildings attached to an early-19th century timber-framed barn. Both the farmhouse and barn are of relatively modest proportions and reflect the small scale of the historic holding, which formed a tenanted farm of just 21 acres in 1840. The barn extends to 10.5 m in length by 5 m in width, and contains three bays with a central entrance in its eastern elevation and a small original porch facing the farmhouse to the west. The present entrance is an alteration of the late-19th or early-20th century, and the roof structure is a replacement of the same period, but the wall framing is largely intact. The 20th century buildings flanking the yard to the east of the barn form a series of cattle enclosures and loose boxes which until recently held a herd of Murray Grey cattle, and a late-19th century cart lodge lies to the south of the site. The small porch is an unusual feature, but the barn is too late in date and too heavily altered to merit listing. At the time of inspection it contained a rare 19th century feed mill with painted wooden sides bearing the name N. Warren, Agent, Elmswell. Nathan Warren is listed as a wheelwright and blacksmith in the 1881 census.

Historic Context: Documentary & Cartographic Record

White Wheat Farm lies in arable countryside on the western crest of the Gipping Valley and approximately 0.5 km north-east of St Peter's church. The site adjoins the northern side of Upper Street, and the thatched farmhouse, which lies at right-angles to the road, is described as a 15th or early-16th century open hall in the Schedule of Listed Buildings. The relatively modest proportions of the house and barn are consistent with the small size of the holding on the Baylham tithe map of 1840 (figure 1). Thomas Mount occupied just 21 acres of purely arable land, lacking both pasture and meadow, owned by George Paske Esquire. Hill Farm, in contrast, lying on the opposite side of the road, contained 218 acres in the ownership of Sir William Fowle le Fowle Middleton, baronet, of Sibton Park.

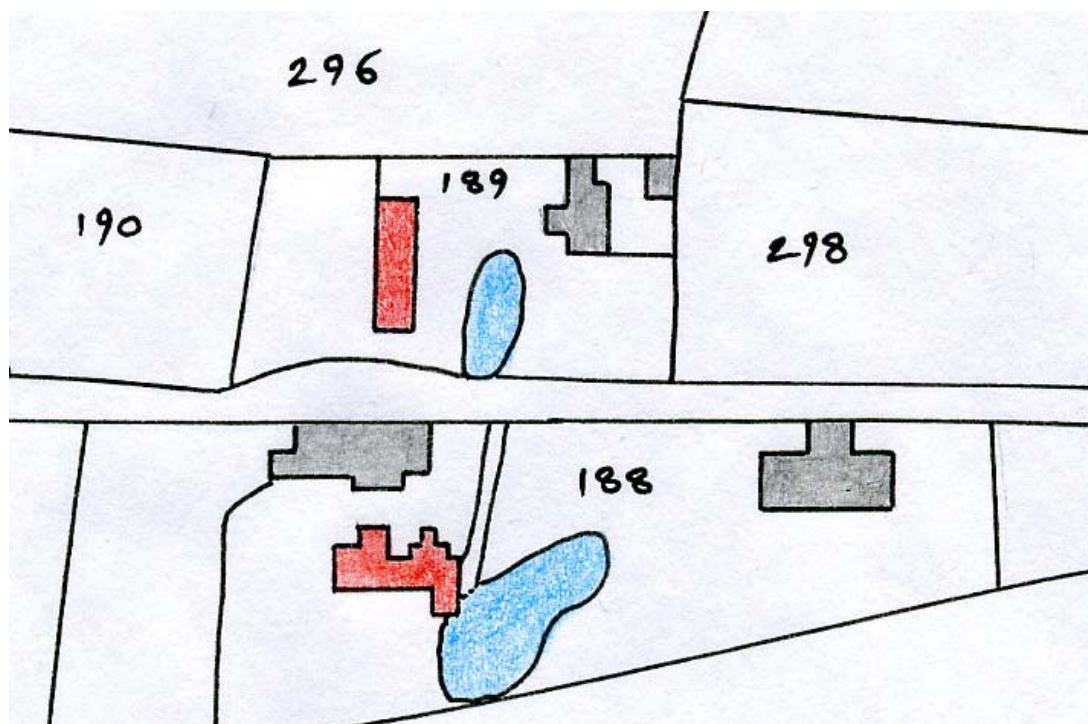


Figure 1

Baylham Tithe Map of 1840, showing White Wheat Farm to north of Upper Street (no.189) and Hill Farm to south (no.188). The present barn is recognisable with its porch facing the farmhouse to the west (no. 1 in figure 5 below). Another structure adjoins its northern gable and frames an eastern yard with another small building in its north-eastern corner – possibly a stable, stable yard and shelter shed.

The tithe apportionment lists the field to the north of the farmhouse (296) as 'Part of Home Field', and that to the east (298) as Barn Field. The field to the east (190) was church glebe known as Town field and did not form part of the holding. The First Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1884 (figure 2) shows an identical layout to that of 1840, with the exception of a new cartlodge to the south – now represented, albeit partly rebuilt, by the buildings marked 6 & 7 in figure 5. The possible stable against the barn's northern gable appears to have been demolished, although its area is indicated as an enclosure, and the lean-to in the angle of the barn and porch is probably shown. The Second Edition of 1904 shows the present range of cattle loose boxes, suggesting the farm had diversified into mixed animal husbandry. The situation remained unchanged at the time of the Third Edition Ordnance Survey in 1926 and the present shed which adjoins the northern gable of the barn had yet to appear. The covered yard and eastern lodge (3 and 5 respectively) are also later additions to the site.

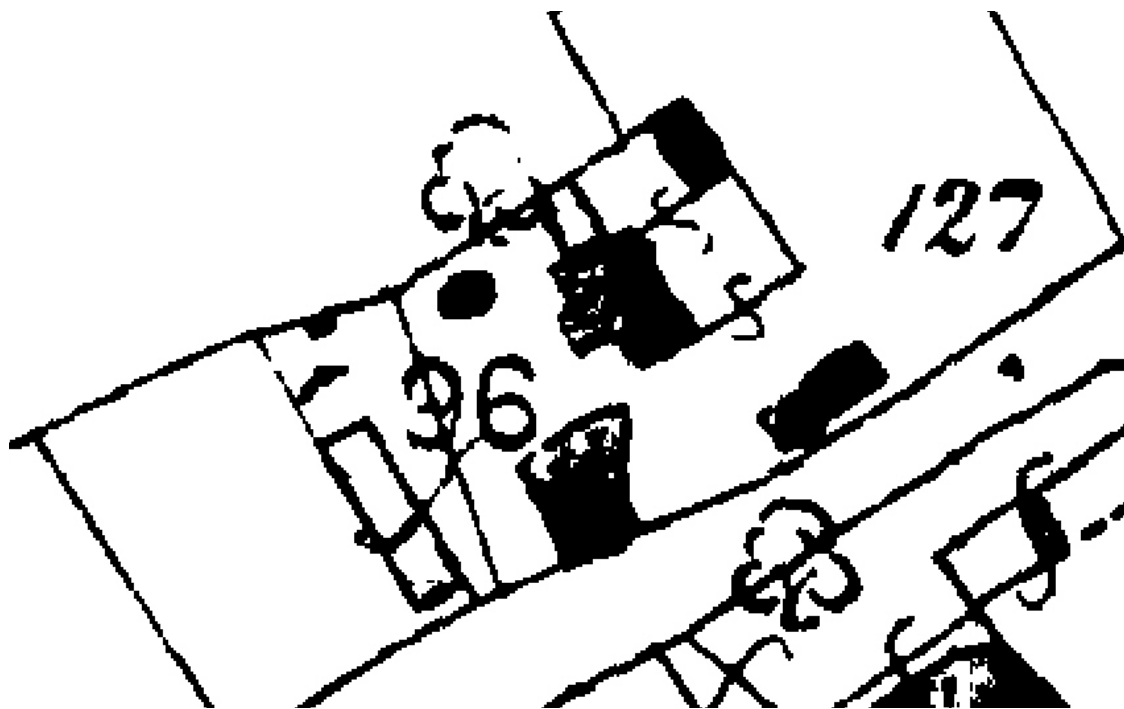


Figure 2
 First Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1884 showing the barn and attached yard unaltered since 1840, but with the addition of a new cartlodge to the south (6 & 7).

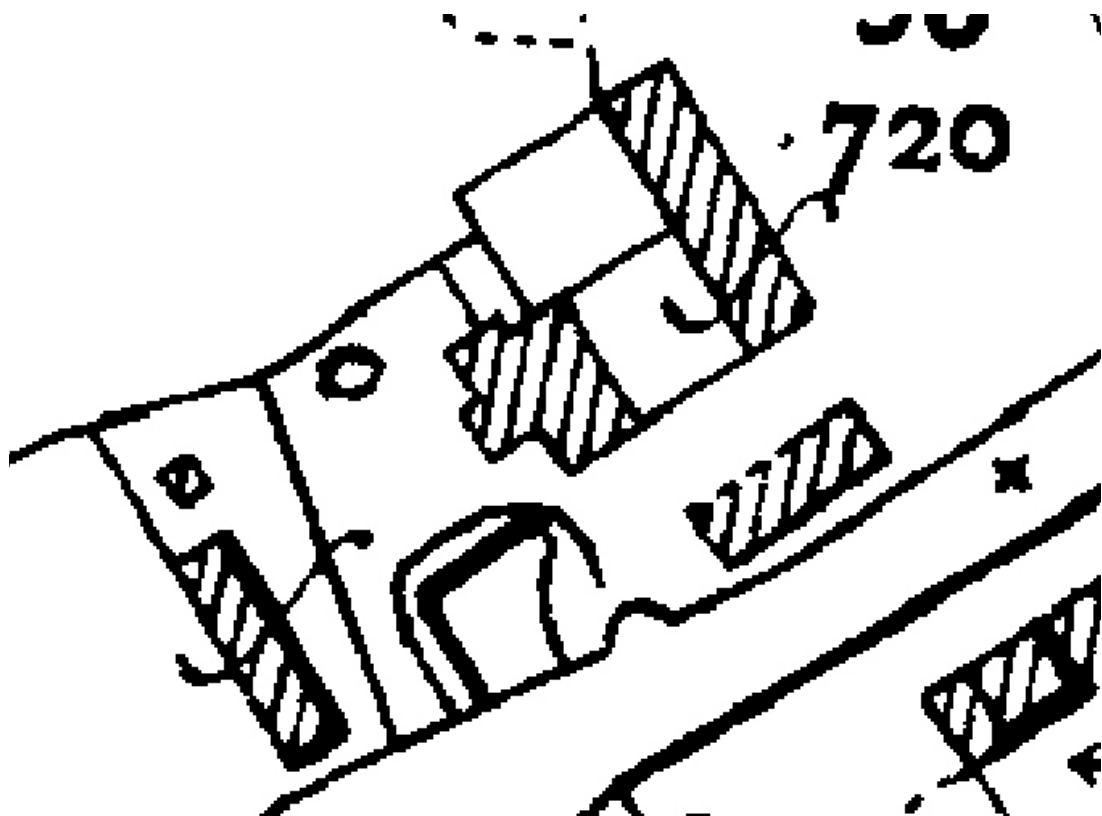


Figure 3
 Second Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1905 showing the addition of the present range of cattle loose boxes (4) the east of the yard. The shed or stable which adjoined the barn's northern gable in 1840 is now shown only as an empty yard

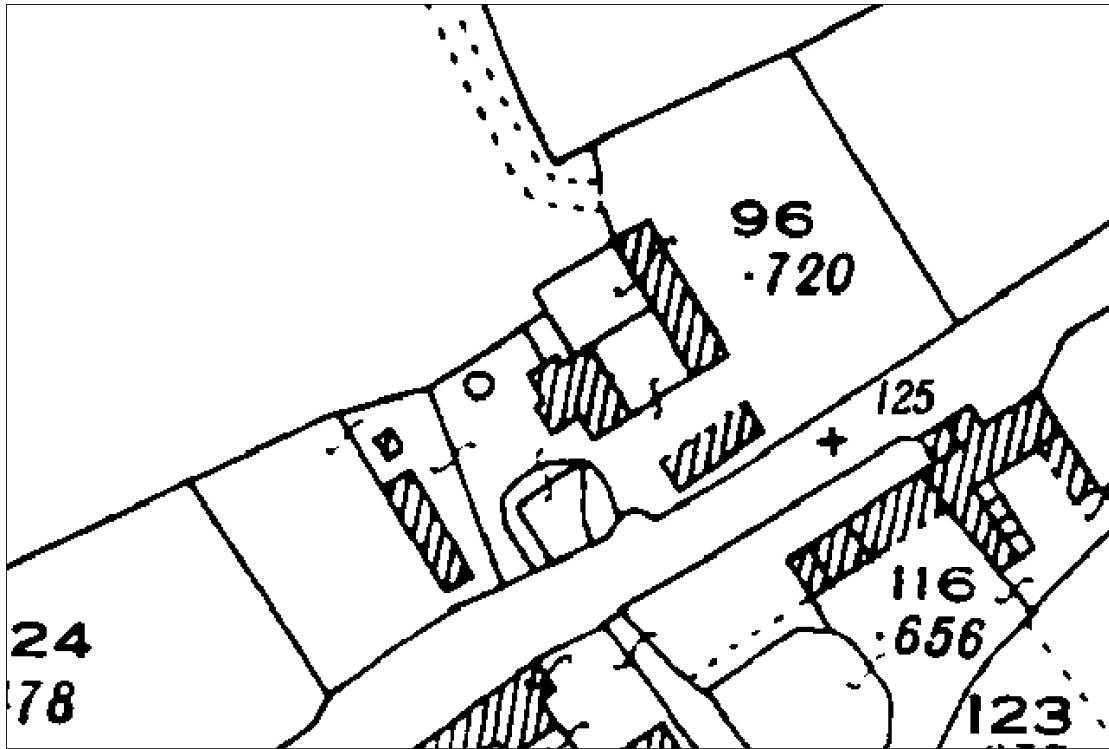


Figure 4
Third Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1926 showing no change since 1905.

Building Analysis

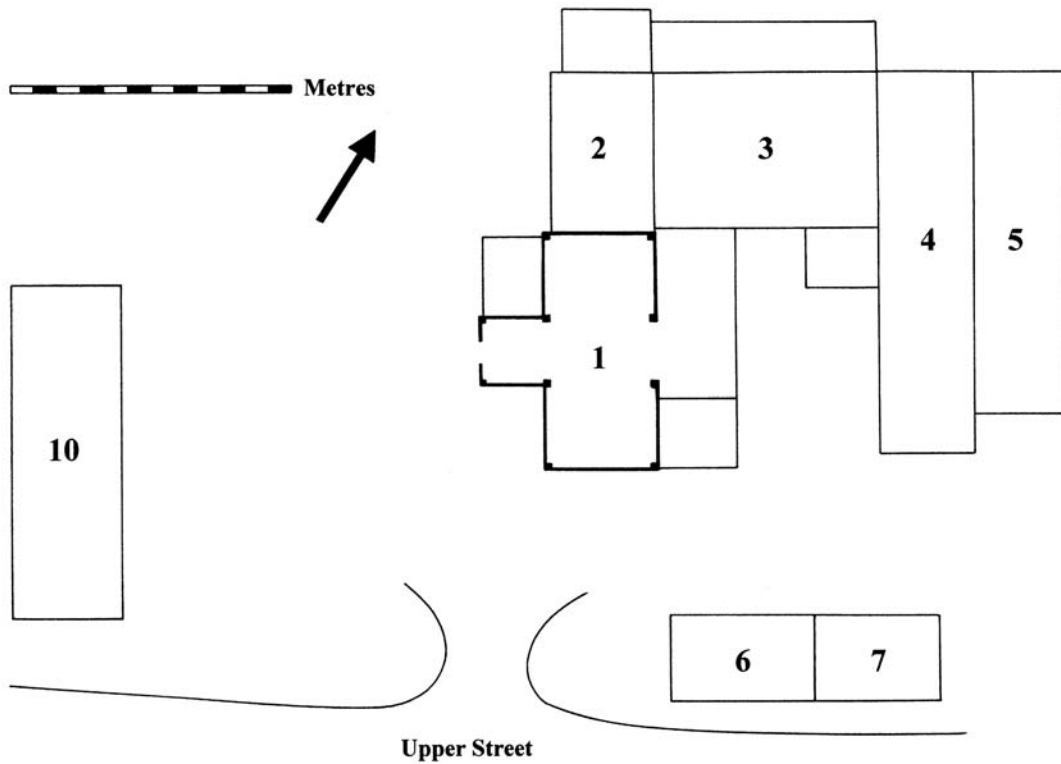


Figure 5
Schematic Block Plan of Farm Complex
Showing the timber buildings discussed in the text and illustrated in the Appendices.

Key to Figure 5

1. An early-19th century three-bay timber-framed barn with original small porch to west of central bay and modified main entrance to east. Roof rebuilt. 20th century lean-to structures attached to eastern elevation.
2. A mid-20th century storage shed.
3. A mid-20th century covered cattle yard
4. An early-20th century cattle shed divided into loose boxes.
5. A mid-20th century open-sided vehicle and equipment shed
6. A late-19th century open-sided cart lodge (re-roofed)
7. A late-19th century open-sided cart lodge
10. Grade II-listed thatched and rendered farmhouse, described in the Schedule of Listed Buildings as a 15th or early-16th century sooted open hall with later alterations and extensions

The Barn (1)

Structure and date

The barn at White Wheat Farm is a timber-framed structure of three equal bays clad in tarred weatherboarding. It is aligned on an approximately north-south axis at right-angles to the nearby road, reflecting the arrangement of the farmhouse to the west, and extends to 10.5 m in overall length by 5 m in width (34.5 ft by 16.25). Its wall studs rise 3 m (10 ft) between the roof-plates and ground sills and the later clasped-purlin roof structure is covered with unglazed pantiles. A small contemporary porch projects by 2.5 m (8.5 ft) in the direction of the farmhouse from the central bay of the western elevation. The framing contains tenoned and pegged primary braces which interrupt the wall studs which are tenoned but not pegged to the roof-plates; the ground sills are largely hidden by a 20th century concrete plinth. The wall timbers consist of elm and oak, and in general are waney and of poor quality. The corner-posts are jowled but the storey posts flanking the central bay are linked to the tie-beams only by bolted knees. A small number of timbers, including the south-eastern corner post, bear empty mortises that are not relevant to the present structure and were evidently re-used from an earlier building or buildings. Framing is this kind, which lacks any evidence of tie-beam braces and included bolted knees from the outset, is typical of the early-19th century, but may possibly date from the final years of the 18th century.

Layout

The porch is an integral feature as its roof-plates are tenoned and pegged to the storey posts of the central bay 66 cm (26 ins) below the soffit of the original roof-plate. It contains an original narrow door in its gable and was clearly not designed as a cart entrance. The principal entrance to the barn evidently lay in the central bay of the eastern elevation, but the existing doors in this position, which span the width of the bay, are secondary. The posts of this entrance interrupt the original roof-plate in order to maximise height, and were probably inserted to enlarge the entrance when the roof was rebuilt in the late-19th or early-20th century. The machine-sawn softwood of the existing roof is entirely different in character to the wall framing and is a later feature which may have replaced a more steeply pitched thatched roof structure. The posts retain grooves for a retaining board at their bases. The lean-to in the north-western angle of the porch and barn has been re-roofed but is probably a mid-19th century addition.

Historic Significance

The building is a good example of an early-19th century small barn of utilitarian construction, and remains essentially intact despite the replacement of its roof and alterations to its eastern entrance. The original wall framing is largely complete. The small porch is an unusual and

historically interesting feature which presumably served as an entrance from the farmhouse and operated as a storage area, admitting sufficient air to create a through-draught for threshing and winnowing but not to admit vehicles. Most barn porches were designed to shelter the tall principal entrance, and while small rear doors were common, most were destroyed when cart thoroughfares were inserted during the 19th century. Despite these points of interest, the barn is not of sufficient age or sufficiently well-preserved given the loss of its roof to merit listing in its own right.

Historic Machinery

At the time of inspection the barn contained a number of historic features which illustrated its use in the 20th century as an area to store and prepare animal feed – possibly on a semi-commercial scale. These included a wide variety of printed grain and feed sacks bearing the names of local mills, such as the example shown in photo A1.40: ‘Brooks Mistley On Hire 1954’. An early-20th century cast iron hopper-type grain mill stood in the centre of the barn entrance, bearing the cast name plate: ‘R. Hunt & Co. Ltd. Earls Colne England’ and the title: ‘Improved Corn Crushing Mill’. A rare machine with shaped boarded sides lay to the north of the entrance but was partly inaccessible; the boards were finely painted with imitation wood grain and bore the painted name ‘N. Warren Agent Elmswell’. Nathan Warren is listed as a wheelwright and blacksmith in the 1881 census for Elmswell (available on the internet). This machine, which presumably also operated as a feed mill, is a fine and rare piece of folk art which might be offered to the Museum of East Anglian Life at Stowmarket.

Later Buildings (2-7)

The later buildings at White Wheat Farm are utilitarian boarded structures of the late-19th and 20th centuries which lack particular historic significance and are not described here in detail. These structures are roofed with a variety of corrugated materials with the exception of the open-sided cartlodge of boarded rails at the south of the site (6 & 7). This building is shown on the Ordnance Survey of 1884 and dates from c.1880, but while its eastern half (7) retains original pantiles its western half (6) has been re-roofed with corrugated iron.

The long cattle shed which forms the eastern side of the former cattle yard alongside the barn also consists of boarded rails and is an addition of c.1900 which is shown on the Ordnance Survey of 1905 (but not that of 1884). It consists of a series of loose boxes or cattle stalls and retains a depth of manure belonging to the small herd of Murray Grey cattle kept here until recent years (information from an acquaintance of the present farmer, who was not available in person at the time of inspection). The shed of boarded rails which adjoins the barn’s northern gable is not shown on the Ordnance Survey of 1926 but was probably erected soon afterwards; it contains narrow central entrance doors in both eastern and western elevations and probably served as a storage shed or possibly a milking parlour, but lacks any relevant fixtures and fittings. The shed presently houses a series of chicken coops. A lean-to equipment shelter was added to the eastern elevation of the cattle shed in the mid-20th century, and various other improvised shelters and stalls were added to the yard. The northern end of the yard was provided with a roof at the same period, and various metal sheds were added to the east and north of the site during the second half of the century. The chief interest of the yard buildings lies in their relatively inexpensive boarded construction, which illustrates a type of structure found only smaller holdings that rarely survives the passage of time.

Appendix 1 (on accompanying CD): Full Photographic Record

Description of Photographs in Appendix 1

Photograph no.

1. General view of site from Upper Street to west showing farmhouse (10) on left.
2. General view from Upper Street to west showing farmhouse (10) left and barn (1) right.
3. Entrance to site from Upper Street to south showing gable of barn (1).
4. General view from north-west showing farmhouse (10) right and barn (1) left.
5. General view from north showing modern barn in foreground & barn (1) in rear.
6. General view from north showing modern lean-to against covered yard (3) in centre.
7. Exterior of barn (1) from north-east showing shed (2) in foreground.
8. Exterior of barn from west showing shed (2) to left.
9. Exterior of shed (2) from south-west showing gable of barn (1) right.
10. Exterior of barn (1) from south-west showing shed (2) left.
11. Exterior of barn (1) from south-west showing entrance to porch.
12. Exterior of barn (1) from south showing yard to right.
13. Detail of painted farm sign to southern gable of barn (1).
14. Exterior of barn (1) from east showing 20th century lean-to shelters in yard.
15. Yard to east of barn seen from south, showing barn (1) left.
16. Exterior of barn (1) from yard to east showing 20th century loose-box to right.
17. Barn (1). General view of interior from southern gable.
18. Barn (1). General view of interior from northern gable.
19. Barn (1). Interior of southern gable.
20. Barn (1). Interior of southern bay of western elevation showing porch to right.
21. Barn (1). Interior of western elevation showing central porch.
22. Barn (1). Interior of porch from north.
23. Barn (1). Interior of porch from south.

24. Barn (1). Interior of porch showing narrow external door.
25. Barn (1). Interior of northern bay of western elevation showing porch to left.
26. Barn (1). Interior of northern gable.
27. Barn (1). Interior of northern bay of eastern elevation showing entrance to right.
28. Barn (1). Interior of central entrance in eastern elevation.
29. Barn (1). Interior of southern bay of eastern elevation showing entrance to left.
30. Barn (1). Interior of rebuilt roof structure from south.
31. Barn (1). Interior showing detail of board groove at base of northern door jamb.
32. Barn (1). Interior showing detail of board groove at base of southern door jamb.
33. Barn (1) Interior. Detail of posts and bolted knees flanking western porch.
34. Barn (1) Interior. Detail of replaced northern entrance jamb rising above roof-plate.
35. Barn (1) Interior. Detail of re-used south-eastern corner post with empty mortise.
36. Barn (1). Corn crushing machine inside entrance viewed from south.
37. Barn (1). Corn crushing machine inside entrance viewed from north.
38. Barn (1). Detail of corn crusher label (R. Hunt Earls Colne).
39. Barn (1). Detail of corn crusher base. Improved Corn Crushing Mill.
40. Barn (1). Detail of sack label. Brooks Mistle On Hire 1954.
41. Barn (1). 19th Century mill to north of entrance, viewed from south.
42. Barn (1). 19th century mill viewed from north.
43. Barn (1). Detail of painted name to side of 19th century mill. N. Warren Agent Elmswell.
44. Barn (1). Detail of 19th century mill showing pegged joints and combed paintwork.
45. Barn (1). Entrance doors from east showing corn crushing machine.
46. Interior of covered yard (3) from north-east showing open yard to left.
47. Interior of covered yard (3) from east showing shed (2).
48. Interior of covered yard (3) from west showing range of loose boxes (4).
49. Interior from east of 20th century lean-to to north of covered yard (3).

50. Interior of shed (2) showing northern gable of barn (1).
51. Interior of shed (2) showing external door in western elevation.
52. Interior of shed (2) showing chicken coops with northern gable to right.
53. Detail of mowing scythe in shed (2).
54. Shed in north-western angle of barn (1) and porch showing close stool.
55. Entrance doors to northern loose boxes (4) from covered yard (3).
56. Interior of northern loose box (4) from western entrance.
57. Interior of central loose box from western entrance showing door to east.
58. Interior of central loose box showing western door to covered yard (3).
59. Interior of southern loose boxes (4) from north, showing open yard to right.
60. Interior of southern loose boxes (4) from south, showing depth of cattle manure.
61. Detail of iron hay rack in southern loose box (4).
62. Exterior of 20th century lean-to shelter (5) from north-east.
63. 20th century sheds to south of site, showing shelter (7) to right.
64. Entrance to shelter (5) from south showing 20th century sheds to north of site.
65. Interior of shelter (5) from north showing wall-mounted ladder.
66. Open cattle yard from south showing covered yard (3) in rear.
67. Open cattle yard and loose boxes (4) from south-west.
68. Open shelters (6 & 7) from south-west showing entrance to site to left.
69. Open shelters (6 & 7) from west.
70. Open shelters (6 to right and 7 to left) from north-west.
71. Interior of shelter (6) from east.
72. Interior of shelter (6) from west.
73. Interior of shelter (7) from east.
74. Interior of shelter (7) from west.
75. Shelter (7). Detail of roof structure seen from east.
76. View of farmyard from within shelter (7) to south.

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



A2.1 General view from Upper Street to west showing listed farmhouse (10) left and barn (1) right



A2.2 Exterior of barn (1) from south-west showing shed (2) to left



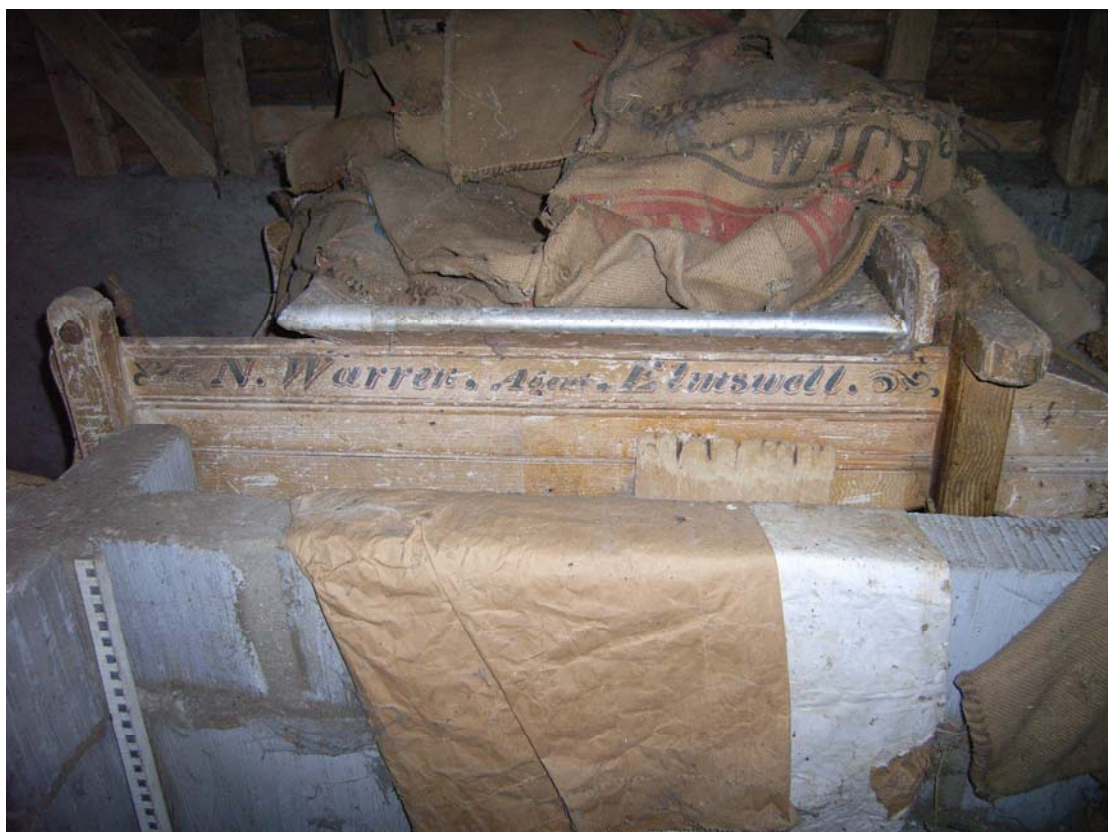
A2.3 Open yard to east of barn seen from south, showing barn (1) left with covered yard (3) in rear.



A2.4 Barn (1). General view of interior from southern gable showing entrance from eastern yard to right and porch to left



A2.5 Barn (1). R. Hunt corn crushing machine inside entrance viewed from north



A2.6 Barn (1). Detail of painted name to side of 19th century mill to north of entrance: N. Warren Agent Elmswell



A2.7 Interior of covered yard (3) from west showing range of loose boxes (4)



A2.8 Interior of southern loose boxes (4) from south, showing depth of cattle manure