

7.0 Key Building Types: Animals and Animal Products

7.1 CATTLE HOUSING

7.1.1 NATIONAL OVERVIEW (Figure 26)

There are great regional differences in the management of cattle and the buildings that house them. This extends to how they are described in different parts of the country: for example, 'shippon' in much of the South West; 'byre' in northern England; 'hovel' in central England. Stalls, drains and muck passages have also been given their own local vocabulary.

Evidence for cattle housing is very rare before the 18th century, and in many areas uncommon before the 19th century. The agricultural improvements of the 18th century emphasised the importance of farmyard manure in maintaining the fertility of the soil. It was also recognised that cattle fattened better and were more productive in milk if housed in strawed-down yards and buildings, and fed with carefully measured quantities of nutritious turnips and imported feed. There is hardly a farmstead without 19th-century adaptations for increased livestock accommodation.

The introduction of hygiene regulations early in the 20th century for the production of milk resulted in new floors, windows and stall arrangements being inserted. Animal welfare standards are also important; cows on farms seeking Soil Association assurance require more than double (at 6 square metres) the space of tethered beasts in traditional cow houses. Some, particularly under split-level barns, are too low for modern usage and so have been preserved by abandonment or occasional use by sheep.

Characteristic features of cattle housing include:

- Externally, lower and wider doorways than stabling, with wall ventilation slits (adjustable sliding ventilators from the early 19th century) and holes in gable ends or side walls for the throwing out of muck (especially in areas with limited straw for bedding, where cattle were wintered indoors).
- Internally, ceilings were typically low and there was very little light. Hay was stored above in lofts, and in some examples (such as the Pennines) on either side in 'sink mows', increasing the warmth and airlessness. It was not until the later 19th century that the importance of a well-ventilated cow house became fully appreciated. The size of the haylofts increased as more cows were kept and the production of hay rose; their ceilings were higher and air ducts went from the cow house up on to the roof above the hay barn.

- Interior stalling and feeding arrangements. Cows were usually tethered in pairs with low partitions of wood, stone, slate and, later, cast iron between them. As the breeding of stock improved and cows became larger, the space for the animals in the older buildings became limited and an indication of the date of a cow house can be the length of the stalls or the width of the building. Feeding arrangements can survive in the form of hayracks, water bowls and mangers for feed.
- Variations in internal planning, cattle being stalled along or across the main axis of the building and facing a wall or partition. They were fed either from behind or from a feeding passage, these often being connected to fodder rooms from the late 18th century.

In the following descriptions of buildings for cattle the wide variety in the means of providing accommodation for cattle, both over time and regionally, can be seen .

7.1.1.1 Longhouses

In this type of building the family and animals used a common entrance and the cattle (typically prized dairy cattle) were stalled at one end, usually the end down-slope. Examples (often high status in terms of their size, detail and construction) survive in parts of the north and west of England and are usually the only evidence for cattle housing before the 17th century. They were more widespread in the medieval period (see 5.1.1 and Figure 17).

7.1.1.2 Ox houses

Oxen were the favoured animals for draught work on the farm in the medieval period, although in some parts of the country horses were already replacing them.. They survived in some areas into the 19th and even 20th centuries. Ox houses can be very difficult to identify, the most distinguishing feature being wide doorways and wider-than-average stalling (see 7.3.2).

7.1.1.3 Combination barns

See 6.1.2. These were used for cattle accommodation from the 17th century, and in northern aisled barns from at least that period.

7.1.1.4 Open-fronted sheds

The earliest of these were the two-storey linhays of the South West, with cattle accommodated below a hayloft. Shelter sheds, facing on to yards and either with haylofts above or simply single-storey, were increasingly built from the mid-18th century. Cattle yards with open-fronted sheds were typical of mixed farming areas where cattle

26 Cattle housing

- A & B Wooden cow stalls and slate cow stalls, the latter as found throughout the northern uplands. (A Durham Coalfield Pennine Fringe; B Yorkshire Dales)
- C Cow houses needed to be well ventilated, by either slits in the wall or windows. Horizontal sliding hit-and-miss ventilators, as here, achieved wide popularity in the mid- to late 19th century. (Vale of York)

- D A range of looseboxes, easily distinguishable by its rows of doors providing access to individual cubicles for fattening. (North Northumbrian Coastal Plain)
- E The interior of a covered yard, on a home farm of the mid-19th century. (Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain)
- A, B & C © Jen Deadman; D & E © English Heritage / Michael Williams



26A



26B



26C



26E



26D

were housed on the steading as fatstock and for their manure. Common internal fittings were mangers and hayracks, and sometimes stalls.

7.1.1.5 Lean-tos (outshots)

These were attached to other buildings (particularly barns) and farmyard walls, either as part of the initial

phase of build or (particularly if the barn is pre-1750 in date) a later addition. These could be either open-fronted or closed with doorways to individual cow houses or looseboxes.

7.1.1.6 Free-standing cow houses

These comprised either single-storey ranges, or two-

storey ranges with haylofts. Pre-19th-century examples of the former include the neathouses of the claylands of Suffolk and examples of both types are found in the West Midlands. In cattle-rearing areas calf houses have also been found; typically they are smaller in scale and often sited close to the house.

7.1.1.7 Looseboxes (Figure 31D)

Mostly dating from the 1850s, these served as accommodation for sick or calving beasts, bulls or most commonly fatstock. They comprised individual boxes or more usually a row of boxes with a central or rear feeding passage. The latter were usually distinguished externally by continuous rows of doors. There was often a feeding passage along behind them, with a feed store at one end. If used for fatstock, the floor of the boxes was sunken and the manure would build up in them during the winter. They reflected a realisation that warm and dry conditions would promote weight gain (through minimising heat loss) and retain the quality of the manure. Double rows would have a central feeding passage and were to be found on many farms by 1860.

7.1.1.8 Covered yards

By the 1850s it had been proved by agricultural chemists that the nutritional value of manure would be better preserved if it were under cover, and as costly feeds produced richer manures, the incentive to protect them was great. The problem was that it could be difficult to provide enough ventilation, but this could be overcome by complex systems of louvers and shutters. Some continued to be built as the depression in grain prices focused attention on livestock production. The best-known examples of covered yards are on the most expensively designed model farms of the mid-to late 19th century, almost all of them being estate-owned. The introduction of roofs to existing yards became general in fatstock areas from the late 19th century and especially after 1940. Dairy cattle are now typically housed in portal-framed sheds erected in the post-war period.

7.1.2 CATTLE HOUSING IN THE EAST MIDLANDS (Figure 27)

A small number of longhouses have been tentatively identified in Derbyshire but in all the examples recorded it appeared that the byre end of the house had been rebuilt, removing the evidence that would positively identify the building as a longhouse (Hutton 1991, pp.8–9).

In common with most regions, examples of cattle housing built before the 18th century are extremely rare, making those that are identified all the more significant. The earliest examples of cattle housing

found in the East Midlands, dating from the 17th century, usually form part of a combination barn. It is probable that, as in the East of England and West Midlands Regions, there were pre-18th-century cattle yards bordered by barns and stables.

There are very few surviving separate buildings for livestock accommodation dating from before 1840. They were probably either temporary in form or simply not provided. Seventeenth-century Northamptonshire inventories, for example, show that barns were accompanied by smaller animal housing/storage buildings called 'hovels' (RCHME 1984, p.lxvii). Pusey, writing of Lincolnshire in 1843, stated that, 'though the farm buildings of Lincolnshire are generally excellent, I was sorry in some of the yards to see numerous cattle standing shelterless in the midst of a snow storm. These yards should at once be furnished with sheds, for the beast's and his master's comfort' (Pusey 1843, p.305).

Where cattle accommodation was provided it usually took the form of enclosed cow houses in the northern and dairying parts of the Region. Many cow houses in the dairying areas were rebuilt in brick during the 19th century and were important features of many farmsteads. Cow houses formed an important element of all farmsteads in the grazing areas. Brick cow sheds with ventilated hay lofts above were typical of the Humberhead Levels around Misson as well as the Trent Valley.

In the south and east of the Region particularly, cattle housing often consisted of single-storey, open-fronted brick and pantile shelter sheds frequently associated with cattle yards or 'crew yards' divided up so that groups of cattle could be managed individually. The addition of shelter sheds around yards became increasingly common in the early to mid-19th century; for example, on many of the Lincolnshire farms surveyed as part of the RCHME survey shelter sheds were added after 1850 (Barnwell & Giles 1997, p.46).

In the clay vales of the Midland Plain the shift away from arable after the enclosure of the open fields is reflected in the buildings. Whilst sheep farming leaves little in the way of built evidence, dairy farming does, and 19th-century brick cow houses – often with haylofts above – survive on many farms.

Covered yards are also mostly found on estate farms such as the Dysart estate farms at Little Ponton, Hanby and North Witham, in Lincolnshire, all built in 1883 (Barnwell & Giles 1997, p.58) although they are occasionally found away from estate-owned farms.

27 Cattle housing in the East Midlands Region

- A Single-storey open-fronted shelter shed facing into a fold yard. (Needwood and South Derbyshire Claylands)
- B Enclosed cow houses in Derbyshire. (Derbyshire Peak Fringe and Lower Derwent)
- C A hemmel with a walled yard. (Northamptonshire Uplands)
- D, E & F On many farmsteads in the 19th century cattle fattening

increased in importance and farmsteads were provided with ranges of looseboxes (D Lincolnshire Wolds; E Northamptonshire Uplands) or a fully covered yard, which, in this example, also has looseboxes where sick or calving beasts could be isolated. (F Kesteven Uplands)

A Bob Edwards; B © Susanna Wade Martins;
C–F © English Heritage / Michael Williams



27A



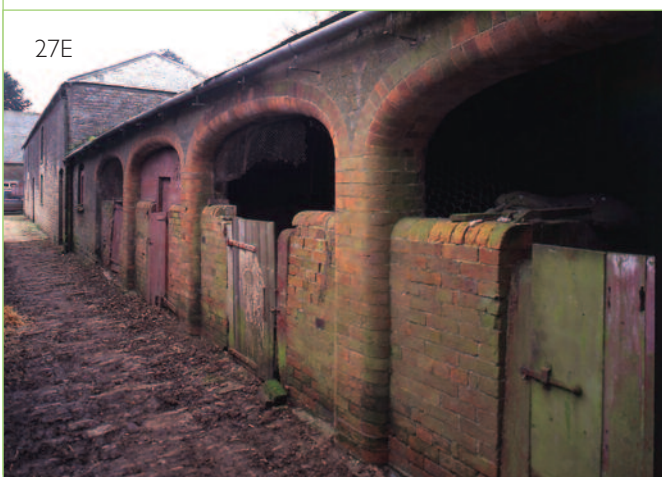
27B



27C



27D



27E



27F

7.2 DAIRIES

7.2.1 NATIONAL OVERVIEW

The dairy, where milk was stored and turned into butter or cheese, was usually located within the farmhouse (at its service end or in a rear room) or located in a lean-to at the rear of the house. Some dairies were separate buildings but, as the women of the household usually managed the dairy, they were normally situated close to

the house. Within the dairy, which was commonly cool and damp, milk was poured into large shallow pans and the cream left to rise to the top before it was skimmed off and churned (usually with a plunger) in order to make butter. New types of churn appeared in the mid-19th century, the most important invention being the centrifugal separator in 1890. On some estates, the individual dairy building could be ornate in design; they were often circular, with a tall conical roof and plenty of

28 A typical stable interior for working horses, showing the stalls that prevented the horses biting and kicking each other; the hay rack and cobbled floor. (Dorset Downs and Cranborne Chase) © Bob Edwards

ventilation, cool tiled floors and a low marble, slate or tiled shelf running almost all the way around inside.

Cheeses were made from the preservation and treatment of the curd, the solid mass that separates from the thin whey: harder cheeses were made from skimmed milk, softer cheese such as Cheshire from whole milk. After pressing, it needed space for storage. In areas where cheese making was important the dairies often had a room above called a cheese loft, where cheese was stored while maturing, or there would be a separate cheese house, the equivalent of the arable farmer's granary. In the 19th century more ornate dairy buildings were built on some of the larger farms, often located within the garden of the farmhouse rather than in the working farmyard.

Dairying for urban markets was already a specialised enterprise by the 1750s, and winter feeding and the ousting of less-productive breeds by the Dairy Shorthorn (after 1820) boosted yields. By the 1850s, butter production for the market was concentrated around towns, and the first small dairy factories started production around 1870. Cheese making in East Anglia gave way to cereal farming and fattening after 1800 (Holderness in Mingay 1989, pp.160, 158). Commercial cheese making and foreign imports (from the colonies) made inroads from the 1860s, and by around 1914 farmhouse butter was being sold only in Devon and Cornwall, and cheese made only in Cheshire, Leicestershire and the vales of Dorset and Somerset (Whetham 1978, pp.11, 15). Changes in hygiene regulations and the centralisation of production through the 20th century had a major impact on dairies, with the majority becoming redundant to their original use. Changes in use may have resulted in the removal of fixtures such as slate or stone shelves for cooling the milk.

The sale of liquid milk had become massively important in many areas by the early 20th century (Whetham 1978, pp.9–10). The stand for milk churns, often built at the farm gate to save the milk cart or lorry from having to come to the farmstead, and the abandonment of all but a handful of farmhouse dairies and cheese rooms for new milk-production plants were the other visible consequences of these developments.

The industrialisation of much of the dairy industry meant that the majority of farm dairies were redundant by the mid-20th century. Where the dairy was part of the farmhouse it is usual to find that it has been brought into domestic use, typically resulting in the removal of any



fittings associated with butter or cheese making. Any survivals of dairy equipment in situ are rare. Detached dairy buildings may also have been brought into an alternative use, again usually resulting in the removal of associated fittings. Surviving historic dairies are both rare and highly vulnerable. Cheese rooms are now especially rare and hard to identify.

7.2.2 DAIRIES IN THE EAST MIDLANDS

The principal surviving examples of dairies are within farmhouses rather than as detached outbuildings (see, for example, Barley 1961, pp.158-60; Hey 1984, p.133; Mingay 1984, p.142).

7.3 STABLES

7.3.1 NATIONAL OVERVIEW

After the barn, the stable is often the oldest building on the farmstead. The high value of horses to the running of the farm meant stables were well built and often placed near the house, with easy access to the fields, and given a certain level of architectural and decorative treatment. A few stables dating to before 1700 have been identified in local surveys, while many more date from the 18th century. One of the reasons for this rise in number was the decline in the use of oxen.

The size of stabling was, like granaries and cart sheds, loosely linked to the arable acreage of the farm. The number of horses needed to work a farm changed little until the arrival of the tractor, with one horse for every 20 acres being the frequently quoted figure. Smaller farms still needed a team of horses, so even a 50-acre farm might well have four horses. Most farms still kept a few working horses until the 1950s, and they were finally replaced by tractors during the 1960s. Farmsteads, and the farmyards attached to manor and gentry houses, often had stables for riding and coach horses, the upper floors commonly being used as accommodation for stable hands. These were usually well appointed and in some cases were used as displays of wealth and status, incorporating architectural detailing not found on most other farm buildings.

29 Stables in the East Midlands Region

Stables are typically lofted buildings, either separate structures (A Needwood and South Derbyshire Claylands) or forming part of a range of buildings around a courtyard (B Derbyshire Peak Fringe and Lower Derwent). Later 19th-century stables are often single storey buildings with roof vents to provide improved ventilation for the horses.
A © Bob Edwards; B © English Heritage / Michael Williams

Stable interiors are characterised by:

- Horses commonly stalled in pairs with wooden stall divisions between them to stop them kicking each other (Figure 28). Cast-iron stable fittings often replaced wooden ones. More elaborate stalls and mangers were usually confined to the riding-horse rather than carthorse stable, but on many small farms the riding horse would have been kept alongside the working animals. In early (pre-1750) examples, the stalls are across the end walls while in later examples the stalls are along the side walls, allowing more scope for lengthening the building and thus housing more horses.
- A manger and hayrack, the latter often accessed from a drop from the hayloft above. Other types of fodder, such as crushed oats and bean straw, became more general after the mid-19th century.
- Floors, cobbled and from the mid-19th century of engineering brick, sloping to a drainage channel.
- A ladder to the loft.
- The harness was usually kept in a separate room and chaff boxes were built in to the structure for storing feed. Small cubby-holes for keeping grooming brushes, medicines or lanterns were often built into the walls.

Stable exteriors are characterised by being:

- Usually two-storey, with pitching openings and ventilation to the first-floor loft and an external staircase. The upper floor sometimes provided accommodation for farm labourers or stable lads. Despite textbook advice on the tainting of the hay, the practice of housing horses below haylofts persisted, partly because of the perceived need to protect horses from chills and draughts. Single-storey stables, commonly with cast-iron ridge vents, were built from the later 19th century.
- Well lit, with windows ideally opening to the east to catch the early morning light. The door was wider and higher than that in the cow house.

As stables were usually well-lit buildings they tend to be less vulnerable to changes that affect their character externally. Carthorse stables are far less likely to retain floor surfaces, internal stalls and fittings (such as saddle hooks) than riding-horse stables. Many stables, particularly those located within ranges that included cow houses, were converted into dairies when modern electrically powered milking and cooling machinery was introduced from the 1950s.

29A



29B



7.3.2 STABLES IN THE EAST MIDLANDS (Figure 29)

The move from arable farming to predominantly pastoral farming probably resulted in a lesser requirement for stabling, as fewer working horses would have been necessary on a rearing or fattening farm. Although some free-standing stables of the 16th and 17th centuries survive in the Region, many of these examples are probably domestic rather than agricultural. More are to be found dating from after 1700, and survey evidence in Northamptonshire suggests that stables there were mostly square with a storeroom above (RCHME 1984, p.lxxviii).

Across the northern part of the Region stables typically form part of a combination barn, occupying one or two bays to the side of the threshing floor and with a hayloft above.

Horse rearing was important in parts of the Region but it is not yet clear whether farmsteads in these areas incorporated higher numbers of buildings such as stables or hay barns.

7.4 PIG HOUSING

7.4.1 NATIONAL OVERVIEW (Figure 30)

One or two pigs were kept on most farms, although the pigs often ran with other livestock in the fields, or roamed about the yard, rather than having their own