

ABBEY COTTAGE, MEAUX ABBEY,
WAWNE, EAST YORKSHIRE

ARCHITECTURAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY



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Report no: 2008/327.R01
Version: Final
Date: December 2010
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2008, Ed Dennison Archaeological Services Ltd (EDAS) undertook an architectural and archaeological survey at the single remaining standing ruined building on the site of Meaux Abbey, East Yorkshire, situated c.5km east of Beverley. The building is traditionally thought to be one of the Abbey's watermills, but it is also known as 'Abbey Cottage'. The survey was undertaken as a private research project, at the request of local historian Mary Carrick.

The ruined building is located in the western part of the former precinct of Meaux Abbey. Meaux, a Cistercian house, was founded in c.1150 by William le Gros, Count of Aumale, and was a daughter house of Fountains Abbey in North Yorkshire. Extensive building programmes were undertaken at the site during the 13th and early 14th centuries, and the abbey had a profound influence on the development of the whole of the Hull valley. The abbey was dissolved in 1539 and in 1542 the buildings were almost entirely demolished to provide material for the defences built by Henry VIII at Hull. Although only this single ruined building survives on the abbey site, there are 85 acres of extensive and well preserved earthworks denoting the former precinct area, which, in terms of their complexity and definition, must surely rank as some of the best surviving examples of their type in the north of England.

Although previous sources have suggested that the building was built largely of stone from the abbey, implying the re-use of medieval material, the information gathered during the survey indicates that parts of a medieval building still survive within the standing structure. It is suggested that the ground floors of the north walls and the west gable (and perhaps also the lowest part of the south elevation) are of possible medieval date, and represent the remains of a rectangular east-west aligned stone building, rising from a chamfered drip course. This building may once have formed the central part of a much longer range, extending to the east and west, and c.30m in total. The longer range may have been partly timber-framed, and spanned an adjacent watercourse to the west; the eastern part now survives only as an earthwork platform. There is some evidence to suggest that this range may indeed have formed the Abbey's mill, as is traditionally suggested, but the surrounding earthworks contrast with a proposed layout of the Abbey precinct reconstructed from documentary sources. A detailed earthwork survey across a much wider area would be needed to accurately assess the building's relationship to other parts of the monastic complex.

One possible explanation for the survival of this building, when all others on the site were demolished, might be that it was re-used for another purpose very soon after the Dissolution, possibly as accommodation for part of the workforce employed in dismantling the Abbey precinct. At some point, most probably in either the late 16th or the early 17th centuries, the building underwent a radical remodelling, creating what was essentially a lobby entry plan form. It may be that the range was split into two separate dwellings of similar overall size, or that alterations were made to convert it to domestic use as a single large dwelling. This remodelling may coincide with the purchase or redevelopment of the abbey site by a post-Dissolution owner.

By 1855, when the first edition Ordnance Survey 6" map was published, the building had a woodland/orchard to the south, and an 1893 sketch of the cottage appears to depict the structure as two separate dwellings, perhaps workers' cottages; this is confirmed by the 19th century census data which shows that James Naylor, an agricultural labourer, occupied one of the cottages. After 1893, perhaps in the late 19th century or early 20th century, the eastern half was demolished and a lean-to structure built in its place. The lean-to itself was demolished in the later 20th century, by which date the building had assumed its current form and poor state of preservation.

1 INTRODUCTION

Reasons and Circumstances of the Project

- 1.1 In March 2008, Ed Dennison Archaeological Services Ltd (EDAS) undertook an architectural and archaeological survey at the single remaining standing ruined building on the site of Meaux Abbey, East Yorkshire, situated c.5km east of Beverley (NGR TA09043934) (see figures 1 and 2). The building is traditionally thought to be one of the Abbey's watermills, but it is also known as 'Abbey Cottage'. The survey was undertaken as an EDAS private research project, at the request of local historian Mary Carrick; it was not done as a prelude to any proposed repair or at the instigation of any advisory authority.

Survey Methodology

- 1.2 The site was visited by Ed Dennison, Shaun Richardson and Richard Lamb of EDAS, accompanied by Mary Carrick, on 14th March 2008. A 1:50 ground plan and cross section of the standing structure was prepared, using traditional hand-held measurement techniques; this drawn record was supplemented by a comprehensive 35mm colour print and digital photographic survey. Shaun Richardson and Richard Lamb returned on 8th April 2008 to prepare a first floor plan and also to undertake a 1:500 measured survey of the earthworks in the immediate vicinity of the structure. These drawings, together with the photographs and site notes, form the basis of the following description.

2 SUMMARY HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The ruined building is located in the western part of the former precinct of Meaux Abbey. Meaux, a Cistercian house, was founded in c.1150 by William le Gros, Count of Aumale, and was a daughter house of Fountains Abbey in North Yorkshire. Along with the Gilbertine house at Watton, Meaux was the wealthiest monastic foundation in East Yorkshire. Extensive building programmes were undertaken at the site during the 13th and early 14th centuries, and the abbey had a profound influence on the development of the whole of the Hull valley. In addition to its numerous granges, Meaux founded the town of Wyke to export Cistercian wool in the late 12th century, and this developed into Kingston-upon-Hull following its acquisition by Edward I in 1293. The Abbots of Meaux were also prominent improving landowners in the upper Hull valley, and their activity including digging substantial drains such as the Eschedike, cut by the later 12th century, and the Monkdiike, Skernedike and Forthdike, all mentioned in the early 13th century. The Abbey was dissolved in 1539 and in 1542, the buildings were almost entirely demolished to provide material for the defences built by Henry VIII at Hull (Allison 1976, 76-77, 94-95 & 239-40; Pevsner & Neave 1995, 613; Howes & Foreman 1999, 13).
- 2.2 Although only this single built structure survives from the abbey, there are some 85 acres of extensive and well preserved earthworks denoting the former precinct area (see figure 3), which, in terms of their complexity and definition, must surely rank as some of the best surviving examples of their type in the north of England. Despite this, Meaux appears never to have received detailed or protracted study, although important work is now being undertaken by local historians such as Mary Carrick. The abbey earthworks were subject to a general survey at a scale of 1:1250 by the RCHME in 1980 and an interpretative diagram was published in 1984 (Butler 1984, 47).

- 2.3 The RCHME survey established the overall layout of the precinct, while Ken Beulah, working from documentary evidence, has attempted to place the individual buildings and structures referred to in documents within the precinct area. Although Meaux was nowhere near as wealthy as its mother house at Fountains, the claustral ranges were laid on a similar scale; for example, the abbey church at Fountains measured 106m in length, whereas at Meaux it was still 80m or about 250 feet long. It should also be remembered that Fountains Abbey is largely concealed within a small valley, whereas Meaux rose up from the flat Holderness plain and must once have had a considerable visual impact in the surrounding landscape.
- 2.4 Abbey Cottage is traditionally interpreted as the remains of one of the abbey's water mills. A detailed study of three of the Abbey's mills, including the mill on the Abbey site itself, was published by Lewis (1996, 165-179), although this makes no mention of the standing building. Drawing on documentary evidence, Lewis concluded that the first Abbey mill may have been constructed as part of the building programme undertaken by the Thomas, 3rd Abbot (1182-1197), and it is first mentioned in 1196-97. The mill and adjacent granary appear to have been destroyed by fire soon afterwards but were quickly rebuilt. Water was initially brought to the mill site from the north, via the 'Wythdyke' and the 'Cote dyke', but later a new cut, the 'Monkdyke', was dug from the Lambwath Drain to the east and the mill was supplied by a dyke which ran along the north side of Eastwood fields; the outflow to the River Hull was provided by the 'Ashdyke' (Kent 2002, 182; Earle 1906, 74). A mid 13th century description notes that the watermill inside the Abbey grounds lay on the west side of the granary, was roofed with lead, and was shut off by the outer wall. It had a pond opposite the common stable, served by water coming down from the Lambwath Drain, passing through the precinct by the chapel in the wood and between the monastery gates and the stable (Lewis 1996, 169-170). The water supply appears to have been affected by a series of disputes concerning drainage between Meaux and the nearby Swine priory in the early 13th century, and the natural flow of water passed along the south side of Eastwood fields. This effectively by-passed the precinct mill, and milling was transferred to another of the Abbey's mills on the Ashdyke near the junction with the River Hull in the mid 13th century. There was an unsuccessful attempt to revive milling on or near the site using a horse mill in the late 14th century, and a prominent mound in an enclosure on the west side of the precinct may represent the remains of a post-mill; nevertheless, the mill structure itself had been abandoned by the mid 15th century (Lewis 1996, 170).
- 2.5 After the Dissolution, part of the Crown's estate including the former abbey site was granted in reversion to Sir Christopher Hatton in 1586. Lancelot Alford, the lessee of the Crown's estate, was said to have bought the reversion from Hatton, and his family continued to acquire land and hold this part of the township until the mid 17th century. The estate then passed to the Grantham family, and then by marriage to James Winstanley who sold the c.500 acre holding, then divided between six farms, to Francis Stringer's executors in 1712. The estate later passed to the FitzWilliams, and in 1810 William Wentworth-FitzWilliam sold his 543 acre estate to Robert Wise. It then passed by marriage to the Richardson family, and George Beulah bought Home and Coy Farms with 470 acres in 1917. Frederick Beulah bought the rest of the Richardson estate, the 157a Stud Farm, in 1952 (Kent 191-192).
- 2.6 On his unpublished reconstruction of the abbey precinct, Ken Beulah marks the Abbey Cottage at one end of an L-shaped range named as 'Water Mill'. The long arm of the L-shaped range is aligned north-south, and parallel to the east side is

the 'Great granary over the carthorse stable', with a 'horse mill' at its north end. The water supply for the mill follows the route given above, and a large 'Mill Pond' is shown to the north of the standing structure. On the 1855 Ordnance Survey 6" map (sheet 211), the standing structure is shown to be approximately twice its current length, with the west end apparently extending over the adjacent north-south aligned watercourse; there is also an enclosed orchard or wood to the south, and some smaller structure and enclosures to the north (see figure 4).

- 2.7 A sketch of the remains of the abbey, drawn by T T Wildridge and dated 1893 (ERAO PH/2/194), shows the cottage in the background, looking from the north-east (see figure 5) - this depicts a two part structure, both parts with steeply pitched roofs, but the ridge of the east part being set lower than that to the west. The west part has a ridge stack to the east end of the roof, and Wildridge may possibly show another stack rising from the south side behind the roof ridge. There may be a window or other opening in the east gable of the west part, blocked by the north slope of the east part's roof. A single small first floor window is shown to the west part, and a ground floor doorway at the east end. There appears to be another ground floor doorway at the west end of the east part. Although the sketch is small, it is possible that Wildridge shows the first floor of the east gable to be jettied over the ground floor, or at least supported on a substantial exposed horizontal timber. A tall tapering stack, possibly in brick, rises from the first floor to well above the height of the ridge, and has a small window to the north. The apparent distribution of doorways and stacks shown on the sketch suggests that the east and west parts formed separate dwellings in 1893. By comparison with near contemporary maps and structural evidence (see below), it would seem that the west part sketched by Wildridge represents the surviving building, while the east potentially jettied part is the ruinous east cell shown on late 19th and early 20th century maps.
- 2.8 The possibility that the building formed two separate dwellings in the 1890s is confirmed by the 19th century census data. It is not possible to identify the specific building in the 1851 census returns, but in 1861 it was occupied by James Naylor, a 40 year old agricultural labourer from North Summercoates in Lincolnshire, together with his wife Ann (aged 38), their three sons John (12), George (9) and Robert (5), and Rebecca Hayton (a daughter aged 20 visiting from Beverley) (NA RG9/3573 p3). James Naylor continued to live there until after 1901 with his wife and in 1891 and 1901 with his granddaughter Lillie. It is difficult to tell from some of the census returns whether the building was divided into two separate dwellings in the mid 19th century, but it was in 1881 - at this time one part of 'Abbey Cottage' was occupied by James Naylor and his wife, while Ann Fryer (wife aged 48), Ann Fryer (her married daughter aged 32) and Richard Scott (a 22 year old border with no occupation) occupied the other part (NA RG11/4745 p4). In 1891, James Naylor still occupied one of the two dwellings while the other was uninhabited, and in 1901 only the Naylor's occupied 'Old Abbey Cottage' (NA RG12/3911 p6; NA RG13/4465 p2).
- 2.9 The Ordnance Survey 1910 25" edition, re-surveyed in 1889 and revised in 1909, depicts a three celled structure - a small roofed west end apparently spanning the watercourse, a larger roofed central cell representing the surviving building, and a derelict unroofed larger cell to the east; there is also a small structure attached to the west end of the south side of the main range (see figure 4). By the time of the 1927 edition, the building had assumed its current plan and dimensions, i.e. no west cell and a narrow east cell added to the east end of the central part, both of which are roofed, and a ruined right-angled wall alignment representing the former western cell.

- 2.10 Like the surrounding earthworks, the standing ruined structure is believed to have received little previous detailed attention, Pevsner and Neave describing it as ‘a small derelict cottage built largely of stone from the Abbey’ (Pevsner & Neave 1995, 613). It is in poor structural condition and is Grade II listed (see Appendix 1); it also lies within the Scheduled Ancient Monument area of the Abbey.

3 DESCRIPTION OF ABBEY COTTAGE

Introduction

- 3.1 A description of the standing structure, based on the information gathered during the field survey, is given below. The description commences with the plan form, structure and materials, followed by the external elevations and finally an internal circulation description. Reference should be made to figures 6 and 7.
- 3.2 Although the building is actually set on a very shallow north-west/south-east alignment, for the purposes of description, all parts are considered to be aligned either north-south or east-west, with the main axis lying east-west. Unless otherwise stated, all terms used to describe timber elements or internal fixtures and fittings are taken from Alcock *et al* (1996) and Alcock and Hall (1994). Finally, in the following text, ‘modern’ is taken to mean dating to after c.1945.

Plan Form

- 3.3 Abbey Cottage is basically sub-rectangular in plan and is aligned east-west, with overall external ground floor measurements of 10.40m long (east-west) by a maximum of 6.60m wide (north-south); there are a number of ruinous brick structures attached to the east end of the main building (see plate 1). The walls are subject to much local variation, but at between 0.80m and 0.85m, the north and west external walls are the thickest, with the south wall being 0.70m wide. The east wall, and any internal walls, are generally much narrower.

Structure and Materials

- 3.4 The building is of two storeys, with a pitched pantiled roof (see plate 1). There is a short brick stack to the west end of the ridge, and a very large brick firehood to the east end. This was formerly partly enclosed by a lean-to structure, which has subsequently largely collapsed. The structural framework of the building is formed by load bearing external walls with wooden beams and joists supporting the internal floors.
- 3.5 The majority of the building is built of a mixture of Magnesian limestone and Cave oolitic limestone; in some areas, this is laid roughly as rubble, but in others, notably the lower parts of the south elevation and west gable, it is reasonably well coursed and squared. The Cave oolite was probably sourced from Brantingham while the Magnesian limestone came from West Yorkshire (Myerscough nd). There are also substantial areas of brickwork to the east and west gables. Detailed examination shows that a number of different types of brick have been used, representing different phases of construction; a fuller account of the dimensions, appearance and distribution of these is given in the circulation description below. No *in situ* timber-framing was observed within the building, or any elements that may formerly have been associated with it such as chalk padstones, stylobates or footings.

External elevations

North elevation

- 3.6 The most highly visible elevation of the building when approached from the east, and that least obscured by vegetation, is the north elevation (see plate 2). The majority of the elevation is built of oolite and limestone, better coursed to the ground floor than to the first. For part of its length, the elevation rises from a chamfered drip course, slightly hollow to the underside, although this is lost towards the western end due to the rising external ground level.
- 3.7 At the east end of the ground floor, there is a doorway with jambs formed from Magnesian limestone blocks, widely chamfered to the exterior and rebated and splayed to the interior (see plate 3). The doorway lacks a proper head, having a shallow timber lintel, and it appears to have been inserted into a wider opening here. It is presumably re-used from elsewhere within the abbey precinct and retains a plank and batten door. To the west, there is a two-light window; unfortunately, like all other windows within the building, the original frames have been replaced by modern concrete sills, lintels and divisions. To the west side of the window, there is a similar smaller example, again with a concrete frame. However, a close examination reveals that this has been created by blocking a former doorway. The doorway was relatively low and also broke the chamfered drip course properly, rather than cutting through it. The north-west corner of the building is quoined.
- 3.8 At first floor level, there is a shallow course of thin red clay tiles, above which the face of the first floor stonework is inset slightly. Much of the first floor stonework has been thickly repointed using a cement mortar, thus obscuring some detail. However, there is a blocking visible towards the east end, perhaps representing a former low window, with an area of brick rebuilding to the north-east corner. To the west, in the centre of the first floor elevation, there is a substantial area of collapse; when viewed from the interior, it appears to contain the remains of a window (see below). The remainder of the first floor elevation is blank, with a shallow area of 18th or 19th century brickwork forming the eaves.

West gable

- 3.9 The west gable was partly obscured by ivy and an adjacent tree at the time of the survey, although enough was visible to record the main features. Like the north elevation, the majority of the west gable is built of oolite and limestone, and most of this is relatively well coursed and squared. The chamfered drip course noted to the north elevation continues across the full length of the west gable.
- 3.10 The ground floor is largely blank, but at the base of the south end of the gable, beneath the chamfered drip course, there is a sub-rectangular area of red handmade bricks (average depth 70mm), possibly blocking a former opening/recess or denoting a repair/alteration. There may be a similar feature in the same position at the north end of the gable, but the vegetation here is such that it is difficult to be certain. At first floor level there is a moulded stone string running across the gable (see plate 5). This string does not continue around either of the adjacent long elevations, but neither has it been hacked off, ending in a straight face flush with the wall elevation at either end; it is set at approximately the same height as the tile course in the north elevation. Above the string, the stonework continues for c.1m as below the string. The upper part of the gable is then built of brick, of a similar form and appearance to that used at the north-east corner.

However, in the top of the stonework, there is a lowered section c.2m wide, centrally positioned and perhaps marking a former window opening. A smaller window was once positioned here within the brick upper part of the gable, but this has subsequently been blocked.

- 3.11 As has been mentioned above, the 1855 and 1910 Ordnance Survey maps suggest that the building originally extended further to the west, so that the west cell spanned the north-south aligned watercourse here (see below). Assuming that the maps are accurate, the presence of the west cell is of interest when considered together with the structural evidence. Unless the whole of the west gable is a relatively recent rebuild (for which there is no evidence), the presence of the plinth indicates that the stone-built part of the structure extended no further westwards at ground level. However, as the upper part of the gable is of brick rather than stone, it is possible that the structure did extend west over the watercourse at first floor level. This extension might have been stone or timber-framed, spanning the watercourse, and perhaps partly open-sided. If it was timber-framed, then there would almost certainly have been a stone structure of some kind on the west side of the watercourse to provide support. The implications of the presence of such a structure are discussed more fully in the Chapter 4 below.

South elevation

- 3.12 The area to the immediate south of the building was covered with scrub and a very large box bush at the time of the survey and, although there was access to the full length of the elevation, it could not be viewed from a distance. As with the north elevation and west gable, the south elevation is built of stone and rises from a chamfered drip course, which continues around the base of a shallow projection towards the east end of the elevation (see below).
- 3.13 To the west of the projection, there are three windows to the ground floor, all of similar size but again all with modern replacement concrete frames; there is no indication of the small structure shown attached to the west end of the elevation on the 1910 Ordnance Survey map. The projection itself is 1.60m wide and rises the full height of the ground floor, apparently truncated thereafter; the upper part appears to preserve part of a chamfered inset and the whole structure has the appearance of a truncated chimney stack. There is a small brick blocking in the centre of the ground floor of the projection, relating to an internal bread oven (see below). To the east of the projection, the chamfered drip course continues for a short distance and is then hidden by a later stepped brick buttress; the buttress obscured the relationship of the drip course to an adjacent doorway, contained with the south gable of the former lean-to at the east end of the building. The doorway, like that in the north elevation, is built of Magnesian limestone and has widely chamfered jambs to the exterior; the head has been removed externally, although it can still be seen internally (see below), again like that to the north elevation. To the east of the doorway, there is a low brick wall. This continues east for a further 1.50m, containing a single straight joint, and then curves around to the south-east for c.3m, terminating in a simple gatepier.
- 3.14 There has been some alteration and disturbance to the first floor, and the two existing windows are probably relatively recent insertions. The south-east corner of the first floor has been rebuilt in brick, and the jambs of the east window are also brick. There is a straight joint in the stonework to the west of the east window, with the stonework to the west of the joint possibly butting that to the east. The west window retains a timber sash frame, and there may be another straight joint to its west.

East gable

- 3.15 As noted above, the 1855 Ordnance Survey map shows that the building originally extended to approximately twice its existing length. The cartographic and census data suggests that eastern half was demolished between c.1891 and 1909, and a single storey lean-to had been constructed across the truncated east end of the building by 1927. This was itself subsequently demolished or collapsed, leaving the east end of the building exposed to the elements, which has contributed greatly to its current poor structural condition.
- 3.16 The lean-to built between 1909 and 1927 was a predominantly brick structure. The bricks are pinkish red in colour, machine-made (average dimensions 240mm by 110mm by 80mm) set with a lime mortar and laid in a stretcher bond. Only the south gable survives to the original full height and this now forms the east end of the building's south elevation; the Magnesian limestone door here retains its flat head to the former interior of the lean-to, which is widely chamfered as with the jambs. Like the similar doorway in the north elevation, it seems likely that this doorway is also a later insertion, re-used from elsewhere within the precinct. The lean-to also had a two-light concrete framed window in the east wall. A small angled alteration or addition was made to the south end of the east wall in slightly different brickwork; this butts both the main body of the lean-to and the curving brick wall at the east end of the building's south elevation. The lean-to roof was a simple structure, comprising common rafters only, with no wall plate.
- 3.17 The removal of the lean-to has left the formerly internal brick firehood open to the elements (see plate 4). A more detailed description of the different parts of the firehood are given in the circulation description below, but broadly it comprises two large ground floor fireplaces set back to back, both retaining substantial bressumers, and with a tall brick stack over tapering inwards to the first floor; the uppermost part has been rebuilt. Externally, the firehood is built of light red handmade bricks (average dimensions 200mm-240mm by 120mm by 40mm-50mm) set with a buff lime mortar but laid in no particular bonding pattern. There is a mixture of stone rubble and brick lining to the interior, which is heavily sooted.

Circulation (see figure 7)

Ground floor

- 3.18 The only existing access to the interior of the building is through the doorway at the east end of the north elevation, which appears to be that shown by Wildridge in 1893. This formerly lead into a small lobby area positioned to the north of the firehood; the fireplaces to either side of the firehood have a small window lighting their north ends but these are clearly modern creations, with much rebuilding/repointing surrounding them. From the lobby, there is a doorway to the west leading to the main ground floor room and stairs adjacent rising to the first floor, while to the east, the lobby is crossed by a substantial north-south ceiling timber. This once supported a number of floor joists running to the east, but these must have been removed when the lean-to structure was built before 1927.
- 3.19 The principal feature of interest in the former interior of the lean-to is the firehood. It is supported on a substantial chamfered bressumer and there are a number of blockings/alterations to the rear wall. A slightly recessed central panel of older brickwork is decayed and heavily sooted; the lower half has been infilled with modern brickwork. To the south, there is a shallowly projecting brick pier with a further recessed panel beyond. In the south wall, there is a recess with the

remains of a shallow arched head over; this is now badly damaged, but may once have formed a smaller version of the well-preserved bread oven surviving in the west side of the firehood (see below).

3.20 The doorway in the west side of the lobby leads into the main ground floor room. This was formerly covered with red clay tiles, 0.22m square, but these have been taken up in places to expose soil beneath. The west wall of the room is largely blank, although there may be a staggered joint visible in the stonework towards the north end. There is a small recess of uncertain purpose, fitted with a metal door, at the west end of the south wall, with three windows placed between it and the firehood. As has already been noted, all these windows have had their original frames removed and modern concrete replacements fitted. However, they all retain their original brick four-centred/Tudor rear-arches; in addition, the internal bases of the window openings are at approximately the right height to have functioned as shallow window seats (see plate 7). In the north wall, the west window can clearly be seen to have been created from a doorway, while the east splay of the east window has been rebuilt in brick. The firehood at the east end of the room is supported on a substantial and slightly cambered chamfered bressumer (see plate 6). As with the fireplace beneath the east side of the firehood, there are blockings and alterations to the rear wall. There is a central, slightly recessed, panel of older brickwork, decayed and heavily sooted, flanked by modern rebuilt sections to either side thickly pointed with a cement mortar. The south wall retains a well preserved bread oven. The mouth of the oven is c.0.40m wide and has a shallow cambered head. Internally, there is a second lower arch, which opens out into the oven proper. The oven is sub-circular in plan, c.0.90m in diameter and brick-lined. The sides of the domed interior are formed by a course of stretchers laid on edge, with the shallow dome rising over them; the height at the centre of the dome is c.0.40m. The base of the oven is also brick built.

3.21 The ground floor has a well preserved and high quality hardwood floor frame over. There are two large north-south aligned beams, with stopped and barred chamfers to the soffits. These support the floor joists, which have received similar decorative treatment. In the central bay of the ceiling, the chamfers of the joists are stopped about 0.30m out from west beam, rather than immediately adjacent to the beam. This might indicate that a partition was planned to be placed here at the same time as the ceiling was built, and so the stops were moved so that they were not obscured. There is however no surviving evidence for such a partition, and it is difficult to see why one should have been placed here rather than beneath the adjacent beam. There have been some alterations to the westernmost bay of the floor frame, with some of the original joists being cut out and a trimmer inserted to support the fireplace above on the first floor.

The first floor

3.22 The only access to the first floor is via the staircase situated on the west side of the entrance lobby. The staircase is constructed in softwood, and is of a plain form. It rises to the first floor, the head being adjacent to the area of collapse in the north elevation. Close examination of the east side of the collapse reveals what appears to be the east jamb of a deeply splayed window, built from neatly cut limestone blocks, although it is now difficult to tell if this feature is *in situ* or a later introduction. A first floor window is shown in approximately this position by Wildridge in 1893.

3.23 The first floor is divided into two rooms, both floored with north-south aligned floorboards (average width 0.27m). The rooms are separated by a stud and brick

partition, with a doorway at the north end. The studs used in the partition all appear to be softwood, with the exception of the southernmost visible example, which is a re-used piece of hardwood. The brick infill is largely plastered over, and so the size and form of the bricks used could not be ascertained.

- 3.24 The principal feature of interest in the east room is the firehood rising up from the ground floor below. The west face of the firehood has been partly broken into, but there is no clear evidence that any attempt was made to introduce a fireplace at first floor level. The west room is also largely empty, and contains only a small brick fireplace with a semi-circular head and chimney breast against the west wall. There is a small recess to the south of the chimney breast, corresponding with a straight joint visible externally; it appears that a wide opening here was initially reduced in width using brick to create a window, and then this window was subsequently blocked to allow the fireplace to be built against it. The interior of the recess is plastered and bears a scar left by at least one shelf.
- 3.25 The first floor is crossed by three north-south aligned trusses, all of similar form. The central truss is positioned directly over the partition, and has a substantial tie-beam, slightly cambered and apparently of hardwood, roughly chamfered to the soffits but without stops. The tie-beam of the west truss is similar but that to the east truss is slightly less substantial, and has plain stops to the chamfers. It was not possible to examine the upper sides of the tie-beams to see if any evidence for an earlier roof form survived; above tie-beam level, all trusses are of softwood plank principal rafter and collar form and appear to be relatively recent in date.

Adjacent Earthworks (see figure 6)

- 3.26 As stated above, the abbey precinct at Meaux survives as a rich, complex and well preserved earthwork landscape. In order to begin to place the standing building within this earthwork landscape, a measured tape survey of the earthworks in the immediate vicinity was undertaken as part of the survey work.
- 3.27 The ruined building now stands within a small post-and wire enclosure, which extends to the north and south but is of relatively modern date. That part to the north of the building is grassed, while the area to the south is covered by scrub and small trees. The ground within the latter area is much disturbed by rabbits, and their activities have thrown up numerous sherds of pottery dating from the medieval period to the 20th century; the quantity of 19th and 20th century pottery suggests that some deliberate dumping of domestic rubbish has taken place here. There is also a millstone in this area, of uncertain date and provenance.
- 3.28 As has already been noted, the building is shown as being approximately double its existing length in 1855, and its former extent is clearly visible as a raised platform to the east of the surviving building. The platform is aligned east-west, and is c.15m long and c.9m wide. There is a sub-square projection to the east end of the south side, possibly a large stack or a porch. To the east of the platform, there is a sub-rectangular depression on a similar alignment, c.13m long and c.10m wide. A number of north-south aligned scarps are visible to the south of the building and associated platform. These were also shown by the RCHME in 1984 (Butler 1984, 47), and fall within an orchard or wood located here in 1855.
- 3.29 To the north of the enclosure on the north side of the building, the footings of a number of brick structures can be seen. There appears to be a small rectangular structure running parallel to the enclosure fence, with a larger sub-square structure to the north-east. The latter may be the building shown in this approximate

position in 1855 and 1927, and the footings also incorporate some concrete. To the west of this structure, there may be another sub-rectangular platform, but it is spread and not as well defined as those to the east of the building.

- 3.30 The most prominent earthwork in the vicinity of the building is the dike, ditch or drain running along its west side. To the immediate south of the building's west gable, the feature is well defined, being c.9m across and with sharply sloping sides meeting a flattened base c.4m in width. The east side is only c.1m in height, whereas the west side rises to over 2m, reflecting the raised ground level in the field to the west. The earthwork becomes shallower as it moves northward, rising very slightly from south to north, and stops altogether to the immediate west of the building, where it has probably been infilled; the early Ordnance Survey maps suggest that the building originally extended over the drain (see figure 4). At this point, the bank on the top of the west side of the drain is broken in line with the building, and this break presumably marks the western end of the building as it is shown on the early Ordnance Survey maps. The ditch or dike then re-appears to the immediate north of the enclosure on the north side of the building, set at a higher level than where it stops to the south. As to the south, the west side is the most substantial, with the east side being very slight indeed; the overall width is similar to the section to the south of the building. On his interpretative plan, Ken Beaulah marks a 'Mill Pond' to the east of the linear feature to the north of the building, and the RCHME also show a slight sub-rectangular feature in the same position. There is indeed a slight depression, wider than the ditch/dike and defined by a shallow west-facing scarp in this area, but a detailed earthwork survey at a suitable scale, such as 1:500, would be needed to establish the relationship of any possible pond to the other earthworks in this area.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

A Medieval Structure?

- 4.1 Although previous sources have suggested that the building was built largely of stone from the Abbey (Pevsner & Neave 1995, 613), implying re-use of medieval material, the information gathered during the survey indicates that parts of a medieval building survive within the standing structure. It is suggested that the ground floors of the north walls and the lower part of the west gable, and perhaps also the lowest part of the south elevation, are of possible medieval date, and they may represent the remains of a rectangular east-west aligned stone building, rising from a chamfered drip course. This building may once have formed part of a much longer range, perhaps c.30m long, the eastern half now surviving only as an earthwork platform. Later alterations make it difficult to identify early windows externally, but the doorway in the north elevation that breaks the drip course properly represents an early access point. The shallow projection to the east end of the south elevation is contemporary with the string course and perhaps represents the remains of an early external stack, serving an internal fireplace. The doorway to the east of this projection might also be of early date, but it could have been introduced much later. The rear arches of the windows in the south elevation also appear early, although the wall in which they are situated is somewhat narrower than the north and west walls, and so might represent an early post-medieval rebuilding on a medieval line.
- 4.2 The break at first floor level in the north elevation might suggest that the medieval building was of a single storey only, or that the first floor may originally have been timber-framed. However, as noted above, the area of collapse to the north elevation's first floor retains part of a splayed quoined opening of early

appearance, suggesting that this part at least was of stone. In addition, the stonework of the west gable is similar below and immediately above the moulded string, and also preserves the position of a wide opening to the first floor, later narrowed and then blocked altogether. Nevertheless, as has been already noted, it is possible that other parts of the longer range depicted in 1855 were timber-framed, such as the west cell over the watercourse, or the east gable of the east cell, which Windridge's sketch could portray as being jettied.

- 4.3 Beyond stating that it is likely that the Abbey Cottage incorporates part of a medieval structure, there is little left that can be assigned any firm dates. The profile of the moulded string to the west gable might broadly be later 14th or 15th century, although this is not certain, whereas the brick rear arches to the windows in the south wall are of early to mid 16th century appearance, although as has been noted, the south wall is markedly narrower than the north wall and west gable, and so might not be all of the same phase. The disposition of the adjacent earthworks in relation to the existing building do not reflect the medieval layout as proposed in Beulah's sketch, but detailed earthwork survey across a much wider area would be needed to accurately assess its relationship to other parts of the monastic complex.

Was it a Mill?

- 4.4 If it is accepted that the existing building incorporates part of a medieval building, then the question must be posed: was it the Abbey's mill as is traditionally stated? As has already been noted, drawing on documentary evidence, Lewis concluded that the first Abbey mill may have been constructed as part of the building programme undertaken by the third Abbot, Thomas (1182-1197), and it is first mentioned in 1196-97. The mill and adjacent granary appear to have been destroyed by fire soon afterwards but were understandably quickly rebuilt. The water supply to the mill may have been affected by a series of disputes concerning drainage between Meaux and the nearby Swine priory in the early 13th century. A mid 13th century description notes that the watermill inside the Abbey grounds lay on the west side of the granary, was roofed with lead, and was shut off by the outer wall. It had a pond opposite the common stable, served by water brought from the Lambwath Drain, passing through the precinct by the chapel in the wood and between the monastery gates and the stable. However, problems with water supply led to milling operations being transferred to another of the Abbey's mills in the mid 13th century. There was an unsuccessful attempt to revive milling on or near the site using a horse mill in the late 14th century, but the mill had been abandoned by the mid 15th century (Lewis 1996, 169-170). Lewis makes no attempt to accurately locate the mill within the precinct, nor does he mention the existing building in this connection.
- 4.5 On the other hand, Beulah's sketch locates the building at the west end of an L-shaped range of buildings representing the Abbey mill, and there are indeed reasons for linking the two. Firstly, the general location of the building corresponds with the documentary evidence for the mill's location in relation to other parts of the precinct, and it also lies within the precinct; in contrast to other orders, such as the Benedictines or Augustinians, who acquired grants of existing manorial mills, the Cistercians built their own distinctive precinct mills (Harrison 2001, 23). Secondly, the fact that the mill was roofed with lead suggests a stone rather than a timber-framed building, and the existing building appears to incorporate the remains of a medieval stone structure. Thirdly, the existing building is sited adjacent to a watercourse, and previous earthwork survey undertaken by the RCHME identified a depression to the north that might be interpreted as a mill pond. The western cell

of the building once spanned the watercourse, and its position and form on historic maps is highly suggestive of a wheelhouse, although there is no evidence in the existing west gable for the position of a shaft from a wheel or indeed internally for the former presence of mill fittings. Fourthly, the fact that the existing building once formed part of a significantly longer range bears some resemblance to other mill ranges at other Cistercian sites in Yorkshire, such as the magnificent surviving example at Fountains Abbey, or the mill at Rievaulx abbey, which was also once larger than the surviving building there would suggest (Harrison 2001, 24-25).

4.6 Against this, as noted above, the surviving earthworks do not appear to correspond to the medieval layout in this part of the precinct as proposed by Beulah but, given the amount of immediate post-Dissolution demolition work and disturbance, this is perhaps to be expected. Comparison with other Cistercian mill sites in Yorkshire also throws up a number of contrasts. In all Cistercian houses, the domestic buildings, including agricultural buildings and the corn mill, were included within the boundary wall of the precinct, but within the outer court which the lay brothers might enter without having access to the nave of the church (Harrison 2001, 24). According to Beulah's reconstructed layout, the mill lay within the inner court. It was also a standard practice on Cistercian sites for the tail race from the mill to flush out the main drain of the monastery (Harrison 2001, 24), but there is no direct evidence for this at Meaux. Beulah marks an 'enclosed stone built sewer' at the south-west corner of the infirmary court, which on excavation and investigation was found to extend for some 54ft on an east-west alignment (Sheppard 1929, 110-112), which may have lead into a dike or drain connected to the watercourse running south past the proposed mill building.

4.7 There are also many other issues that need to be resolved, some of which would have a substantial bearing on the original form of the mill. For example, as has been noted, the position and form of the former western cell spanning the adjacent watercourse on historic maps is highly suggestive of a wheelhouse. Structural evidence indicates that the west gable of the surviving building did not extend further west at ground level, but it might have done at an upper level, perhaps as a timber-framed structure. This timber-framed structure could have spanned the watercourse and covered the wheel. If so, it must surely have been supported on a stone plinth or other structure on the west side of the watercourse. The watercourse is wide enough to take a substantial wheel, but is not particularly deep to the building side. However, without any firm evidence as to how or at what height the wheel was mounted, and without more information on the fall from the possible pond to the north towards the ruined building, it is difficult to assess how it was powered. Was water brought to the wheel through a head race or perhaps along a launder, and was there a tailrace and bypass leat? It is possible that the wheel was undershot, relatively wide and driven directly by the watercourse itself; if a sluice was positioned to the north of the mill, across the watercourse, then a head of water might have been dammed behind it and then released to drive the wheel for a limited period of time. A relatively inefficient water control system such as this might have contributed towards the early demise of any mill to be located here. Some of these questions may be resolved by more detailed earthwork survey over a wider area, although it must be borne in mind that due to its location, particularly the flatness of the surrounding landscape, Meaux had a peculiar set of problems which, as Lewis has shown, may have required different solutions to those used on other Cistercian sites. Finally, if the western cell did form the remains of a wheelhouse then, given that the mill is thought to have gone out of use during the later medieval period, this would imply that the mill structure (if not the wheel and internal workings) remained intact not only through the Dissolution but also the following 400 years.

Post-Dissolution History

- 4.8 The major question that remains unanswered regarding the post-Dissolution history of the site is why should this building have survived when all else was demolished? The survival of the building might imply that it had been re-used for another purpose very soon after the Dissolution. As has already been noted, many of the Abbey buildings were demolished in 1542 to recover materials for use in the Henrician defences under construction in Hull. A single surviving estimate for wages from February 1542 notes that there were 20 masons, some employed in taking down stones at Meaux, some ten plumbers rolling up lead off the roof at Meaux and a total of 300 labourers, again some of whom were working at Meaux (Butler 1984, 46). There would clearly have been large numbers of people on the site who would have needed accommodation during the demolition process. They may well have been put up in former monastic buildings, and so it is possible that the survival of the building could result from early re-use as accommodation for those involved in demolition.
- 4.9 At some point, most probably in either the late 16th or the early 17th centuries, the building underwent a radical remodelling. The large brick firehood with its back to back fireplaces was inserted into the approximate centre of the range, then c.30m in length, and what was essentially a lobby entry plan form created, with an entrance to the north of the firehood; the lobby entry plan has been noted in other larger regional vernacular houses in East Yorkshire (Pevsner & Neave 1995, 63). The chamfered limestone doorways in the north and south elevations may have been introduced into the building from elsewhere within the precinct at the same time, although this could have happened later (see below). As a result of the remodelling, it may be that the range was split into two separate dwellings of similar overall size, or that alterations were made to convert it to domestic use as a single large dwelling; Wildridge's sketch of 1893 appears to depict two cottages with differing roof levels, and this is confirmed by the census data for 1881 and 1891. The existing floor frame over the ground floor was inserted at the same time, although the roof itself was not altered until much later, making extensive use of softwood. The first floor itself was unheated.
- 4.10 This remodelling is assumed to coincide with the purchase or redevelopment of the Abbey site by a post-Dissolution owner. A late 16th or early 17th century remodelling would tie in with patterns noted at other monastic sites, for example in Hertfordshire. Here, first grantees or lessees of monastic property often did little to the buildings and left it to second or third generations to implement major conversion works; some grantees may simply have wanted to farm the former monastic land and not wished to convert the buildings at all. Many families waited until the 1570s or 1580s to convert monastic buildings, as by this date fears that property might revert back to the Crown or church had gone, as perhaps had superstitions about re-using former religious sites, and the owners had paid off the former purchase price of their properties (Doggett 2002, 5-57). Much nearer to Meaux, a similar pattern of re-use has been suggested for Haltemprice Priory, near Willerby (Dennison & Richardson 2006).
- 4.11 Further detailed documentary research would be needed to tie the remodelling of the surveyed building with the landowners of the time, but the work may well have been done by Lancelot Alford who bought the reversion of the Crown estate from Sir Christopher Hatton in 1586 (see above). The Alfords continued to acquire land and hold this part of the township until the mid 17th century, and they lived at Meaux from the 16th century; their house has been wrongly identified as Meaux Grange (later Meaux Abbey Farm) (Kent 2002, 192), and although the remodelled

Abbey Cottage is unlikely to have been their house (which contained 16 hearths in 1672 and the first floor of the Abbey Cottage was unheated), perhaps it represents an outlying structure on the Alford estate.

- 4.12 There would clearly have been piecemeal alterations to the building throughout its later post-medieval history. One of these may have been the addition of a fireplace and chimney breast to the west room on the first floor, perhaps in the late 18th or early 19th century. This replaced a small window, which had itself been created by blocking a much wider opening. By 1855, when the first edition Ordnance Survey 6" map was published, the building may have become the focus of a small agricultural complex and in 1861 it was occupied by at least one agricultural labourer and his family; it is noticeable that there is a track leading to the site from a farmstead to the north-west (now Crown Farm, but formally Abbey Farm). Abbey Farm was built in 1801 and was designed by Robert Wise who bought rest of the Meaux abbey estate in 1810 (Mary Carrick, *pers. comm.*; Kent 2002, 187 & 192), and he may have initiated the alterations at Abbey Cottage. Wildridge's sketch of 1893 appears to depict two separate structures, and they are recorded as two cottages in 1881 and 1891. The apparent stack shown by Wildridge to the south elevation of the west part, rising above the roof ridge, may have served the internal bread oven.
- 4.13 After 1893 and before 1910, the eastern half of the building was demolished and a lean-to built had been built in its place by 1927 to partly shield the large firehood; the chamfered doorways may have been re-used in the lean-to from the demolished eastern half of the building. The lean-to itself was demolished in the later 20th century, by which date the building had assumed its present form and poor state of preservation.

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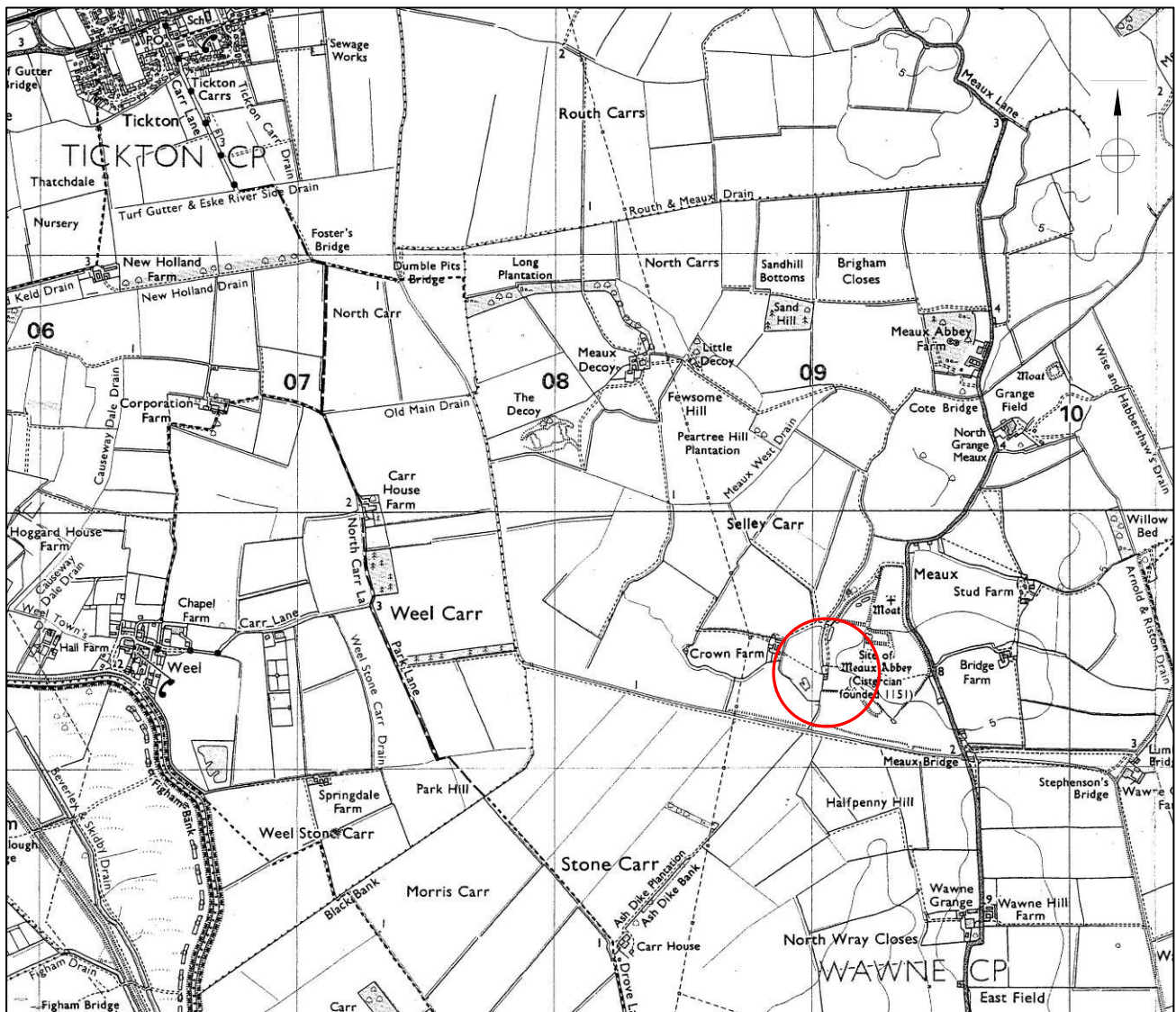
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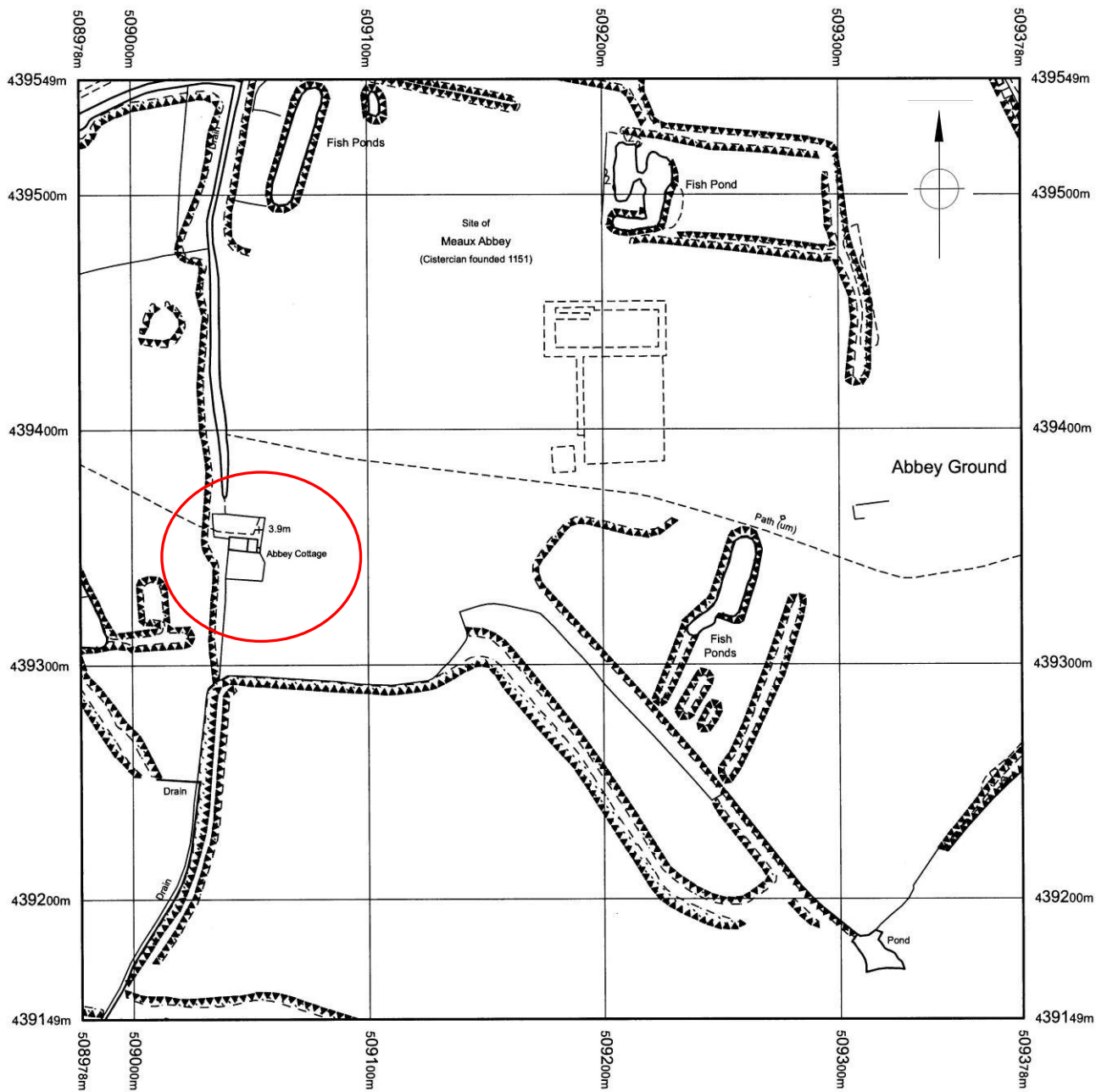
6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

6.1 The architectural and archaeological survey of Meaux Abbey Cottage was undertaken by Shaun Richardson and Richard Lamb, with assistance from Mary Carrick. Permission for the survey was granted by the site owner, Mr Andrew Beulah, and access was secured by Mary Carrick. Richard Myerscough also kindly provided some information regarding the geological make-up of the cottage and Mary Carrick took the photographs. EDAS would like to thank all the above for their help and co-operation in carrying out the architectural and archaeological survey. The final report was produced by Ed Dennison of EDAS, with whom the responsibility for any errors remains.



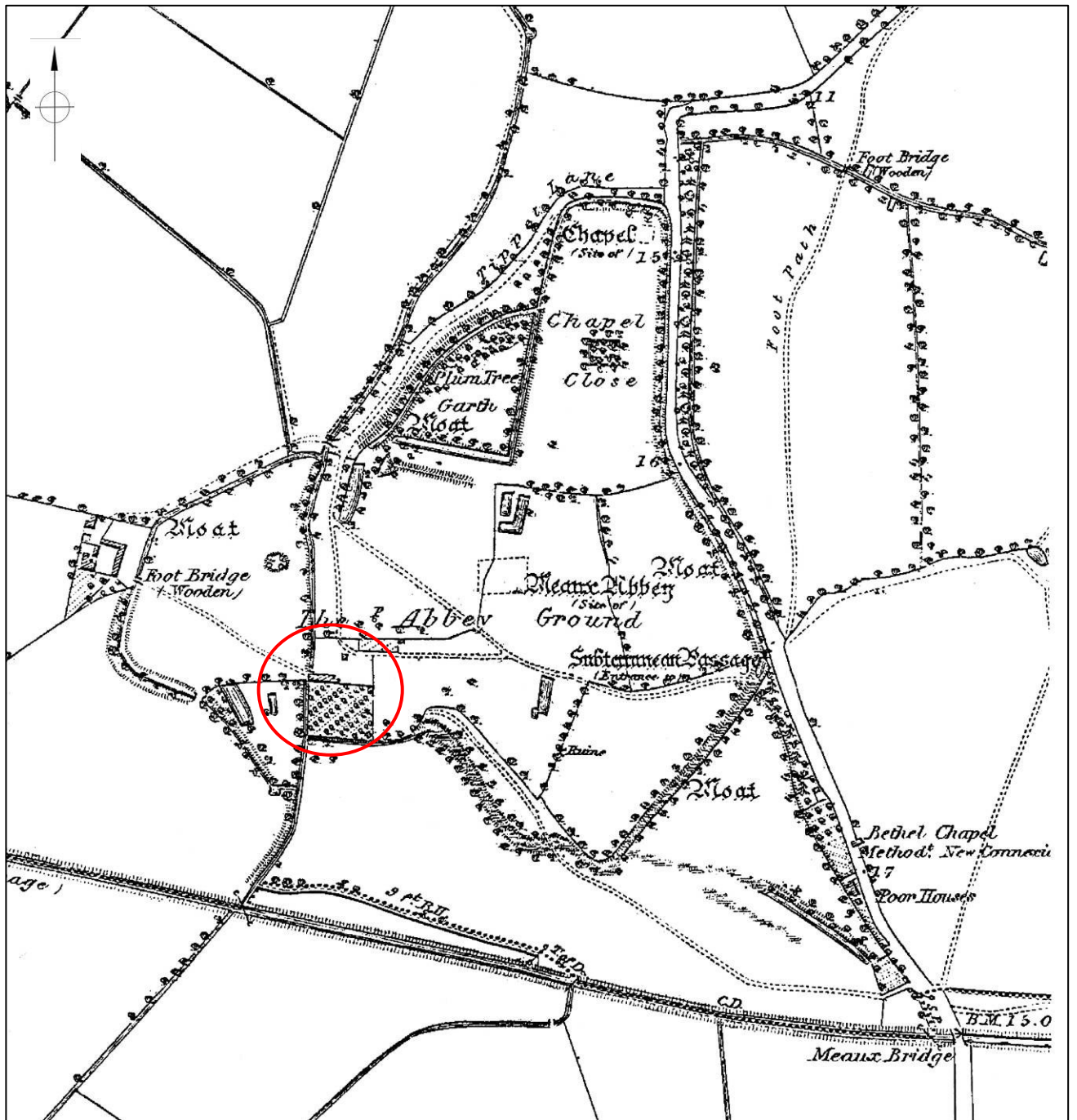
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SCALE	NTS	DATE	DEC 2010
EDAS		FIGURE	1



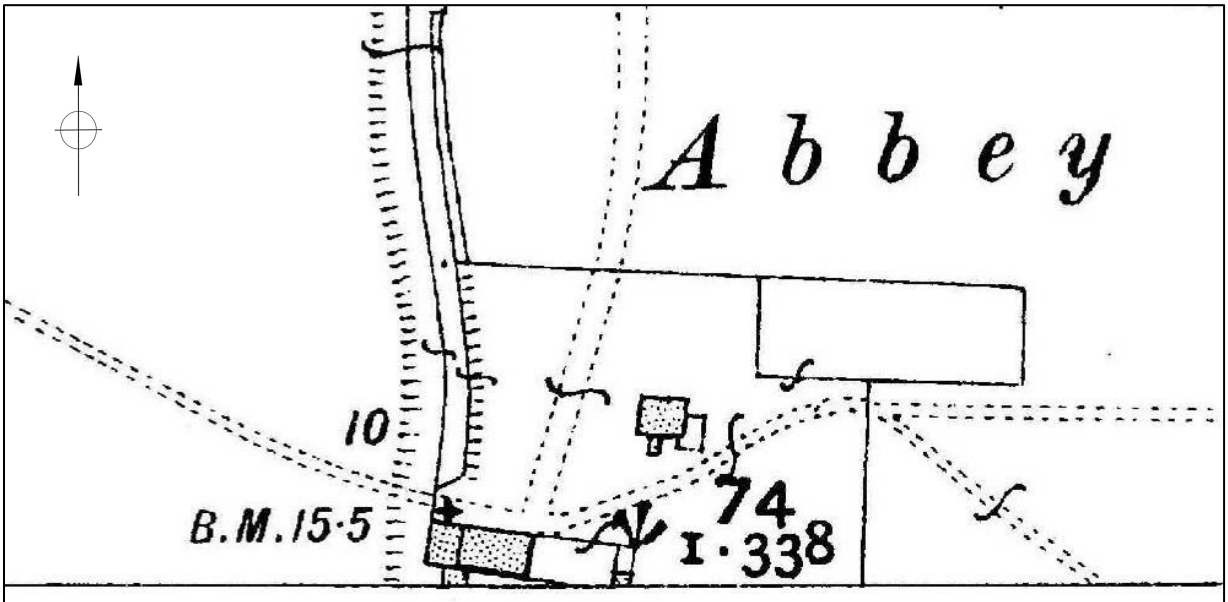
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PROJECT		ABBAY COTTAGE, MEAUX	
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SCALE	NTS	DATE	DEC 2010
EDAS		FIGURE	2



Source: Ordnance Survey 1855 6" map sheet 211 (surveyed 1852).

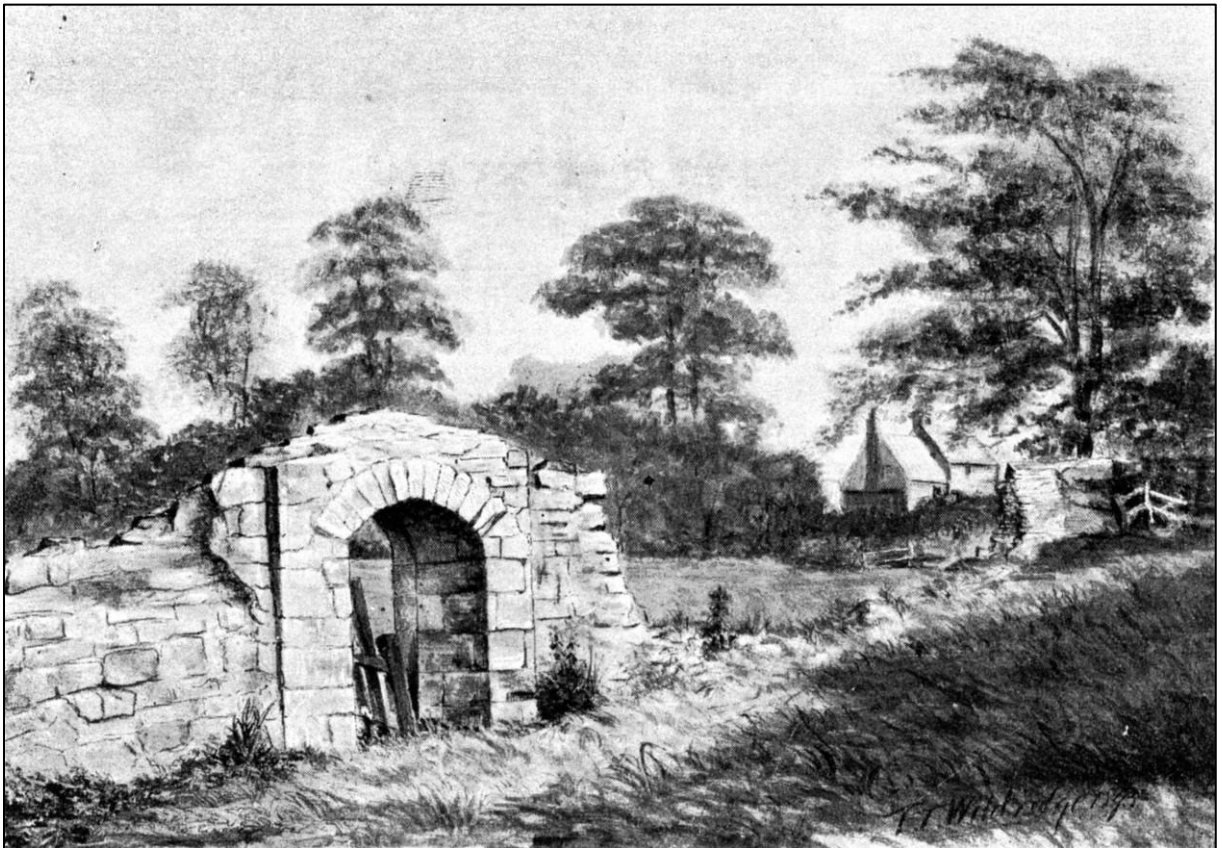
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TITLE		1855 ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP	
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Top: Ordnance Survey 1855 6" map sheet 211 (surveyed 1852).

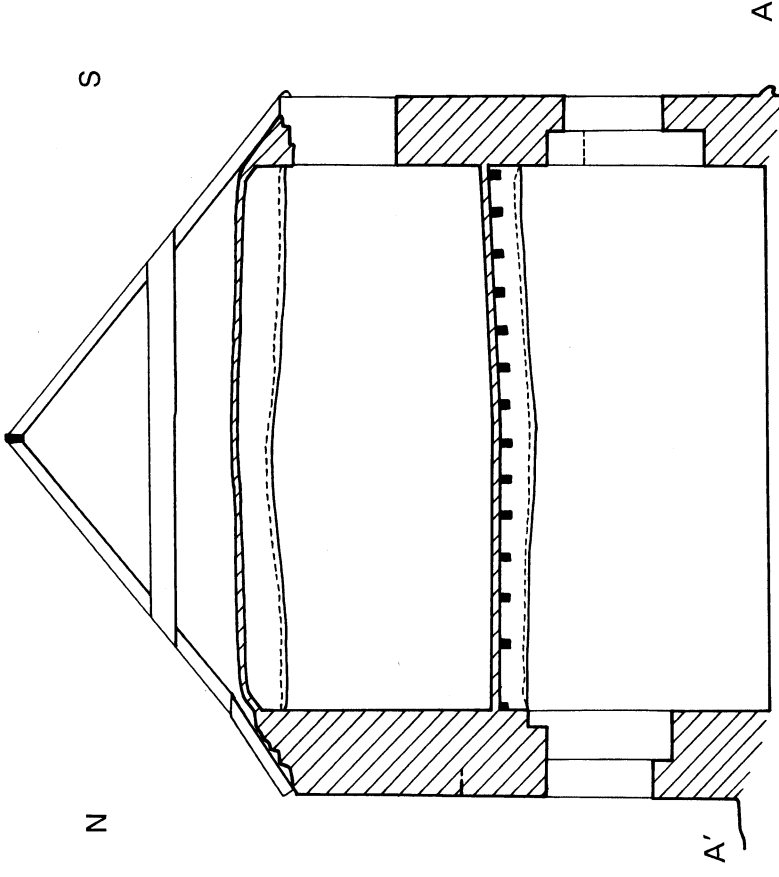
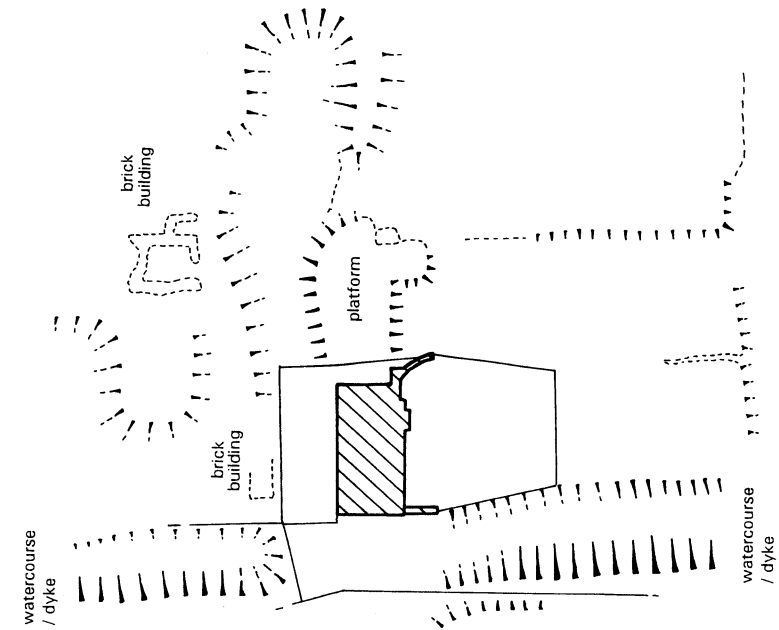
Bottom: Ordnance Survey 1910 25" map sheet 211/6 (resurveyed 1889, revised in 1909).

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TITLE		ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP DETAIL	
SCALE	NTS	DATE	DEC 2010
EDAS		FIGURE	4



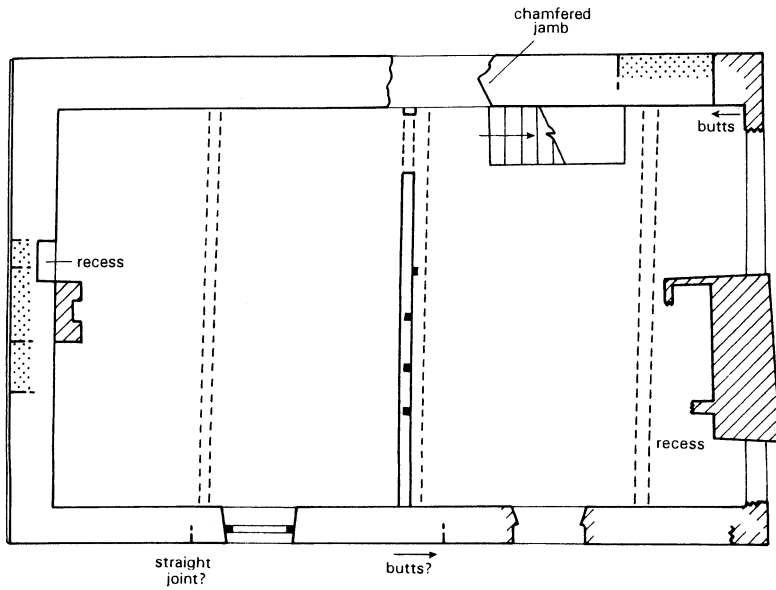
Source: T T Wildridge "Remains of Meaux Abbey 1893" (ERAO PH/2/194).

PROJECT		ABBAY COTTAGE, MEAUX			
TITLE				1893 SKETCH	
SCALE		NTS	DATE		DEC 2010
EDAS			FIGURE		5

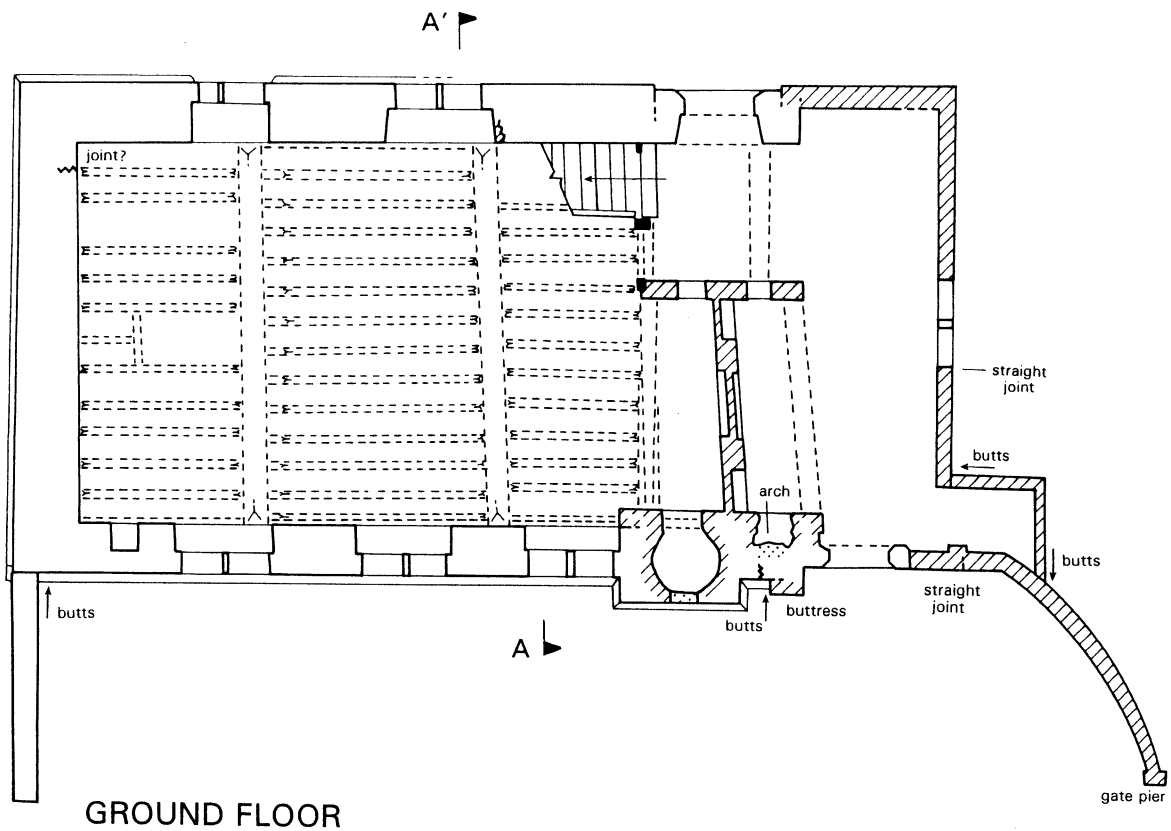


PROJECT	ABBAY COTTAGE, MEAUX
TITLE	SITE PLAN AND SECTION
SCALE	AS SHOWN
DATE	DEC 2010
FIGURE	6

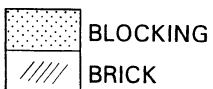
EDAS



FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR



PROJECT		ABBAY COTTAGE, MEAUX	
TITLE			
FLOOR PLANS			
SCALE	AS SHOWN	DATE	DEC 2010
EDAS		FIGURE	7



Plate 1: Abbey Cottage, looking SW.



Plate 2: North elevation, looking S.



Plate 3: East doorway in north elevation, looking SW.

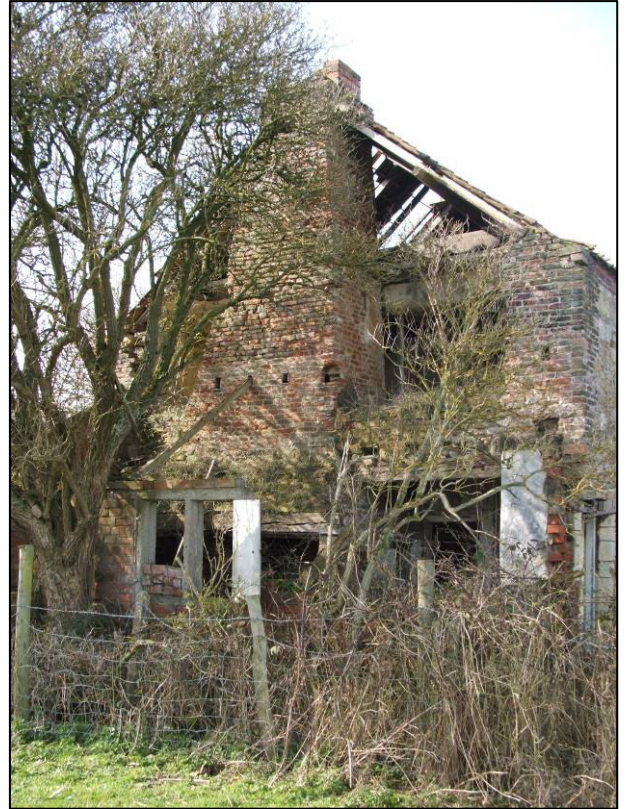


Plate 4: East gable and stack, looking SW.



Plate 5: West gable, looking E.



Plate 6: West internal fireplace, bressumer and bread oven, looking SE.



Plate 7: Ground floor of main building, looking SW.

APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX 1: LISTED BUILDING DESCRIPTION

Location: ABBEY COTTAGE TIPPETT LANE, MEAUX LANE, WAWNE, EAST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE, EAST YORKSHIRE

IoE Number: 164532

Date listed: 09 February 1987

Date of last amendment: 09 February 1987

Grade: II

TA03NE

WAWNE

MEAUX LANE

10/60

Abbey Cottage, Tippett Lane

House. C13 origins; considerably remodelled in C16 with C18 roof and C19 outshut. Coursed rubble with freestone dressings and quoins, brick, pantiled roof. 2 storeys, 2 bays, with single-storey outshut to right. Ground floor: three C20 two-light openings with mullions and boarded shutters to ground floor, two 6-pane sashes to first floor. End stacks, plain close verges. Rear elevation: C13 chamfered door jambs to left under rebuilt segmental head. The left and rear elevations have a chamfered plinth: in addition the left elevation has a C13 string course with filleted roll moulding at eaves level. Interior massive brick stack serving 2 inglenook fireplaces with chamfered bressumers to right: apparently a C16 insertion, this was intended to heat not only the surviving building but also its extension to the east now visible only as footings. Herringbone brick work to hearths. From the inside it can also be seen that the C20 ground floor windows have been inserted into larger 4-centred openings. There is a series of massive, chamfered primary joists. Disused and derelict at time of resurvey. This building is the last surviving structure of Meaux Abbey, founded in 1150, of which considerable earthworks remain in the immediately surrounding area.

Source: Images of England website (www.imagesofengland.org.uk)