

FAIR ACRE COTTAGE, KEARTON,
SWALEDALE, NORTH YORKSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND
ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY,
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In February 2007, Ed Dennison Archaeological Services Ltd (EDAS) were commissioned by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) to undertake a programme of archaeological and architectural survey at Fair Acre Cottage, Kearton, Swaledale, North Yorkshire (NGR SD99489900). The cottage was in a poor structural condition, and was of particular interest because it contained some drawn graffiti which was rapidly deteriorating. The resulting report would provide an accurate record of the building, as well as sufficient information to assist with the preparation of any future consolidation proposals.

The structural evidence suggests that the cottage was originally of a single storey with a single cell direct-entry plan, with a steeply pitched ling thatched roof. The ground floor room was heated by a fire beneath a firehood placed against the internal west wall, served by a small fire-window at the west end of the south wall with perhaps similar examples to the centre and east. There appear to have been no window openings in the north wall, although a narrow opening high in the east gable may also be an early feature. The entrance was probably in the same place as the existing doorway. A previous survey suggested that the earliest form of the house was late 17th century in date, which has been confirmed by the current study.

At some point in the mid 18th century, the house was raised to two full storeys and re-roofed with stone slates, although it still kept the single cell direct-entry plan. The fire-hood was also removed, and replaced by the existing fireplace. A staircase was placed against the east internal wall, serving an unheated first floor bedchamber. A screen wall in the south-east corner of the ground floor may have been associated with an earth closet located partly beneath the stairs. A small structure against the external west wall, now surviving only as an earthwork, probably represents the remains of a small stable or cow house erected during the 19th century. It has not been possible to establish when the building went out of use as a dwelling, but it must have been before the First World War and the painting of the graffiti. The building presumably performed a minor agricultural function for much of the 20th century, but it has clearly been in poor structural condition for some time.

The graffiti within the building comprises a number of paintings and texts, many deliberately defaced. As far as can be established, the paintings date to before the 1920s, and they depict a member of the local Gill family and three other characters of First World War vintage. One of latter, with a spiked helmet and moustache, may be a painting of Kaiser Wilhelm II, while the others appear to be the head and shoulders of a man wearing a British Army cap and the full face of another man, with a prominent moustache which might be a depiction of Lord Kitchener. The texts are mostly names and dates, but they do include slightly corrupted (or poorly remembered) versions of a famous quotation and an ancient Chinese proverb, both written by the same hand. The dated graffiti covers a period of 70 years, from 1917 through to 1988.

1 INTRODUCTION

Reasons and Circumstances for the Project

- 1.1 In February 2007, Ed Dennison Archaeological Services Ltd (EDAS) were commissioned by Robert White, Senior Conservation Archaeologist of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) to undertake a programme of archaeological and architectural survey at Fair Acre Cottage, Kearton, Swaledale, North Yorkshire. The cottage was in a poor structural condition, and was of particular interest because it contained some drawn graffiti which was rapidly deteriorating; this graffiti had been first been noted by English Heritage and YDNPA staff during a site visit to the area in July 2006.
- 1.2 In summary, the project involved an archaeological and architectural survey of the dilapidated building, augmented by a detailed descriptive record and report. The resulting report would provide an accurate record of the building. It would also provide information to assist with the preparation of any future consolidation proposals, should resources become available. The scope of the work was not defined by a formal project design but was outlined following discussion between EDAS and the Senior Conservation Archaeologist of the YDNPA.

Site Location and Description

- 1.3 Fair Acre Cottage lies at the western end of the dispersed hamlet of Kearton, c.500m to the north-east of Feetham village in Swaledale, North Yorkshire (NGR SD99489900) (see figure 1). The cottage occupies an isolated and elevated position at c.300m AOD on the south-facing slope of the valley (see plate 1). It is accessed via an unclassified road and a rough track leading from Feetham. The area around the cottage is largely rough grazing or unenclosed moorland, and the cottage itself was in poor structural condition. The site lies within the Yorkshire Dales National Park, in the Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Conservation Area. The unnamed cottage is shown on the Ordnance Survey 1st edition 6" map (sheet 52) (see figure 2), within the small dispersed hamlet.

Aims of the Survey

- 1.4 The aims of the survey work can be summarised as follows:
- to gather sufficient information to establish the extent, nature, character, condition, quality and date of the surviving archaeological and historical features within the cottage;
 - to provide a detailed architectural record of the cottage;
 - to provide a base-line of information to assist with the preparation of any future detailed consolidation specifications for the cottage.

Survey Methodologies

- 1.5 As noted above, the scope of the archaeological and architectural survey work was not defined by a formal brief or project design, but was agreed between EDAS and the Senior Conservation Archaeologist of the YDNPA in advance of fieldwork. Three main elements were involved.

Documentary research

- 1.6 No documentary research was required to be undertaken as part of the project. However, readily available material, including historic map coverage, was consulted. A programme of oral research was also undertaken within the local community in order to establish the identities of some of those who used the building or who had been responsible for the graffiti within. A previous survey of the building, undertaken by the Yorkshire Vernacular Buildings Study Group (YVBSG) in 1988 (Potter *et al* 1988) was also consulted. A full list of the sources consulted, together with their references, is given in the bibliography below.

Building survey

- 1.7 A detailed drawn record of the cottage was made at a scale of 1:50, using traditional hand-measurement techniques, on 12th and 23rd March 2007. Drawings were produced of all four external elevations, selected internal elevations as part of two sections through the building, and a ground floor plan. This plan shows all significant details such as openings (blocked or unblocked), inserted doorways, fittings, joist sockets etc, as well as earthworks, ruined structures and other features in the immediate vicinity of the cottage. The elevations show all significant features and details such as construction detail, modifications and differences in fabric, and the stones ("quoins") or dressings around openings and at corners; stone-by-stone drawings of the elevations were not required. The elevation drawings are marked with a common datum but were not reduced to a level AOD.

Photographic record

- 1.8 A general photographic record of the cottage and its significant parts, together with close-up photography of significant details, was also undertaken on 23rd March 2007. The photographic guidelines produced by English Heritage (2006, 10-12) were followed and each photograph was provided with a scale and an identifier where appropriate. Photographs were taken using both digital and 35mm colour format, with selected 35mm colour transparencies for presentational use. A selection of the photographs have been reproduced to illustrate this report.
- 1.9 All photographs were clearly numbered and labelled with the subject, orientation, date taken and photographer's name, and are cross referenced to film and negative numbers. All photographic film was exposed and processed to ensure high quality definition, and was processed to archival standards according to manufacturer's specifications.

Report and Archive

- 1.10 This report forms a detailed written record of the cottage, prepared from the sources of information set out above, and analyses its form, function, history, and sequence of development, as far as is possible using the previously gathered information. The site is also placed within its historical, social and industrial context, where possible.
- 1.11 The full archive, comprising paper, magnetic and plastic media, relating to the project has been ordered and indexed according to the standards set by the National Archaeological Record (EDAS site code FAK 07). It was deposited with the YDNPA on the completion of the project.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Introduction

- 2.1 As stated above, no documentary research was required to be undertaken as part of the project beyond readily available material, including historic map coverage. The following chapter summarises the information gained from this material.

Early History

- 2.2 Fleming, through his extensive fieldwork undertaken in Swaledale with Laurie and others, suggests that the frameworks for planned land divisions were probably set up in this area during the middle Iron Age, around 300 BC, if not earlier (Fleming 1998, 160). However, Kearton is characterised as a pre-Conquest settlement, the *tun* element denoting an Anglian name usually thought to date to the period c.750-950 AD. It may have been a subsidiary settlement of a larger territory with its core settlement at Reeth, and its position, high up on the daleside, appears to be characteristic of earlier pre-Conquest settlements in this part of Swaledale (Fleming 1998, 41-46).
- 2.3 Furthermore, Fleming notes the same conjunction of Anglo-Norse names between Kearton and Feetham (set slightly below Kearton), as he does elsewhere in Swaledale, for example between Muker and Kisdon. The Norse settlement of Feetham (meaning “at the meadows”) was established later than Kearton, but the proximity of the two meant that the cow pasture above them had alternative names, being known as either Kearton or Feetham pasture. There are also two lanes or footpaths in this part of the daleside, the upper path serving the earlier settlements of Kearton, Blades and Little Rowleth, while the lower path passes through the later Norse settlements. Of Kearton itself, Fleming states that there is an informal green set behind the houses (Fleming 1998, 34, 41 & 111-113).

Later History

- 2.4 Harrison and Hutton note that by 1640, large tracts of upper and lower Teesdale, Swaledale and Wensleydale were occupied by small freehold farmers often holding leases for 999 years, and it is no accident that the first phase of vernacular building in permanent materials begins at this time. A major building boom appears to have begun in Swaledale and Wensleydale shortly before the Civil War, reaching a peak in the last decades of 17th century (Harrison & Hutton 1984, 216).
- 2.5 Amongst the graffiti surviving on the plasterwork within the building, the names of several members of the Gill family are visible (see below). The Gill family have a longstanding history in this part of Swaledale, and some members still live in the area. Thomas Gill was born in c.1825 at Low Row, and had two sons by his second wife Hannah; John, born in c.1863 and Leonard, born c.1865 (Monika Bulter, *pers. comm.*). Shields Gill (1875-1951) was the eighth of ten children of Agnes and Shields Gill, a butcher/farmer in Grinton, and was minister of the Low Row United Reform Church between 1923-28 and 1940-45. Shields and Letitia Gill had two children before coming to Low Row in 1923, Ralph born in 1914 and Blanche, born in 1917 (<http://gmb.orpheusweb.co.uk/lowrow/min.html>).

3 SITE DESCRIPTION

Introduction

- 3.1 A detailed description of the building is given below, based on the records made on site and drawing on the earlier 1988 survey (Potter *et al* 1988). Throughout the following descriptions, reference is made to the photographic record. These photographs are referenced in the text using bold type, the numbers before the stroke representing the film number and the number after indicating the frame (e.g. **2/1**); Appendix 1 provides a catalogue of all the photographs taken during the project. Finally, in the following text, “modern” is used to denote the period after c.1945.

Location and Plan Form

- 3.2 The cottage stands on the south side of the unclassified track leading to the core of Kearton hamlet, set slightly above the level of the trackway itself (see plate 1). To the south, there is a small area of ground enclosed by a drystone wall, beyond which the ground slopes downwards very steeply into the valley (**1/3**, **1/4** and **3/5** to **3/8**). The ground also slopes away steeply to the east, although to the west, it rises gently towards an adjacent occupied house.
- 3.3 The cottage itself is rectangular in plan, of a single cell direct-entry form, with maximum external dimensions of 6.90m long (east-west) by 5.40m wide (north-south); the walls are on average 0.55m in width, although the north and west walls are slightly thicker at 0.65m (see figure 3). There was originally a single room to each floor.

Structure and Materials

- 3.4 The cottage is of two storeys, having a pitched stone slated roof with a substantial ridge stack at the west end. It is built of roughly coursed squared sandstone rubble, both dry and mortar pointed (see below), with quoined corners rising to coped gables supported on decorated kneelers incorporating a scrolled or spiral design (**1/10**); a similar kneeler has been re-used as the sill of a narrow opening in the east gable. The south-east corner of the building rises from a large block of stone, which projects slightly beyond the wall faces. This stone was previously tentatively suggested to have formed a padstone for part of a cruck (Potter *et al* 1988) although local information indicates that it was in fact placed here as part of repairs to this corner carried out in 1968-69 following its partial collapse (George Tiplady, *pers. comm.*); these repairs are not otherwise visible in the elevation.
- 3.5 The roof structure of the cottage comprises two roof trusses. In 1988, the roof was described as being supported by modern king-post trusses (Potter *et al* 1988). However, this appears to have been erroneous for at the time of the present survey, the trusses were both of tie-beam, principal rafter and collar form, each formed from a mixture of modern softwood and earlier hardwood (**1/33**, **1/38**, **1/39**, **3/18** and **3/19**). Vertical softwood struts have been added at a later date. Each principal carries a pair of staggered butt purlins with common rafters over (**1/38** and **1/39**).

External Elevations (see figure 4)

- 3.6 The main (south) elevation of the cottage faces into a small adjacent enclosed area, and provides the only existing access to the interior, through a plain doorway

at the east end of the elevation (1/2, 3/1 and 3/2). The doorway is flanked to the east by a straight joint relating to a blocked window visible from the interior, and to the west by a larger sub-square blocked window with a stone slate dripstone above (see plate 2). At the west end of the ground floor, there is a recessed and chamfered single-light fire-window with seatings for a central bar to sill and lintel (1/6). The stonework of the ground floor is dry, whilst that the first floor has been mortar pointed. There is a single central sub-square window to the first floor.

- 3.7 The base of the west gable (2/14 and 2/15) is partly obscured by the collapsed remains of a small attached structure, now visible largely in plan only (see below). There are two shallow recesses to the centre of the ground floor (1/7), together with a number of smaller recesses at a higher level probably relating to the former roof of the attached structure. Above these, the line of a steeply pitched gable can be made out, although it is not as apparent nor of the same profile as that seen on the east gable (see below) (1/8 and 1/11; see plate 3). The north elevation is blank, with no openings (1/49); the principal feature of interest is the change from dry to mortar pointed stonework at first floor level, as noted on the south elevation. The east gable preserves the line of the original steeply pitched thatched roof, pierced by a single narrow opening which has a re-used kneeler as a sill (1/1, 1/5, 3/3 and 3/4).

Circulation

- 3.8 As noted above, the only existing access into the interior of the cottage is through the doorway at the east end of the south elevation. At the time of the survey, the original floor was buried beneath accumulated debris and collapse, and so its form could not be ascertained.
- 3.9 The cottage had a single room to the ground floor. The principal feature of interest is the large, now blocked, mid-18th century fireplace to the west wall (see plate 4). This fireplace has monolithic jambs, surmounted by simple moulded corbels, supporting the broad arched head and moulded mantelshelf over; all are painted black (1/15, 1/27, 1/32 and 3/9 to 3/13). The fireplace was once flanked by recessed areas to either side, which both retain curved wooden lintels. The southern area has a second small square recess set into the rear (west wall) (1/40, 1/47, 1/48 and 3/16); an adjacent hole is partly blocked using a silk parachute, which was found blowing around on the moorland above Kearton during the Second World War (George Tiplady, *pers. comm.*).
- 3.10 In the 1988 survey (Potter *et al* 1988), it was noted that there were suggestions that a bake-oven had once existed here, but that no trace of it could be found. The fireplace was suggested to have replaced a firehood, the former position of which was marked by approximately opposed recesses in the north and south walls (1/35). There are further opposed recesses to the east, marking the former position of the first floor north-south aligned beams, together with a single recess immediately above the largest window in the south wall which is not mirrored to the north (3/14). A short angled wall projects into the ground floor on one side of the doorway (3/15), screening the area to the east. This was formerly lit by a now blocked splayed window in the south wall, whilst there is a tall blocked feature adjacent in the east wall (3/20). This is of similar dimensions to a doorway but cannot be seen externally, and so may be a shallow recess rather than an opening.
- 3.11 The staircase to the first floor was formerly positioned in the north-east corner of the ground floor, where fragments of the stone base from which it rose are still visible - traces of its line are also still visible in the plaster of the east wall (1/36,

3/17). Like the ground floor, the first floor also comprised only a single room. It was unheated (**1/16**), lit by a single central window in the south wall and a smaller opening in the east wall (**1/37** and **1/41**); some of the first floor walls retain expanses of whitewashed plaster.

Internal Graffiti

- 3.12 Although much of the wall plaster had fallen away by the time of the current survey, considerable amounts of graffiti remained visible, and this was recorded as part of the survey work. The graffiti ranges in date from the latter part of the First World War to the 1980s, and included painted and pencilled inscriptions. Deliberate attempts had been made to scratch out much of the graffiti, reducing its legibility, whilst in several places there are marks apparently left by shotgun pellets. It is interesting to note that the graffiti is not mentioned in the previous survey report (Potter *et al* 1988).
- 3.13 The principal items of interest are four paintings on the north wall (**1/17**, **1/18**, **1/25**, **2/17** and **2/18**; see plate 5). All are done in a red paint or dye, possibly sheep raddle (Robert White, *pers. comm.*), and, like the rest of the graffiti, they are quite badly scratched; in addition, only one is complete, the lower half of the other three having been lost when the plaster fell away. The paint or dye used for the complete painting is slightly darker than that for the other three, and the complete painting is arguably better drawn than the others, but there is no convincing reason to believe that they were done at different times. The owner of the barn and local farmer, George Tiplady, believes that the paintings have been there for all of his life and possibly since his family bought the farm in the early to mid 1920s (George Tiplady, *pers. comm.*). Although it was previously thought that the paintings might have been drawn by First World War prisoners of war held in the Richmond area, who could have been out-working on Swaledale farms, it is now thought that they were done by one of the younger male members of the Spensley family, of Langhorne House in Kearton, some of whom were known to be good artists (Raymond Alderson, *pers. comm.*).
- 3.14 The complete painting on the north wall shows the head and shoulders of a man in profile (**1/21** and **1/56**; see plate 8). He has neat (slicked back?) hair, prominent eyebrows and a moustache, and is wearing a collar and tie. Beneath the portrait is the name "J. GILL", believed to refer to the identity of the portrait (James or Jim Gill of Low Row), not the painter (Raymond Alderson, *pers. comm.*). Beneath this, there is a smudgy red line. Initially, this was thought to be some underlining of the name, but it apparently obscures the word "Murphy". Murphy was Gill's nickname, because his moustache made him resemble an Irishman who came to Swaledale once a year with a travelling fair; Gill's grandson didn't like the comparison, and so must have crossed it out (Raymond Alderson, *pers. comm.*). Consultations undertaken by Lawrence Barker with members of the Gill family still living in Swaledale have failed to reveal any further information relating to the portrait (Lawrence Barker, *pers. comm.*).
- 3.15 Below and to the left of Gill are the other three paintings (**1/17** and **1/18**). The far left painting shows the head and shoulders of a man in profile wearing a British Army soft cap; a patch of red to one side might obscure another name (**1/23** and **1/59**; see plate 7). The central painting is a similar profile of a German soldier wearing a spiked First World War *Pickelhaube* helmet; the prominent *Schnurbarr* moustache suggests that he may be intended to represent Kaiser Wilhelm II (**1/19**, **1/20**, **1/24** and **1/60**; see plate 6). The painting to the right shows part of the full face of another man, again with a prominent moustache (**1/19** and **1/20**), perhaps

bearing a passing resemblance to the famous recruitment poster of Lord Kitchener (see plate 6).

- 3.16 The other graffiti visible inside the cottage is listed below in a logical order, starting with the north wall, and proceeding from left to right; any relevant comments are highlighted in italics (see plate 9 and 10):

North wall

(?) Wilkinson July 19th 1940 COCKERTON CE (1/22 and 1/57)

I ask why (*possibly in same handwriting as entry relating to Leonard Gill below*).

(Bratting?) Hugo Dec 10th 1956

Chris Greatrix 28th September 1986. For this moment and forever, my actions and my dreams (Anne or Adam?) Greatrix 28.9.86. Good luck Chris! (1/58)

E G Sept 10th 26

Leonard Gill June 1st 1917 (*Leonard Gill's date of birth - Raymond Alderson, pers. comm.*).

Adam Greatrix 1988 (*same family as Chris Greatrix noted above - Raymond Alderson, pers. comm.*).

Sheeps

Oh where is my boy (*rest illegible*) (1/53)

Vic and Ben was with girls

24 0
17 2 10

5 7 2 £5 (1/26)

W A Simpson 1937

John Willis 1961

Big Cock Bill

Mary Hudson July 19th 1940

1919 (?) Gill (*may be date of birth of Leonard Gill's sister - Raymond Alderson, pers. comm.*).

Wet Day August 1954 P Brown 1954 J Brown

If you bring a girl in here to shelter (?) for love felt her (1/27, 1/51 and 1/61)

Raymond Burgess

1925

South Wall

J W Watson 25/1/25 (*above doorway*) (1/31)

Monday June 13

Ralph White Rex Williamson (dog) (*Ralph White lived at Gallows Top, whilst the Williamson family holidayed at Park End - Raymond Alderson, pers. comm.*).

Oh spoken word thou art the Master
The spoken word is master of thee

(*In same hand*) You cannot prevent the birds of sadness from flying over your head, but you can prevent them from settling in your hair! (1/28, 1/29 and 1/42)

N.S

Adjacent features

- 3.17 A number of other features were recorded either in the immediate vicinity of the cottage or in the surrounding area. The remains of a small structure, post-dating the cottage and butting its west gable, are also visible (1/13). This structure was c.4.80m long (north-south) by 3.40m wide (east-west), with 0.65m wide mortared coursed squared sandstone rubble walls and a possible doorway at the east end of the north wall; the interior was obscured by rubble. Further fragmentary wall footings were visible to the north and east of the building.
- 3.18 The cottage once had a narrow pathway, c.1.1m wide, running along its east and south sides (1/12). On the south side, the pathway retains flagstone paving and was once enclosed by a wall running parallel to it, although only the footings for this now remain. The drystone wall enclosing the area to the south of the cottage is of roughly coursed rubble, with vertical coping but few throughstones. It stands up to 1.4m high and has a slightly battered profile, being c.0.60m wide at the base. The wall may have a blocked stile towards its south-west corner and an old bedstead, possibly taken from the cottage, is leant against its central section.
- 3.19 The ruined remains of another house/cottage can be seen on the north side of the track running past the cottage (1/44, 1/46, 1/50 and 3/21 to 3/25). It is almost completely ruinous, the only portion standing to any height being the eastern gable which contains the remains of a fireplace similar to that noted within Fair Acre Cottage. However, unlike Fair Acre, there is no indication in the ruined building of an earlier gable incorporated into the existing one. The main body of the house appears to have comprised two cells; the southern contained the remains of a small 19th century cart or wagon converted into a wheeled trailer at the time of the survey. This building, unnamed but roofed and intact, is shown on the Ordnance Survey 1st edition 6" map (sheet 52) (see figure 2). There is a further ruinous structure to the south of the house.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The structural evidence suggests that in its earliest form, Fair Acre Cottage was of a single storey with a single cell direct-entry plan, with a steeply pitched ling thatched roof; contrary to earlier suggestions, the large stone at the base of the south-east corner is not a padstone for an earlier cruck-frame, but relates to repairs carried in the late 1960s, although it is possible that stone walls noted eroding out of the ground to the north and east of the house might represent the remains of an earlier building. The ground floor room was heated by a fire beneath a firehood placed against the internal west wall, served by a small fire-window at the west end of the south wall and perhaps similar examples to the centre and east, now either replaced by the existing larger window or blocked. There appear to have been no window openings in the north wall, although the narrow opening high in the east gable may also be an early feature. The entrance was probably in the same place as the existing doorway; the blocked doorway-like feature at the south end of the east wall cannot be seen externally and, assuming that the east gable has not been refaced, it appears to be some kind of recess rather than a doorway. The previous survey suggested that the earliest form of the house was late 17th century in date (Potter *et al* 1988), and the current study has found no evidence to contradict this.
- 4.2 At some point in the mid 18th century, the house was raised to two full storeys and re-roofed with stone slates, although it kept the single cell direct-entry plan. At the same time, the fire-hood was removed, and replaced by the existing fireplace, previously described as “a humble example of the triple-arch chimney area so popular in larger houses in the area” (Potter *et al* 1988). A staircase was placed against the east internal wall, serving an unheated first floor bedchamber. The screen wall in the south-east corner of the ground floor may have been erected to contain an earth closet located partly beneath the stairs; if this was the case, then the window opening here in the south wall was presumably blocked at the same time. The small structure against the west external wall, now surviving only as an earthwork, probably represents the remains of a small stable or cow house erected during the 19th century. There was also formerly a paved pathway around the east and south sides of the house, partly screened by a drystone wall along the south side.
- 4.3 The likely development of the house as outlined above corresponds closely to a pattern established for Swaledale through the work of the Yorkshire Vernacular Buildings Study Group (YVBSG) and others (e.g. Harrison & Hutton 1984). As stated above in Chapter 2 above, a major building boom appears to have begun in Swaledale and Wensleydale shortly before the Civil War, reaching a peak in the last decades of 17th century, the likely date of the earliest house on the site for which structural evidence survives. However, this rebuilding did not necessarily result in larger houses; surviving probate inventories for Wensleydale for the period 1660-1700, suggest the importance of small houses (45% had one to three rooms), with 40% also being of a single storey only (Harrison & Hutton 1984, 216). Of the 241 houses in Swaledale that had been surveyed by the YVBSG by 2000, 166 were found to be of direct-entry end stack form, and of these 51 were of a single cell only. Furthermore, thatched roofs were found to relate to houses only with single chimney stacks, and of these many were of a single cell with an end firehood (McLellan 2000, 33-34), again corresponding closely to what was recorded at Fair Acre Cottage.
- 4.4 It has not been possible to establish at what date the building went out of use as a dwelling, but this must have happened before the First World War and the painting

of the graffiti (see below). The building presumably performed a minor agricultural function for much of the 20th century, but has clearly been in poor structural condition for some time.

- 4.5 Unless further family information is forthcoming from an as yet unknown source, it is considered unlikely that much more can be said about the surviving graffiti. As far as can be established through enquiries with local historians, local residents, family historians and regional building recording groups, the paintings date to before the 1920s and were painted by a younger male member of a local family. They show a member of the Gill family, and three other characters of First World War vintage.
- 4.6 If the painting with the spiked helmet and moustache is indeed Kaiser Wilhelm II, then it is a relatively uncommon example of such; Cocroft *et al* note the general scarcity of surviving examples of First World War graffiti or art done by soldiers in Britain, some of the best known being that made by conscientious objectors at Richmond Castle in North Yorkshire (Cocroft *et al* 2006, 35-38). They also include a rare example of a pencil sketch of the Kaiser, probably made by soldiers billeted at a farm at Wigmore Abbey in Herefordshire. Without wanting to read too much into the “significance” of the Kearton paintings, which are likely to be well-executed doodles by local boys, they form an interesting and valuable survival of civilian artwork of the period that might be contrasted with surviving military examples or indeed children’s graffiti and artwork from the Second World War (Cocroft *et al* 2006, 71-73; Morecroft 2008). Similarly, one might also make some comparisons between the paintings and the wider categories of “Trench Art” produced by civilians between 1914-1939 as discussed by Saunders (2002, 27-29), or graffiti recorded in other agricultural buildings within Yorkshire (Richardson & Dennison, forthcoming).
- 4.7 One might also speculate about the longevity of local slights, as demonstrated by J Gill’s grandson crossing out the name “Murphy” beneath his grandfather’s portrait, or indeed local levels of education. The graffiti “Oh spoken word thou art the Master - The spoken word is master of thee” may be a corruption or poorly remembered rendition of “Of thine unspoken word thou art master; thy spoken word is master of thee”, which is a famous but undedicated quotation (<http://www.geocities.com.pleco3/quotes/pquotes.htm?200919>). In the same hand, on the same wall is “You cannot prevent the birds of sadness from flying over your head, but you can prevent them from settling in your hair!”. This is more reminiscent of the homespun humorous remarks one often finds in autograph books of the 1920s through to the 1940s, although it is a slight corruption of an ancient Chinese proverb: “You cannot prevent the birds of sadness from passing over your head, but you can prevent their making a nest in your hair” (<http://thinkexist.com>). Finally, given that the dated graffiti in the building covers a period of 70 years (from 1917 through to 1988), it may be that the paintings acted as a catalyst for the continued use of the space within the former house for this activity.

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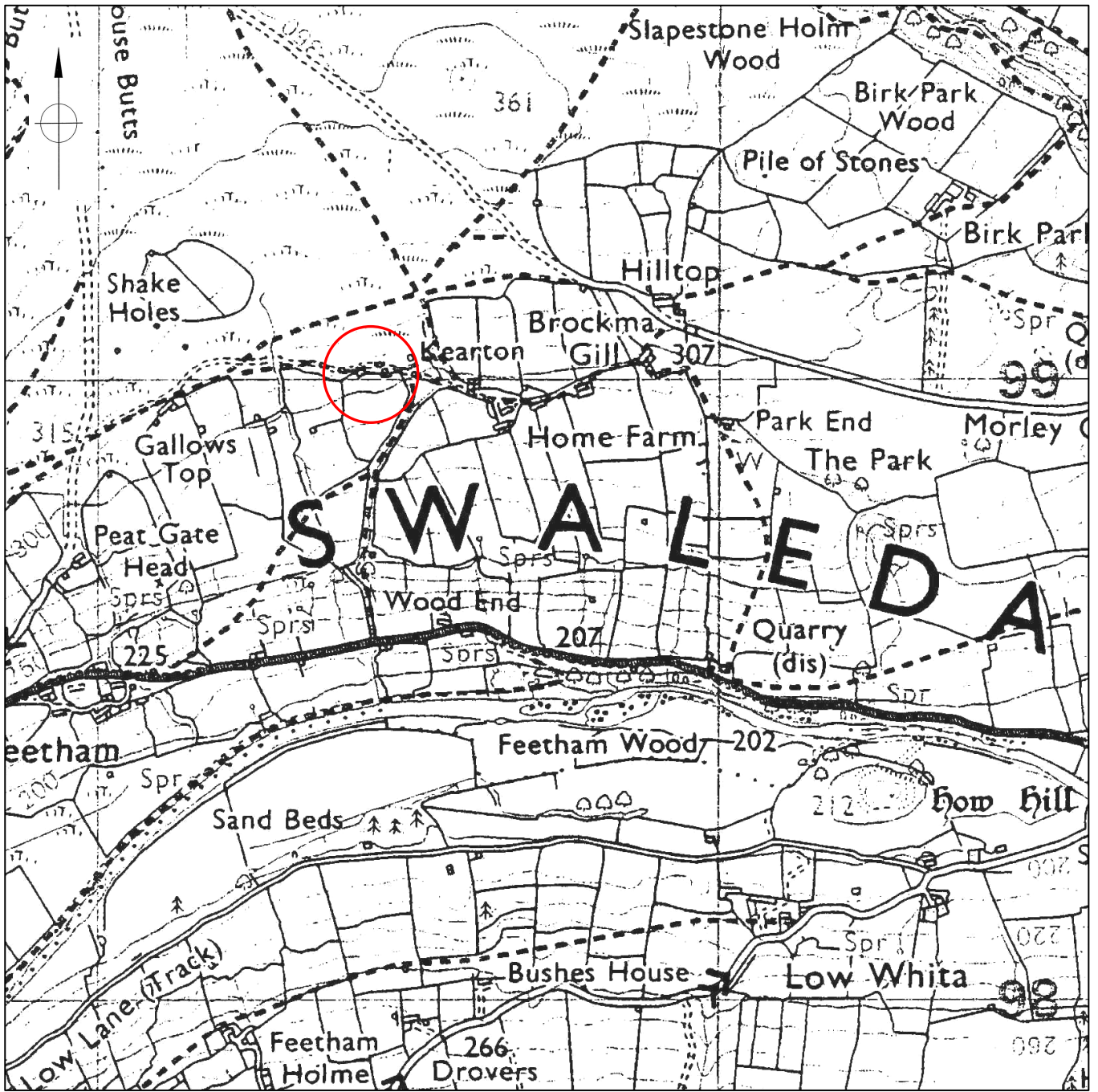
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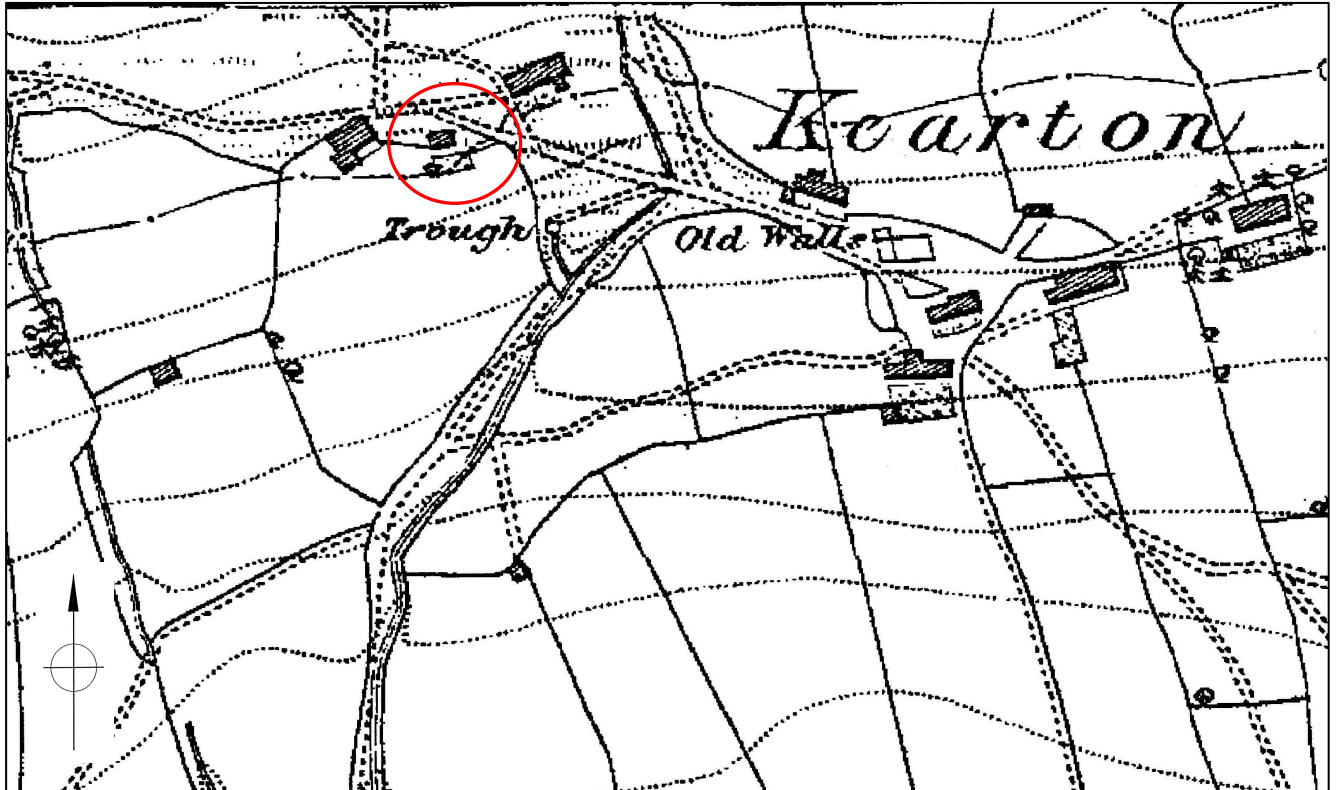
6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 6.1 The archaeological and architectural survey at Fair Acre Cottage was commissioned by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. EDAS would like to thank Robert White of the YDNPA for his assistance and co-operation in carrying out the recording work. EDAS would also like to thank Monika Butler, who provided information on the history of the Gill family, and Lawrence Barker, who carried out enquiries with Gill family members still resident in Swaledale. Especial thanks are due to George Tiplady and Raymond Alderson, who provided much invaluable information on the graffiti without which this report would have been considerably poorer.
- 6.2 The on-site building recording was undertaken by Shaun Richardson and Richard Lamb, assisted by Ed Dennison. Shaun Richardson produced the site archive and a draft report. Robert White kindly provided comments on the draft report. The final report was produced by Ed Dennison of EDAS, with whom the responsibility for any errors remains.



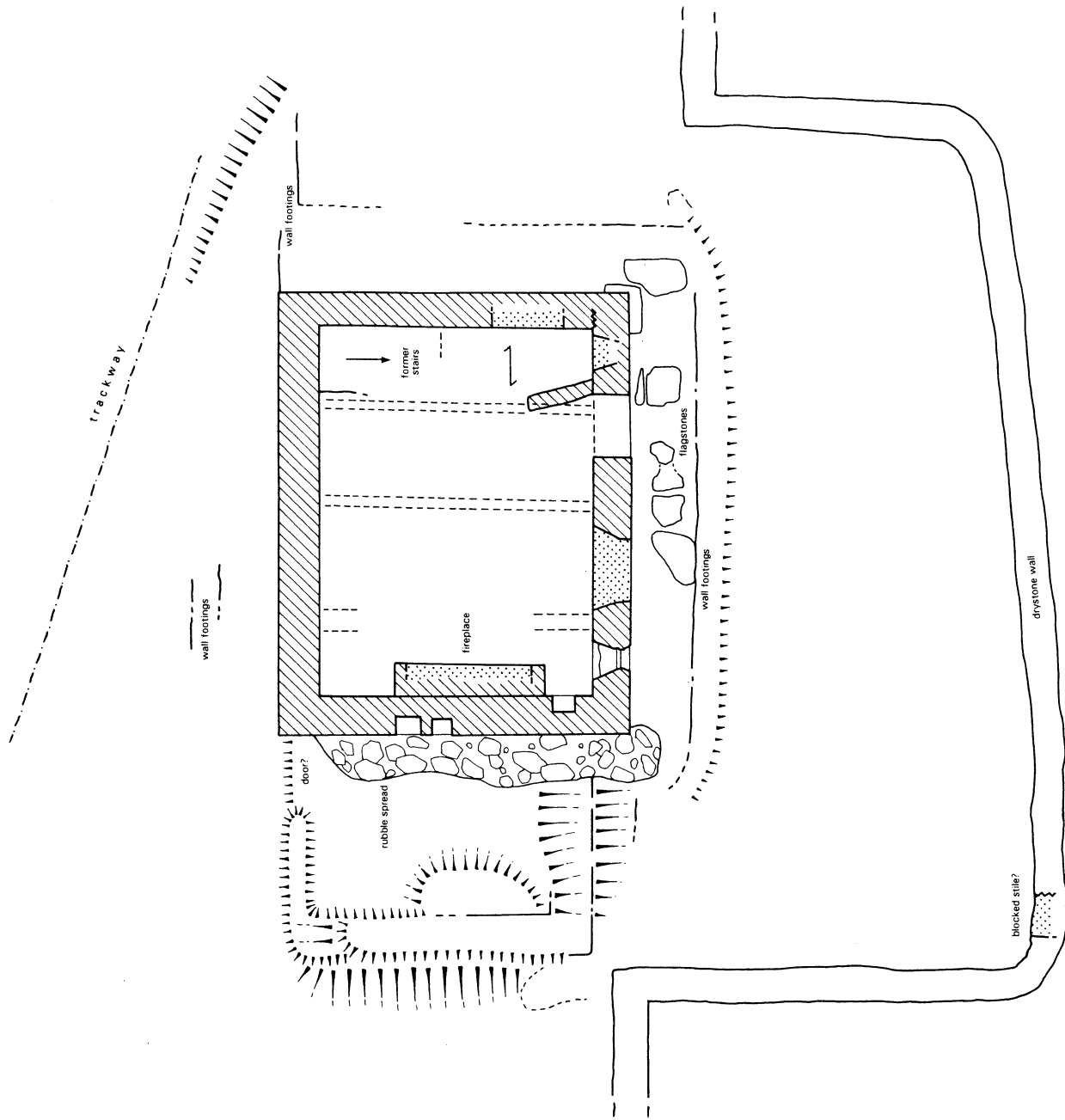
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PROJECT		FAIR ACRE COTTAGE, KEARTON	
TITLE		GENERAL LOCATION	
SCALE	NTS	DATE	MAY 2009
EDAS		FIGURE	1



Source: Ordnance Survey 1857 6"
map sheet 52.

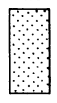
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NTS	MAY 2009
EDAS	FIGURE
	2

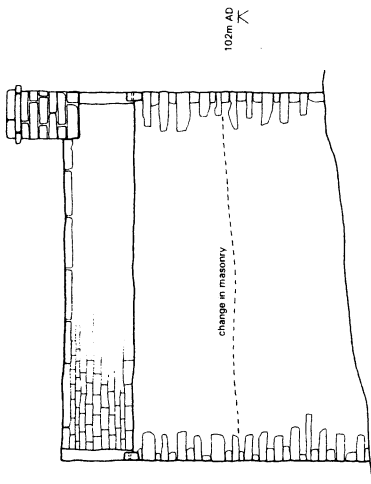


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TITLE	PLAN		
SCALE	AS SHOWN	DATE	MAY 2009
	EDAS	FIGURE	3

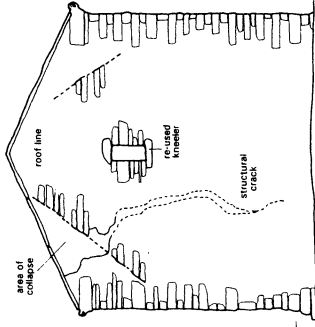


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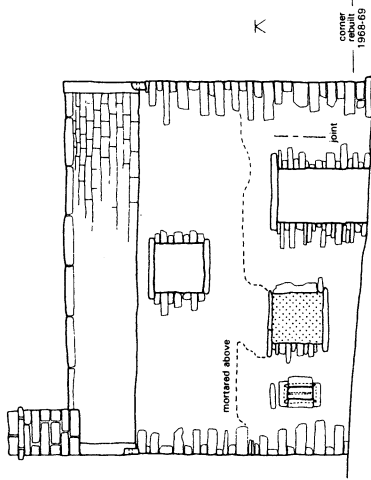




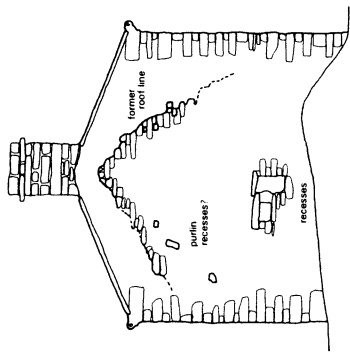
North elevation



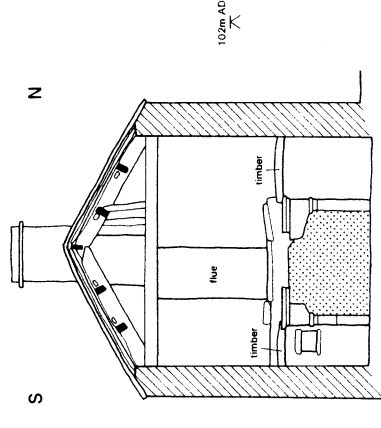
East gable



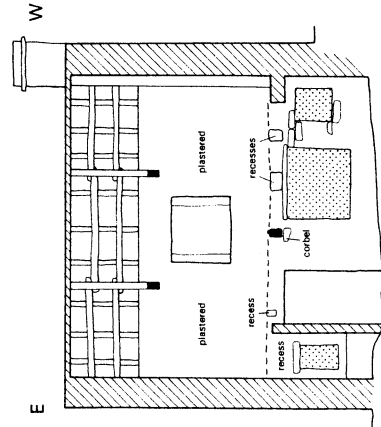
South elevation



West gable



North-south section



East-west section



PROJECT	FAIR ACRE COTTAGE, KEARTON		
TITLE	ELEVATIONS AND SECTIONS		
SCALE	AS SHOWN	DATE	MAY 2009
	EDAS	FIGURE	4



Plate 1: Fair Acre Cottage, looking SW across Swaledale (photo 1/3).



Plate 2: South elevation, looking NE (photo 1/2).



Plate 3: West gable, looking E (photo 1/11).



Plate 4: Blocked fireplace, internal west wall, looking W (photo 1/15).



Plate 5: Painted portraits, north internal wall (photo 1/18).



Plate 6: Kaiser and Kitchener portraits?, north internal wall (photo 1/20).



Plate 7: WW1 soldier?, north internal wall (photo 1/59).



Plate 8: J Gill portrait, north internal wall (photo 1/56).

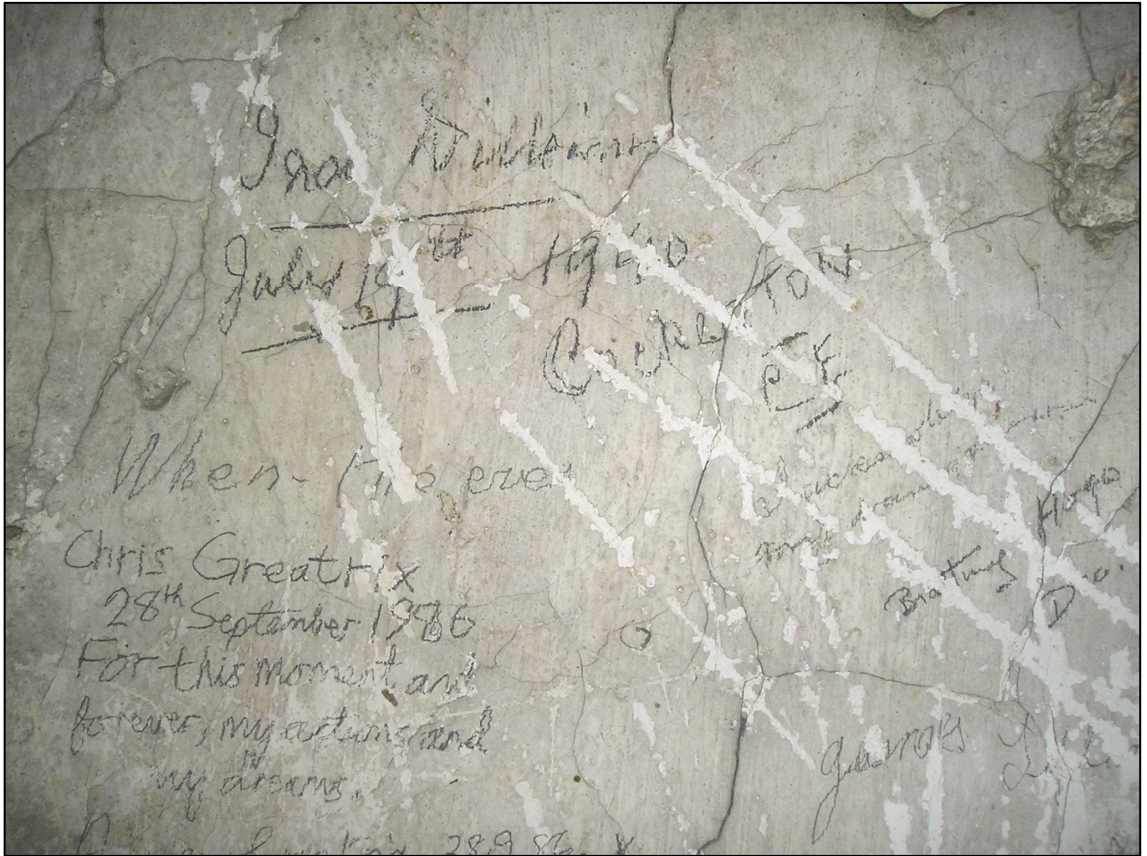


Plate 9: Graffiti, north internal wall (photo 1/57).

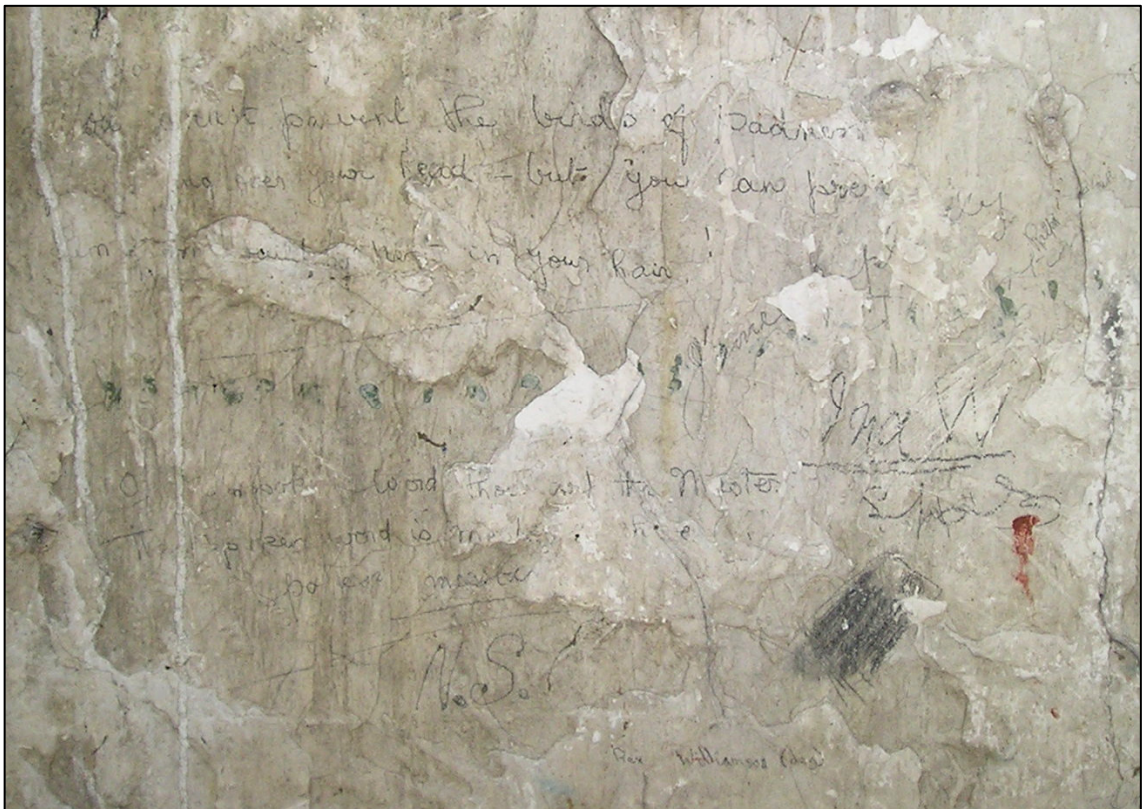


Plate 10: Graffiti, north internal wall (photo 1/29).

APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX 1: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER

Film 1: Digital colour prints taken 23/03/07

Film 2: 35mm colour prints taken 12/03/07

Film 3: 35mm colour prints taken 23/03/07

Film	Frame	Subject	Scale
1	1	East gable, looking W	2m
1	2	South elevation, looking NE	2m
1	3	Site, looking SW	2m
1	4	Site, looking SW	2m
1	5	East gable, looking W	2m
1	6	Detail of early fire window and blocked window to south elevation, looking N	1m
1	7	Recesses in west gable, looking E	1m
1	8	West gable, looking E	1m
1	10	Detail of kneeler in west gable, looking E	-
1	11	West gable, looking E	1m
1	12	Flagstones and path to south of house, looking W	1m
1	13	Footings to west of house, looking SW	1m
1	15	Blocked fireplace, internal west wall, looking W	1m
1	16	Fireplace flue to first floor, internal west wall, looking W	1m
1	17	Painted portraits, north internal wall, looking N	0.5m
1	18	Painted portraits, north internal wall, looking N	0.5m
1	19	Kaiser? and Kitchener? portraits, north internal wall, looking N	0.5m
1	20	Kaiser? and Kitchener? portraits, north internal wall, looking N	0.5m
1	21	J Gill portrait, north internal wall, looking N	-
1	22	Detail of graffiti, north internal wall, looking N	-
1	23	WW1 soldier portraits, north internal wall, looking N	-
1	24	Kaiser? portrait, north internal wall, looking N	-
1	25	Detail of graffiti, north internal wall, looking N	-
1	26	Detail of graffiti, north internal wall, looking N	-
1	27	Detail of graffiti, south internal wall, looking S	-
1	28	Detail of graffiti, south internal wall, looking S	-
1	29	Detail of graffiti, south internal wall, looking S	-
1	31	Detail of graffiti, south internal wall, looking S	-
1	32	Blocked fireplace, west internal wall, looking SW	1m
1	33	Roof trusses, looking SW	-

Film	Frame	Subject	Scale
1	34	Blocked fireplace, west internal wall, looking SW	1m
1	35	South-west internal corner, looking SW	1m
1	36	North-east internal corner showing stair stain, looking E	1m
1	37	East internal wall, upper part, looking E	-
1	38	Roof trusses, looking W	-
1	39	East roof truss, looking E	-
1	40	Possible earth closet, south-east internal corner, looking S	1m
1	41	East internal wall, upper part, looking E	-
1	42	Detail of graffiti, south internal wall, looking S	-
1	44	Ruined house, north-east of site, looking NE	-
1	45	Separate structure to south-west of ruined house, NE of site, looking NE	-
1	46	Ruined house, north-east of site, looking NE	-
1	47	Recess to south of fireplace, west internal wall, looking W	-
1	48	Recess to south of fireplace, west internal wall, looking W	-
1	49	North elevation, looking SE	-
1	50	Ruined house, north-east of site, looking NE	-
1	51	Detail of graffiti, north internal wall, looking N	-
1	53	Detail of graffiti, north internal wall, looking N	-
1	56	J Gill portrait, north internal wall, looking N	-
1	57	Detail of graffiti, north internal wall, looking N	-
1	58	Detail of graffiti, north internal wall, looking N	-
1	59	WW1 soldier portrait, north internal wall, looking N	-
1	60	Kaiser? portrait, north internal wall, looking N	-
1	61	Detail of graffiti, north internal wall, looking N	-
2	14	West gable, looking E	1m
2	15	West gable, looking E	1m
2	17	Painted portraits, north internal wall, looking N	1m
2	18	Painted portraits, north internal wall, looking N	1m
3	1	South elevation, looking N	2m
3	2	South elevation, looking N	2m
3	3	East gable, looking W	2m
3	4	East gable, looking W	2m

Film	Frame	Subject	Scale
3	5	Site, looking SW	-
3	6	Site, looking SW	-
3	7	Site, looking SW	-
3	8	Site, looking SW	-
3	9	Blocked fireplace, west internal wall, looking W	1m
3	10	Blocked fireplace, west internal wall, looking W	1m
3	11	Blocked fireplace, west internal wall, looking W	1m
3	12	Blocked fireplace, west internal wall, looking W	1m
3	13	Blocked fireplace, west internal wall, looking W	1m
3	14	South internal wall, looking S	1m
3	15	South internal wall, looking S	1m
3	16	Recess to south of fireplace, west internal wall, looking W	1m
3	17	East internal wall, looking E	1m
3	18	East roof truss, looking E	-
3	19	West roof truss, looking W	-
3	20	Possible earth closet, south internal wall, looking S	1m
3	21	Ruined house, north-east of site, looking NE	-
3	22	Ruined house, north-east of site, looking NE	-
3	23	Ruined house, north-east of site, looking NE	-
3	24	Ruined house, north-east of site, looking NE	-
3	25	Ruined house, north-east of site, looking NE	-



1-01.JPG



1-02.JPG



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1-04.JPG



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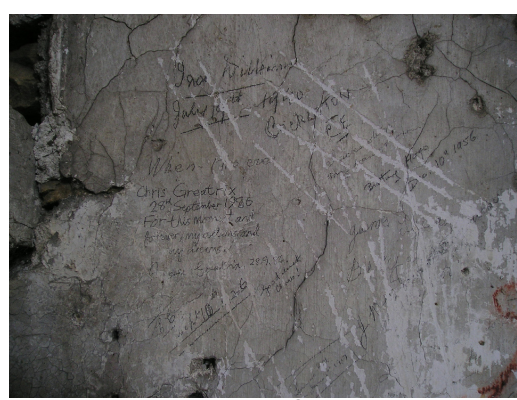
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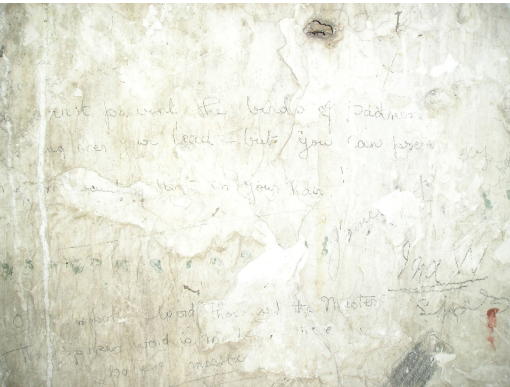
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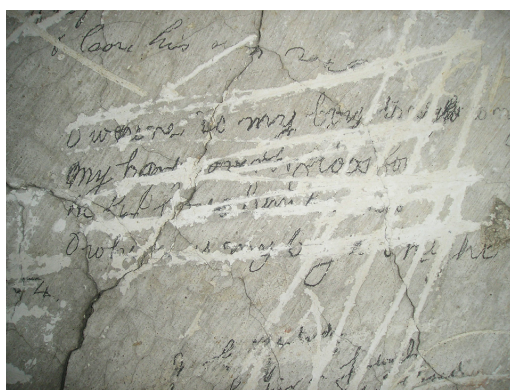
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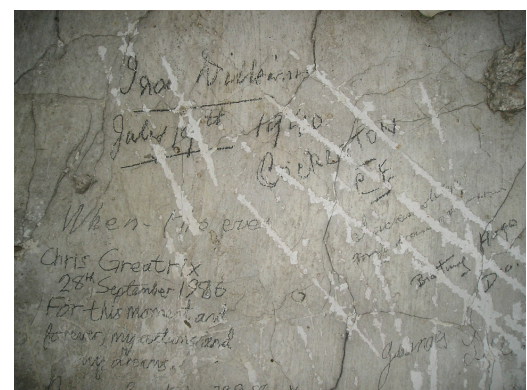
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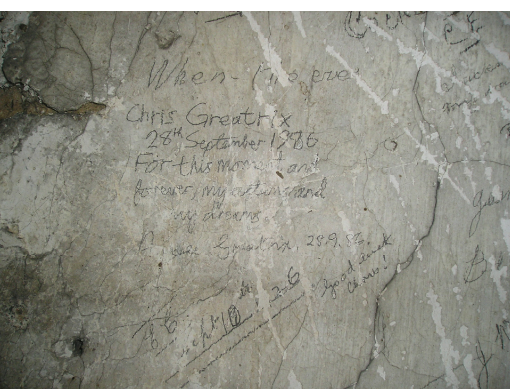
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