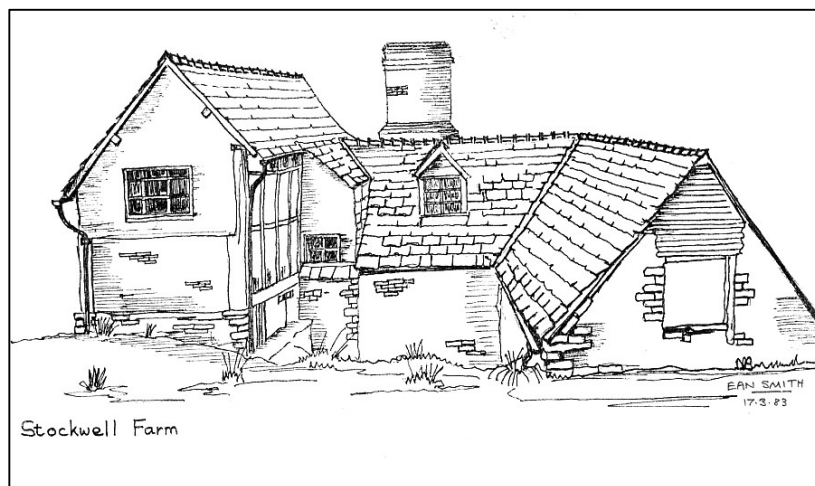


The Landmark Trust

STOCKWELL FARM

History Album



Written and researched by Charlotte Haslam, 1987
Updated 2005 and re-presented in 2015

The Landmark Trust Shottesbrooke Maidenhead Berkshire SL6 3SW
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BASIC DETAILS

Built 17th century

Altered c.1700 and c.1830

Bought by Landmark Trust 1972

Architect for the restoration: James D. Reid

Builders: Ernest Deacon Ltd

Restoration completed 1973

Further building work 1984

(Architects: Jones Thomas Ass.)

Much of the information in this album was contributed by Commander M. Beebee.

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Stockwell Farm

Summary

Stockwell Farm is an example of a once common building in which people and animals lived together under one roof - a broad definition within which there are of course many variations: the animals can live on the ground floor with the family above, or they can live side by side on one floor. The latter sort are found in a number of areas in the British Isles but most commonly in Yorkshire, Wales and Devon, and are called, somewhat loosely, the Long-house. But there is considerable debate and disagreement among historians of vernacular buildings as to what distinguishes a true Long-house (that such a thing exists is conceded) from many similar buildings. More strictly these buildings should all be called house-and-byre homesteads, indicating simply that they had the living quarters for the family at one end and a byre for the animals at the other. Usually, though not necessarily, one continuous roof covered both parts.

Stockwell Farm has been described as a Long-house but it does not in fact conform in at least one major respect to what are now usually regarded as the main characteristics. I.C. Peate, who first formulated the term 'Long-house' in his book *The Welsh House* threw the net wide and said that the only essential feature was that of internal access to the cow house. On the other hand, Peter Smith, author of *Houses of the Welsh Countryside* considers a far more important distinguishing feature to be that the house was actually entered through the byre, along a feeding walk which acted as a division between men and animals, 'for' he writes on one occasion 'if we allow any house with internal access to the byre to be described as a Long-house, much confusion will arise, and many fundamentally dissimilar types of plan will be placed in the same category.'

If we follow Iorwerth Peate, Stockwell Farm is a long house, since at one stage the door between house and byre was there - although it was later blocked up. Common also to the Long-house are the steps up from byre to kitchen level, a means of preventing the accumulated manure of the cows from spreading into the upper end or 'pen uchaf.' But if we follow Peter Smith, it is not a long house, since the living quarters always had their own entrance, quite separate from that leading into the byre.

Vernacular buildings such as this are extremely difficult to date, since the same methods of construction and plan types continued to be used until surprisingly late dates. However, from the fact that Stockwell Farm was not built with a chimney, and that the timbers of the original roof, one of which can be seen in the bedroom, look medieval, we can surmise that it was built in the late Middle Ages or, more probably, the 16th or even the early 17th century. At this time the living end would simply have consisted of a single ground floor room, with a loft above for sleeping. The floor of the kitchen was of stone flags, as it still is. The floor of the byre was of cobbles.

Later, perhaps about 1700, a parlour or sitting room was added onto the western end, with a bedroom above; also the south west bedroom and the stairs. The pale oak floor beams can be seen in the sitting room. The addition was built of stone up to the first floor, to match the earlier part of the house; above that it was timber-frame and plaster.

Sometime around 1830 the gable end of the newer part was re-faced quite grandly with dressed stone. The windows were given stone arches. The fireplace in the sitting room was probably put in then. It was possibly at about this date that it was no longer considered healthy to have the animals living immediately next to the house, and access between the two was blocked off. Whether cows were still kept in the byre, or whether it became a barn at this point, we don't know.

Landmark did as little as possible to the house. Inside, all the partitions were left the same as before, only a bathroom being fitted into the smallest bedroom, and the kitchen into the larder. The door leading into the byre was unblocked. The floors are all original, stone flags in the kitchen, cobbles in the animals' quarters, good oak boards in two bedrooms and pine boards in the east bedroom. It is in this bedroom that the fine oak beams of the oldest part of the farm are visible. On the front of the house, the white wash which had distinguished the farmhouse from the farm buildings was removed, so that the whole range should be the same. A new dormer window was added to light the east bedroom, above the front door. This was later found to leak, and so in 1984 it was replaced with one to match that on the back of the house, facing the hill, which dates from the 19th century.

Landmark took on and restored the Harp Inn in the village at the same time as Stockwell Farm. It was let commercially until Landmark sold it in 1984.

Stockwell Farm

Stockwell Farm is an example of a once common building in which people and animals lived together under one roof - a broad definition within which there are of course many variations: the animals can live on the ground floor with the family above, or they can live side by side on one floor, for example. Of the latter sort one, found in a number of areas in the British Isles but most commonly in Yorkshire, Wales and Devon, folk historians have called, somewhat loosely, the Long-house. But there is considerable debate and disagreement among historians of vernacular buildings as to what distinguishes a *true* Long-house (that such a thing exists is conceded) from many similar buildings. More strictly these buildings should all be called house-and-byre homesteads, indicating simply that they had the living quarters for the family at one end and a byre for the animals at the other. Usually, though not necessarily, one continuous roof covered both parts. And it is within this wider categorisation that both the true Long-house, and Stockwell Farm, fall.

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So, if we follow Iorwerth Peate, Stockwell Farm is a Long-house, since at one stage the door between house and byre was there - although it was later blocked up.¹

Common also to the Long-house are the steps up from byre to kitchen level, a means of preventing the accumulated manure of the cows from spreading into the upper end or 'pen uchaf.'

But if we follow Peter Smith, it is not, since the living quarters always had their own entrance, quite separate from that leading into the byre. The date of the house Vernacular buildings such as this are extremely difficult to date, since the same methods of construction and plan types continued to be used until surprisingly late dates. However, from the fact that Stockwell Farm was not built with a chimney, and that the timbers of the original roof, one of which can be seen in the bedroom, look medieval, we can surmise that it was built in the late Middle Ages or, more probably, the 16th or even the early 17th century.² At this time the living end would simply have consisted of a single ground floor room, with a loft above for sleeping. The floor of the kitchen was of stone flags, as it still is. The floor of the byre was of cobbles.

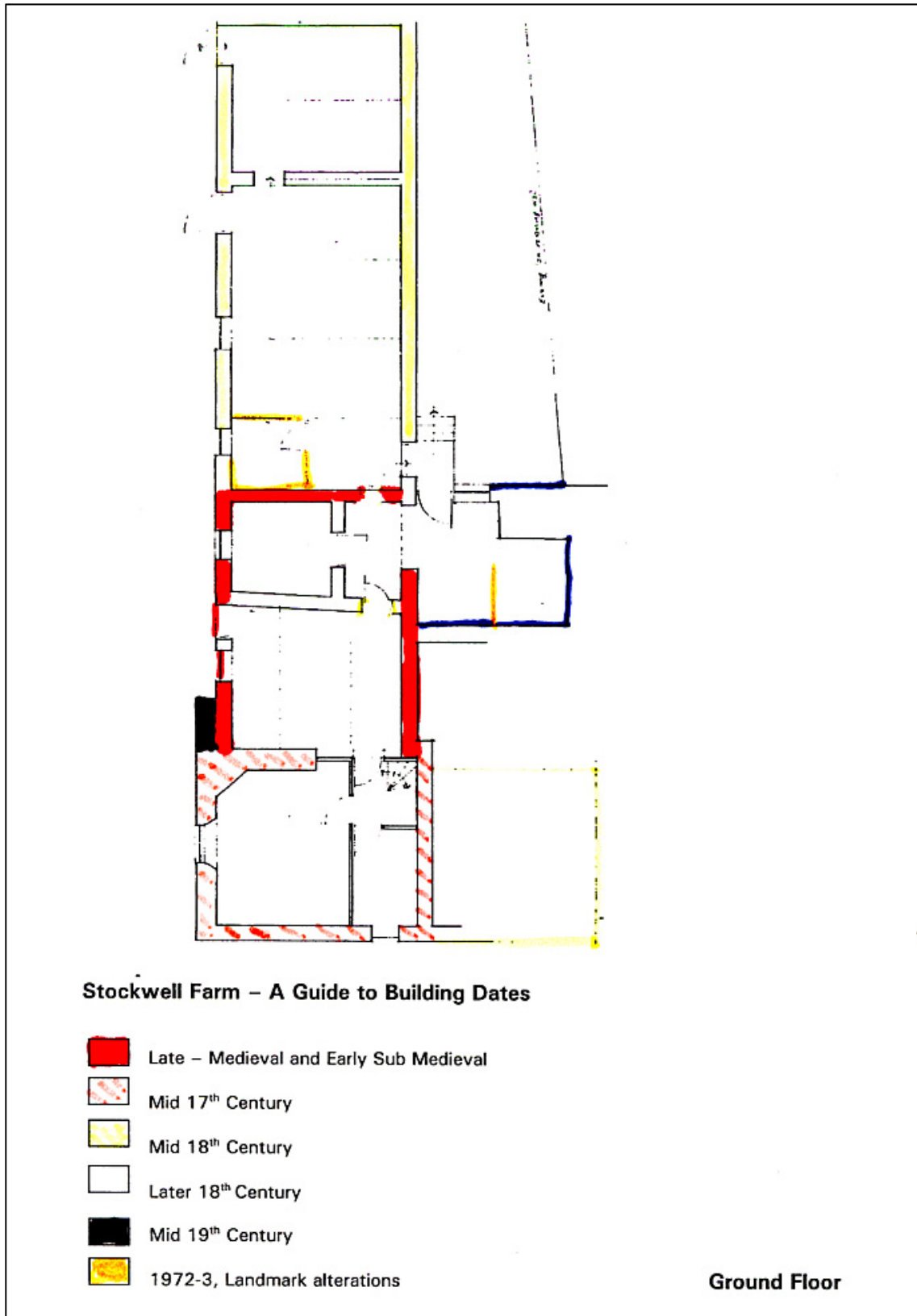
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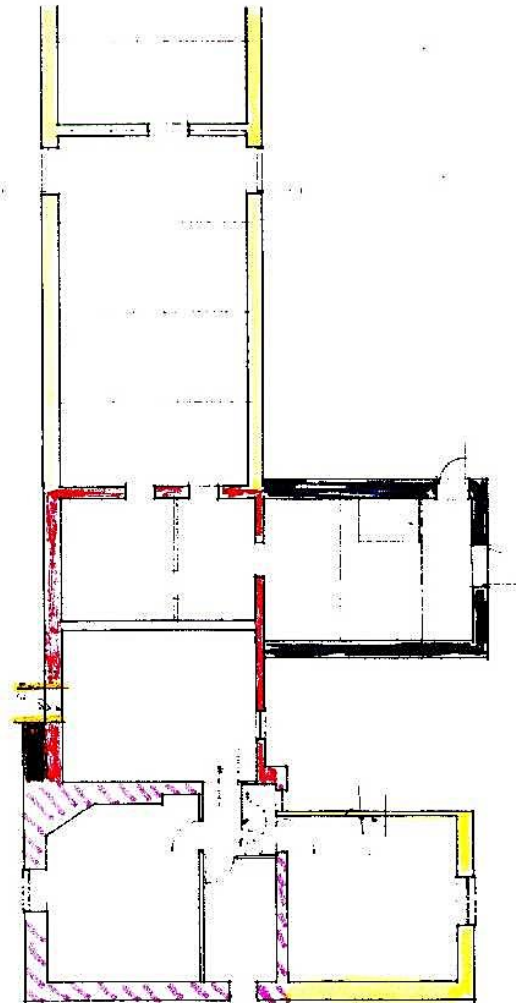
¹ In fact, recent archaeological evidence suggests that this door was not an original element of the frame as a new lintel had been slotted into the frame and this was topped by a contemporary gable truss. (*An Outline Archaeological & Architectural Assessment, Richard K Morriss, June 2005, pp 11*)

² Richard Morriss states that this is likely to be a cruck frame, which would suggest an earlier open hall. However, this type of design continued to be used in vernacular buildings well into the 16th century and so accurate dating is difficult without timber analysis. *Ibid, pp 15-16.*





Sometime around 1830 the gable end of the newer part was re-faced quite grandly with dressed stone. The windows were given stone arches. The fireplace in the sitting room was probably put in then. It was possibly at about this date that it was no longer considered healthy to have the animals living immediately next to the house, and access between the two was blocked off. Whether cows were still kept in the byre, or whether it became a barn at this point, we don't know.

The whole roof of the long house would have been of stone tiles, as the north side is now. The west end was probably re-roofed in slate at the same time that the stone facing was added.



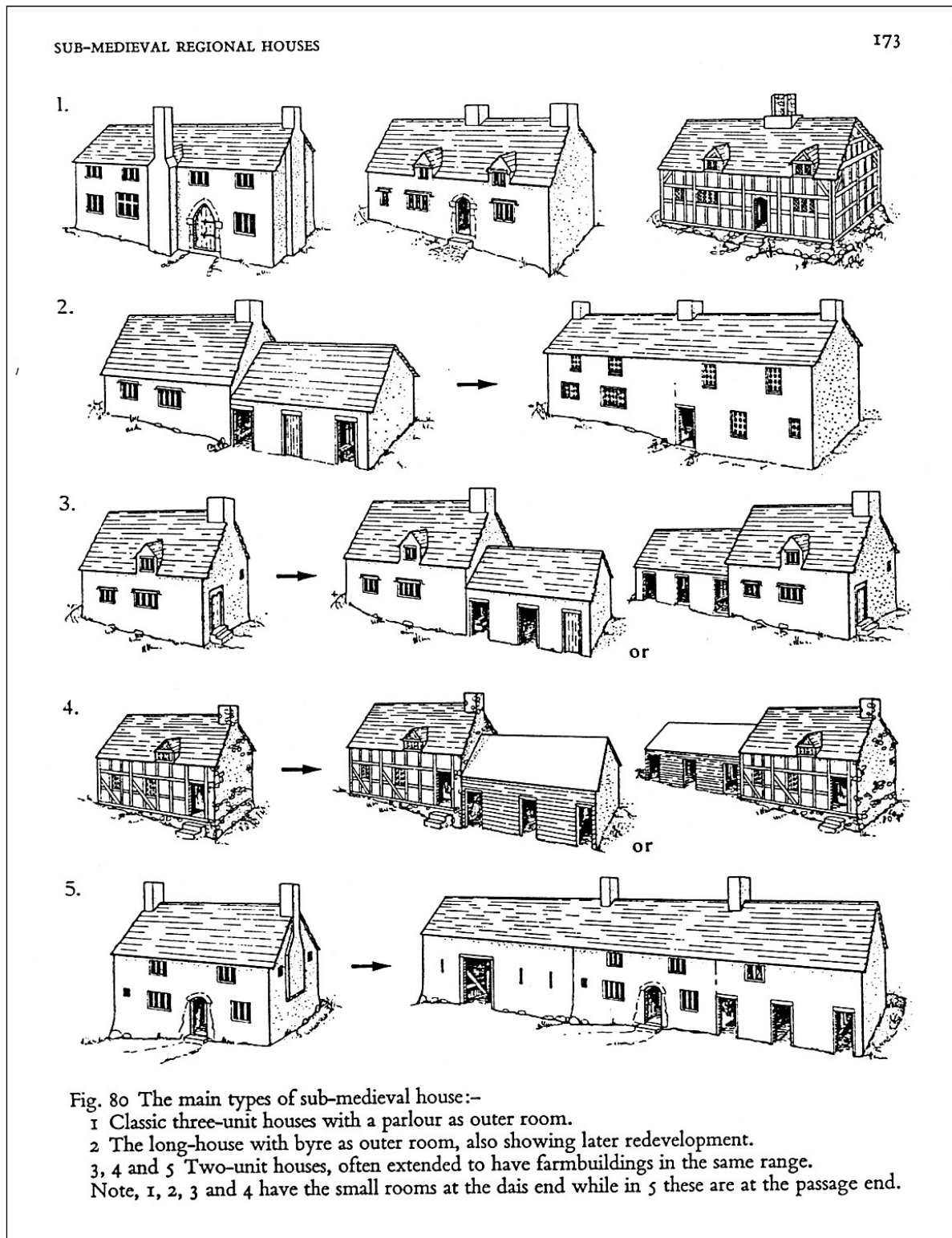


Stockwell Farm – A Guide to Building Dates

-  Late – Medieval and Early Sub Medieval
-  Mid 17th Century
-  Mid 18th Century
-  Later 18th Century
-  Mid 19th Century
-  1972-3, Landmark alterations

First Floor

Extract from: *Houses of the Welsh Countryside*, by Peter Smith (RCAHM, 1975)



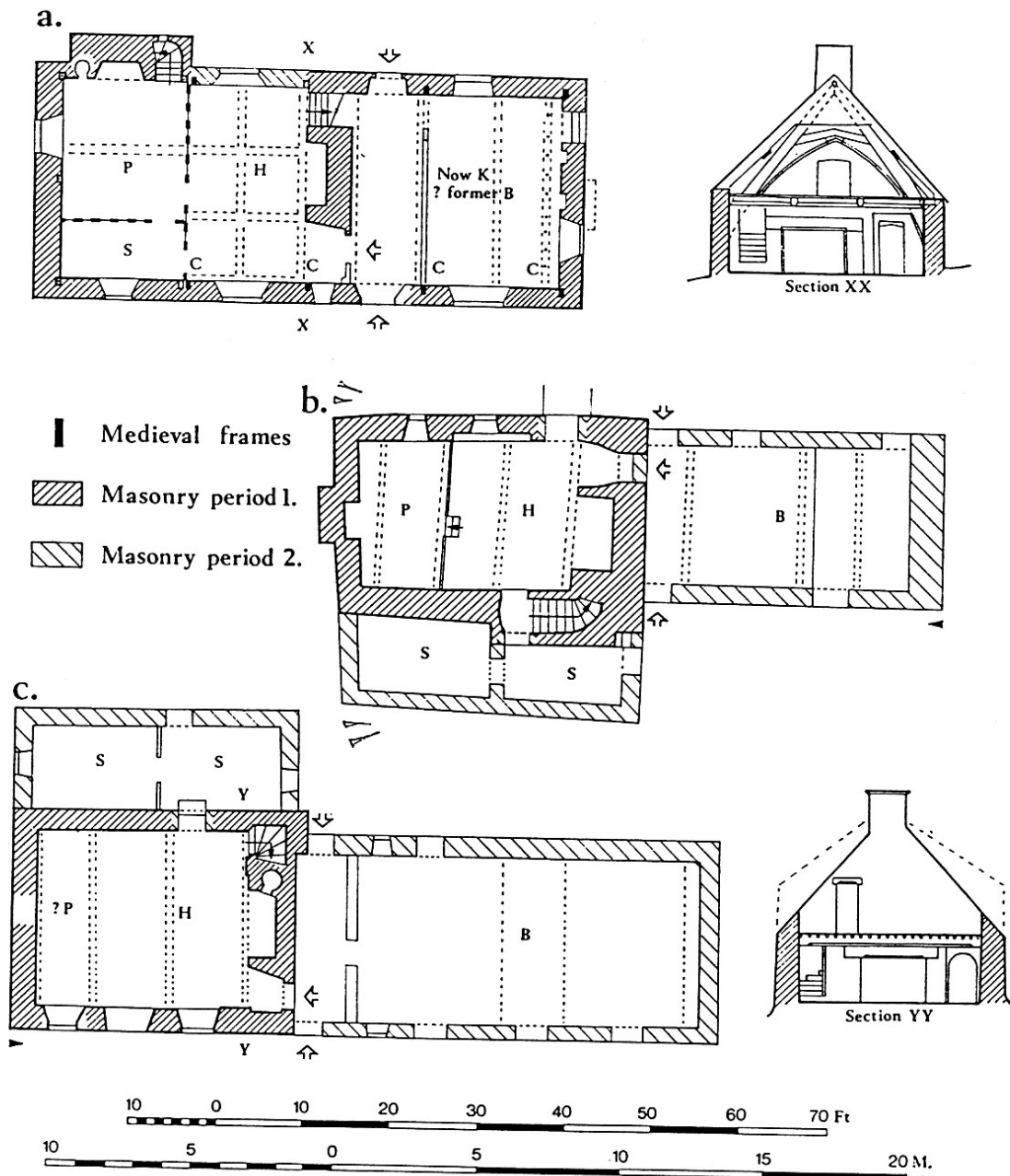


Fig. 110 The most famous of the type B family is the long-house where the dwelling was entered through an adjoining byre. It appears that many outer rooms, now domestic, were originally byres. At *a* Llangwathen (Hay Rural, Brecs.), a rebuilt hall, the ceiling beams in the kitchen have sockets for tethering posts, although the roof above is heavily smoke-blackened. At *b* Alltygraban-fawr (Llandeilo Talybont; Glam.) there is a byre downhill, and at *c* Ffald-y-dre (Resolfen, Glam.) there is a byre uphill. In each case, however, the byre is of a later build, seemingly an addition to a two-unit nucleus (as opposite).

a After Jones and Smith, *Brycheiniog*, 1964, p. 119.

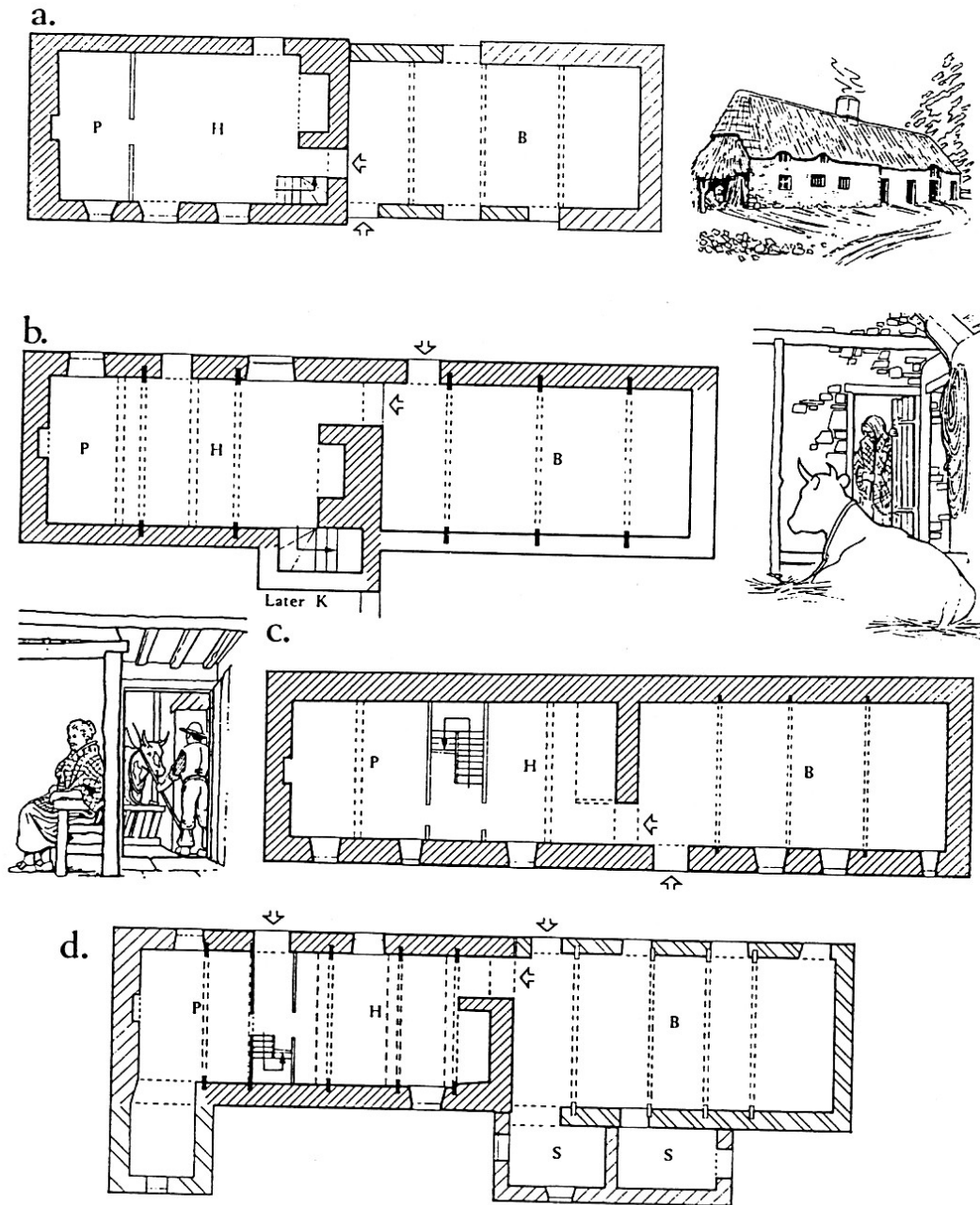


Fig. 111 The chimney-backing-on-the-entry long-house was first identified as a distinct house type in eastern Carmarthenshire. Examples are *a* Tŷ'rcelyn (Llandeilo), *b* Maes-y-rhiw (Llansadwrn), *c* Rhiw'rerfin (Pencarreg) and *d* Maesybidiau (Abergorlech). To judge, however, from the centralised stair at *c* and *d* many of the Carmarthenshire long-houses are quite late, probably eighteenth-century. Many are formed agglutinatively, the byre built against the house as at *a* and *d*, rather than continuous with it.

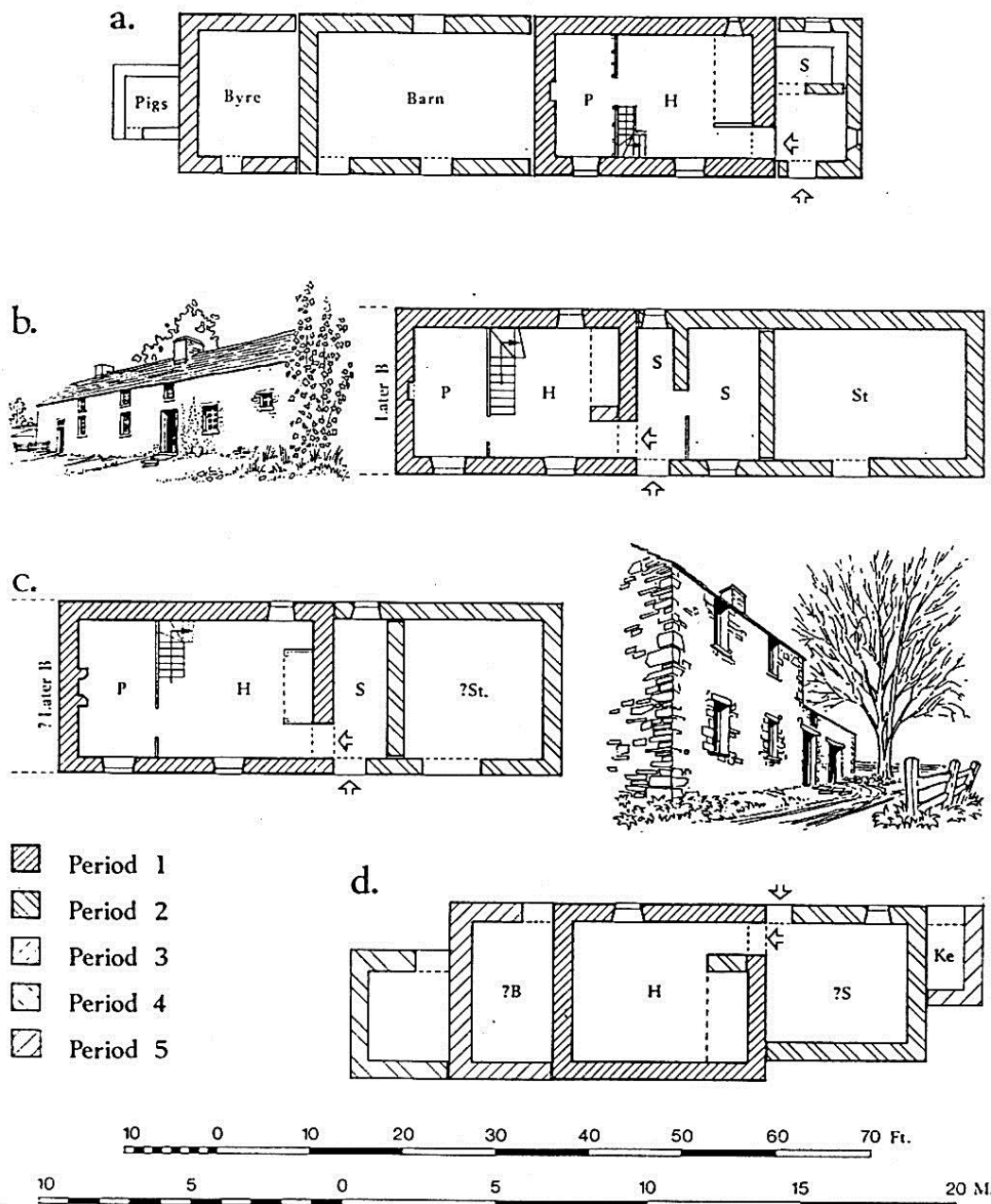


Fig. 112 A contrasting version of the chimney-backing-on-the-entry plan, also common in Cardiganshire and Carmarthenshire, has the service-room by the entry and the main farm buildings attached to the parlour end of the house. The basic design of the end-entry hall-and-parlour nucleus is, however, the same. The plan is illustrated by *a* Pantunnos (Llwyncrwys, Carms.), *b* Ffos-y-ffin (Llangeitho, Cards.), *c* Tŷ-llwyd (Llangeitho, Cards.), and *d* Ochr-bryn-lloi (Caron-is-clawdd, Cards.). Note the agglutinative construction, the end units added to the central unit.

He notes on p. 34 that the present kitchen at Y Fachwen Ganol (Llanfihangel-yng-Ngwynfa, Mont.) may once have been a byre, but points out that at both Pen-y-graig and at Cyfiau in the same parish the link between house and farmbuildings is quite recent.

4 The house-and-byre homestead where there is an internal access between house and byre was noted as long ago as 1895 by Sir D. Lleufer Thomas in his *Report* for the Welsh Land Commission. It is discussed at length by Dr I. C. Peate in Chap. IV of *The Welsh House* where he gives this class the name long-house. The suggestion that there were eclectic factors in the formation of this type of house was suggested in 'The Long-house and the Laithe-house' in *Culture and Environment*, (ed. I. Ll. Foster and L. Alcock), pp. 415-37. Other contributors to this volume, Mr J. T. Smith and Dr I. C. Peate, strongly disputed this. See 'The Long-house in Monmouthshire; a Reappraisal', pp. 389-414, and 'The Welsh Long-house: a Brief Reappraisal', pp. 439-44.

5 The distribution of the chimney-backing-on-the-entry house was discussed by Dr P. Eden at the Canterbury meeting of the British Association in 1973. He suggested that while it occurs occasionally in most parts of England it is of general occurrence in only two. One is a belt covering the Cotswolds, Somerset, Dorset and East Devon and the other is a belt extending from the West Riding to Cumberland. It does not appear to be common in either Scotland or Ireland.

The chimney-backing-on-the-entry plan varies considerably in detail. In much of England, whether in Westmorland or Oxfordshire, the characteristic two small rooms behind the dais, so characteristic of both the type B and other patterns in eastern Wales, do not appear. This end of the house tends to be a single large room, a parlour, or in the north-west the 'bower'. Far more important, however, is the variation in the use of the outer room. In the more easterly parts of the two English type B regions the outer room tends to be a kitchen or service-room; in the more westerly, on Dartmoor or in the mountains of Cumberland it is very frequently a byre. This offers two lines of argument. The first is that the long-house is the underlying factor behind the plan; the second is that the survival of the internal access between house and byre depends on the adoption of the chimney-backing-on-the-entry plan, and that this pattern has been imported into the western areas from the eastern. It can be argued that these long-houses are therefore eclectic, because the earliest storeyed long-houses in the west tend to be rather later than the earliest examples of the other types of outside cross-passage house in the east. For illustrations of the non-long-house type B house, see R. B. Wood-Jones, *Traditional Domestic Architecture of the Banbury Region*, and C. F. Stell, 'Pennine Houses: An Introduction', *Folklife*, 3, 1965, pp. 5-24. For illustrations of the long-house version see R. W. Brunskill, 'The Development of the Small House in the Eden Valley 1650-1840', *Cumberland and Westmorland Arch. Soc.*, 1954, pp. 160-89; N. W. Alcock, 'Devonshire Farmhouses', *Trans. Devonshire Association*, 1963, pp. 83-105, and S. R. Jones, *ibid.*, 1970, pp. 35-75. See also R. W. McDowall 'The Westmorland Vernacular' in *Studies in Architectural History* (ed. W. A. Singleton), II, 1956, pp. 125-43.

6 In my first study of the three-unit lobby-entry house I noticed that the parlour was by the entry. As it was generally believed at the time that the room by the entry must be either a service-room or a byre, I assumed that the entrance had been moved; see P. Smith and C. E. V. Owen, 'Traditional and Renaissance Elements in some Stuart and early Georgian Half-Timbered Houses in Arwystli', *Mont. Coll.*, LV, Pt. II, 1958, pp. 101-24. A study of the medieval precursors of this plan makes it quite clear that this has not happened. For other studies of the Montgomeryshire lobby-entry house see A. D. Rees, *Life in a Welsh Countryside*, pp. 32-59; I. C. Peate, 'Abernodwydd: a Montgomeryshire Timber-framed House', *Mont. Coll.*, LIII, Pt. I, 1953, pp. 34-8. For English central-chimney houses, see R. T. Mason, *Framed Buildings of the Weald*, also RCHM (England), *West Cambs. Inv.*, p. xlvi.

7 I have to thank my colleague, Mr H. J. Thomas for drawing my attention to this rather unusual type of house. Mr Thomas' excavation suggests that there are good medieval precursors for this end-entry house in the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Restoration of Stockwell Farm

When the Landmark Trust took on Stockwell Farm, we did as little as possible to the house. Inside, all the partitions were left the same as before, only a bathroom being fitted into the smallest bedroom, and the kitchen into the larder. The door leading into the byre was unblocked. The floors are all original, stone flags in the kitchen, cobbles in the animals' quarters, good oak boards in two bedrooms and pine boards in the east bedroom. It is in this bedroom that the fine oak beams of the oldest part of the farm are visible.

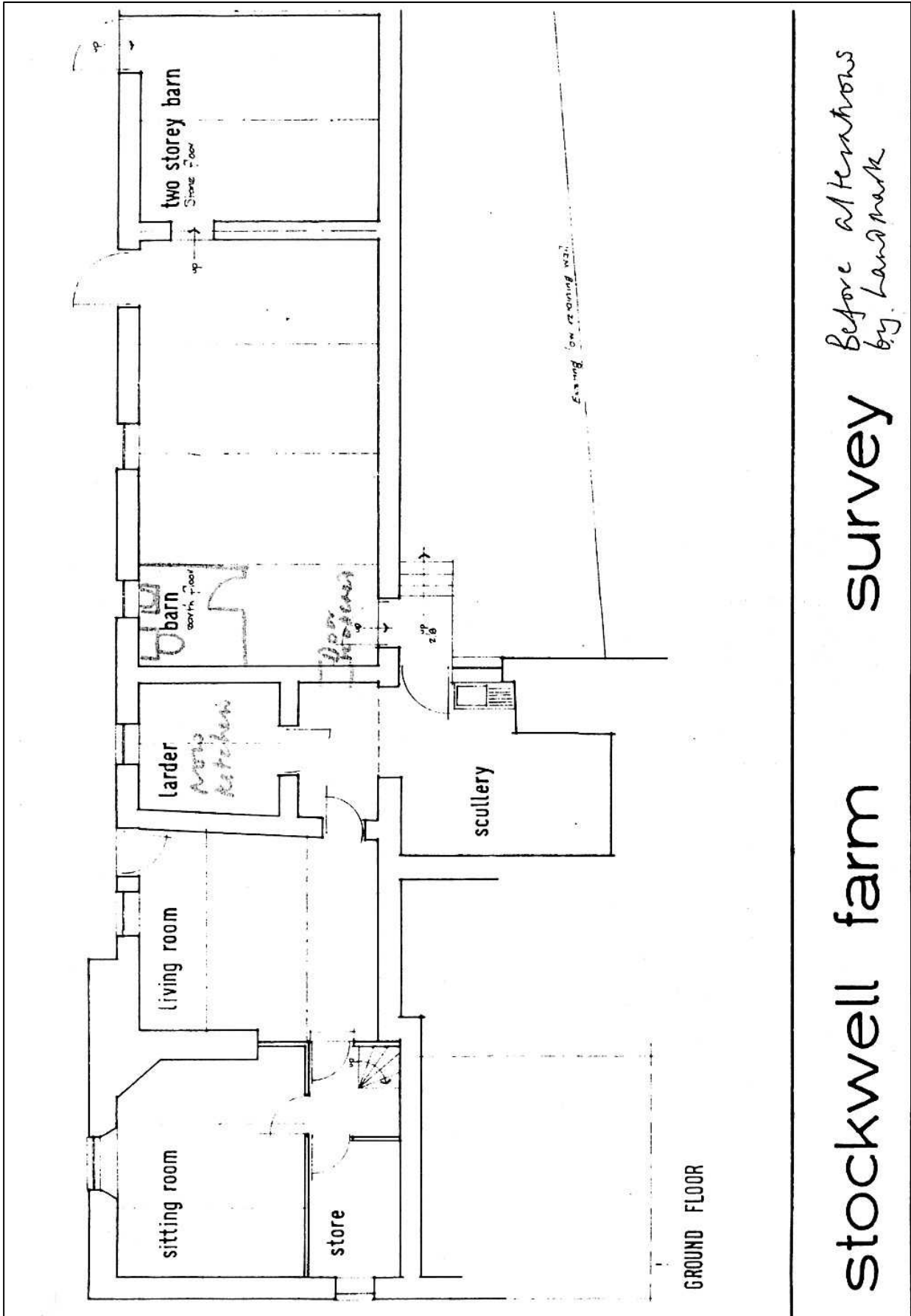
On the front of the house, the white wash which had distinguished the farmhouse from the farm buildings was removed, so that the whole range should be the same. A new dormer window was added to light the east bedroom, above the front door. This was later found to leak, and so in 1984 it was replaced with one to match that on the back of the house, facing the hill, which dates from the 19th century.



Stockwell Farm in 1972 before restoration



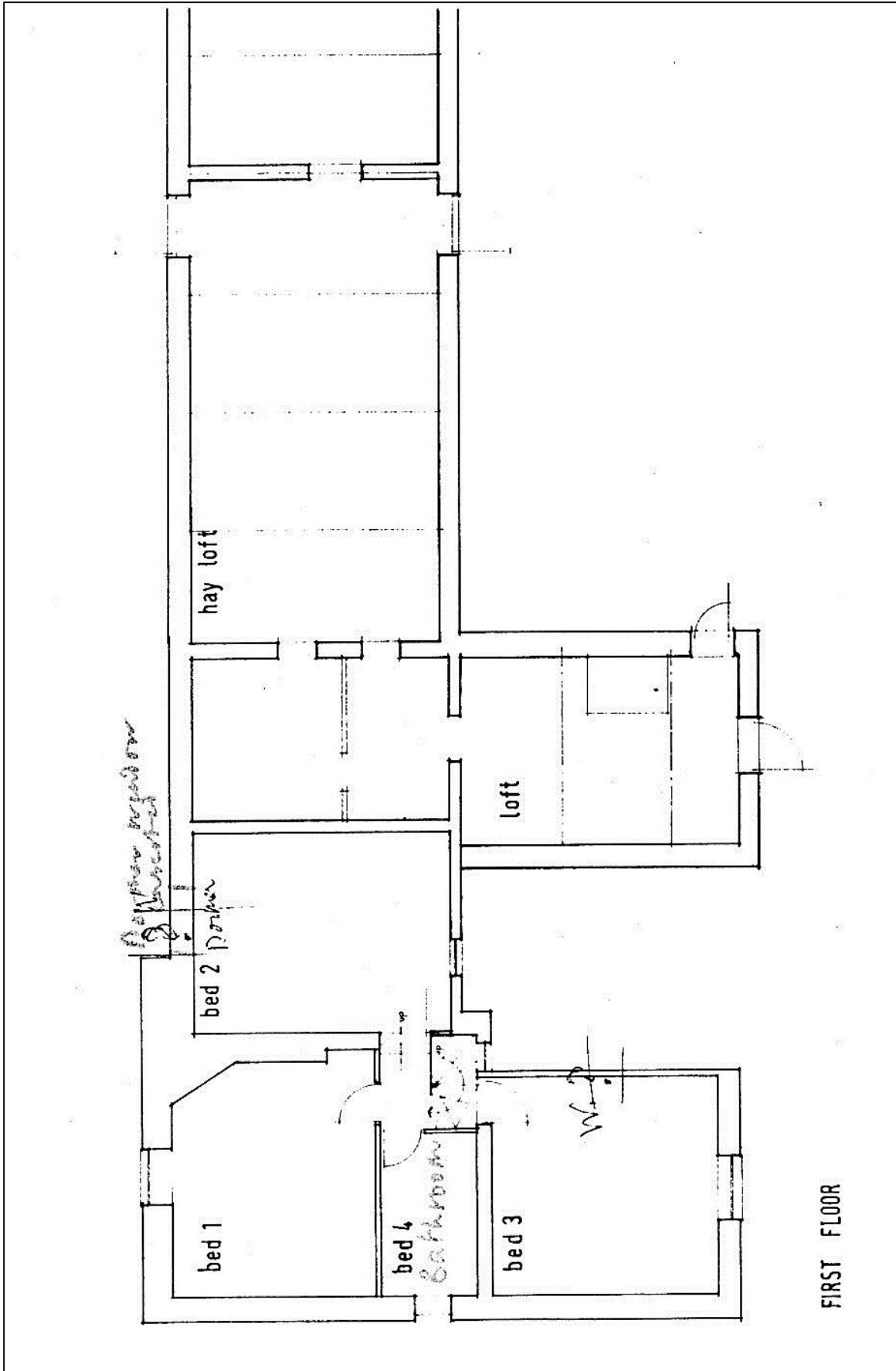
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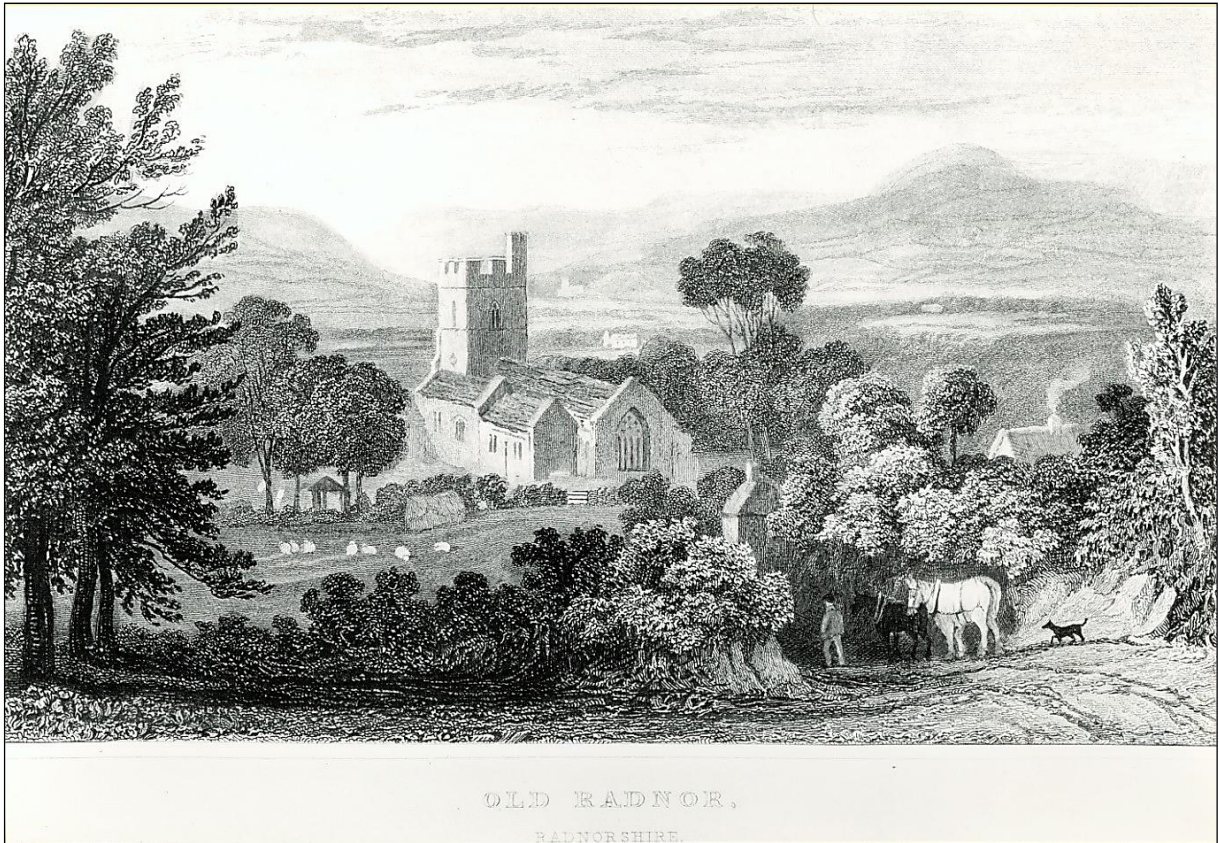


*Before alterations
by handmark*

survey

stockwell farm





Engraving of Old Radnor, Radnorshire, 1830

Local History – The Immediate Neighbourhood

(Information from Radnorshire by W.H.Howse, 1949; Old Radnor Parish and Church by W.H.Howse; Presteigne Past and Present by W.H.Howse, 1958, unless otherwise stated).

Old Radnor

Old Radnor was already in existence during the Dark Ages. The name Radnor is derived from the Anglo-Saxon 'readan affre', meaning red bank; but its Welsh name is Maesyfed, meaning the field or plain of Hyfaedd, who was a 6th century Welsh chief. Radnor is mentioned in a charter of King Offa's in 774. It was on the Welsh side of the Dyke, but was taken by the English during the reign of Edward the Confessor. He owned a castle at Womaston, of which a mound and a moat remain. Later during his reign Old Radnor was re-taken by the Welsh, then taken back for the English by Harold, who dominated the Borders for fifteen years and according to local tradition, made his headquarters at Old Radnor; if this is right his castle was probably just south of the church, where the site of a castle is marked on the ordnance survey maps (*History of Radnorshire by Rev.J.Williams, 1905*).

Castle Nimble, a mound a few hundred yards along the footpath which runs north from the church, probably dates from the same period, but the castle, if it was one, was on a curiously poor site and was, perhaps, only a temporary fortification.

Harold owned considerable estates in Radnorshire, including a manor of 15 hides at Old Radnor. After the Conquest this was confiscated; later William Rufus gave it, together with the manors of Gladestry and Huntingdon, to the de Braos family, who were Lords Marchers.

There was never a Norman castle of any importance at Old Radnor. A moated clergy house was built on the site of what may have been Harold's castle. The

field is still called Court Fold; but the house was already in ruins by 1607. After the battle of Naseby in 1645 (*M. Toynbee in Transactions of the Radnorshire Society 1950*). Charles I marched his defeated army of 4,000 men to Old Radnor and according to Sir Henry Slingsby, who kept a diary of the campaign, the King stayed there and 'lay in a poor, low chamber and my Lord Lindsay and others by the kitchen on hay.' The king said that the place should be called the Beggar's Bush, referring to a play by Beaumont and Fletcher of that name. He may well have been staying at the Harp; it would seem the obvious place, though the name Beggar's Bush has gone to a crossroads two miles to the north.

Old Radnor church is outstanding and has its own excellent guide. From 1663-1743 the vicar used to live at Kinnerton Court. In 1846 he built himself his own vicarage at Walton. The parish is now run from Kington; it is in the diocese of Hereford.

On the opposite side of the hill from the church is the Congregational Chapel, sandwiched between the A44 and the quarry. It was built in 1878 and replaced the original chapel, which was built in 1720, and can still be seen on the hillside above it.

There was a school in Old Radnor in pre-Reformation days, but nothing is known about it except that the endowment was seized by Edward VI's commissioners. At the beginning of the 18th century there was a school endowed by the Joanna Hartstongue Foundation. It was one of the earliest endowed schools in Radnorshire and continued until 1894, when it was taken over by the county council.

By 1250 Old Radnor had been superseded by New Radnor as the principal town in the area, then New Radnor was overtaken by Presteigne, and Presteigne by Llandrindod Wells, which is now the county town.



The Harp Inn



The Harp Inn

Until 1984 the Harp Inn was also owned by the Landmark Trust and was restored by us in 1971-2. The plan of the building, the long shape, with one room opening into another, suggests a date before 1700; but it is hard to date exactly, because from time to time parts of it will have been rebuilt.

The stone to build it came from the quarry on Old Radnor Hill, which is hard and difficult to work. In the farms in the area it is usually left rough as it is here, and sometimes painted white.

In early Victorian days the Harp was known as the Welsh Harp, and was a fashionable hostelry. There are records of balls and hunt dinners that took place there in the 1840s (From *Transactions of the Radnorshire Society Vol XI*).

But in 1971 the Harp was in a state of disintegration. The old stone roof had fallen in and had been replaced with corrugated iron; it was reroofed with stone tiles from a barn nearby. The exterior of the building was cleaned, and some of the windows were also renewed, matching the original ones, several of which survived. To provide more space, a barn to the south of the main building was renovated and brought into use.

The wide fireplace in the sitting room was uncovered when a wall was removed. The stairs are in their original position, and the stone flags in the sitting room are also original.

Harpton Court

The manor house most closely connected with Old Radnor is Harpton Court, which belonged to the Lewises, a very old Welsh family. According to Kilvert there was a tradition that Charles II stayed at Harpton when he was in hiding. Certainly, Radnorshire supported the Stuarts, and many of the country gentlemen had Jacobite leanings. They planted Scotch firs to demonstrate their loyalty, calling them Charlie trees. Some, perhaps planted in this way, may be seen by the old well in front of Stockwell Farm.

In 1724, when the squire of Harpton died, the hearse was met by 700 horsemen, all friends and neighbours.

The most distinguished of the Lewises was Sir George Cornwall Lewis, who was Home Secretary and Chancellor of the Exchequer under Palmerston. There is a monument to him as you go into New Radnor; he died in 1863. Harpton was inherited by the Duff Gordon family. Much of it has now been pulled down.

The Wordsworths

Since Charles I and II the most distinguished visitors to the immediate area have been the Wordsworths. Mary, the poet's wife, had a brother and sister-in-law called Tom and Mary Hutchinson, who lived at Hindwell Farm, only a mile from Old Radnor. All three Wordsworths were very fond of the Hutchinsons and used frequently to stay there. (*Dorothy Wordsworth's Letters ed. de Selincourt*).

Dorothy Wordsworth learnt to ride there; she also used to go for long walks, thinking nothing of walking the four miles to Kington and back just to get some needles or cotton. In one of her letters she describes Hindwell Pool:

'You could hardly believe it possible for anything but a lake to be so beautiful as the pool before this house. It is perfectly clear and inhabited by multitudes of geese and ducks, and two fair swans keep their silent and solitary state apart from all the flutter and gabble of the inferior birds.'

It has not changed.

Kilvert was a great admirer of Wordsworth's, and he writes in his diary:

'Miss E. Hutchinson had sent for me to keep for my very own a relic very precious to me, a poem of her aunt Dorothy Wordsworth in her own handwriting.'

The Hill

Old Radnor Hill is an island made of a different kind of rock from that of the surrounding countryside. The neighbouring hills and Radnor Forest consist of Silurian shales and flags, while Radnor is made of Cambrian Grits with bands of Conglomerate. Its stone is useful for roadmaking and has been quarried steadily for at least 150 years.

Its history is not only one of quarrying: in the 16th century, after the Reformation, it was notorious for the witches' dances that were held on it.

Prehistoric Sites Nearby

The earliest traces of habitation in Radnorshire were found in a field between New Radnor and Evenjobb, where a plough turned up hundreds of Stone Age flint tools and chippings, indicating a Mesolithic site.

The four standing stones north west of Walton date from the Bronze Age. They themselves are erratic boulders thrown up by a volcanic eruption which were moved to form the four supports of a cromlech. There would originally have been a large flat slab on top of them, forming the roof of the sepulchral chamber, and the whole would have been covered with earth. There is a tradition that the four stones dip themselves in Hindwell Pool every night. There are several mounds in this immediate area, probably Bronze Age too.

There are no Roman remains near Old Radnor; but three miles to the north east there is a fine fortified Iron Age camp, on Burfa Hill. It was built by a Celtic people who sailed up the Severn about 150 B.C., coming probably from the north

of Spain; they continued living in fortified places like this until about 500 A.D. There is another smaller one two miles north-west of Burfa, called Castle Ring.

Offa's Dyke

Past these camps runs one of the best preserved stretches of that remarkable survival from the Dark Ages: Offa's Dyke. (*Offa's Dyke by Sir Cyril Fox*). It dates from the second half of the 8th century A.D., is 149 miles long and formed a boundary for the Anglo Saxons against the Welsh. It was probably dug, not by a central gang of workers, employed by Offa, but each section by the resident thane. Where there was thick forest, and invaders and cattle raiders were unlikely to cross, gaps were left; but between Kington and Beggar's Bush it ran along high ground and is clearly visible. It was about 6 feet high and between 22 and 60 feet across, with a ditch either on one side or both.

Roads and Tracks

Alfred Watkins chose this part of Radnorshire to illustrate his work on *The Straight Track*. These were the paths of the Neolithic inhabitants of England, which ran between sighting points, ancient stones, or earth mounds. He was a keen observer of the countryside and his work makes interesting, if controversial, reading.

Watkins thought that two Straight Tracks, or Leys, intersected at the stone on the road below Stockwell Farm. One ran from Old Radnor Church down the road past Stockwell to Walton crossroads, then through the castle mound at Womaston to Presteigne church. The other went from Stockwell through Hindwell Pool and Evenjobb Mound, passed Castle Ring Camp, to run along the line of Offa's Dyke. Watkins maintained that at this point Offa's men were following the line of a much older track, then still in existence.

In a less ambitious mood Watkins describes the Stockwell stone in a paper he wrote for the Woolhope Club:

'At Stockwell Farm, on the road to Walton, a square markstone stands at the gate. It is opposite the ancient well in the field across the road, to which comes (as a short cut to the valley) the ancient steep lane, Willings lane, the first part of the word indicating 'well.' Stock here means 'tree' as in our present name for young trees. A line of Scotch firs marks the old lane and one still stands by the well.'

A Bronze Age track ran along the high ground from Presteigne to Beggar's Bush and on to Radnor Forest.

Offa's Dyke is, of course, a fortified boundary, not a track, but in 1971 the Offa's Dyke Path was opened. This was an imaginative project to make it possible to walk from one end of the Welsh Marches to the other. It involved careful negotiations with the farmers and landowners and it was not always possible to keep exactly on the line of the Dyke; but the Radnorshire stretch mostly does stick to it, is very distinct and well signed and extremely beautiful.

Medieval roads connected the manors and one ran from Harpton Court to Walton, Lower Harpton and Knill, then on west to Little Brampton keeping south of the Hindwell Brooke, instead of north of it as the present road. (*The Valley in the March*, Lord Rennell, 1958). It was connected to Old Radnor by Willings Lane, the path mentioned by Watkins, in front of Stockwell Farm. To the west there was a medieval road, that ran from Old Radnor to Gladestry and on to Painscastle. This was the road that Charles I took when he marched his defeated army through Old Radnor.

From the 17th to the early 19th century drove roads were important. Between 8,000 and 9,000 cattle passed through Kington every year on their way to the English markets. The Kington drove road, which was one of the main outlets for central Wales, ran very near Old Radnor. The cattle, which would have been the small black Welsh cattle from the valleys of Cardiganshire, crossed the Wye at

Newbridge-on-Wye. They then went over Gilwern Hill, skirted to the south of Radnor Forest, passed through Dolyhir then over Hergest Ridge to Kington.

Old Radnor is not mentioned in the 19th-century coaching timetables. The coach road ran roughly along the line of the A44 from Kington to New Radnor. Now the absence of a main road is one of Old Radnor's greatest assets. Many of the footpaths that criss-cross the hillsides immediately round Old Radnor were made by the quarrymen walking to their work at Old Radnor Hill and Dolyhir.

The Tramway

In 1816 a tramway was opened between Brecon and Hay. It was extended to Kington and the limekilns of Burlingjobb in 1820. It had grooved rails and carried small iron trucks, drawn by horses. It connected with the Brecon-Abergavenny canal. Lime, grain, timber, etc were taken to South Wales and coal, iron, brick and slates were brought north.

The Railway

The railway came to Kington in 1857 and in 1875 the branch line to New Radnor was built. The trains stopped at Stanner and Dolyhir. There were plans for the line to continue to Rayader, but they did not materialise. In 1951 the line was closed, and the tracks have now been taken up.

Further Afield

Radnor Forest

Radnor Forest, which is one of the best places for long walks, was originally a forest in the sense of being a Royal hunting ground. After the Wars of the Roses it became a hiding place for robbers and outlaws; at that time anarchy reigned on the Welsh Marches, much as it did on the Scottish borders a hundred years later. During the reign of Henry VIII, Bishop Roland Lee was made President of the Court of Wales and Marches; he was a warrior bishop, who ruthlessly exterminated the brigands, but who bought peace.

By the reign of Elizabeth 1, Radnor Forest had become private property and was owned by Sir Gelli Meyrick of Gladestry. He was one of the Earl of Essex's most active supporters, and when Essex's rebellion failed he was hanged and quartered for his share in it.

In 1650 the Forest was bought by Thomas Lewis of Harpton Court. Most of it now belongs to the Forestry Commission. It is also used for testing weapons, so look out for danger signals.

Churches

Old Radnor is a good centre for looking at village churches; many of them mainly or partly Norman, often beautifully sited.

To the south-west are:

Gladestry – late Perpendicular in a very unspoilt village, which also has a Baptist and a Wesleyan chapel.

Colva – mainly 13th century with a 16th century wooden porch. There are slate tablets in vernacular rococo on either side of the altar.

Glascwm – 13th century and 15th century, founded by St. David in the 6th century.

Cregina – 13th century with a 15th century screen.

To the south there are:

Huntingdon - 13^h-century with massive 16th-century benches. North of the church is Huntingdon Castle; part of the inner bailey wall is still standing.

Michaelchurch-on-Arrow – 15th century tower with 16th century screen.

These all lie between Old Radnor and Clyro, where the Rev. Francis Kilvert was curate for seven years from 1865 to 1872. He was a great walker and he describes this part the country vividly in his diary. He mentions most of the churches, particularly Glascwm.

To the north there are:

Cascob - 13th century with 15th-century screen.

Bleddfa - 13th-century and 14th-century, weather-boarded belfry, fine timber roof with kingpost, Jacobean pulpit and Communion rails.

Church Tiles at Old Radnor

Jane Kent

Old Radnor is a Welsh border hill village near Presteigne in Powys. The church of St. Stephen is said by Richard Haslam (*Buildings of Wales, Powys, 1979*) to be mainly an early 15th century rebuilding of an earlier 12th century church. It stands proudly in a large round churchyard and seems rather superior for the isolated nature of the parish it now serves.

The church consists of a nave, a long chancel with a choir, a wide south aisle and narrower north aisle each with their own chapels. What particularly distinguishes the church is the high quality of the medieval fittings it retains including some glazed floor tiles. These are not extensive and vary in condition, but according to J.M. Lewis (*Medieval tiles of Wales, 1999*) apart from St. David's Cathedral, they are unique in Wales as the only known instance of a site 'where tiles have remained exposed and in use

Below: Fig 1. Tile from Group A with a couple on either side of a spade (or a love spoon) and an inscription around the edges.



8 Glazed Expressions



Above: Fig 2. Tiles from Group A with ellipses with double outlines set diagonally and filled with a leaf pattern on either side and tiles showing a bishop's mitre.

since they were laid'.

The medieval tiles are laid in four blocks; the most impressive, with 72 tiles in 5 designs laid in blocks of 4, is at the entrance to the chapel in the south aisle. The smallest block (of 12 tiles) is in the south aisle by the eastern-most column. There is another

block of 25 tiles (of larger size than those in the other blocks) at the eastern end of the south aisle adjoining the south wall, and a final group at the western end of the north aisle, many of these too worn to record, or plain.

The tiles fall into two distinct groups, differing in size as well as designs. Most of the tiles in group A are in relief or counter relief. This is surprising since this is a technique associated with east Anglia and the East Midlands. They are either slip coated and glazed yellowy brown or brown-black glazed. They are between 4.75 and 5.25 inches square and include 7 different patterns (one of which is very obscure):

1. A couple on either side of a spade (or love spoon?) with an illegible inscription around the edges.
2. A 4-tile design of two concentric circles enclosing flowers or leaves woven with stems.

Below: Fig 3. Tiles from Group A showing a four tile design with fleur-de-lis set diagonally facing outwards.



3. A shield with a cross set diagonally. A five petalled flower above and foliage? at the sides.

4. An ellipse with a double outline set diagonally and filled with a leaf pattern, leaves on either side.

5. A 4-tile design with banded circle with 4 fleur-de-lis set diagonally facing outwards.

6. Design resembling a bishop's mitre.

The second group of designs, Group B, occur only at the eastern end of the south aisle. The tiles are larger than Group A, being about 6.25 inches square, more worn, and have entirely different designs. They are about 1 inch thick. There are 6 different designs including acorns and oak leaves, a shield set diagonally with an amorphous pattern and flanked on each side by a leafy stem, and two designs with lettering (IHC or IHS and SM/MS or SW/WS).

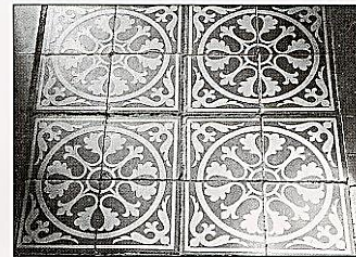
In 1882 Old Radnor church underwent restoration and Godwin of Lugwardine supplied new plain and encaustic tiles which were laid diagonally in the main aisles of the church and the choir and

Below: Fig 4. Tile from Group B with the monogram SM/MS or SW/WS.



Above: Fig 5. Tile from Group B with the monogram IHC or IHS.

Right: Fig 6. Encaustic Godwin tiles laid during the restoration of the church in 1882.



altar. Godwins do not appear to have derived any of their tile designs from the medieval tiles in situ. Most of them are red and buff, many using 4-tile or occasionally 16-tile designs.

The altar floor is composed of 4 inch tiles. The designs include three different fleur-de-lis and a black and buff Tudor rose. The decorated blocks are banded with running encaustic designs and rectangular and triangular mosaic tiles in green, white, black and brown. The effect is impressive. ❖

Note:
1 J.M. Lewis, *The Medieval Tiles of Wales*, National Museums and Galleries of Wales, Cardiff, 1999.