

Recent Emergency Recording

by

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This article is the third in a series on discoveries made during the recording of historic buildings compiled by the present author with contributions from the national agencies. As always, we are grateful for their help to staff in the Royal Commissions on Ancient and Historical Monuments (Tony Calladine, John Cattell and Peter Guillery in England, and Richard Suggett in Wales).

The value of systematic recording may be shown by an example from last year's article in these Transactions (41 (1997)). Heytesbury House in Wiltshire was briefly described and illustrated with a plan showing its complex development. In June 1997, some four months after publication, the house was gutted by fire. The first and second floors of the main block were entirely destroyed, although some ground floor rooms were left reasonably intact and the service rooms were largely untouched. The detailed survey including a full photographic coverage by the RCHME survives for future researchers to study. This year's compilation includes a number of buildings which are well known, but where detailed study has confirmed some previous assumptions and also revealed much which was unknown. It is not only to preserve some record in the event of loss that a survey is invaluable, but also to inform conservation and preservation in the future, for example, the longhouse at Llanwenog, the Archbishop's Palace at Charing or Barwick Park in Somerset.

For those wishing to know more about a particular site described below, contact names and addresses are given at the end of the article.

CARDIGANSHIRE

Rhiwson-uchaf, Llanwenog

Rhiwson-uchaf is a longhouse (Fig. 1) of the classic type described in the *Report of the Royal Commission on Land in Wales* (1896) and discussed by Iorwerth Peate in *The Welsh House* (1940). When Peate wrote, longhouses were already something of a curiosity. Today, Rhiwson-uchaf appears to be the only remaining longhouse of 'traditional' type in Cardiganshire and survives in a relatively unaltered state as an outbuilding of a neighbouring farm, having been unoccupied for some forty years. There are now welcome plans to conserve this important but vulnerable house.

At Rhiwson-uchaf, house and cowhouse form a continuous, intercommunicating, down-hill sited range with the hearth-passage entry from the cowhouse serving as the only entrance into the house. There is a structural break between house and cowhouse but the identical nature of the soffit-pegged scarfed cruck-trusses must make the dwelling and down-house broadly contemporary. The house has a three-unit plan-type with a central stair and dairy set between the large kitchen and



Fig. 1

Rhiwson-uchaf, Llanwenog, Cardiganshire
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upper-end parlour. Particular attention should be drawn to the black and yellow free-hand floral and leaf-trail wallpaintings which survive in the parlour, largely concealed by successive layers of lime-wash.

Longhouses in central Wales are often the result of the process of hall-house conversion. However, Rhiwson-uchaf clearly was built as a storeyed house (there is no evidence for a medieval open-hall phase) and the developed nature of the three-unit plan makes it unlikely that the house dates from before the mid-seventeenth century. This is consistent with the architectural detail, but it may be noted that a chronology remains to be established for scarfed cruck-trusses in south-west Wales.

DERBYSHIRE

Torr Vale Mill, New Mills

Torr Vale Mill (Fig. 2) was built for water-powered cotton spinning and weaving in the 1790s and was extensively rebuilt to use a combination of steam and water power in the early 1860s. The site occupies a dramatic location within a meander of the River Goyt at the bottom of the Torrs, a sandstone gorge close to the centre of New Mills. In addition to its architectural significance, Torr Vale Mill is an outstanding example of the influence of topography on early industrial development, retaining an eighteenth-century weir with related tunnels and watercourse.

Published research indicates that the site was acquired by Daniel Stafford in 1788 and that a water-powered mill had been built by *c.*1794. The existing mill buildings are ranged around a sloping yard with a single access. The site is notable

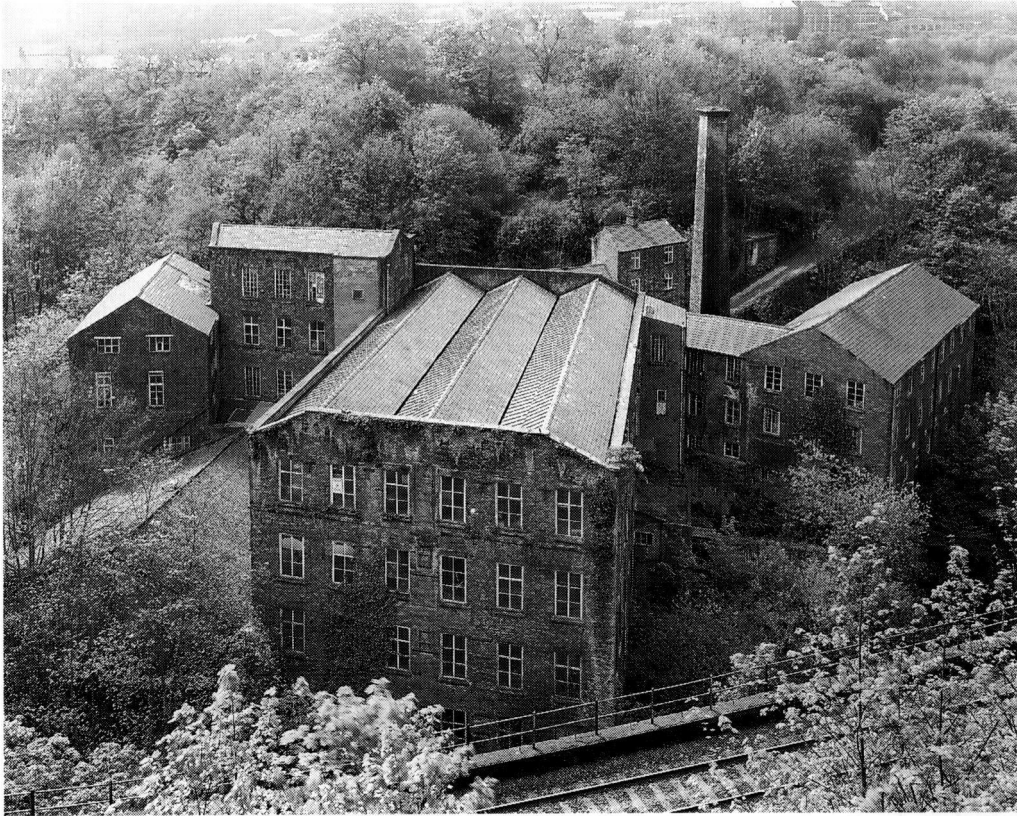


Fig. 2

Torr Vale Mill, New Mills, Derbyshire

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as an intact and relatively well-preserved complex of mills and ancillary buildings covering a wide date range and illustrating a development from water power to steam power. Most of the buildings date from the second half of the nineteenth century, but significant structures survive from the original mill and have had a marked influence on the development of the site. For example, the largest building is the fireproof Cotton Mill of *c.*1860 which straddles the watercourse on the same orientation as the original mill and probably incorporates parts of the earlier structure. The oldest extant building is the aptly named Old Mill at the lower, north end of the yard which although modified probably originated in the 1790s. The nineteenth-century redevelopment included the construction of a terrace of workers' houses, with a corner shop, inscribed 'Torr Vale 1863', and a nearby manager's house, all of which remain well-preserved alongside the access road.

Torr Vale Mill is the last extant mill in the Torrs, which formerly contained a string of water-powered mill complexes, and has been in continuous use from the 1790s. At the time of the survey in 1997, cotton towelling was still being

manufactured, which may exhibit the longest period of continuous use of a cotton mill site in England.

KENT

Archbishop's Palace, Charing

The manor of Charing is said to be one of the earliest possessions of the See of Canterbury, recorded as far back as the eighth century. Archbishop Lanfranc (1070-93) is thought to have been the first to build a house on the manor and the Archbishops' registers indicate that the palace was used regularly from the time of Archbishop Peckham (1279-92) onward. Archbishop Winchelsea (1293-1313) entertained the King at Charing in 1297 and again in 1299. In 1507, Henry VII stayed for one night, and in 1520 Henry VIII used the palace as a staging post on his way to France. Since the Dissolution, the property has been leased to and owned by local gentry, who have farmed the land.

The site of the palace is in Charing village, adjacent to the parish church and on the north side of the medieval market place. It is contained within a medieval walled precinct in which the standing structures are clustered to the south-west. A survey of the earthworks in the remainder of the precinct revealed one medieval and some later subdivisions, but only tentative evidence of building platforms. A twelfth-century cushion capital, reused as a quoin in one of the standing buildings, is a tangible indication of early building work which has now been lost. However, the importance of the site lies, to a great extent, in the survival of buildings from the late-thirteenth and early-fourteenth centuries. They formed only part of a larger complex but include some of the most important buildings of the palace. They were constructed in flint with stone dressings, and were arranged around a courtyard. On the north side of the courtyard were the Archbishop's private chambers, including a heated great chamber raised over an undercroft, with an associated chapel. These are now ruinous, but enough survives, notably a window onto the courtyard, with window seats, to indicate their former quality and to hint that they may date from the time of Archbishop Peckham. To the east of the courtyard is the great hall, now converted to a barn, which stylistic and documentary evidence dates to *c.* 1300, during the time of Archbishop Winchelsea. Its dimensions, 10.7m wide and at least 21.8m long internally, show it to have been one of the largest unaisled halls of its time. Entrance from the courtyard was via a two-storey porch and the hall was open to the rafters of a substantial, single-span, arch-braced roof, now replaced. Presumably it was heated from an open hearth and was lit from tall, two-centred arched windows of which only one survives. At the south end, twin doorways led into a buttery and a pantry and there is documentary evidence of a detached kitchen.

To the south and west of the courtyard, two adjoining ranges, erected around the same time as the hall, formed a gatehouse (Fig. 3) and lodgings. Although much has been lost, what remains provides valuable information about the form of lodging accommodation at this date. The arrangement of the surviving doorways and windows suggests that the ground floor was divided into open dormitories,



Fig. 3
Archbishop's Palace, Charing, Kent
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served by two adjoining garderobe blocks. However, on the first floor, evidence of a heated room with its own garderobe indicates the differing ranks of visitors and servants who needed to be accommodated.

Campaigns of re-development and refurbishment have added to and altered the palace buildings considerably. The Archbishop's private chambers were extended in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and, during the time of either Archbishop Morton or Archbishop Warham, in the late-fifteenth or early-sixteenth century, brick additions were made in the form of a stair tower for the hall porch and an additional upper storey for the private chambers. After the palace was surrendered to the crown in 1545, it seems to have become a working farm. Apart from the great chamber, which was

abandoned, the Archbishop's private chambers became a farmhouse, parts of the lodging ranges were rebuilt as cottages and, in the mid-eighteenth century, the hall was converted to a barn. In the nineteenth century, part of the medieval chapel was incorporated into an outhouse and an oast house was added to the hall. There has been other refurbishment and repair, but no major building campaign, and the buildings currently are used as they were in the eighteenth century.

The site was recorded during the autumn of 1996, having been brought to the attention of RCHME by the owners and the planning authorities who had begun to discuss a safe future for the buildings and sought a full record in order to inform their decisions. More information may emerge during the course of any future repair or refurbishment work, or if any systematic archaeological investigations are carried out.

LONDON

Goddard's 'Ye Old Pie House', No. 45, Greenwich Church Street, Greenwich
Greenwich Church Street has early origins, linking the River Thames to the Church of St Alfege, founded in the eleventh century. In the early fifteenth century a royal residence was established at Greenwich on the site of what is now the Royal Naval College. The palace at Greenwich grew in importance, particularly under Henry VIII. The development of the town certainly reflected the royal presence, with Church Street apparently marking the west end of the settlement. However, Greenwich town centre retains no buildings of this early period; its earliest surviving buildings appear to be of the late seventeenth century.

Goddard's Pie House occupies the ground floor of No. 45 Greenwich Church Street which appears to be a late seventeenth-century house, and therefore one of the earliest survivors in the area. It is a three-storey brick building with a three-room 'central staircase' plan (Fig. 4), a late seventeenth-century London house-plan type, once widespread but now relatively rare. Irregularity in the plan indicates that the house was built on the site of an earlier building. The house was refronted in the nineteenth century and the ground floor has been altered for shop use. Early brickwork survives on the flank and rear walls. Internally, early features survive on the upper storeys in the shape of the original open-well staircase with twist balusters, and some plain panelling.

No. 203, Deptford High Street,
Lewisham

Deptford is a district of great historical richness. From origins as a small riverside settlement it grew rapidly through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, its fortunes inextricably linked with those of the Royal Naval Dockyard founded in Deptford by King Henry VIII in 1513. The

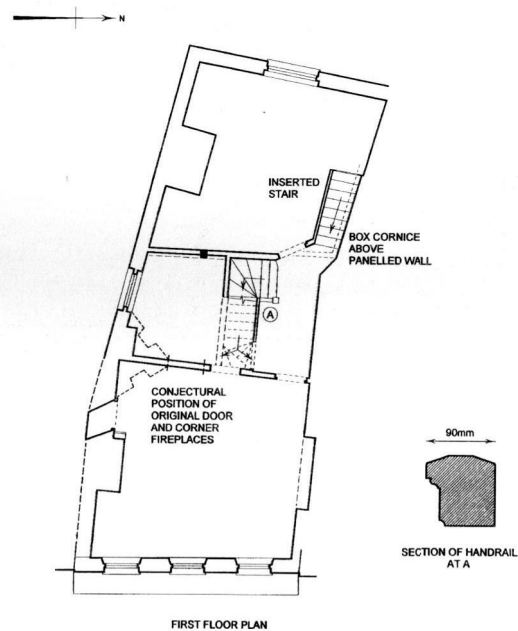


Fig. 4

First floor plan of No. 45,
Greenwich Church Street,
Greenwich, London

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45 GREENWICH CHURCH STREET
London SE10

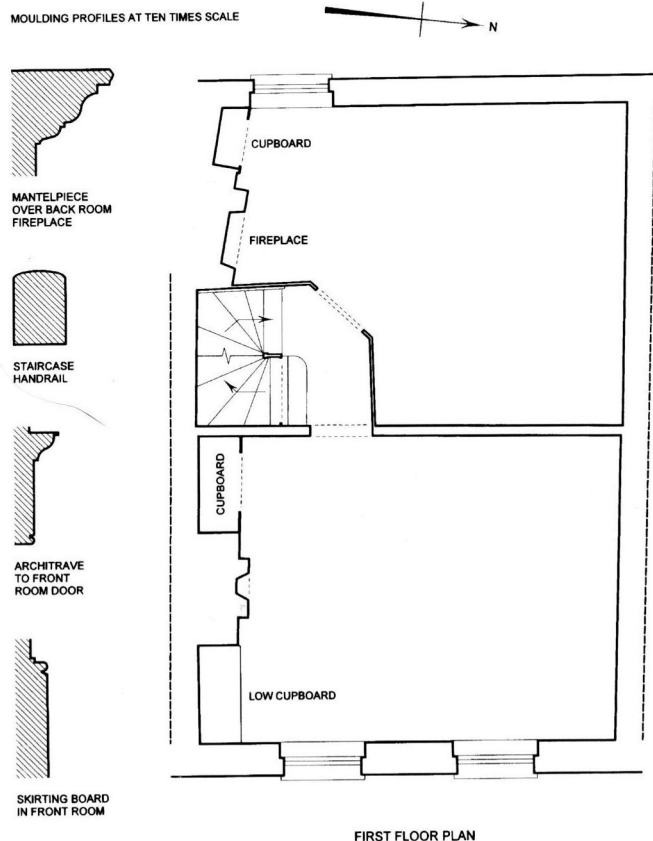
Borough of Greenwich
Surveyed September 1996
Grid Reference TQ 383 778
NBR No. 95579
Drawn by A.D.



dockyard was renewed systematically from 1688 into the eighteenth century. By 1700 John Evelyn, the diarist and lessee of Sayes Court, the manor house of Deptford Strand, was able to record that 'by the increase of Building may be seen that the Towne is in eighty years become neare as big as Bristoll' (annotation on a map of Deptford of 1623; British Library, King's Maps 25 C 26 (15)).

No. 203 Deptford High Street is a small brick town house, perhaps datable to c.1700. Its precise date remains open to question, subject to documentary research and further study of related buildings. Even so, within the period to which it can be confidently dated it is rare as a recorded example of a low-status urban house. It has particular interest in the context of Deptford High Street where it is likely that numerous other comparable buildings survive, though un-recorded. The building has two storeys with an attic in a steeply-pitched M-profile roof. The upper levels retain a two-room central-staircase plan (Fig. 5) with internal end

stacks, an interesting transitional variant between seventeenth- and eighteenth-century plan types. The ground floor has been altered to be the dining room for a pie shop, but there may always have been a shop to the front. The original tightly-wound and steep newel staircase survives, with some stick balustrading in the attic. On the first floor there is what appears to be original joinery comprising plain panelling to the staircase landing, cupboards with H-L hinges, a moulded mantel piece in the rear room, a door architrave to the front room, and skirting boards.



203 HIGH STREET
Deptford London SE8
Borough of Lewisham
Surveyed April 1997
by C Burgess, N Stankley
Grid reference TQ 3714 7759
NBR no. 95955
Drawn by A.D.

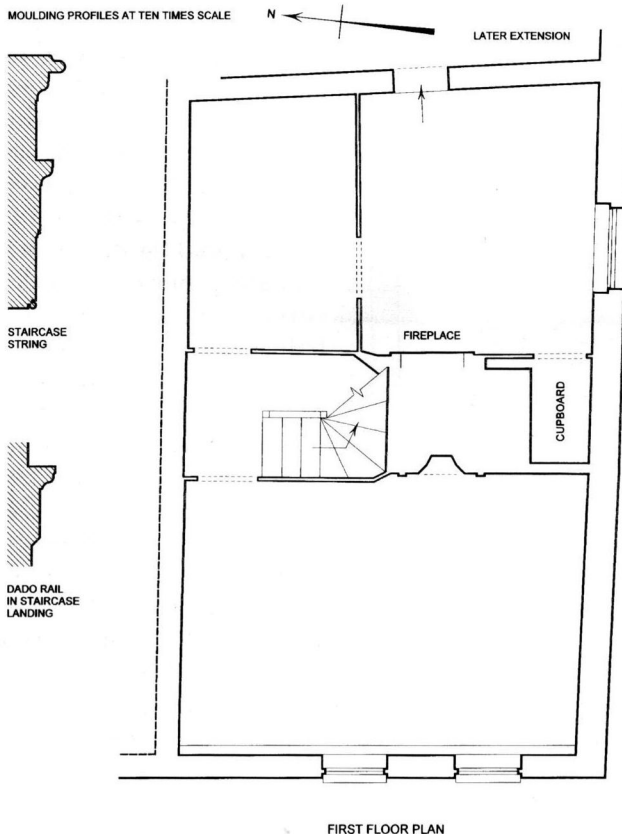


Fig. 5
First floor plan of No. 203,
Deptford High Street,
Lewisham, London
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No. 62, Deptford High Street, Lewisham

This modest brick town house was built in two phases. The earlier part, fronting Deptford High Street, appears to date from the first quarter of the eighteenth century; a rear addition is of the nineteenth century. The earlier block has two storeys with attics, an M-profile roof and a central chimney stack. The two-storey extension to the east, equal if not larger in size, has a mansard roof. The brick elevations of the front block on the south and west sides appear to have been rebuilt in the nineteenth century (the glass shop front to the west being a modern insertion). The interest of the building lies in its earlier part, which has a central-chimney-stack plan (Fig. 6). This is a rare survival in an urban context and would conventionally give it a seventeenth-century date. However, the first floor and attic storeys retain joinery of an apparently early eighteenth-century character that does not appear to be secondary. As comparable recorded survivals are few,

the evidence of the fabric is a particularly important factor in dating the building. The argument for a slightly later dating may be supported by a plate in Joseph Moxon's *Mechanick Exercises* of 1700 which could have provided the prototype for both plan and elevation. By such means, constructional forms that had become unfashionable in higher status buildings could have endured in low-status buildings such as this. The building has further interest in the context of Deptford High Street where it is likely that numerous comparable houses survive, though few are recorded (see above).



62 HIGH STREET
Deptford London SE8

Borough of Lewisham
Surveyed April 1987
by C. Burgess, N. Stankley
Grid reference TQ 3720 7715
NBR no. 95954
Drawn by A.D.



Fig. 6

First floor plan of No. 62,
Deptford High Street,
Lewisham, London
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MANCHESTER

Central Fire Station, London Road, Manchester

The Central Fire Station (Fig. 7) was built for the Manchester Corporation between 1904 and 1906, and was designed in an Edwardian Baroque style by the architectural partnership of Woodhouse, Willoughby and Langham. It occupies a trapezoidal site which has its parallel sides bounded by London Road (to the east) and Minshull Street, and with Whitworth and Fairfield Streets to the north and south respectively. The fire station has imposing red brick and yellow terracotta ranges which front all four thoroughfares and enclose a central open drill yard. In addition to housing the City's chief fire station, the building originally contained a police station, Coroner's Court, ambulance station and bank. The fire station incorporated stables and garages for the fire appliances, a hose-drying tower, training tower, workshops, control room and domestic accommodation for fire and police officers, including a laundry, gymnasium and children's play area. The concentration of these facilities and provisions within a single coherent complex, set behind its imposing Baroque façades, endowed the City with reliable up-to-date emergency services and formed a focus for civic pride. It also created a distinct social phenomenon with a large



Fig. 7
Central Fire Station, Manchester
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homogeneous community of fire personnel and their families living within the station, set aside from the broader context of the community as a whole.

The fire station served its original purpose for eighty years, and was taken out of use in 1986, following the provision of a new city fire station at Thompson Street. At the time of its closure, the Central Fire Station was the subject of a monograph by R.F. Bonner and J. Dwan entitled *The Finest Fire Station in This Round World* (1986), which gives some idea of the pride this great public building generated locally. The Coroner's Court remains in the building and part of the London Road range was taken over for use as offices. The remainder of the station has been used as a store and warehouse or left empty, as it was at the time of recording.

MERIONETH

Castell Deudraeth, Penrhyndeudraeth

Castell Deudraeth or Deudraeth Castle (Fig. 8), sited on the Penrhyndeudraeth promontory, is one of a series of nineteenth-century mock-castles strung along the north Wales coast. Castell Deudraeth was built *c.*1850 for David Williams (1799-1869), an attorney and Liberal MP for Merioneth. This was rather late for a Gothic castle-house, but the building was an expression of the owner's antiquarian and literary interests and belief in his noble ancestry.

The architect, who has not been identified, clearly was influenced by John Nash's castle-houses. The plan is of villa type with a small number of principal rooms, and the service range forms part of the towered and crenellated main front. The eclectic Gothic and Tudor architectural delights include a vaulted porch with sliding



Fig. 8

Castell Deudraeth, Penrhyndeudraeth, Merioneth

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wrought-iron doors – a kind of portcullis; a baronial hall fireplace flanked by soldier and bard (Fig. 9); and a slate-piered conservatory linking dining-room and drawing room.

Castell Deudraeth became something of a white elephant after David Williams's death but eventually was bought by Clough Williams-Ellis, who wrote an entertaining account of the castle in his *Portmeirion: The Place and its Meaning* (1963). Latterly the building was found to be badly affected by dry rot and structurally unsound in parts. Castell Deudraeth was visited and photographed before extensive alterations and repairs took place.

MONMOUTHSHIRE

Penrhos Farm, Caerleon

Penrhos is a complex, multi-period farmstead occupying an elevated site at about thirty metres above sea level in the north-west angle of a scheduled earthwork.



Fig. 9

Hall fireplace at Castell Deudraeth, Penrhyndeudraeth, Merioneth

RCAHMW Crown Copyright



Fig. 10
Penrhos Farm, Caerleon, Monmouthshire
RCAHMW Crown Copyright

The increasing dereliction of this house has revealed a complex building history and some puzzling architectural detail, including a challengingly early date inscription. The tall, five-bay centrally-entered symmetrical house, which is dated 1718, is clearly a reconstruction of a substantial early- or mid-seventeenth century house. The roof-trusses of the earlier end-chimneyed house survive, as is often the case, but the detail of the plan is irrecoverable. The date inscription of 1500 set over a rear doorway has been rejected as spurious, but a section of an archbraced principal rafter, reused as a lintel, may relate to a lost medieval phase. To the south of the house a brick-walled garden survives relatively unaltered and may relate to the seventeenth-century phase of the house. The projecting 'belvederes' or summer-houses of the garden are certainly reminiscent of the Jacobean corner-tower domestic plan. The siting of the house (Fig. 10) near the earthwork would have made the 'bastions' of the garden particularly appropriate. The air of antiquity about the site may possibly have encouraged the late cutting of the 1500 date inscription.

SOMERSET

Barwick Park, Barwick

The landscape park covers approximately eighty hectares with the house, remodelled *c.*1830, at its centre. The park is notable for its surviving follies and a grotto, to which no exact date has yet been assigned. However, similarities in construction and the little documentary evidence suggest that they were all constructed *c.*1770 for John and Grace Newman. Local folklore claims that they

were commissioned to provide employment when there was a depression in the local glove-making industry.

The four follies are situated on the boundaries of the estate marking the cardinal points of the compass and their axes intersect on the northern bank of the ornamental lake. Due north of the house is the Fish Tower, a circular tower some 15m tall. To the east is the curiously named 'Jack the Treacle Eater' (Fig. 11a), a rustic arch surmounted by a pigeon house with a conical spire and a statue of Hermes. The southern boundary is marked by a thin obelisk, 12m tall, known as the Needle. At the western point is the Princess or Rose Tower (Fig. 11b), which has a circular base with three arched openings topped by a tall, hollow cone. The grotto (Fig. 12), which lies almost directly on the east-west axis between the Princess Tower and 'Jack the Treacle Eater', is situated at the western end of the lake to the south of the house. About 50m to the west is an associated rustic arch. The grotto is of rubble-stone construction and comprises three chambers: a small, domed entrance chamber, a barrel-vaulted sub-chamber containing a pool, and a large, circular domed chamber about 7.3m in height and diameter. This last chamber contains a circular pool around which is a pebble path. There are three pairs of

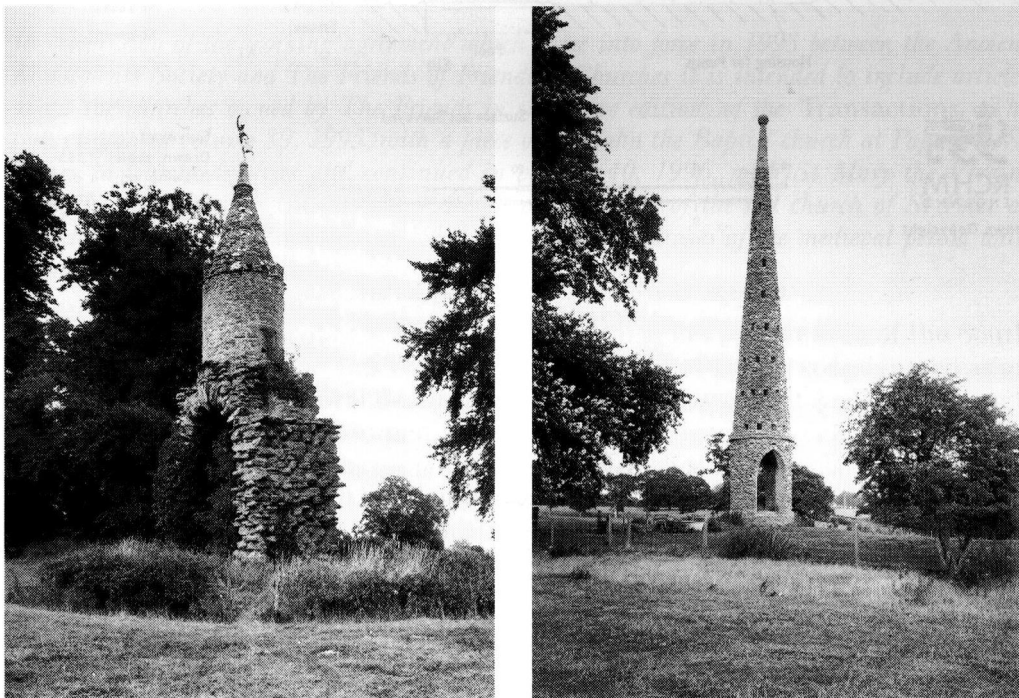


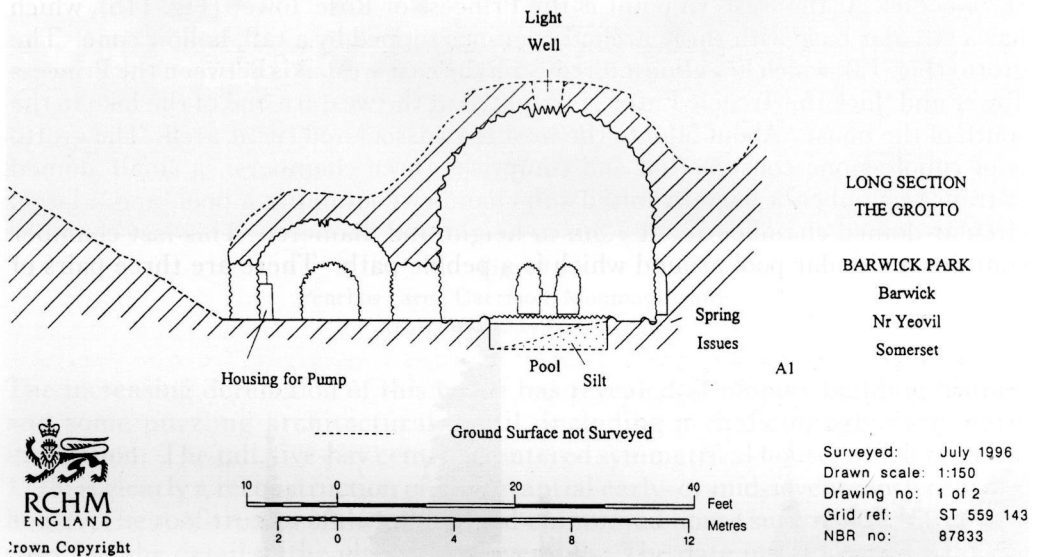
Fig. 11

- a. 'Jack the Treacle Eater', Barwick Park, Somerset
- b. Princess or Rose Tower, Barwick Park, Somerset

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niches in the surrounding wall. Springs issue from two of these. The interior is not ornamented, but documentary evidence indicates that there was a statue in the grotto which still survived in the early twentieth century.

The survey was carried out when the grotto was being considered for individual listing (the park is listed Grade II* on English Heritage's *Register of Parks and Gardens*). Further investigation of the surrounding area and documentary research may provide more information about the park and its follies.




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 ENGLAND
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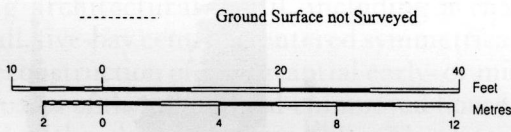


Fig. 12

Cross section of the Grotto, Barwick Park, Somerset

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For further details of any of the buildings described above or for general information on their emergency recording work, please write to the representative of the relevant agency:

ENGLAND: Colum Giles, RCHME, Shelley House, Acomb Road, York. YO2 4HB
 WALES: Richard Suggett, RCAHMW, Plas Crug, Aberystwyth. SY23 1NJ