

# DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE OF HEREFORDSHIRE

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THE domestic architecture of Herefordshire has been influenced by many factors, the chief one being the county's inaccessibility until the invention of the motor car. This has largely contributed to the preservation of the timber-built houses. Another factor has been the difficulty of the water supply, which in so many parishes has caused the houses to be scattered, and not concentrated around the church. The county is almost entirely agricultural, but the scenery varies from the rich meadow lands of the valleys of the rivers Wye, Lugg, and Arrow to fertile arable land and woods, and the bare tops of the Black Mountains where, until recently, grouse and blackcock flourished.

Although there were iron-works in both the north and south of the county from the end of the sixteenth to the end of the eighteenth century, or even a little later, the opening of the coal mines of Wales and the Midlands caused the industry to migrate to more convenient places. For many years Herefordshire woods had been cut down to supply charcoal for the local furnaces, but the county soon recovered its rustic appearance and the industrial revolution left it unscathed.

The inroads of the Welsh before Tudor times also influenced buildings and fields. Flocks and herds were more important than crops for they could be moved to places of safety, and therefore fields with ridge and furrow are rare, although in the neighbouring counties of Worcester and Gloucester they remain in great numbers.

## THE CASTLES

The Normans were obliged to fortify the Welsh borderland, and remains of castles and mediaeval earthworks are numerous, and manor houses protected by moats are still occupied. C. J. Robinson in *Castles of Herefordshire* (1869) records no less than 39 of the first-named. In addition, circular mounds, once surmounted by strong wooden towers, probably similar to those depicted in the Bayeux tapestry, and surrounded by deep ditches, are scattered along the borderland. All the upper-structures of these have now disappeared, and the mounds are either grass-grown or covered with trees.

The largest castle is at Goodrich. This stands on the summit of a

natural hill, protected on the north by the Wye, on the west by the scarp, and on the south and east by a deep rock-cut dry moat. The twelfth century keep is of three storeys, and was entered by a doorway on the first floor until the castle was rebuilt about 1300, when a lower one was inserted. The external walls enclose a rectangular space about 175 by 152 feet with a tower at each corner. The great hall is 65 by 27½ feet and occupies the west side of the courtyard. The kitchen was between the tower at the south-west and the keep; three ovens are still visible. The solar was on the western half of the north side at ground level, and below was a large room reached by stairs from the vestibule of the hall. The gate-hall at the north-east corner was protected at each end by a gate and portcullis. To the left of this, as one enters, is the chapel tower with traces of the altar and a piscina in the recess of the fifteenth-century eastern window.

Goodrich was the scene of a heroic defence by Colonel Henry Lingen on behalf of the King in 1646, and was not surrendered until the walls had been battered and every room badly damaged by a mortar, cast by the local blacksmith, and fired at times in person by Colonel John Birch, a seventeenth-century war profiteer, who was enraged at the time taken to overcome the defences. The water supply also had been cut off. The garrison at last marched out gallantly to the tune of 'Sir Henry Lingen's Fancy' or 'Delight,' an air now lost.

At Brampton Brian in the north of the county stands a good example of a fourteenth-century gatehouse. This is flanked by a round tower on each side of the entrance, which has moulded arches with a portcullis groove. The hall block lies 32 feet to the north, and is in ruins but well preserved.

In the Civil War Brampton Brian was bravely defended by Lady Brilliana Harley, in the absence of her husband and son who were away fighting for the Parliament. The letters she wrote to her son are preserved by the family, and now belong to Major J. R. H. Harley at Brampton Brian. Her health was ruined by a siege lasting for six weeks in July and August, 1643, and she died the following October, when the castle was again threatened.

Pembridge castle, in the parish of Welsh Newton, is a rare example of one called after the name of the builder, probably Ralph de Pembridge, and has no connection with the village of this name. Much of the building is of thirteenth-century date, including the gatehouse, kitchen, west tower, hall block and chapel, with parts of the curtain wall. Alterations were made in the sixteenth century, as shown by a fireplace in the upper part of the gatehouse (*c.* 1500), and the rebuilding of the chapel a little later. During the Civil War the castle was held for the King and reduced to ruins, but was restored as a residence by the present owner in the first

quarter of this century. It was here that Father John Kemble was arrested for saying mass before being hanged at Hereford in 1679.

Croft Castle is another early one that is still occupied. It is mostly of fifteenth century date, the main block forming a rough rectangle with towers at the angles. In the sixteenth century the north range was rebuilt and a large L-shaped wing added. The castle was dismantled by the Royalists in the Civil War, but early in the eighteenth century the north-west range was reconstructed in brick; a few years afterwards considerable alterations were made. At a later date the east side was rebuilt and the whole modernized. The site of the castle belonged to the Croft family from the time of Domesday until 1770, after which it passed successively to the families of Knight, Johnes, Somerset-Davies and Kevill-Davies, but it was restored to the Crofts in 1923, when it was purchased by the trustees of Sir James Croft, then a minor, and it now belongs to Major C. G. S. Croft.

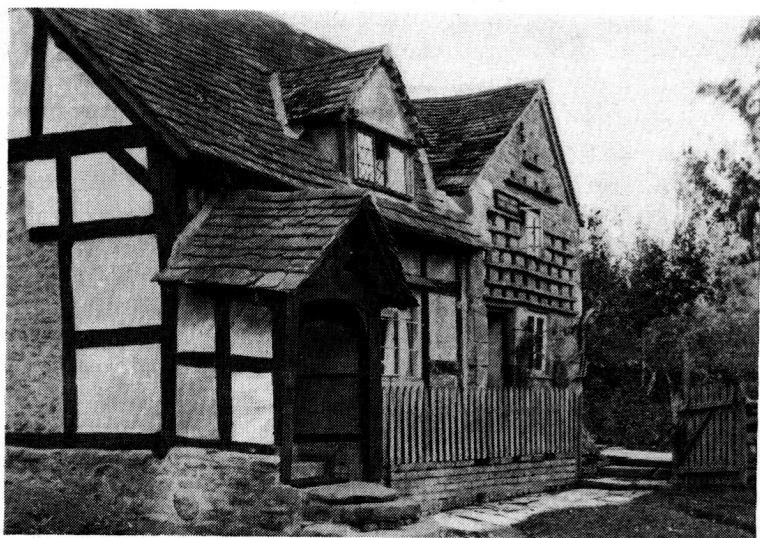
Treago Castle is perhaps the most interesting of all those in the county. The earliest remains visible probably are of the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century though possibly some of the walls may be earlier. The building is square in plan with round towers at the corners, and had an inner court-yard about 26 feet square. In the seventeenth century alterations were made inside the building, and in 1840 more work was done to modernize the castle, and the courtyard was built over. The two-storeyed porch dates from the sixteenth century. The roof of the once open hall survives in the attics; it had two bays with a screen bay at the east end. The castle has been occupied continuously and kept in good repair, and has belonged to the Mynors family from the time of Edward II.

Of Hereford Castle, the Governor's house only remains above ground. This is of the thirteenth century, the north front retaining a doorway of *c.* 1300 with jambs and segmental-pointed head of two chamfered orders, and a similar doorway is inside the building. It was used as the city bride-well in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but the house has been reconstructed and is now a private residence. The castle site was granted by Parliament to Colonel John Birch, who sold it to the six members of Parliament for the county for the benefit of the residents of Herefordshire. It is now used as pleasure gardens. In the early years of last century the ruins of the castle were used as a quarry for local buildings.

There are remains of early castles at Clifford (the home of the 'Fair Rosamund'), Kilpeck, Snodhill, Stapleton, Longtown, Wigmore (the home of the Mortimers), Wilton, and elsewhere. The sites of many other strongholds of powerful lords can be traced by the mounds upon which they stood.



WOBLEY. Fourteenth century house.  
See page 65.



MANSELL LACY.  
Seventeenth century house, with pigeon nesting holes.  
See page 65.

## THE TIMBER BUILDINGS

The oak tree, once called the 'Herefordshire weed,' naturally formed the principal building material for dwelling-houses and barns. The earliest example is the Bishop's Palace, Hereford, formerly a hall of five bays 110 feet long by 55 feet wide divided by oak pillars into aisles 13 feet and nave 29 feet wide. It dates from the twelfth century, and, though later alterations have removed or obscured many of the timbers, there are still three of the roll-moulded and round-headed arches with nail-head enrichment and five pillars with attached columns in position. More timbers of the arches are on the wall of the entrance gateway, and one is on loan to the city museum, where there is also a cushion capital. The building was altered by Bishop Bisse (1712-21) who divided the hall into five compartments, and generally modernized the interior. The entrance bay shows the original height, but the north and south bays were pulled down in 1841, and the others converted into two storeys. It is the principal example of a Norman timber building in England, though the walls have been rebuilt in brick.

Houses with close-set timbers are plentiful in Herefordshire, but the county cannot boast of any as elaborate as some in Cheshire. At Lower Brockhampton there is the gatehouse, east wing and hall of an H-shaped house in good condition, but the west wing has been destroyed. The gatehouse has close-set timbers and is a fine example of fifteenth-century building. It stands on the line of the moat, of which much remains, and is of two storeys, the upper projecting on carved brackets. An arch within the gateway has a door with cross-battens, strap-hinges, and a wicket. The house has some close-set and other square-framed timbers. The open hall has two bays with a screen bay and primitive staircase at the east end. Fortunately this house was bequeathed to the National Trust recently, and has been put into a sound condition, though the old barge-boards of the gateway have had to be renewed.

At Peterchurch is an example of what can be done to save these interesting buildings. In 1920 Wellbrook Manor was in a bad state of repair, but by 1922 it had been so well restored that parties of wounded American soldiers who were taken to see the house in 1946 were thrilled with its appearance. The Manor was built in the fourteenth century and consisted of a central hall of two bays with a half bay for the screen, and with a solar wing at the north-east and a kitchen wing at the south-west. The latter was demolished some years ago. In the seventeenth century the hall was converted into two storeys, and photographs of the upper room that were taken in 1920 show the floor covered with corrugated iron to hide the holes, and other poor features. It now has a good floor and the whole house is in excellent condition. The free truss has cusped openings

above it, and the former screen has side-posts carried down to the floor to form speres. The north-east wall has exposed framing with large cusped panels. The doorways of the wing have good ogee-heads.

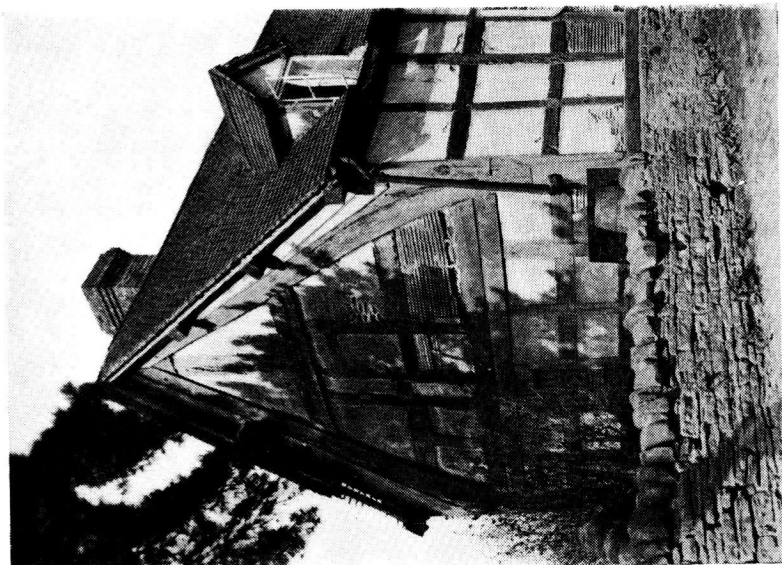
In the same parish of Peterchurch is a seventeenth century H-shaped farmhouse, Snodhill Court Farm, with rubble walls, but much good interior timber-work.

Rhydspence Inn in Brilley is a picturesque two-storeyed building on the extreme Welsh border of Herefordshire. Although the occupiers call this a fourteenth-century house it only dates back to the early sixteenth. An interesting feature is the outside staircase. Before the days of the railways Rhydspence was a meeting place for the drovers and dealers who came to buy Welsh cattle from the hills for the English market, and drove them after they had been shod ('cued' in the local dialect), along the hard English roads until re-sold to farmers and others.

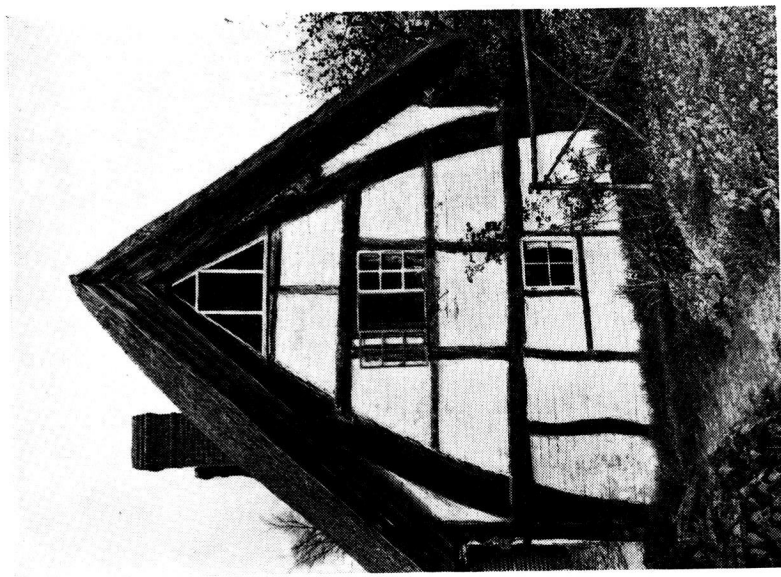
The Staick House at Eardisland is an exceptionally good timber house, standing in delightful surroundings on the north bank of the River Arrow. The east wing was built in the fourteenth century, the great hall a few years later, and the west wing was added in the sixteenth century, when probably the hall was divided into two storeys. The hall-block retains much of the original square framing, and most of the roof of four bays largely survives. The timbers are chamfered and smoke-blackened. The east wing has a fourteenth-century roof of six bays with two main and three subsidiary trusses. This part of the village of Eardisland is beautifully kept, and has often been illustrated as one of the beauty spots of England. Adjoining the bridge is a smaller timber house, once the village school, with the whipping-post in position.

The Booth Hall in Hereford had been so altered that its existence had been forgotten until a storm in 1919 blew down brickwork and disclosed some of the ancient timbers. The owners were induced to remove additions made at the end of the seventeenth century, when the hall was divided into small rooms, and to restore it to its present attractive appearance. The roof is of alternate hammer-beam and tie-beam trusses of good and unusual design, and there are cusped wind braces. The hall was first mentioned in 1392, and was used for public purposes until it fell into grave disrepair and was sold by the Corporation to William Gwillim in 1783, when it was turned into an inn. The purchaser agreed to rebuild the front in a handsome and ornamental manner. The street bay was then pulled down owing to its dangerous state and not rebuilt. "Tom Spring," the champion pugilist, one of Borrow's heroes, was once landlord here.

Across the road is the 'Old House,' built in 1621. It is the only house of Butchers' Row now standing, probably being the last and best house to be built in the street. A water-colour by David Cox in the city Art



LEINTHALL STARKES. Medieval Cottage.



PUTLEY, The Lacons.  
See page 67.

Gallery shows it nearly at the eastern end of the row. It is of three storeys with a modern pent-roof between the ground and first floors. The top storey overhangs. Brackets carved with pendants representing grapes, gables with barge-boards depicting scrolls, birds, etc., carved pendants of angels holding shields bearing the date of building, and ornamental chimneys make this house particularly attractive. The porch also has well-carved barge-boards and other work including the arms of the Butchers' Guild. The 'Old House' was given to the city by Messrs. Lloyds Bank in 1928, and is now a museum. Tradition ascribes the house to John Abel, a local craftsman, but the design is too good to have been his work.

The city lost an especially good building when the Old Market Hall, dating from the end of the sixteenth century, had its top storey removed in the eighteenth century, and the remainder pulled down in 1862. It stood on twenty-seven oak pillars in the centre of the High Town. The bottom was open, the large first floor was used for the assizes, etc., and the fourteen rooms above were the headquarters of the trade companies of the city. Thomas Dingley in *History from Marble*, written in the seventeenth century states that inscriptions suitable for each trade were over the doorways. There were turrets at the corners of the building.

The Market Hall at Leominster, cruder but yet picturesque, was certainly the work of Abel in 1633. It was removed to its present position overlooking the recreation grounds in the middle of the nineteenth century, and then converted into a residence called the Grange. It has recently been bought by the Corporation and is used as the offices of the Town Clerk. The bottom storey, the arches of which have been filled in, has Ionic oak columns, the arcades have pendants and spandrels carved with foliage and monsters, and on a frieze above is a long inscription in Latin and English. The upper storey projects, and has fluted and carved Doric pilasters on modern pedestals.

At Mansell Lacy there are two houses worthy of notice. One of mediaeval origin stands on the north side of a small stream which adds to its appearance. The lower storey is of close-set timbers, the upper is in large squares. The post office nearby has the unusual feature of pigeon nesting holes in the outside wall of a living room.

Weobley, Pembridge, and Eardisley (not to be confused with Eardisland) have many timber houses of note. In the first-named eleven date from before the end of the fifteenth century and some fifty others before 1714. Unfortunately within the last few years several have been destroyed, some by fire. There are also several mediaeval barns. A cruck-built house formerly with two wings connected by a central hall has lost the south wing, and the hall has been divided into two storeys. Two cruck-trusses remain, a heavy pair visible from the street, and a pair with cusped



timbers dividing the bedrooms. The Red Lion, an altered fourteenth-century house, has exposed timbers; those on the east side show the original ogee-headed doorway (now blocked) and the upper parts of three trefoiled ogee lights with cusped spandrels. The south side has the first floor underbuilt in stone. Nearby, and belonging to the house, is a fine cruck-built barn now converted into dining rooms. The Ley was built by James Brydges in 1589. This is a particularly good example of a house for the well-to-do middle class. It has barge-boards, projecting bay windows, gables, and a porch carved with the arms of Brydges and the date of the building.

Pembridge is also rich in timber houses. Some have lost part of their beauty owing to bad repairs, but enough remain to make the village attractive, and several have been carefully restored since the war. Here there are fourteen houses with remains more or less perfect of cruck-construction, and an interesting market house.

The Old Steps, of sixteenth century origin, altered in the seventeenth century, has an original projecting window of seven lights, and above are fine bargeboards carved with fruit, flowers, and dragons. Duppa's Almshouses, two houses nearby which have been restored recently exposing good timbers, a mediaeval house almost opposite, the New Inn, which has just had several original fireplaces of unusual design opened out, and the old School House with the market hall in front, make this part of the village exceptionally interesting. The Historical Monuments Commission record no less than ninety-eight houses or outbuildings built before 1714.

Eardisley, the third village in the group mentioned above, has houses dating from the thirteenth century onwards. Eardisley Wootton is the earliest and is of cruck construction, having three pairs in position and a massive oak doorway formed of two timbers. The house was altered in the seventeenth century. The barn here has crucks. Other houses of the same style are the Forge, Little Quebb, Great Quebb, and Broadlands. The Quebbs date from mediaeval times with seventeenth century alterations. These are only a few of the many picturesque houses in this parish.

At Ledbury the large mansion house Ledbury Park, the Feathers Hotel, and the Talbot Hotel are good specimens of late sixteenth-century work. A house at the corner of South End and New Street has been restored within the last two years, the removal of the rough-cast having exposed moulded timbers. The upper storey projects over the footpath and is supported by five posts. Ledbury retains its Market Hall, built in 1633. It is open below, and has been most carefully repaired. Nearby is Church Lane with picturesque houses of about 1600 on both sides.

Every street has timber buildings, including two, Le Play House and one in the Homend, incorporating mediaeval crucks.

Luntley Court, Dilwyn, an early seventeenth century house, altered and enlarged in 1674, is a good example of building of the period. It is of five bays with projecting porch of two storeys, the lower open and the upper supported on moulded and enriched bressumers and brackets. In all this large house there are not two sets of mouldings of the same pattern. In a field near is a modern barn with ornamental crucks probably taken from the earlier house.

Kingsland, Orleton (two villages), and Ross-on-Wye (a small town) have many timber houses, too many to be mentioned except for the house at Ross in which 'The Man of Ross' who was mentioned by Pope, lived.

In Putley, the Lacons is perhaps the most picturesque cottage, having a pair of crucks at each end. At Ty-Mawr in Longtown the fourteenth century hall with four crucks is now used as a barn, and the north-east wing of two storeys is turned into stables with loft over. Old Court farm in this parish dates back to the same century, and is in a good state of preservation. Here the plan of an open hall with buttery wing and solar can be seen in spite of later additions, together with transomed windows, original roof trusses, crucks and wind braces, all of the fourteenth century.

Enough has been said to show the wealth of timber houses in Herefordshire. It will have been noticed how frequently those of cruck construction have been mentioned. The county is rich in these—a survey published in the Woolhope Club *Transactions* recorded no less than 140 in 1938. Since then others have been found, but some have been lost by fire (including two fine barns), or demolition by order of the Health authorities.

Some of these cruck buildings are worthy of complete restoration, when wonderful examples of mediaeval houses could be preserved.

One feature of the Herefordshire farm-houses is the projecting porch, open below, and with a room over. Many examples of these can be seen, Fenhampton, Nunupton, Lower Marston, Hope Farm, Parsonage Farm (Much Cowarne), Hope Farm (Edvin Loach) being some.

Timber houses had the fillings between the panels made of hazel rods and mud or oak laths and mud. As these fall into disrepair they are replaced with brick.

#### STONE HOUSES

There are a few examples of mansions built of stone in the county. Most important is Kentchurch Court where there are traces of a fortified fourteenth-century enclosure of which the gateway survives, and also a tower at the north-west angle of the house. The building was enlarged

and remodelled by John Nash in 1824. The contents of this mansion (pictures and furniture) are of interest and value, and there are many legends of Owen Glendower and John of Kent associated with it.

Hampton Court, near Leominster, retains the main plan of the house which Sir Roland Lenthall had license to crenellate in 1434. Leland states that it was built with the spoils of Agincourt. It was sold to Humphrey Coningsby in 1510, whose descendant Sir Thomas, Lord Coningsby, employed Colin Campbell to modernize the house in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century Sir Jeffrey Wyatville was commissioned to remodel the interior, with the result that the house was re-gothicised, and its original appearance disguised. The great entrance tower with cruciform loops, the hall porch, chapel, and the small angle towers of the north front are mostly original. The enriched tie-beam of the chapel (now re-coloured) and the heraldic glass are worthy of notice. Hampton Court is the home of Viscount Hereford, the premier viscount of England. When William Stukeley came to Herefordshire in the early part of the eighteenth century he was entertained by a harpist in the hall, in mediaeval style. This and other episodes are described in his diary.

Brinsop Court is undoubtedly one of the most picturesque houses in Herefordshire. It dates from the early years of the fourteenth century, the small part of the north range, east of the entrance, being of about 1300 to 1310, and other parts of this range being a very few years later. The great hall in the south range was built about 1340; the west range was replaced by a higher timber-framed building in the middle of the sixteenth century, the southern half of which was again rebuilt at the end of the seventeenth century. Part of the west range was refronted in brick about 1750, when the main entrance was altered. The house became the property of the Astley family early in the present century, and the modern east range was built in 1913, the courtyard then being enclosed and some internal walls and added partitions being removed. The moat still surrounds the house, and the late Rev. H. D. Astley being a great lover of birds made it the home of many water birds, including a number of flamingos. The appearance of the beautiful house with its reflections in the water and these handsome birds wading in the moat was a sight to be remembered. The interior is equally fine, the great timbered roof of the hall of two bays with screen bay at the east end, being a wonderful example of Herefordshire craftsmanship. The Court is now owned by Sir Derrick Bailey.

At Brampton Abbots there is an interesting house formerly the home of, and named after, the Rudhall family. It is of fourteenth century origin, but as so many others in Herefordshire, was much altered 200 years later



WEOBLEY. The Ley.  
See page 66.



LOWER BROCKHAMPTON. Gateway.  
See page 62.

when it became the property of William Rudhall, who died in 1530. The east wing was extended to three times its original length and a new roof inserted under the original one. In consequence of a fire in the early part of the seventeenth century a new north front was built, and the kitchen is of the same date. The stone entrance is noteworthy, with Doric half-columns supporting an entablature of the same order, and with an upper storey flanked by similar columns supporting a plain entablature. The exposed timbers are well ornamented. In about 1935 the house was repaired and an interesting gallery was uncovered, the front of which shows in the dining room. There is much fine panelling in the rooms and on the staircase, making the house of great interest and a specially good example of its kind.

Gillow Manor was formerly moated (part of the moat still remains) and was built round a rectangular courtyard and dates from the fourteenth century. The gatehouse was partly rebuilt in the sixteenth century, and other rebuilding took place at subsequent dates.

The mansion of Holme Lacy is the most elaborate in the county. It was erected on the site of an earlier one by John, second Viscount Scudamore at the end of the seventeenth century, but has been much altered since. Grinling Gibbons was engaged to do the carvings that decorated the best rooms until the beginning of this century, when they were sold upon the house changing hands. The interior has much splendid panelling, especially in the saloon which occupies two storeys. It has moulded skirting dado-rail, and a cornice ornamented with acanthus leaf and egg and dart enrichment. The decorated ceiling is above a plaster cove with cartouches-of-arms of Scudamore and Cecil, and Scudamore crests with other decorations. Seven other rooms have first-class ceilings, most with good panelling of the seventeenth century. The house, given to the County Council of Hereford a few years ago, is now used as a mental home.

At Eye Manor, a small mansion, there is some of the best Renaissance ceiling work in the country. The house was built in 1680, but the ceilings took several years to complete. They are naturalistic of the Italian style, in which every flower and leaf was modelled by hand, and are similar to some at Holyrood and Ham. In the south-east room there are ceiling panels depicting classical and sporting scenes. The house has a fine staircase, and is a most attractive residence.

There is a remarkably fine ceiling on a small scale in a house in Church Street, Hereford. This can be dated to within a year or so of 1622. It has the arms of the city before they were augmented by Charles I in 1645 as a reward for the valour of the citizens, and is otherwise decorated. The house was bought by the Post Office authorities, and although it has been scheduled as an ancient monument, the new owners say it must be

demolished in spite of efforts on the part of local residents to save it.

Caradoc Court, Sellack, is a mansion dating from the middle of the sixteenth century, altered in the seventeenth. In the west wing are two seventeenth century fireplaces, and a room at the north end retains much painted decoration of the same period.

Downton Castle was built in 1774 by Richard Payne Knight, the connoisseur who bequeathed a collection of gems, coins, drawings, etc. said at the time to be worth up to £60,000, to the British Museum. It has a Gothic exterior with Grecian interior, but is pleasing, and stands in one of the most picturesque parts of Herefordshire.

Eastnor Castle was built by John, first viscount Somers, in 1815, Robert Smirke being the architect. It is embattled, with round turrets at the four corners, and a central keep. The same architect was responsible for the classical Shire Hall, Hereford.

#### BRICK HOUSES

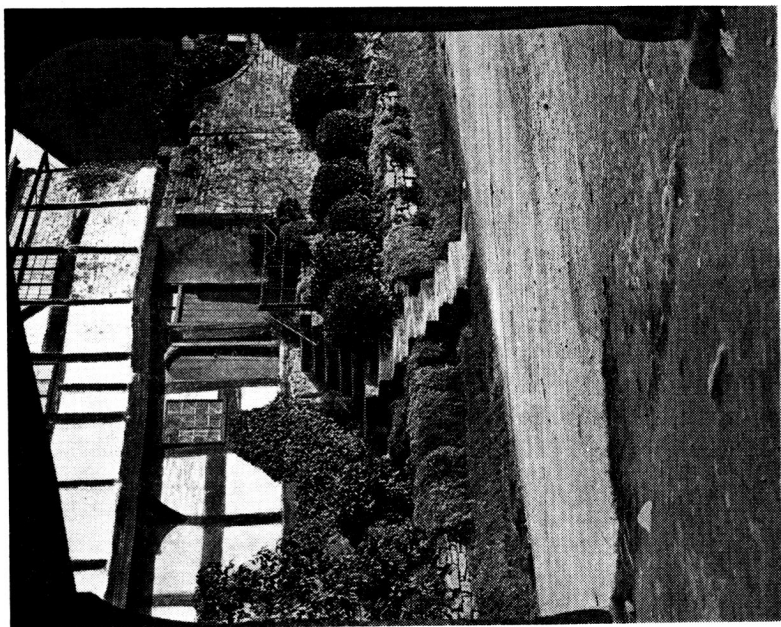
Bricks were not used in Herefordshire until Tudor times and then infrequently for many years. The best early house is Hellens in Much Marcle, of sixteenth-century date. It is now T-shaped in plan, and perhaps retains part of a fifteenth-century house. Formerly a larger residence, it was reduced in size in 1681 and again later. The interior contains good timber work, the staircase and landing being noticeable, and the hall and several rooms are panelled. The west room in a cross wing, now divided, was formerly the hall. Hatfield in the north of the county was a good E-shaped house of the same date as Hellens, but is now in ruins.

Stoke Edith mansion was erected by Paul Foley, Speaker of the House of Commons, in 1695, and completed by his son. It is possible that Foley drew the designs for the house with the assistance of Christopher Wren, its reputed builder. It was a stately quadrangular mansion of brick with stone dressings, with an approach on the north by steps leading to the great hall, the walls and ceilings of which were painted by Thornhill. Unfortunately the house was partly destroyed by fire in December, 1927, and the shell only remains to show what a fine building it was.

Only one house in Hereford shows signs of the Gothic revival of the nineteenth century. This is the Fosse, overlooking the moat of Hereford Castle. It was built about 1825 by the Rev. Henry Gipps, and the design is said to have been based on a Swiss chalet, but this is doubtful. The house is well-built, and being so different from any others in the city, is interesting. When the outlines are reflected in the moat in the mornings, with clouds behind, the effect is indeed pleasing.

#### CONCLUSION

Many of the houses in the city have remarkable timbers behind their later brick fronts; few have their timber fronts remaining. It is good to be



PEMBRIDGE. Old School House, Sixteenth century.  
See page 66.



DILWYN. Luntley Court porch.  
See page 67.

able to say that two old houses in King Street, though in a bad state of repair, were purchased recently by a resident of the city, who has (after difficulties in obtaining permission to retain the old timber fronts) engaged an architect to preserve them. The backs of the premises were so ruinous that they had to be demolished.

Many other houses in the county that are condemned as unhealthy could be converted into healthy, comfortable and picturesque dwellings with modern conveniences at a far less cost than that of the ugly cottages that are built in many parishes, thus destroying the beauty of Herefordshire. The authority responsible for building the council houses at Harewood, which are well designed and well placed, can be congratulated upon its work.

Quite recently two cottages at Lingen that were nearly roofless and with all the fillings between the wall timbers missing were bought by a craftsman. With the help of a labourer the purchaser has converted them into one house, making well designed oak doors and other fittings of wood, and doing this work in his spare time. It is now a comfortable, dry, and picturesque home.

In the county there are several villages of a character peculiar to Herefordshire. Unfortunately there are no large landowners who own them in their entirety. It is therefore difficult to ensure their preservation, as has been possible elsewhere by purchase by a Trust. Great efforts on the part of all interested in country life are needed to influence the owners of houses and lands in these villages to preserve the good and to prevent the building of badly designed dwellings. An example of what can be achieved in this way may be seen at Chipping Camden, where a society was formed to keep the character of a Cotswold town unspoilt, with excellent results.

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### BOOK REVIEW

*The Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England) Dorset.* Vol. I (West)  
10 $\frac{3}{8}$  × 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ . pp. l. + 334, with 212 plates and 1 folding map. London. H.M.S.O.  
1952. 63/-.

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This volume is the first to appear since the war and is the twentieth Survey and Report to be issued by the Royal Commission. It is also the first to be issued since the terms of reference were extended to cover, at the Commission's discretion, the period subsequent to 1714. In this case a terminal date of 1850 has been adopted.

Dorset is only the eighth county to be surveyed and so it will be a long time before it is possible to compare to the full all the various regional and local styles in the country. The whole book is well produced and indexed, while the photographs, maps and plans are of the usual high standard.

W.A.S.