

Working-class housing in Oxfordshire

By CRISPIN PAINE, *et al.*

CONSIDERING the vast amount written by the Victorians on the antiquities of the county, it is striking that between 1854, when Henry Acland published his seminal work on the Oxford cholera outbreak, and 1912 when Miss C. V. Butler published her *Social Conditions in Oxford*, absolutely nothing seems to have been written on the housing of ordinary Oxfordshire people.

Even in recent years, though the vernacular buildings of the country have received some attention, the only work on artisan housing has been Morris' study of St. Ebbe's.¹ Yet older working-class houses are everywhere rapidly being demolished or modernized.

Oxfordshire Museums Service, together with a group of other people, has therefore recorded a number of buildings of different type, in the hope of arousing interest in this important and long-neglected subject.²

Styles Cottage at Uffington and *Blenheim Cottage at Standlake* are rare examples of country cottages whose history can be traced to the 17th century.³ Very few working-class houses survive in the countryside from before about 1850, for most 'cottages' were built for a higher social class. It is hard to realize today, when slums are associated with towns, the squalor in which farmworkers sometimes lived.

You approach the doorway through the mud, over some loose stones, which rock under your feet in using them. You have to stoop for admission and cautiously look around ere you fairly trust yourself within. There are but two rooms in the house—one below and the other above. On leaving the bright light without, the room which you enter is so dark that for a time you can with difficulty discern the objects which it contains. Before you is a large but a cheerless fireplace—it is not every poor man that may be said to have a hearth—with a few smouldering embers of a small wood fire, over which still hangs a pot, recently used for some culinary purpose. At one corner stands a small rickety table, whilst scattered about are three old chairs—one without a back—and a stool or two, which, with a very limited and imperfect washing apparatus, and a shelf or two for plates, tea-cups, etc. constitute the whole furniture

¹ R. J. Morris, 'The Friars and Paradise': an essay in the building history of Oxford', *Oxonienia*, xxxvi (1971), 72-98.

² The more detailed notes, plans and photographs of these eleven buildings are deposited in the Oxfordshire Sites and Monuments Record at the County Museum, Woodstock.

³ Very occasionally one gets earlier glimpses. Portman quotes the rare inventory of Richard Church-house, labourer of Taston, whose one-roomed hut in 1592 contained: a bed-covering, 3 pairs of sheets and a bolster, a table cloth, 2 pots, 2 kettles, a frying pan, 2 candlesticks, 2 platters, 1 porringer and a saucer, a cover (for the fire, probably), a load of wood, a brandiron and other implements belonging to the house. The total value of his worldly goods, 18/8d., compares with that of a Marston yeoman who died the following year: £386 10s. 8d (D. Portman, 'Vernacular building in the Oxford region in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries', in C. W. Chalklin and M. A. Havinden (eds.), *Rural Change and Urban Growth 1500-1800* (1974)).

of the apartment. What could be more cheerless or comfortless? And yet you fancy you could put up with everything but the close earthy smell, which you endeavour in vain to escape by breathing short and quickly.⁴

Sometimes, though, the 'country cottage' image must also have been true :

But Lark Rise must not be thought of as a slum set down in the country. The inhabitants lived an open-air life ; the cottages were kept clean by much scrubbing with soap and water, and doors and windows stood wide open when the weather permitted.⁵

In the second half of the last century, canal and railway brought cheap bricks and slates to house the booming rural population. Of these 'stone or brick boxes with blue-slatted roofs'⁶ even less is known : many must have been put up, like *Sheephouse Fields Cottage, Longworth*, by farmers for their employees, but there is an enormous amount to be found out about the way these houses were financed and built, who built them and for whom, and about, for example, the contrasting life-styles in closed and open villages.

It is a common belief that, after the enclosure of the common fields, farmers moved from their old houses in the village street, and that these were subdivided and let to farmworkers. *Town End, Ardington*, began as a yeoman farmer's house of the 18th century or a little earlier, but by the mid 19th century it had become two estate workers' houses. In this case enclosure was not responsible ; it will be interesting to learn how often in Oxfordshire it really was.

We tend to assume nowadays that most people live in family houses. Before this century this was not true of very many ; particularly not for the working classes. Girls were sent away as servants, boys often lived in as farmhands, at least until marriage. Many jobs demanded constant moving about—hence the importance of lodging-houses and private lodgings (as for the Long Hanborough stonemason brothers who lodged at 99 *Causeway, Banbury*, in 1871). Many people, too, must have been simply homeless : migrant workers, gypsies, tramps.

Many of the old stone or timber-framed houses that give such charm to Oxfordshire towns like Thame, Witney, Burford or Wantage were occupied for much of their lives by working-class families. We remain profoundly ignorant about them : how they were built, who by, whether (as one tends to assume) houses originally built for shopkeepers or master-craftsmen acquired working-class occupants when their former owners moved to better accommodation. The cottage formerly in *Queen's Square, Bloxham*, so much smaller than 'Thatchers' in nearby Church Street, is a reminder that today we see only the larger and better-built houses. How did accommodation standards change in the 18th and 19th centuries ? Did one's job make much difference ? Did parts of the county differ very much ? Research in progress in a number of Oxfordshire towns should soon begin to make the picture clearer.

⁴ P. E. Razzell and R. W. Wainwright (eds.), *The Victorian working-class ; selections from letters to the Morning Chronicle* (1973). The quotation is from a letter of 24 October 1849 discussing conditions in Berks., Bucks., Wilts. and Oxon.

⁵ Flora Thompson, *Lark Rise to Candleford*.

⁶ *Ibid.*

The way William Wilkins developed *Causeway, Banbury*, in the 1850s, 60s and 70s, with his elaborate edifice of mortgages, is probably typical of the way Victorian country-town speculators coped with the massive influx of families. One wishes one knew how the families coped with their new houses : new luxuries like W.C.s and coppers. How, for example, did front rooms acquire their sanctity ?

Just as there were no major industries in Oxfordshire before World War I, so there was no large-scale house-building by employers—not even, until 1904, by the Great Western Railway.⁷ *Ormond Terrace, Grove*, however, seems to have been built in 1810 by the canal company.

Some businesses did find it worthwhile to provide housing for their workers. The 12 houses erected in the 1870s by William and Thomas Nalder of *East Challow* probably reflect the success of their ironworks business and an urgent need for loyal workers. Cape's, whose hostels housed 47 people in 1911, was only the largest of the Oxfordshire shops with living-in staff.⁸

Apart from almshouses, *Charterville* was the first attempt in Oxfordshire to provide large-scale housing with no profit motive.⁹ 17 of the best preserved houses have recently been Listed. Most surprising perhaps is the high standard of building and detailing.

A mixture of motives prompted landowners to provide housing for their workers :

Mr. Spencer [who in 1902 was farming 800 acres at Tetsworth] thought that labourers were in any case likely to drift away to towns in order to better themselves, but he was of the opinion that the loss would be diminished by the provision of good cottages and a liberal supply of allotments and small-holdings.¹⁰

The beautifying of Lockinge was not the work of a day, but the loving labour of many years. Gradually the two villages of Lockinge and Ardington were transformed, the cottages remodelled and rebuilt, the churches restored, schools and estate-buildings of all kinds erected, cultivation developed, roads constructed, herds of cattle and flocks of sheep multiplied, bare slopes clothed with young wood, the aspect of the whole countryside changed.¹¹

To what extent was philanthropy the chief motive of improving landlords, and to what extent were landlords obliged to provide cottages to attract and keep labour ? Was eviction really commonly used as a threat ? Or was simple investment sometimes a motive as well ? Oxfordshire's labourers were notoriously badly paid : how were rents affected, and how did the county's landlords compare as builders with those elsewhere ?

Apart from college and university buildings and a few Victorian shops, Oxford's main streets were lined almost entirely with 17th-century houses until after World War I. Behind them were the houses of the poor : 17th-, 18th- and 19th-century cottages. They have now all been entirely swept away, and only a handful of photographs survive to show how most Oxford people used to live.

⁷ M. R. Airs, 'Railway Housing in Didcot', *Oxoniensia*, forthcoming.

⁸ R. A. Foster, *F. Cape & Co. of St. Ebbe's St., Oxford* (1973).

⁹ A. M. Hadfield, *The Chartist Land Company* (1970).

¹⁰ H. Rider Haggard, *Rural England* (1902).

¹¹ Lady Wantage, *Lord Wantage, V.C., K.C.B., a memoir* (1903).

The 1820s was the crucial decade for working-class housing in Oxford. A massive building boom covered Oxford's flood-plain for the first time with houses. Thanks to the work of R. J. Morris¹² we know quite a lot about how the largest area of the 1820s housing, St. Ebbe's, was developed, and recent work is showing that the pattern in Jericho was similar.¹³

Two kinds of men were involved: firstly, the major developers who bought a former market garden in lots, laid out an estate and provided roads; secondly a host of small capitalists—often local tradesmen, upper college servants and the like—who invested their savings and mortgage loans in the building of small groups of houses or individual lots. Typical might have been a college servant who raised a mortgage, built 4 houses, and retired to live in one on the income of the others. This small-scale piecemeal development can still be seen in Jericho.

What were these houses of the 1820s like? Jerry-built of brick with slate roofs, they were usually of 2 storeys, sometimes of 3.¹⁴ In the smallest houses the front door opened directly into the living room, and a steep staircase led to the bedrooms, with a small scullery at the back. Larger houses had an entrance passage and front and back rooms. Toilet buckets were emptied, in the country manner, onto the garden or into a ditch draining to the Thames; on the other hand, gardens were usually big enough for pig-sties, chickens and rabbits as well as for vegetables. At about 1s. per room per week rent, they were thus better value than the old cramped courts.

The terrace house of the later 19th century is the classic working-class house with which everyone is familiar. The front door opens into a passage past the front room and into the kitchen, which was used for all day-time living. Beyond is a scullery with copper, sink and perhaps cold tap. In the garden is a W.C. and coal house. From the kitchen a stair leads to 2 or 3 bedrooms.

These houses can be found in every Oxfordshire town; Oxford itself boasts street after street of them, and work by Malcolm Graham on the development of Oxford's suburbs is beginning to reveal how they came about. What were the respective roles of the building societies (notably the Oxford Industrial and Provident Land and Building Society¹⁵), the colleges, private speculators (from Walter Gray, 'Father of Oxford Conservatism', downwards) and solicitors (who seem to hover mysteriously behind every deal)? How did the pattern of the building industry (dominated by Kinglerlee) for example, or the proportion of houses for sale or rent, differ in Oxford from other towns? Did the colleges differ from other speculators, or college servants from other tenants and purchasers? Did the notorious seasonal nature of Oxford's employment affect rents or occupation density? Did the needs of laundering or lodging, for example, affect the way houses were lived in?

The blocks of flats erected by Christ Church in St. Thomas's are the best known 'improvement' housing in Oxford, but from 1866 the Oxford Cottage Improvement Society¹⁶ bought houses in bad condition and improved them by

¹² *Op. cit.* note 1.

¹³ A. Whitehead, 'Working-class housing in Jericho', *Oxoniensia*, forthcoming. See also R. Fastnacht, *Summertown since 1820* (1977).

¹⁴ These paragraphs are largely based on C. V. Butler, *Social Conditions in Oxford* (1912).

¹⁵ Cf. A. Saint, 'Three Oxford Architects', *Oxoniensia*, xxxv (1970), 91.

¹⁶ Cf. *Ibid.*, 93.

installing new drains, sculleries, windows etc. (From 1875 most building plans in the city survive in the Local History Collections of the Central Library.) The Society paid a dividend of 4%–5%.

1890 saw the first Act allowing local authorities to build houses. Few in Oxfordshire did so to any extent, except for Bullingdon R.D.C. and Banbury R.D.C.¹⁷ but the 1919 'Addison Act' led to some building in almost every village. 215 houses were built in Oxford.¹⁸ Local authority housing of this period is distinctive: well-built semi-detached houses, often with Mansard roofs, had a parlour and kitchen (or living-room), scullery and 3 bedrooms. Where water was laid on they also had bathrooms and W.C.s. The rents of 7s. 6d.–11s. per week were however out of the reach of poorer people.

From 1930 government policy changed the emphasis from building for wealthier workers to replacing slums. 1,200 Oxford houses were classified as unfit—by 1939 about 800 replacement houses had been built. Rents ranged from 1s. 2d. to 10s., with the average about 5s. While some R.D.C.'s, like Abingdon and Witney, built a good many houses, others did little: in Begbroke, where 22% of families were classified as overcrowded, no houses were built between the wars.

37 Clive Road, Oxford built in 1929, stands at the very beginning of Oxford's inter-war building boom. Between 1919 and 1929 only 436 private houses were built in Oxford (against 1,551 municipal). But between 1930 and 1937, 4,336 were erected.

The sheer squalor of living conditions in town and country alike, even up to the last war, would astonish most people today. For all our continuing problems, the achievement in housing over the past 50 years has been astonishing—but this achievement has meant that much of the evidence of how our fathers and grandfathers lived has disappeared. We need urgently to record the surviving buildings, their fittings, and (even more ephemeral) memories of how they were used.

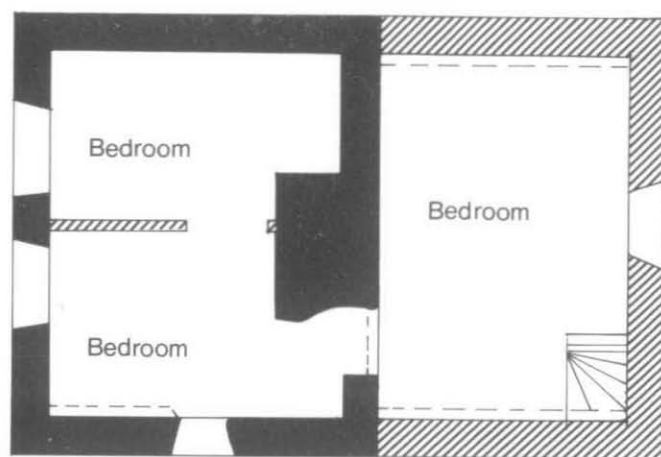
UFFINGTON, STYLES COTTAGE (SU 30738923) PRN 11416. By NANCY STEBBING

The cottage is one of a row built before 1699 as part of the Craven Estate, on the edge of Upper Common. It was a single room and loft, and at leasehold from 1699 rented at 1s. p.a. In the 18th century a second cottage, also single room and loft, was added, and they were leased separately at £1 p.a., but this was not paid. Some of the tenants, known from estate records and overseers accounts, were assessed for Poor Rate, but in 1782 the tenant was receiving Poor Relief. In the 1870s the cottage and garden holdings (11 perches) were rented at £1 5s. 0d. p.a. Two families of farm labourers lived there, according to the census returns, with 6 and 9 children. By the early 20th century a dairyman and wife occupied the cottage, which had been converted into one.

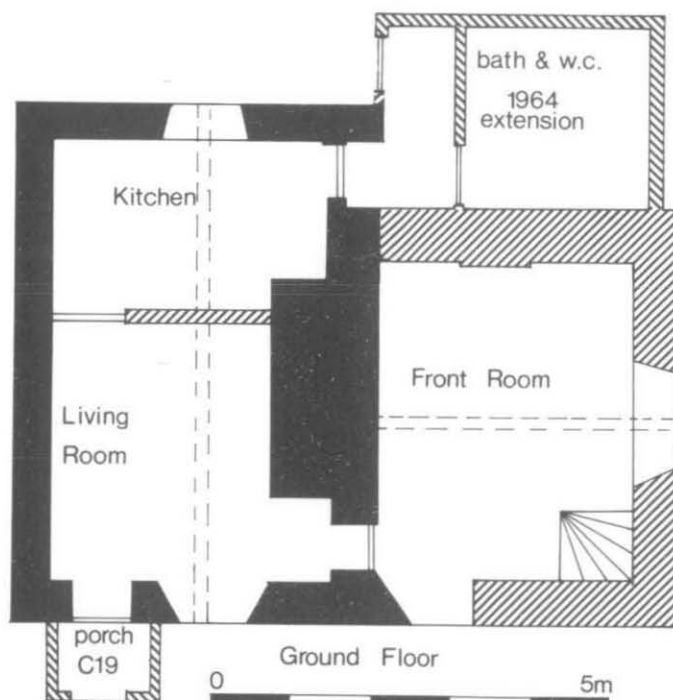
The cottage is built of chalk, on sarsen footings, with some brick infill, under a thatched roof. It is double-fronted, of one and a half storeys (Fig. 1; Pl. VIII, A).

¹⁷ Why this should have been so will, one hopes, emerge from David Witham's current work on housing in Banbury R.D.C. and Jacqueline Porter's on Banbury U.D.C. I am grateful to both for their help. Meanwhile useful notes on housing in North Oxfordshire between the wars will be found in *Country Planning, a study of rural problems* published by the O.U.P. for the Agricultural Economics Research Institute in 1944. The associated film *24 Square Miles* has some marvellously vivid shots of rural housing conditions 30 years ago.

¹⁸ *A survey of the social services in the Oxford district*, Oxford 1940.



First Floor



- C17 Cottage
- C18 Cottage
- C19 & 20 Extensions

Fig. 1
Styles Cottage, Uffington.

The eastern half, with the entrance, is built of roughly coursed chalk blocks, while the western half is built of coursed rectangular chalk blocks. A date stone over the window reads 1824. Window levels on the front differ, as do the floor levels inside. The older half is 10 cm lower. A long sarsen plinth under the window butt-joins the footings of the eastern half, and marks the addition, or rebuild, of the western half.

Five phases can be worked out in the structure :—

- I The pre-1699 cottage, single room with loft, and gable chimney stack.
- II Another room and loft added to the west gable, between 1705 and 1766, as a separate tenement. Rear fireplace and stack. Front door paired to match the original.
- III New windows inserted and modernization probably effected, *e.g.* brick infilling and quoins. Datestone of 1824.
- IV Cottages joined into single property, *c.* 1900. Staircase inserted, porch added, second doorway converted to window, doorway access through loft rooms.
- V Modernization, 1964. Bathroom in rear extension with back entrance passage, fireplace blocked, kitchen separated from living room, running water and electricity supplied.

Sources

Schedule of the Craven Estate, Berkshire Record Office D/EC/E33.
 Survey of Berkshire Estates, 1784/5 and Map. B.R.O. D/EC/E13.
 Survey of Lifeholders at Uffington, 1746. B.R.O. D/EC/6.
 Survey of Manor of Uffington, 1705. B.R.O. D/EC/E2.
 Census Returns for Uffington, 1861, 71. Oxfordshire County Library.
 Overseers Accounts (1719-92). B.R.O.

BLenheim COTTAGE, BRIGHTHAMPTON, STANDLAKE (SP 38670348) PRN 11403. By JOHN RHODES and CHRISTINE BLOXHAM

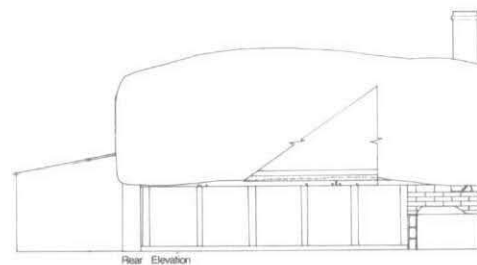
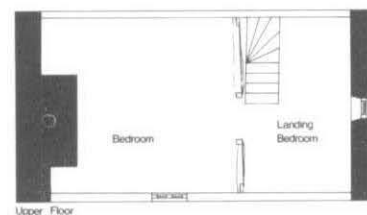
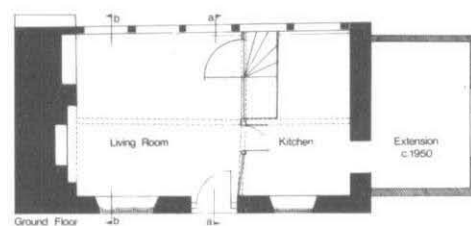
Blenheim Cottage, Brighthampton was built some time prior to 1694 and was sold by Nicholas Yateman Junior of Clanfield to the Churchwardens and Overseers of Standlake for £32. The cottage was then 'in decay', and was put into repair by its tenant Jenkins, who lived in it for a considerable period. His widow lived on there rent-free until her death in 1727, although the close attached to the cottage was let for £1 4s. 6d. The charity which the cottage constituted, known originally as Yateman's, came to be called Jenkins; rent from it was put to the general charity account.

The cottage was let to Stephen Hickman in 1838, with a right of common, for £4 *p.a.*, though he lived elsewhere, and throughout the 19th century the cottage and its close were let separately. In 1851 the cottage was let to 'one of the poor', though the land was held by the Hemmings family, market gardeners, until 1887. By 1898 Magdalen College were leasing the whole property, sub-letting to their tenant at Yew Tree Farm, who purchased it in 1925 for £90. Thereafter the cottage was let rent free to various families whose members worked on the farm. When there was no farm work involved a small rent was charged—4s. in 1928, and again during and immediately after the Second War. During the 1930s one George Jones, carter on Yew Tree Farm, inhabited the cottage with his wife, three daughters and a son. The cottage ceased to be habitable after 1963, when a closure order was put on it by West Oxfordshire District Council.

The cottage as it survives is little altered from its original 17th-century structure (Fig. 2; Pl. VIII, B). It is a two-floored, two-celled building of coursed limestone rubble on its front and side walls, the rear wall being of timber-frame on a dwarf wall, infilled with wattle-and-daub. There is a datestone of 1704 on the road-end gable which may date repairs to the cottage and explain its local name of Blenheim Cottage. The ground floor is made up of a living room with a fireplace, now containing a late 19th-century range, and a kitchen area. It is possible that a bread-oven is concealed in the stack to the right of the fireplace. Stairs lead from the living room to an upper floor contained wholly within the roof space; this is itself divided by a rough wood-boarded partition into two

Blenheim Cottage Brighthampton

PRN 11403



J. G. Rhodes March 1978

Fig. 2
Blenheim Cottage, Brighthampton, Standlake.

separate sleeping areas, one lit by a small window in the gable, one by a dormer window at the front of the house at floor/wall-plate level.

The only alterations made (other than the renewal of window and door woodwork) have been the insertion of the range, the paving of the downstairs floor with quarry tiles, and in 1950 the construction of a concrete-walled extension on the N.E. gable.

Acknowledgement is made to Brigadier F. R. L. Goadby for his work on the documentary history of the cottage.

SHEEPHOUSE FIELDS COTTAGE, LONGWORTH (SU 392958) PRN 11417. By NANCY STEBBING

The cottage was built as an agricultural labourer's cottage, before 1846, when it appears on the Tithe Award map for Longworth and Charney Bassett. It belonged to Sheephouse Fields Farm, and was used by a farm labourer and his wife in the 1860s and 70s. Later it became almost a squatters' cottage, changing tenants by 'keyhold' or handing over the key, with rent at £5 5s. per quarter in the 1900s. A family of travellers lived there until the 1950s, when it fell derelict.

The cottage is of one building phase, of coursed rubble limestone, with brick quoins, door and window jambs, chimney and relieving arch, under a slate roof (Fig. 3). It is of one and a half storeys: a single ground floor room, with larder, back entrance lobby, stair and understair coal store; loft space divided into two rooms. Outside is a stone-walled chicken run, foundations of the W.C. and a well. The plot is wedge-shaped, said to have had a stable at the end, and cultivated with vegetables and flowers. A separate field was rented at 10s. a week beyond the cottage garden for the travellers' horses.

Sources

Tithe Award for Longworth and Charney Bassett, 1846, Bodleian Library.

Census Returns, 1861, 1871.

Oral evidence from daughter of last tenant.

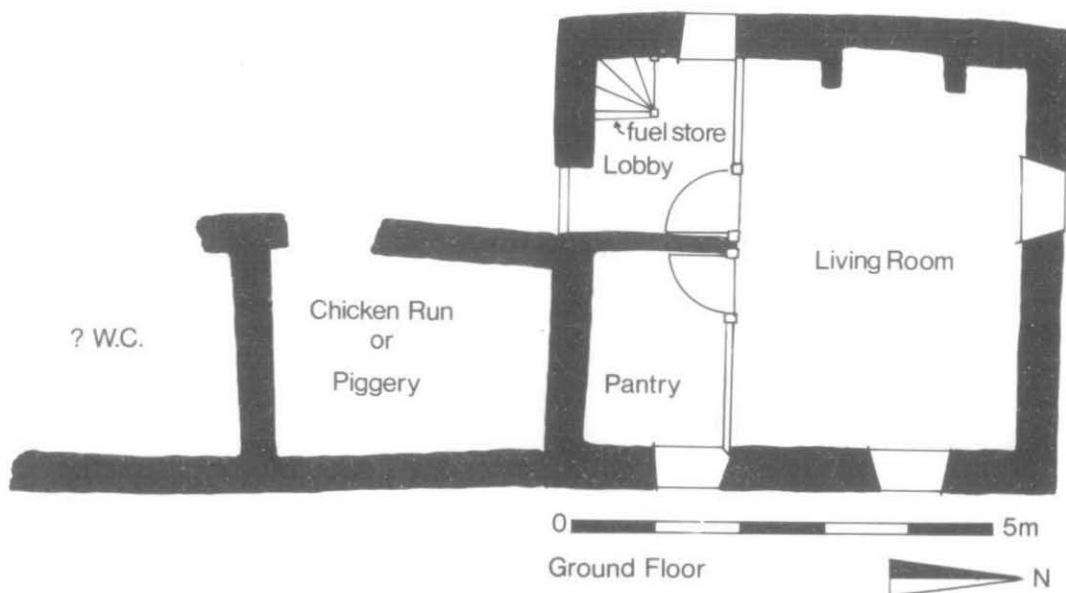


Fig. 3
Sheephouse Fields Cottage, Longworth.

47-49 ARDINGTON (SU 43498845) PRN 11418. By NANCY STEBBING

Numbers 48 and 49 Ardington were formerly the farmhouse of an independent yeoman farmer, who died in 1795, dividing the house in his will for his two daughters. They married, and by 1814 there were 13 children in the two families. In 1857 the Lockinge Estate was created from the Manors of Lockinge and Ardington, with piecemeal acquisition of the remaining freeholdings. The farmhouse had become part of the Estate by 1863, for dated bricks relate to the typical estate improvements and additions to the terrace. Number 47 was built at this time, and the terrace was lived in by Estate workers until it was demolished in 1977 (Pl. IX).

Number 47: double fronted on two storeys, with W.C. and washroom with boiling copper added in a lean-to extension, south end. Brick structure, with datestone 1863, under tiled hipped roof. Rear and side elevations of chalk blocks with brick quoins and brick infill. Chimney stack at apex of hip. Extension to rear had lower roof level porch of chalk and brick. (5 small rooms total; 3 bedrooms).

Number 48: Centre cottage. Front elevation single-bay with porch built over the front door. Brick ground floor with tiled canopy, rendered first floor with dormer window. Chimney stack between 48/49. Roof pitched. (5 rooms; 3 bedrooms).

Number 49: End of terrace with an extension to the rear. Single fronted, brick built, on coursed chalk block foundations under tiled mansard roof. The extension timber box-framed, with brick infill, one and one half storeys under a pitched tile roof. Chalk foundations. Chimney stack rising from eaves of extension. (6 rooms; 3 bedrooms).

The building sequence in summary:

- I Single farmhouse (Numbers 48 and 49) and barn belonging to Thomas Clarke, yeoman, pre-1795.
- II 1795: farmhouse divided by will into two.
- III 1863: addition of Number 47, modernization and improvements by Lockinge Estate: Dormer windows and porches added in mock-tudor estate style; wash-house with coppers and W.C. extension added on the end of the terrace.

Sources

Will of Thomas Clarke, yeoman, of Ardington, 1795. Bodleian Library.
Ardington Enclosure Award Maps, 1811, 1814. Berkshire Record Office.
Havinden papers on Lockinge Estate in Museum of English Rural Life, Reading.
Parish Registers (Baptisms, Deaths, Marriages) for Ardington, Berkshire Record Office.
Poor Rate Accounts, Ardington, B.R.O.
Census Returns, 1841, '51, '61, '71.

COTTAGE IN QUEEN'S SQUARE, BLOXHAM (SP 429360) PRN 11412. By SARAH GOSLING

The structure and internal layout of this cottage have been reconstructed from a photograph taken in 1923 and from the oral evidence of Mr. Ernest Mawle (grandson of the then tenant, Mr. George Mawle) recorded by Mrs. Y. Huntriss. The cottage was demolished in 1938, by Banbury R.D.C., as part of the Bloxham clearance area. The records of the individual houses in the clearance area are unfortunately no longer available. Ernest Mawle's interview reflects some local feeling that the clearance was a mistake, as the smaller and more seriously overcrowded cottages might have been demolished to give more land for planting to the remainder.

Nothing is known of the date or circumstances of the building of the cottage, beyond the fact that it was in existence by the time of the O.S. 25 in. map of 1881.

The cottage in 1923

The cottage was a single cell structure of local middle lias marlstone, with a thatched roof and a chimney stack of brick (Fig. 4; Pl. X, A). Door and window lintels were of wood. There were a few square yards of flower garden in front of the cottage, and a brick pigsty in a row on the other side of the road. Mr. Mawle also had an allotment elsewhere in Bloxham.

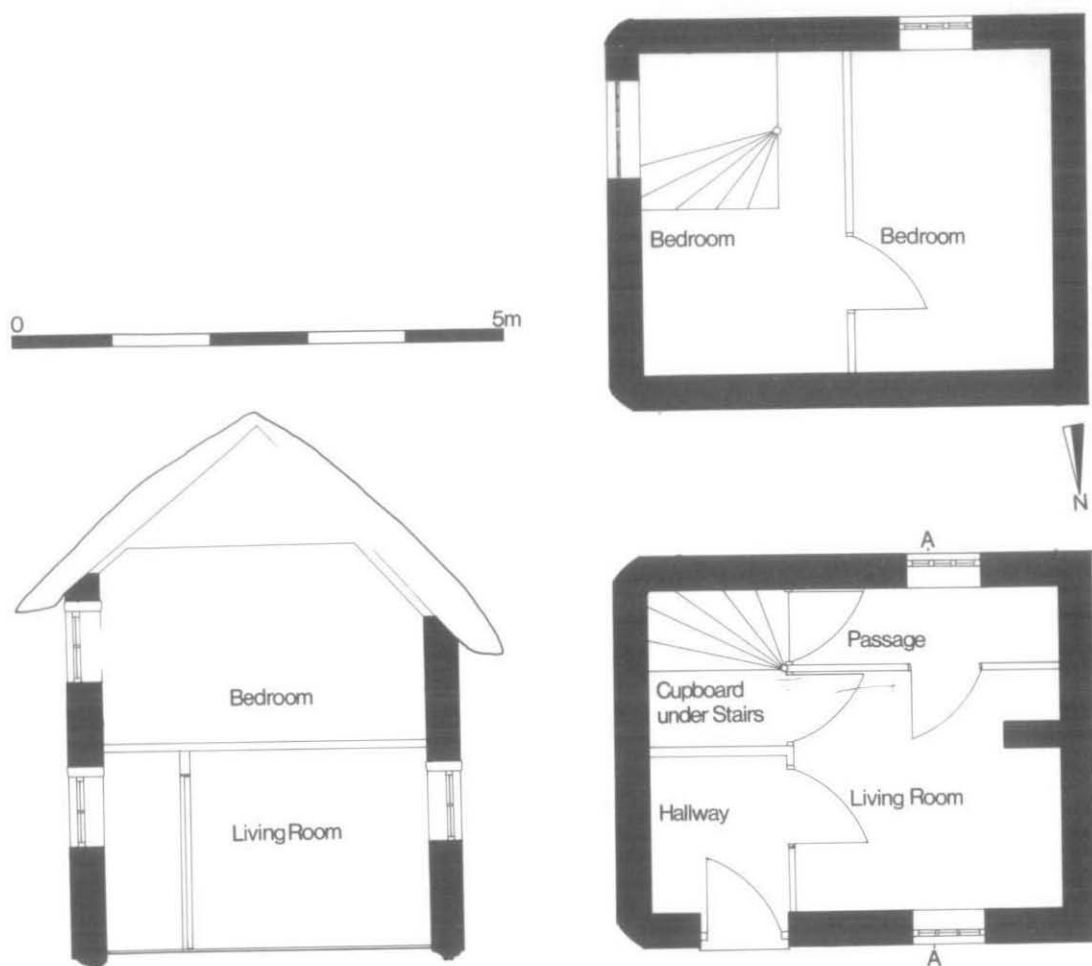


Fig. 4

Cottage in Queen's Square, Bloxham. Reconstructed from photograph (Pl. X, A) and descriptions.

Ground floor. The front door opened into a small hallway. From this a door to the right led into the living room, lit by one window. In the west wall of the living room was a wide fireplace (in which was an open fire with an oven on one side) which Mr. Mawle remembers with stone seats around the back walls. From the living room a door opened into a rear passage, which was presumably lit by a window, although there is no evidence; from the passage a further door led to the curving staircase.

The whole of the ground floor was paved with flagstones.

The *first floor* was divided into two small bedrooms, one leading out of the other. Mr. Mawle remembers that in his grandfather's cottage, as opposed to many other local houses, it was not necessary to kneel down to look out of the bedroom windows. There was no attic as the bedroom ceilings were taken up into the roof.

Furnishings and use in 1923

The *hallway* was unfurnished.

The *living room* was wall-papered and the lath and plaster ceiling whitewashed. It contained a dining table and chairs, a sofa and a big wooden armchair, which was Mr. George Mawle's own chair. There was a free-standing corner cupboard for china. The mantelpiece was covered with a plush cloth and on it was a clock, a few ornaments brought back from fairs and a tea caddy. On the walls were pictures of Queen Victoria, the Last Supper and 'The Thin Red Line'. There were geraniums at the window-sill and a tasselled cream-coloured blind at the window. On the floor were rag-rugs, made freshly each spring by Miss Mawle, George Mawle's daughter who lived in the cottage and looked after her father. Lighting, as throughout the cottage, was by means of wall-mounted oil-lamps.

All cooking was done on the living room fire—the only means of heating. About 1·5 m. up the chimney an iron bar (called the 'readypole') went across, from which hung the pot-hook. There was an iron fender around the fire-place. Saucepans were kept in the cupboard under the stairs. Bacon was hung to cure round the inside of the chimney. The Mawles took baths in a zinc bath by the fire, which burned wood or coal.

The *passage* contained a table, and all washing and washing-up was done in a bowl on this table. There was no sink or piped water supply. All water was carried from a communal pump in Queen's Square. The communal lavatory serving 29 households was also in the square.

The two *bedrooms* upstairs contained one bed in each. Mr. Mawle had the larger room and his daughter the other. Both beds were covered with hand-made patchwork counterpanes. There were lace curtains bought in Banbury market at the windows.

The rent for the cottage in the early 1920s was 2s. per week. Mr. Mawle was then aged about 80, and the age and occupation of his daughter are not known, so the household income may have been limited to an old-age pension.

'THATCHERS', CHURCH STREET, BLOXHAM (SP 428356) PRN 11413. By SARAH GOSLING

The date of building of this house is unknown. In the late 19th century it formed two houses, both entered from the same front door and thatched porch. It is not clear whether the northern part of the house is a later addition or whether a three-bay house with through passage has been later divided.

The house is of local ironstone; the southern two bays at least were originally thatched (Fig. 5; Pl. X, B). It is of two storeys. The thatched porch is a later addition, of unknown but possibly late 19th-century date. Substantial internal alterations were made to the house in the 1950s, chiefly the demolition of partition walls and the re-alignment of the staircase in the southern bay and the demolition of a staircase and fireplace in the present dining-room.

The internal layout and furnishings of the southern house in the 1890s have been largely reconstructed from the oral evidence of Mr. W. E. Woodford (born 1887) whose grandmother kept a small sweetshop there. She also took in lodgers. The other part of the house (then occupied by a dressmaker) is not remembered by Mr. Woodford; his memory is most complete of the ground floor rooms of his grandmother's house. As an occasional child visitor, he was less familiar with the bedrooms (whose contents are sketchily recorded) and not at all with the attics.

The house in the 1890s

The present living-room was then divided into a kitchen and a sitting room.

The *kitchen* was used for everyday domestic purposes and for selling sweets. A very detailed impression of the room is given by Mr. Woodford's list of its contents:—

At the front window: plain blinds with acorn pulls and white curtains.
6 bottles of boiled sweets and toffees (no scales—sweets counted out).

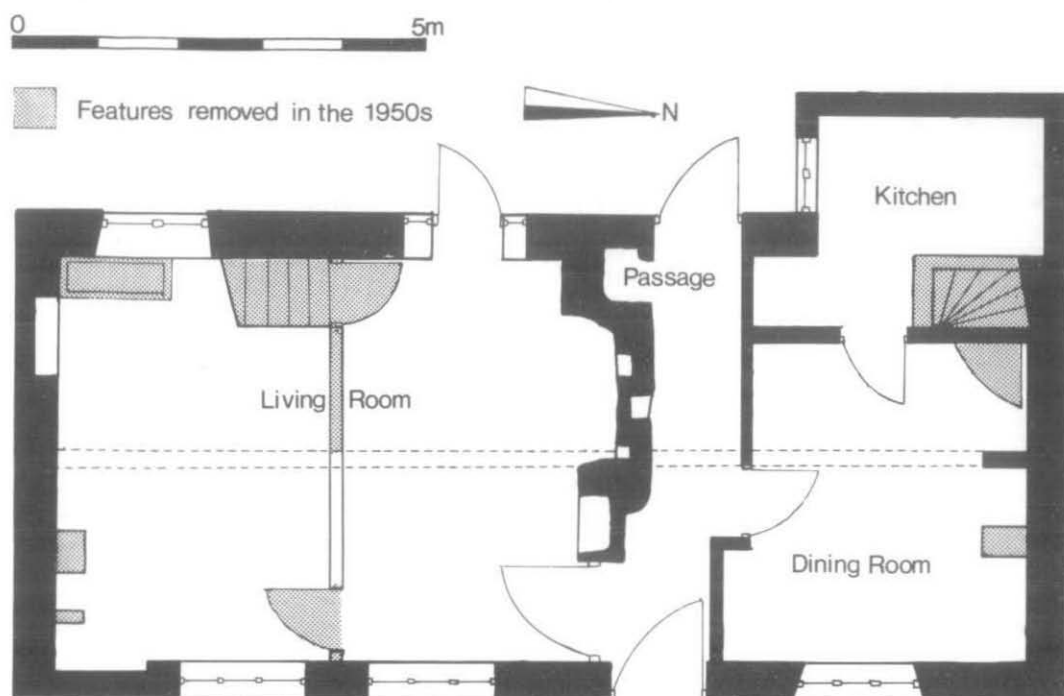


Fig. 5

'Thatchers', Church Street, Bloxham. Ground floor.

Around the fireplace : Seats in inglenook ; brass fender and fire-irons ; pegged rug ; coalbox and tongs ; brass toasting fork ; bellows ; tinder box ; small iron ovengrate with kettle on pot hook ; Dutch oven and iron saucepans ; large meat tins sent to baker on Sunday with meat and Yorkshire pudding ; bacon rack on ceiling ; American clock, a squirrel and a partridge under glass, on mantelpiece.

On the walls : Framed photographs on wall to left of rear window ; oval mirror ; pictures ; copper warming pan.

Other furniture and equipment : Wooden chair in front of fireplace, with cushion ; small round tripod table under rear window, with plant ; 2 wooden chairs around walls ; grandfather clock ; sheep's head clock ; round pedestal table in centre of room ; clothes horse ; 4-legged stool ; dough guiver ; willow pattern and white crockery ; round bread board ; tin cans, some with lids for milk, tripe or cowheels ; basket with two lids for butter from farm.

The sitting room was less often used and more for 'best'.

At the front window : Plain blinds with acorn pulls ; white curtains.

Furniture : Chest of 4 drawers on west wall ; 2 armchairs ; cloth-covered sofa ; mirror set in shelves above small fire-place in south wall ; table with an American organ, whose top was removed for playing. It had 4 tunes—'Bluebells of Scotland', 'Men of Harlech', 'Home Sweet Home', 'Hard Times Come Again No More'.

A stone sink stood under the rear window.

At the end of the passage, outside the back door, was a well with a bucket on a chain, and next to it, against the kitchen wall, a bench with a hand bowl and scoop. A range of coal and other sheds went off at right angles to the sitting room wall and at the end were an earth closet and a midden. In the sheds were kept : a chopping block ; an axe

and saws ; gardening tools ; a handmade wheelbarrow ; a rack for killing pigs (pig-form).

On the first floor, Mr. Woodford remembers two inter-connected bedrooms, the stairs opening through a door into one of them. In this, the southern bedroom, he remembers only some cane-seated chairs and 2 trunks with clothes. In the other were more cane-seated chairs, a chest of drawers with 4 brass handles, an iron bed with brass knobs and a blue counterpane. There were also a washstand, with a toilet set with coloured rims, a towel rack and (particularly memorable to a small child) a large box with clothes for dressing-up in.

57-129 CAUSEWAY, BANBURY (SP 464405) PRN 11410. By SARAH GOSLING

The development of the terrace

These properties were built over 15 years, 1856-71, by William Wilkins, carpenter and builder, brickmaker and timber merchant of Banbury (Pl. XI). Originally known as Nos. 1-37 Regent Place, they were built, together with 28 houses in Duke Street to the north, a timber-yard and a brickworks, on a close of land known as Dumbleton's Whitehill, in the parish of Warkworth, and until incorporated into the Borough of Banbury in 1889, in Northamptonshire.

From 1801 until 1829, Dumbleton's Whitehill (7 acres, 2 rods and 18 perches) was leased and sold purely as agricultural land. The first developer of the land was John James Pullinger, a local carpenter who built several cottages between 1829 and 1831. In 1841, he sold the remaining northern and eastern part of the close (5 acres, 2 rods and 5 perches) for £850 to Mrs. Hannah Tite, a widow who ran a grocery and tea-dealing business, and it was farmed by her tenants until 1852.

In 1852 William Wilkins bought the close from Hannah Tite for £1500 and raised a mortgage from her of £1150. Behind his acquisition of cheap building land lay a rapid increase in Banbury's population. The largest percentage increase of the century took place in the decade 1841-51, even before the coming of the railway and the expansion of the Britannia Works around 1850. Much of this growth was accounted for by immigration, especially to the suburban hamlet of Neithrop. Grimsbury and Warkworth were as yet largely unaffected by suburban development, but the area was well-placed to supply the growing housing market, particularly for railway workers.

William Wilkins had begun as a bricklayer in 1835. He expanded his business, employed several men and by 1850 advertised himself as a builder and carpenter. He financed the building of Regent Place and Duke Street by raising mortgages on Dumbleton's Whitehill, and on each block of houses as they were erected. He borrowed a total of £3,300 from a wide range of people, including William Farebrother, an illiterate shoemaker from Camberwell (Middx.), Thomas Summerton, a baker from Bloxham, and two local farmers, John Hambridge of Chadlington and William Eldridge of Middleton Cheney. In all cases the rate of interest was 5% *p.a.*

It would appear that Wilkins pushed his financial resources to the limit ; the mortgages were continued long beyond the original date for the repayment of the capital and were frequently transferred when payment was demanded. The £1,150 borrowed from Hannah Tite, in 1852, for example, was paid back by Wilkins' heirs in 1893.

By combining the evidence of the mortgage indentures, of the structures and of the census returns of 1861 and 1871, the sequence of Wilkins' building on Dumbleton's Whitehill can be summarized as follows :

1. In 1856, a block of ten houses, now 83-101 Causeway, then 16-25 Regent Place.
2. By October 1857, a further block of 14 houses, now 103-129 Causeway, then 26-39 Regent Place.
3. By December 1860, an office and timbershed.

4. By March 1869, a block of 8 houses built onto the first block, now 67-81 Causeway, then 8-15 Regent Place, and 28 houses in Duke Street.
5. By 1871, 57-65 Causeway, then 1-5 Regent Place.

The office and timbershed of 1860 formed part of the timber- and brickyard established by Wilkins in that year. From then onwards Wilkins could supply his own bricks and timber on site. There is a local assumption that the bricks for Regent Place came from that yard, but the bricks were not marked and there is no visible difference between the houses built 1856-60 and the later houses. James Danby was making bricks at a yard on nearby Middleton Road during this period, probably from the same clay-source.

The Banbury Borough Board of Health (set up in 1852) was the only local body to establish building standards. Plans of the drains and waterclosets of all proposed buildings had to be submitted to the Board, which administered the Public Health Act of 1848. Regent Place itself does not appear in the Board's minutes, but in general Wilkins seems to have built only to such a standard as would scrape past the Board's stipulations. There are frequent references in 1858 to the 'ditch in the Causeway complained of as a nuisance', but discussion of the matter with Mr. Wilkins and enforcement were continually deferred. Mr. Wilkins' ditch was still noisome in 1870.

Wilkins died in 1872 and left all his real estate to his sisters Mercy, Esther and Charlotte. Of these only Charlotte was married, to Barnes Bourton Hiron in 1874. The Causeway properties descended to her relative, Mary Bourton Robins, and remained in the possession of the Robins family until purchased by Cherwell D.C. in 1975.

Nos. 57-129 Causeway have always been occupied by tenants, firmly identifiable only in the census returns of 1861 and 1871. What sort of people lived in the newly-built Regent Place in 1861? There were significant groups of railway workers (25%) and skilled men (*e.g.* brickmaker, shoemaker, carpenter) (38%), but a comparatively small group of foundry workers (13%). Only two wives worked, as upholstress and dressmaker. By 1871, the 37 heads of household were more evenly spread among several groups; there had been a rise in brewery workers (17%), foundry workers (18%) and in labourers (22%), and a corresponding decrease in skilled men (18%) and especially in railway workers (6%).

Where had all these workers come from? In 1861, in 70% of the families both husband and wife had been born outside Banbury, Grimsbury or Neithrop, and in nearly half of these (33%) both had been born more than ten miles from the town. Only in 9% of the households were husband and wife born in Banbury or its suburbs; 21% of families had one parent born in the town and the other an immigrant, more than half of these from over ten miles away. The railway workers contributed to this large-scale immigration, but the figures show a general move of skilled men, including foundry workers, to the expanding town of Banbury, from the countryside around and from further afield. By 1871, there is a different emphasis; in 60% of households both husband and wife were still immigrants to the town, but 33% were families where either husband or wife had been born in Banbury or the suburbs. Banbury-born couples still numbered only 8%. The differences between these pictures of the tenants of Regent Place in 1861 and 1871 throw light on the most striking fact to emerge from the census returns—the discontinuity of tenancies. Only two of the families of 1861 still lived in Regent Place ten years later, and one of these had moved house.

In both years, married couples with families formed about half of the occupants. Families such as the Mosses at 20 Regent Place in 1871—Thomas, a foundry labourer, his wife Phoebe and seven children aged 4 to 15—were very crowded. In addition many of the families with fewer children, and even some of those with many, took in lodgers (42% in 1861, 46% in 1871). One can imagine the problems of Mrs. Bedlow at No. 24 in 1861, whose husband was a guard on the L.N.W.R., who had four sons aged between 9 months and 6 years, and in addition found space for two stonemasons.



Fig. 6
83 Causeway, Banbury.

No. 83 Causeway

The house is the westernmost of those erected in 1856. In 1861 it was known as 16 Regent Place, and was occupied by Joseph Dawkes, a railway policeman, his wife, three children under five and a lodger, Alexander McKinnell, an engine stoker. In 1871, as 14 Regent Place, the house was occupied by George Nash, a labourer, his wife Martha and sons William, aged six, and baby Joseph. The rent they paid is not known.

The plan of the house has remained unchanged, with only the addition of a scullery in 1932 by the landlord, Mrs. Robins, at an approximate cost of £20. Some internal details of No. 83 have been altered, but enough evidence survives from the whole terrace to form a composite picture of the house of 1856.

The house is a one-bay structure of brick, under a blue slate roof (Fig. 6). The chimney stacks are of brick with three oversailing courses and the pots of fired clay. The two windows and the door on the front elevation have decorative window arches of stone—a prominent key stone and four voussoirs. The window arches on the rear elevation are of brick. The windows on the front elevation have three-light sash frames; the rear window on the ground floor is a four-light casement and the first floor window a two-light casement.

In the front room there were originally built-in wooden cupboards on either side of the fireplace, and the floor was of wooden boards. All domestic activity took place in the kitchen, whose fireplace originally housed an iron grate with two ovens. The floor was of large alternate black and red quarry tiles. A copper stood until 1932 in the north-east corner of the room, by the window.

Upstairs, the rear bedroom is set partly within the rear pitch of the roof and there is no access to the attic.

At the back lies a garden 15 m. long and 3.5 m. wide. The lavatory, one to each house, is about 2 m. from the back door and contains a watercloset. The house has no bathroom.

No. 83 is now unoccupied, as are most of the houses. As soon as the few remaining tenants have been rehoused, Cherwell D.C. intend to demolish all 37 houses.

Sources

Rusher's Banbury Directories.

Banbury Guardian files.

Banbury Advertiser files.

Banbury Borough Board of Health rough minute books, 7 vols., 1856–88.

1861 and 1871 census returns for Warkworth.

27 indentures in the possession of Messrs. Fairfax, Barfield and Blencowe, Solicitors, Banbury.

Information from Mr. B. S. Trinder.

BRIDGESIDE, ORMOND TERRACE, GROVE (SU 40308960) PRN 11419. By NANCY STEBBING

Ormond Terrace lies along the line of the Wilts. and Berks. Canal, opened in 1810, north of Grove Bridge. There were 7 canal locks near Grove, which also had a wharf. The turnpike road crossed the canal immediately to the west, and the Wantage Tramway ran next to the road, at the foot of the canal cottage gardens. This range of canal company houses was built by the navvies, as they built the canal, around 1805–10. By tradition there was the lock-keeper's House (Bridgeside, No. 4), a carpenter's house (No. 3), smithy (No. 2) and a stable (No. 1). The 1841 Census calls it 'Lock House' with 'Boat House' next door. Lock-keepers, carpenters and a foreman on the canal lived there in the mid-19th century.

Bridgeside is a brick built, double fronted, two storeyed house, which shows evidence of several structural alterations (Fig. 7; Pl. XII, A). There is a straight butt-join between it and the rest of the terrace, which appears to be of one build. The roof level was raised along the whole of the terrace, and the roof is of slate. The gable end, which is rendered, shows that the original structure has also been widened on the side facing the canal. The terrace now consists of three double-fronted two-storeyed houses with a single fronted end terrace house, all of two storeys.

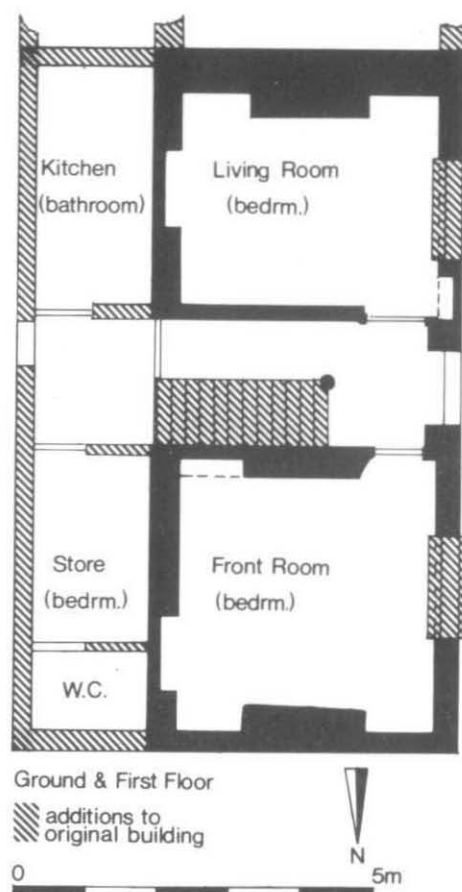


Fig. 7

Bridgeside, Ormond Terrace, Grove.

The building sequence in summary :—

- I Lock-keeper's house, 1810. One and a half storeys, double fronted, a single room each side of a central passage, with loft space serving as store or bedrooms above. Two groundfloor windows and the door faced the canal.
- II c. 1810-40 : addition of carpenter's house/workshop ; smithy and stable added to the terrace.
- III 1906 alterations : Edward Ormond bought the terrace from the bankrupt canal company, and modernized it. The roof level was raised to provide two full storeys ; a narrow extension took in the space between the houses and the towpath, and the windows facing the canal were blocked up. The back facade was converted to the front by the addition of stone door and window dressings on both storeys, and a porch. A new staircase was inserted.
- IV Mid 20th-century arrangement of bathroom, kitchen and toilet in the narrow extension.

Sources

1877 O.S. Map, Wantage.

Census Returns, Grove, 1841, '51, '61, '71.

NALDERTOWN, WANTAGE (SU 39208806) PRN 11420. By NANCY STEBBING

Naldertown is a terrace of 12 houses, built prior to 1877 on the western outskirts of Wantage, only a mile from the Nalder and Nalder Foundry in East Challow. The foundry, begun in 1866, was incorporated in 1877, and by 1900 was employing 200 men.

The terrace belonged to the Nalder family until Edward Nalder (son of one of the original brothers) died in 1967. Rents were £1 3s. 0d. per month. Mr. D. Leverton bought the terrace in 1967, and modernized it in 1973. Rents went up to £2 6s. 0d. per month, and are now at £2.25 per month. As houses fell vacant, they were sold off for £500. The houses were let to workers of Nalder and Nalder of Challow, some of them living on after retirement and handing the lease over to daughter or son. About half are still occupied by former employees or their families.

The terrace is composed of 12 single-fronted houses of red brick (stretcher courses) with blue slate roofs, and stone window and door dressings, of two storeys and attic (Fig. 8; Pl. XII, B). There are individual front and rear entrances. Some attention to detail has been paid in the brass letter boxes, draught excluders, porches, picket fences, windows, and dormers with decorative barge-boards. The roof is gabled at the north end, half-hipped at the south. The windows are sash type, with 6 lights per sash, narrow lights at top and bottom. The houses are arranged in reflected pairs; the terrace slopes slightly to the south.

The houses have two rooms on the ground floor, a central stairwell, two bedrooms on the first floor, and a single attic room. An extension to the rear originally held a stone sink, copper and W.C. Water came from a well shared with one other house, with a pump over the sink. Apart from modernization in 1973, the terrace is of one build. The rear extensions were replaced, to the same size, but converged into bathrooms and inside toilets. The back living rooms were supplied with water, sink units and converted into kitchen/living rooms.

Sources

1877, O.S. Map, Wantage.
Census Returns, Wantage, 1871.
Tenant's Rent Book, private.

GLENDALE, 69 BRIZE NORTON ROAD, MINSTER LOVELL (SP 313134) PRN 11421. By DAPHNE AYLWIN

The cottage is one of the remaining Chartist cottages on the Charterville Estate near Witney. It lies about half way along Brize Norton Road on the eastern side, and stands on its original 4 acre plot. It was listed as a building of Architectural and Historic Importance in 1977, together with 17 of the other remaining Chartist cottages.

Description : Exterior

The cottage is built of coursed rubble stone, quarried locally (Figs. 9, 10; Pl. XIII). It is rectangular in plan with a front range of habitable rooms and a rear range of service rooms. The front section comprises three inter-connecting rooms under a low pitched, hipped roof covered in blue slates. The central room breaks forward slightly and is gabled. A decorative roof ventilator is set in the gable over the porch. The walls of this front section are rendered in roughcast above plinth level. The quoins are emphasized with chamfered quoin blocks of a smoother render; the same render is used around the window openings but finished flush.

The rear range is set at a lower level under a separate hipped and slated roof.

Behind this is a concrete yard and a number of outbuildings. Although considerably altered and in a somewhat dilapidated state these are clearly contained within the original walls; there are also two pigsties which have not been altered. All the outbuildings and walls are built in coursed rubble stonework.

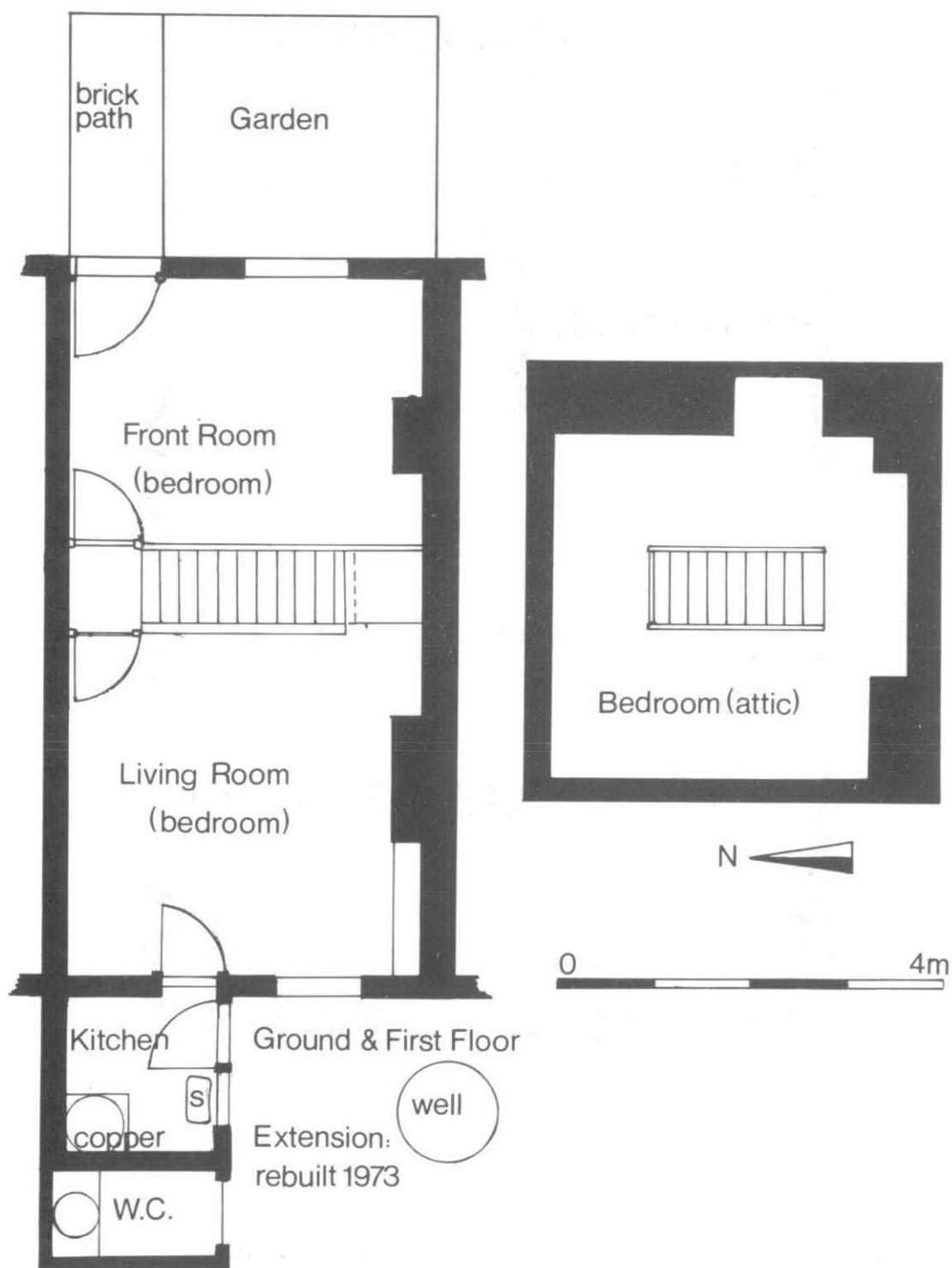
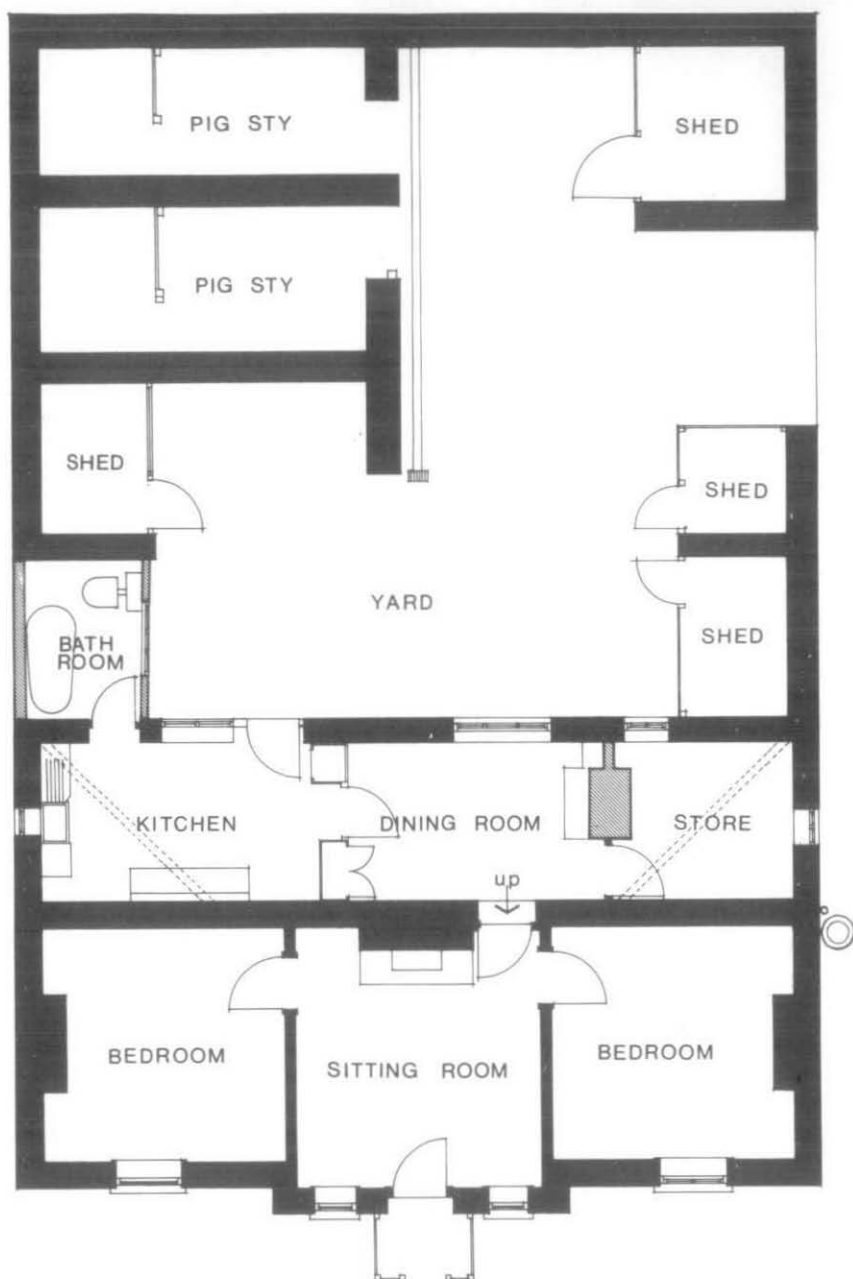


Fig. 8
9 Naldertown, Wantage.

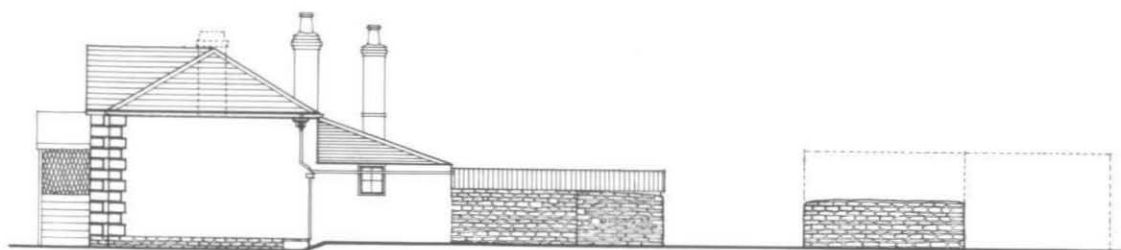


plan



scale 0 2 4 6 8 10 12 metres

Fig. 9
69 Brize Norton Road, Minster Lovell. Ground plan.



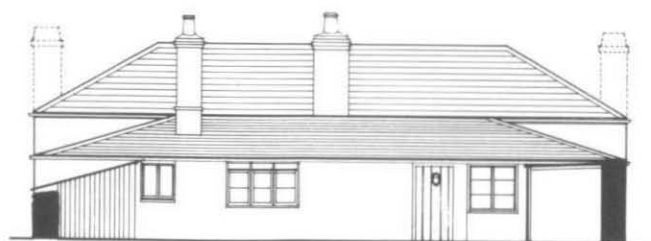
side elevation



section



front elevation



rear elevation



Fig. 10

69 Brize Norton Road, Minster Lovell. Elevations and section.

The main entrance door is central on the front gable. A small wooden porch was added at an early stage. The rear entrance door may not be in its original position but it carries a typical cast iron door knocker of drop handle design decorated with a motif of a bunch of grapes.

The windows have all been altered except for one small casement on the south elevation, which is divided into four panes. The windows on the front elevation are in their original openings but the wooden casements have been replaced with metal casements divided horizontally into four panes. The windows on the rear elevation have all been altered and are of mixed types; the openings have been altered.

Originally, the house had three chimney stacks to the front section, one at each end, placed centrally, and one on the rear wall of the central room. The two end stacks have been demolished, the remaining stack being built of brick. A further brick stack has been added. It serves a new fireplace in the rear wing.

Water supply

Water was in short supply on the estate; only three wells were dug to supply fresh water to the whole of Chartersville. However, each house was given a means to obtain a private source. Cast iron gutters were fitted to both roofs, encompassing the building. These culminated at a point on the south wall and discharged into hexagonal hopper heads decorated with a rose motif. A single down pipe led to an underground sump, or tank, about a yard from the house. This sump was connected to a pump in the rear service section so giving each house an internal water supply. There was no public water supply system until after the First World War.

Description : Interior

The front door opens directly into the central room of the front range. This is now a sitting room but was originally a kitchen/living room fitted with a range, a store cupboard and a dresser. Two rooms lead from this, one on each side. They are bedrooms and may well have been used as such since the house was built although the intention was to provide one sitting room and one bedroom. The doors to these rooms are simple four panelled doors with moulded architraves. Both rooms have fireplaces.

A door leads from the right hand side of the fireplace in the sitting room into the present dining room, the central room of the rear range. It is set two steps down. On one side of this is a store room, and on the other the kitchen. Between the dining room and the kitchen is a fitted cupboard of exactly the right dimensions to have fitted the recess in the original front kitchen. It is nicely made and now has two doors, each door being divided into three bead butt panels. It appears that it was once a four door cupboard with an upper and lower section. A dresser stands in the kitchen which may also be an original fitting. The base has three drawers over lower cupboard doors which appear to have been altered. The upper part is a narrow plate rack with two shelves with the top member missing.

From the kitchen a door leads into a small, cheaply built bathroom erected by the present owner's father. It occupies the space originally taken up by a small shed and the closet, between the rear of the house and the pig-sties.

The exact layout of this rear service range has not yet been established. A number of similar houses have been investigated but they have all undergone extensive modification. One cottage has the rear section divided into three rooms by stout brick walls. The central room which is about 8 ft. square is said to have contained the pump. On one side is a room with a fireplace which used to have a copper boiler alongside. Apparently the other room was a store or workshop. A sale catalogue dated 1951 refers to a Bungalow on Lot 2. At that date it had a sitting room, two bedrooms (the front range), a kitchen, scullery and a workshop (the rear range).

Documentation

The Chartersville Estate—A. M. Hatfield, *The Chartist Land Company*.
Census Returns dated 1851, 1861, 1871.

This cottage is one of 78 (possibly 80) Chartist Allotment cottages comprising the third of five estates established by the National Land Company. The Company was formed by Feargus O'Connor in 1845 to establish families from the factory towns on smallholdings where they could maintain themselves and qualify for a vote. The basis of the plan was a lottery; anyone could subscribe for shares and these gave their holders the chance of a house and a two, three, or four acre plot of land.

The land was purchased at auction held at the Crown Hotel, Witney, from a local landowner, Richard Walker. On 21 August 1847, Feargus O'Connor and Christopher Doyle (Company Director), began laying out the plots. The building works were supervised by Doyle. He lived in a farm cottage bought with the estate, but O'Connor, who was an M.P., paid frequent visits and managed the business side. By the end of October 1847, 47 houses had been erected and by February 1848, 70 cottages and a School House were sited and under construction.

Ballots were held in January 1848 and the winners announced in the *Northern Star* on 12 February. The allotments were numbered according to acreage, 23 two acre, 12 three acre and 38 four acre plots. The first allottees came to Minster Lovell from far afield, Newcastle, Huddersfield, Norwich, Birmingham, Brighton, London, Pershore and St. Germain to name only a few places of origin.

Although the allottees believed that they had been offered the standing of freeholders, in fact O'Connor had hoped to realize the interest on a mortgage of £5,000 of the purchase price by raising rents. The allottees were both unwilling and unable to pay. The Land Company ran into financial difficulties and was declared illegal. In the early part of 1850, a number of allottees were ejected and in August the estate was put up for sale, but there were few bids. In July 1851 the Land Company was dissolved and the assets put under Court of Chancery and under the management of William Goodchap. The census returns dated 7 April 1851 reveal that 37 cottages were uninhabited. Only 4 appear to have been in the possession of the original allottees, the occupants of the occupied cottages being divided between an almost equal number of locally born men and newcomers.

A second sale was held in 1851. This was more successful; many properties changed hands, most being bought by local tradespeople. The Census return dated 15 April 1861 shows that the new owners came from Witney, Leafield, Asthall, Charlbury, Ducklington, Shipton and Taynton etc. Their occupations included agricultural labouring, glove making, spinning, blanket weaving and tailoring. There were also a baker, a grocer, a stonemason and a cordwainer.

An Estate and Land Sales map dated 1858 refers to the fact that Charles Willis, Lot 38, was granted a fee farm rent charge of £9 5s. 0d. A plan of the estate shows Lot 38 as Allotment Plot 22—4 acres.

These local inhabitants seem to have stabilized the situation and the area began to prosper. Ten years later over 30 were still in possession of the same houses. Most seemed to have an occupation in addition to cultivating their plots, mainly with potatoes and barley. There were two survivors from the original allottees of the 1848 ballot, namely John Bennett on 4 acre Allotment No. 29 and Elizabeth Price, widow of Thomas Price on 4 acre Allotment No. 14. The sale price of a cottage with a 4 acre plot in 1872 was as high as £320, freehold. A leasehold interest sold at about £130.

By 1889 the estate was known as Little Evesham. Plots had been amalgamated and 42 landowners (60 men) cultivated the original 80 plots.

During the first part of the 20th century there was little change. In 1928 properties changed hands for £375-£425. Water was laid on after the First World War, electricity in the 1930s and mains drainage in 1967-68.

Over the last twenty years however, there have been many changes. Most of the cottages have been modernized and enlarged, sometimes almost beyond recognition. 15 cottages have been demolished to make way for larger and more imposing houses. Infilling has occurred with new bungalows squeezed in between the original cottages.

Properties change hands fairly frequently, a cottage on a reduced plot fetching a price in the region of £10,000. Many present-day purchasers are locally born and work at Witney and other nearby centres of employment.

4 acre Allotment No. 22. Postal address—69 Brize Norton Road

The original allottee nominated in the list published in the *Northern Star*, February 1848, was A. J. Kendall from Bradford, Wilts.

In June 1852 William Goodchap prepared a schedule of allottees. He listed the holder of Plot 22 as Charles Willis. The Census return dated 7 April 1851 contains reference to a Charles Willis, farmer of 4 acres. He was a widower with two sons, Edward, aged 13 and Albert, aged 12.

Unfortunately it has not been possible as yet to trace the ownerships from this date until 1937 when Joseph Clements, gardener to Lord Redesdale at Asthall, purchased the house for his retirement. After he died it went to his daughter Mrs. Margery Locke, who left it to her sister Mrs. Mabel Sturgess, born 1897, the present owner.

2-5 PENSON'S GARDENS, ST. EBBE'S, OXFORD PRN 6424 (Pl. XIV, A). By CRISPIN PAINE

In 1900, the City's 'Housing of the Working Classes Committee' were told about these houses. They were very similar, each having two living rooms and three bedrooms. None had any water supply, though all had closets. No. 2 was occupied by five adults and two children, who paid 5s. a week rent, plus rates. Next door No. 3 contained four adults (but no children) who paid 5s. 9d. per week, while No. 4, which had seen no repairs for six years, housed eight adults. It shared its garden with No. 5, which was said badly to need inside repair. No. 5, the shop, contained only three adults, but paid 6s. rent. In none of these houses, surprisingly, were there any lodgers.

We shall not know who lived in these houses until the 1901 census returns are made public, but we can see (from C. V. Butler's 1912 *Social Conditions in Oxford*) the sort of family whose weekly budget would have included this level of rent:

Mr. D., a painter's labourer, at 6d. an hour, 'earning an average wage between March and November of 25s. a week' (November to February, broken work); Mrs. D., children, 5½, 3½, 6 months looking healthy and well cared for.

A Week's Expenditure, when in work (1909)

Saturday	s.	d.	Tuesday	s.	d.
Sugar, 4 lb.	0	8	Soap	0	3
Butter, ½ lb.	0	7	Soda	0	1
Cheese, ½ lb.	0	4	Starch and blue	0	1½
Lard, ½ lb.	0	4	Rice, 1 lb.	0	2
Bacon, ½ lb.	0	6	Loaf	0	3
Tea, ¼ lb.	0	4½			
Eggs	0	4			
Candles and Matches	0	2	Wednesday		
2 loaves	0	6	Meat, 2 lb.	1	0
Flour	0	3	Potatoes	0	2½
Husband's sick club	0	7	Cabbage	0	1
Meat, 3½ lb.	2	3	Loaf	0	3
Vegetables	0	5			
Milk for week	0	7			
Monday			Thursday	s.	d.
Rent (5 rooms)	5	6	Quaker oats, 1 lb.	0	3
Coal	1	1	Jam, 1 lb.	0	4
Insurance for family	0	10	Loaf	0	3
Dispensary for wife and children	0	2	Currants, ½ lb.	0	2
Loaf	0	3	Cocoa, ¼ lb.	0	4½

	s.	d.	Summary	s.	d.
Friday					
Fish, 1½ lb.	0	6	Light, coals, washing materials	2	6
Light for week (1d. in slot gas)	0	7	Food	11	7
Salt, pepper, mustard	0	1½	Rent, excluding poor-rate	5	6
Blacking	0	0½	Insurance and clubs	1	7
Wood	0	2	All else	3	10
Loaf	0	3			
Total	£1	1 2		£1	5 0

The unallotted 3s. 10d. would be spent on boots, clothes, and other things—*e.g.* the poor-rate of about 7s. a half-year, and parish savings-cards, upon which Mrs. D. had paid 13s. 9d., and Mr. D. £1 2s. 6d., by weekly instalments between February and November.

A week's menu in November 1909. 8s 6d. earned during week ; no rent paid

Day	Breakfast	Dinner	Tea	Supper
Saturday	Bread, butter, tea, porridge	Bread, cheese	Bread, butter	—
Sunday	Bread, butter, tea, porridge	Tame rabbit, potatoes, greens	Bread, butter	—
Monday	Bread, butter, tea	Rest of rabbit, potatoes	Bread, butter	Bread, cheese
Tuesday	Tea, porridge	Hog pudding (2d.), potatoes	Bread, butter	Fried fish (2d.)
Wednesday	Tea, bread, butter, porridge	Fish, potatoes, bread pudding	Bread, butter	Bread, cheese
Thursday	Tea, bread, dripping, porridge	Bullock's liver (4d.), potatoes, rice pudding	Bread, jam	Bread, fried fish (2d.)
Friday	Tea, bread, porridge	Soup, bread	Bread, butter	Roasted potatoes

37, CLIVE ROAD, COWLEY, OXFORD (SP 541043) PRN 11422. By MARTYN HEIGHTON

Clive Road runs westward from the Cowley Road, about two miles from the centre of Oxford, and over a mile from the car works. Cowley itself lies south-east of the city. Development in this area began after the Great War, gaining momentum with the 1924 Local Authority Housing Act which empowered local authorities to build houses for rent to meet the nationally chronic shortage. The demand for accommodation around Cowley was further raised by the growth of the Morris Car Works, which was expanding at a time when other industries were in recession. This resulted in workers moving to Oxford not only from the immediate area, but from other parts of the country, notably South Wales and Yorkshire. South and south-east Oxford was developed by the Oxford City Council and by private builders to meet this influx.

No. 37 Clive Road was chosen for recording for two major reasons. The first is that this small development of which it forms a part was built as a 'show' estate, a forerunner of the much larger Florence Park estate built by the same developer, but as rented accommodation. It is interesting to contrast the quality of the building between the two types of housing. Secondly, the owner, Mr. C. F. Farnell, moved into the house when it was new in 1929, and it has been possible to record life in the estate through his eyes.

The House

No. 37 stands in a short terrace of five houses. This terrace was the first series of houses to be built on the estate, and was put up by the builder F. E. Moss in 1929. All the houses have two downstairs living-rooms, a small kitchen, three bedrooms, and a combined bathroom and toilet. Some of the houses, and No. 37 is one of them, have an

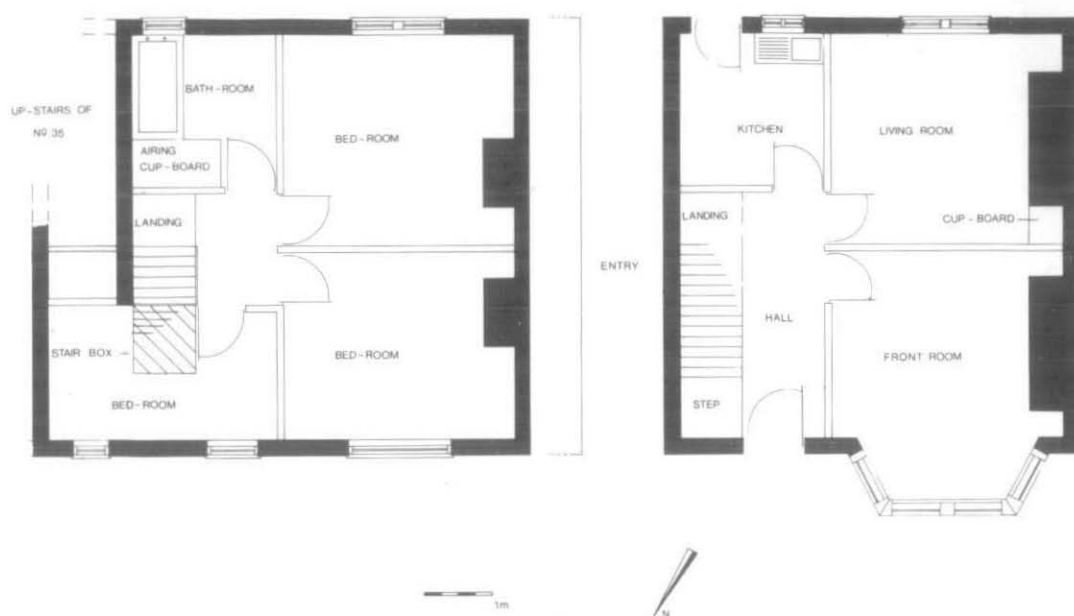


Fig. 11
37 Clive Road, Cowley.

enlarged third bedroom at the front of the house, where the small bedroom runs out over a passage-way leading to the back garden (Fig. 11 ; Pl. XIV, B). The adjoining house on the passage-side benefits from a larger bathroom, extending over the passage-way to the rear of the house (see plan). Because of the shallow depth of the houses, it was necessary to make the stairs with right-angle steps at top and bottom. To gain enough head-height on the stairs, where the floor of the third bedroom runs over them, a recess has been cut into the bedroom floor, a metre long, and 90 cm. high. The result is a large protruding boxed section in the small bedroom, making the room an awkward shape to furnish. Downstairs, an interesting feature is the pine wood-block flooring, laid on to cement screeding without a damp-proof membrane. Although this kind of floor has given no trouble at No. 37, other owners have complained of the blocks lifting as damp rises through the screed. Quarry tiles form the kitchen floor. There is no plastering on any ceilings, insulation-boarding battened to joists being used instead. This was a much cheaper alternative to lath and plaster-work, and was widely used in all types of houses up to post-Second World War building.

Heating was by open fires, in the two downstairs rooms, and in the two larger bedrooms ; the third bedroom and the kitchen were unheated. A back-boiler was fitted to the fireplace in the rear living-room for heating water, and it was not until the mid 1930s that the owner fitted an immersion heater. Cooking was by mains gas. Recently a Rayburn fire has been built into the back room fireplace, and a gas fire in the front room.

The windows are unusual for the period in being sliding sashes. They are well made and notable for their heavy wood-work particularly the wooden mullions. The front room has a small bay window with a sloping, tiled roof.

External walls are not cavity walls, are 23 cm. thick and comprise courses of headers and stretchers. The whole terrace is stuccoed front and back, as are the side walls of the end houses, and all passage-way walls. Interior divisions are made up of one brick deep (10 cm.) walls, and bedroom partition walls are constructed above the downstairs partitions. Room heights are 240 cm. downstairs and 225 cm. upstairs.

Little was provided in the way of cupboard-space when the house was built. In the bathroom is an airing cupboard at the foot of the bath and downstairs the only cupboards were the broom-store (below the stairs) and a glazed full-height built-in china cupboard to the right of the back room chimney-breast. The family spent most of their time in the back room and the kitchen. Only on Sundays and at Christmas and Easter was the front room used.

When Mr. Farnell bought his house in 1929, it cost £665.

The Owner

Cyril Frank Farnell bought No. 37 Clive Road (then number 7) in August 1929, on getting married. Before that he lived with his parents in 8 Fairacres Road, Oxford. His father gave Mr. Farnell £165 for a deposit, as a wedding present, and a mortgage was taken out for the remaining £500. Repayments were guaranteed by Mr. Farnell's recently-acquired job at Pressed Steel in Cowley as a 'straightener', a panel-beater, and although work had been scarce throughout the 1920s, and he had been unemployed for long periods, Mr. Farnell had also managed to save some money for furnishings, so that he was able to buy new furniture for his home. In 1929, his earnings from Pressed Steel were £2 9s. 0d. out of which 18 shillings went in mortgage payments. To help meet what was a large proportion of income being paid out to buy this property, Mr. Farnell took a part-time job as a night telephonist at Oxford Telephone Exchange, working 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. This evening work lasted six years. He and his wife also took in lodgers to supplement their income, until the outbreak of war in 1939. With themselves, two children, and the lodgers, the house was very cramped.

Most of the houses in Clive Road and the nearby streets of this estate were bought by workers at the Cowley Motor Works, and taking in lodgers who also worked at Cowley was common practice. Most people were earning roughly the same wages as Mr. Farnell, and must have found it equally difficult to raise families and pay off mortgages without a second income. The lodgers who lived in these houses, and whose rents were seen as vital to the new householders, came mainly from the industrial valleys of South Wales, and the Yorkshire conurbations, both areas of high unemployment in the 1930s. Mr. Farnell recalls that 'a lot of them didn't fall in love with Oxford', and went back to their home towns. Many did stay, and in turn bought houses in the area, or rented those built in Florence Park Estate (1933-7) at about 11s. 6d. a week.

Both Clive Road and the later Florence Park Estate were well served with shops, on the Cowley Road, and in Florence Park itself, where a group of shops and a pub were built in 1935. Because of this, the Farnells rarely went into Oxford (except for Mr. Farnell's part-time job), doing their shopping locally, and not using Oxford for the library, cinema, or any other entertainment. Indeed, they rarely went out except to Evangelical Chapel in Cowley on Sunday, the one day when they used the bus-service. During the rest of the week Mrs. Farnell walked to the shops, and Mr. Farnell rode his bicycle to the works. Mr. Farnell says that most men got to the works that way. He feels that the quiet life he and his family led in Cowley between the wars is typical of most of the people living and working in the area.

The Society is grateful to Oxfordshire Museums Service for a grant towards the publication of this article.

PLATE VIII



A. Styles Cottage, Uffington. Front elevation.

Ph. : Oxon. Museums Services



B. Blenheim Cottage, Standlake. Front elevation.

PLATE IX



48-49 Ardington, during demolition. From the east.

OXONIENSIA, XLIII (1978)

Ph. : *Oxford Mail and Times*
OXON. HOUSES

PLATE X



A. Mr. George Mawle in front of his cottage in Queen's Square, Bloxham, in 1923.

Ph. : Oxon. Museums Services



B. 'Thatchers', Bloxham, in 1955, looking west.

Ph. : Blinkhorns, Banbury
OXON. HOUSES

PLATE XI



A. 67-129 Causeway, Banbury, looking east.



B. 57-107 Causeway, Banbury, looking west.

PLATE XII



A. Ormond Terrace, Grove, from the north, showing the rebuild at the gable end and the c. 1900 reworking of the frontages.



B. Naldertown, Wantage, from the east. The first two houses have had their windows replaced, and the first has had its porch removed.

PLATE XIII



A. 69 Brize Norton Road, Minster Lovell. House and plot.



B. 69 Brize Norton Road, Minster Lovell. Front elevation.



C. 69 Brize Norton Road, Minster Lovell. Back yard.

PLATE XIV



A. Penson's Gardens, St. Ebbe's, Oxford, looking north towards Church Street, July 1909. On the left is the back of Paradise Place ; on the right is the former British School, with Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5 beside it.

Ph. : Oxfordshire Libraries (O.C.L. 2839)



B. 37 Clive Road, Oxford.