



YORKSHIRE VERNACULAR BUILDINGS STUDY GROUP

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Newsheet No 105

December 2021

Dear Member,

Welcome to our 105th Newsheet. This is an appropriate time to look back on the last year's achievements, not least of all the informative and enjoyable Zoom talks that we have presented in lieu of no day school due to the Covid epidemic. You should have recently received your copy of our journal *Yorkshire Buildings*, our 48th edition, recording our events for 2020. I must congratulate the Editorial Team who have been working on this volume for many months, for producing such a fine publication. It provides a valuable record of our activities, many with a scholarly summary by Tony Robinson of the several buildings visited and recorded. In my opening 'From the Chair' in the journal I began by reporting on the taster visit to the North Sheffield area bordering with the Derbyshire Peak District, where we visited some of the buildings we planned to record at our annual



The gatehouse at Hooton Pagnell

recording conference in and around Sheffield. These were duly subject to a detailed survey by groups of member recorders with a team leader, the survey and appraisal being reported in the journal. In this bumper edition there was much to enjoy, showing the wide range of buildings recorded and demonstrating what a rich area the south of the county is.

Doncaster taster visit 2022

I promised to report on my intended Doncaster 'taster visit' to be held next year in 2022. You might recall that after our last day school in York on 'Extraordinary Buildings', I had hoped to run a taster of the north Doncaster area. Aware of the coming restrictions on public meetings I had planned it around visits to three outstandingly interesting churches where social distancing could easily be achieved. We were to begin at the church of St Mary Magdalene in Campsall that has the tallest Norman tower in Yorkshire. Opposite is the medieval Old Rectory of great interest; its traceried Gothic-arched window set in its gable end looks straight towards the tower. We hoped to visit to see the outside, but the inside was dependent on the current situation of the worsening epidemic.

After that we intended to visit St Helen's Church at Burghwallis, an early church with all the hallmarks of Saxon work: side-alternate angle quoins and a mass of herringbone masonry with an added Norman tower. Inside there is a late medieval rood screen, restored 1881 but still very beautiful, and rare. Then after a lunch stop at a local restaurant,



Hooton Pagnell village

we were to visit St Laurence's Church, Adwick-le-Street, with a Norman nave but with an unusual fourteenth century king-post roof, the trusses infilled with similar vertical posts with cusped sides, of a type I have never encountered before that I considered would be of great interest to our members.

We then planned to move on to visit the fascinating estate village of Hooton Pagnell with its ancient church of All Saints – the latest Pevsner (*Yorkshire West Riding: Sheffield and the South*, 2017) states: 'Much of the masonry of a complete early Norman church is preserved, i.e. the coursed rubble with occasional herringbone in the S. walls of the nave, and the short chancel (see its E. quoins)'. From its churchyard a good view of the exterior of the fourteenth century gatehouse of the medieval Hooton Pagnell Hall can be had. A walking tour of this attractive village was planned, where many buildings are gable-on to the village street. At one of the best of the seventeenth century stone houses, the Home Farmhouse with its massive Tudor-arched lintel dated 1688, the owner had agreed to me bringing members to inspect the outside, and in due course to permitting the Group to record it.

continued ...

We wish our members a Happy Christmas and all the very best for 2022, and we hope to see you either online or in person at our events during the coming year.

Sadly, the pandemic took hold and we had to cancel both taster and conference for 2020 and 2021. However, all being well, it is my intention to visit all these buildings in a taster visit in spring 2022 aiming for Saturday 26 March 2022 – fuller details in the next Newsletter. If you go to our website and open up Newsheet No 99 for March 2020, you will find details of the original planned taster visit and recording weekend. I hope to follow this as was first planned.

Doncaster Building Recording Weekend

Our recording conference is planned to be held at the Junction 36 Holiday Inn, Warmsworth Hall, Doncaster, about half a mile from the A1 motorway, which is booked for the weekend of Friday 13 to Sunday 15 May 2022. In November I revisited the Doncaster area for the first time in two years, accompanied by Lorraine Moor and Kevin Illingworth, firstly to see if the owners of the houses, who had previously agreed for us to record them, were still willing to let us do that, and to seek out other new buildings of sufficient merit and interest for us to record. We made some good progress and further exploratory visits are planned – wish us luck!

Peter Thornborrow, chairman@yvbbsg.org.uk

Future YVBSG events: dates for your diary

Third Thursday Talks

With the hope that we can resume some in-person activities next year, we are likely to move towards holding online talks every two months rather than monthly. These normally take place by Zoom at 7.30pm on the third Thursday of the month and there will be the opportunity for questions after each talk. The talks are open to all (including non-members) and are free of charge. Members will be notified by email when booking is open for each talk, or you can keep an eye on the 'Events' page of our website. We thank all the members who have given talks so far; we are still looking for volunteers to give future talks and if you are interested in doing so, please contact Mary Cook on secretary@yvbbsg.org.uk. Recordings of many of the previous talks can be watched online by following the links on the website. There will be no talk in December 2021 so our next presentation will be on Thursday 20 January 2022 as detailed below.

Traditional farm buildings around Ingleborough: a summary of recent work

by David Johnson on Thursday 20 January 2022 at 7.30pm. Since 2011 Alison Armstrong and David Johnson have led on various programmes surveying field and farmstead barns, byres and shippens in Upper Ribblesdale and around Ingleborough, including Level 3 surveys, and dendro dating of reused timbers in twelve 'buildings'. This presentation summarises the overall findings. Booking will open in early January.



Annual General Meeting and talk

Saturday 19 March 2022

The AGM normally takes place immediately after the annual day school in March. However, given the ongoing uncertainties regarding large indoor events, we have decided not to arrange a day school in March 2022. The AGM will therefore be held again by Zoom and will be accompanied by a talk by David Cook on some of the more unusual buildings to be found in the YVBSG archive. Details to follow.

Doncaster Taster Visit

Saturday 26 March 2022

See Peter Thornborrow's note above – details to be confirmed.

Annual Recording Conference

Friday 13 to Sunday 15 May 2022

Again, see Peter's note above. We'll continue to review the situation and will confirm details in due course.

Looking closely at windows: some questions

In his recent Third Thursday Talk, Colum Giles offered some thoughts on what a study of windows in vernacular houses can tell us about themes such as status, function and the roles of the builder and the client, taking the houses of the Calder valley as a case study. Colum posed a number of questions to the audience:

- Timber mullions in later stone houses appear to be rare, although they exist at Nether House, Hipperholme (listed as 1 and 3 Upper Green Lane, Brighouse – look up the listing description at historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/ for more details). Are there any other examples?
- Is the Calder valley exceptional? Can this exercise be applied elsewhere in Yorkshire?
- Is there any other feature that could bear the same sort of scrutiny and give the same sort of results?

Colum would welcome any thoughts on these questions – please contact him on columgiles@gmail.com. For the full context, you can watch the recording of the talk by following the link from our website.

Committee meeting

The next meeting of the committee will be held on 15 January 2022. If you'd like to raise any matters, or have ideas for future events, please contact the Secretary, Mary Cook.

Next Newsheet

The next Newsheet will be in February 2022 – please send any contributions to the editor at newsheet@yvbbsg.org.uk by 31 January 2022. Short articles on buildings or features would be welcome, as well as details of publications or events which might be of interest to other members.

The YVBSG's 50th anniversary

An invitation to join the celebration – have you contributed yet?

For our collection illustrating the breadth of our members' interests you are invited to submit a short paragraph about yourself and your interest in the group (further details in the last Newsheet). For example, you could mention an event, a publication or activity that you took part in and which still means something to you today. Maybe a person, a publication or moving to a particular property sparked your interest in vernacular architecture in our

area. A text of about 100 words would be appreciated and a picture or drawing to accompany it would be wonderful. Don't hesitate to contact me with any queries, either on 01422 883846 (not Tuesdays or Thursdays) or via Gunhildwilcock@icloud.com.



Please send contributions either electronically to the email address above or by post to me at 3 Middle Hathershelf, Luddendenfoot, HX2 6JQ. The deadline has been extended to 1 February 2022.

Many thanks to those members who have already provided their contributions. We'd love to see more!

*Gunhild Wilcock (committee member),
Gunhildwilcock@icloud.com*

Yorkshire Buildings

We hope you enjoyed the latest edition of our journal, which was published in October.

Back issues are available for purchase (see website for details), and articles from all except the two latest issues can be found online on the Members' Area of the website.

Contributions for future editions are always welcome – please contact editor@yvbsg.org.uk if you're interested in submitting an article.

Membership renewal

Membership fees for the coming calendar year become due on 1 January 2022. Renewal payment (£12) can be by cheque payable to YVBSG, or by using direct bank transfer (BACS). Whichever method you use, please also post or email your completed renewal slip (making sure that you've ticked all the boxes to show your preferences) to the Membership Secretary, Pat Leggett.

Do note that the password to the Members' Area of the website will change in January and you'll receive the new details when you renew your membership for 2022. The Members' Area provides access to around 1,900 building reports and 150 articles from back issues of *Yorkshire Buildings* up to 2018, as well as information sheets and other handouts.

We gently remind you that in line with our Privacy Statement which came into effect with the introduction of GDPR in 2018, membership may be terminated if you do not renew within three months from 1 January each year.

The YVBSG Beverley Book

The first draft of a book on the findings of the YVBSG Beverley Project is nearly completed and will be sent to the publisher shortly. The book is based on the historic buildings reports done by the YVBSG and others in the town. It includes the dendrochronology results (funded by Historic England for the project) and building histories by Dr Susan Neave. It also includes an analysis of the wills and earliest available probate inventories which gives an account of the types of rooms in the buildings, their contents and activities not long after the end of the timber-framing tradition of building in the town.

The first part of the book has chapters on carpentry, posts, braces, joints, carpenters' marks, jetties, carved and moulded timber, roof types, and re-used timber. Plan forms, including hearths and heating, are considered.

The second part of the book is a gazetteer of the known timber-framed buildings in Beverley, including those in which only a fragment of timber-framing survives, and also some which have been demolished. The buildings have been dated by either dendrochronology or their timber-framing features, and are listed with the oldest first.

The book is fully illustrated and includes modern photographs and drawings as well as some archive photographs, some of which I believe have not been published before. There is a foreword by Dr David Neave.

The title is *Timber-Framed Buildings of Beverley*. More details of the publication and how to get a copy will be in the next Newsheet.

David Cook, archivist@yvbsg.org.uk

Right: St Mary's Court, 49-51 North Bar Within, Beverley.
The building incorporates timbers dendro-dated to 1336.



Past YVBSG Events

Vernacular Buildings of the Todmorden countryside: Cross Stone and Eastwood

This was our first 'in-person' event for many months, and it certainly didn't disappoint the nine of us who gathered on Saturday 25 September 2021 for a walk led by Kevin Illingworth to view some of the spectacular farmhouses scattered across the hillsides of the Cross Stone and Eastwood areas to the north-east of Todmorden. Many of these listed buildings were surveyed by our chair, Peter Thornborrow, in 1983/4, and his listing descriptions came in useful for reference on the day.

It didn't bode well when an early morning rain shower made its appearance just before we met but it soon cleared up to promise a dry day ahead. After a steep climb up from the car park, we emerged into the hamlet of Rodwell End where the first building to come into view was a cottage, mid seventeenth century and later, with some rather nice heart-shaped label stops above a ground floor window.



Cottage at Rodwell End

A few yards away, a pair of early eighteenth century cottages have the appearance of a barn conversion with a large segmental arched central doorway, but they were actually designed as two dwellings. Nearby, the intriguing-looking Lad Stones dates back to the early seventeenth century but with its accumulation of outshuts and unusual window arrangement, the original plan was difficult to determine. On the edge of the hamlet sits Jones Barn and cottage, currently up for sale for a mere £450,000. The barn is one of those splendid stone-arched barns mentioned in the last Newsheet, with a cottage occupying an end bay; one of the cottage's interior window jambs has been formed from a datestone tipped on its end, inscribed 'Built in the Year of Chrif 1749'. Try Googling 'Jones Barn Todmorden' and you should find the estate agent's brochure and also a fly-through video which takes you inside

the building and gives you an impression of the arches.



Bean Hole Head

Then it was off for a stroll along Long Lane, a bridle path which took us round the head of Rodwell End Clough and brought us to another seventeenth century house, Bean Hole Head. Here are more fancy label stops, this time of a scroll design, as well as decorative finials, kneelers, and a huge external stack. Beside a window with unusual label stops showing 'WS' at one end and '1700' at the other, a corner porch has been added with a datestone of 1638 and a tiny peephole window in its side wall. The datestones appear to have been moved at some point, perhaps when the porch was built. Inside, the listing description refers to a fine quality plaster frieze of scrolled vine with pomegranates and lion masks, together with a coat of arms dated 1634 and various initials, with the plaster work 'amongst the finest to survive in the Calder Valley'. Alas, we had no access to the interior of the house that day.

A few yards along the lane is Cross Gap, a late seventeenth century house with added barn said to be early nineteenth

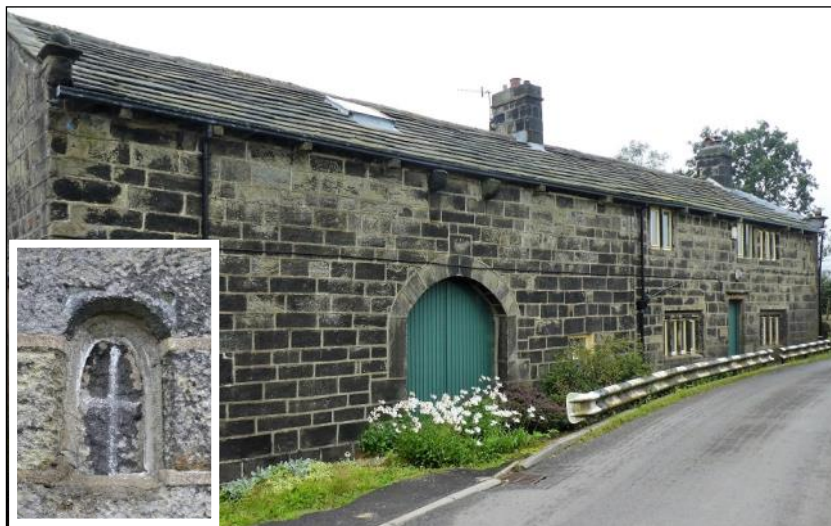
century, though sporting a reset datestone of 1674. We were intrigued by the small round-headed blocked window on the first floor of the house.

A rough track leads up to Lower Ashes (pictured in the last Newsheet) where we perched on the impressive garden wall, ramped to accommodate a gateway at one end and with rusticated gate piers at the other end, to eat our sandwiches. The rear wall tops, steps and pillars are said to have been shaken out of place by an earthquake in 1971, but no tremors interrupted our lunch this day. The owner of the house then kindly led us on a tour of the buildings and outlined their history. The house has a three-room plan with through-passage; the elevation of the house



Lower Ashes

facing over the valley has a simple datestone of 1610 above the door, but the opposite elevation bears a more elaborate datestone of 1759 to mark the extension of the building for Anthony and Mary Crossley when it became an important example of a cloth merchant's house of the mid eighteenth century.



Cross Gap with added barn and small window (inset) on first floor at far end of house

Further up the track, the impressive Higher Ashes is a hall-and-cross-wings house described as the finest example of a yeoman clothier's house in the Todmorden region. Now divided into three dwellings, the building gazes out over the valley and offers more finials, label stops and a date of 1691. At the rear of one of the wings, a three-light window is topped by a hoodmould with more heart-shaped label stops.

Our path took us across pasture land, through the dairy herd belonging to the unusually-named Pextenement Farm. The organic cheese made at the farm was not on sale that day (the cheesemakers were away selling their produce at a Saturday market) but details of availability can be found on their website at www.pextenement.co.uk. The late seventeenth century house is T-shaped and we heard that the added eighteenth century wing at the rear contains a beehive oven and four hearths under a long shelf: were these for some sort of commercial activity?



Lower East Lee

Nearby, we were invited into the garden of Lower East Lee for a closer look at the splendid two-storey porch with its 'dated to the day' datestone of 27 October 1831 and ogee-headed doorway, former pigeon holes, and a fleur-de-lis design on the doorway chamfer stops (pictured in the last Newsheet). As at Lower Ashes, the back door had a much more simple lintel dated 1610. The original plan comprised parlour, housebody, through passage and service end, with an attached early nineteenth century barn. Inside, although not seen on the day, scarf joints in the spine beams provide evidence of a former firehood in the housebody.

Our last visit of the day was to Lower Birks, a two-cell house with hall and parlour, and smaller rooms at the rear. The doorway which forms the original gable entry has a semi-circular arch with datestone above, reading 'ABRAHAM AND MARY STANSFIELD 1664'. We admired yet more label stops whilst appreciating the welcome cup of tea offered by the householders on the terrace with its spectacular views over the valley to Stoodley Pike.

Our thanks go to Kevin for arranging and leading this enjoyable walk. We noted a wonderful variety of decorative features during the day, as well as two houses with 1610 datestones which were extended later

in the century. We didn't manage to fit in all the houses which Kevin had identified as being of interest during his exploratory wanderings, so he has promised another walk next year to see these.

If you'd like to see some of the highlights of the walk, I've collected together some of my photos into a short video which can be watched on the YVBSG YouTube channel; you can also find it on the Events page of the website for a while.

Lorraine Moor



Lower Birks

Seeking a new Treasurer ...

After seven years acting as the Group's treasurer, Sue Southwell has expressed a wish to stand down from the role in the near future. If you think that you would be interested in taking on this role we would love to hear from you and will provide information on what the role entails. Please get in touch with Sue on treasurer@yvbsg.org.uk, or contact any other member of the committee.

An East Riding house of significance

A Monday in early November saw the annual open day at Elmswell Old Hall near Driffield. The hall has much historical significance in that it was built in around 1634 for Henry Best who documented the activities on this East Riding farming estate at that time, including the building of the house (see *The Farming and Memorandum Books of Henry Best of Elmswell 1642*, ed D Woodward, 1984). The brick house was last occupied in 1965 and is now a consolidated roofless ruin standing on private land, with no interior access. The remains of a dovecote stand nearby. The next open day at Elmswell will be on 1 April 2022.



Jacky Quarmby

We are very sad to report the death of Jacky Quarmby on 25 November 2021. Jacky was a longstanding and enthusiastic member of the Group. She was Treasurer from 1998 to 2014, taking on the additional role of Membership Secretary from 1999. She regularly attended our recording conferences and day schools, and most other events too.

Jacky was an astute, perceptive and frequent recorder of buildings, and her down to earth approach and sense of humour always made it fun to record with her. She was a keen researcher of documentary sources and spent many hours transcribing wills and inventories with Barry Harrison, including for our Beverley project.

Jacky had a wide range of interests ranging from local and family history to her voluntary work with Guisborough Museum. An animal-lover, she kept horses and had a tendency to acquire cats. She'll be very much missed.

Sell Gill farm, Horton in Ribblesdale: an archaeological assessment

Named on historical mapping as 'Sell Gill Barn', the structure that forms the focus of this piece was originally a farmhouse. It is seen today in a ruinous condition with the north elevation (2.5m high) and east gable (3.9m high at the apex) walls surviving to more or less full height, but the other external and the two internal walls are reduced to their lower courses only. The house is centred on NGR SD 81113 74392 (at 350m AOD); it is aligned south-west to north-east.



Sell Gill prior to excavation, looking north-east. The 2m ranging pole is at the south-west corner (David Johnson)

Sell Gill lies within what was part of Jervaulx Abbey's estate extending from Langstrothdale through Oughtershaw, Beckermonds and Greenfield into Upper Ribblesdale, encompassing all the land east of the Ribble from High Birkwith to Studfold and Helwith Bridge. Many of the farms that exist today here began as Jervaulx possessions with High Birkwith having been the grange, the centre of the estate, west of the main watershed. The earliest known dates are High Birkwith 1189, Fawber 1228, Harber 1297, New Houses 1378 and Scale 1399.

I was approached by the landowners with a view to undertaking some investigative work on the site as they were keen to know more about its history and internal arrangements. A programme of archaeological works was undertaken in summer 2021 with the main aims of archival research examining surviving probate wills and inventories, census records and parish records; and targeted invasive work on the building to investigate morphology (number of cells, position of doorways, nature of walls, nature of flooring, existence of external plinths, existence of padstones).

Dimensions

Externally, the building measures 20.3m in total length along both south sides; width at the east gable is 5.6m and at the west gable 6.05m so it is not a perfect rectangle though both diagonals were recorded as 21m. The long south wall (E and G on the plan) were not built in a straight line but with a distinct 'kink' west of external doorway D2. Wall

thicknesses vary: internal wall D is only 600mm wide whereas wall J increases from 600-700mm. External walls range in width from 650-800mm.

External boulder plinths were seen along Wall A, at the south-east corner of Cell 1, along Wall G and at the south-west corner of Cell 3 (points 'a' on the plan).

Apart from where Walls C and D originally conjoined but is now destroyed, all walls are tied into each other: no butt joints were revealed.

The surviving north elevation clearly never had any window apertures.

Doorways

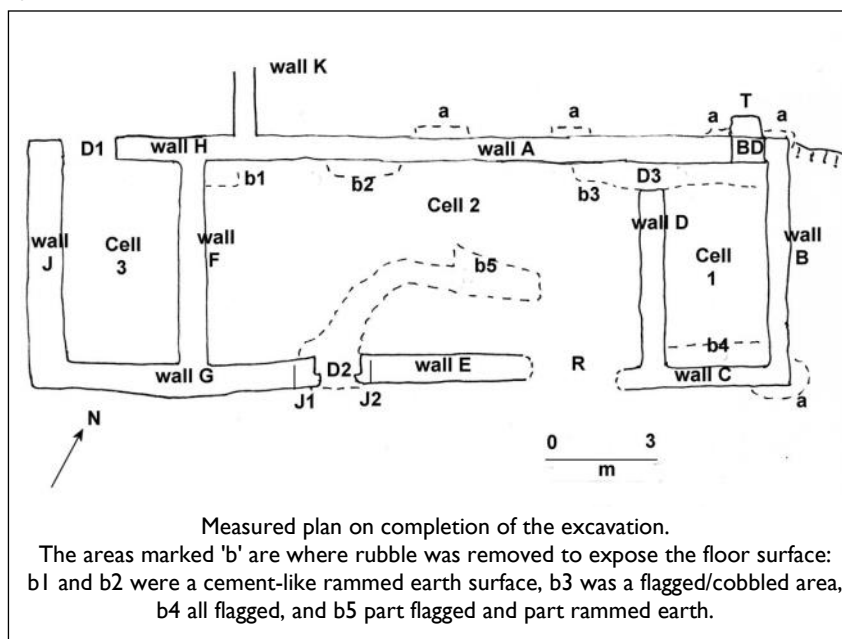
All four doorways are broadly similar in width – the only internal doorway (D3) is 800mm wide, the three external ones 860-900mm. With widths such as these it can be said that all were probably intended for people rather than livestock. The only surviving door lintel (in BD) was not semi-dressed and not squared off at the top corners.

Flooring

Regardless of whether the floor seen during excavation represents one building phase (flagstones laid on a lime mortar matrix in turn laid on a rammed clay substrate) or two (lime mortar laid on clay in the earlier phase with the later addition of paving), it can only be described as crude and vernacular. There was no evidence of paving slabs cut with squared corners and carefully laid; rather the slabs were uneven in size and shape. What was somewhat unusual was that floor level sloped down from east to west, with a total drop of 460mm, including a small step down from Cell 1 to 2.

Functions

From documentary evidence we know that Sell Gill was a farmhouse from at least 1591 to at least 1788, occupied at different times by husbandmen or yeomen. From census records and 1847 mapping we know it had been reduced to a 'barn' by 1841 – it is not possible to say when in that half century it ceased to be lived in.



The building has three cells but most likely four bays (Cell 2 probably subdivided longitudinally). Cell 3 is only accessible externally (through doorway D1) so was not part of the living space. Furthermore, with a doorway effectively no wider than the other three, it was not a space used for keeping livestock though it could have been a stable, or a storage space typical of most farmsteads.

Cell 2 was the living space and originally would have been one long room open to a thatched roof. At some point in its history, and quite possibly in the seventeenth century typical of the Dales, the house was remodelled and likely to have been split into two rooms: the housebody or bodystead and the parlour. The housebody had external access: the presence of doorway D2, and the depiction on 1847 mapping of a porch sited more or less at that position, strongly point to the western section of Cell 2 as the housebody. The sheer amount of rubble against Wall F, however, made it impossible to expose the base of the central part to look for signs of a fireplace.

Cell 1 has several characteristics setting it apart from most vernacular houses in Upper Ribblesdale: it is very narrow – only 2.9m; at the north end at least it has a narrow strip of cobbles in the floor; and it was accessed both from Cell 2 and externally by the blocked doorway. It cannot have been part of the living space or for housing livestock, given its narrowness and the fact that it is the highest part of the building, and living space would not have had cobbles running down the middle of the floor. So, what purpose could it have served? Running past the house is a walled lane, formerly Langstrothdale Road, the main route from Horton to Upper Wharfedale; in monastic times it was *the* road from Jervaulx Abbey in Wensleydale to their Ribblesdale estate. A plausible explanation for this small cell is that the families living here tapped into the opportunities provided by the road of serving



Gable B, internal view

travellers – maybe with ale or victuals or saleable products from the farm.

Once archaeological work was completed, the building was left in a stable condition: two holes in the east gable were plugged to prevent further loss of stonework; wall lines were stabilised and left proud of vegetation and clear of rubble so that the internal form of the building is clear to see; one area of floor was left exposed as an example of what it was like across Cells 1 and 2; a was the top of the boulder plinth, as well as the threshold to the blocked doorway, to enable a clearer understanding of the building.

In summary, though it was first recorded in 1591, details within the building suggest an earlier genesis. There was, though, no evidence of cruck construction.

David S Johnson

A dry summer (before the reservoir arrived ...)

Dry Summer Farm is an unusual name for a farmhouse that was situated near the 1080 feet contour (330 metres) on Heptonstall Moor, about four miles north-west of Hebden Bridge, Calderdale. The farm was said to have been demolished in the 1930s when the Lower and Upper Gorpole Reservoirs were built (1927-34). But the basket-arched doorhead dated 1723 was saved and built into the garden wall of Gorpole Cottages, built in the late 1920s or early 1930s, near Lower Gorpole Reservoir.

A photograph (KES00154) in Pennine Horizons Digital Archive (see penninehorizons.org) shows Reaps Farm comprising the whitewashed Dry Summer Farmhouse and two barns. Teas were served from the farmhouse for visitors viewing the construction of the reservoirs, while the white-painted barn became a beerhouse for the navvies, being known as Gorpole Canteen.

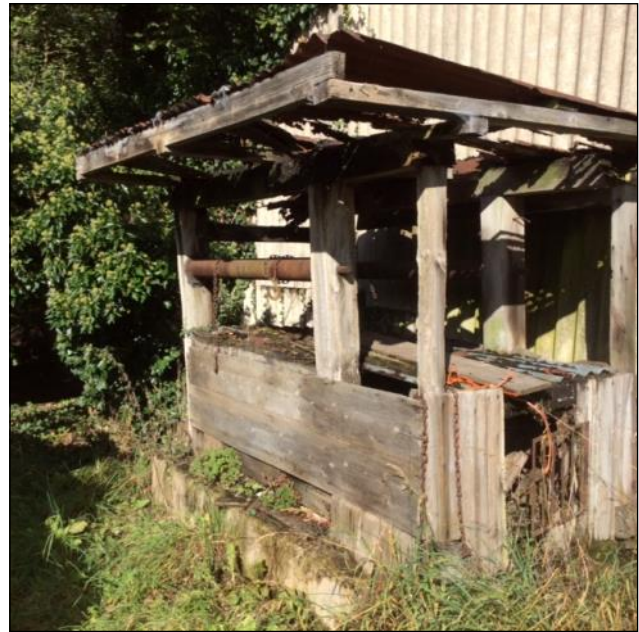
Today only low foundations and scattered building stones can be seen just north of where the Pennine Bridleway and Pennine Way meet, overlooking Lower Gorpole Reservoir (there is a Dry Summer Cottage in Luddenden village).

*Kevin Illingworth,
j.k.illingworth@btinternet.com*



A mystery structure ...

Gunhild Wilcock and David Cant came across this unusual structure near Ilkley whilst recording an adjacent cruck cottage. Can you guess what it was used for, and have you seen any similar structures? Please send your suggestions to Gunhildwilcock@icloud.com. We'll reveal the answer in the next Newsheet; Gunhild and David had no idea of its purpose until the tenant of the cottage enlightened them!



Publications

DANBY: Four More Views of a History by Alastair Laurence. I am pleased to report that one of our members, Dr Alastair Laurence, has recently produced a book that should be of particular interest to those members who live in North Yorkshire. Printed privately by Jetprint in Whitby in 2021. The book is a sequel to an earlier book with a similar title Dr Laurence published last year (2020). It provides 'Views' on various topics including Castleton where he gives a scholarly insight into the common-field farming of that area; descriptions of the farms of Danbydale, with a detailed analysis of the landscape they sit in; the community of Botton Hall – in the 1970s when I first visited Whitby they were notable for producing the best bread in the area; finally the historic homesteads of the North York Moors. He has an easy-to-read style as if he is speaking to the reader direct. He makes much use of the Hearth Tax roll of 1673 that records some 267 homes in the area, the majority (80%) of them only with a single hearth. He describes these mostly single-storeyed dwellings using floor plans and various illustrations of the barns, byres, chambers, cruck construction, forehouses, hearths, parlours, through-passages, milk-houses, wattle-and-daub, and thatching; with detailed drawings of witch-posts that are of great interest. I can recommend this highly readable account of a much-loved landscape that is captured on the superb cover photo that shows Little Fryupdale, Danby, taken from Oakley Walls; it would make an attractive Christmas present. For further details contact the author on 07770 772233.

Peter Thornborrow

Two recent or forthcoming articles by Colum Giles may be of interest to the group. First, Colum has published an article in the *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, 93, (2021) entitled 'Vernacular buildings: a source for historical study'. In it, he traces the history of the study of vernacular buildings in the county up to the present day and discusses the potential for further research, in particular showing how a thematic approach to recording can exploit the potential of buildings as an historical source. Second, the same author has prepared an article, to be published late this year, on what the study of windows in vernacular houses (the subject of November's Third Thursday Talk) can tell us about a range of issues such as the internal workings of a house and the decision-making and design processes behind the appearance of the houses of the Calder valley. The article, 'Windows in houses of the upper Calder valley: a celebration of light', will be published in the *Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society*, 29.

The Barn: The Lives, Landscape and Lost Ways of an Old Yorkshire Farm by Sally Coulthard. The story of a stone barn and farm in the Howardian Hills, and its occupants over the years. November 2021, around £13.

Before The Merchant Adventurers: Building the Hall. An account of the building of the hall from 1357 onwards, detailing the merchants who contributed to the cost of the building and the workmen who carried out the work – carpenters, masons, tilers and daubers. The book is essentially a transcript of the account book of the Fraternity of Jesus and Mary, York, the religious fraternity which originally built the hall as a hospital for the poor and needy. The book records the construction costs of the hall, for which more than 500 trees were felled and thousands of bricks and tiles bought. Available at £10 from the Merchant Adventurers Hall or from King's Manor. But before you rush out to buy the book, do note that it's written mostly in Latin!

From the archive: Snape

The attractive village of Snape is three miles south of the market town of Bedale. The name apparently derives from the Old Norse language, meaning a boggy tract of uncultivated land. This is certainly not the case in 2021: the Nurse Well runs through the village in a managed way. Footbridges over the water feature add character to The Avenue.

Snape Castle, largely rebuilt in the sixteenth century, dominates the north-west end of the village. Much of the land associated with the castle was used as demesne parkland, woodland, and pasture, leaving only a small area of open arable fields for the peasantry, most of whom were smallholders. Income was supplemented from secondary trades, particularly wool combing in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Timber-framed cruck houses were the primary type of residence built in this area.

Mary Cook



Springfield (YVBSG 189). A single storey three cell house with rendered rubble stone walls and three pairs of crucks internally, with saddle apexes (Type C). This may have had a hearth-passage plan form but has been much altered over the years.



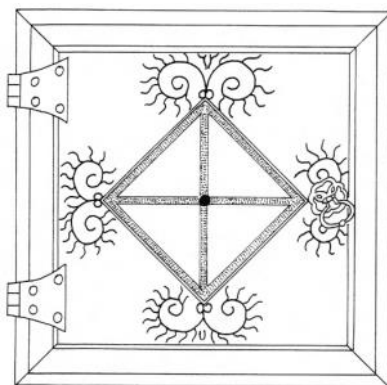
Old Village Farm (YVBSG 1574) was most likely a low cobble-built three unit farmhouse. In 1772, the date over the front door, the house was raised and significant alterations made.



Next Door (YVBSG 1575). This single cell cobble and boulder cottage is adapted to the very narrow site between two other buildings. Internally, two cambered hardwood tiebeams may originate from an earlier building.



Lilac Cottage (YVBSG 1576) contains four cruck trusses, only one of which is now complete. They originally stood on padstones set within a wide plinth. About 1600, a large timber firehood with studded side walls (which still survive) was inserted into the former open hall.



Spice cupboard door with butterfly hinges at Old Village Farm, measuring 29cm square.



Little Owl Cottage (YVBSG 1580). The curving lines of the rear stone wall suggest the influence of at least two cruck trusses.



Cruck Cottage (YVBSG 1594). One complete cruck truss with finely shaped blades, nearly square in section survives in the middle of the building. It is possible this building could have been the 'low end' of a longhouse originally.



Braeside (YVBSG 1603). Traces of a much earlier roof line in the east gable show that the whole house was originally single-storey and possibly of cruck construction.



Greenways (YVBSG 1602). Changes in the front wall and quoining suggest this house was originally another single storey structure. As at Braeside, there was originally a cross passage running from front to rear doors.

Gainsborough Old Hall – well worth a visit

Gainsborough Old Hall is jaw-dropping – it's vast and utterly beautiful. It is also astonishingly well-preserved, considering that most of it was built in the late fifteenth century, and the remainder is Elizabethan.

The hall is flagged up as among England's best remaining medieval manor houses. It has one of the finest surviving domestic kitchens of the late Middle Ages, with a huge serving hatch, enormous fireplaces and a gallery from which the head cook supervised operations. The timbers of the great hall were felled in c1460.

Very little imagination is needed to understand how it functioned as a place to live and a centre of local activity. For such a large structure, how has it managed to survive so intact, and to keep itself relevant? It has been owned by only two families: first, the Burghs, who were able to navigate with success the changing politics of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Then it passed to the Hickman family, who lived in it only until decamping to the local countryside in 1700. But a careful and thoughtful eye was kept on the building through the following centuries, until the hall was presented to the nation in 1970. It had variously served as a theatre and meeting place for the town, a feeding centre for the town's poor after the Napoleonic wars, and at times was subdivided into small dwellings and (simultaneously) two pubs.



The hall stands close to the town centre, between that and the former port on the Trent. Gainsborough is currently a town down on its luck, but it's a joy for a landscape historian.

Gainsborough Old Hall has recently been returned by the county council into the care of English Heritage, and reopened in 2021 after a refurbishment. Did I mention the café? And also easy parking and friendly staff.

North Lincolnshire was never high on my list of travel destinations, but current restrictions are making us look around at what was hiding in plain sight. This is on the doorstep of south Yorkshire. I've not been so excited since discovering Shrewsbury in summer.

Also in north Lincolnshire, St Peter's at Barton-upon-Humber is spectacular (though now closed for the winter): www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/st-peters-church-barton-upon-humber/history/.

Gill Cookson

A remarkable find

During recent preparatory work for restoration, the Landmark Trust discovered a spectacular scheme of wall paintings covering three walls of a room at Calverley Old Hall. The paintings are said to show fantastical birds and animals, figures and vases, and date back to the sixteenth century. They had been plastered over at some point.

The Landmark Trust has launched an appeal to save this exceptional feature as part of the overall restoration of the building; for further details and photos, see landmarktrust.org.uk.

A Yorkshire/Lancashire doorhead in Madeira?

In September one of my tweets showed four decorative doorheads in Lancashire and Yorkshire. A follower with a Twitter account then sent me this photo of a doorhead he saw in Madeira, likely to be three hundred years old, he said. It is an ogee type that is found in northern parts of West Yorkshire, Craven, and Harrogate areas, and in Lancashire from Burnley and Colne northwards to the Lune Valley.

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