

PENDLE ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP

Wycoller Landscape Project



A Report on a survey of the barn at Copy House Farm Wycoller

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Pendle Heritage Archaeological Group

Wycoller Country Park Landscape Project

A Report on the Barn at Copy House, Wycoller

Site

- Record no. – AB.03
- Location – Copy House Barn, Wycoller
- NGR – 9330 3890
- Altitude – 230m
- Orientation of barn doors – flush wagon entrance faces north
- Listing – unlisted
- Date of Survey – 20th April 2013

Description of Building

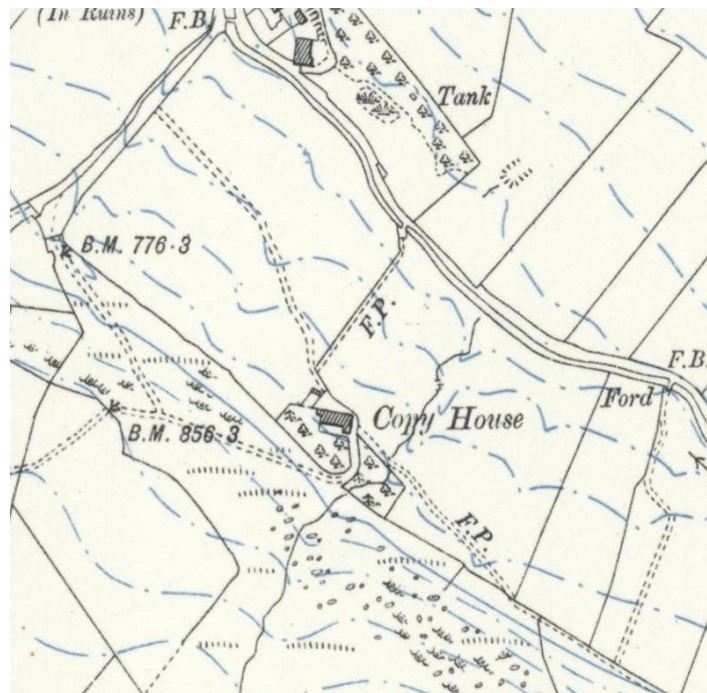
The barn is of five bay construction with an attached, later extended, 18th century small farmhouse to the east elevation. The building is constructed with the external walls of stonework and a stone slated roof. Three phases of development have been recognised with the earliest dating to the early 17th century.

Historical Record

The history of Wycoller is presented elsewhere¹.

Map Regression

1888-13, six inches to the mile.

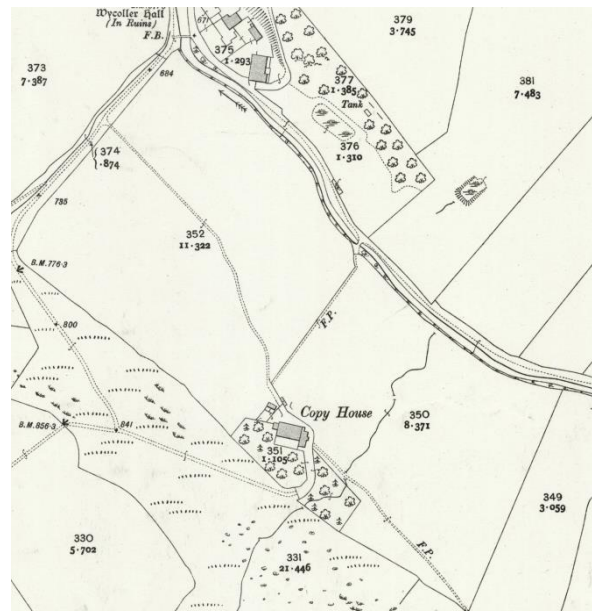


Access to the farmhouse is shown to be from the south, the track turning back on itself to the north to join the track to Wycoller; This track is joined at its junction by that from Raven's Rock Farm. The present access road approaching from the north is 'modern'. The Copy House farm yard is shown opening out along the line of the 'modern' access road and it is possible, that it was in existence earlier for wheeled vehicles.

The barn itself is shown without the extension to the north; a projecting barn entrance is shown on the 1848 map. The attached farmhouse is shown together with a small outbuilding abutting the west side of the western boundary wall. The enclosed area around the farm is indicated as being wooded.

A footpath is shown running north towards Wycoller Beck where it crosses a bridge close to the boundary wall to the south-east of the former gardens to Wycoller Hall.

1892-14, 1:2500



The barn is shown having been extended to the north. A small outbuilding is shown abutting the north side of the northern boundary wall of the farm yard.

The former access track are shown all of which, except the 'modern' road, are present-day public rights of way.

Setting

The barn is set into the sloping hillside to the south of Wycoller hamlet. It is accessed at present by the 'modern' road running from the lane leading up to Ravens Rock farm to approach the farm from the north. The land to the south side of the building is considerably higher than that to the south and is reflected in the construction of a retaining wall to the south. It is significant that the field boundary walls to the north and

west of the farm buildings are of an early typology suggesting that the adjacent fields were enclosed at an early date. The field boundary wall to the south is of an early date being constructed of boulders.

Plan

The plan and form of the building has been substantially altered (Fig. 2). The primary building was a barn with an average span of around 7.690 m with a length of 16.570 m. There was a barn door to the north. At the east and west ends of the barn byres were provided for cattle as can be seen from the extant doors in the south elevation. The date of this primary phase could probably be dated to around the beginning of the 17th century or later. The floor of the barn slopes from south to north and the ground level to the south rises from east to west.

Substantial alterations were carried out around 1890, which involved the demolition of the north wall and rebuilding it on a line of around 3.500m to the north, i.e. the line of the projecting wagon entrance. At the same time, the roof was raised so as to provide access for larger wagons. The side walls of the projecting wagon entrance were retained. It is probable that this additional space was primarily used for increased milk production, with two doors being provided for access, as farming moved towards the milk economy of the latter part of the nineteenth century; the doorways are too low for horses. At this time the pitched roof would be asymmetrical, the earlier north facing pitch of the roof being followed (Fig. 1). The eaves level of the primary roof was approximately 1.300 m below the present eaves level. A change in the quality of the masonry can be seen on the north external elevation showing the earlier eaves line, which is around half way up the total height of the north wall. The pitch of the roof was slightly steeper than that of the present roof (Pl. 5). Around this time a store was built onto the west gable wall as shown on the first edition maps.

The final alteration was carried out in the earlier 20th century when the north and south walls were raised, together with both gables and a symmetrical pitched roof with a queen post truss constructed a common alteration to allow for greater storage capacity for hay in the upper parts of the barn. It is probable that the shippons were retained to the east and west of the building together with the north due to the pockets for timber joists supporting the hay loft over being extant at the western end of the building. The wing walls leading to the barn doors were retained but were now redundant as the roof had been rebuilt at a higher level. The doors were retained in their seventeenth century position inside of the wing walls and a roof formed over the entry passage. The barn doors are 2.820m wide and set back 3.670m from the face of the wall.

External Walls

All the external walls were built with an inner and outer leaf of masonry bonded with lime mortar. The south facing wall is of coursed rubble with the top five courses of different masonry reflecting the final phase of development. Doorways are formed at the east and west ends which lead to the shippons with square dressed stone heads and jambs to the east door. The door to the west of the south elevation appears to be of the primary phase having the jambs formed with large stones and a large lintel over with a crudely cut splay formed to the lower outside edge (Pl. 7). A large door has been inserted into the centre of the wall opposite the barn doors (Pl. 6 and Fig. 3). This is clearly later and of re-used masonry. The jambs are finely splayed with non-matching stop-ends. The lintel is non-matching and has a crudely cut splay to its outer edge. The doorway appears to have been increased in width by c. 320mm as can be seen by a change of masonry to the step. This is reflected in the reduced bearing of the lintel at its eastern end. It is likely that the doorway is a modified primary phase threshing doorway, inserted and altered more than once when the barn was extended in the mid-late 19th century. There may have been a timber lintel at one time (suggested in the stonework), perhaps replaced by the current crude stone lintel when the pitching door was inserted immediately above the doorway. Thus, one could postulate three phases for the doorway:

- a primary phase narrow threshing door;
- subsequently widened with a timber lintel;
- this was replaced with a stone lintel when the pitching doorway was added above (i.e. acting as a stone sill for the doorway).

Interestingly slots have been cut into the side of the jambs at low level. These have been positioned to prevent animals entering the barn from outside. There is a considerable change in level at the doorway of 510mm. This is accommodated by the insertion of three steps. This change of level is also reflected in the height of the vents above ground level to the west elevation. Two pitching holes (now windows) and the above mentioned pitching door have been formed at high level with square heads and jambs as part of the final phase. The two holes align with the presumed hay stores on balconies above the cattle stalls.

The external leaf of the east gable wall has been rebuilt, probably when the attached farmhouse was extended. Internally this wall shows clear evidence of the primary phase of construction where the later phases can be seen to the north and at high level. Three blocked vents are present at low level made up of large stones to the sides of the openings and a hay door was positioned mid-way up the elevation. The west gable wall

shows evidence of similar phased construction with four vents at low level (Pl. 8). The masonry to the primary phase is formed of larger stone to that of the later phases and is of a higher quality.

The north facing wall is 520mm thick and is built of watershot masonry. A clear break in the phasing of the wall can be seen midway up this elevation. Two doors leading to the shippon are positioned at each end of the elevation with substantial lintels over the openings. Two windows at low level and one central pitching hole (now window) at high level all with square jambs and heads were formed as part of the final phase of construction.

Evidence for the supports for the hayloft over the shippon and stable is evident. Projecting stones, most of which have been broken off, can be seen to the inside face of the east wall. Projecting stones can also be seen to the inside of the west wall. These stones would have supported a timber beam to support further beams running at right angles on the line of the divisions to the byres. Evidence of pockets to receive the ends of the joists to the hayloft can be seen in the lintel at the west end of the north wall and the walling adjacent, as well as the lintel at the west end of the south wall and walling adjacent.

The roof

The span of the roof to the primary phase of the barn was c. 7.690m (25.2 ft). Due to the span it is almost certain the truss for the roof construction was a king post truss supporting purlins and rafters. It is likely that the roof construction to the two extensions to the north, either side of the projecting wagon entrance, of the second phase involved a principal rafter to each side of the barn door walls on the line of the truss. This would need to have been supported on a post positioned on the line of the partition wall dividing the stable or shippon from the barn. Purlins would then be set on the principal rafter together with rafters.

The roof was replaced when the last phase of the development of the barn took place. A queen post roof spanning 11.120m (36.5 ft) was erected creating five bays of an average width of 3.110m. Purlins are laid on the truss with rafters over and a roof covering of stone slates. All the roof timbers are contemporary.

Discussion

The barn is a good example showing how the building developed reflecting the growing agricultural economy at the time. The three main phases of the barn can clearly be found in the surviving structure. However, this has been made more difficult due to

insensitive partial repointing of the internal face of the external walls around 1970. This work has undoubtedly destroyed archaeological evidence of features.

From the size of the barn in its primary phase it was clearly built by someone of social standing. This design and layout, as far as can be ascertained, is very close to that of nearby Bracken Hill barn (which has a better preserved primary phase), for example in the overall dimensions, the projecting wagon entrance and the four vents in the gables. It is significant that, like Bracken Hill, it was built initially without a farmhouse attached; this addition could be the result of a change in ownership. It is not known who or where the original landowner lived. Like Bracken Hill, the subsequent farmhouse is of the form of a worsted weavers' house. The extension in the mid-late 19th century would appear to reflect the well documented change to a milk based economy serving the growing towns and this again it is reflected in the final building phase of the early 20th century.

The floor to the barn slopes significantly from the south to the north. There is also a significant change in level between internal floor level and the levels beyond the yard in front of the barn to the north and the retaining wall to the south. This change in level would have hindered access to the doorways on the south elevation and it is possible that the present levels do not reflect those of earlier phases in the life of the barn.

The widening of the primary phase doorway in the centre of the south wall could be seen as a need to accommodate small wagons or equipment from the south. The finely worked jambs represent a 17th century primary phase of good quality. Unfortunately, the lintel over is not of the same level of workmanship.

Note

1. Bentley, John, 1975, *Portrait of Wycoller*, Nelson; Folley, E. W., 2004, *Romantic Wycoller*, Nelson.

Acknowledgements

The Archaeological Group gratefully acknowledge the help and assistance given by Peter Short the Warden of Wycoller Country Park who allowed unlimited access to the barn. The help given by members of the Group not named is also appreciated.



Pl. 1 North elevation (eastern Section)



Pl. 2 North elevation (western section) note change of masonry mid-way up the wall



Pl. 3 South elevation



Pl. 4 West elevation



Pl. 5 East internal wall; the outline of the primary barn gable wall can be seen



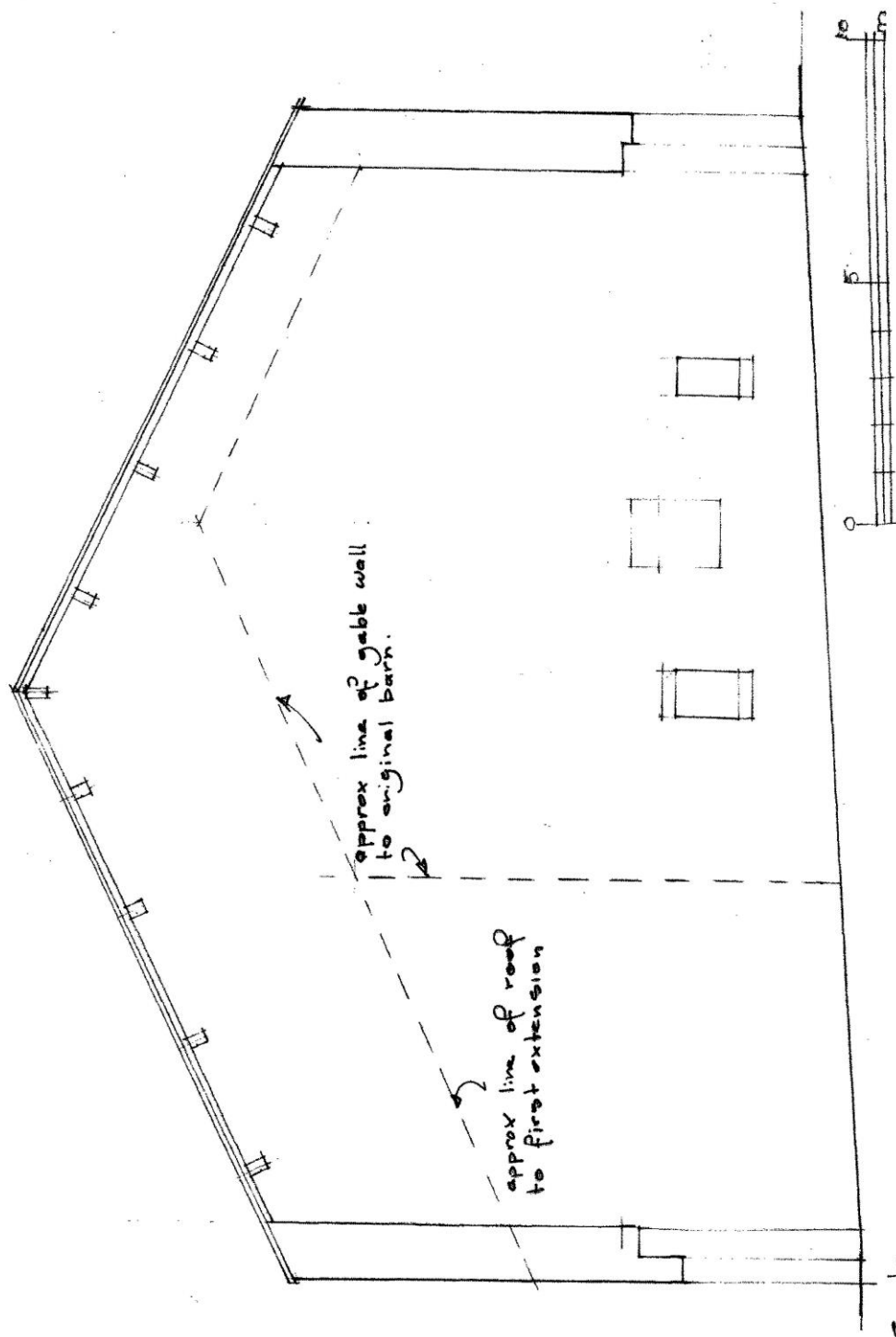
Pl. 6 Large door opening to south elevation



Pl. 7 Small doorway to west of south elevation

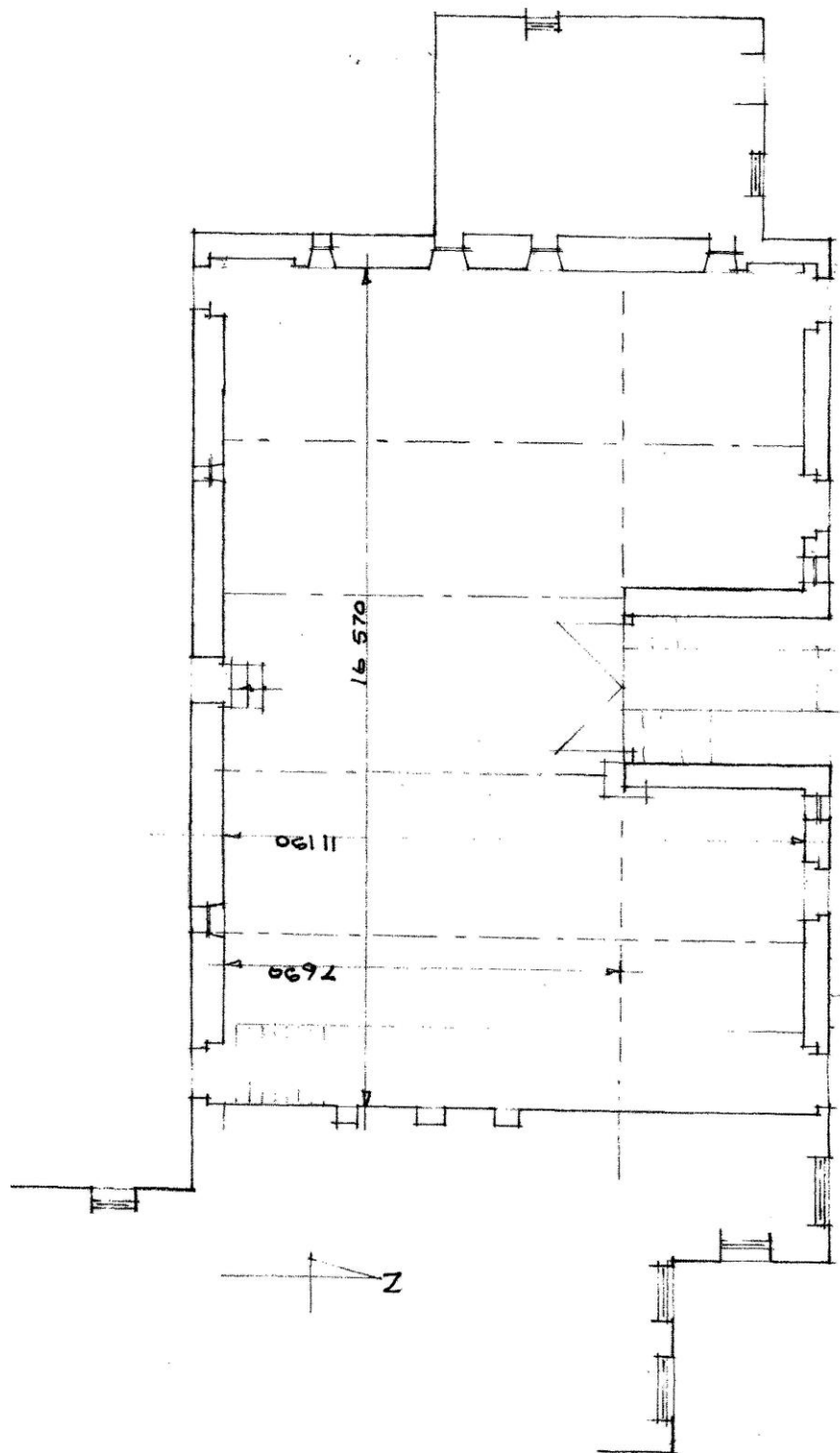


Pl. 8 External vents to east elevation; note ground level



COPY HOUSE BARN - WYCOLLER

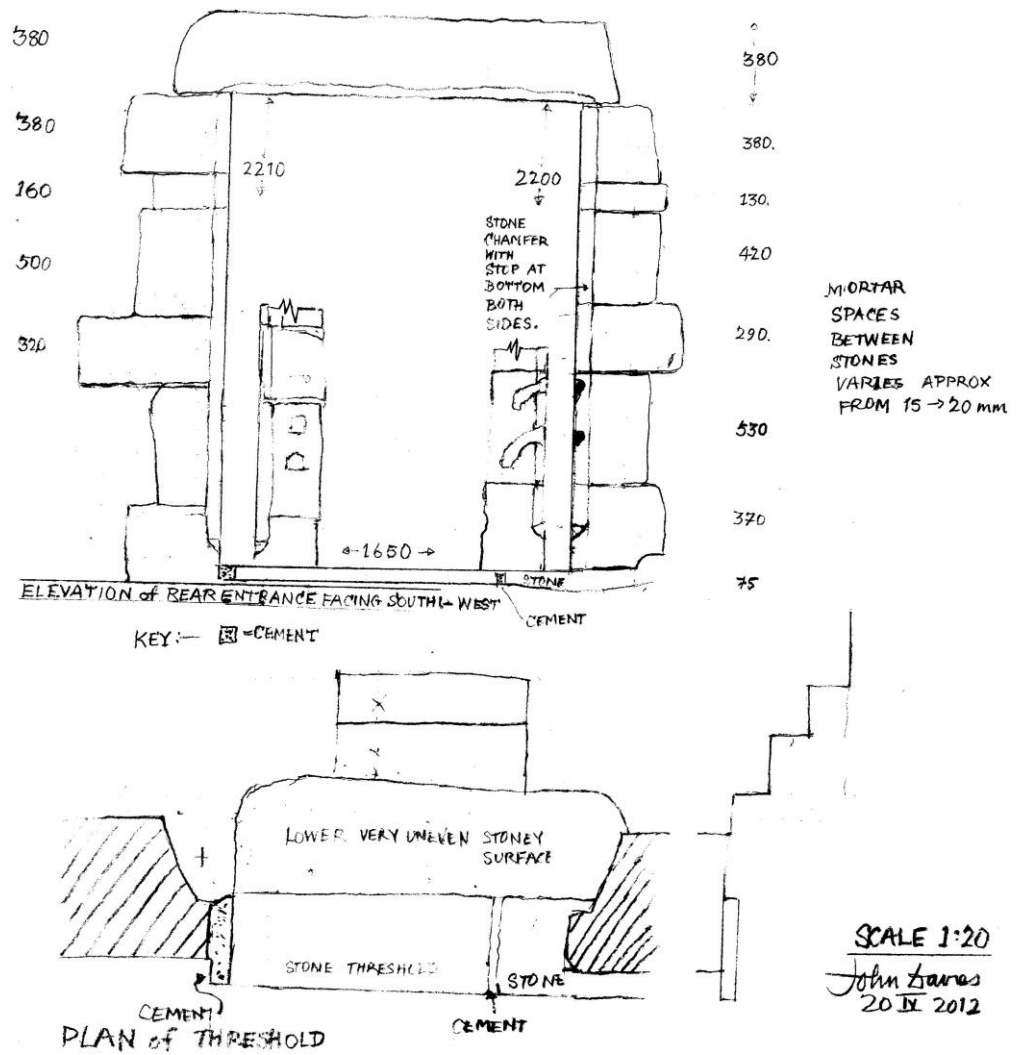
FIG. 1



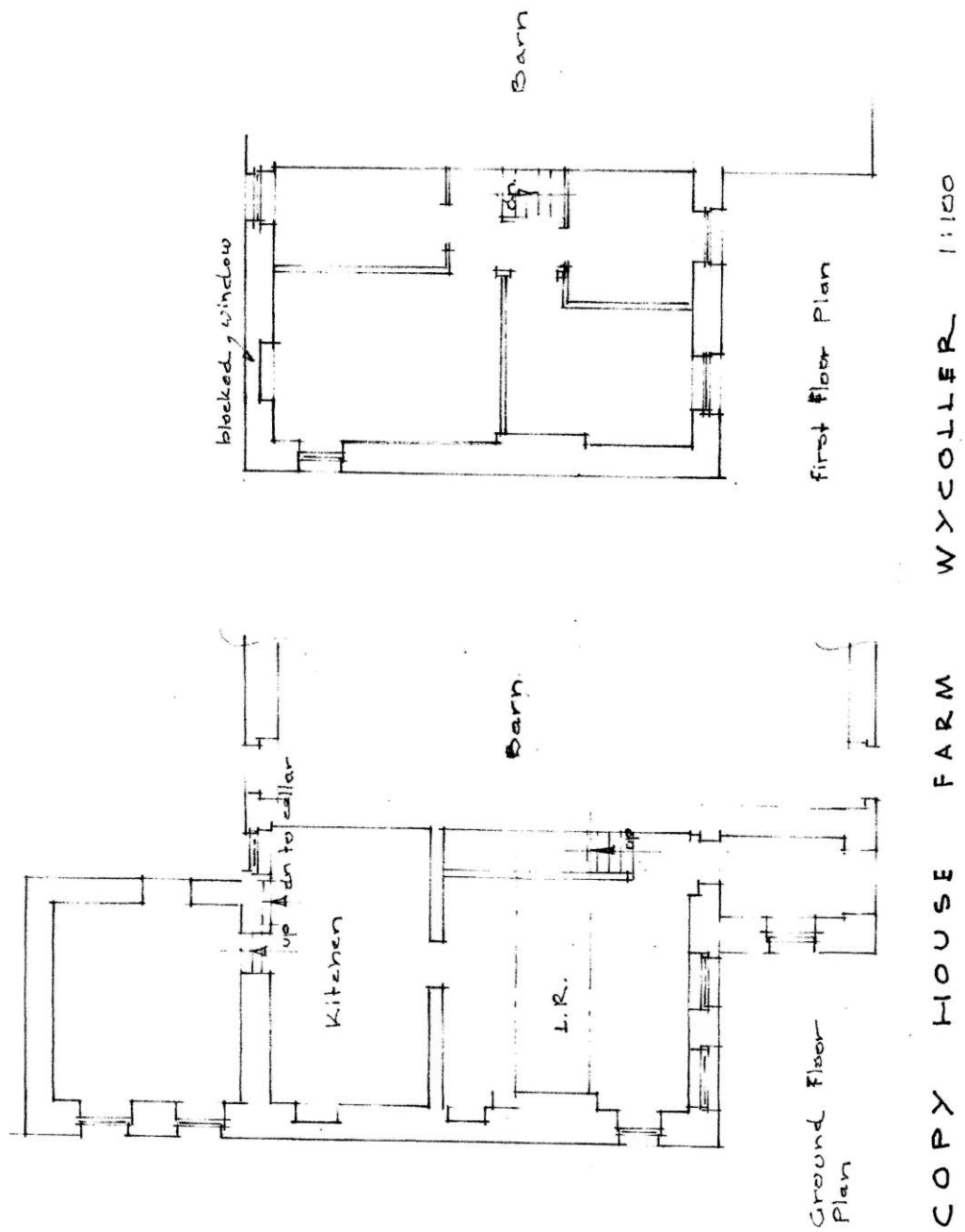
Scale 1:100

COPY HOUSE BARN. WYCOLLER
FIG. 2

COPY FARM BARN WYCOLLER LANCASHIRE
MEASURED SURVEY DRAWING OF REAR ENTRANCE FACING S.WEST



Detail of South Doorway



Plan of the farmhouse attached to the barn

