

# THE DOMESTIC BUILDINGS OF SELBORNE

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'We abound with poor; many of whom are sober and industrious, and live comfortably in good stone and brick cottages, which are glazed, and have chambers above the stairs: mud buildings we have none.' – Gilbert White, *The natural history and antiquities of Selborne* (1789).

UNDERTAKEN in 1967 as part of a more extensive study of the settlement of the area (Meirion-Jones 1969), this work is based on the Tithe Map of 1842, which, together with the accompanying Tithe Apportionment (P.R.O., Tithe Map and Apportionment, Selborne) provides an almost complete survey of the landscape of the parish, the boundaries of which had probably remained unaltered from the Dark Ages until the changes of the late nineteenth century brought about a reduction in area. The parish, which became famous as the setting of Gilbert White's pioneer study in natural history (White 1789), lies in the western Weald and falls into four parts, coincident with lithology. From the crest of the east-facing chalk escarpment, where the beech hangers of Selborne Common rise above 650 feet O.D., the parish stretches eastwards across the Upper Greensand (Malmstone) and Gault, down to the sandy wastes of Woolmer Forest.

## *The Settlement Pattern*

Selborne village occupies a classic scarp-foot site below 'the vast hill of chalk', close to the Malmstone junction. In 1842, as in White's time 50 years before, it consisted of 'one straggling street, three quarters of a mile in length, in a sheltered vale, and running parallel to the hanger' (Pl. 1a). East of the village, the dip-slope of the Malmstone, here two miles wide, swells up to reach its greatest height of 571 feet O.D. within the parish. It is here that the Tithe Map (Fig. 1) shows a pattern of rectilinear field boundaries, suggestive of the enclosure of those common arable fields that once occupied the Malmstone soils famous for their fertility (Wilkinson 1861, 254). The wooded Malmstone scarp face, in places deeply incised by the headwaters of the Oakhanger stream, descends some 200 feet to the Gault Clay vale which separates it from the Folkestone Beds. The latter form a rather monotonous landscape, 'a hungry, sandy, barren waste' (White 1789, 25) whose altitude varies from *circa* 250 feet O.D. to 508 feet O.D. on Weavers' Down, at the extreme south-east tip of the parish.

Both nucleated and dispersed elements are present in the settlement pattern of 1842, for in addition to the village, several hamlets and numerous dispersed farms lay beyond the area of former common fields. Figure 1 shows this pattern to have been far from uniform, the village straggling in an arc about the chalk escarpment and separated from Selborne Common by remnants of common field, King's Field, Ewell Field, Fardown, and North Field, each clearly subdivided into strips. To the east of the village the Malmstone bench, both north and south of the Oakhanger stream, is devoid of settlement. Fielders, Norton, Upper and Lower Wyck, Southerington and

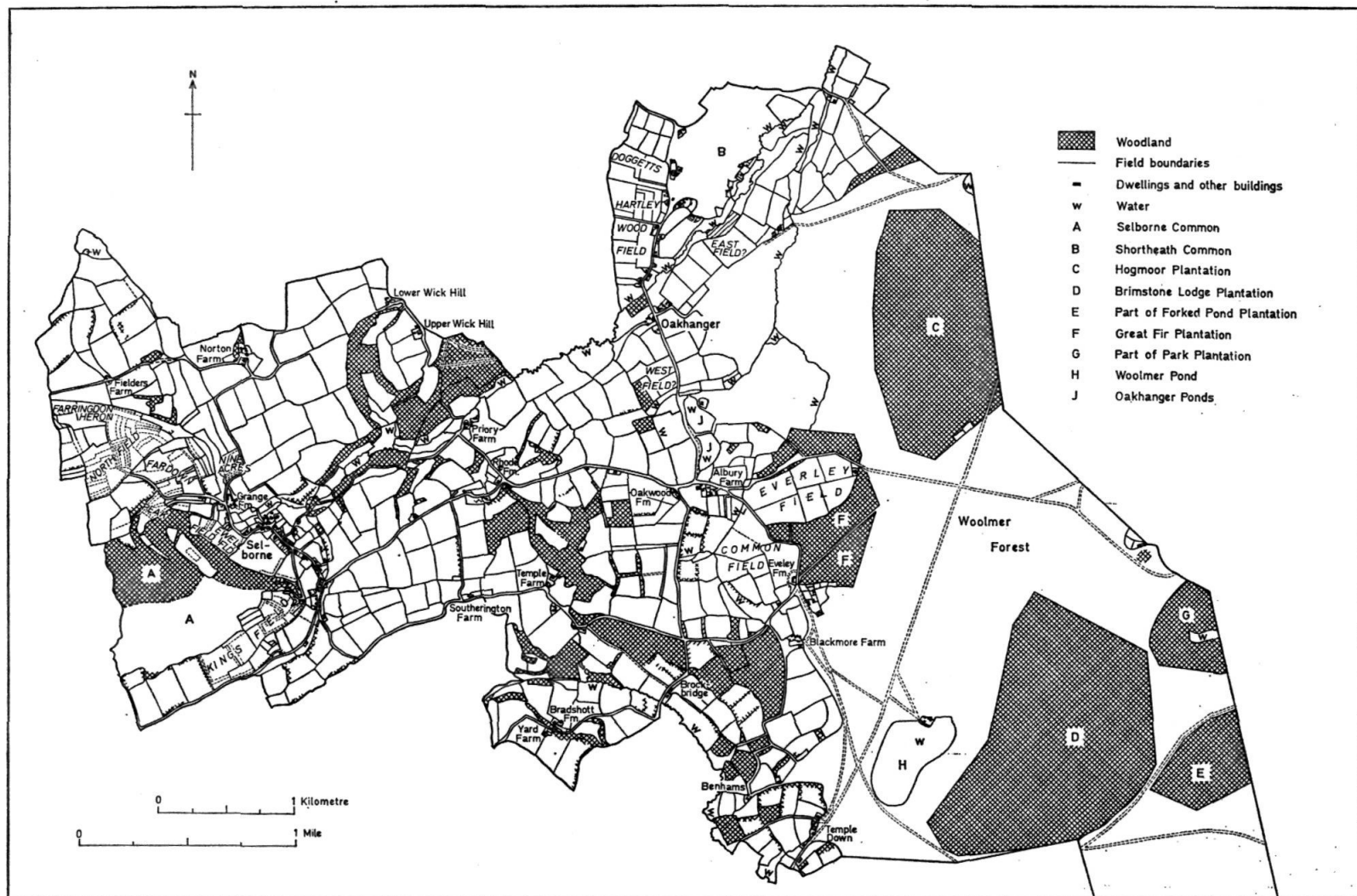


Fig. 1. Selborne, Hants, settlement and field boundaries in 1842, from the Tithe Map.

Temple lie close to the parish boundaries beyond the former common fields (Meirion-Jones 1969, 93). The Malmstone escarpment is strongly marked by woodland below which Priory, Oakwood, Rhode and Brockbridge lie on the heavy soils of the Gault, otherwise conspicuously devoid of settlement. Further east, along the junction of the Gault and the Folkestone Beds, a discontinuous line of settlement extends from Oakhanger in the north to Temple Down in the south, and includes Albury, Eveley and Blackmoor. On the margins of Shortheath Common and Woolmer Forest many sites are of the squatter type, the dwellings set in small plats which appear as appendages on the outer sides of field boundaries, or as islands on the common, betraying their origin as piecemeal enclosures from the waste. Woolmer Forest, occupying the extreme eastern part of the parish, is almost without settlement.

Criteria used to classify and date the dwellings include the type of building materials, timber work, roof structure and plan, and although the great majority of buildings included in this survey were seen only from the outside, some were examined in detail, sufficient evidence being obtained to establish a broad classification. Although dwellings fall into types to which only an approximate date can be given, evidence necessary for more precise dating often being lacking, when classified and presented cartographically (Fig. 2), the results of the survey may be compared with the map of settlement and field patterns (Fig. 1).

#### *Building Materials*

Timber-frame buildings survive over the whole parish, most now having brick or ironstone nogging, clearly a replacement in many cases for an earlier wattle and daub filling. By the sixteenth century, Malmstone was being used in the Wealden area where quarries supplied an acceptable building stone that had been used in the local churches for centuries, but which appears to have been used only in limited quantities for domestic building. A freestone quarry was recorded in the adjacent parish of Hartley Mauditt in 1552 (P.R.O., D.L. 42/108), and Selborne Priory, dissolved in 1485, was built of Malmstone subsequently re-used elsewhere in the district. This stone is widely used, the harder bands appearing in houses, park and garden walls and farm buildings as far north as the parish of Froyle (White 1909, 102), some six miles away, where it occurs in buildings right up to the crest of the chalk escarpment. In the adjacent Wealden parishes the stone is widespread in houses of seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth century date, and 'when chisled smooth it makes elegant fronts for houses, equal in colour and grain to the Bath stone . . .' (White 1789, 9). The 'blue rag', although not favoured for the walls of houses was considered 'excellent for pitching of stables, paths and courts, and for building of dry walls against banks . . .' (*ibid.*). Carstone, a dark red-brown ferruginous sandstone found in the Folkestone Beds of Woolmer Forest is used in houses, cottages and walls on, or close to, that outcrop. Some large blocks have been quarried, but pieces an inch or two thick are more common. It is found as nogging in timber-framed buildings (Figs. 3 and 6), whole walls are built of it, and it also occurs widely as 'nailhead' decoration in the courses of Malmstone walling.

Brick is also common, and whilst in the sixteenth century it had been used mostly for chimney stacks, there is evidence of wider use in south-east England during the

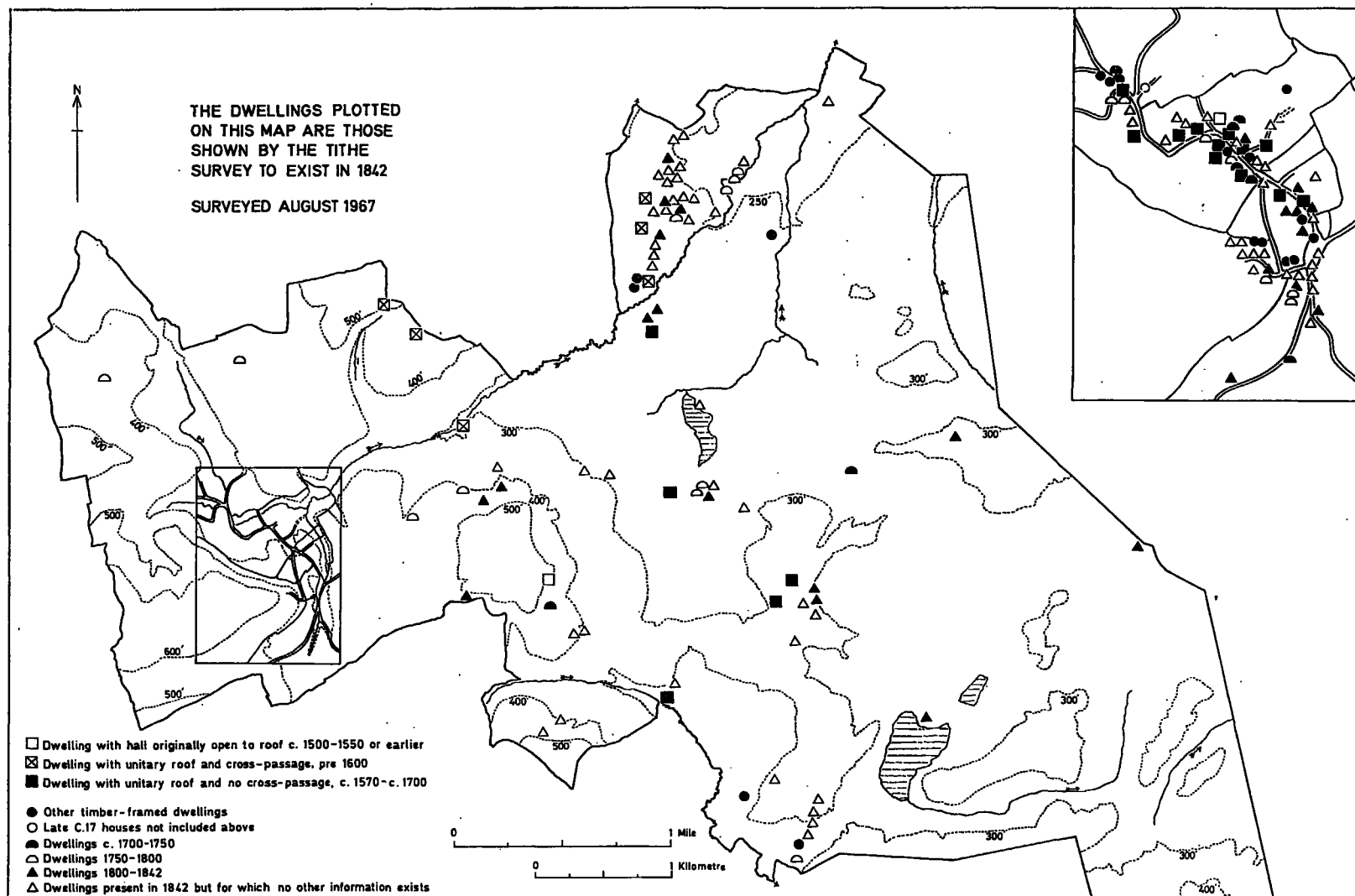


Fig. 2. Selborne, the domestic buildings in 1842.

seventeenth century (Meirion-Jones 1969, 257). The small dark red bricks characteristic of the sixteenth and seventeenth century are to be found in the chimney stacks of several houses. In 1610, a cottage and brick-kiln in Binswood, on the Gault Clay, were held for the payment of 'two loades of brick or two loade of Tyle' (P.R.O., L.R. 2/203f). All the local argillaceous formations have been worked, a combination of Gault Clay and sand from the Folkestone Series producing pale red bricks, whilst those produced at the Bentley brickworks have a lemon coloured mottling (White 1909, 103). Flint, although not extensively used for housebuilding is occasionally found, sometimes as nogging, and always cornered with brick or stone. Roofing is mostly of tile, although thatch was undoubtedly much more extensive formerly. Slate did not appear until the early nineteenth century but is quite common in the parish, not only when used for the roofing of new houses of nineteenth century date, but also when used to re-roof houses which were almost certainly originally thatched (e.g. Eveley Farm).

#### *Timber Work and Roof Structure*

Selborne roofs are in the south-east tradition, having no ridge-purlin, the pairs of common rafters being halved and pegged at the apex (Smith 1958, Cordingly 1961, 73). Trusses are almost universally of the queen-post type and of uniform scantling, and although a crown-post roof survives in the parish church this roof must have been renovated, for the crown-posts are found in conjunction with a ridge purlin. Unhappily, many roofs seem either to have been burned as a result of thatch catching fire, as at Lassams and Wheelwrights, or they have been interfered with so much in recent centuries that valuable evidence has been destroyed, as at Grange and Priory Farms. In several instances, however, smoke-blackened common rafters are still to be found alongside newer timbers, as at Plestor House and Priory Farm. Although such timbers may have originated at another site, it is more likely that in each case they formed part of the roof of a medieval hall on the same site having been re-used at a later re-building. For further evidence of roofs it is necessary to turn to the writings of Gilbert White in which the descriptions of the Old Vicarage and Temple are particularly helpful, both houses formerly having halls open to the roof (*infra*). Such dwellings in this district are unlikely to have been built after 1500.

The framing of the walls of the timber houses is plain and remarkably uniform both in type and quality. There is little massive timber work suggestive of an early date, and although limited amounts of close studding may be found in a few dwellings, it is not always convincingly original. An exception is undoubtedly that shown in Grimm's drawing of the Vicarage (Pl. 1c), an excellent example of a feature that has been described as 'Perpendicular' in feeling and 'surprisingly late in date, considering how prodigal it is of timber' (Wood 1965, 224), and for which the dates 1475-1575 have been suggested. The massive tension bracing of high quality, for which an upper terminal date of about 1500 has been suggested for the Berkshire examples (Rigold 1958, 4), is absent in Selborne. Only one dwelling, at Oakhanger, with a cross-passage, has convincingly early braces (Fig. 3) which might be pre-1500 and even these are not curved in the manner of, say, Lodge Farm, Odiham (Meirion-Jones 1969, 278). That at Blackmoor (Fig. 6), where the braces are remarkably straight, is a baffle entry house whose date is likely to be nearer 1600 than 1500. At Yew Tree Cottage (Fig. 9)



Fig. 3. House at Oakhanger, Selborne, Hants. (Figs. 3-11 are drawn from photographs by the author.)

the braces are light and attenuated, and undoubtedly of early eighteenth century date, probably contemporary with the house (1708). It would thus appear that these examples provide a case of the continuation of a technique with accompanying degeneration long after the date before which it is thought to have become generally extinct.

A tendency to light and poorer box framing is noticeable in some houses and these are thought to be later in date, the lightest observed being in Yew Tree Cottage (Fig. 9). Here the large square panels and light framing are entirely consistent with the date of 1708 and probably mark the end of the use of such framing although it undoubtedly continued to be used in farm buildings until a later date.

### *Plan*

The clearest distinction lies between those houses with medieval and post-medieval plans and those which display symmetrical Renaissance forms. The traditional medieval house, with 'one or more rooms, in particular the living-room or hall, open to the roof' (Fox and Raglan 1951, 16), was formerly to be found in the parish. This type, in which the hall was flanked by a number of rooms either under the same unitary roof, or in structural wings, and which resulted from the drawing together into one

structure of the separate buildings of an early medieval manor house (Barley 1963, 23), was common in south-east England and has been described as possessing the medieval H-plan (Smith 1955, 77). The three basic units, hall, solar and service rooms, were either side by side, or the solar was placed above the service rooms, there being no essential difference 'between the house which formed a long rectangle, with one or more rooms on either side of the hall under a continuous roof, and that with wings at right angles to the hall, making an H-plan' (Barley 1963, 24), the secondary rooms being accessible from the hall. The larger houses with a cross-wing may have represented the homes of classes wealthier than those whose homes, of comparable size, had a unitary roof. Only Priory Farm now survives with a cross-wing but other dwellings of this type are known to have been present formerly (Pl. Ic) (W. S. Scott 1950, Plate 12). A pair of opposite doors permitted access, either directly into the lower end of the hall, or into a cross-passage separated from the hall by a screen. This cross-passage became a 'characteristic feature of the medieval house' (Barley 1961, 24), and divided the hall from the service rooms (buttery and pantry). No such halls are now known to have survived in Selborne but Gilbert White gives evidence of their former existence (*infra*).

By 1500 the open hall was on its way out in south-east England, indeed it had become 'outmoded when Elizabeth came to the throne' (Fox and Raglan 1951, 18). As halls were lofted over (Barley 1961, 43), the building of a stack became necessary, usually in brick. In this parish, both Malmstone and brick were used and several houses have stacks built of small dark red bricks which are considered to be early in date. The mid-sixteenth century saw the beginning of what has been described elsewhere as the 'Great Rebuilding', ascribed to the years 1570-1642 in south-east England generally (Hoskins 1965, 131-148). Reconstruction and enlargement, and complete rebuilding, are thought to be characteristic of the period, halls still open to the roof being ceiled over and new houses built with two storeys throughout. It remains to be seen whether the term 'Great Rebuilding' or the dates 1570-1642 are appropriate to this parish, but this post-medieval type is associated with a particular plan. The cross-passage had now been generally abandoned, the entrance opening into a lobby in front of the stack. In this area it is improbable that the cross-passage would have been built as late as 1600 and this is taken as the terminal date for the type. The convenient siting of fireplace and staircase (Barley 1961, 68) were now the principal criteria. Massive brick axial stacks, often containing four flues, became widely distributed in the south-east (*ibid.* 67), and examples may be seen in Selborne. 'The entrance was now near the upper end of the hall, opening into a lobby, filling the space on one side of the central stack, giving independent access left and right to hall and parlour' (Wood 1965, 219) as at the Old Thatch in Blackmoor (Fig. 6). The staircase provided a problem usually solved by placing a wooden newel stair alongside the chimney stack which itself provided partial support. In south-east England, the change from the vernacular plan to Renaissance symmetry came after 1660, but it is to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that the majority of houses of this type belong; houses characterised by two or four-roomed plan with rooms placed symmetrically about a centrally placed door. These dwellings, which show little variation in plan, are classified by date (Fig. 2).



Fig. 4. Grange Farm, Selborne.

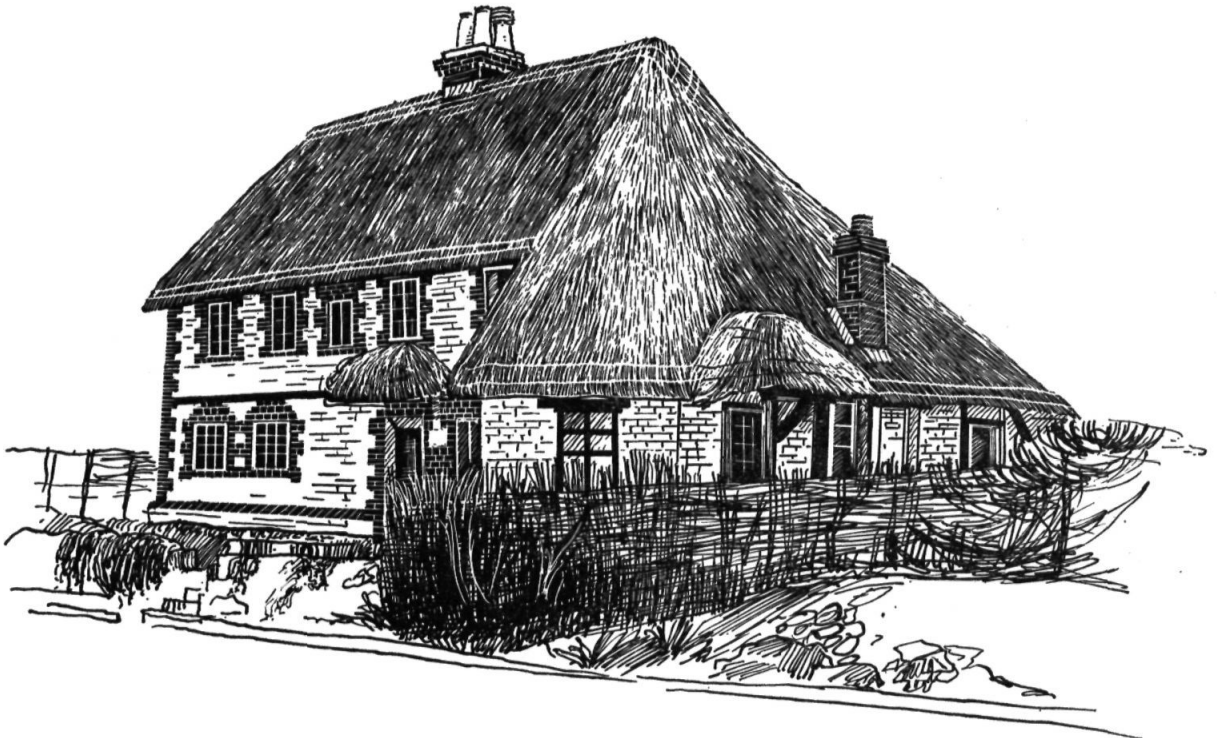


Fig. 5. Trimmings, Gracious Street, Selborne.



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### *Cartographic and Documentary Evidence*

Evidence obtained from a field survey of surviving dwellings may usefully be supplemented by reference to cartographic and documentary evidence, the most valuable source in north-east Hampshire being the *Tithe Map and Apportionment* of circa 1840 (Meirion-Jones 1969, 40). The Tithe Survey is the earliest, indeed the only, country-wide survey to distinguish between dwellings and other buildings, and one whose accuracy for north-east Hampshire has already been established (Meirion-Jones 1969, 40). Its date is particularly appropriate since to some workers 'vernacular', as applied to architecture, is synonymous with pre-railway age, the use of such a base map thus saving considerable time in the field, no time being wasted visiting later sites. The Map provides record, entirely reliable, for the existence of sites which have since been abandoned, and of dwellings which may subsequently have disappeared only to be replaced by more modern structures. Indeed, where field evidence shows a post-1842 dwelling to exist, the Map is the only means of establishing whether the site was formerly occupied by an earlier building. Used in conjunction with the Map, the Tithe Apportionment shows conclusively that some buildings which later came to be sub-divided to form labourers' cottages were then still single dwellings. The survey further provides a complete record of the field boundaries and field names to which



Fig. 6. The Old Thatch, Blackmoor, Selborne.

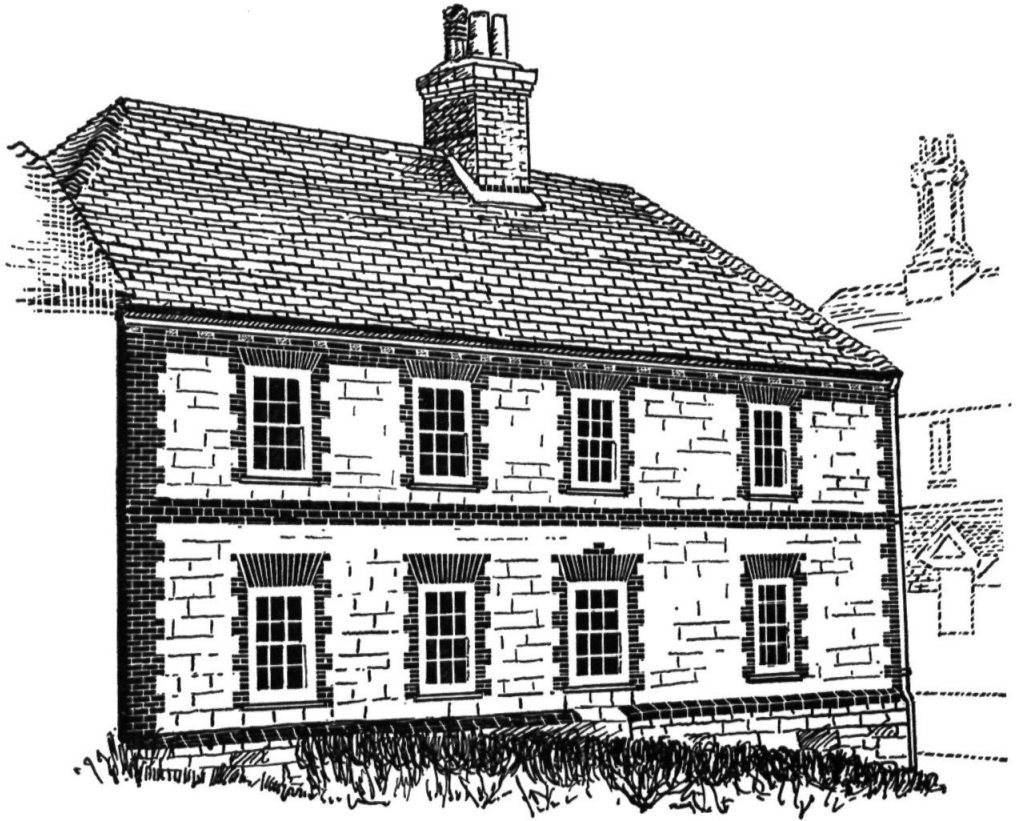


Fig. 7. Plestor House, Selborne.

the pattern of settlement may be related. It has consequently been possible to include on Fig. 2 dwellings present in 1842, but which have since disappeared, and for which no other evidence exists.

Two other sources have been used in this work: the details of several important dwellings recorded by Gilbert White, whose accuracy as a scientific observer is acknowledged, and the illustrations prepared by S. H. Grimm in 1776 for the first edition of *The Natural History of Selborne*. Several of the original drawings, although not used in the first edition, appear in later editions. Fears of artistic licence may be allayed by comparing the illustrations with surviving buildings, in addition to which there is White's own testimony to the accuracy of Grimm's work (White 1789, 323).

*Dwellings with halls formerly open to the roof c. 1500-1550 or earlier*

No such dwellings appear to have survived, although smoke-blackened timbers, almost certainly derived from the roofs of earlier halls on the same sites, are to be found as common rafters at Priory and Grange Farms and Plestor House. Gilbert White,

however, records the existence of two former halls recorded as dwellings with hall open to the roof in Fig. 2.

The present Vicarage, largely a mid-nineteenth century structure, is the latest of several rebuilds, but formerly 'the hall was open to the roof . . .' (White 1789, 323). The house, renovated in 1681 when White's grandfather 'floored and wainscoted the parlour and hall' and 'enlarged the kitchen and brewhouse, and dug a cellar', was extended in 1727 and re-roofed in 1758 (*ibid.*, 330-2). That the house (Pl. Ic) was a hall with cross-wings at each end is clear from Grimm's illustrations, the door being situated at the southern or lower end of the hall, obviously opening into a cross-passage. Two adjacent stacks in 1776 appear at the upper end (W. S. Scott 1950, Plates 4 and 6), one presumably heating a parlour. The house is almost certainly pre-1550, the date 'some time in the reign of Elizabeth', formerly inscribed 'over the door that leads to the stairs' (White 1789, 323), probably being that when the hall was ceiled over and the staircase inserted.

Temple has the appearance of having been rebuilt in the early nineteenth century, the moderately pitched red tile roof and the Georgian gothic window frames suggesting a date about 1820. The western limb, clearly re-roofed, perhaps at the same date, contains the remains of the house described by White and illustrated by Grimm (Pl. Ib). In the late eighteenth century it had been 'occupied as a common farmhouse

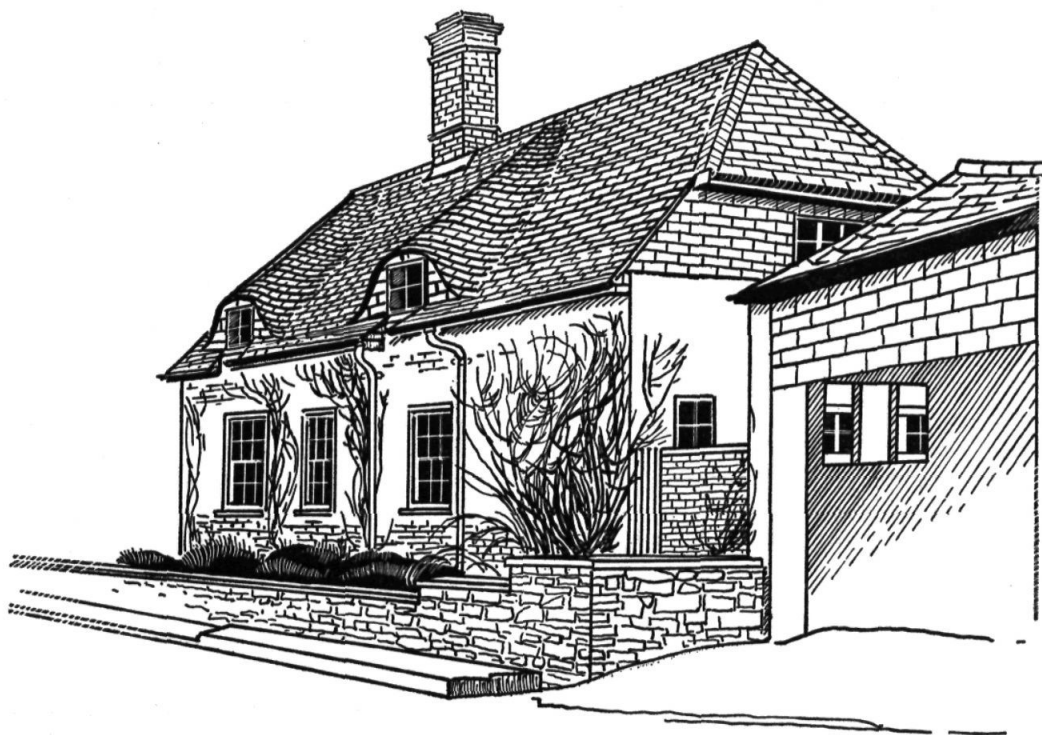


Fig. 8. Wheelwrights Cottage, Selborne.

from time immemorial' (*ibid.* 343), White also commenting that 'the south end is modern, and consists of a brew-house and then a kitchen. The middle part is an hall 27 feet in length, and 19 feet in breadth, and has been formerly open to the top, but there is now a floor above it, and also a chimney in the western wall. The roofing consists of strong massive rafter work ornamented with carved roses.' White found a fox with a goose on its back in one corner, but the significance of this is not known. 'Beyond the hall to the north is a small parlour with a vast heavy stone chimney-piece, and, at the end of all, the chapel or oratory, whose massive thick walls, and narrow windows at once bespeak of great antiquity. This room is only 16 feet by 16 feet 8 inches, and full 17 feet 9 inches in height. The ceiling is formed of vast joists, placed only five or six inches apart' (*ibid.* 344). Sadly, White left no description of the roof beyond these few words, but his measurements of the ground floor permit a reconstruction of the plan (Fig. 12). The surviving walls here are of the order of 55 cms thick but no attempt has been made to illustrate these as only part of the original building remains, the northern end having been demolished. Grimm's illustration shows a building of rectangular plan, the chapel visible at the near end (Pl. Ib), and behind it a timber frame wing projecting eastwards. The location of the small parlour between hall and chapel is clear, the parlour fireplace, referred to by White, rising in an off-set axial stack. The lateral hall stack is also visible as is an axial stack presumably at the junction of kitchen and brew-house. The windows have a 'perpendicular' look about them, suggesting a fifteenth century date. Although no other description of halls exists, the engraving by Grimm of Dorton Farm suggests that it was formerly of the hall and cross-wing type, for a single storey hall range is shown with an end stack, the door being at the lower end of the hall near the cross-wing (W. S. Scott 1950, Plate 12). In addition, there is the evidence of smoke blackened timbers at a number of sites. These, however, are not classed as 'halls' on Fig. 2.

*Dwellings with unitary roof and cross-passage, pre-1600*

None of the surviving dwellings in Selborne, with the exception of Priory Farm, has a structural cross-wing, a unitary hipped or half-hipped roof being common to all to which a date prior to 1700 can be ascribed. Seven houses with cross-passages have been identified, the most substantial of which, Priory Farm, is built of Malmstone and has been added to, notably in the eighteenth century. The plan of this difficult house shows two rectangular parts at right angles (Fig. 12), each containing an axial stack. The stack on the left, the larger of the two, adjoins the outside wall (where until recently there was a bread oven) at a point where the direction of the wall changes slightly. The other part, facing south, also has an axial stack, this time with a tunnel through its centre, separating the flues at ground floor level, a feature similar to that observed at Dowlings. The fire openings within the stone stack are smaller than those in the larger stack which is rather crudely built. In 1967, two doors led into the south front, the position of one door and window being interchanged in 1970 (Fig. 12). One door opens into a room opposite the passage leading past the larger stack, the two opposing doors here suggesting a vestigial cross-passage. The other, in 1967, opened into a lobby in front of the right-hand stack, on the opposite side of which lies a staircase. Two of the bounding walls are of close-studded timber work, the timber being

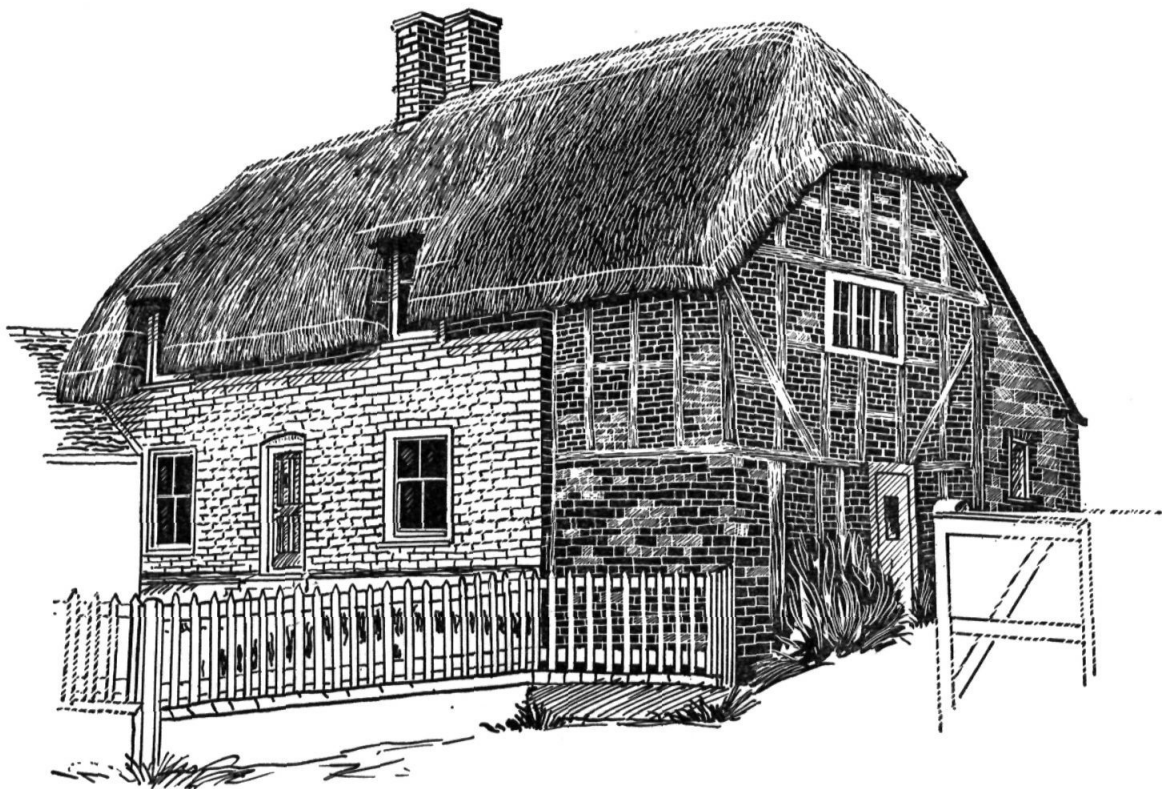


Fig. 9. Yew Tree Cottage, Selborne Street, Selborne.

rather light for outside walls. They may be a vestige of a former timber-frame building but it is possible that they are an original feature and that, as in some other Hampshire houses, service rooms were provided in an outshut, built specifically for that purpose. The considerable height of the rooms on both ground and first floors is a further anomaly and yet there is nothing about the timber framing to suggest any vertical addition. The relative positions of the rooms and the vestigial cross-passage suggest that the south-facing part is earlier, and that the large stack in the other section is a later addition (insertion?) to a cross-wing. The thinning of the wall at a point opposite the stack remains a problem but the interpretation outlined is supported by the roof structure. Both roofs have been much altered, but that of the south-facing wing has cambered tie-beams and good quality trusses as well as some smoke blackened common rafters. It has every appearance of being earlier and of better quality than the other wing. Both chimney stacks at roof-level contain the small dark red bricks suggestive of a seventeenth century or earlier date. The building appears, then, to have been a hall, re-built, retaining a cross-passage, a second door later being made into a lobby opposite the chimney stack. The whole re-building could have been completed *circa* 1600.

The core of the present structure is undoubtedly that found by John Sharp, husbandman, when he leased the Priory lands in 1526 and took possession of 'a house, two barns, a stable and a duf house', although 'as early as the reign of Henry VII (*i.e.*, at some time between 1485 and 1509) we find that a farmhouse and two barns were built to the south of the Priory and undoubtedly out of it's (*sic*) materials' (White 1789, 413, 421).

Thatched Cottage, in Gracious Street, also has evidence of a vestigial cross-passage with stack adjoining (Fig. 12). This too is not an easy house to analyse and it is possible that the conversion, during the nineteenth century, into a pair of labourers' cottages (witness the two staircases), and its restoration to a single dwelling, has completely masked the original openings. Stacks abutting the cross-passage are not unknown in the district and the unheated room here was probably the parlour, the chimney in the former service rooms being a nineteenth century feature built onto the outside of the house within an outshut. The rear outshut is probably an original feature and could have provided accommodation for service functions supplementary to the service rooms.

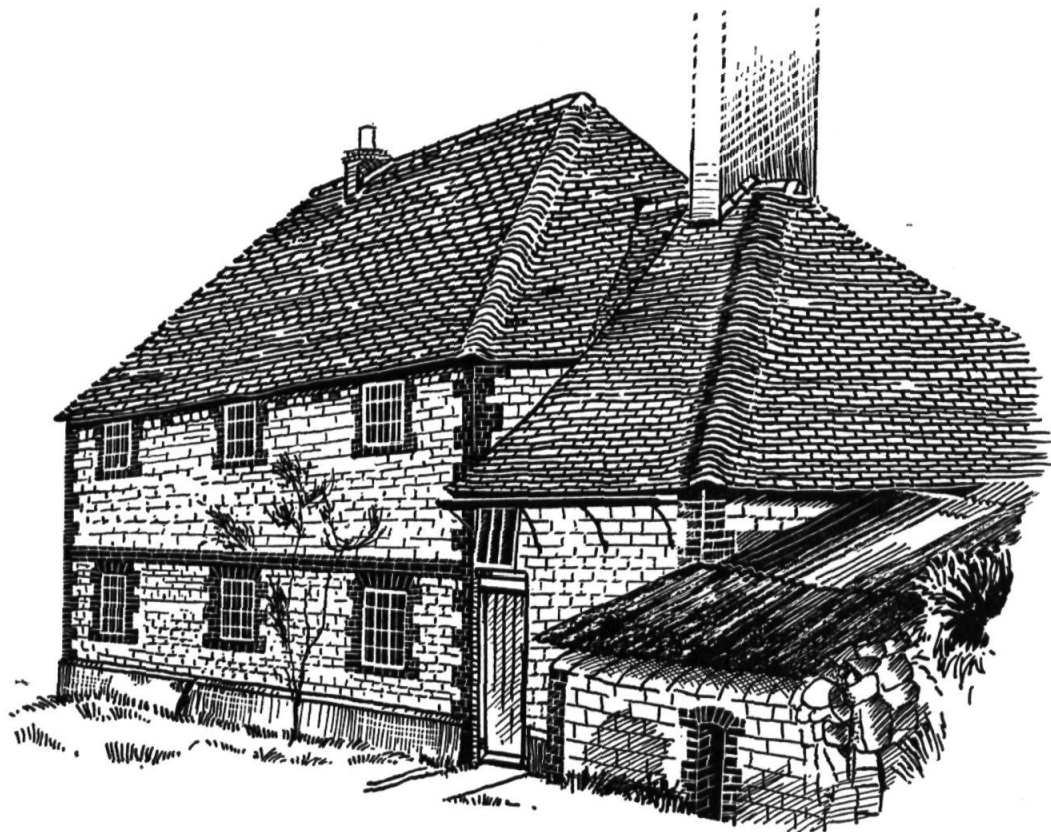


Fig. 10. Galley Hill Farm, Selborne.

*Dwellings with unitary roof and no cross-passage, c. 1570-1700*

Both timber-framed and stone-built houses of this type exist. Brockbridge and The Old Thatch at Blackmoor (Fig. 6), both substantial timber-frame structures, have the lobby at the front of the stack balanced by a staircase at the back. In the Old Thatch, the timber work (with ironstone nogging), although good, is not of the best, the parlour wing having been refaced with brick. Brockbridge is of better timber frame construction and has an eighteenth century extension at the south-western end. The original end of the house is quite clear both internally and externally and the three-unit plan discernible. Oakwood Farm presents the same plan, but has been cased in brick, probably in the eighteenth century, whilst Eveley Farm is superficially a nineteenth century structure with a slate roof, but of unmistakable plan and massive axial stack. Numerous examples of the same type occur in Selborne village, some of which are clearly timber-framed structures whilst others have Malmstone or brick facings. Lassams, much altered, is of this period although the stack has been moved, giving the superficial appearance of a house with cross-passage. Internal examination, however, reveals that the former stack (the bressumer remains) has been cleared to make way for a modern staircase. The close-studding in the lean-to at the southern end may be modern.

Plestor House (Figs. 7 and 13), where brick quoins and string-courses frame Malmstone walls of good quality, has the same plan, the now blocked-up doorway in front of the stack being visible from the Plestor. The date 1796 is undoubtedly that of an addition on the street side. Although alterations have been considerable, the basic plan is clear. The former door opened into a lobby in front of the chimney stack, probably originally balanced by a staircase on the opposite side. The house is, however, curiously short, perhaps constrained by a restricted site, there being apparently no service rooms. Either the left-hand room must have been divided, all evidence of such a division now having gone, or the service rooms were contained in an original outshut, formerly on the south side and now destroyed. The ceilings on both floors are high for a house of this type and would seem to anticipate the eighteenth century. Smoke-blackened common rafters survive in the roof suggesting that the present house was re-built on the site of a medieval hall, some timbers being re-used.

Grange Farm is a multi-period building, the southern end being an obvious later addition (Fig. 4). The axial stack extends northwards (Fig. 13) into an outshut that is probably an original feature intended to house service rooms and perhaps a dairy. The original rectangular house is of two units like Plestor House, a now blocked door leading into a lobby in front of the stack, the original staircase perhaps occupying the space between the stack and the timber-frame partition wall. A form of three-unit plan in which the third unit takes the form of an original outshut has been observed elsewhere in Hampshire and West Sussex (Coke and Lewis 1972). The roof has been several times altered and contains some smoke-blackened rafters. This again was probably a hall, re-built as a timber-frame house and re-built again, perhaps *circa* 1600, and widened, the extension with its 'Jacobean' staircase probably being added *circa* 1700. Grange Farm appears to have been the 'manor-house of the convent possessions' and White claims to have talked with old people 'who remembered the old original Grange' (White 1789, 424). This memory would go back *circa* 1700, a date that accords with plan, style and materials of the addition. Although in some respects difficult houses,

both Grange Farm and Plestor House are undoubtedly in the three-unit tradition.

Wheelwrights Cottage (Figs. 8 and 13), a stone house, is unmistakably of the three-unit type, a door until recently opening into a lobby in front of the stack. Here, as at the Old Thatch, the two staircases result from the conversion into labourers' cottages during the nineteenth century, that by the stack being the original. The door at the lower end of the hall suggests that the house may once have been of the cross-passage type. Of this, however, there is no proof, and the date 1697 is clearly that of the three-unit house with baffle entrance, the entrance lobby being balanced by a staircase on the other side of the stack. Trimmings (Fig. 5) and Deep Thatch, also in Gracious Street, are basically similar.

*Timber-framed dwellings not included above*

A large number of timber-frame cottages, of the two-room plan, survive. The quality of the timber-work varies considerably and some examples have exposed timber-frame in lean-to additions. As in Odiham, the timber tie-beam and gable appears in houses which are of eighteenth and even early nineteenth century date (Meirion-Jones 1971b). One curious cottage in Selborne Street is of good quality framing and appears to have been built as a two-storey house and yet has an end stack, one room appearing to be unheated. Several good quality timber-frame cottages survive in Oakhanger.



Fig. 11. Seal View, Gracious Street, Selborne.



*Early eighteenth century dwellings*

There are surprisingly few houses of this date. A pair of cottages on the south side of the Plestor are symmetrical, of coursed Malmstone blocks with brick quoins and retaining the timber-frame gable. These houses are little changed to the present and are important in supporting the view that Grimm's drawings are accurate. They must pre-date the drawings (1776), and are probably largely of early eighteenth century date, although detailed examination may yet reveal earlier features. The single storey cottage beyond, shown by Grimm, is now vanished. Part of Fisher's Buildings are also probably of this period. Two dwellings bear date-stones. Yew Tree Cottage in Selborne Street (Fig. 9) is a symmetrical building with a light timber-frame extension at the northern end, but there is nothing to suggest that the building was other than new-built in 1708, the date on the stone above the front door. Galley Hill Farm (Fig. 10) bearing a superficial resemblance to the three-unit type, is less symmetrical, the door being on the side away from the street. Nevertheless the internal plan is one of crude symmetry, marking a departure from the earlier three-unit form, and consistent with the date 1710 inscribed in the eastern gable.

*Late eighteenth century dwellings*

Seal View, in Gracious Street, is a pair of cottages, of coursed stone blocks with brick quoins and window dressings dated 1797, probably the date of first building and, as such, the earliest known semi-detached dwellings in the parish. At the higher end of the social scale, Norton Farm, although on the site of an earlier building (White 1789, 4), is a good example of a substantial late eighteenth century farmhouse. Most of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century cottages are stone built, usually, but not always, with brick quoins. Good quality coursed stonework is to be seen but there are in addition some houses built of random stone blocks, usually with better quality stone quoins. These may be later in date, representing a deterioration in masons' work as good freestone became scarcer. In 1789, White recorded good stone or brick cottages, glazed, having chambers above the stairs. He is emphatic that there were no mud buildings (*ibid.* 14) although this may not always have been so, for shortly after he came to Selborne in 1681, White's grandfather is recorded as having 'removed the hovels' in the front of the vicarage (*ibid.* 330), but whether these were of mud, or timber-framed is not known.

*Early nineteenth century dwellings*

A number of houses of this period are present in the village, in Oakhanger and in Shortheath. Slate roofing appears, and it is clear that much rebuilding is of nineteenth century date, mostly after 1842. Many dwellings recorded by the Tithe Survey at that date are now replaced by more recent structures, and of these nothing can be said beyond the fact that they were present in 1842. Malmstone continued to be used although the deterioration in the quality of the stone is noticeable. Symmetry is still present as at Weedcot in Gracious Street, a cottage which also displays gothic-type panelling in the door.

PROCEEDINGS FOR THE YEAR 1972

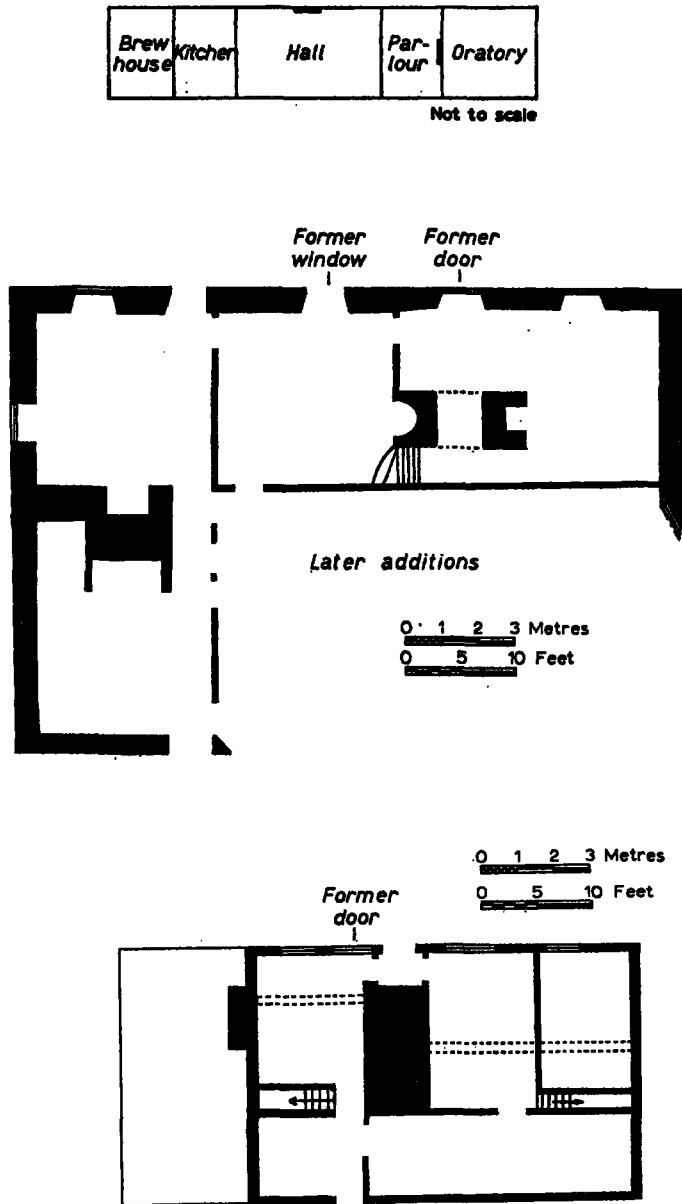


Fig. 12. Plans of Temple, Priory Farm and Thatched Cottage, Selborne, Hants.

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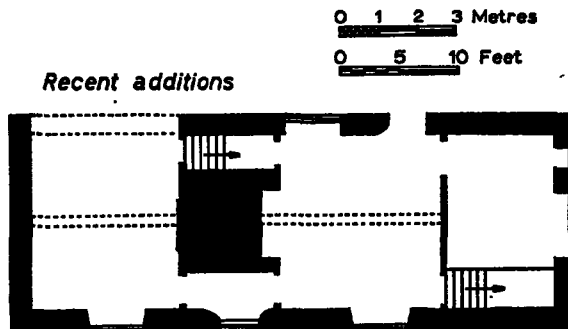
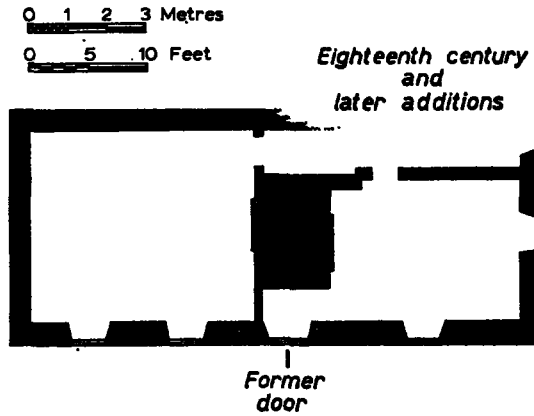
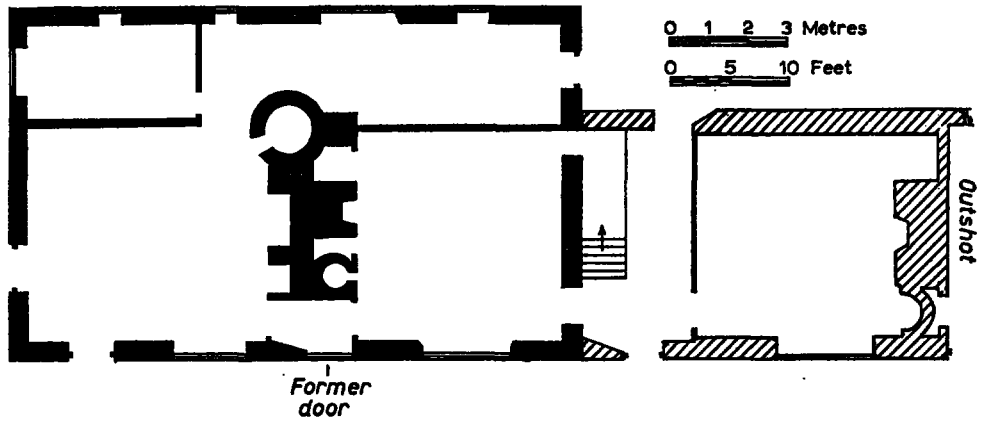


Fig. 13. Plans of Grange Farm, Plestor House and Wheelwrights Cottage, Selborne, Hants.

One considerable addition to the landscape was the building of Blackmoor House in the late nineteenth century. Designed by Waterhouse, and in most respects anything but vernacular, the house is built of random blocks of Malmstone with quoins of Bath stone, but it was not, however, entirely new, for part of it has a distinctly homespun look having been incorporated into the new building in 1871. This part was the house standing when the estate was acquired by the first Earl of Selborne in 1865. A surviving water-colour suggests that in spite of the eighteenth century overlay, the core is a much earlier yeoman house, probably of the three-unit type. This water-colour was executed by one of the daughters of the first Earl of Selborne, possibly Lady Sophia Palmer, and must have been painted within a year or so of the additions, perhaps in anticipation of them.

*House-type and settlement pattern*

The greatest concentration of dwellings in 1842 was that in the village, lying in an arc between the Common and the Malmstone bench (Figs. 1 and 2). Of these buildings, 27 were present in 1842 and have since been demolished, mostly to be replaced by more recent structures. Ten houses are of early nineteenth century date, whilst seven each belong to the first and second halves of the eighteenth century. Ten smaller, and 13 substantial, timber-frame and Malmstone houses survive, mostly of the type with baffle entry. North and east of the village, the remains of common field, still obvious in 1842, placed a constraint on settlement, it being axiomatic that dwellings were excluded from such areas until the common field system began to decay. It is beyond the former field that the first outlying farms are found; Fielders, Norton, Wick Hill, Priory, Temple and Southerington are clearly associated with irregular field boundaries and woodland remnants. Some of these sites are of high antiquity, others may date from the period of medieval assarting from the waste, although it is unlikely that the present dwellings were the earliest to stand on their respective sites. This whole belt of settlement follows closely the line of the Malmstone escarpment and includes several substantial buildings, in addition to a number of smaller and later ones. Three of these are timber frame buildings with cross-passage, whilst Temple was a medieval hall. Two are of late eighteenth century date, one of early eighteenth century date, and five known only to have been pre-1842.

The Gault was cleared and settled late and it is quite possible that the timber-frame buildings surviving on this formation were the first buildings to occupy their sites. The belt of settlement along the junction of the Gault and Folkestone Beds, from Oakhanger in the north to Temple Down in the south, is scarcely constrained by the small areas of common field, and here the most characteristic feature is the large number of dwellings along the edge of Woolmer Forest, often small and of poor build, being found in association with small plats which clearly represent squatter settlement on the waste. Some 30 houses present in 1842 no longer stand, these being largely associated with small plats, and if surviving buildings on such sites are any guide, most were undoubtedly of poor construction. Nevertheless, seven substantial buildings survive, three with cross-passage and four with baffle entry.

Houses of all types and periods are found in Selborne village, in the small nucleations and on dispersed sites. Nevertheless, the most marked concentration of large

houses lies in Selborne village, and the greatest number of poor buildings is found in association with the forest edge. The dispersed sites show a wide range of quality and type and many are occupied by substantial yeoman farmhouses.

### *Conclusions*

The surviving dwellings of the parish show a wide range of size, date and quality. Plain of detail and difficult to date though they are, they indicate the former existence of a substantial farming community. Of the 92 dwellings recorded in the parish in 1665, 41 (44.5 per cent) survived to 1967 (Meirion-Jones, 1971a). In addition many houses of eighteenth and early nineteenth century date survive, sufficient to permit some generalisation.

Hoskins (1965) first described the activity of 1560–1640 as ‘the Great Rebuilding’, his work being supported by that of M. W. Barley (1961). In the light of the survey of Selborne buildings, it must now be asked whether the term itself is suitable and whether the period 1560 (or 1570) to 1640 is applicable to this parish. The most substantial type of dwelling before *circa* 1700 was undoubtedly that with a three-unit plan, both with and without cross-passage, although the largest houses may have been of more elaborate plan. The variety of surviving timber frame dwellings in Selborne is less than elsewhere in north-east Hampshire, few having a structural cross-wing, the most common type lying under a unitary hipped or half-hipped roof. This three-unit plan was found in the earliest recorded type of house as at the Vicarage and Dorton where the open hall was flanked by two-storeyed wings. The type with cross-passage is the subject of two principal variations, for the position of the stack may be axial, heating hall and parlour or it may heat the hall only, either by being placed laterally, or axially, backing onto the cross-passage. On general grounds, an upper terminal date of 1600 may be suggested for the cross-passage type for the feature persisted in new-built houses. Seven such houses have been identified, but the form had been giving way gradually, perhaps over 50 years or so, to the house in which the door gave access to a lobby in front of the stack, in both timber and stone-built versions. This latter form is widespread in the area, and although later alterations have often tended to disguise the original plan, there is no doubt that it is the most common single type surviving from the seventeenth century, and represents the ultimate development in the evolution of vernacular building. The type is shown to be capable of less variation than earlier types, for the object of this development was to achieve a rationalisation of access and accommodation, the position of the stack therefore being fixed relative to that of the door and staircase. Stone houses of this type are almost certainly generally later than timber houses. Plestor House, Wheelwrights Cottage and Trimmings are all remarkably similar, in spite of the lack of obvious service rooms at Plestor House. The high ceilings here seem to anticipate the eighteenth century, and a late seventeenth century date has been suggested for the building. There is thus a group of stone-built, three-unit yeoman type houses with baffle entrance, showing that the type persisted into the late seventeenth century, an observation further supported by the presence of Hammonds in the nearby parish of West Worldham, a massive stone house dated 1652. Although stone, probably ‘quarried’ from the Priory, had been known in domestic buildings in earlier centuries, the wider use of building stone probably dates only from

the seventeenth century. These houses almost certainly mark a transition from timber frame building to the stone buildings of the eighteenth century, the change in building materials deferring the onset of the symmetrical Renaissance forms. Confirmation of a change to symmetry about 1700 is to be found in two dated examples, Galley Hill Farm in 1710, and Yew Tree Cottage 1708. Thereafter, Renaissance forms were universal, buildings having a central door, the plan being either of the two or four-room type. The one and two-roomed cottages must be seen as parallel developments at the lower end of the social scale to the larger dwellings occupied by substantial yeomen.

The upper terminal date for the 'Great Rebuilding' suggested by Hoskins would thus seem inappropriate in this parish. Casual observations throughout the stone belt of the Hampshire Weald indicate that the terminal date of 1700 for the baffle entry type of dwelling is generally true, but insufficient evidence is available for the lower terminal date. The term 'Great Rebuilding' is, however, open to more serious objections. The building activity so described marked an important step forward from the open medieval hall, but it remains true that the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were also periods of great rebuilding. New houses and cottages were built, timber frame structures fronted, sometimes wholly encased, in brick. Window openings were glazed for the first time, sash windows inserted to replace earlier casements, chimney stacks built to serve formerly unheated rooms and additional wings constructed to existing houses. Periods other than that defined by Hoskins and Barley were times of rebuilding and there can be little justification for retaining the term for one of several such periods.

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P.R.O. Public Record Office, London.

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