

Lyddington Manor History Society
Historic Building Survey

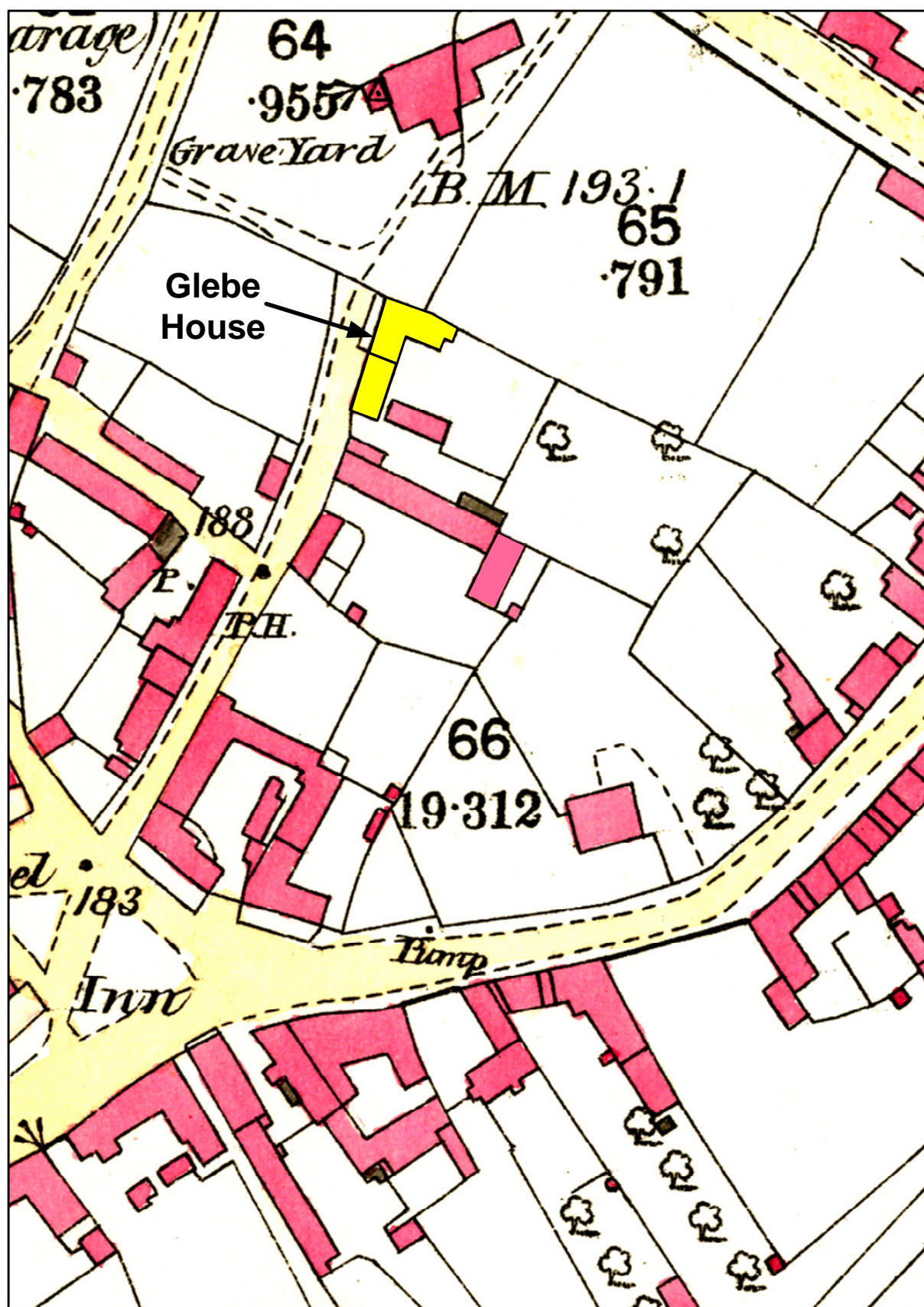
Glebe House
1 Church Close
Caldecott, Rutland



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Location Map – Glebe House, 1 Church Close, Caldecott
(OS First Edition 1886)

HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY REPORT

GLEBE HOUSE, 1 CHURCH CLOSE, CALDECOTT

Survey

Date of survey: 7th July & 9th November 2012

Surveyed by: Robert Ovens/Nick Hill

Summary

Standing at the end of Church Close, next to the churchyard, this L-shaped house was built in a single phase in 1729, as indicated by a date-stone. The copyhold was purchased by John Brown the elder in 1727. He demolished the previous house on the plot and erected the current building for his son John, who occupied it on completion, and brought his new wife here in 1733. The house was set in the north-west corner of a substantial plot, with a farmyard to the rear.

The front block of the house contained a hall and parlour, with a kitchen in the single-storey rear wing. A central stair led up to two unheated bedrooms on the first floor, and attic rooms above. The house now appears to have a standard symmetrical frontage, with central doorway leading into the staircase hall. However, the 1729 house had an offset front doorway, leading into the north room (the hall), and only indirectly to the central stair – an interesting transitional plan form. The date-stone remains in its original location, over the blocked front door. The stonemasonry of the house is quite sophisticated, with three original elegantly moulded chimneystacks, though the A-frame roof structure is relatively crude. A large farm building was added against the south end of the house in the late 18th century, replacing earlier outbuildings on the plot. A first floor was added to the rear wing in the later 19th century. The name ‘Glebe House’ is of relatively recent origin, and the property has no connection to the church or vicar. Samples were taken for tree-ring dating in 2013, but the timbers failed to date.

Site

OS Ref: SP867936

Orientation: For report purposes, the street frontage is taken as facing W.

The house is set with its west front adjoining Church Close, and the north side immediately abutting the churchyard. The front is set back a short distance from the cul-de-sac of Church Close. The kinked N wall follows the line of the churchyard boundary. A converted outbuilding abuts the house on the S side, with a large rectangular plot behind.

Materials

Very neatly dressed and squared ironstone walling, with dressings generally of ironstone, except for limestone to the gable corbels and the chimneystacks. Roofs are

now of Welsh slate, but the house roof was originally of thatch, as seen on a drawing of c1838-9.¹

External features

The front block is of two storeys with chimneystacks at each gable end. The W front has walling of finely coursed ironstone and a chamfered ashlar plinth. The front is now symmetrically arranged, with a central doorway, sash windows on ground and first floor to either side, and a smaller window set over the door. However, joint lines indicate that the doorway was originally set off-centre to the left, as shown on the drawing of c1838-9. A faint line from the roof of a former porch (also on the 1838-9 drawing) can be seen, and 'closer' bricks in the front boundary wall also indicate a previous gateway, aligned with the original front door. Set centrally over the original doorway position is a date-stone of 1729, of limestone with the numerals set within a diamond-set square, with no initials. The date-stone courses in exactly with the stonework, which all appears undisturbed. It is also shown on the 1838-9 drawing, and seems to be original to the building. The five window openings have plain, unchamfered lintels of a single piece of brownstone, of quite shallow height, and limestone cills. The doorway lintel is also of brownstone, but deeper, and has incised grooves for false voussoirs; it is presumably re-set from the original doorway. As the porch shown on the 1838-9 drawing would have concealed the false voussoirs, the porch was probably a later addition. The windows are of late 19th century sash type, with 2/2 lights, though the 1838-9 drawing shows casements or sashes, with smaller panes.

The N gable end of the front block has finely dressed ironstone walling with a chamfered ashlar plinth, as to the W front. There are good brownstone quoins to the N, but no quoins to the ground floor stage at the junction to the rear wing, though there are brownstone quoins at first floor level. Gable parapet with limestone ogee-moulded corbel of distinctive pattern, kneeler and copings. Single-flue chimneystack with cornice of cyma and corona moulding; pulvinated frieze; square architrave; main shaft of four ashlar slabs; chamfered plinth. First floor window with plain brownstone lintel as to the W front, though the attic window has a plain chamfer (but square jambs).

The N wall continues on into the rear wing. The masonry shows this was single storey originally, later extended upwards in different coursed ironstone. But the rear wing at ground floor is integral with the front block: the chamfered plinth continues across, there is no straight joint, and the kinked angle of the junction has several stones which bridge across both sides, with angled faces cut to suit. Narrow ground floor window with plain Weldon type limestone lintel. First floor window has a brownstone lintel with central keystone, unlike the original windows.

The S gable of the front block is now largely blocked by the added outbuilding. The top part has a gable parapet with moulded kneelers of the same pattern as those to the N gable, and an identical single-flue stack. A plain brownstone lintel for an attic

¹ Drawing reproduced in *Rutland Churches before Restoration*, p.36 (ed G Dickinson, Barrowden Books, 1983).

window, now blocked by the outbuilding, is visible. Brownstone quoins to both the SW and SE show that the outbuilding is a later addition.

The W front of the outbuilding is of very similar well-coursed ironstone as the W front of the house. It also has the same type of chamfered ironstone plinth. At the abutment, the outbuilding wall is set about 25mm back from the house wall. The central opening to the ground floor was originally a doorway, blocked in 1987, with the plinth also built up here. The lintel over the former doorway is of brownstone, fairly shallow in height, the same as the lintels to the house. Photos of 1986 show that the ground floor and first floor windows to the N are insertions of 1987, as also may be the central first floor window.

The S gable of the outbuilding has only a slightly projecting (c20mm) plinth of coursed rubble. The ground floor window to the E was formerly much wider, as shown on pre-1987 photos. The brick chimneystack (like the inglenook fireplace inside) is an addition of 1987. The E wall of the outbuilding has the same coursed ironstone, and a 20mm projecting rubble plinth. Pre-1987 photos show that there was a central doorway (of standard width), with window openings to S and N on the ground floor, and a single window to the S on the first floor. All the openings were altered in 1987, together with the addition of a triangular projecting bay.

The E side of the front block has similar finely dressed ironstone walling as elsewhere, but the plinth here is of roughly squared rubble stone, projecting 60mm. Two main windows, one to ground and one to first floor placed above, with plain brownstone lintels and cills of Ketton limestone; sash windows. To the right, in the corner where the rear wing abuts, are two narrow windows on ground and first floor. In the corner, a short piece of wall at a 45° angle links the front block to the rear wing; this has a sloping top set well below the current roof line of the rear wing. Some of the stones to the left side of this section have the 45° angle cut from a single block, showing this is an original feature. At lower level, there was a window opening with a plain limestone lintel (as to the N side), now blocked with much later ironstone facing.

The S side of the rear wing is partly obscured by planting. It has coursed ironstone walling, the 60mm rubble plinth continuing from the main block, around the 45° link wall and along the S face. The back door has a good brownstone lintel, as do the ground and first floor windows.

The E gable of the rear wing has the ground floor blocked by a recent extension, though photographs of this area of walling before the extension were inspected. The rear wing roof is set rather below the level of the front block roof. The gable had a rough, squared plinth and well-coursed ironstone, with brownstone quoins to full height. No evidence for the raising of the gable can be seen externally, so it must have been carefully re-faced during this work. The gable has moulded corbels, kneelers, copings and a single-flue stack, all identical to the other two gables. As the N wall shows the wall has been raised, the gable masonry and the chimneystack must have been re-set at a higher level.

Internal features

Ground floor

The front doorway now leads into the central entrance hall, with the staircase. To the S is the parlour, separated from the stair by an oak stud partition. Splayed, smaller-size fireplace and chimneybreast set in the SW corner; roughly dressed ironstone, with a flat lintel of roughly shaped stone voussoirs. Fixing holes indicate that this masonry was originally covered by a chimneypiece, of timber or higher quality stone. Transverse ceiling beam with chamfers and decorative stops: a shallow raised section of truncated pyramid shape, half-round bar; and fairly long run-out stop. This chamfer stop detail is found to both ends of the two ground floor beams and the two first floor beams in the front block.

The room at the N end of the front block would have been the hall of the original house. Large ingle fireplace with slender stone 'heck' wall (incorporating a timber plate); plain unchamfered oak bressumer; stonework to back has two salt/spice cupboard recesses, with oak casings; left side has a shaped recess for a former oven or flue. Transverse ceiling beam with decorative chamfer stops. The location of the blocked former front entrance door here now has a shallow cupboard.

The kitchen in the rear wing has another large stone fireplace, with oak lintel. This lintel has a small, rough chamfer without stops, so may be re-used. The lintel has several burn marks and some possible graffiti of scratched straight lines. To the left, a bake oven of ironstone was found during alterations of 1987. A stud partition divides the rear wing from the front block: plain, often rather thin, oak studs fixed to a top plate; some original mud infill was found during works in 1987. The beam from the front block protrudes into the kitchen, with a cut-off end. The beam is supported on a larger post in the partition. At the SW corner, the wall cuts back at 45° at the junction of the rear wing with the front block, with a tall, narrow cupboard recessed into the wall, with splayed reveals inside from the former window here. Two modern transverse beams to the ceiling replace two earlier beams. The W one was set below ceiling level, forming a partition. To the W, the oak ceiling joists are c50mm wide by 75mm deep, but the centre and E sections have older-looking joists, c90mm wide by 75mm deep. The doorway in the E gable leading to the modern conservatory is an insertion of 1987, as shown on earlier photos.

The interior of the outbuilding was fully re-worked in 1987. There was formerly a well inside the central E doorway, constructed of brick rather than stone, circular and quite deep. In the NW corner there was some sort of hearth for a forge; the chimneystack for this, apparently with a very tall chimneypot, can be seen on pre-1987 aerial photos. Examination of these photos suggests this stack was an addition, not an original feature.

Wall thicknesses to ground floor: front block of the house W and E walls are 570mm thick, as are the W and E walls of the outbuilding. The rear wing has N and S walls of 480mm thickness, with the E gable 630mm thick. No doubt the rear wing walls are less thick because this was originally only single-storeyed.

First floor

Oak winder stairs lead up to the first floor and continue on up to the attic. Part of the underside of the stairs is visible at ground floor level; it is built of oak, with bearers supporting the winder treads, fixed with hand-made nails. There is a plain, square oak newel, with a pegged tenon scarf joint visible just below first floor level. Beams running W-E across the full width of the house define the stairwell compartment.

On the first floor landing a modern cupboard re-uses two bedroom doors: of 2-panel type, pine, with raised and fielded panels, plain to rear face – perhaps of 1729. The S bedroom has a transverse beam, with the same type of decorative chamfer stops. To the SW corner, the former chimney flue from the ground floor has been removed to allow insertion of a doorway linking into the former outbuilding. The N bedroom of the front block has another transverse beam with decorative chamfer stops and a big, stepped chimneybreast from the ingle fireplace below. At the junction of the front block and rear wing is a cased oak beam, with another tall, narrow cupboard worked into the junction of the two ranges. The bedroom in the rear wing has a big, stepped chimneybreast and a softwood tie-beam for the late 19th century roof truss above. During the 1987 works, the floor here was found to be of plaster.

The first floor of the outbuilding has no visible historic features other than the roof (see below).

Attic and roof structure

At the top of the stairs, no original newel or balustrade survives. Flooring re-worked, but with original oak boards. Two trusses of rather crude timbers: principal rafters, lapped collar of irregular shape, scissors apex. Both trusses are of A-frame type, without tie-beams (the first floor ceiling beams being set at different spacings). The S truss (T2) has chisel-cut carpenter's marks 'T' to both principal rafters at the apex; no marks visible to truss T1. Joints are crudely lapped and pegged. The collars have an upstand piece at their outer top end, an unusual detail. Both collars have a matching, irregularly curved shape, and are probably halved from a single timber. The principal rafters of truss T1 seem to be re-used, as they have a lap joint and pegs for an earlier collar, set a little lower than the current collar, and without the upstand piece joint detail. Single purlins sit on the backs of the principals, with pegged, straight-splayed scarf joints. The NW purlin is of re-used timber, as it has three large diameter holes drilled right through it – purpose unknown. The ridge is of oak, square-set. No evidence visible of original rafters, as the roof has been overlaid with later pine rafters. No evidence for any original subdivision. Recess for blocked original window to S gable.

Over the rear wing, the roof void (not a useable attic floor) has a softwood roof with central truss: king-post with jowled head and foot, bolted to tie beam with captive nut; struts; ridge board; rafters. This roof joins into the over-roofing of the front block, and is probably of late 19th century date. At the E gable end, the original stone chimneybreast and gable wall can be seen, the gable stepped slightly forward from the later walling above. The original masonry is of ironstone bedded in clay mortar; the gable end raising of different ironstone, bedded in lime mortar.

The attached outbuilding roof has two trusses: of oak, straight tie-beams and irregular S-shaped collars crudely lapped to principal rafters. The joints have large, round-head bolts with large, square, threaded nuts, and also a large-head nail. The apex joint is of bridled form, fixed here with an oak peg, not an iron bolt. Staggered purlins are set simply on the backs of the principal rafters. In the roof void, it can be seen that quite a number of original oak rafters (c75 x 50mm) survive, fixed to a narrow ridge board. The blocked window to the S gable of the house is also visible.

Site history

The 1800 enclosure map shows the L-shaped building, complete with the outbuilding to the S of the house. A large rectangular plot stretches to the SE, with no other outbuildings in the yard at this stage, though the location of the house, set tightly into the NW corner, suggests the area was in use as a farmyard. By the time of the 1886 OS map, three further outbuildings have been added to the S side of the yard, and it appears that an orchard has been planted in the SE part of the plot.

A black and white aerial photo of around mid-20th century date shows the main outbuilding, set quite close against the SE corner of the current house. It was of a single storey, stone-built, with doorway or window openings of normal width and a hipped, thatched roof. Abutting this to the E was another single-storey outbuilding with a low-pitched roof. A colour aerial photo, probably dating shortly before the alterations of 1987, shows the main outbuilding with a flat roof of corrugated iron, a central 2-part stable door set between two good-sized windows, with a small window to W and E. The eastern outbuilding has a flat roof and probably walls of rusty corrugated iron. These outbuildings have subsequently been replaced by the current brick-built garage. The 1886 map also shows a small projection to the E gable of the house rear wing, recognisable as a brick-built privy on the pre-1987 aerial photos.

Tree-ring dating

Tree-ring dating samples were taken from the main house and the attached outbuilding roof in 2013 by Robert Howard of Nottingham Tree-ring Dating Laboratory, but have so far failed to date.

Date and development

Analysis indicates that the whole of the front block of the main house, together with the rear wing, were built in a single phase of construction, presumably in 1729. The structure of the front block, with its stonemasonry details and window openings are consistent with this date. The front block has been carefully designed with two main rooms set either side of a central stairway compartment. The W-E floor beams at first and second floor level are laid out in a regular pattern, with major beams placed at the centre-span of each of the main rooms, and beams set either side of the stair compartment. The floor joists all run N-S, to suit these beam spacings. The rear wing is also designed as an integral part of the 1729 build. The stonemasonry details are consistent throughout, with no building break at the kink of the N wall. If the rear

wing was a later addition, one would expect the NE wall of the front block to have been of full-thickness masonry. Instead, it is a slender partition of oak studs, to both ground and first floor – an internal partition which was enclosed by the original, single-storeyed roof of the rear wing. The only detail inconsistent with the 1729 date is the pattern of chamfer stops to the four ceiling beams, for which one would expect a 17th century date, rather than early 18th century. It seems the older style of stops was still in use, unless these beams are re-used from the previous house on the site (like the principal rafters of truss T1, with earlier lap joints).

The plan form of this house is unusual and of considerable interest. The front block now appears to be a typical fully-developed double-fronted house with a central hallway/stair, and a room set symmetrically to either side. However, as originally built, the front door was offset to the N and the entry was into the N room, instead of the central hall/stair compartment. The 1729 date-stone was carefully set directly over the original, offset front door. In place of the current front door, there might have been a small window to light the hall/stair, though if so this is concealed by vegetation on the 1838/9 drawing. The N room, with its large ingle fireplace, would have been the ‘hall’ of the 1729 house, functioning as the main living room. The S room, with its smaller, corner fireplace, would have been the parlour. In the rear wing, with another larger fireplace and bake-oven, was the kitchen. It seems likely that the W end of this area was partitioned off from the main kitchen, with a passageway to the S and a pantry or similar room to the N, the space being lit at either end by small windows. The ground floor ceiling beam, which protrudes into the W end of the kitchen, would originally have extended up to the N-S partition, but was later cut off, when the first floor was added above. It seems that the reason for the offset front doorway is that entry into one end of the hall, with a connecting ‘cross-passage’ type route leading to the rear, was more important than a symmetrical front elevation or centralised circulation. This house thus seems to present a remarkable case where a central stairs hall is created but the front doorway and circulation route still passes through the old-fashioned ‘hall’ room.

On the first floor, the central stair compartment provided independent access to the two original bedrooms (the bedroom over the rear wing being an addition of the later 19th century). Interestingly, neither of the bedrooms had its own fireplace; despite the very fashionable design of the chimneystacks, they all had only a single flue. The staircase continued on upwards to serve the attic; although this was fully floored and was lit by windows in both gables, it was undivided and probably used only for storage.

Some time before the time of the 1800 enclosure map, the large outbuilding was added to the south end of the house – probably in the late 18th century. Its original use is unclear, and may have been multi-functional, as it lacks the large opposed threshing doors of a typical barn. Around 1850-1880, a first floor was added to the rear wing of the house, with the original chimneystack carefully re-set at a higher level, and a new king-post softwood roof. This was probably also the time when the front doorway was re-set, to enter into the central staircase hallway. Sash windows were fitted to the house, and the thatched roof was replaced with Welsh slate.

The history of the property has been investigated in the manorial court rolls. The house plot can be identified with certainty, as it is described as a ‘Messuage or house

in Caldecott situated near the Church Stile'. The earliest such reference is in 1688, when the copyhold passed from Robert Woodcock to his wife, Bridget. The Woodcock family appear to have held the plot from the earlier 17th century, and possibly before. In April 1727 the copyhold passed from Thomas Woodcock (occupier) to John Brown, when it was described as a 'Messuage or tenement situated near the Church Stile formerly in the possession of William Green with barns stables yard orchard and garden', and a rent of 1s. In October 1733 the copyhold passed from 'John Brown the elder' to 'John Brown the younger and Elizabeth his wife', described as a 'Messuage or House situate in Caldecot lately purchased of Thomas Woodcock with appurtenances', with rent of 1s and John Brown the younger as occupier.

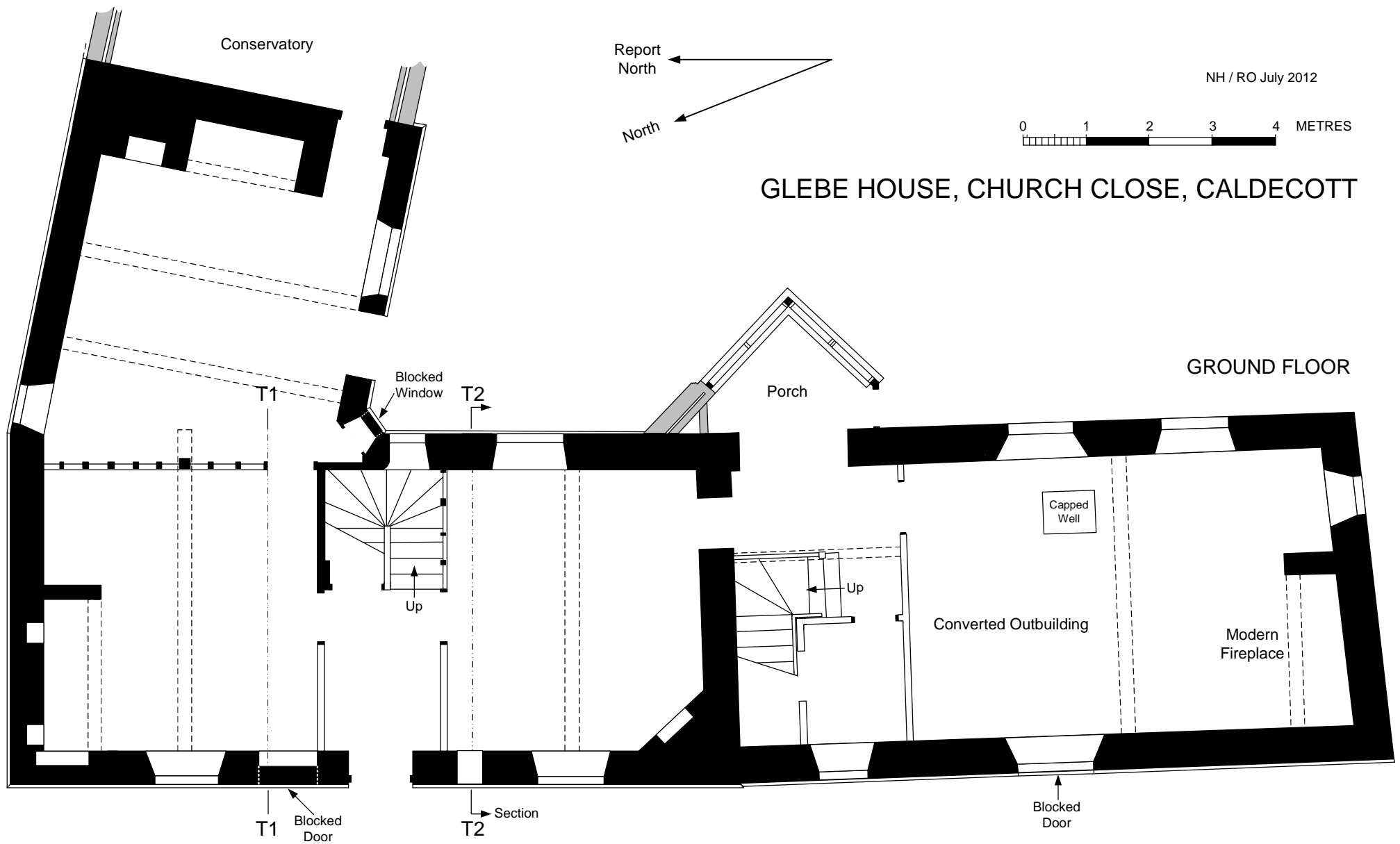
Evidently, the copyhold was purchased by John Brown the elder in 1727, and he then proceeded to demolish completely the previous house (and perhaps the farm buildings), and erect the new house, which he completed in 1729, as the date-stone states. Nothing of the previous house survives, except probably the re-used principal rafters of the roof truss (and perhaps the floor beams). It may have stood in the same location beside the street frontage, or elsewhere on the plot. It is interesting to note that, despite the major investment made by John Brown, the copyhold rent remained at the same figure of 1s. John the elder built it for his son John the younger, who presumably moved in after the new house was completed. Soon after the transfer of copyhold from father to son, in July 1733, John the younger married Elizabeth Brightman in Lyddington church (from the parish registers). This sequence of events may help to explain why there are no initials on the date-stone – John Brown was still single when the house was built for him, so it was not possible to include the normal initials for husband and wife.

Further research is needed to establish more information about John Browne the elder and younger. In the 1712 Land Tax, a John Browne senior was assessed at 15s 3d per quarter for lands in Caldecott (10th highest), and a John Browne junior for 3d (5th = lowest). A John Brown millwright was buried at Caldecott in 1748 and John Browne junior, millwright, in 1745. It is not clear if these are the same John Browns who held Glebe House.

By 1767, John Brown the younger was dead, and his widow Elizabeth passed the copyhold to their two daughters, Sarah and Elizabeth and their husbands. This may have been the time at which occupation by the Brown family ceased. Henceforward, the copyhold owners of the property sublet it to other occupiers. In 1801, the copyhold passed from Elizabeth Hodgkin (née Brown) to her son William, described as A 'Messuage or Hose situate against the Church Stile in Caldecot with barns stables dovehouses and gardens formerly Woodcocks', still at a rent of 1s and with William Essam as occupier. The property can now be matched with the Enclosure Map of 1800, which shows that all such outbuildings (including any 'dovehouses' must have been contained in the existing range attached to the south gable of the house, as no other buildings are shown on the map.

The name 'Glebe House' is of late date. Despite its location beside the churchyard, there is no evidence that it was ever held as glebe land by the church, or occupied by the incumbent.

Nick Hill
December 2013



Conservatory

Report
North

North

NH / RO July 2012

0 1 2 3 4 METRES

GLEBE HOUSE, CHURCH CLOSE, CALDECOTT

FIRST FLOOR

Porch

T2

T1

Down

Up

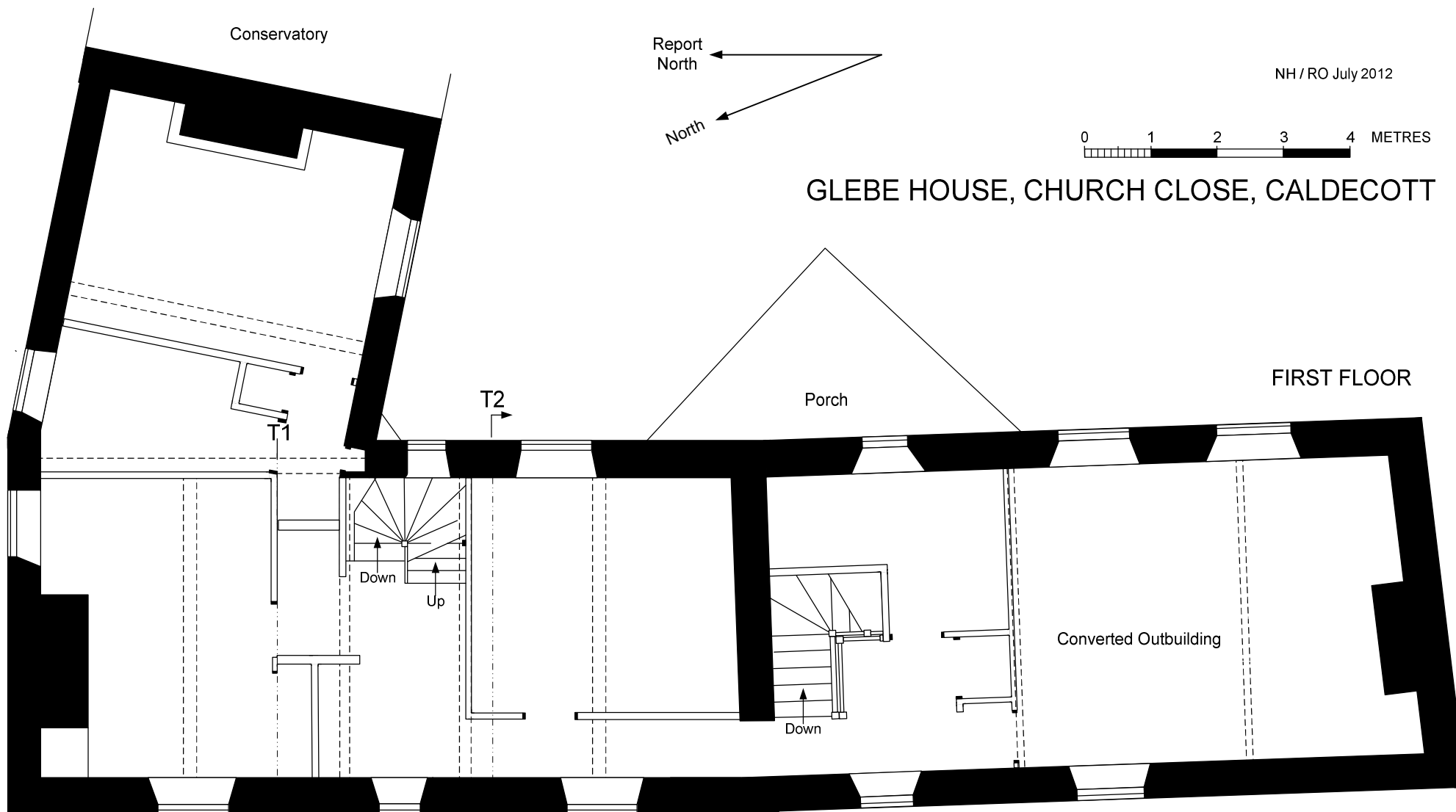
Down

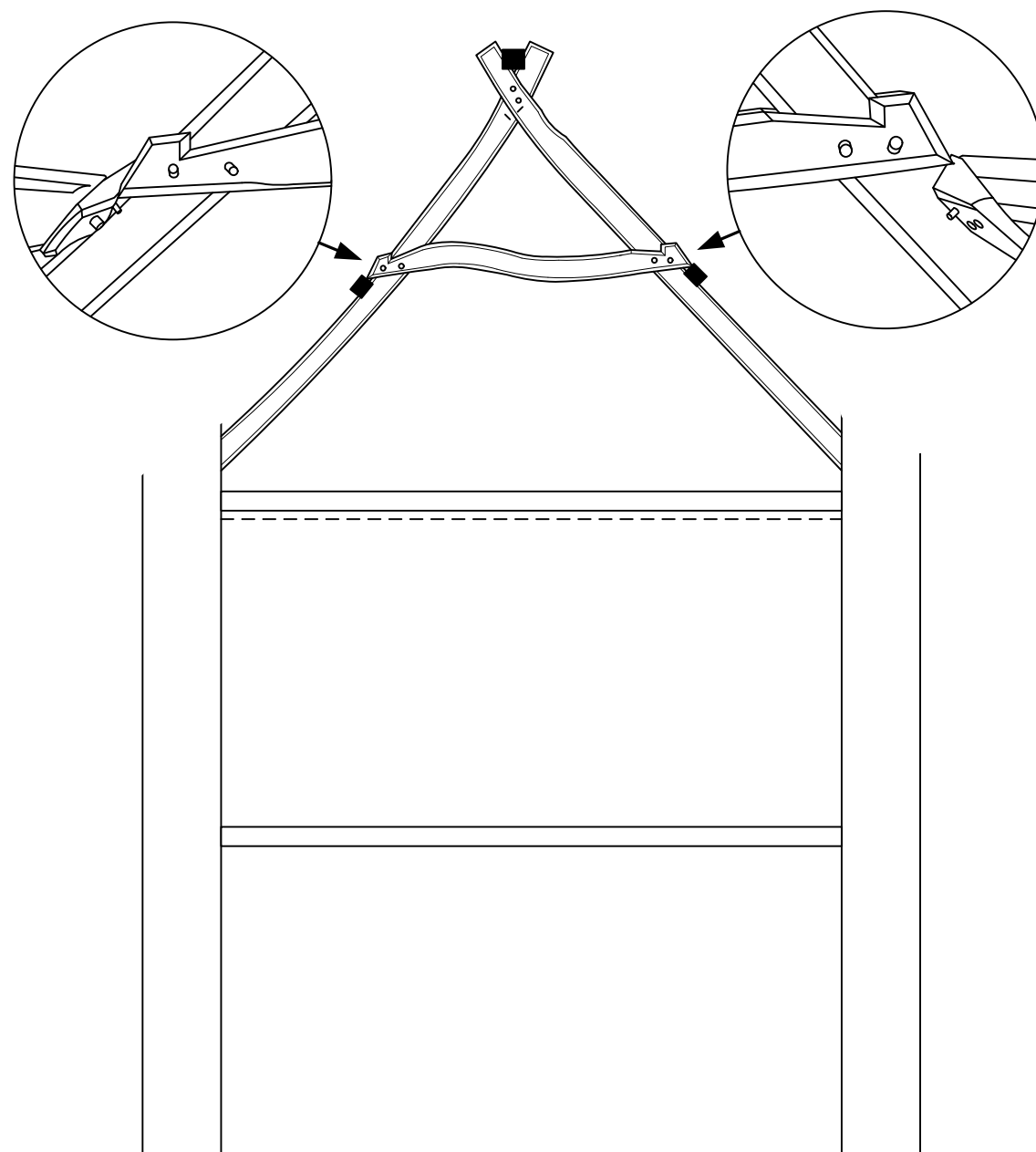
Converted Outbuilding

T1

T2

Section





Section – Truss T2 North Face

GLEBE HOUSE, CHURCH CLOSE, CALDECOTT



NH / RO July 2012



View from the south-west



The west front



The date-stone



Chimneystack with moulded
capping, to south gable



Moulded corbel and kneeler to north gable



The rear east wing, with added first floor – note straight joint beside downpipe



The house and outbuilding from the east



The rear of the house, with two-storey wing



The south room (parlour) of the front block, with corner fireplace



Chamfer stop to ceiling beam



The kitchen of the rear wing, looking west to the timber stud partition



Roof truss of the 18th century outbuilding



Truss T2, north face



View of c.1900



Earlier aerial view from south-east, with thatched outbuilding to yard



Later aerial view

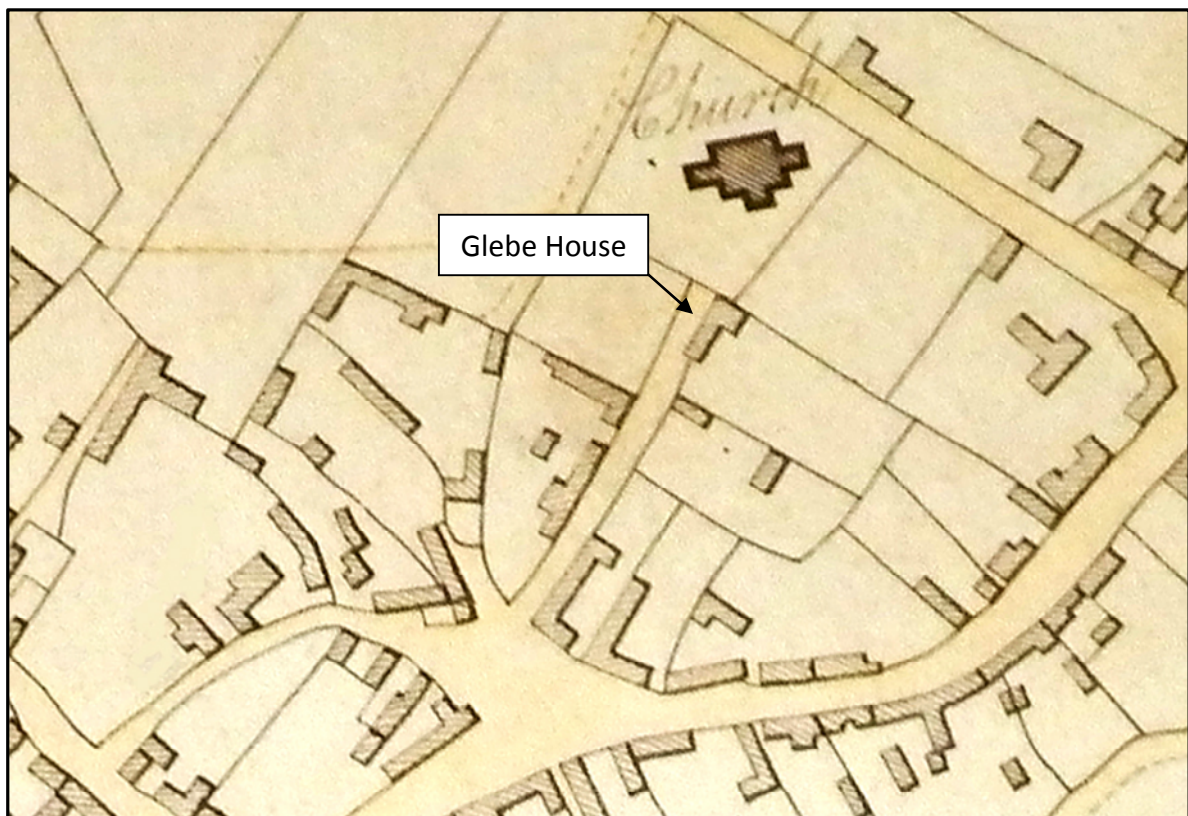


Drawing of c.1838-9, showing front door in original location

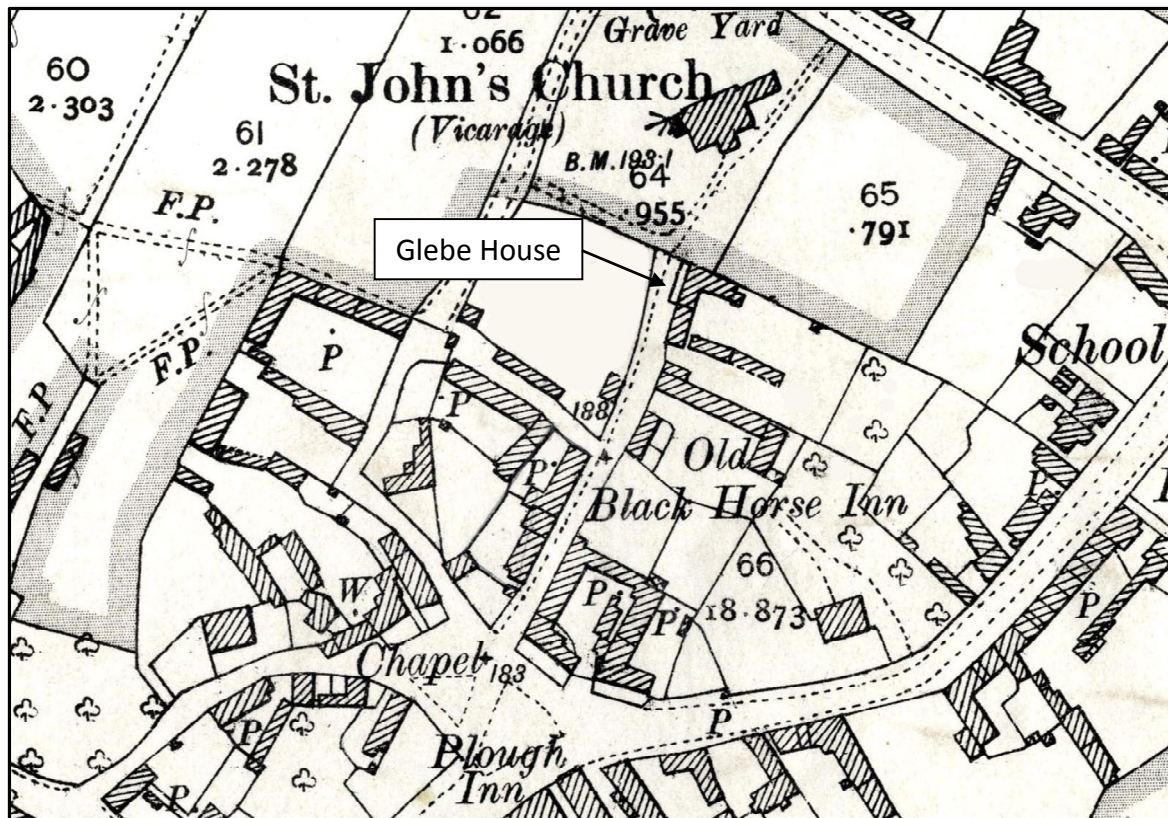
From *Rutland Churches before Restoration*, p.36 (ed. G. Dickinson, Barrowden Books, 1983)



Caldecott Enclosure Map - 1800



Caldecott Tithe Map - 1850



Caldecott – OS Second Edition 1904