

**Lyddington Manor History Society
Historic Building Survey**

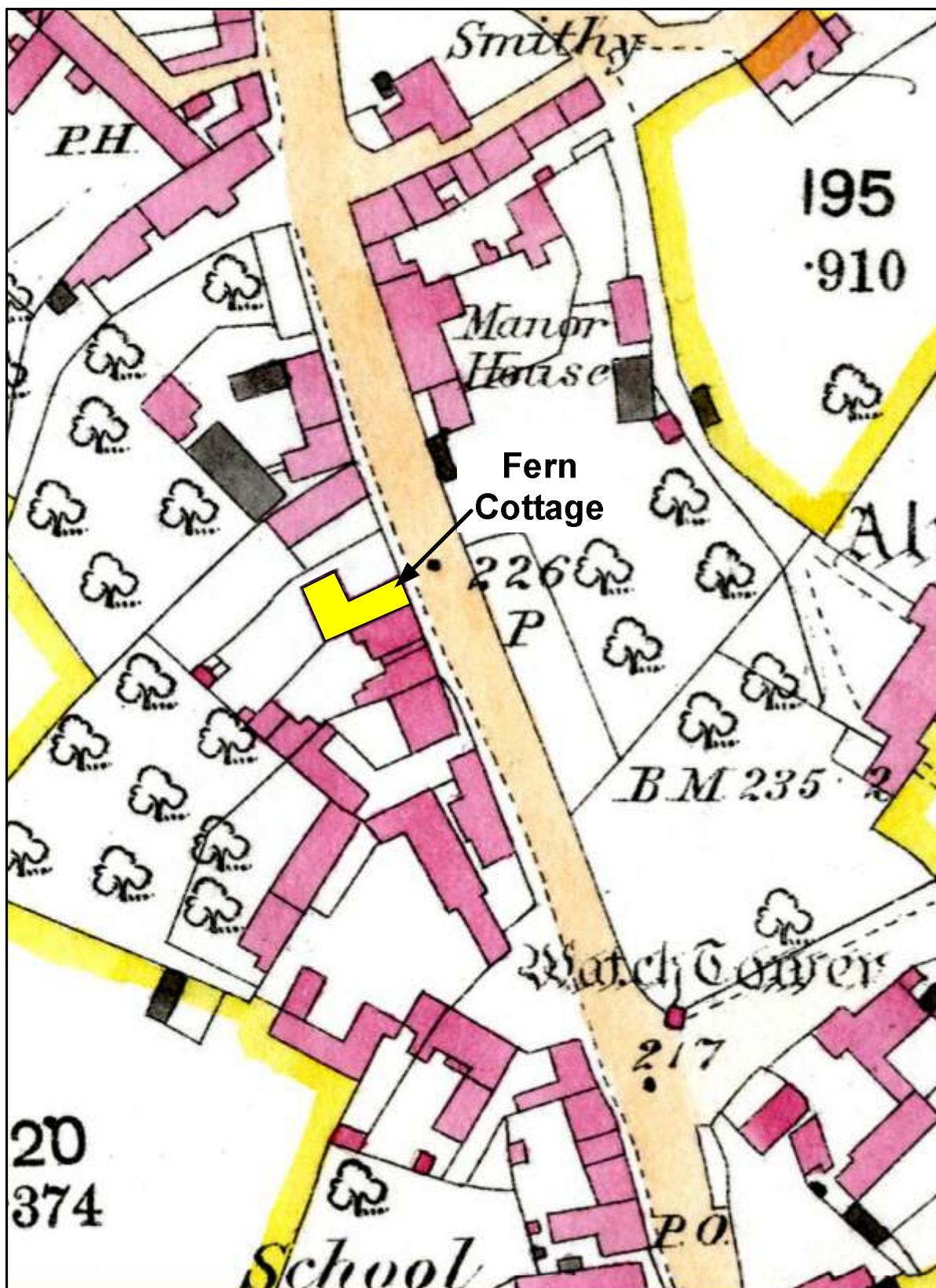
**Fern Cottage, 43 Main St
Lyddington, Rutland**



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Location Map - Fern Cottage, 43 Main Street, Lyddington
Ordnance Survey 1st Series 1886

HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY REPORT

FERN COTTAGE, 43 MAIN ST, LYDDINGTON

Survey

Date of survey: 10th March 2012
Surveyed by: Nick Hill/Robert Ovens

Summary

Although it contains several anomalies and various features of older appearance, the main block of this house, set well back from the street, was a new build of the earlier 19th century. The building incorporates an unusual traceried window of alabaster and some fine re-set Jacobean panelling. The projecting front wing was previously a small separate house, but was absorbed as part of the main house in the earlier 19th century. An adjoining pair of houses to the south was demolished in the mid-20th century, and the space was taken over as the garden of No 43. The whole building was much altered in the 1950s, with further works carried out in 2012-13, after this survey was undertaken.

Site

OS Ref: SP875970

Orientation: The front wing projects forward, with its gable end to the street facing E. The L-shaped building is shown on the 1886 OS map with a house abutting the S wall, now lost. The boundary wall line running SW from the SW corner is now a line of stone footings at ground level, as the current plot includes both former houses to the S.

Materials

Walling of coursed ironstone rubble with dressings of ironstone and brownstone.
Clay tile roofs.

External features

The front wing N elevation has an ashlar brown/purple stone band at first floor height, and another irregular band around 1m above, of larger blocks with some limestone – probably representing an earlier line of rebuilding, as the building was much re-worked in the 20th century. Doorway with large plain brown/purple stone blocks and flat head to W end, perhaps moved here from the centre of the wall in the 20th century (area of disrupted masonry to the centre). Above the door is the name 'Fern Cottage', carved in limestone with a fern leaf decoration, in earlier 20th century style. The front E gable has good quoins, with the ashlar band carried also across the gable. The gable has distinctive limestone (or cast stone?) ovolo-moulded kneelers of mid-20th century date. It is evident that this wall has been much rebuilt, as a photograph of c.1910 shows the street frontage with a tall window to both ground and first floors, a tall single-flue chimneystack, and a pitched roof of thatch, instead of the current gable. The S elevation has a large 20th century bay window, and a stair window with a flat

ironstone head of similar date. There is a straight joint at the junction with the main range, indicating that the front wing is a later addition.

The main block S gable has a doorway, 1st floor window and gable kneeler all probably of 20th century date. The roof eaves to this range was also raised in the 20th century. There is a blocked window to the former first floor height with a characteristic large brownstone chamfered lintel – probably 19th century. The rear W wall has rather irregular masonry coursing in places, with an area of rebuilding above the S ground floor window. The two main ground floor windows have chamfered brownstone lintels of the same 19th century type as the S gable. At the N end is a small single window which has a highly unusual detail – a 2-light inner window with delicate ogee-headed tracery of alabaster. This is presumably a re-used feature salvaged from elsewhere. The first floor has two large dormer windows. The N gable is blank, and has the same ovolo-moulded kneelers as the front wing, from the 20th century roof raising. The front E wall of the main block has a brown/purple stone ashlar band at first floor level, like the front wing, but with finely jointed ironstone walling. The two ground floor windows here have flat lintels with a slightly projecting false keystone. Three 20th century brick chimneystacks.

Plan

The main block has a two-room plan, but has been much altered, and the original plan form and doorway locations are difficult to deduce. Wall thickness to the main range front wall is 660mm and 720mm to the rear wall, with the front range N wall 460mm.

Internal features

Ground floor

The existing kitchen at the S end of the main block has a slightly irregular spine beam with chamfer stops of ogee type. To the SE is a pantry, set one step below ground floor. The wall between the kitchen and the room to its N has masonry 715mm thick, whose purpose is unclear – perhaps a former chimneybreast. This wall now extends only up to first floor level, and the roof truss is located directly over it, so it now has no function except to support the spine beams.

The N room has a good spine beam with finely formed ogee stops to the N end, at the inglenook chimneybreast, but no stops at the S end. The inglenook has a high-set beam, cased in boarding. A partition wall now divides the room, with a narrow room to the east. A rounded corner at the N end, beside the inglenook, is said to have been the location of a former winder stair.

The door in the N room leading to the kitchen, with pilasters to either side, is made of re-set Jacobean panelling. The panelling is of very high quality, a very unusual feature which must have come from a building of considerable status, probably of earlier 17th century date. The door has two arched sections, one above the other, with intricately carved guilloche borders to each side. The pilasters have panelled pedestal bases, shafts with leaf and floral carving, and Ionic capitals. Over the door, between the pilasters, is a finely carved gadrooned cornice.

The linking hall/stairs area between the main block and the front wing has a W-E beam of vertical rectangular section, with some chamfering, and exposed joists – all probably a late re-working. It is understood that the large room in the front wing was converted from a former laundry in the 1950s.

First floor and roof

Single roof truss at centre of main block, of A-frame type with dovetail-lapped collar, probably of re-used timber. At the apex, the principal rafters are joined by a short saddle piece, and rise above this to hold a ridge beam, now missing. The purlins and rafters have all been replaced when the roof was raised in the 20th century. The S room has an irregular projecting chimneybreast, probably a later addition for a ground floor fireplace.

Outbuildings

The 1886 map shows two very small houses at the SW of the two plots adjoining to the S. These survive as the ground floor only of a pair of brick-built 19th century cottages. Each cottage had a single room on the ground floor with a front door and window in the E wall, under flat brick arch heads. The rear W wall and S end walls are older, of stone. The front E wall and N external wall are of 9 inch brick, but the dividing wall between the two cottages (of which only the base course remains) was of half-brick thickness. The N cottage had a fireplace with chimneybreast on the N wall, though evidence for a chimneybreast to the S cottage is unclear. Brick-paved floors, modern profiled sheet roof, with no remains of the former first floors. .

The location of a privy in the NW corner of the main plot, as shown on the 1886 map, can be seen in the masonry of the boundary wall. The privy was subsequently relocated closer to the house.

Date and development

The main block was built between 1804 and 1848, as shown by the map evidence (see Appendix), though it was subject to much alteration in the mid-20th century. It incorporates re-used fabric of unusual character and quality for a house of this type – the alabaster window and re-set panelling. It is unclear whether these are part of the original early 19th century build, or a later 19th century introduction. There are some other unexpected anomalies, with thick walls and other old-fashioned features, such as the roof structure.

The front wing originally formed a small, separate house, as seen on the Enclosure Map of 1804, but by 1848 it has been absorbed as a subsidiary wing of the main house, though retaining a N-S oriented roof of thatch, as seen in the photo of c.1910. It is said that this block was in use as a laundry for Uppingham School prior to c.1950. When the adjoining house to the south was demolished in the 1950s, it was altered or rebuilt in its current form, with a W-E oriented roof of slate and a chimneystack to the centre of the front gable.

APPENDIX

THE SEQUENCE OF BUILDINGS AT 41-43 MAIN STREET, LYDDINGTON

Phase 1 – by 1804 See 1804 map

No 41 is on Plot 107. This has the house to the E part of the plot. The house of 1804 has been wholly demolished. The map also shows an outbuilding to the W of the house, which still stands, of 18th century date. The date of the original house on Plot 107 is unknown, but it is likely that it incorporated the re-set date-stone of 1767. The initials on the date-stone are CWI, indicating that the owner was William Clarke.

Plot 104 is the long W-E building immediately S of Pageant House (Plot 103).

No 43, as it currently exists, stands on Plot 105-106. But in 1804 these two plots had only small houses directly fronting onto the street, with no buildings shown to the rear (where the main rear block of the current No 43 is located). So presuming the 1804 map is correct (as is the case everywhere else where interrogated), the main rear block of No 43 is post-1804. In 1804, there were two small houses on Plots 105 and 106 with fronts aligned to the street ie with roof ridges parallel to the street. The small southern building, on Plot 105, can be seen on photos of c.1910, with a roof ridge parallel to the street, thatched roof and tall stone chimneystack to the NE corner.

Phase 2 – by 1848 See 1848 map

No 41 has by this date been rebuilt – now Plot 82 (replacing the 1804 plot no of 107). No 41 has a good date-stone of 1814, so can be assumed to have been built at this date. The date-stone carries the initials JC. The 1848 Schedule gives the copyhold owner and occupier as Joseph Clarke, so it seems the builder was either this Joseph, or his father. In the Schedule the property is described as ‘House Stone Masons Shop barn yard and garden’, amounting to 13 perches. So it seems likely that the current house was built by Joseph Clarke. The Clarke family, in several branches, were well established in Lyddington as stone masons, as the Schedule shows. A photo of c.1910 shows the house with a thatched roof, no bay windows and a front porch with shaped barge-boards. The cill of the date-stone can be seen just above the porch.

Between Nos 41 and 43, a pair of houses was constructed between 1804 and 1848, taking up Plots 79 and 80 – probably in association with the new house at No 41, as the previous house on the plot had to be demolished to allow space for both No 41 and the new pair of houses. The copyhold owner of Plot 79 was William Tansley, the occupier William Lygo, and the property was a ‘House hovel and garden’ of 3 perches. For Plot 80, the copyhold owner was Elizabeth Tansley, the occupiers were Mrs Kelly and Elizabeth Brown, and the property was a ‘House in two tenements and garden’ of 2 perches. Finally, Plot 81 to the rear had another house constructed, which was owned once again by Elizabeth Tansley. The occupiers were John Braunston and Robert Skellam and the property was a ‘House in two tenements pigsty & gardens’ of 4 perches. The 1848 map does not manage to show buildings on Plots 79 and 80, but the Schedule confirms that they had been built by this date.

The buildings on plots 79-81 can be seen more clearly on the 1886 OS map. 79 and 80 were set at the street frontage, either side of an access passageway, which passed through the building. 81 is set at the rear of the plot, and still survives as a pair of brick-built terrace cottages, with only the ground floor still standing. Several old photos show the street frontage of 79 and 80. It was of coursed stone, 2 storeys high, with a roof of Welsh slate. The ground floor had a central doorway for the access passage, with doors to either side for 79 and 80, and 4 casement windows. There were 4 further windows of the same type on the first floor. Over the S doorway the date-stone of 1767 can be seen, in a re-set position. The date-stone could not have belonged to the pair of houses on plots 79 and 80, as these were constructed after 1804.

This group of buildings on plots 79-81, with five separate dwellings packed into a small area, including pigsties and gardens, is an interesting example of intensive development from the earlier 19th century, similar to the yards which developed in small towns.

No 43 has by 1848 had a new range added at the rear of the property, on a N-S alignment (Plot 78 on the 1848 map). This is the main rear block of which the fabric survives today, the map evidence indicating that it only goes back to the early 19th century. The small house at the front, on Plot 105 of 1804, was retained, the whole now forming an L-shaped range. The copyhold owner and occupier in 1848 was Seaton Clarke, another of the Clarke family of masons. The property is described as 'House masons shop yard and garden', with an area of 13 perches.

Phase 3 – mid 20th century

A photo in TL Marsden's 1958 PhD thesis 'Vernacular Architecture of Rutland and vicinity' shows demolition work underway. The photo was presumably taken around 1955-57 and is titled 'Lyddington, Rutland. Partition in house dated 1767.'

Examination proves that the photo shows the southern half of the pair of houses on plots 79 and 80, with the northern half demolished. The photo shows an internal partition, of studs, reed and plaster in the recently exposed gable.

Subsequently to this, a photo of c.1950s date (after electricity poles had been installed) shows the southern half of the house pair as retained, with a gap to the north. The exposed gable end was presumably made serviceable as an external wall. By this time, the front range of No 43 (on plot 105 of 1804) had been replaced with a 2-storey block, with a gable to the street front and the roof ridge running W-E, with slated slopes replacing thatch. Bay windows have also been added by this time to the ground floor frontage of No 41.

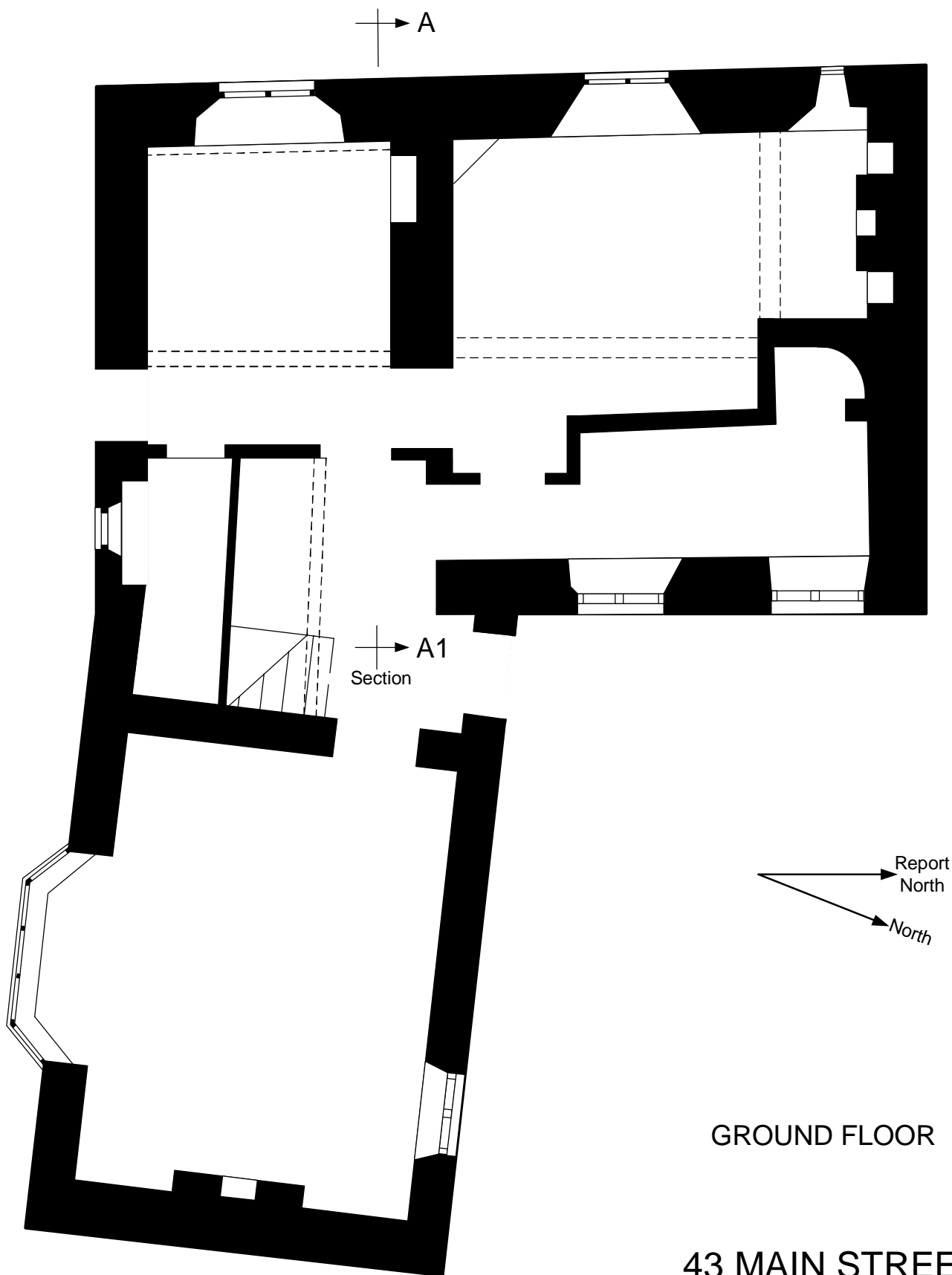
Phase 4 – 1962

In 1962 the remaining half of the house pair on plots 79 and 80 was demolished, resulting in the wide gap that currently exists between No 41 and No 43, forming part of the garden to No 43. It is the demolition of this building which is shown on a painting which includes the title, in the bottom left-hand corner 'Men at work Fern Cottage demolition 1962'.

After the demolition, a buttress was constructed at the NE corner of No 41 to provide support to the wall, which must have relied on the gable of 79/80 for support. The need to provide a buttress for support suggests that No 41 of 1814 and the 79/80 block were built around the same time. The date-stone of 1767 from the earlier building was re-set in the buttress.

Nick Hill
Rose Cottage, Bringhurst

June 2012, revised December 2016

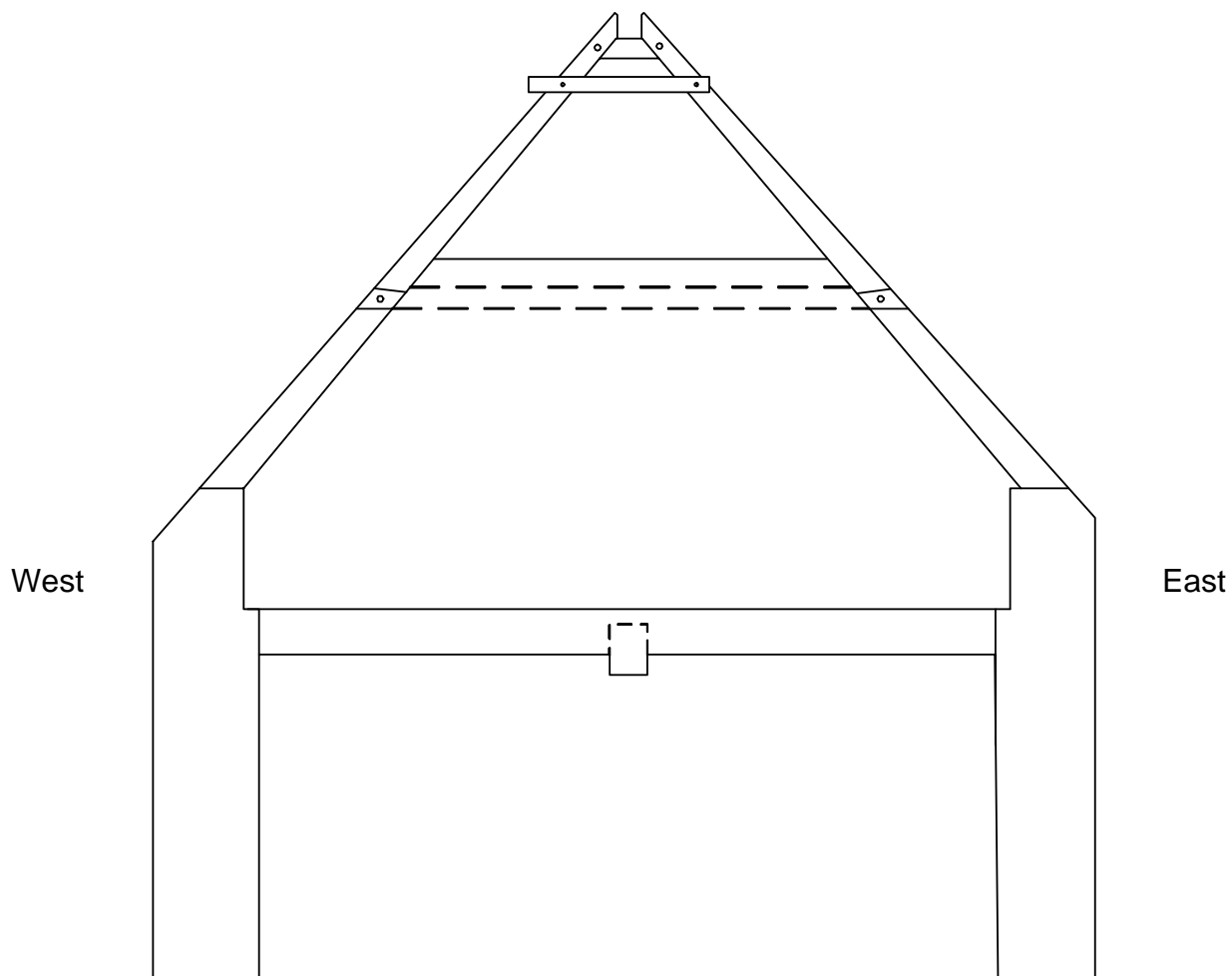


GROUND FLOOR

43 MAIN STREET
LYDDINGTON

0 1 2 3 4 METRES

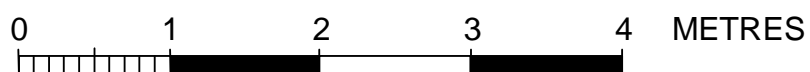
NH / RO March 2012



SECTION A – A1

FERN COTTAGE, 43 MAIN STREET
LYDDINGTON

NH / RO March 2012





View from the north-east



View from south



The north side of the front wing



The east front of the main rear range



The rear west side of the main range



The re-used alabaster window in the west wall of the main range



The north room in the main rear range, with ingle fireplace



The apex of the roof truss to the rear range



The re-set Jacobean
panelling in the north room
of the main rear range



Detail of the panelling



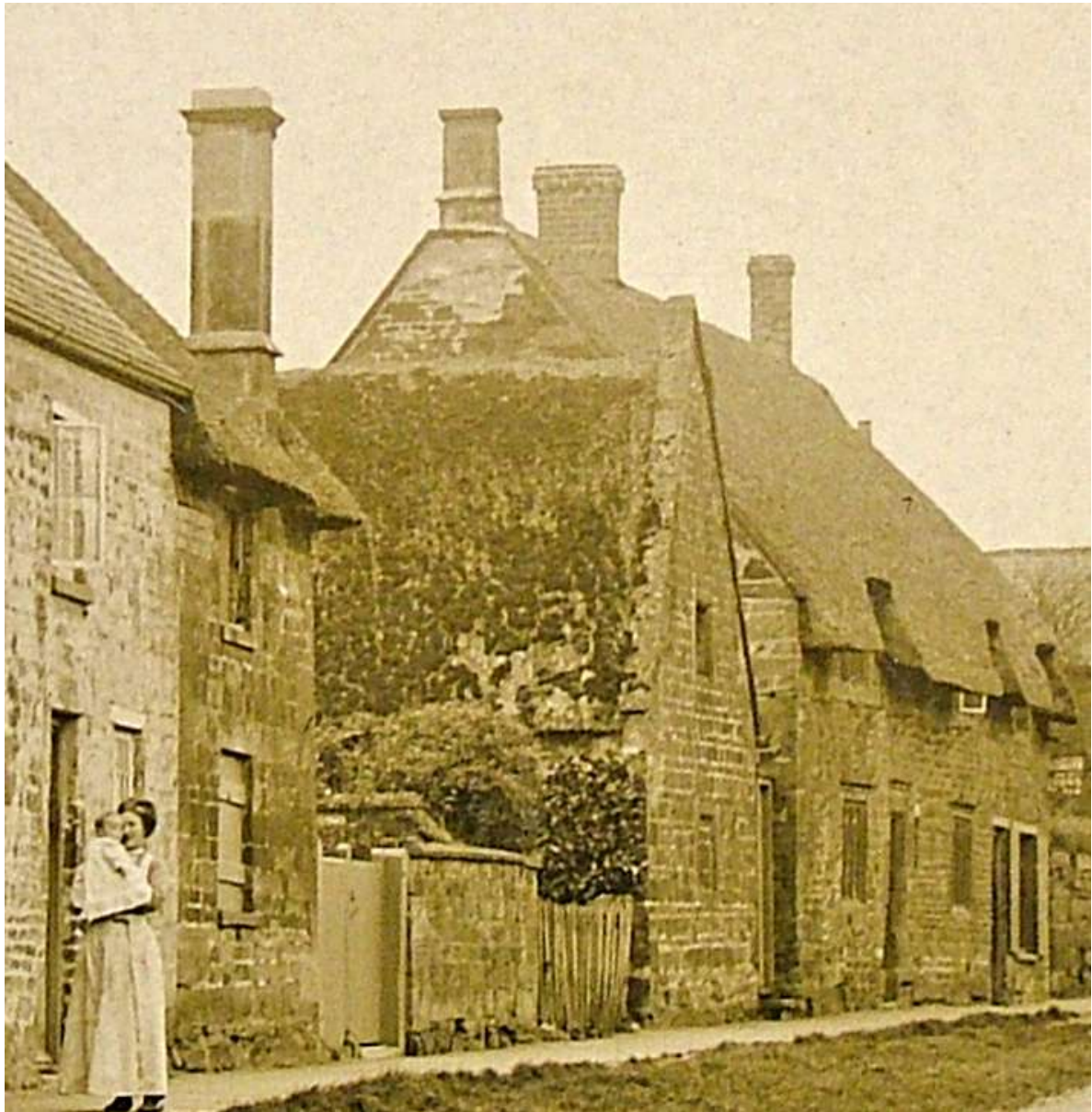
The surviving ground floor of the pair of 19th century cottages at the rear of the plot



Interior of the west cottage, looking west



Postcard of c.1910 (RCM 0548), showing: No 41 with front porch; the pair of houses demolished in the mid-20th century; and the front wing of No 43 before the alterations



Detail of the postcard of c.1910, showing the front wing before the 1950s alterations.

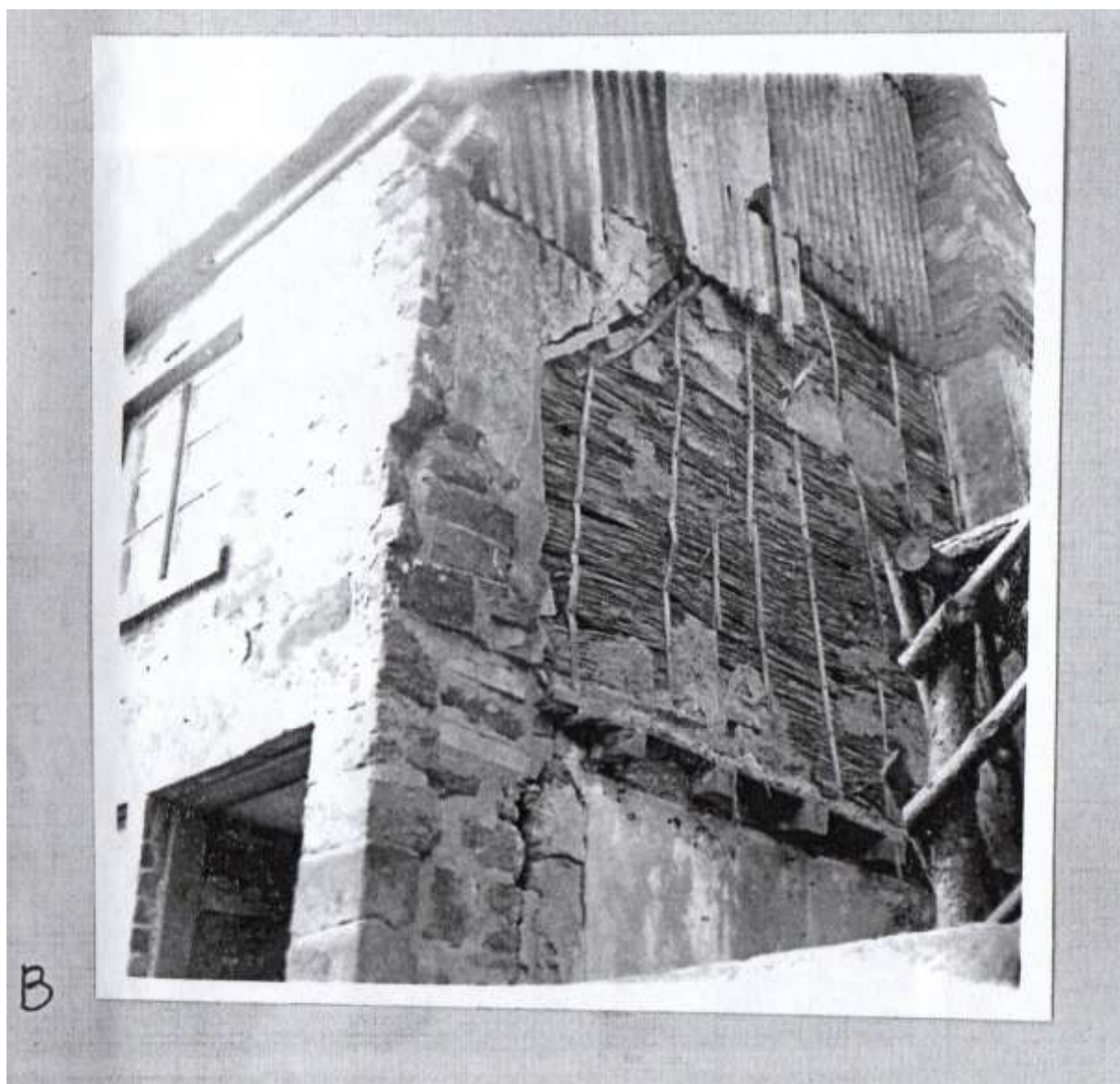


Photo of c.1955-57 from T.L. Marsden's PhD thesis, showing the north half of the house pair demolished and the south half retained



Photo of c.1960 looking south down Main Street, with White Hart on left



Detail of the photo of c.1960, showing only the south half of the house pair still standing, with a gap and then the re-built front wing of No 43, with W-E slate roof and gable stack

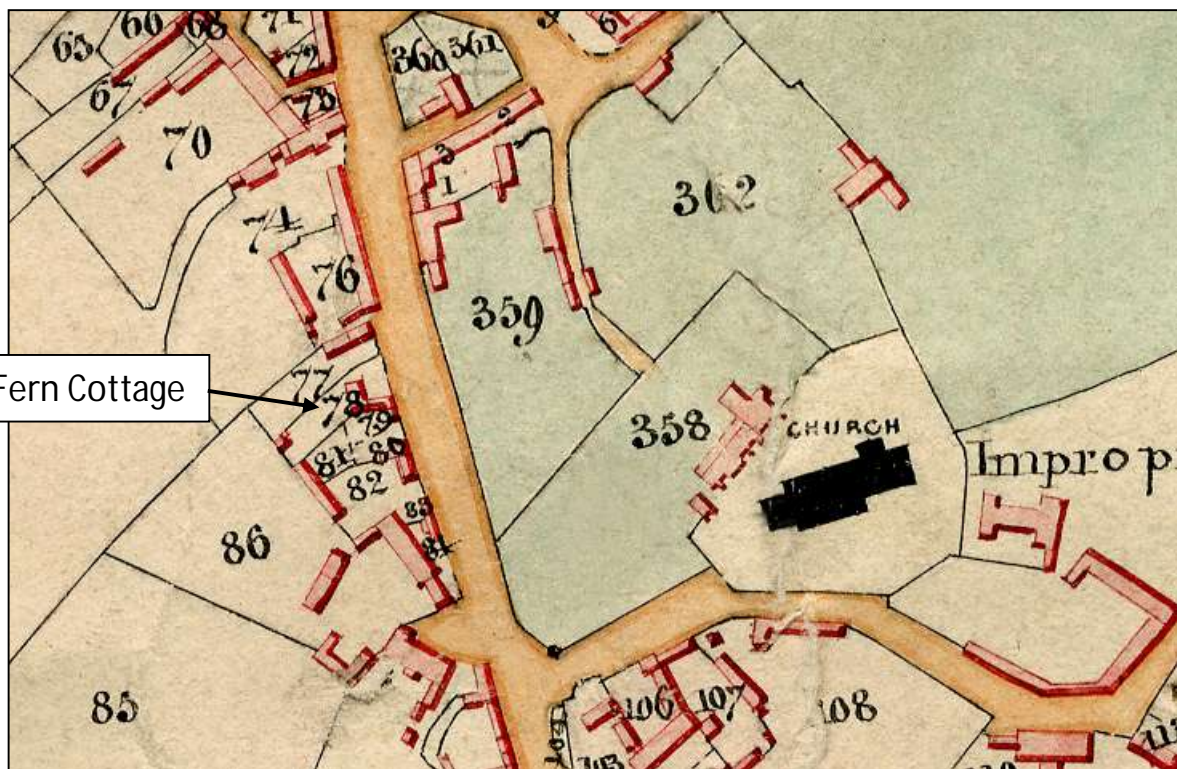


A painting entitled: 'MEN AT WORK FERN COTTAGE DEMOLITION 1962'

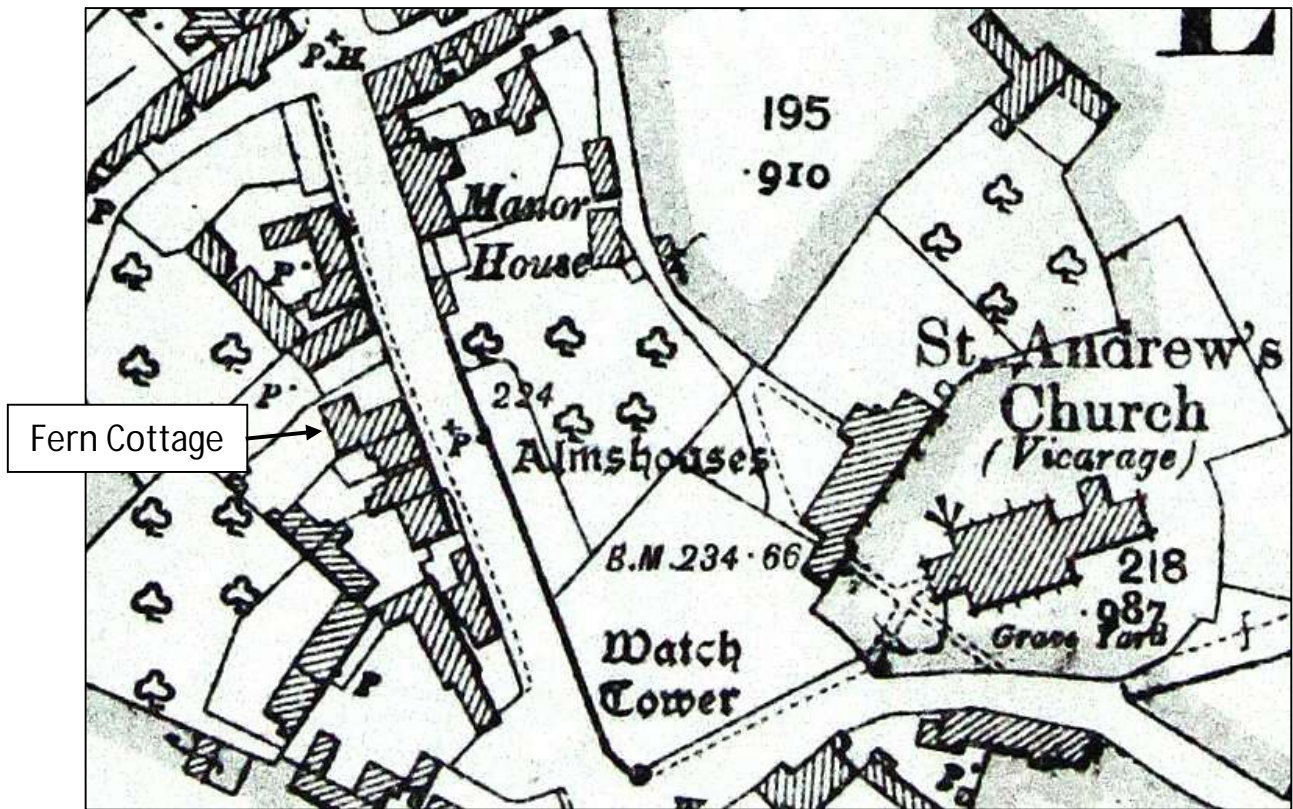
This shows the demolition of the south half of the house pair on plots 79-80 of the 1848 map. To the right is No 41, prior to the replacement of a rear lean-to with the current two-storey rear wing. This is now the location of the entrance drive to the south of No 43, Fern Cottage.



Lyddington Enclosure Map - 1804



Lyddington Estate Map, 1848 (Burghley Archives)



Ordnance Survey 2nd Series, 1904