

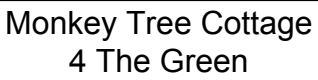
**Lyddington Manor History Society
Historic Building Survey**

**Monkey Tree Cottage
4 The Green
Caldecott, Rutland**



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Location Map – Monkey Tree Cottage, 4 The Green, Caldecott
(OS First Edition 1886)

HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY REPORT

MONKEY TREE COTTAGE 4 THE GREEN, CALDECOTT

Survey

Date of survey: 9th February 2014

Surveyed by: Nick Hill & Robert Ovens

Summary

Dating back to the 17th century, this house had a hall with good inglenook fireplace and heavily chamfered ceiling beam, with a heated parlour beyond. The front door is next to the gable end, opening against the side of the inglenook, giving a lobby-entry plan form. A new front of very fine masonry with a date-stone and initials was added in 1774 by William Woodcock, the village blacksmith, who died in the same year. Near the house to the west was a blacksmith's shop, which was converted to a Methodist chapel in the mid-19th century. The chapel closed around 1920 and was subsequently demolished. The house's thatched roof was replaced with modern tiles in the 1950s, when the eaves were raised.

Site

OS Ref: SP868936

Orientation: For report purposes, the main front is taken as facing S. The house is set back from the main village green, with a walled rectangular front garden. The gable end of No 3 The Green is set closely against the E end of No 4. The plot extends further W to the rear.

Materials

Coursed ironstone/limestone, with banded ashlar front. Roof of concrete tiles.

External features

The main house forms a single range, now 2 storeys high. A 2-storey rear extension replaced a previous single-storey extension in the 1980s.

The main south front has very finely jointed ashlar masonry, of ironstone with limestone band courses. The limestone is generally of Weldon type, though sometimes quite finely grained. The door is set to the far W end. Two 3-light casement windows to ground and first floor are set either side of a 2-light window. A limestone band course runs across at the bottom of the ground and first floor windows, forming stooped cills. A deeper band course runs across at lintel height, with shallow arches over the openings, which have projecting triple keyblocks. The central keyblock over the door has an elegant moulded profile. Set over the door is a limestone date-stone, with a raised diamond-set centre, edged with a small cavetto moulding. The well-cut script, with the lettering picked out in black reads:

WW 1774

A photograph of 1913 (Henton Collection, ROLLR) shows the house with a lower-set thatched roof. The front wall was built up in concrete blocks around the 1950s when the roof was raised and re-covered in concrete tiles. The three first-floor windows would have had eyebrow dormers in the thatch.

The E gable has good limestone quoins to the south-east corner, from the 1774 re-facing. Beyond this, the gable has coursed ironstone/limestone rubble, with no openings. The 1913 photo shows that there was previously a coped gable parapet, with a bold ogee-moulded corbel. The triangular ironstone blocks which were under the gable parapet remain in situ. Single-flue chimneystack at the apex, with limestone ashlar base and chamfered plinth. Above the plinth, the stack has been rebuilt in limestone/ironstone blocks, but the 1913 photo shows it was of 4-slab limestone ashlar type, with a moulded cap.

The W gable is of rather irregularly coursed limestone rubble with ironstone, and various patching work at lower level. The fine ashlar of the S front runs on 200mm past the corner to the ground floor, forming the front wall of an adjoining block, with its west edge cut back, perhaps for a later doorway insertion. Above ground floor level, the S front forms proper quoins at the building corner. So it is evident that, when re-fronted, there was a single-storey block attached to the W. Next to the SW corner there is a blocked doorway, with some good limestone jambs to its N side, but the head of the opening has been re-faced. The NW corner has good limestone quoins below, and ironstone quoins above. Triangular limestone blocks which would have sat below the gable coping remain on both sides of the upper gable, though re-set to the new roof slope to the S side. Single-flue chimneystack to apex, of the same type as the E gable.

The rear N wall is partly covered by the modern extension. To the W, the ground floor has striped masonry of ironstone/limestone, except where disrupted by a modern French window towards the E. A medium-sized window near the W end has an old lintel of re-used oak and was wider to the E side, with a straight joint to the jamb stones. This may originally have been a smaller fire window, to light the inglenook inside. To first floor, the wall has ironstone rubble with limestone, and concrete blocks from the roof raising above. The first floor window was probably an earlier dormer in the thatch.

Internal features

Ground floor

The W room now forms a large space, with a smaller room to the E. The W room has a good inglenook fireplace, with stone cheek of good quality limestone blocks and chamfered beam with ogee stops. The beam was raised around the 19th century, with the former sockets filled with brick. Set fairly near to the angle is a heavily chamfered transverse beam with good ogee stops at both ends. Old oak floor joists are tenoned into the transverse beam, spanning to W and E of it. The next transverse beam is modern, with casing timber, and the first floor structure E of this has probably been

fully reconstructed, at a raised level. It may replace an earlier partition wall. Modern stairs rise in the NE corner. The front door opens into a lobby beside the stack, with the recess of a former doorway leading W visible.

A modern partition separates the W room from the E. The E room has an old oak spine beam, but it looks re-set. In the E gable is a small fireplace with modern stone surround. The doorway in the N wall appears formerly to have been a window, with a window recess remaining to the E of it. In the modern extension the external face of the rear N wall can be seen. It has coursed ironstone with limestone. One jamb of an original rear door, now blocked, is visible, with good quoins and an old oak lintel.

First floor and roof structure

The room at the W end has a big, stepped stone stack from the inglenook below, but never had a fireplace itself. There is a smaller chimneybreast in the E gable. The roof structure was replaced in the 1950s roof-raising, but a section of ridge beam remains towards the W. It had a splayed and pegged scarf joint, near the location of a former roof truss. The tops of several ash pole rafters nailed to the ridge can also be seen, as well as debris from the former thatch. Both gable ends have stone chimneybreasts, with unusual timber plates near the top.

Outbuildings

As noted above, there was an additional block to the W of the main building (as shown on early maps), of which the lower part of the front wall remains. This wall is set at a slightly skewed angle to the main house. A short first section is built of ironstone, with good quoins to its SW corner and the mark of a N-S gable wall on its rear N face. Beyond this, the wall continues on the same orientation for some distance, but has been fully rebuilt in recent times. Beyond this wall is a circular stone-lined well, indicated on the 1900 OS map. To the front of the house is a rectangular garden, surrounded by a well-built stone wall. The wall is of 18th century date, as it is shown on the 1800 enclosure map. There was a monkey puzzle tree in the middle of this front garden in the mid-20th century.

To the NW of the house is a garage block, which incorporates the E wall and a short length of the S wall of an outbuilding which is shown on early maps. It has coursed limestone/ironstone with good quoins and a pedestrian-size doorway in the E wall. The remainder of this garage block is of modern build, as is a second garage block to its N.

An old stone wall which now stands only c.1m high runs N-S to the N part of the garden, with short length of gable wall and quoins to the SE corner. This is the remains of a long outbuilding shown on early maps. The wall has two triangular vents of the type often found locally in barns of the 17th-18th century, though set at unusually low level – perhaps the ground level has risen.

Site history

The 1800 enclosure map shows the building as a single, long block, extending for about twice the length of the current house. In the rear yard, two outbuildings are

shown, one L-shaped and one a single range. The plot extends some distance further N. On the 1886 1st edition OS map, a short additional section seems to have been added to the main front range, as well as extensions to the rear NE. The two outbuildings remain. One of the blocks to the W of the house (it is unclear which on the map) is now named as 'Chapel'. The 1900 map shows the same detail.

The history of the property has been traced in the manorial court rolls, which has identified the builder 'WW' of the 1774 date-stone. William Woodcock blacksmith was admitted to the copyhold in or soon after 1750, it being then described as 'All that Messuage Cottage or Tenement with the Bakehouse Homestead and Appurtenances thereto belonging', with a rental value of 5d. Prior to this, the copyhold had been held by Henry Newbourn the Elder up to 1737, and then passed to his son, Henry Newbourn the Younger. In 1737 the property was described as 'All that Messuage House or tenement in Caldecott with Barns Stables Yards Orchards Gardens Backsides Ways Paths Passages and all other premises with their appurtenances ...'. A separate copyhold entry describes Henry Newborn (the Younger) as 'Baker', so it seems that the 'Bakehouse' noted in c.1750 was added by him after 1737.

William Woodcock surrendered the copyhold on 4th August 1774, the entry noting 'William Woodcock Blacksmith by his will dated 4 Aug 1774'. His wife Grace was admitted to the copyhold on 2nd October 1774 'for her natural Life and then to his son William Woodcock'. The property description is: 'A Messuage and Homestead wherein he dwelt in Caldecott with Appurtenances'. His son William (also a blacksmith) was not admitted to the copyhold until 1790, the property then being noted as 'late in the tenure or occupation of Grace Woodcock'. So it seems that William Woodcock the elder must have been responsible for the re-fronting of the house in 1774, just before he died. A later copyhold transfer to John Peter Woodcock in 1857 from William Woodcock (grocer, died in 1855) notes, beside the main messuage 'Also all that Building adjoining now used as a Methodist Chapel formerly a Blacksmith's Shop to the above premises belonging'.

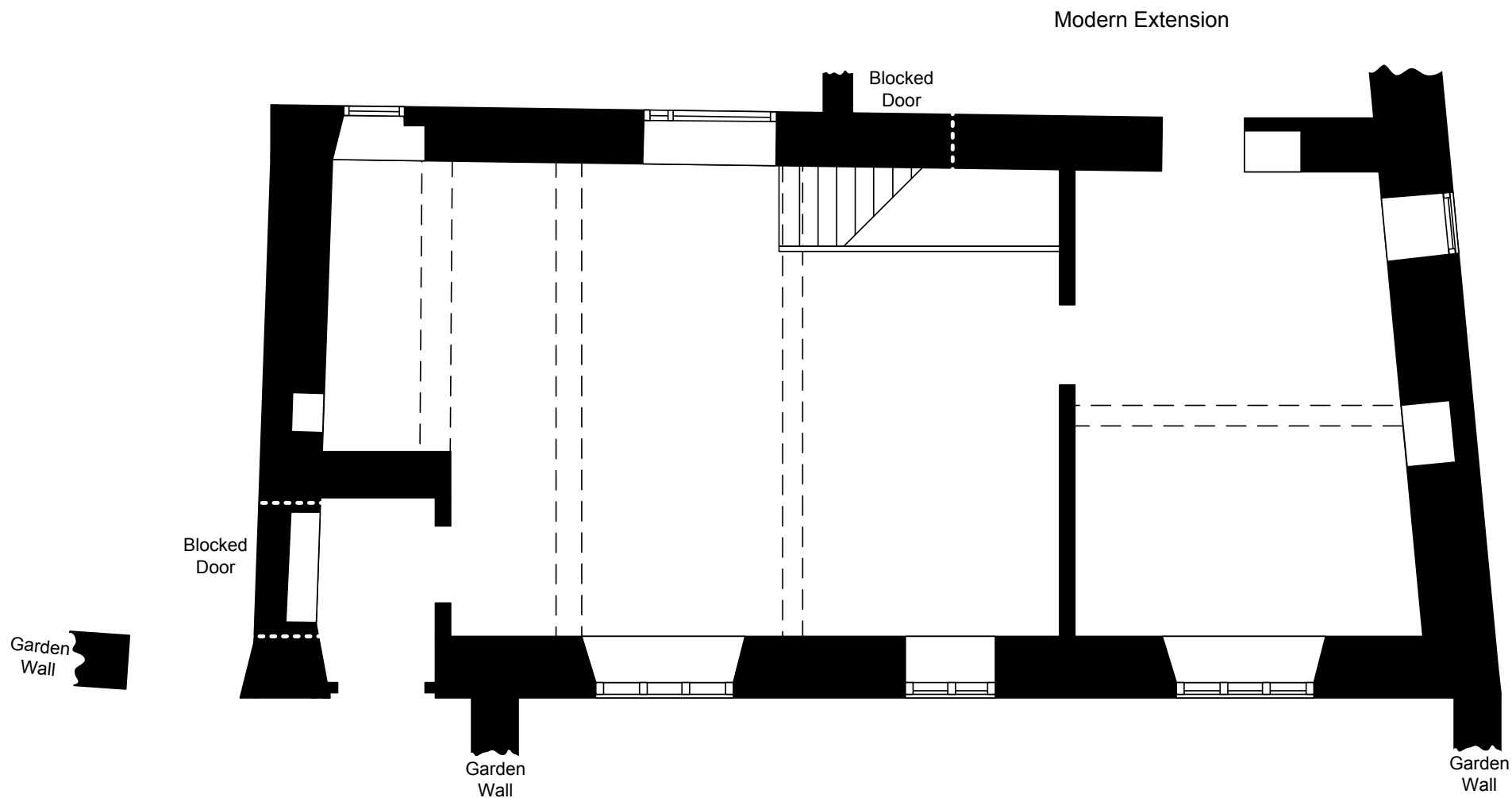
According to Traylen (*Villages of Rutland – Caldecott*, 1976), 'The Congregational Chapel closed in 1920, it originally being a woolcomber's shed, where workers combed down the hanging fleeces with spiked gloves, it then became a stays factory for Morre's corsets, this firm eventually moving to Great Easton. In the 1939 was the building was used as the HQ of the Home Guard.' This information came from Marion Neeman, who undertook research for a history of Caldecott. Further information from this source is given in *Rutland in Dissent* by Pauline Collett (Spiegel Press, 2011, p. 76-77). It is said that the Chapel 'was erected in 1858' and that 'In 1958 it started to be demolished when the roof was removed, although one gable end remained until the 1960s, when demolition was completed.' Old photographs show a single-storey thatched building with a chimneystack to the left of Monkey Tree Cottage, which is said to have been the chapel. However, former village resident and local historian Ian Bottrell states that the chapel was in the block to the rear, to the NW of the house. It has to be said that the thatched building in the old photos does not look much like a chapel.

Date and development

The original house dates back to the 17th century, as indicated by the heavily chamfered beam with ogee stops, the inglenook fireplace and the striped masonry to the rear wall. Not enough detail survives to ascribe a closer date to the original building. It seems that the original house had two ground floor rooms, the hall (with main cooking hearth) to the west and a parlour, with smaller fireplace to the east. The front door opened against the side of the inglenook fireplace, a lobby-entry plan form (as noted also at Weldon House, Caldecott). A central back door led out to the rear yard. Upstairs, there were two chambers, without fireplaces. The remaining parts of the roof may date from the 17th century, but could equally be part of the 18th century re-build.

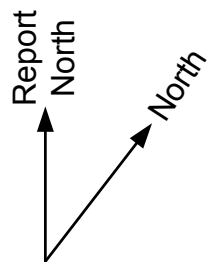
An extension was subsequently added to the west, at a slightly splayed angle, and a doorway was formed to connect this to the main house. This block may have been built as the bakehouse, which Henry Newborn the Younger created at the property in 1737-50. The bakehouse may have been converted to a blacksmith's shop soon after William Woodcock blacksmith took over in c.1750, unless the blacksmith's shop was the former building to the NW. In 1774, the year in which he died, William Woodcock carried out the re-fronting of the house. The new front was of very high quality masonry, and William proudly embellished it with his initials and the date. William was probably around 50 years old at the time (his son was 24 years old, baptised at Caldecott in 1748). He may well have expected to enjoy his new house for some years, but at least his wife lived on there until her death in 1790, and it was then taken over by his son, his wife Jane and their young family. After William's death in the early 19th century, the use of the nearby building as a blacksmith's shop must have ceased, and it was converted to a Methodist chapel around the mid-19th century.

Nick Hill
May 2014



GROUND FLOOR

MONKEY TREE COTTAGE, 4 THE GREEN, CALDECOTT





The south front



Ground floor window



The date-stone



The front door



The south-west corner, with
stone face extending onwards
to ground floor only



The west gable



The rear north wall



The main west room, looking west



The inglenook fireplace, with raised beam and brick blocking



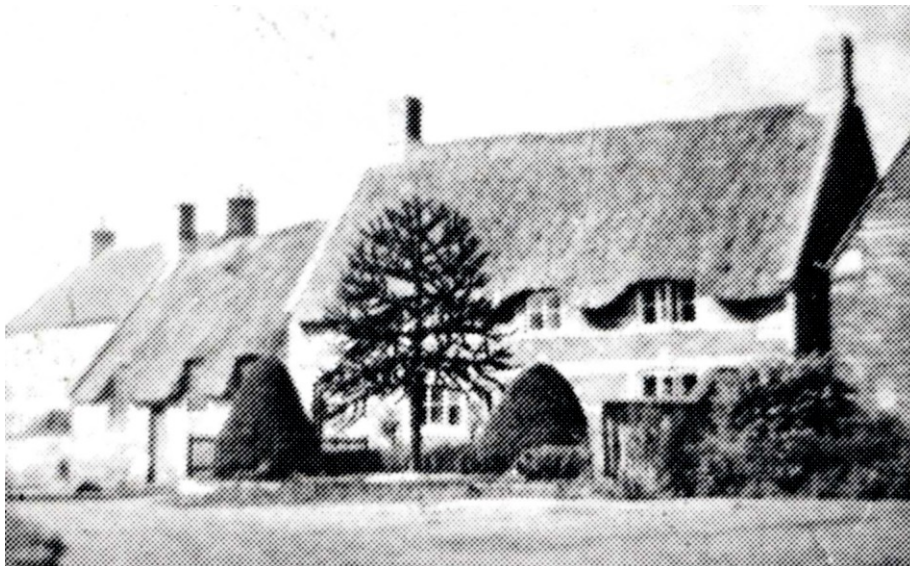
The surviving ridge beam at the west end, with timber plate to chimneystack



Photo of 1913 (Henton) of 3 The Green, with No 4 to left



Early C20th photo of May Day on the Green, with the lost single-storey thatched building to the left of Monkey Tree Cottage



Mid C20th photo of the Green, with monkey puzzle tree



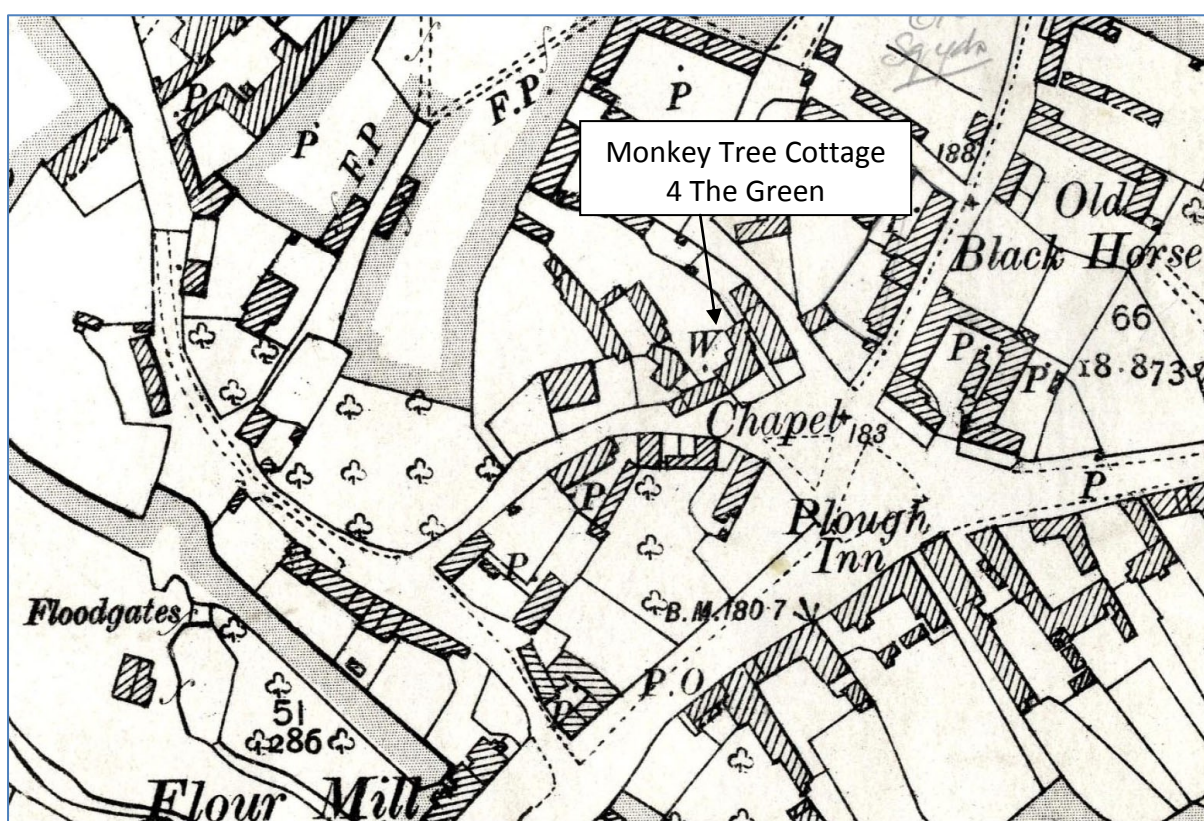
The garage block to the left, to the north-west of the house, is an old outbuilding, and might once have been the blacksmith's shop and then the chapel.



The remaining wall of a former outbuilding to the north of the house, with triangular vent



Caldecott Enclosure Map - 1800



Caldecott - OS Second Edition 1904