

**Lyddington Manor History Society
Historic Building Survey**

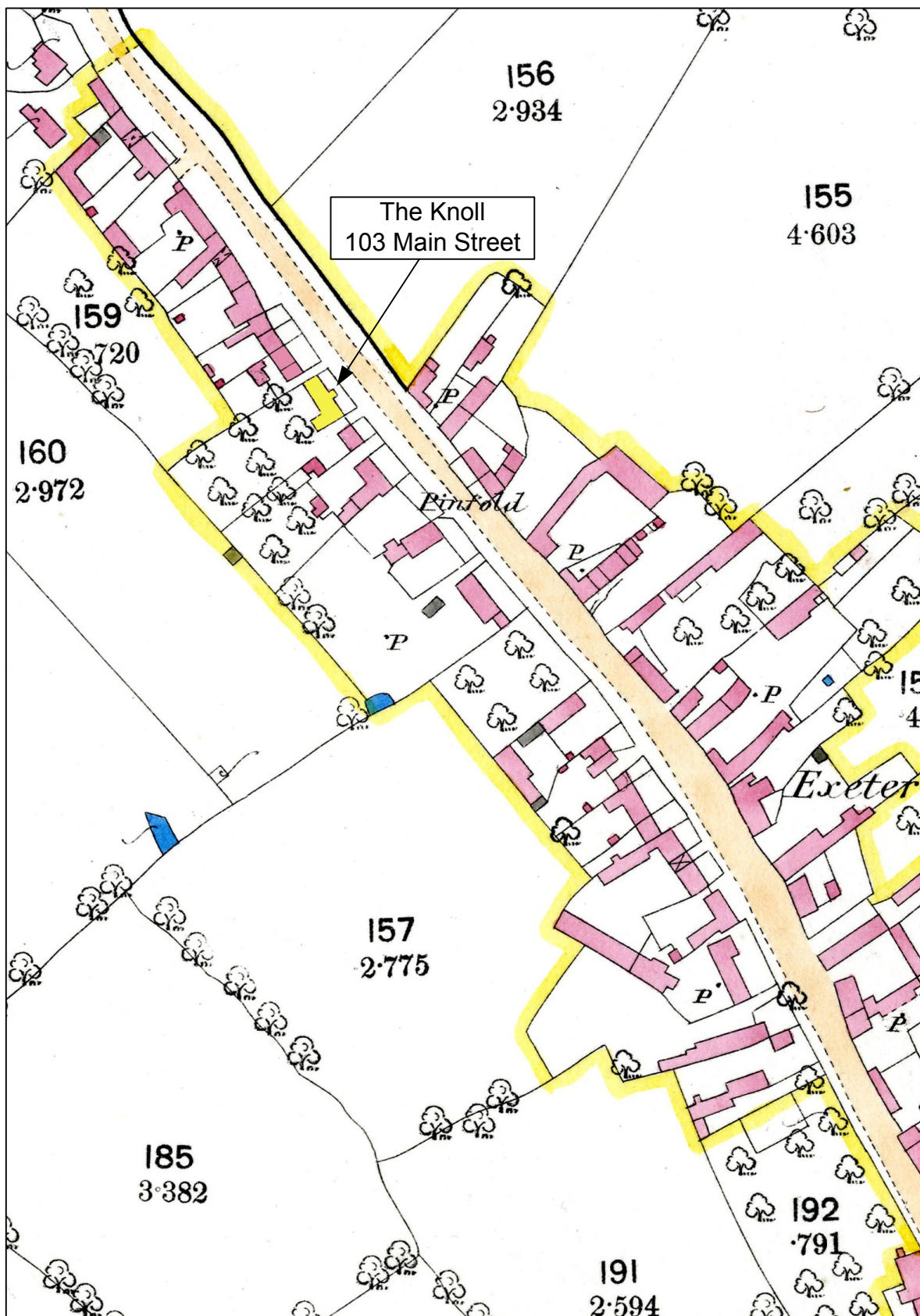
**The Knoll,
103 Main Street,
Lyddington, Rutland**



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Location Map – The Knoll, 103 Main Street, Lyddington
(OS First Edition 1886)

HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY REPORT

THE KNOLL 103 MAIN ST, LYDDINGTON

Survey

Date of survey: 15th March 2014

Surveyed by: Nick Hill & Robert Ovens

Summary

This house was built around 1770-90 to a high quality design, more sophisticated than many village houses of the period. The tall front elevation is double-fronted, with fine ashlar masonry and well-proportioned sash windows to both ground and first floors. The roof was always of Collyweston slates, rather than the thatch used on most village houses at this date. The plan form is well developed, with a central stairs/entry hall and the parlour and kitchen set to either side. Under the parlour was a cellar with its own fireplace, an unusual feature in the area. The first floor had two bedrooms, though only one was heated originally. Construction features are transitional, with the use of pine as well as oak, and brickwork in an internal partition.

An extension containing further kitchen/service space was added around 1830-50. It had external walls of solid brick, one of the earlier houses of such construction in the area. Rooms were also created in the attic during the 19th century, with the staircase extended up to the second floor.

Site

OS Ref: SP873975

Orientation: For report purposes, the front to the road is taken as facing E.

The house is set back from the road frontage, on rising ground, with a walled front garden. A vehicle entrance to the S leads to the rear. To the N, the house directly abuts Jasmine Cottage (No 105), but is set considerably further forward towards the road. Behind the house, the ground rises, with a large garden plot.

Materials

Coursed ironstone, with finely jointed ashlar to the front façade and a Collyweston slate roof. The S extension is of rendered brickwork, with Collyweston slate to the front and Welsh slate to the rear.

External features

The main block forms a single, double-fronted range of two storeys and attics, with a cellar to the N. The S extension is also of two storeys, but lower. It has modern extensions to the rear.

The main E front is a high quality, symmetrical design with fine masonry. Quite tall, with two full storeys set over a cellar. Finely jointed ironstone ashlar, with dressings of brownstone. Band courses of brownstone at first-floor level and eaves, and a 40mm

square-set plinth. Central front door, approached up stone steps with an iron railing. The doorway has a beaded brownstone surround, projecting slightly from the wall face; flat, beaded lintel with projecting triple keyblocks, the central one fluted. 6-panel C20 door. Tall sash windows set to either side of the door, also with beaded surrounds and projecting triple keyblocks. Three tall sash windows to first floor, with timber lintels at eaves level. To the N of the door, not aligned under the sash window, is a cellar window of stone-mullion type, with a plain, square-cut central mullion and surround.

The N gable is blank, except for a small attic window to the W side. Good quoins to NE, the NW corner being covered by the abutting No 105. The gable has a shaped, cyma corbel below a kneeler, with a gable parapet; seating for a 2-flue stack, mainly of ironstone ashlar, with chamfered plinth and square-cut cornice with blocking course. There is no moulded corbel to the rear. Only the upper part of the S gable of the main block is visible, as the S extension abuts here. The S gable has a gable parapet like that to the N, again with a moulded corbel to the front only. Also a 2-flue stack of the same type, though the upper section has been replaced in brick.

The S extension has a rendered front wall, set back 90mm from the main front, with 60/65mm deep bricks visible at low level. Two modern windows, the lower a projecting bay. The gable is also rendered, and blank except for a small modern window; plain gable coping, with seating for a single-flue brick stack. The Collyweston roof is at a pitch of 35-40°, rather less than the main house. The front wall is 350mm thick (ie 1½ bricks), the gable end 230mm (1 brick).

The rear W wall of the main block is partly covered by a modern conservatory, though most stonework is still visible. Coursed ironstone rubble, with larger courses near the top. The SW quoins are visible both at first floor level and ground level, where they now form the jamb of a doorway. N of this doorway is a window, with jambs that look slightly re-worked, though the flat ironstone lintel appears original. Next to the N is the original back doorway, with good quoins and a square-cut flat ironstone lintel. Beyond the conservatory is a small window with a deep flat ironstone lintel, then a wider window, set at a slightly higher level. This window is a 2-light timber casement, with a C19 stout pegged frame. Two straight joints at low level in this area indicate an area of re-facing, to correct outward bowing of the wall. But there is no evidence for the former projection shown here on the 1804 and 1848 maps, nor of an opening through the wall to suit the timber lintel visible inside. The first floor has two 2-light timber casement windows with timber lintels, set at slightly different heights. The central dormer for the attic now appears of modern construction.

Windows generally are of C20 date.

Internal features

Ground floor

The front door leads into a central entry/stairs hall. The stair balustrade has been renewed, but parts of the substructure and newels are of old, irregular timber and probably original. The two doors leading off the entrance hall are of unusual design,

rather Art Deco in feel and probably earlier C20. The N room has a transverse oak beam with only partial chamfering. There is a large chimneybreast, now with a plain, plastered fireplace opening with rough oak lintel. In the rear W wall there is a large oak beam at door-head height – probably a former doorway into the rear projection which is shown here on the 1804 map. The window to the S of this has a thin lintel of pine, the N end of which is cut into the older oak beam. So it appears that the window post-dates the doorway. The partition dividing the N room from the stair hall is of 60/65mm deep brick (visible to the SW), but also has a single exposed vertical oak stud and a beam running across the top.

The S room has a large inglenook fireplace, its beam a re-used ceiling beam with empty mortices for floor joists. The hearth has been relaid, using old pierced tiles from a maltings floor. The spine beam is of pine, not oak, with chamfers but no stops, and tenoned floor joists. To the SW the window has a window seat, and there is good quality stone paving which forms steps down to the extension.

The extension has a brick chimneybreast with plain-plastered fireplace. The fireplace opening has a shallow arch, probably of brick. Transverse oak beam, chamfered with run-out stops, and tenoned floor joists. Rear door of plank and ledge type with wide boards. The rear extension is now of modern construction.

Steps lead down behind the entry hall to the cellar. A glazed partition, formerly solid, separates the cellar stair from the main stair half landing. The cellar has an original fireplace to the N wall, with stone chimneybreast and plain oak lintel, unchamfered. The rear W wall is reinforced with a stone buttress, with chamfered top. Central transverse beam of re-used oak, with large empty mortices, with peg holes. The ground floor joists, of oak with some pine, span onto another transverse beam, set on top of a W-E stone wall (on the line of the half-brick ground floor partition). Both transverse beams have sloping corbel stones to support them at the rear W wall. An opening (with no door) leads into a smaller compartment with old pine joists, under the entry hall.

First floor and roof structure

The N bedroom has a small C19 cast iron fireplace set in the chimneybreast. There is now a bathroom in the S bedroom of the main block, so the former fireplace here is blocked off. The bedroom in the S extension has a large, tapering chimneybreast, but no fireplace. The roof has heavy purlins, previously supported at mid-span by a collar, which clasped the purlins to the principal rafters. The purlins and collar are of roughly shaped oak. Painted rafters, somewhat irregular, with ridge-board. The tops of cut-off vertical central struts remain to the N, S and centre of the room.

The stairs continue up to the attic, with modern balustrade. The newel has an empty lap joint from an earlier, plainer balustrade rail. Part of the crosswall has exposed stonework. The roof structure has purlins which span from the end gables onto the main stone cross-wall, the longer span N purlins being of stouter section. Over the stairs, the purlin has been cut out, showing that there was no attic stair originally.

Outbuildings

To the SE of the house is a small stone building, now a separate house – No 101A. However, as shown on early maps (see below), this was previously an outbuilding on the plot of The Knoll. The building is a small rectangular structure, of a tall single storey. It has well-built coursed ironstone walls with good ironstone quoins. The gables have plain kneelers and gable parapets, with a rolled apex. The roof is of Welsh slate to the E front and concrete tile to the rear, but the building up of the eaves in late C19/early C20 brick shows that it was probably thatched at an earlier date. The building had no original openings to the E front or the S gable, though modern windows have been inserted for the conversion to domestic use. The N gable has a modern window at upper level which might have been an earlier opening, a loading hatch. The rear is largely covered by a modern extension, though the N part has a wide former doorway, blocked with modern brickwork. The tall, well-built rectangular form of the building is very similar to the standard type of dovecote, of 17-18th century date. It seems likely that it was built as a dovecote, though it may well have been converted to other uses by the 19th century. Further investigation of this building is needed to confirm this.

Along the N side of the rear garden is a brick wall, with an unusual feature: it incorporates two/three rows of specially made moulded bricks, with a semicircular projecting nib perforated with two small diameter holes. The holes allowed tie wires to be inserted, to enable plants to be trained against this south-facing wall. No doubt the wall was intended for trained fruit trees, to accompany the orchard indicated here on the 1886 map and mentioned in the 1848 schedule. The lower, W section of the wall has its original bricks of 1850-90 date, but the taller E section has been rebuilt in C20 commons, re-using the rows of moulded bricks. Such special bricks are sometimes found in Victorian kitchen gardens, but usually associated with high-status houses, not ordinary village farmhouses. A brick of this type, Foxley's patent brick, was patented in c.1864 (see *Charleston Kedding: A History of Kitchen Gardening*, Susan Campbell, 1996).

Site history

The 1804 enclosure map shows the main block of the house, without the added S extension. The rear W side has a short projecting section along the N half – probably a single-storey lean-to, but hatched as part of the house, not shown dotted like an outbuilding. To the SE corner is a square outbuilding – this is now 101A. The walled-in garden is shown in front of the house. The plot (68) had a site area of 1 rood 7 perches. The copyhold owner was Arthur Ch ... (illegible).

The 1848 estate map shows the house as plot 40. The NW extension is still there, but the S extension has also been added by this date. The outbuilding of 101A seems now to be shown as part of the adjoining plot, but the description in the schedule as 'House barn stable yard garden and orchard' suggests it was still with The Knoll. The copyhold owner was John Bryan, the occupier Thomas Wright and the area 1 rood 13 perches.

On the 1st edition OS map of 1886 the extension to the NW has gone, but there is a new extension to the SW (later replaced). The outbuilding at 101A seems once again to be shown as part of the plot. The rear garden is covered with trees, probably an orchard.

Date and development

The main block is a good quality house dating from around 1770-90. There was probably an earlier house on the plot, but no trace of this survives. External features typical of this date are: the symmetrical, double-fronted façade; the tall, well-proportioned window openings for sashes; the ashlar masonry with band courses; the flat lintels with projecting keyblocks; the plain stone chimneystacks; and the sophisticated gable corbels, used only on the front. Set into rising ground and approached by a flight of steps at the front, the house is of quite imposing appearance when seen from the street. The roof covering was of Collyweston slate from the beginning, rather than the thatch used on most village houses.

Inside, the house had a well-developed plan form, with a central entry/stair hall and rooms to either side. The south room, with the large inglenook fireplace was the main kitchen, and also had the back door to the yard/garden. The north room would have been the parlour; the fireplace here would have been smaller, probably with a chimneypiece of timber or stone applied to the chimneybreast. The ceiling beams in both rooms would have been cased in, to suit the well-proportioned rooms, lit principally by the large sash windows on the front. The entry hall has one cross-wall of stone, acting as the principal load-bearing wall, and a partition of brick. It is interesting to note the use of a timber stud to reinforce the brickwork. Brick was not yet a material to be trusted on its own for thin partitions. The mixed use of oak and pine, together with second-hand timber, is also interesting to note.

Integral with the design of the plan is the cellar and its stairs. Few local houses incorporate a cellar, but the rising ground into which the house is built no doubt encouraged its provision here. The cellar window still uses a stone mullion, though of plain, square profile, not the older ovolo-moulded form. Stone windows are still used at this date in lower-status areas, and had an obvious advantage in damp cellars over timber windows. Unusually, the cellar here was for more than just storage. It had a sizeable original fireplace, presumably for various service uses. It is odd that the cellar was placed under the parlour, rather than the kitchen, but its stair does connect directly to the kitchen (and was also convenient for the back door).

The central stairs led up to two bedrooms on the first floor. The south bedroom, over the kitchen, would have had a fireplace originally (using the second flue in the 2-flue stack), but the north bedroom must originally have been unheated, as the two flues here served the cellar and parlour. Originally, there were no rooms in the attic, and no stair access. The roof structure is of minimal, pragmatic type, making use of cross walls and purlins rather than trusses.

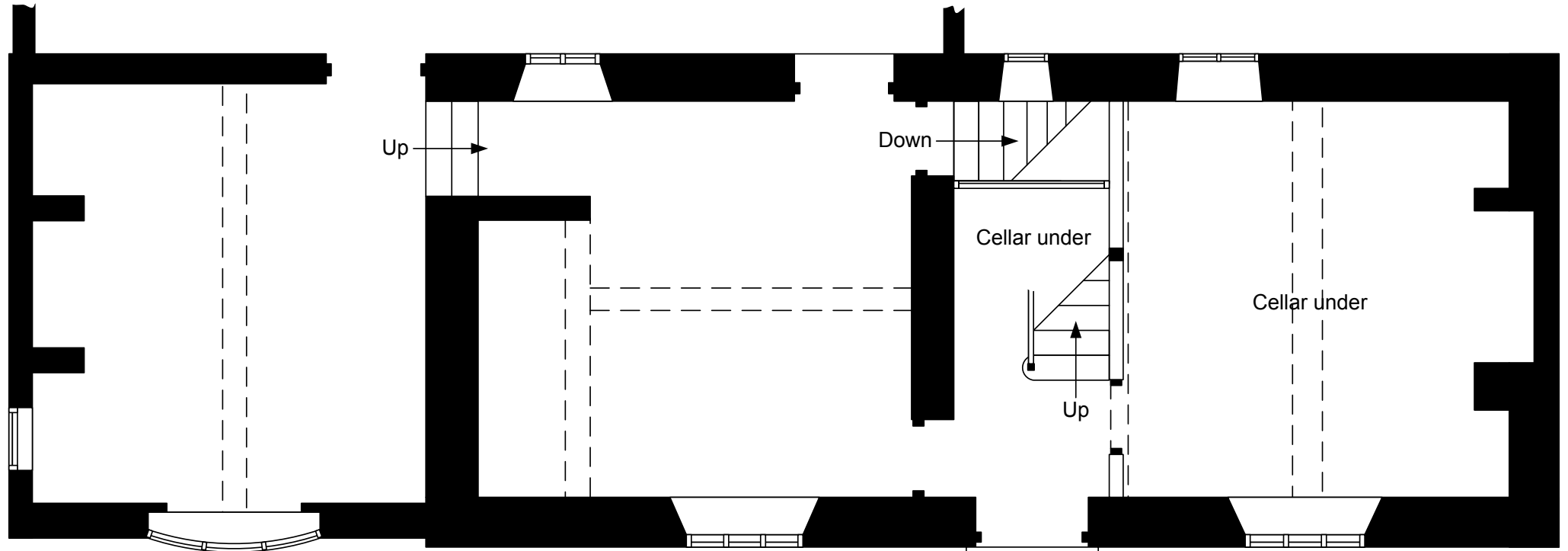
By 1804, if not originally, there was a small projecting room to the NW, probably accessed via a door from the parlour. This was probably a single-storey lean-to. It may have provided storage space, though it is odd that it was attached to the parlour, not the kitchen.

The south extension was added somewhere between 1804 and 1848, probably in the 1830s or 1840s. It provided additional kitchen or service space, with the cellar probably now relegated to storage use only. A fireplace could now have been inserted

in the north bedroom, using the second flue in the chimneystack. This is one of the earlier buildings in the area to have external walls built of brickwork, the bricks being rather smaller in size than those which came into common use after 1850. The new brick extension was of utilitarian character in comparison with the early house, and would not have complemented the original, high quality design. By 1886, the NW extension had been removed and the south extension expanded to the rear. The attic rooms were also brought into use, with the stair extended up to this level.

Nick Hill
March 2014

Modern Extension



GROUND FLOOR

THE KNOLL, 103 MAIN STREET,
LYDDINGTON

NH / RO March 2014



The east front



The rear west side



The head of the front doorway



Stone-mullioned cellar window to east front



Eaves detail to south-east corner



The former outbuilding (101A) to The Knoll, perhaps a dovecote



The north room



The south room, with inglenook fireplace



The extension at the south end



Original fireplace in the cellar



The cellar, looking south, with buttress to rear wall to the right



Roof structure in the southern extension



The Knoll in c.1905



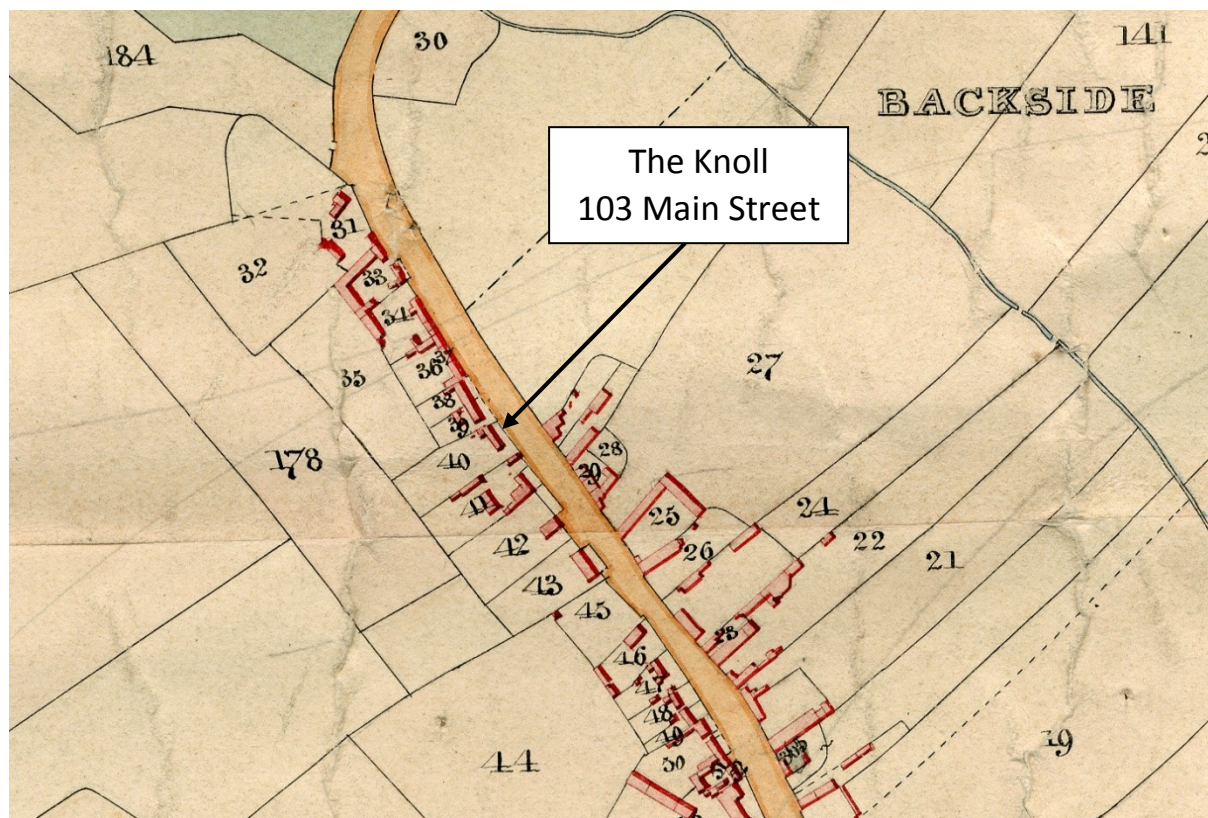
Earlier 20th century view, with The Lilacs in the background



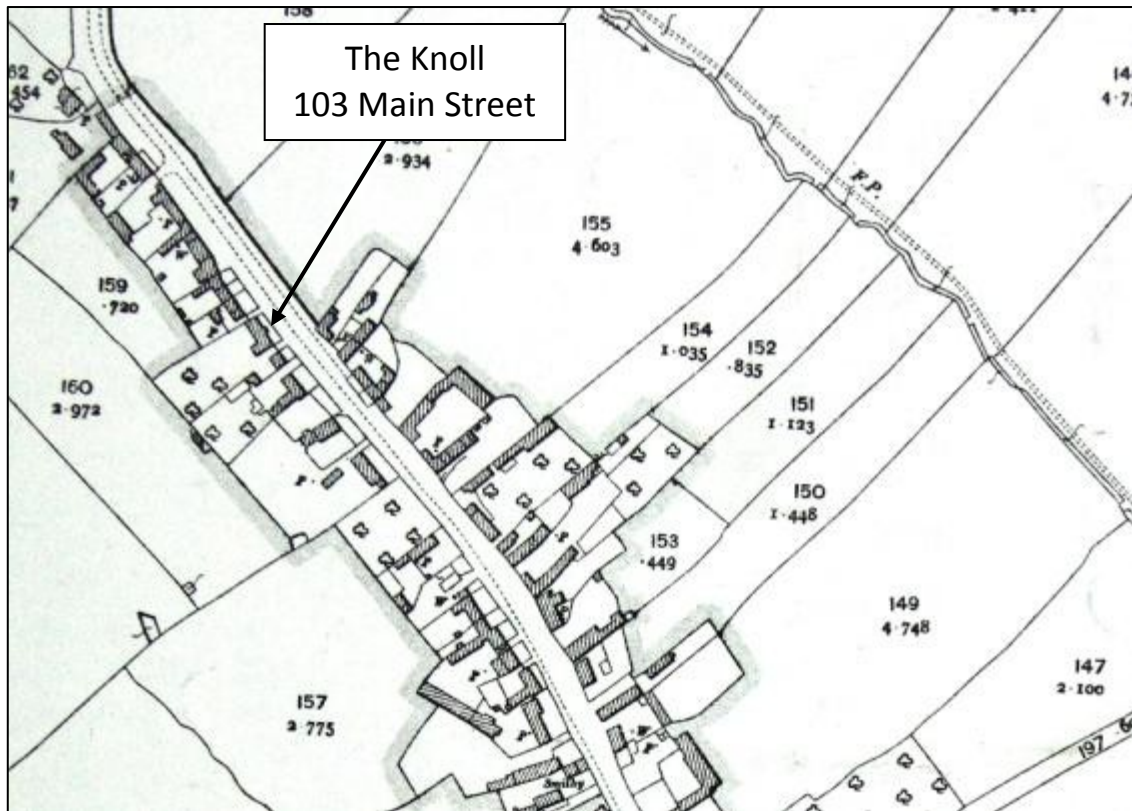
Shaped bricks with holes for planting wires to garden wall



Lyddington Enclosure Map - 1804



Lyddington Estate Map, 1848 (Burghley Archives)



Ordnance Survey 2nd Series, 1904