

HUNSBURY HILL CENTRE NORTHAMPTON

Historical Report



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HUNSBURY HILL CENTRE: Historical Report

Summary

This report describes the history of the farm, which in recent years became the Hunsbury Hill Centre. It offers a summary of the farm's development and the key features that make it such an important site in the county's agricultural history. It is a rare survival of an early 'model farm', that is, a farm which has been designed and built in a single phase, and exemplifies best practice for its day. Model farms were a vast improvement on anything built earlier in terms of convenience and efficiency and represent advanced thinking in architectural as well as agricultural ideas.

Documents in Northamptonshire Record Office indicate that it was built around 1770 with the farmhouse and farm buildings set around an octagonal courtyard. It is unusual and remarkable because the layout of the buildings has remained almost unchanged from 1770 to the present day. No similar farmstead from the county is known.

The farm was built by Edward Bouverie of Delapre and subsequently owned by Pickering Phipps, the Northampton brewer, who was also chairman of the Hunsbury ironworks. Farming was interrupted for the last quarter of the 19th century when the land was given over to ironstone quarrying and the house let separately. The land was returned to agriculture use, predominantly as a sheep farm at the beginning of the 20th century. In 1935 the farm passed into the ownership of a number of companies intending to further exploit the ironstone deposits, though they never did so. In the 1970s, 200 years of farming on Hunsbury Hill ended, but a link with the rural landscape was retained when the buildings became the headquarters of Northamptonshire Rural Community Council subsequently renamed Northamptonshire ACRE.

Further descriptions of the architecture and a list of tenants from the 18th to the 20th century are given as appendices.

Cover photograph of Hunsbury Hill Farm in 1965 courtesy of Dick Rose.

1. Introduction

The area around Hunsbury Hill with the nationally important archaeological monuments of Brier Hill Neolithic causewayed enclosure and the Hunsbury Iron Age Hillfort at Hunsbury, has a long and well-documented history. This report takes up the story in the medieval period and continues it through to the present day, concentrating on the development of the farmstead built in the second half of the 18th century, now the headquarters of Northamptonshire ACRE, which is part of the national network of Rural Community Councils (RCCs).

2. Origins of the farm

The farm stands on what was, from at least 1220 if not earlier, one of the medieval common fields of Hardingstone Parish. All indications are that there were no earlier buildings on the site. The medieval system of agriculture was very different from today being based on large areas called Fields subdivided into Furlongs. Furlongs were further subdivided into separately owned, narrow strips of arable land recognised today in many Midlands counties as 'ridge and furrow'. The early field system for Hardingstone has been reconstructed from historical documents and modern fieldwork (Ref. 1), from which it can be shown that Hunsbury Hill Farm stands in what was Hawkway Field, and straddles furlongs with the names Little Debdale, Head of Little Debdale and Great Debdale. By 1740 these furlongs, along with most of the others on Hunsbury Hill, had been converted from arable to grass pasture, presumably because the poorer quality, dry, acid soils of the exposed ironstone had become infertile after centuries of ploughing.

In the middle of the 18th century, agriculture was changing to meet the needs of a growing population and much of the open-field Midland parishes were 'enclosed', largely for pastoral farming. The separate strips of the earlier farms, scattered over several furlongs, were replaced by consolidated holdings in larger fields defined by hedges or fences, leading to greater flexibility of land use, encouraging the introduction of new crops and ultimately leading to improved farming methods. Whereas the earlier farmhouses were concentrated in the villages, the new enclosure farms were built in the centre of the newly enclosed landscape and new roads were created for access.

When Edward Bouverie purchased Delapre Abbey and the manor of Hardingstone in 1764, and shortly afterwards (1765/6) enclosed the open-fields there, he was one of the pioneers in the early enclosure movement in Northamptonshire. Perhaps to announce his arrival in the county, but certainly to benefit from the advantages of enclosure, by about 1770 he had built an impressive new model farm on Hunsbury Hill. There is a contemporary plan of a farmstead (Ref. 2) in the Bouverie Collection at Northamptonshire Record Office (NRO), which, although not identified as such is without doubt a plan of Hunsbury Hill. From the plan it is clear that it was a remarkably innovative and advanced farm, incorporating all that was best practice in its farmhouse, farm buildings and particularly their layout. Comparing this plan with the present farmstead it is clear that despite later alterations and some 19th century additions, the original design was fully realised in a single phase of building.

3. The late 18th century farmstead

The layout of the c1770 farmstead, shown in Fig. 1, is most unusual in that it is based on an elongated octagon. There seems to be no precedent for such a design in the area and certainly no survivals of such a complete 18th century farm in Northamptonshire. The architect is unknown but clearly had an up-to-date working knowledge of the principles of 'improved' farming that were being discussed in agricultural circles at that time. Few planned or model farms had been built at this date and those that had belonged to aristocratic estates, mainly in the north of England or Scotland. Few books on the subject had been published, new ideas being communicated largely by word-of-mouth, each new farm being different, involving a degree of experimentation. We may never know where Edward Bouverie got the design for his new farm on Hunsbury Hill but it is clear that his architect provided quite an innovative, and by the very nature of its survival, an effective and enduring solution.

The site was carefully chosen on a west-facing slope of the hill, overlooking the Nene valley. The farm buildings were set out around an octagonal courtyard, its long axis aligned roughly east-west, and with the farmhouse defining the eastern three sides of the octagon. The longer north and south sides were each dominated by large barns whilst a pair of cattle foddering hovels separated by the cart hovel made up the three sides of the western end. (Here, the term hovel is taken to mean some form of open-sided shed). A gap in the south-west corner between the cart shed and one of the hovels provided a covered entry into the yard from the fields.

The length of the yard from the back of the house to the back of the cart hovel, scaled from the c1770 plan is 174 feet and the width is 102 feet. Site measurements gave corresponding distances of 172 feet and 103 feet. Considering the accuracy of both the scaling and the measurements, this is extremely good agreement and provides further validation that the NRO plan is the design for this farmstead.

Although there is no contemporary description of how the farm operated, much can be deduced from its layout and the surviving buildings. The fact that there are two similar sized barns for corn and hay implies some form of mixed farming. However, the expected granary for the corn is absent and it is assumed, therefore, that the corn was used for cattle feed, for baking or was possibly sold. The cow house would have been used for only a small number of dairy cattle to provide milk and cheese for the house. Young stock would have been fattened in the fields and folded in the yard during winter, some shelter being provided by the open-sided foddering hovels at the bottom of the yard. The Welsh Lane, an ancient drovers road from South Wales to Northampton and East Anglia, is less than a mile away and must have been a major factor when choosing the site for the farm, also supporting the assumption that the main business was fatstock rather than dairy.

There are several notable features, which identify Hunsbury Hill Farm as a planned or 'model farm' designed and built as a single integrated unit for more efficient farming:

The land falls gently from east to west with the farmhouse at the highest point giving a clear view over the entire farmyard; see Fig. 6. That the house is an integral part of the farmyard also confirms that the occupier is a tenant fully involved in the running of the farm and not a 'gentleman farmer'. The

house is not over large or ostentatious but well above average standard for a farmhouse of the late 18th century.

There are separate barns for corn and hay, both with double opposing doors and positioned alongside their respective rick yards. The corn barn is located on the south side of yard with its outer-door facing approximately south-west to catch the prevailing winds for threshing. The barns, being 26 feet high to the ridge, offer protection and shelter for the farmyard.

Both the local limestone and brick have been used in the construction of the buildings. The front façade of the house is stone but for economy all the remaining walls are brick, whereas the barns are stone-built throughout. All external walls of the other buildings are stone, giving a unity of appearance when viewed from any point outside the yard, and once again supporting the idea of a unified design. Tapered circular brick-built pillars, imitating Tuscan columns, that support the roofs of the foddering hovels and the cart hovels are a nice design touch, adding an element of decoration and interest.

Consideration has been given to the flow of raw materials to minimise cartage. For example, the hay is stacked and dried in the hay rick yard, stored in the adjacent hay barn, from which it is fed to cattle in the yard. Corn stacked in the corn rick yard is threshed and stored in the adjacent corn barn. Straw can be carried into the yard for bedding or converted to chaff in the chaff house behind the stables for feeding to the horses.

Locating the stables close to the house means it is easier to oversee the horses, which are, quite correctly, separated from the cattle.

The wood hovel is situated close to the kitchen (located in the south wing of the house), whereas the cow house, presumed for dairy cows, is close to the north wing, which housed the dairy. The hog sty was also conveniently close to 'dispose of' waste from the house and whey from the dairy.

The cart shed is turned to face outwards, thus avoiding the need for carts to traverse the yard each day.

There would have been some form of internal partitioning within the yard to define separate areas for cattle and horses. There would also have been a corridor to take the animals into the fields through the covered entry by the cart shed at the bottom of the yard. Plans from the 1870s and later do show the yard divided into two areas.

Most importantly, courtyard farms were ideally suited to the production of manure, essential for maintaining the quality of the fields. It would have been stored in the yard and then forked into carts to be spread on the arable and pasture fields.

Detailed descriptions of each building as they existed in c1770 and their degree of survival and condition in the later 20th century are given in Appendix 1.

4. Subsequent developments

Much of the development of the farmstead from its origins through to the 20th century can be traced and explained through a series of maps and documents from records including the Bouverie collection at NRO. These are supported by oral evidence from Dennis ('Dick') Rose, the last farmer at Hunsbury, and by the evidence of the surviving buildings.

The Hardingstone Inclosure map of 1765/6 (Ref. 3) at NRO, Fig.2, shows only the hedges of the newly enclosed fields and is a confirmation that there were no buildings on the site before the present farm. Confusingly, the map has an exact sketch of the farmstead, the adjacent spinney and plantation in their present positions. But since it also shows the Grand Junction Canal, not completed until 1815, it is clear that these were later additions and not part of the original map. The sketch of the farm is, however, an exact replica of the farm layout.

The 1790s Eyre & Jeffreys map of the County is less than helpful, simply showing a rectangle marked 'Lodge' with no further detail, and showing no access roads. Interestingly, the 1851 census describes the farm as Hunsbury Hill, Lodge Farm House.

By 1810 the two long cattle sheds to the south-west of the yard were in existence (see Fig.3). The OS Surveyor's Field Books of that date show two 'appendages' extending outwards from the back of the south-western foddering hovel, which can be identified as the new cattle sheds. The late 18th century up to 1815 was a period of expansion for Northamptonshire cereal and meat farmers. The rise in demand for their produce was the result of the rapid increase in the population and a reduction of exports as a result of wars with France. This led to increased confidence and investment, and explains this additional capacity for cattle feeding. According to Dick Rose, the new sheds housed about 100 cattle so clearly by this date, the farm's primary activity was cattle fattening.

Deeds, the censuses and trade directories all identify the 18th century tenants names as Shaw and it is likely that Joseph Shaw, a farmer, named in the 1777 Hardingstone Militia List (Ref. 4) was the first tenant of the new Bouverie farm. In the 1840s William Shaw senior, William Shaw junior and John Shaw were identified as farmers in Hardingstone (Ref. 5). William senior was at Hunsbury Hill Farm, described in the 1851 census as being 81 years old, farming 230 acres and employing 12 labourers. William junior was tenant at the neighbouring Bouverie farm of Brier Hill. The next year, William senior was dead and his wife Ann had moved to Northampton, having received a mortgage on a house in Gold Street from amongst others, Pickering Phipps, the brewer (Ref. 6). John Shaw, William senior's son seems to have taken over at Hunsbury and was certainly farming there by 1861, when he was 32 years old with 320 acres, employing 11 labourers and 3 boys. He was still the tenant at the 1871 census, now described as tenant and auctioneer, with 250 acres, employing 8 men and 1 boy. In 1874, although still living in Hardingstone, John was not farming but now described simply as auctioneer (Ref. 7).

In 1872 J A S Bouverie leased the mineral rights on the Hunsbury Hill and Brier Hill farms to William Brice (the tenant farmer at Brier Hill), and others for the extraction of ironstone (Ref. 8). In the deeds, Hunsbury Hill is described as 'late in the

occupation of John Shaw, now in the occupation of William Rice'. The lease was renewed in 1877 when the occupier of both farms was now 'the executors of William Rice' (Ref. 9). Quarrying eventually took place over practically the whole area of both farms and would clearly have disrupted the farming, which would explain John Shaw's departure. Top soil and overburden were removed and the ironstone excavated, all by hand digging. When an area was worked-out, the topsoil and subsoil was returned and the land re-levelled, but it was nearly always in poor condition, especially for arable use. Later in the 1870s a tramway was constructed connecting the various Hunsbury Hill quarries to the blast furnaces erected alongside the river to the north of the farm. These were first operated by Northampton Coal, Iron & Wagon Co. in 1874. The tramway passed to the west of the farmstead through the spinney and is shown on the OS maps of the 1880s. This tramway fell into disuse after 1921 when the furnaces were closed and the rails were taken away in 1941 for the war effort.

Plans of the farm in the deeds of 1872 and 1877 (see Fig. 4) clearly show the added cattle sheds to the south-west. The farm yard is divided into two with a building near its centre, probably a covered midden to store and dry the manure, a common practice at this time. The labourers' cottages to the south-west of the yard with allotments and outside privies are also shown, although based on census data they were already there by 1851. Extensions to the front and rear of the north-wing of the house can also be seen. The one to the yard-side houses a second staircase with first-floor bathroom and water closet, features necessary for aspiring householders in this period; that to the garden-side provided a back-kitchen and dairy together with a separate glass conservatory. All these alterations, as well as the bow windows to the sitting room and dining room, date to around the middle of the 19th century. Both the extension and the conservatory were demolished in the 1940s.

Pickering Phipps bought Hunsbury Hill Farm from the Bouverie estate in 1883 (Ref. 10). As there was no farming going on from the late 1870s because of the ironstone extraction, the farmhouse appears to have been let out separately. The 1881 census identifies the occupier as Henry E J Williams, aged 53, a 'Colonel of the 29th Subdivision', born in the East Indies and living with his wife, four daughters, three sons, a housemaid, two nurses and a cook. Also listed, possibly living in the House, are Private Dennis Murphy, aged 39, of the 58th Foot, and a lodger, Private James aged 34, of the 29th Brigade in the service of Colonel Williams. Again in 1891 the occupant is an army officer. Charles B Foster, aged 49 described as Colonel, 49th Regiment District, (which is the 1st Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment) was also born in the East Indies and living with wife, two daughters, a cook, a parlour maid and house maid, and a servant named Thomas Brace, a private from the Northamptonshire Regiment. Another soldier, Christopher Owen, occupies one of the labourers' cottages, aged 26, private from the Northamptonshire Regiment, with his wife and son. Perhaps these army families were friends of the Bouveries needing accommodation whilst home on furlough. According to Dick Rose, his father Charles often spoke about Colonel Foster who was well known for his horses, and might have hunted with the Grafton Hunt.

Farming seems to have returned to Hunsbury Hill by 1901 when Harry Griffin, aged 28 and single, described as farmer, sheep and cattle dealer, was living there with only his sister. The introduction of sheep was perhaps because the lower quality of the

reconstituted land was not sufficient to support arable farming. Harry married in 1911 and his wife Agnes enjoyed entertaining at Hunsbury House, now employing two maids, a scullery maid, cook and Fred Jones, who doubled as shepherd and footman. The parties at the house were a 'must' for the county's socialites, the composer Ivor Novello being a favourite guest (Ref. 11). Harry was a respected and influential sheep farmer, breeding the first Border-Leicester sheep, but left the farm in 1923 when Charles Rose from Lincolnshire became tenant.

Charles ran a mixed-farm, importing and fattening Irish cattle for the local markets, growing oats and barley solely for feed, and corn for feed and sale. During Charles' tenancy the oak spinney was felled for use by the brewery during the Great Strike of the 1920s, and has self-rejuvenated, mostly with sycamore. About 1930, the corn barn to the south of the yard became unsafe and was reduced in height to about 4 feet and used as open pens. The Hay Barn was then used for storing all cereals. The long cattle sheds, never fully occupied in his time, were used only for storage by 1939 although the later feed-store continued to be used for processing root crops for the cattle.

5. Conclusions

The history and development of Hunsbury Hill Farm has been detailed from its construction around 1770 to the present day. Built by Edward Bouverie of Delapre shortly after he 'enclosed' the fields of Hardingstone parish, the original layout has been preserved and many of the buildings still stand.

It has been shown to be a very early example of a 'model' farm, a term more commonly applied to farmsteads of the 19th century evolution in farm buildings and farming practice. Unlike earlier farms, which 'grew' organically over time, Hunsbury Hill Farm was designed and planned as an integral unit, laid out around a courtyard of octagonal plan, the buildings being placed for greatest convenience and efficiency. The concept of an enclosed yard was relatively new in the late 18th century, effectively a 'factory' for collecting and storing manure to enrich the arable and pasture fields.

Two large barns for hay and corn dominated the yard implying mixed farming from the outset. However, before 1810, two long feeding sheds with a capacity for more than 100 cattle had been built, suggesting a greater emphasis on fatstock to feed a rapidly growing population. Perhaps young stock brought from South Wales to the Midlands along the nearby ancient drover's road called Welsh Lane were being fattened for sale at Northampton market. In the later 19th century some of the ancillary farm buildings were altered or replaced as farming methods improved and requirements changed. The farmhouse itself was also upgraded to satisfy the Victorian need for greater comfort and privacy.

A list of owners and occupiers has been compiled from documentary sources showing that members of a family named Shaw were tenants for the first 100 years, a continuity that might explain why so much of the original farmstead has survived. In the late 19th century farming seems to have stopped whilst ironstone extraction took place over the entire farmland and the house let separately. When the land was returned to farming at the start of the 20th century, because of its poorer quality, sheep predominated.

References

(NRO indicates a document held at Northamptonshire Record Office)

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About the Author

Dr Rod Conlon, a retired chartered engineer, is a consultant buildings and gardens historian specialising in surveying and recording vernacular buildings. More recently this has been combined with documentary research to trace the development of houses and to compile house histories. Recent work includes an English Heritage project studying all the pre-1700 buildings in three villages in South Northamptonshire and North Buckinghamshire for the Whittlewood Project.

On behalf of Northamptonshire Gardens Trust, Rod co-authored a leaflet on the historic deer parks of the county (Awards for All project), helped compile the national Gardens at Risk register for English Heritage and has completed several detailed studies of significant county gardens. Rod is a member of the Vernacular Architecture Group, and a council member of Northamptonshire Gardens Trust.

Appendix 1 The Farmhouse and Farm Buildings

This appendix draws heavily on a 1976 report (Ref. 12) and plan (Fig. 5) prepared for Northampton Development Corporation.

The Farmhouse (Fig. 7.)

As built, the original farmhouse was of three bays, two storeys high plus attics, and with identical single-bay, two-storey wings at either end, aligned at about 30 degrees to the main house. The front elevation is symmetrical, of local limestone ashlar with an ogee cornice. The roof with stone-coped gables and 18th century kneelers is covered in Welsh slate, although originally it had plain clay tiles (as seen and photographed in the roof-space when the house was being converted to office use). A central front door leads to a stone-flagged entrance-hall and staircase-bay. A door at the back of the hall lead to the yard whilst doors either side lead to the dining room on the south and the drawing room on the north. Both rooms have high ceilings with cornices and are panelled. Both would have had large fireplaces but only the dining room one survives: a fine late 18th century Adam-style chimney-piece in two colours of marble. A doorway alongside the fireplace, now blocked, would have led from the kitchen in the south wing. The large open fireplace in the kitchen has had its fire-beam replaced and has a later bread oven to one side. There is an external door into the yard. The north wing would have contained the dairy and possibly a brewhouse, and had only a single external door to the yard. During the 19th century this arrangement seems to have been reversed, the kitchen being transferred to the north wing and the dining room and sitting rooms interchanged. The original layout made more sense as it had the kitchen close to the wood hovel for stoking the kitchen fire, and the dairy on the cooler north side, also conveniently close to the cow house.

The staircase leads to a small first-floor landing that provides access to bedrooms over the two principal downstairs rooms; a corridor along the back of the house leads to the north wing bedroom. The bedroom over the sitting room is the most private with a small fireplace and a closet, and without interconnecting doors to other rooms. The bedroom over the dining room, also with a small fireplace, interconnects with the room in the south wing. All the bedrooms were panelled. Three rooms in the attic are reached via a staircase from the landing. These would have been used as servants' rooms and for storage, the central one lit by a dormer to the front elevation, the outer two by dormers to the back, replaced by fanlights after 1938 (photographic evidence). It is clear from the visible timbers that the roof was originally more substantial with multiple but-purlins, but was altered to a single clasped-purlin type when the house was re-roofed with slates in the 19th century. There were no attics over the wings.

There are other dateable features such as the upstairs windows, the kneelers on the stone coping and the staircases but nothing that conflicts with an original build date for the house of the about 1770.

Plans in a deed of 1872 show that the two-storey brick and slate extension on the farmyard-side of the north wing had been built, providing a second staircase, and a first floor bathroom and water closet. This is in keeping with the trend through the Victorian period for increased comfort and better hygiene, to which the owners of a house of this status would have aspired. Likewise, the two attractive bow-windows to

the drawing and dining rooms would certainly have been added during the Victorian period.

The plan also indicates that an extension had been built onto the front of the wing. From later photographs and Dick Rose's description, it was a single storey extension containing the back kitchen and the dairy, implying that the main kitchen had been moved into the north wing by this time and the dairy displaced into the extension. A separate conservatory and greenhouse were also constructed on the front of this wing in the 19th century.

Subsequently, possibly around 1900, a single storey brick and slate pentice was built against the back wall of the house to provide an access corridor from the kitchen to the principal downstairs rooms. It cannot be ascertained whether clay tiles on the main house were replaced by slate at this time or were part of the earlier 'renovation'.

The elliptical-shaped garden to the east of the house, shown in the c1770 plan seems to have survived through to the present day. The only additions have been some 19th century trees, such as the large cedar and the ubiquitous monkey-puzzle tree, introduced into Britain at the end of the 18th century and popularised by the Victorians. In the beginning of the 20th century it is said that there was a tennis court and a croquet pitch on the front lawn.

The Farm Buildings

The descriptions used are those from the c1770 plan.

Wood Hovel and Stable (Now the ACRE Low Barn)

In the 19th century a single-storey barn was built on the site of these original buildings. Both the wood hovel and the stables had been sited conveniently close to the house; the kitchen being the greatest user of fuel, and the proximity to the stables allowing a close watch to be kept on the horses. The stables, probably a two-storey building with hay-loft, were surprisingly small for such a large farm, and would have had a fenced-off area in the yard. Straw from the adjacent Corn Barn (now demolished) would be readily available for bedding or for conversion into fodder in the chaff house at the rear. As the replacement barn contains a blue brick damp course, it was probably built in the later 19th /early 20th century at the same time as the pentice on the back of the house.

Corn and Hay Barns

Only the original Hay Barn, now the ACRE High Barn, survives but from what remains of the Corn Barn it is clear that they were identical in size, wall thickness and, presumably, height. They were built in coursed local limestone having central, opposed threshing-doors with a stone relieving arch. The roof of the Hay Barn, with stone-coped gables and replaced kneelers, is of blue slate. As the pitch of the roof is too shallow for thatch, the slates may be original or, alternatively, it may have had clay pantiles similar to those used on the other farm buildings. There is a single narrow rectangular ventilation slit set high in each gable. Both barns were of five bays; the surviving Hay Barn has a diminished king-post roof having three pairs of raking struts, two pairs from king post to principal rafter and one pair from the tie-beam; this style of roof truss was introduced in the second half of the 18th century.

The wooden doors in the back wall are original, and in 1976 the floor was described as 'of worn and uneven cobbles', although it would originally have had a wooden threshing-floor in the area between the doors. Suspended from one of the tie-beams are the remains of a drive shaft with pulley wheels, a testimony to the introduction of mechanised threshing at Hunsbury during in the 19th century.

The Corn Barn is now reduced to a height of about 4 feet and was latterly used as animal pens. There are the remains of an added stone buttress at its north-east corner, perhaps an attempt to prevent bowing of the walls, which eventually lead to it having to be pulled-down in the 1930s.

Rick Yards

The corn rick yard south of the corn barn had to be terraced because of the slope of the land, which is convenient for its new use, the main ACRE car park. The hay rick yard, to the north of the hay barn (High Barn), is now overgrown.

Foddering Hovels

The two matching cattle foddering sheds at the bottom of the yard have coursed limestone back walls and open fronts. At the front, the roof of each one is supported on a wall plate, which in turn is supported on four Tuscan-style, tapered, circular, brick pillars by means of a wall plate. The c1770 plan shows five pillars but there is no indication that there was ever more than four. The pantiles are probably original.

Cart Hovel and Entry to Yard

Closing the bottom of the yard, between the two foddering sheds, is the cart shed, constructed as the foddering sheds but with its 'back' facing onto the yard and an open 'front' onto the fields. The roof is supported on three Tuscan, brick pillars but as the land falls away quite steeply, they are taller and larger diameter than those in the foddering sheds. At some later date, probably the early 20th century, the area between the pillars was filled in with stone. There is a gap shown alongside the cart hovel in the c1770 plan to enter and exit the yard. Whilst the plan gives no indication, it would seem that the present arrangement of the cart hovel roof extending over it to provide a covered entry was original.

Cow House and Hog Sty (now High Barn vestibule and uninhabited cottage)

There is now no trace of the hog sty, set at an angle and attached to the east-end of the cow house on the c1770 plan. It appears to have had two doors opening into the yard where there would have been some sort of fenced-off pen. Of the cow house, the two-storey, coursed limestone rear-wall still survives but windows and doors with brick arches were introduced in the 19th century when it became the stables. A labourer's cottage was built against its east-gable and the frontage of the combined building was refaced in brick. This cottage became known as Mrs Burman's Cottage after its last occupier. It had been built by the time of the 1851 census, occupied by a Thomas Gadsden, who was living there in 1861 and 1871 but only occupied by his widow in 1881. It was unoccupied at the 1891 and 1901 censuses. According to Dick Rose, Mrs Burman lived there from 1930 until the 1980s when she died aged 97, after which it has remained empty.

Later Cattle Sheds

Two long, single-storey sheds used for tethering and feeding cattle were constructed against the outer wall of the south-west foddering hovel. Although not part of the original farmstead, they were in existence by 1810, and are built of coursed limestone and with pantiled roofs. The most westerly shed has a stone back wall with square brick piers to the front elevation. There is a later extension on the more easterly shed (first recorded on 1880s OS maps but probably built earlier in the 19th century) in coursed limestone, built to store and process turnips and other root vegetables for cattle feed.

Two Cottages (one now occupied by Dick Rose, the other, by his nephew Harvey)
A pair of semi-detached labourer's cottages in coursed limestone with slate roofs and brick chimney-stacks was built between 1851 and 1861. In 1955 Charles Roses' son Dick moved from the farmhouse into one of the cottages, which he then purchased in the 1980s. After Charles' death in 1976, Dick was the last farmer at the Hunsbury Hill Farm.

Water Supplies

A good supply of water was essential for the large number of cattle as well as for domestic use. There were three wells on the farm; one sited in the yard close to the farmhouse, one by the long cattle sheds in front of the 19th century cottages and the third located outside the yard at the north-west corner of the hay barn. In the 1920s there are records of the farm paying a rent of £1 a year to the Grand Junction Canal Co. for a watering place in the meadows by the canal, an arrangement that must have begun when the canal cut the farm off from the river in the 1810s (Ref. 13).

Appendix 2 Owners and Occupiers of Hunsbury Hill Farm

Date	Source	Owner	Occupier
1766	Hall	Edward Bouverie	No farm when fields enclosed.
c1770	NRO	Edward Bouverie	Farmstead built.
1777	Militia List	Edward Bouverie	Joseph Shaw, farmer listed for Hardingstone.
1841	Census	Edward son of Edward Bouverie	William Shaw , age 25, farmer, Jonas Payne, age 30, farmer listed as farmers in Hardingstone.
1849	Whellan	Edward son of Edward Bouverie	John Shaw , William Shaw senior and William Shaw junior listed at Hunsbury Hill Farm.
1851	Census	Edward son of Edward Bouverie	William Shaw senior , age 81, (wife Ann , age 54), farmer, 230 acres, 12 labourers. Son John , age 23.
1852	Mortgage deed		<i><u>Ann Shaw, widow of Hunsbury Hill receives a mortgage on house in Gold Street, Northampton from, amongst others, Pickering Phipps the Northampton brewer.</u></i>
1861	Census	W E Bouverie	John Shaw , age 32 [son of William Shaw senior] farmer, 320 acres?; 11 men & 3 boys.
1867	Children's Employment Commission		<i>Children's Employment Commission evidence. Mr W Shaw of Far Cotton employs 8 labourers and their boys. Not Hunsbury but William Shaw of neighbouring Briar Hill Farm.</i>
1871	Census	W E Bouverie	John Shaw , age 44 [son of William Shaw senior], farmer & auctioneer, 250 acres; 8men & 1 boy.
1872	Deed	J A S Bouverie	late John Shaw , now Wm Rice.
1874	Whellan	J A S Bouverie	<i><u>John Shaw now listed at Hardingstone as auctioneer.</u></i>
1877	Deed	J A S Bouverie	Execs. of late Wm Rice.
1881	Census	J A S Bouverie	Henry E Williams, Colonel, age 53 born India; 29 th Subdivision, family and servants.
1883	Tonks	Pickering Phipps	Purchased HHF.
1891	Census	Pickering Phipps	Charles E Foster, age 49, Colonel, born India; 48 th Regimental District, family and servants.
1894	Kelly	Pickering Phipps	Colonel Charles Edward Foster.
1901-1923	Census	Pickering Phipps	Harry Griffin, age 28, single, sheep, cattle dealer & farmer.
1911	Chron&Ech	Pickering Phipps	Harry Griffin married Agnes [. . .]
1922	Tonks	Executors of Pickering Phipps	
1923	Dick Rose	Executors of Pickering Phipps	Charles Rose from Lincolnshire takes over tenancy from Harry Griffin.
1935	Tonks	Richard Thomas & Co. Ltd.	Charles Rose.
1945	Tonks	Richard Thomas & Baldwin Ltd.	Charles Rose.
1976		British Steel	Charles Rose dies; sons Jack & Dennis ('Dick') Rose, take tenancy.
1977		North'ton DevCorp	Northampton RCC rents the farm.
1979		Northampton RCC, later ACRE	Purchase farm from Northampton Dev.Corp.

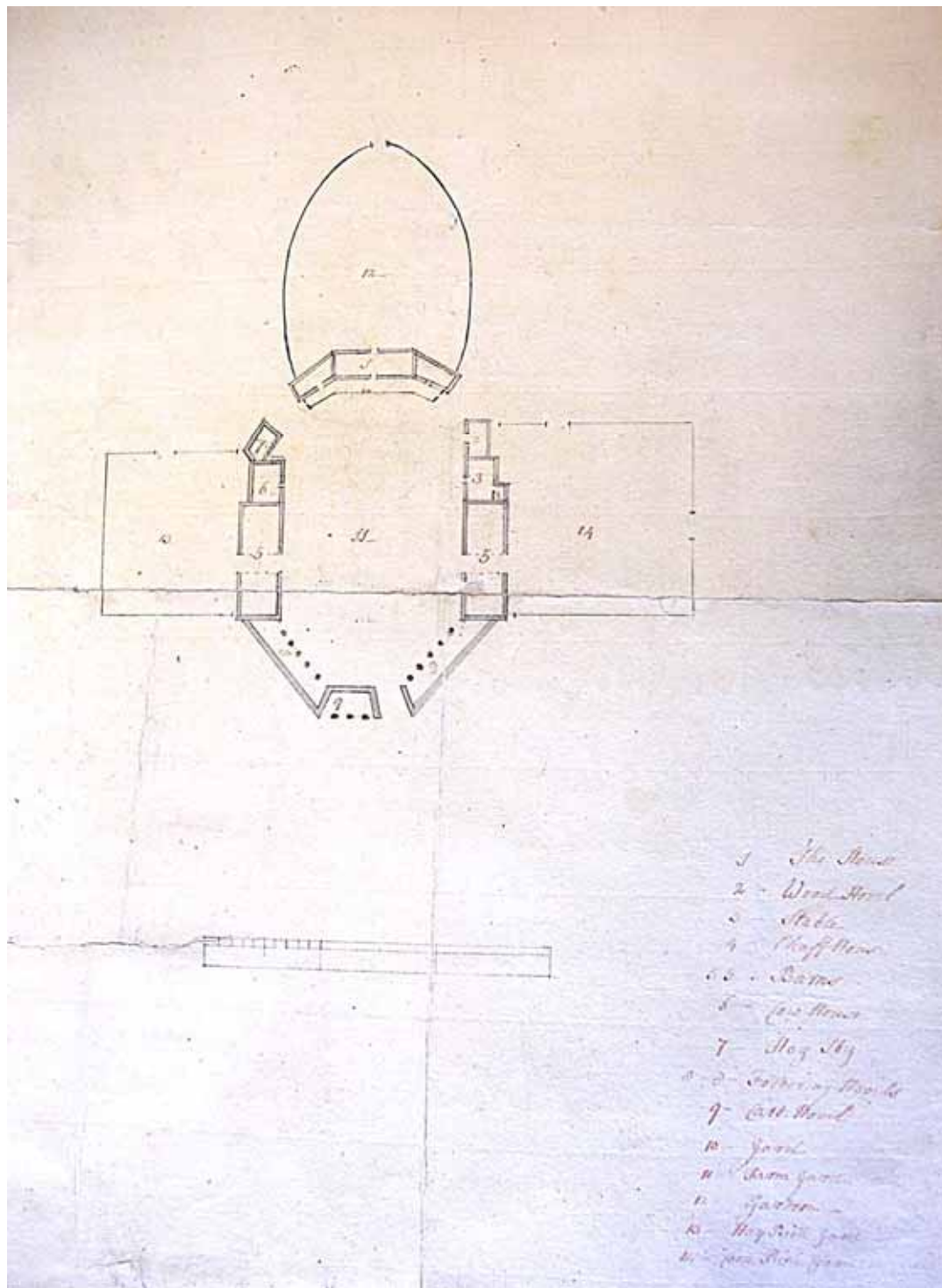


Fig.1. Plan of Hunsbury Hill Farm c1770. NRO B(D) 620

Key

1	The House	2	Wood Hovel	3	Stable	4	Chaff House
5	Barns	6	Cow House	7	Hog sty	8	Foddering Hovels
9	Cart Hovel	10	Yard	11	Farm Yard	12	Garden
13	Hay Rick Yard	14	Corn Rick Yard				



Fig. 2. Detail of Hardingstone enclosure map of 1765/6 , NRO Map Inc 46

Shows the layout of the newly-enclosed fields, overdrawn later with Hunsbury Hill Farm and the Grand Junction Canal (opened 1815).



Fig. 3. OS 2inch map of 1810

The two long cattle sheds to the south-west of the farm can just be seen near the centre of the map. The 'Railway' to the north is a horse-drawn tramway to carry freight whilst the canal was being built.

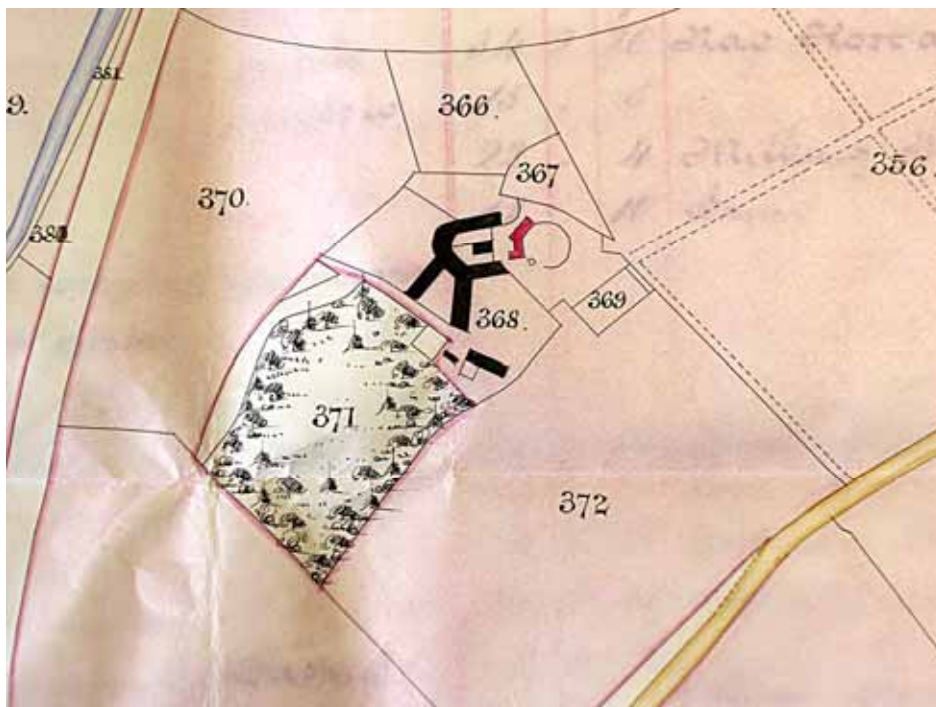


Fig. 4. Plan of the farm from a deed of 1872, NRO B(D) 1408

The extensions to the north wing of the house, the long cattle sheds and labourers' cottages are shown.

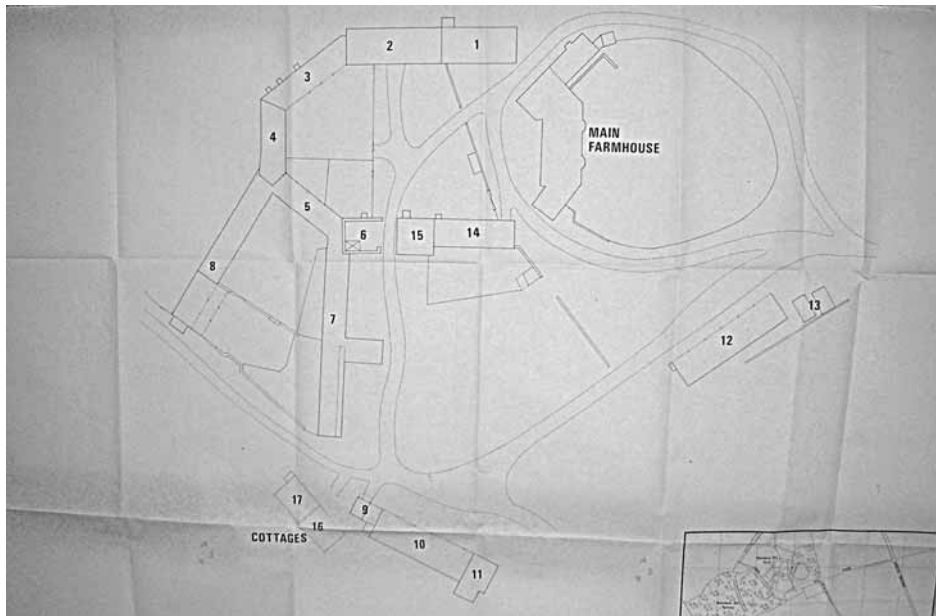


Fig. 5. Northampton Development Corporation plan of 1976

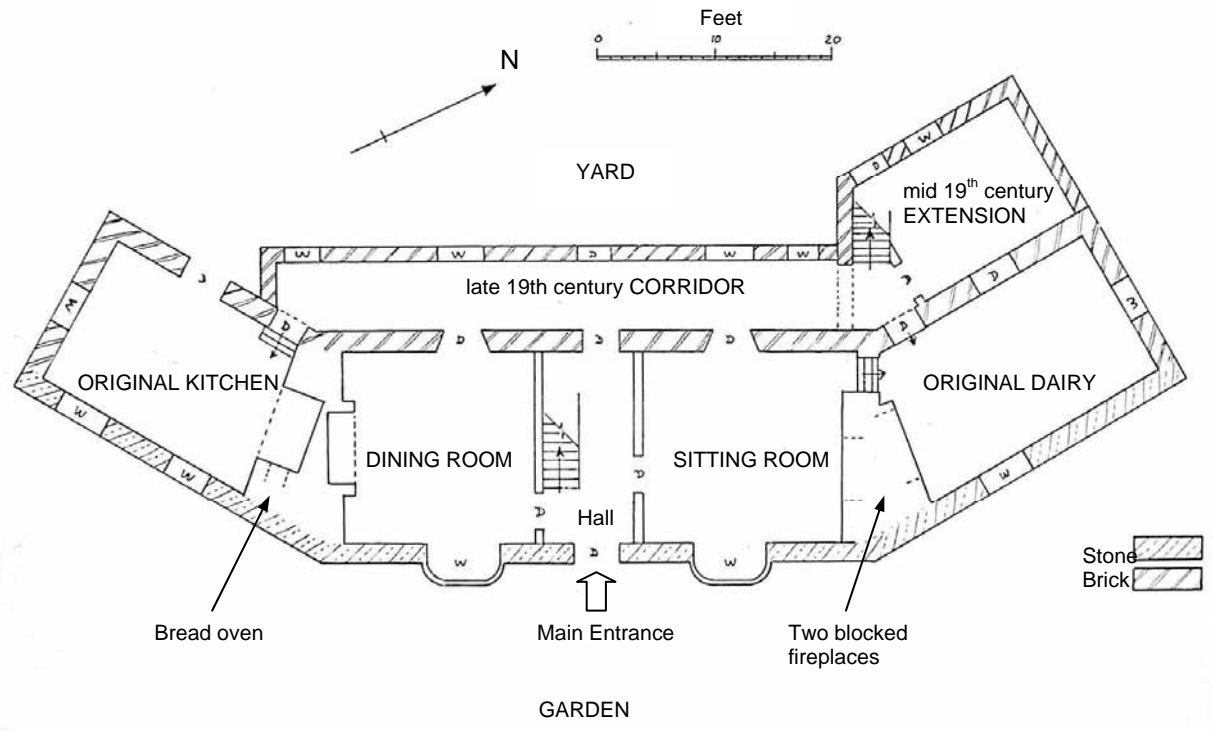
Key.

	1976(2005) Description	1770 Description.
1	Cottage & Stables	Cow House & Pig Sty
2	Hay Barn (ACRE High Barn)	Hay Barn
3	Hovel	Foddering Hovel
4	Animal Pens & Manger	Cart Shed
5	Animal Pens – used as Hay Store	Foddering Hovel
6 & 15	Sheep Pen	Corn Barn
7	Cattle Shed with Extension Arm to East	-
8	Open Sided Storage Range	-
9 to 11	Open Sided and Enclosed Storage Range	-
14	Range of Barns (ACRE Low Barn)	Wood Hovel and Stable
16 & 17	Labourers Cottages (Dick & Harvey Rose)	-



Fig.6. Panoramic view of the yard from the first floor of the house.

Fig.7. Plan of farmhouse



Photographic comparison of the buildings in 1976 and the present

1976



House front

2005



Back of house from yard,



**New stables & Mrs Burman's cottage now
entrance lobby to High barn**



Hay barn now ACRE High barn



Photographic comparison of the buildings in 1976 and the present

1976



Hay barn roof trusses

2005



19th century barn now ACRE Low barn



Foddering hovels



House front and north wing

