

North Yorkshire (West Riding)  
Modern County(Historic County)

Horton in Ribblesdale(parish)  
(Parish or township)

Low Birkwith farm  
(Name of buildings)

NGR  
SD796765

Mr H White  
(Owner or occupier)

Horton in Ribblesdale.  
N Yorks  
(Address)

(listed?)

Recorded: 1 July 1995

Recorders;A Armstrong,J Bishop,S Degnan,L Moor,T Tolhurst

**DESCRIPTION**

Building type: farm complex consisting of farmhouse with attached barn A, detached barn B,henenery-piggery,lower field barn C,higher field barn D.(see attached maps)

(Each building is here described in a seperate report)

**Materials:**

The area probably has a wider range of stone materials than any other in Yorkshire.It certainly has some of the oldest rocks in Yorkshire and these are of Ordovician and Silurian ages and pre-date the Carboniferous limestones and sandstones familiar in many of the Dales vernacular buildings.These older rock layers are brought to the surface as contorted or folded rocks in what is known geologically as the Horton inlier.Older Ordovician rocks are found from Horton north to Newhouses,with later,Silurian rocks from Horton south to Stainforth.'Slates'(not slates in the geological sense but just rocks that cleave into thin pieces)have been worked here for a long time.These 'slaty' rocks are mostly siltstones, sandy flagstones and coarse,gritty rocks,all of which had a certain amount of slaty cleavage imposed upon them during the great upheavals in the Earths crust at the end of Silurian times and before Carboniferous times.The sandier rocks of the area can easily be mistaken for Carboniferous gritstones and roofing flagstones.Research is needed into the sources of the stone materials used in the area.Geological investigation has been concerned only with stratigraphy and palaeontology of the inlier and the vernacular sources of building stone have not been studied.A little is known about Beecroft Quarry(Ordovician slates,'granite'mudstone and Carboniferous limestone);Arco Quarry(Silurian Wenlockian'blue slate');Studfold Quarry(Silurian Ludlovian'slates'of coarse,shelly flags);the quarries around Helwith Bridge S of Foredale(working Silurian Ludlovian 'slates'); Carboniferous limestone from local outcrops and probably some sandstone from further afield,as well as boulders from the glacial deposits are clearly used,but where were these older rocks quarried?

In the local area from Horton northwards,to Newhouses, are Ordovician'slates' and grits. The'slates' are actually fine-grained,greenish or grey silty sandstones which cleave(split) and

are often veined with quartz. The better known 'Ingleton slates' of similar age are, in part, the distinctive bright green colour but apparently go purple on the surface. Hard gritty flags and sandstones and the granular or gritty rock called 'calliard' alternates with these slatier rocks. Higher up in the geological horizon is a small outcrop N of Horton of coarse Wharfe Conglomerate (named after the hamlet of Wharfe). These seem to be the likely sources of flaggy building stone at Low Birkwith along with the large boulders of mixed sandstones and limestones from the glacial debris. The Silurian rocks from S of Horton have been much quarried in more recent times leading to the large quarries around Helwith such as Arco quarry (mostly roadstone now). Here again the rocks which were probably quarried are of mixed lithologies. For instance the Horton Flags seem to vary from 'blue slate' used for floors, gates, bridges and boskins, to dark grey stripy siltstones and to coarse, gritty, 'slates' with wavy, pebbly surfaces. The distinctive purple and green 'Moughton whetstone' is also part of the Horton Formation. Below the Horton flags are the Austwick grits flags and mudstones which were also used for flags, roofing and whetstones. Above the Horton flags, the Studfold sandstone includes massive, grey grits like the Austwick sandstones but some of it yielding coarse, shelly flagstone, and also coarse, blue-grey flags or 'slates' of very large size. More research is needed to identify precisely the materials used in the vernacular buildings around Horton since the term 'Horton Flags' or 'Ribblesdale slate' seems to cover a variety of sandy or muddy rocks of Ordovician and Silurian age.

#### GENERAL SETTING

##### *Orientation;*

The farm buildings including the house, attached barn and adjoining linear barn are aligned along Coppy Gill in a NE-SW direction, on an area of flat land, below a ravine with waterfalls. The polite front of the farm house faces SE away from the yard and the Coppy Gill. The barns A and B threshing floors would have caught the NW wind blowing down Ribblesdale. The field barns, as one would expect, lie further from the farmyard and across Coppy Gill and are related to the enclosed meadow land (Details of orientation are discussed separately)

##### *Relationships;*

The site is probably an ancient one although no medieval buildings survive. The arched doorhead, reused on field barn D, and the cruck-like timbers could be late medieval. In 1189 Birkwith belonged to Furness Abbey. Later, Fountains Abbey also had a stock-rearing lodge there. After a quarrel in 1224 between Jervaulx and Fountains abbeys, Birkwith was divided into High and Low Birkwith with two lodges for stock rearing. Another quarrel in 1338 resulted in Furness retaining some of Birkwith and Jervaulx keeping the rest. Although there were thus small settlements at both Birkwiths, it is not known whether they predate the monastic acquisition of stock rearing land. Certainly ridge and furrow was to be seen in the spring of 1995, underlying the stone enclosure walls of the flat meadow land to the NW, indicating subsistence farming around the farm for centuries and at a time before enclosure took place, after the Dissolution.

Low Birkwith lies at over 850 feet OD by an undulating area of boulder and clay glacial drumlins. Above the house and the drumlin

mounds, limestone bedrock outcrops as areas of pavement. All this gives variable building materials and different types of soils. With slate for roofing so widely available from 2 miles away, it is interesting that the lower field barn has evidence of a roof apparently raised from one with low eaves and thatched roof and the upper field barn has re used cruck, or cruck-like, timbers for a thatched roof. Could these be the remains of older field barns built when the land was first enclosed from open arable land( 16 thC?) and then rebuilt in the 18 th C ?

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### THE BUILDINGS AT LOW BIRKWITH

*Building name*

Low Birkwith farmhouse with barn A

*Building listed?*

NGR SD79687650

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*Date of record;* 1 July 1995

*Names of recorders*

A Armstrong, J Bishop, S Degnan, L Moor, T Tolhurst

*Note of any alterations/demolitions since recording*

The end bay of the barn is being rebuilt with different openings

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#### DESCRIPTION

##### *1. Building type/purpose*

Farmhouse with attached barn

##### *2. Materials*

The building materials are all local but very variable and come from the glacial drift, Carboniferous limestone and from the older, pre Carboniferous rocks of the Horton inlier. The wallstones of the house and barn are mixed random rubble with split gannister sandstone boulders from the glacial debris and beck. There are also some limestone blocks from the hillside above the farm, where fallen or old quarried blocks of limestone are still to be seen. Coarse, sandy Pre Carboniferous rocks are also used, although the smeared style of the pointing makes it difficult to see the rock types clearly

The rebuilt SE front of the house with its projecting stone surround windows, and with projecting sills, are broad tool dressed and would have been rendered originally, covering up the limestone and sandstone rubble.

Sandy, fissile, Ribblesdale flags are used on the roof with the dark Ribblesdale 'blue slate' used for paving outside the farm front door and over the blocked window and as throughs in the barn stone partition wall. Cut sandstones (probably Pre Carboniferous) are used for the ridge.

The yard is wonderfully cobbled with limestone and sandstone pebbles from the glacial debris. The rear wing of the house has been rebuilt recently. The stone surround windows with a parallel, reeded decoration have probably been reset since they do not join properly at the corners. The door has large jamb stones.

##### *3. Exterior details*

The house frontage (roughly S) has been rebuilt in the early 19 th

century with projecting, broad-tooled, stone surround, windows and doors. It was designed to be rendered originally. There are some large boulders in the foundations where it joins the barn. The internal house plan was probably maintained in this modernisation keeping the door position.

There are two large chimney stacks but the central one is the larger and probably the original. Both have quoined and rubble-work with slates forming the moulding. There are no clay pots.

The old 17th C house is best observed from the back (N) where there is a double plinth which continues around the W side of the house. The traditional smeared pointing obscures much of the mixed rubble wallstones but there are long, pecked quoins. There are two mullioned, splayed windows. The lower one is blocked and has a 'slate' hood. Above it, two lights of a shallow, double chamfered mullioned window are seen, indicating a fully two storeyed house. A bulge in the lower wall towards the W gable indicates that another window has been removed and infilled, probably when refrontaging.

The W gable, now in the barn, has the large double plinth, and roughly coursed rubble walls with substantial quoins, and is all of one build. In the wall below the chimney stack is a projecting flagstone. Possibly this supported the inserted stone stack.

The rear wing has recently been rebuilt and is probably not quite as it was. The stone window frames have a parallel, reeded decoration but these do not fit well together, as the quality of the tooling indicates they should. The door has large quoin jambs and is different in style. The wing probably provided a new kitchen with rooms over and it has a chimney stack.

Attached to the wing is an outbuilding of rubble with 2 doors with large rough lintels. It has a monopitch, or saltpie, 'slate' roof and stone ridge and may be a store rather than animal housing.

The Barn A has been added, perhaps c 1700, shortly after the house was built. It has a large rough stepped plinth and watershot rubble walls with throughs and large quoins. The arched cart entrance has rough, thin voussoirs held by a keystone and a hood over. The W bay, now being rebuilt, was a stable. It had a tall door with a heavy lintel, but this has been removed to make a wider entrance. There are two ventilator slits in the N wall and three in the S wall for a hay mew or crop storage.

#### 4. Interior details

No access was permitted to the farm house or store but the fireplaces we were told are all modern and nothing old is exposed.

The attached barn is of three bays with a stone wall deviding the end bay to make a stable. Because of the demolition of the end bay it was not certain if the stable wall was inserted. The inclusion of throughs of 'blue slate' indicated it may be. However there is no foddergang door so it may always have been a stable.

The cart entrance gives access to the W end bay and nearly opposite is a small off-centre door, now a window, which suggests there was a threshing floor here. The same off-centre winnowing door is seen in barn B adjoining. Whilst the centre bay has ventilation holes for crop storage, joist holes in the wall at a level with the cart door top indicates there was also a floor here. This may be an insertion since there is no forking hole for

it unless there were timber steps or a trap door. It would then have made a rather low area for threshing or winnowing.

The single king post roof truss with struts is of interest since the king post is decorated with two cut away bands. There are a number of such decorated trusses in the Settle area, all of about 1700 (see Harrison and Hutton). The banded king post supports the struts to the principal rafters and the braces to the ridge. The oak is roughly chamfered. There is no sign of any reused timber. The stone wall for the stable replaces the need for a second truss. A pig killing creel or stool hanging on the wall was probably used with the hennery-piggery across the yard.

#### 5. plan form.

The house has been a two cell direct entry plan into the houseplace which was heated by the large central stack. The other cell may have been unheated and divided into a low end dairy and parlour, but became a heated parlour when the rear wing was added.

The Barn is of linear 3 bay plan with a threshing floor, crop storage and stable.

#### DATING.

6. Identify the oldest part of the building

The two cell farmhouse is probably of late 17 th C date

7. Major alterations/extensions

About 1700 the barn was added to the house perhaps replacing an older one since a barn would be needed more than a house on new land. (The field barn C across the Gill may have been in use as a thatched barn.) In the early 19 th C, the rear wing was added to the house (although this has been partly rebuilt recently) and about the same time the old two cell house was refronted with large rectangular windows

The salt pie store/shed was added in the mid 19 th C

#### SETTING

8. Orientation

The polite front of the house faces S into the hillside but looking away from the yard. The kitchen wing, however, has access into the yard and its activities, with a flagged way to the barn cart entrance marked out in the cobble stones.

9. Relationships.

The yard was important with its cart road and ford and was also reached from the house backdoor, the barn cart door and the nearby hennery-piggery

#### OTHER INFORMATION

10. Initials/date stones

None seen

11. Oral information from owner/occupier

Fireplaces modern, not exposed. Rear wing rebuilt.

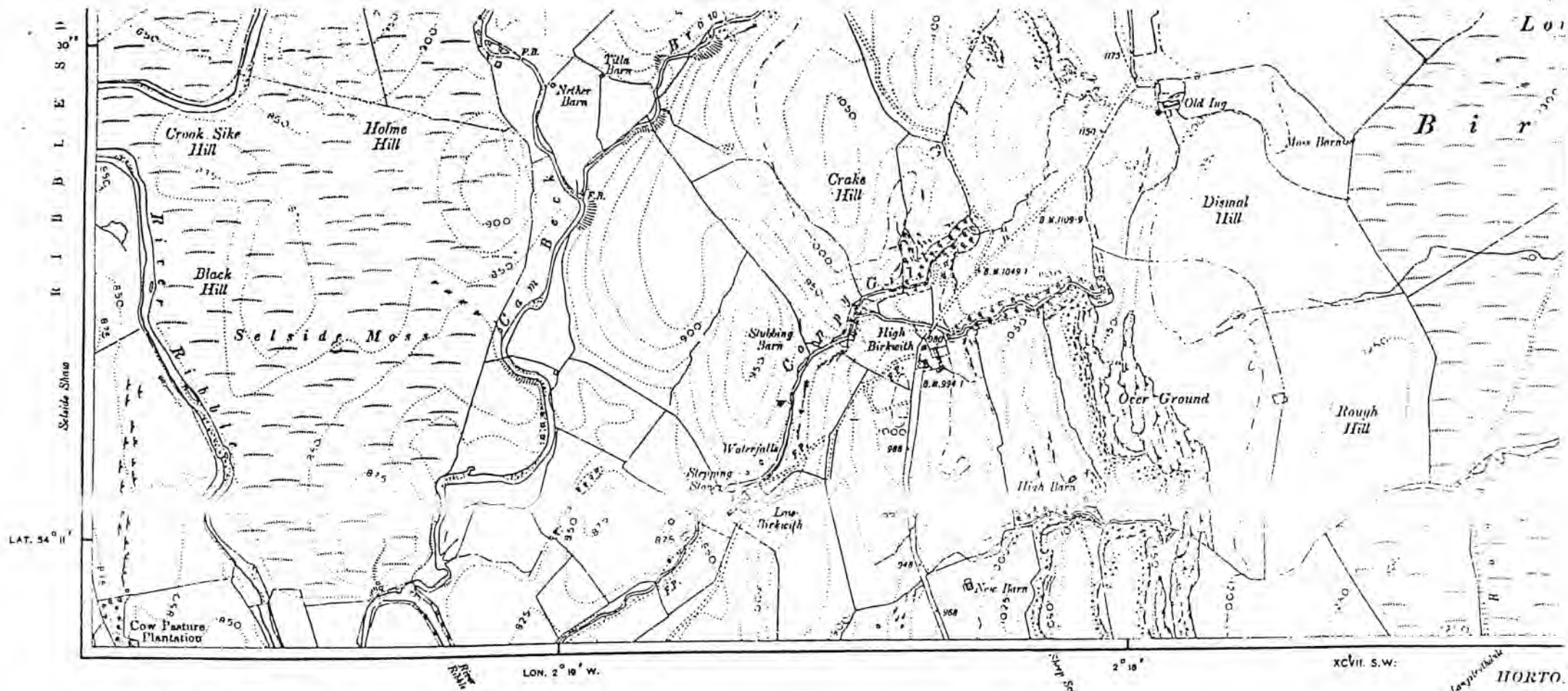
12. Documentation; maps etc

13. Plans etc annexed (please tick)

block plan of site ✓  
ground floor plan ✓ (barely)  
first floor plan  
analytical plan  
copies of inventories etc

sections  
elevations  
detail drawings ✓  
photographs ✓ (see ① → ②)

ACA 1995



Surveyed in 1847-48. Revised in 1907.  
 Reprint 30/36.

**CHARACTERISTICS AND SYMBOLS**

County Boundary	Antiquities, Site of
Parliamentary Division Boundary	Arrow, showing direction of flow of water
Union Boundary	Contours { Instrumental ... 100 Sketches ... 125
Rural District Boundary	
Parish Boundary	Trigonometrical Station
Catchment Area Boundary	

For other information see Characteristic Sheet.

The Catchment Area Boundaries are administrative ones decided by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Price 2/- net

Printed and Published by the Director General at the Ordnance Survey Office

The Altitudes are given in Feet above Ordnance Survey Datum, (approximate Mean Sea Level)

Altitudes indicated thus (B.M. 54.1) refer to Bench Marks on Buildings, Walls, &c. those marked thus (1) provided

Green Copyright Reserved.

6" - 1 mile.

Low  
BIRKWITH

SD 796765

Shobbing  
Barn

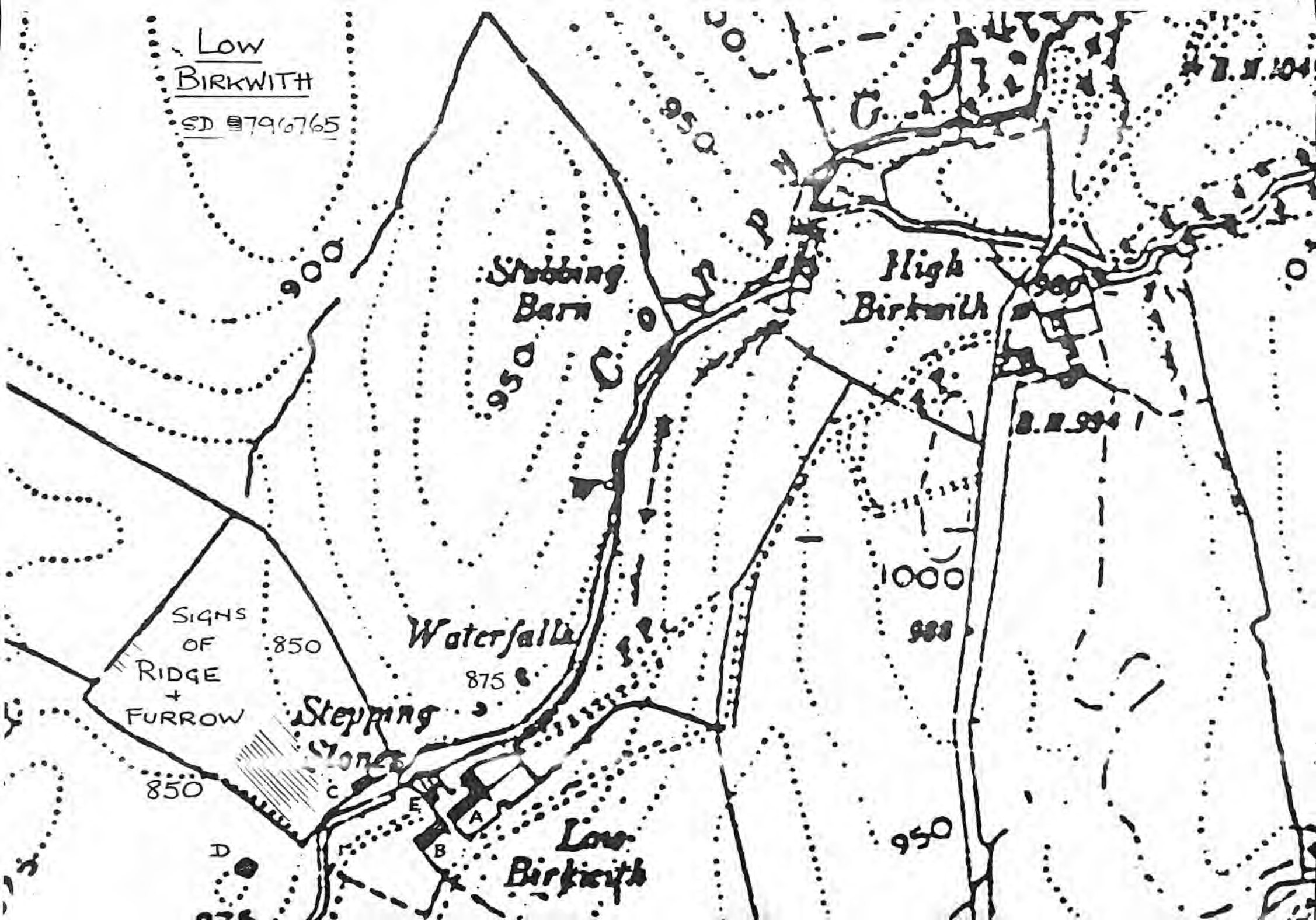
High  
Birkwith

Waterfall

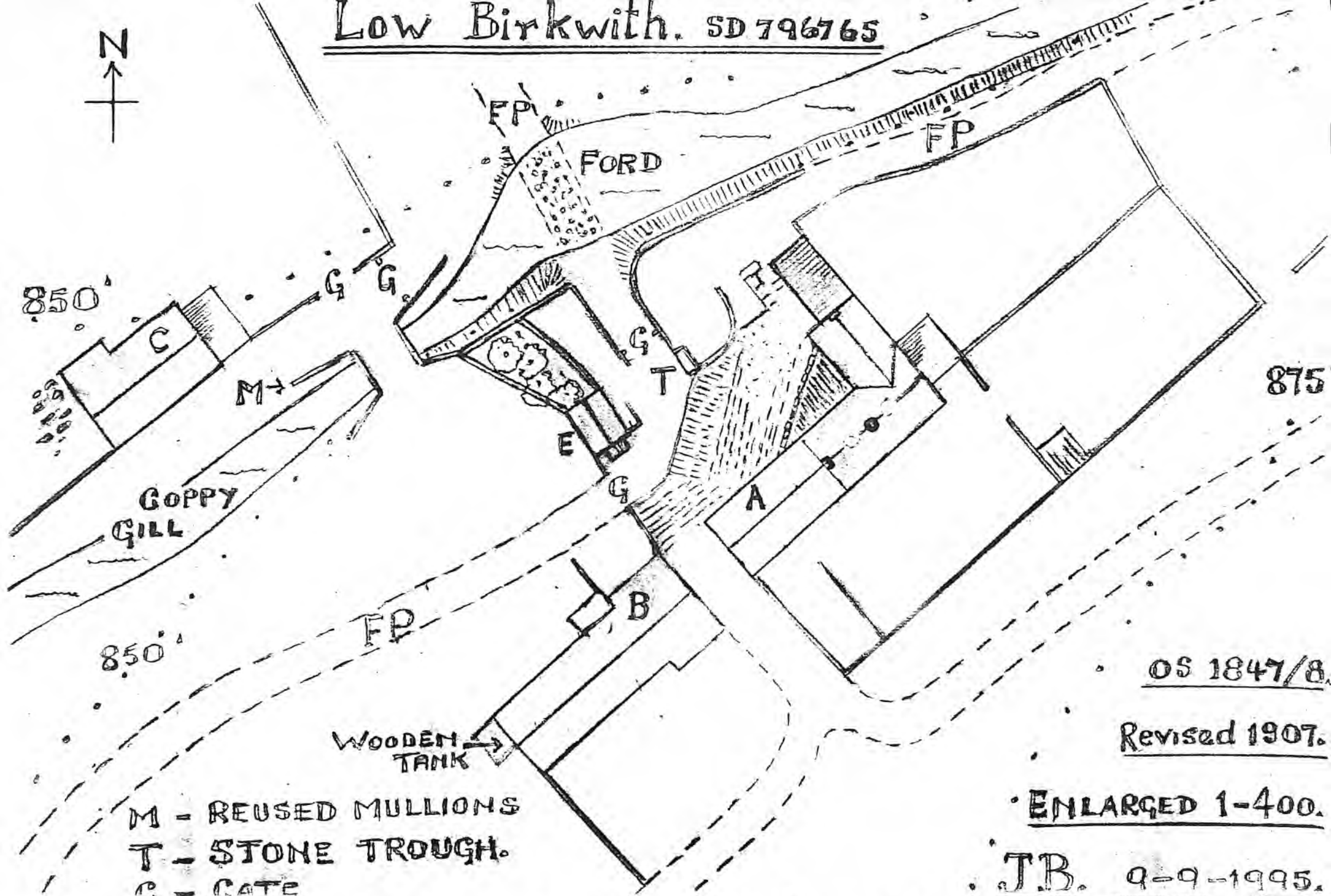
SIGNS  
OF  
RIDGE  
+  
FURROW

Stepping  
stones

Low  
Birkwith



Low Birkwith. SD 796765



850

875

850

OS 1847/8

Revised 1907.

ENLARGED 1-400.

J.B. 9-9-1995.

M - REUSED MULLIONS

T - STONE TROUGH.

G - GATE

A, B, C - BARN. E - HENNERY-PIGGERY.




# LOW BIRKWITH FARMHOUSE COMPLEX

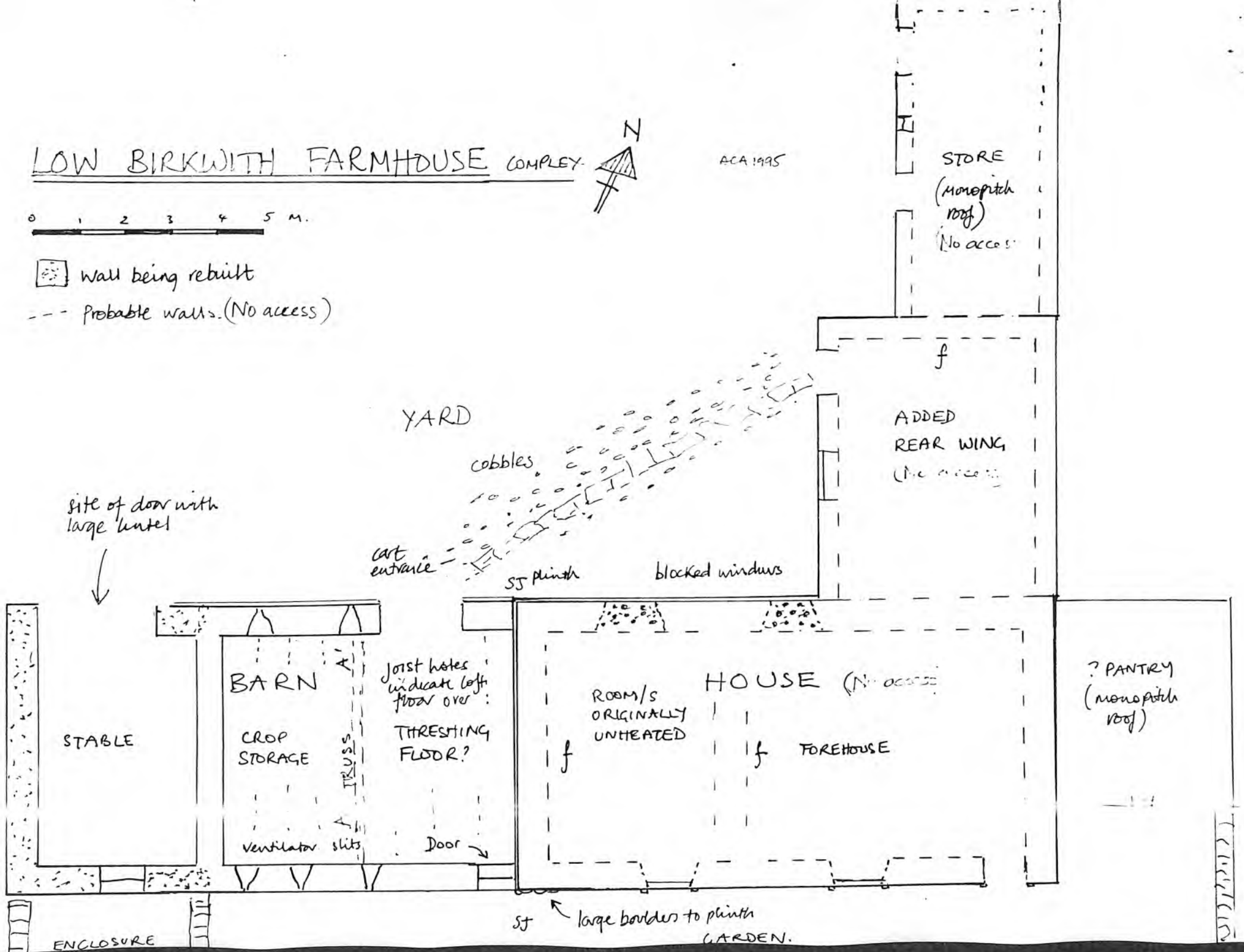
ACA 1995

0 1 2 3 4 5 M.



 wall being rebuilt

--- Probable walls (No access)



STORE  
(monopitch roof)  
(No access)

ADDED  
REAR WING  
(No access)

? PANTRY  
(monopitch roof)

HOUSE (No access)

ROOMS  
ORIGINALLY  
UNHEATED

FOREHOUSE

BARN

CROP  
STORAGE

ventilator slits

Joist holes  
indicate left  
door over

THRESHING  
FLOOR?

Door

YARD

cobbles

cart  
entrance

ST plinth

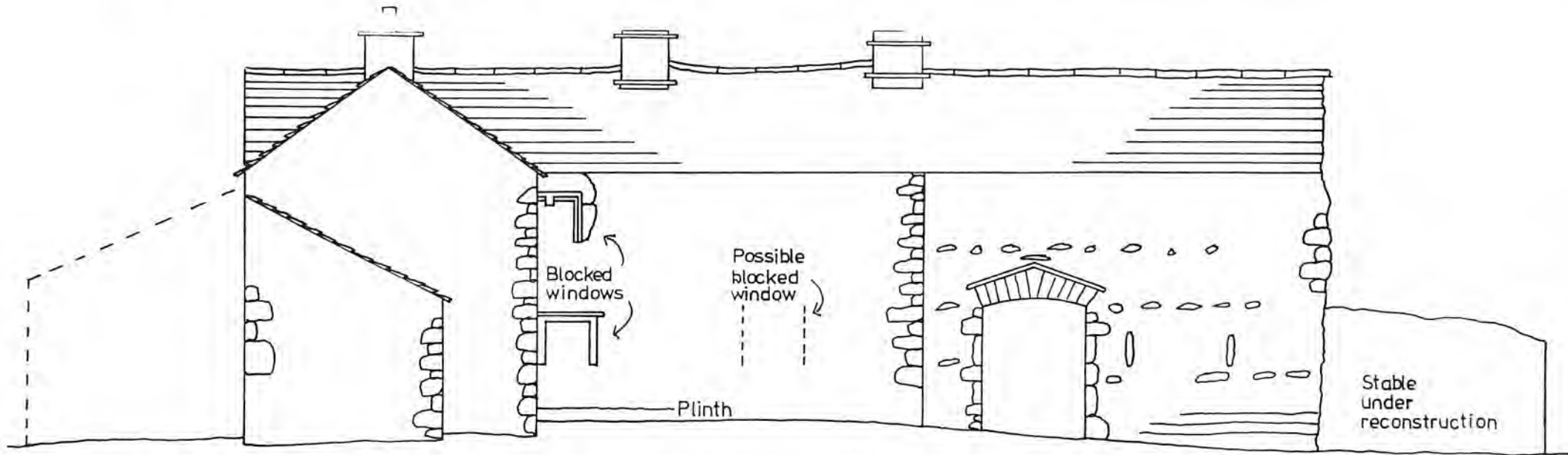
blocked windows

ST large boulders to plinth  
GARDEN.

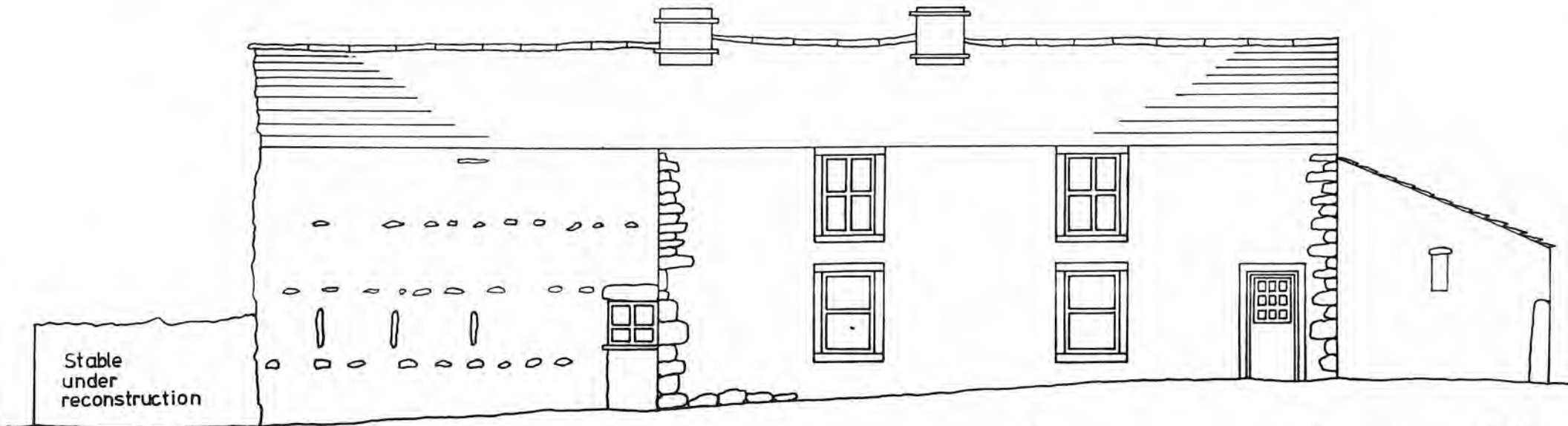
STABLE

ENCLOSURE

# LOW BIRKWITH - HOUSE AND BARN A



North west elevation



South east elevation



L.S.M.  
1/7/95

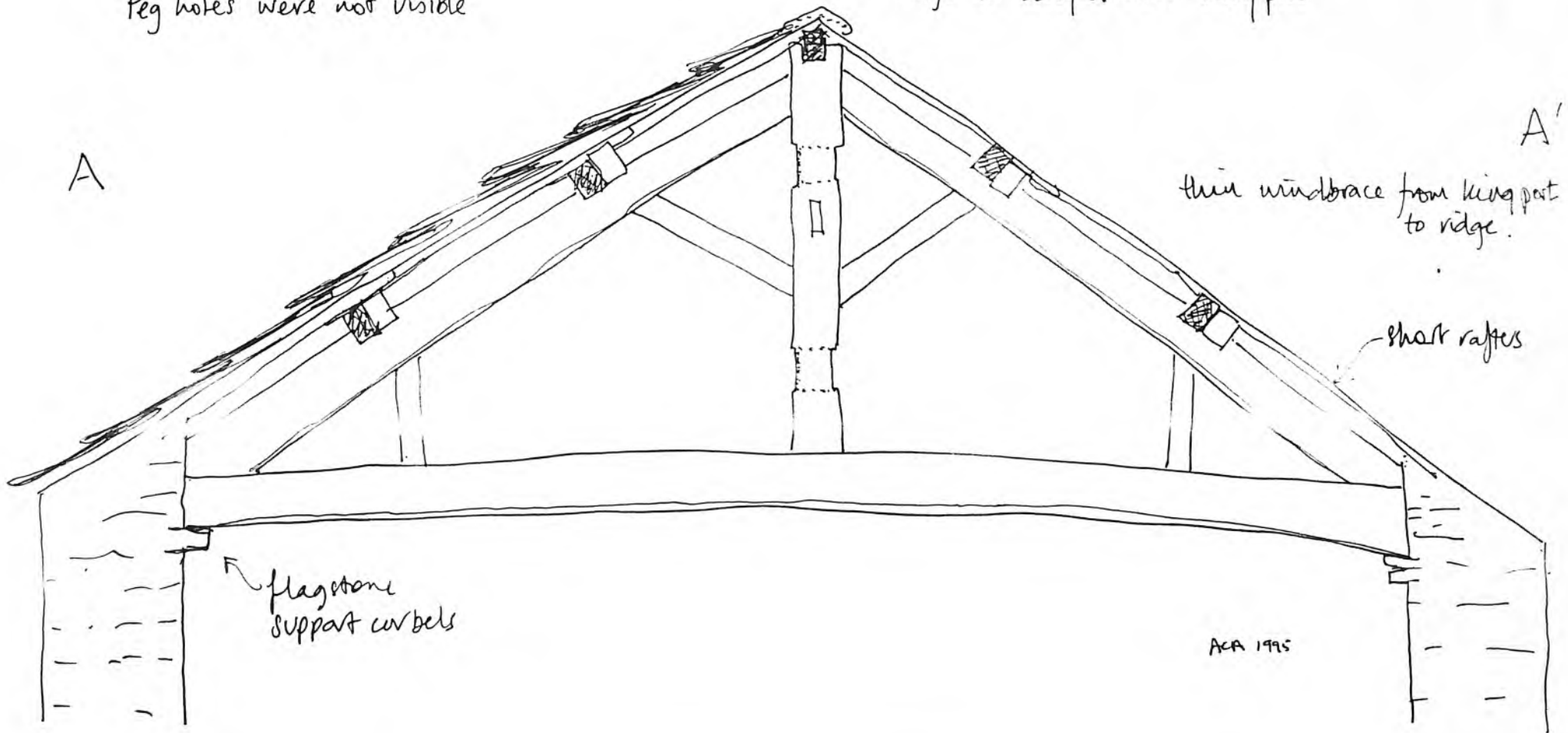
LOW BIRKWITH

ROOF TRUSSES IN BARN ADJOINING HOUSE, looking SW.

0 20 40 60 80 100 cm.  
—————|—————|—————|—————|—————|—————

Peg holes were not visible

ridge is scarfed near King post



thin windbrace from king post to ridge.

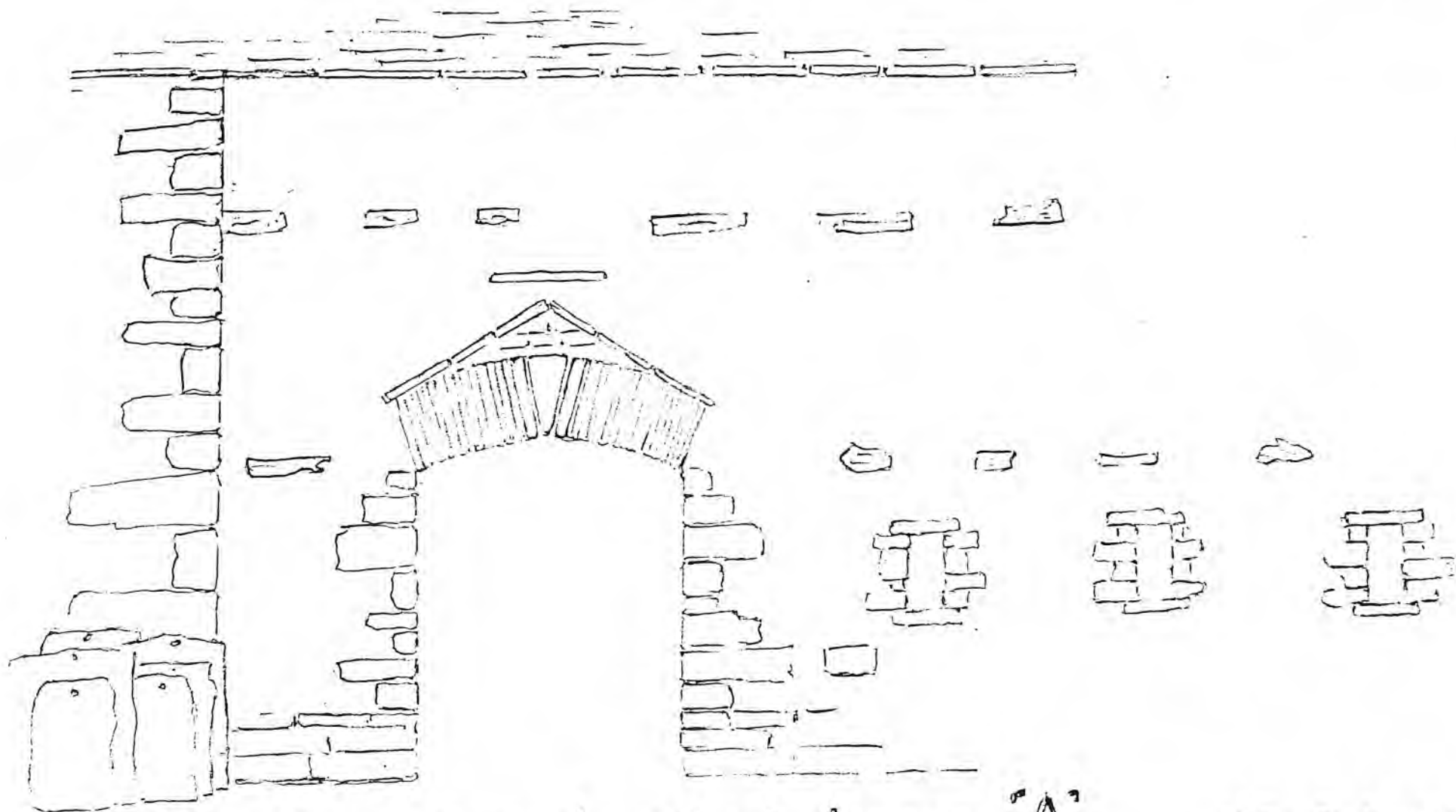
short rafters

flagstone support curbs

ACA 1995

Low Birkwith Barn.

SD 796765.



House.

Doorway to Cart barn. 'A.'

JB. 9-9-1995.

Scale 1-40 APPROX.

LOW BIRKWITH FARM

Farmhouse & Barn A

Barn B

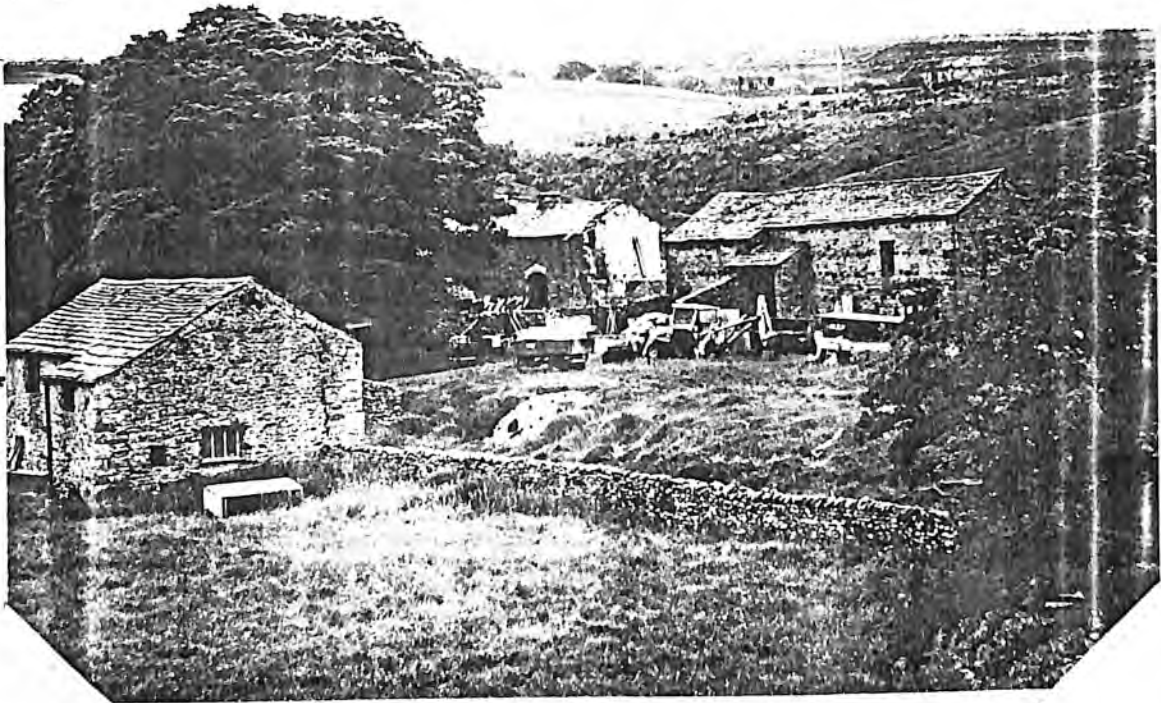


Photo ①

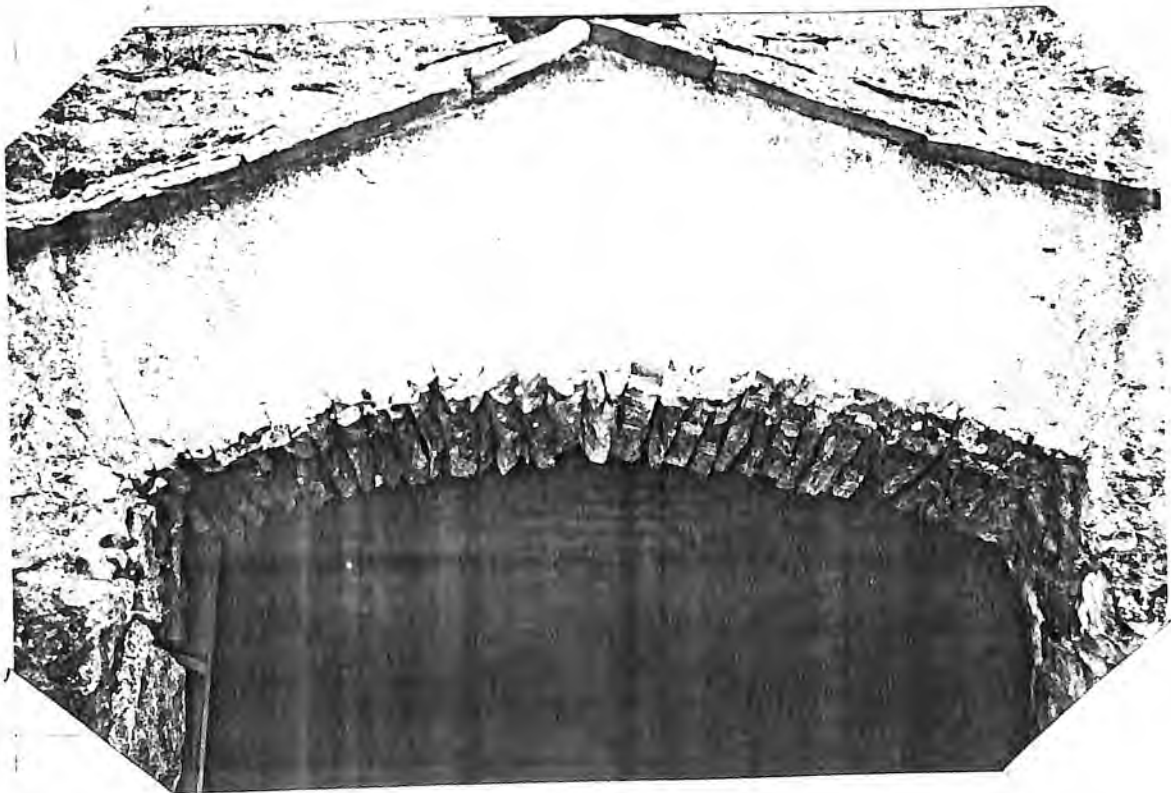


Photo ② Car entrance to BARN A.

Horton in Ribblesdale  
(Parish or township)

Low Birkwith  
Barn B  
(Name of building)

NGR SD  
79647649

Mr White  
(Owner or occupier)  
Low Birkwith Farm, Horton  
(Address)

(Building listed?)

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Date of record; 1 July 1995

Names of recorders; A Armstrong, J Bishop, S Degnan, L Moor,  
T Tolhurst

Note of major alterations or demolitions since the survey;  
none

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**DESCRIPTION**

**1. Building type/purpose;**

Large 7 bay barn with hay/crop storage, ?threshing area and two  
shippens for cows

**2. Materials;**

All dressed stones of sandstone rock but probably from local Pre  
Carboniferous sources of the Horton inlier. The quoins which are  
pick dressed are very red sandy rocks. The walls are of watershot  
rubble, mostly of limestone, with gannister boulders from the  
glacial debris. Limestone is also used for the through stones. The  
byre doors have large rough lintels. The roof is of sandy Horton  
'slate' with a coarse sandstone ridge (again probably local  
Ordovician/Silurian age rock not Carboniferous sandstone). The  
niche in the porch has a lintel of Ribblesdale 'blue slate'. The  
roof trusses are oak.

**3. Exterior details;**

The NE gable has indistinct watershot walls and large rough  
lintels to the two shippon doors, although the doors are different  
and the central one is probably later. The end door shares quoins  
with the gable. The gable forking hole to reach the hay loft has  
stone surrounds. Of particular interest is the columbarium in the  
gable. It is of the type which has continuous landing platforms  
to the nesting holes. It has 47 holes in 8 reducing rows, in the  
top of the gable. Human access appears to have been from the  
outside only but as we were unable to see the purlins inside, it  
is not known if there were interior nesting boxes.

The NW, front, wall has rows of troughs with small square  
ventilators, like the NE gable. There are two stone surround  
windows to the wide shippon. The added porch is built over the  
cart entrance. The forking hole on the NW mew wall is said to be  
an enlargement of the original, although it seems to be inserted.  
The mew or crop storage area under the forking hole has three  
slit ventilators on the ground floor level but square ones higher  
up which are now infilled. The shippon door at the SW end is  
blocked. The cart door has an arch of rough voussoirs with a  
keystone but this has had to be supported by a timber lintel

under it.

The SW wall has the mucking out hole from the shippon .

The SE wall is much obscured by a modern cow house but the blocked shippon door at the other end of the groop passage could be seen, indicating that the cows faced into the barn . There is a winnowing door nearly opposite the porch as in barn A. It is unlikely to be a foddergang door when there is a cart entrance as well. The large shippon has two large modern windows and a door at the far SE end has been blocked to make a third window for the modernised shippon.

#### *4. Interior details;*

The barn was full of hay, it being July, and was not easily accessible. A small door offcentre to the cart entrance, as in barn A, may be a winnowing door, with the adjacent bay for temporary crop storage, since there are no ventilators at ground floor level there. Five of the six tie beams could be seen and these were all similar. The tie beams were of very irregularly shaped boxed heart oak which was roughly chamfered to make it straight. All principal rafters had a morticed apex but with an unusually long overlap of one timber, and a square set ridge sat on the back of one principal rafter. The collars are of pit sawn timber and carpenters construction marks were seen on them. No pegs could be discerned to hold them in place. The large trenched purlins show no sign of reuse. They are all short in length because of the closely spaced trusses, perhaps due to a shortage of long timber. The truss at the SW end however is different and has distinctive curved feet to the principal rafters and no collar or struts. This may be to allow hay to be easily forked into the hayloft over the byre end.

The NE shippon is separated from the rest of the barn by a breeze block partition and is now concreted and converted for modern cows with concrete stalls. There was no access to the hayloft over or to see how the columbarium operated.

#### *5. Plan form;*

A seven bay barn. The NE end shippon projects beyond the body of the barn in local tradition. It seems a big barn for the area with large shippons, hay storage and a threshing floor.

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#### *DATING*

*6. Identify the oldest part of the building and likely date;*  
The barn is of one build, except the porch, and of 18 th C date. The columbarium may reflect the farm status rather than a real need for food

#### *7. Major extensions or alterations;*

The porch was added to protect waggons, making use of the projecting shippon on one side. The door is of 19 th C softwood and has probably been replaced

#### *SETTING*

*8. Orientation;*  
The barn follows exactly the alignment of the farm house and barn A, with the access road between them. With the shortage of flat land here this was probably the only place to build a large barn, so that all its main doors (cart and shippon) face the beck and extended yard.

9. Relationships;

This larger barn probably replaced the older barn A as agricultural practices improved and more cows and fodder could be housed. It also has what seems to be a threshing floor like Barn A

OTHER INFORMATION

10. Initials/date stones  
none seen

11. Oral information from owner/occupier;

The NE end was used for stirks with a loose <sup>box</sup> in the middle, in more recent times

12 Documentation, maps, inventories etc;

1907 revised edition of 1847 map (NB building shapes simplified)

13. Plans etc annexed (please tick)

block plan of site

ground floor plan ✓

first floor plan

analytical plan

copies of inventories, maps etc

sections

elevations

detail drawings ✓

photographs ✓

PHOTOGRAPHS TO NOTE

1. General view of Low Birkwith shows this barn on the right with barn A to the left.

4. Detail of the columbarium or dovecote in the gable with the continuous ledges. The wall's regular through stones are seen all round barn.

3. Detail of cart door

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Waterfalls

Stepping  
Stones

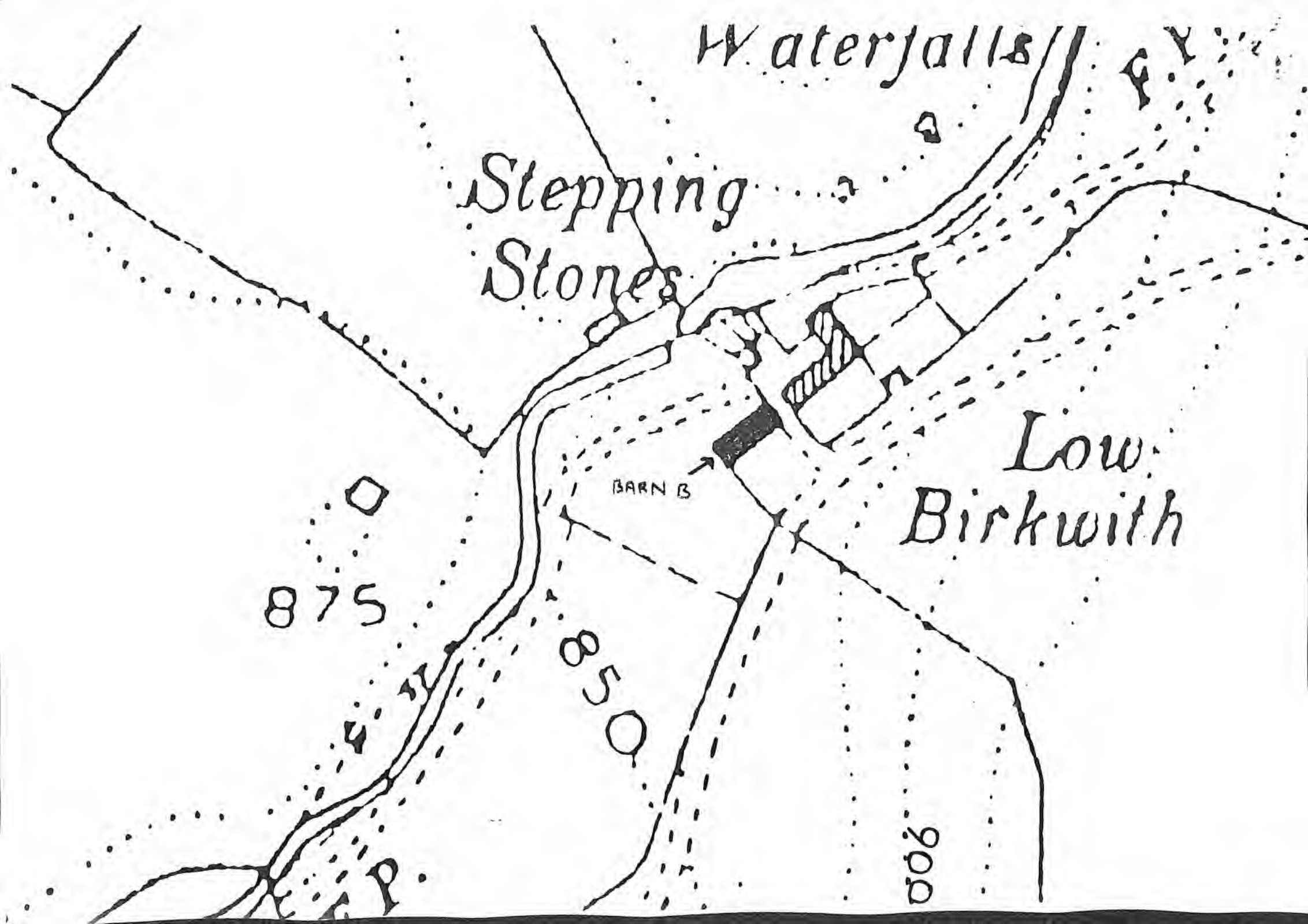
Low  
Birkwith

BARN B

875

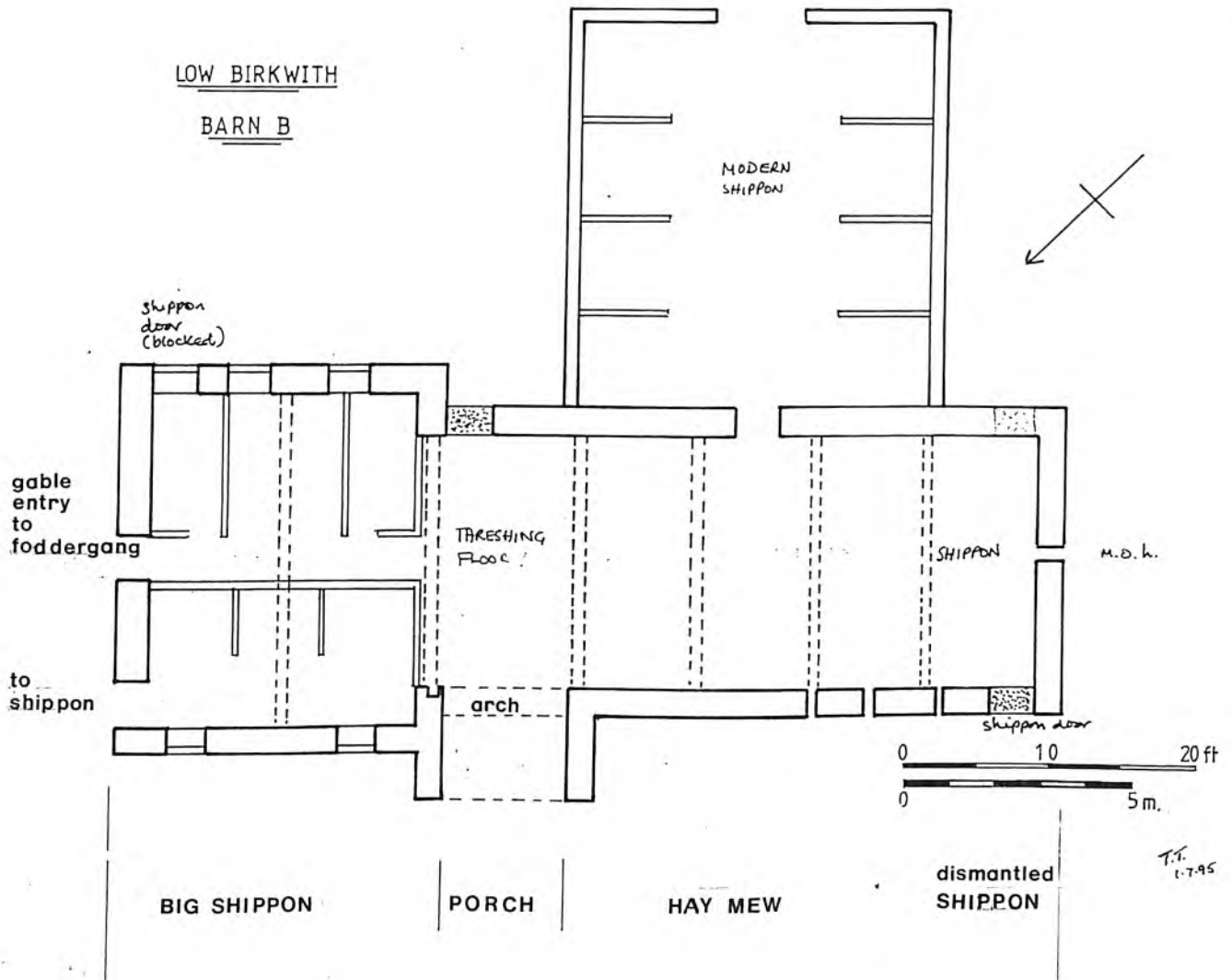
850

900



LOW BIRKWITH

BARN B



# LOW BIRKWITH

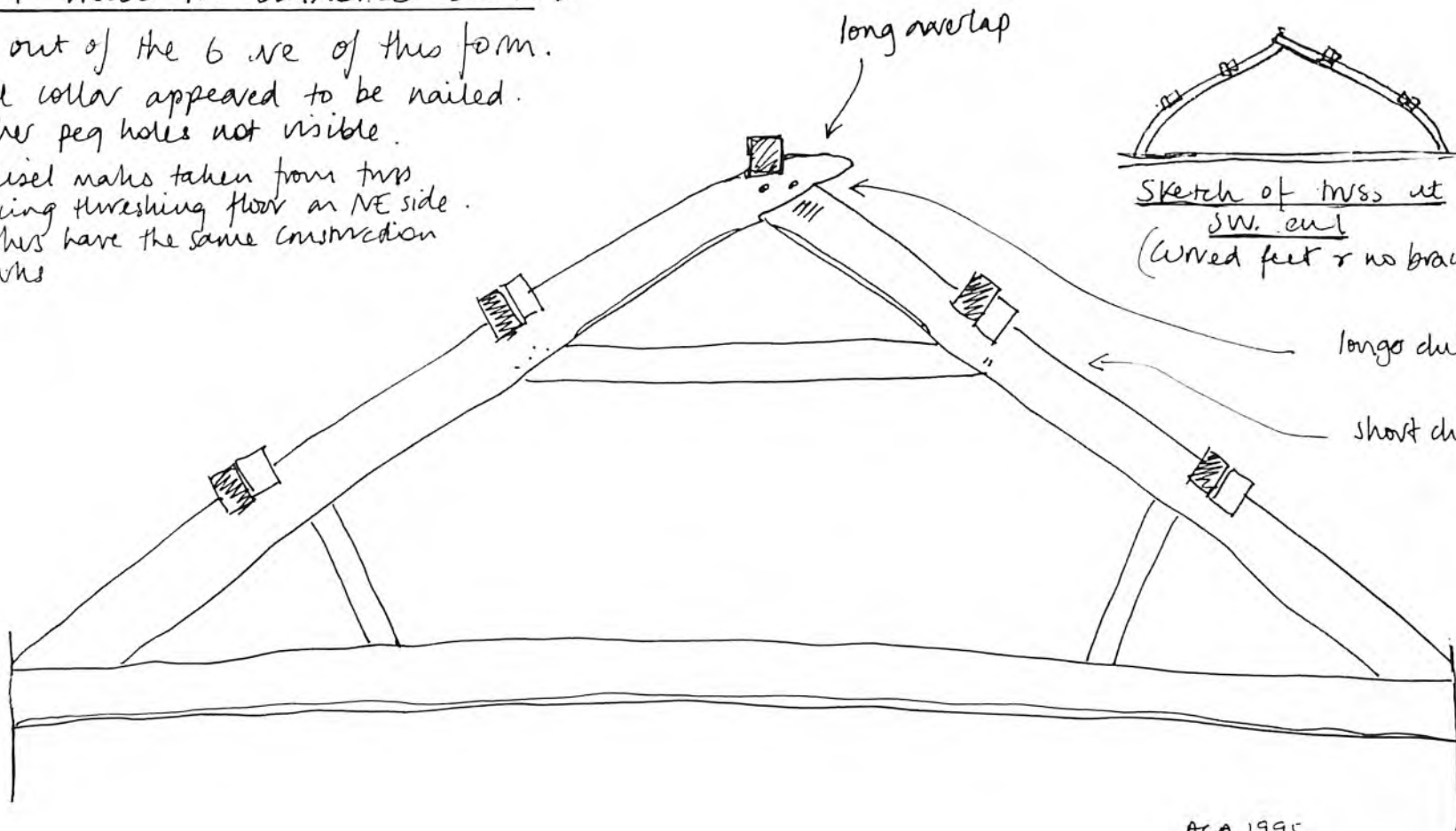
## ROOF TRUSS IN DETACHED BARN B

5 out of the 6 are of this form.

The collar appeared to be nailed.

Other peg holes not visible.

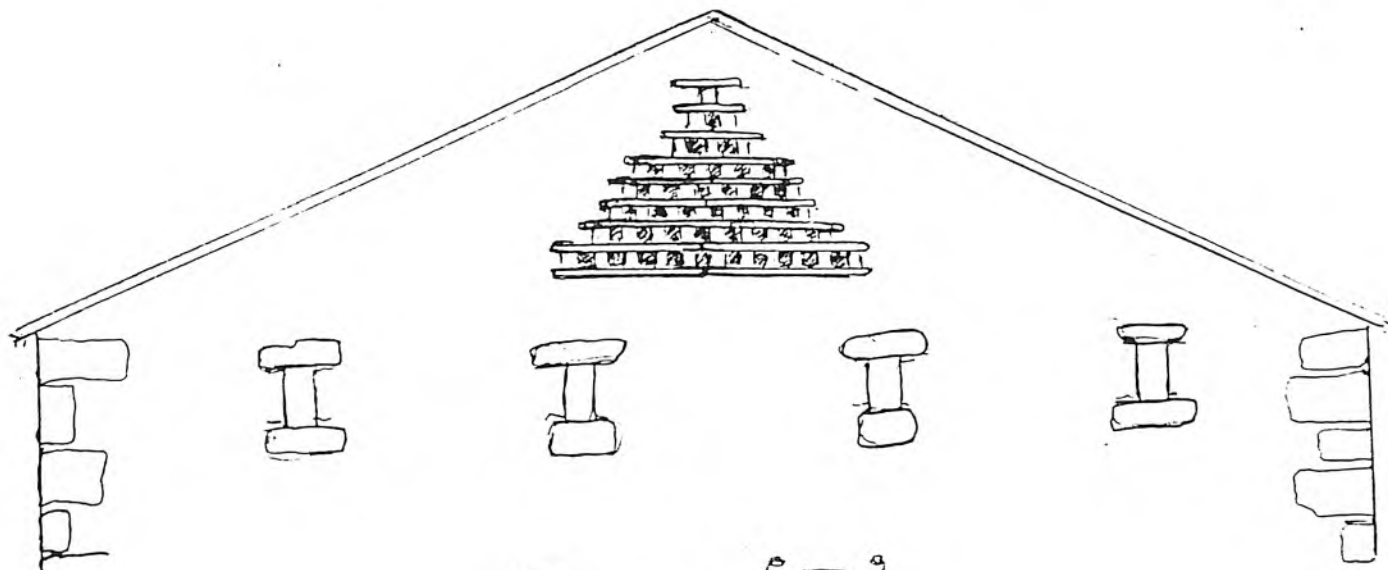
Chisel marks taken from top facing threshing floor on NE side. Others have the same construction marks



ACA 1995

Low Birkwith 'B.'

Columbarium.



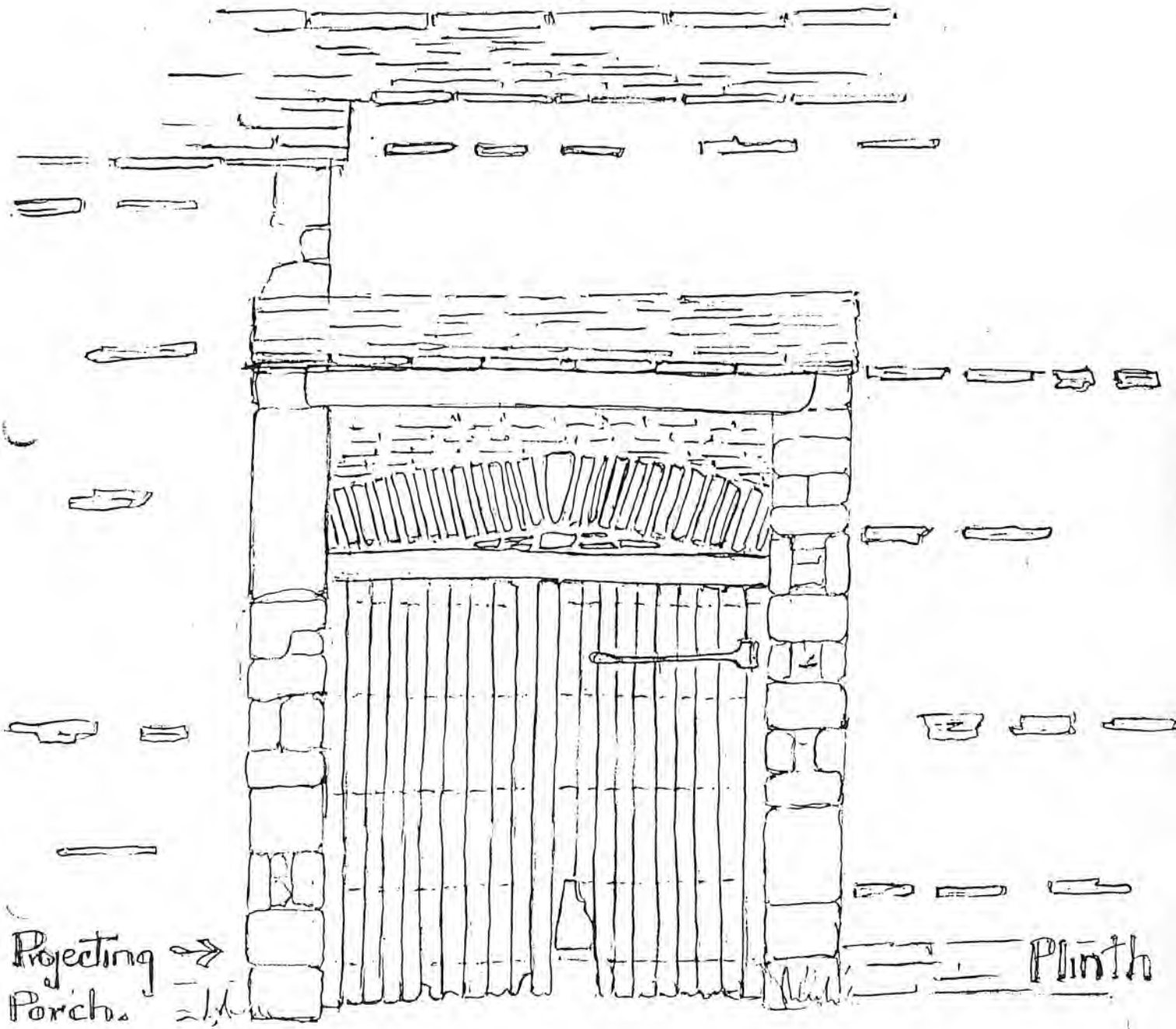
Barn 'B'

N.E. Gable.

Scale 1-50.

JB. 9-9-1995.

Low Berkwith.



Doorway to barn 'B'.

SKETCH.

BARN B.

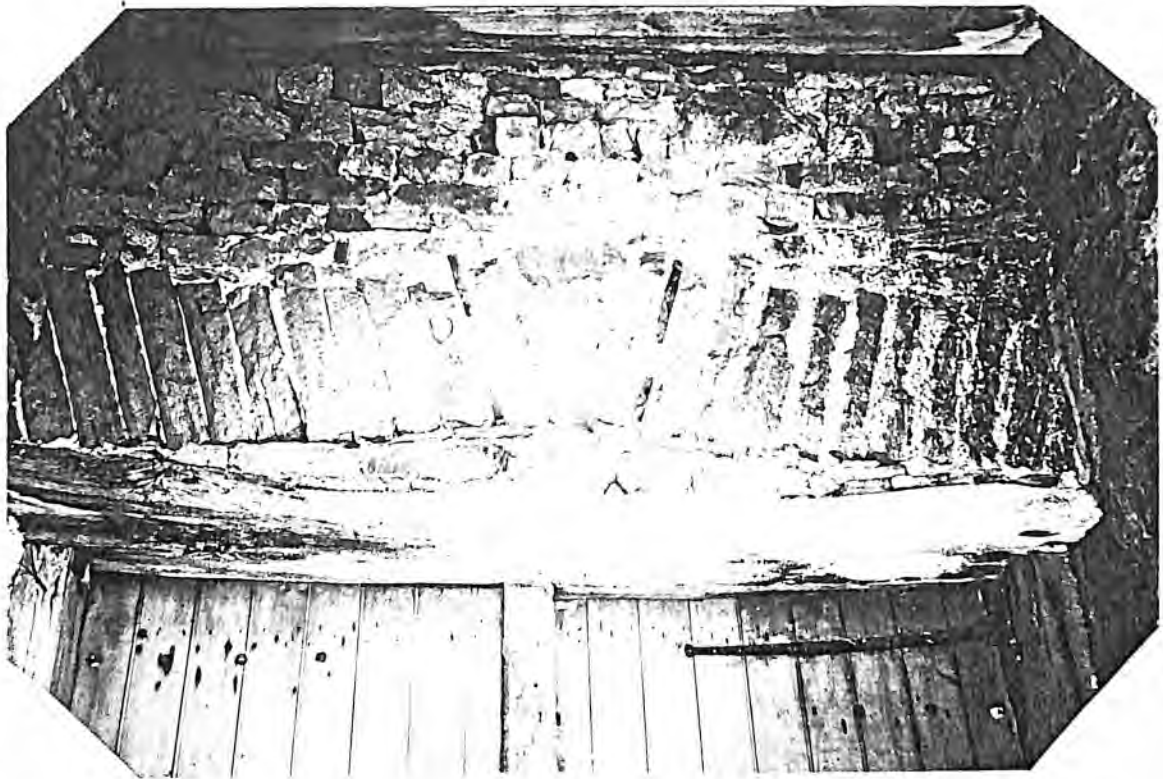


Photo 3 The cast door



Photo 4 the entrance

Horton in Ribblesdale  
(Parish or township)

Low Birkwith  
Field barn C  
(Name of building)

NGR SD  
79587650

(Building listed?)

Date of record; 1 July 1995  
Names of recorders; A Armstrong, J Bishop, S Degnan, L Moor,  
T Tolhurst  
Note of major alterations or demolitions since the survey:  
None

**DESCRIPTION**

1. Building type/purpose;  
Field barn, two door plan type, with shippon for cows and hay storage and outshut shippon/byre

2. Materials;  
Rubble walls of limestone and boulders of gannister sandstone. The sources appear to have been brought in phases, with reddened boulders used in the upper courses. Quoins are of sandy (Pre Carboniferous?) rock with split, flaggy, sandy rocks higher up. On the roofs, very thin black fissile 'slates' are used on the outshot but large sandy 'slates' on the field barn. Timber mostly softwood but some reused oak.

3. Exterior details;

The byre end of the barn projects beyond the hay mew in local fashion giving a reversed L shaped plan. There is a plinth on all elevations but this is pronounced to the S<sub>E</sub>, by the beck. A lean-to outshut shippon has been added to the N<sub>E</sub> gable.

On the NW elevation is the foddergang/mew door protected by the extended byre. It has a projecting 'slate' hood and wooden jambs, apparently nailed, not pegged, into the arched timber lintel with run-out stops. Three blocked ventilator slits to the mew can be made out lower in the wall and there are two hay forking holes; one for the mew and one for the hay loft over the shippon. The outshut has only one door and this is from this elevation.

The SW gable, which contains the shippon, has a small mucking out window. Stone rubble in the grass below suggests there may have been a covered structure over the muck heap (The position makes it unlikely to be an early silage tower although these are found in the area.) The central window is a modern insertion. There is a rectangular vent or owl hole in the apex. At the S<sub>E</sub> end of the gable, a pronounced crack runs vertically up the wall and then curves towards the apex. The barn is perched on the bank of Coppy Gill at this point, but the curve can be followed down the wall to meet the pronounced step in the wall on the S<sub>E</sub> elevation, suggesting the former lower eaves line of a thatched barn.

On the elevation is a very deep, pronounced and stepped plinth and battered wall, perhaps due to the close proximity of Coppy Gill which runs below and parallel to it. The wall bows inward and there is also a step in the walling just above the height of the shippon door, indicating rebuilding and heightening. The shippon door cuts the plinth and has quoin like jamb stones. It has been raised by inserting thin stones under the

thin lintel. There are four projecting throughs in the raised walling over the door which are roughly square in section with rounded ends. Otherwise there are no throughs in the raised walling and the quoins are split stones. The older walling below the lintel height has projecting throughs at a lower level

The *NE* gable, which has an owl hole like that at the other end, is covered by the outshut shippon, although a crack cuts the corner of the gable indicating a former steeper roof. The gable has been roughly broken through to give access to the outshut internally. The outshut has large quoins.

#### 4. Interior details;

The two main trusses are king posts which carry the square set ridge purlin trenched into the apex. The truss over the mew is a sawn, tension bolted one indicating a mid/late 19th C date. The principal rafters are pegged into the head of the king post and two rows of purlins are trenched into the backs of the principal rafters, where they overlap. Four of the lengths of purlin are reused, one carrying mortices. The rafters appear to be original. In the hay mew the blocked ventilators are seen in the *NW* wall whilst cracks across the gable corners may be part of the earlier roof line.

The skellbuse, deviding the foddergang from the shippon at the end of the barn, and the boskins (stall partitions) are well made of softwood posts and rails infilled with large local 'slates'. The timbers have chamfered edges and the double stalls (booses) are further devided by small vertical 'slate' slabs. The tethering posts with sliding rings are still present. Grooved settle stones form the edge of the groop (walkway/channel) which drains to the door. One timber in the shippon is reused and is of oak with two chamfered sides. It has two mortices in what would have been the underside (for studding) and a row of notches for floor joists in the side. Over the boskins is a hay loft.

At the base of the *SW* gable wall, about a metre from the door, is a very large stone from which parallel, prominent cracks run upward. It could be argued that this might be a padstone with the cracks being the ghosts of removed cruck blades. No other similar stones could be found however.

The outshut shippon seems to have had standings for five animals which faced the *NE* end and were fed from behind with fodder from the adjacent mew.

#### 5. Plan form;

Two door field barn with L shape. (Typical Dales type with one door for the cows' shippon or byre and one for the hay mew/ foddergang or feeding passage. The L shape is common in Ribblesdale)

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#### DATING

6. Identify the oldest part of the building and likely date; There is some structural evidence that this may have been a rectangular, thatched, low eaves, and possibly a cruck-built structure, before rebuilding to the present field barn. Evidence includes the low, doorhead-height "step" in the battered and double plinthed *SE* wall, cracks across three of the gable corners, a low straight joint near the mucking out hole, a change to redder stone on the upper part of the *NW* wall, change to split quoins in the upper walling, and the reused timber inside. Although there are no



reused cruck-like timbers for a thatched roof, the curious large stone with the double crack is reminiscent of a padstone and full cruck 'ghost'. With roofing slate available in the area from early times one would perhaps expect a stone roof on the first structure. Other barns in the area (eg Selside) and the adjacent field barn D, however, all have timbers with halvings for thatched roofs. In the booklet by Horton Local History Group, crucks were thought to be common in the 16th C

#### 7. major extensions or alterations;

Fieldbarn rebuilt in the mid/late 19th C, to the local L shape and with a stone roof and softwood truss, probably reusing the older timber and with the well-made boskins of softwood and Horton 'slate'. The shippon door too was raised with the walls. The outshut shippon was added perhaps as late as 1900.

#### SETTING

##### 8. Orientation;

The hay forking holes, foddergang door and muck heap face the fields for ease of access, whilst the shippon door faces the beck where a watering place was made. When the added shippon was built, animals had free access into the field which had perhaps become more pasture than meadow.

##### 9. Relationships;

The field barn set alongside Coppy Gill served the few enclosed fields some 150 m W of the farmhouse. The fields overlie former ridge and furrow arable land in a dip between the glacial drumlins at 259 m OD. Hay, manure and animals thus stayed out where they were needed. There was a ford over the beck to the farm but more recently a bridge with pieces of mullion used in it.

##### 12 Documentation, maps, inventories etc;

1847/8 OS map revised in 1907 shows the site of the barn. (NB simplified building shapes in this map revision)  
Booklet; Horton in Ribblesdale .1984. Horton Local History Group  
(P 24 reference to crucks)

##### 13. Plans etc annexed (please tick)

block plan of site

elevations ✓

ground floor plan ✓

details

photographs ✓

copies of inventories, maps etc

##### Photographs

Of the 7 photos note;

1. General view of Low Birkwith with Barn C in the foreground. Note the gable end crack, curving at the top, and the 'step' of the walling on the beck side, just visible above the first large quoin up. Also disturbed masonry left of the small mucking out window. The hay forking holes are seen
5. The field barn seen from the bridge over the beck. The shippon door is seen cutting the large plinth. The change in walling with a 'step' is seen at doorhead height. Above the outshut shippon, on the right is a wall crack.
6. View of one of the boskins with local 'slate' infill and tethering post. The foddergang door is seen in the hay mew beyond
7. View of one of the double standings with tethering posts, 'slate' infilled boskins and skellbuse and small 'slate' stall division, making two booses (standings)

Waterfalls

Stepping  
Stones

BARN C →

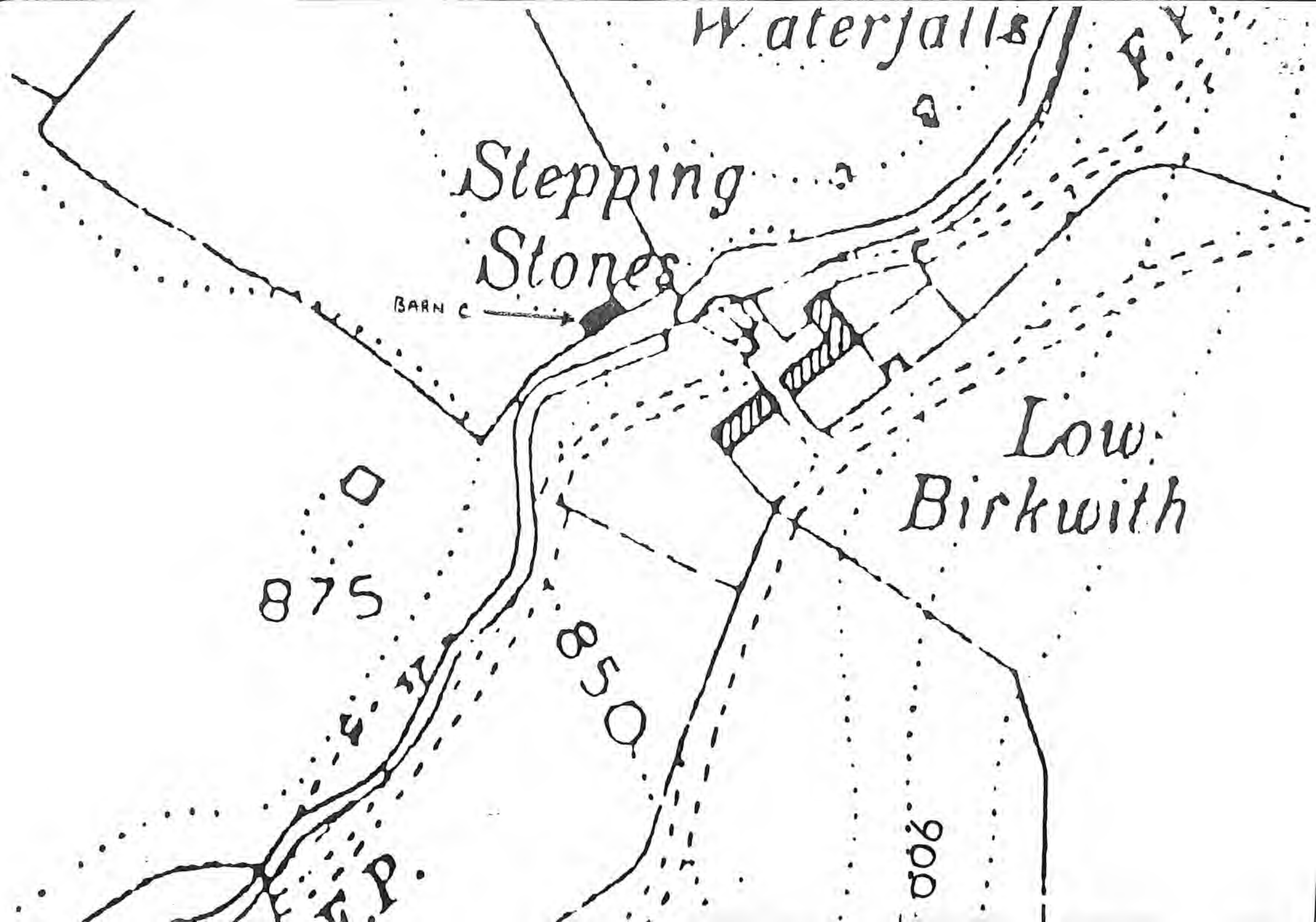
Low  
Birkwith

875

850

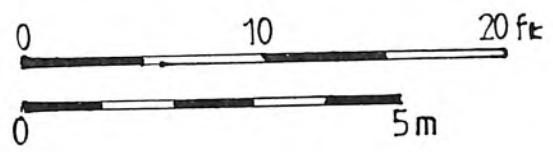
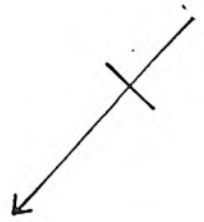
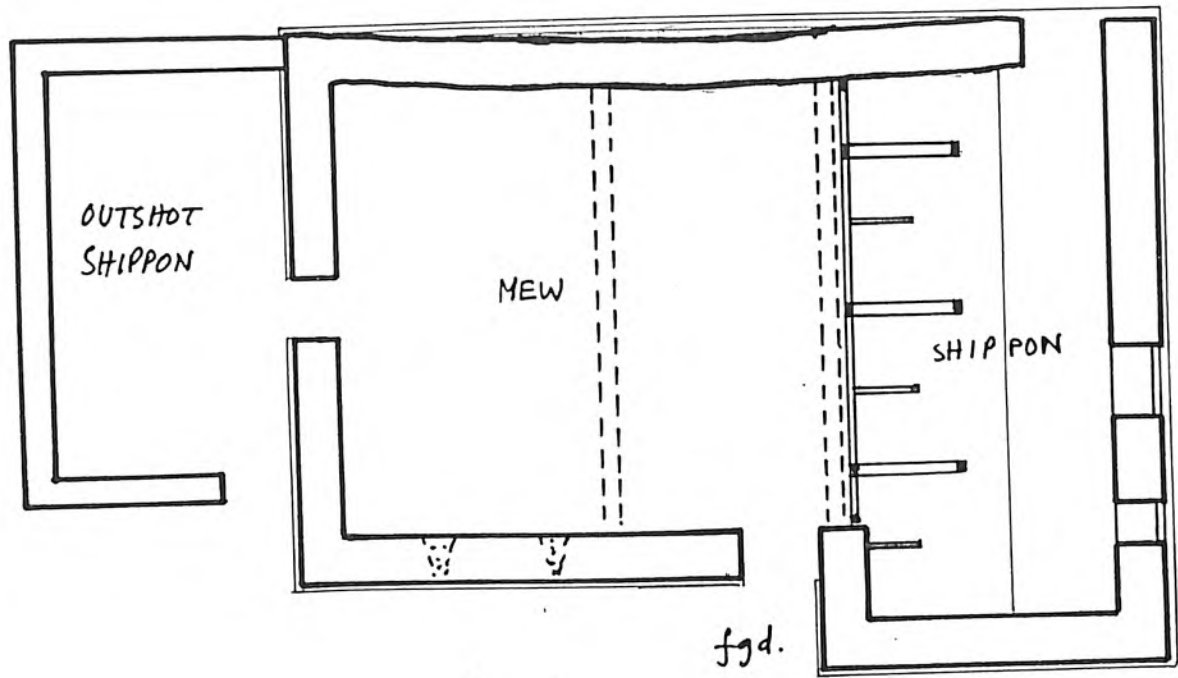
900

SP.



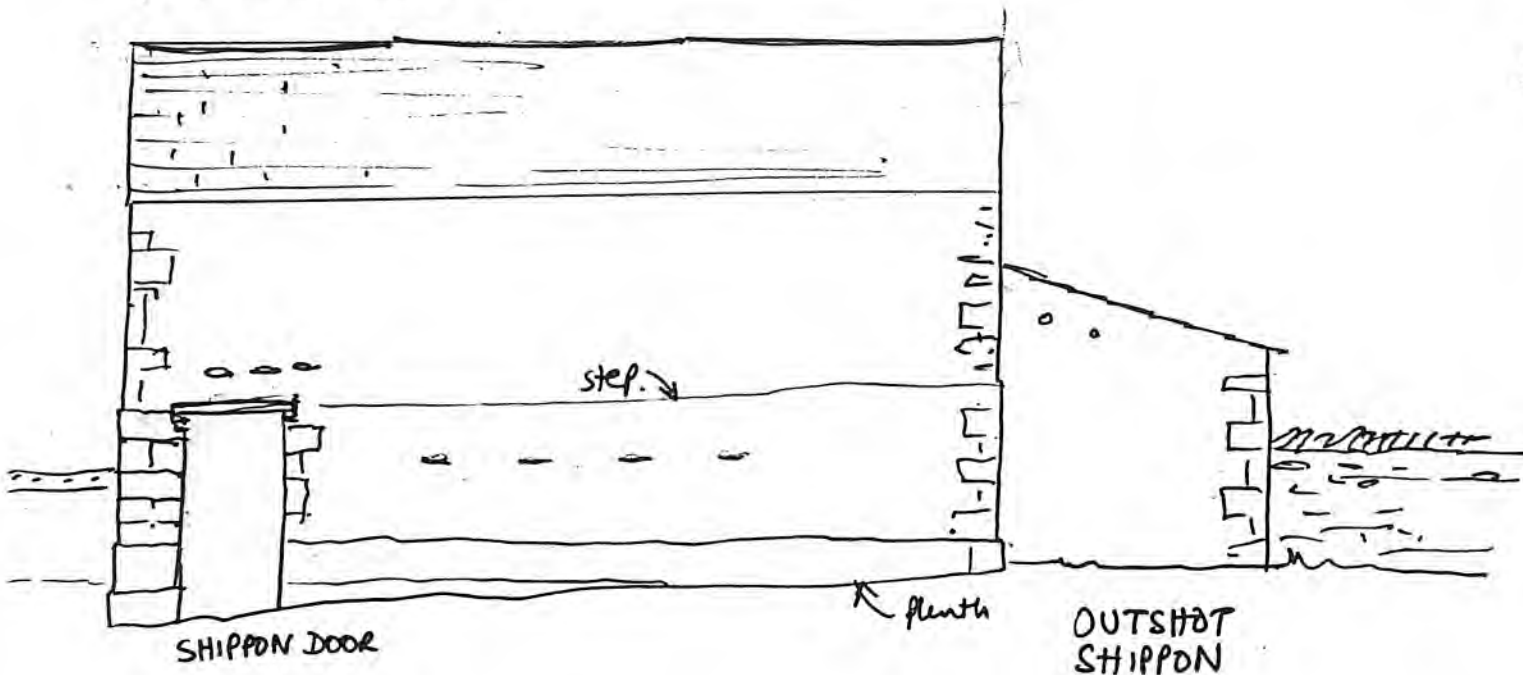
LOW BIRKWITH

BARN C



1.1  
1-7-95

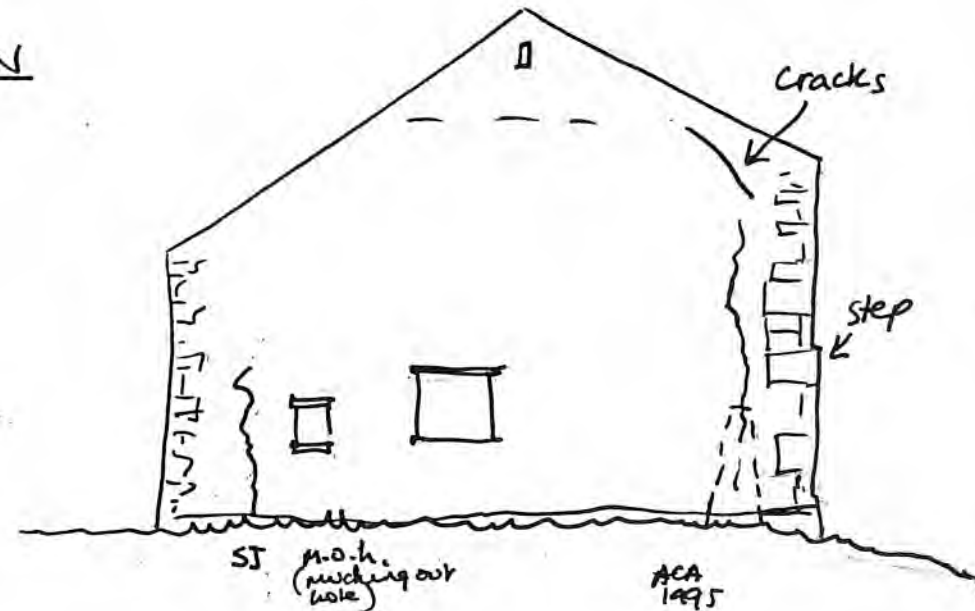
SE ELEVATION



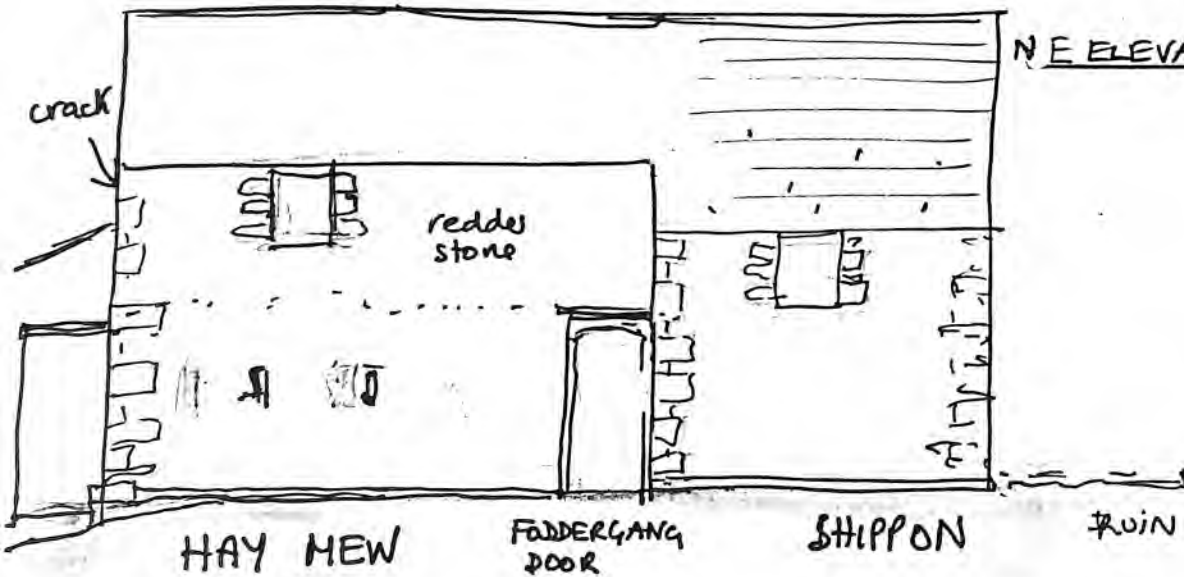
FIELD BARN C.  
LOW BIRKWITH.

SKETCH ELEVATIONS

NW. GABLE



NE ELEVATION



HAY MEW

FODDERGANG DOOR

SHIPPON

RUIN

BARN C

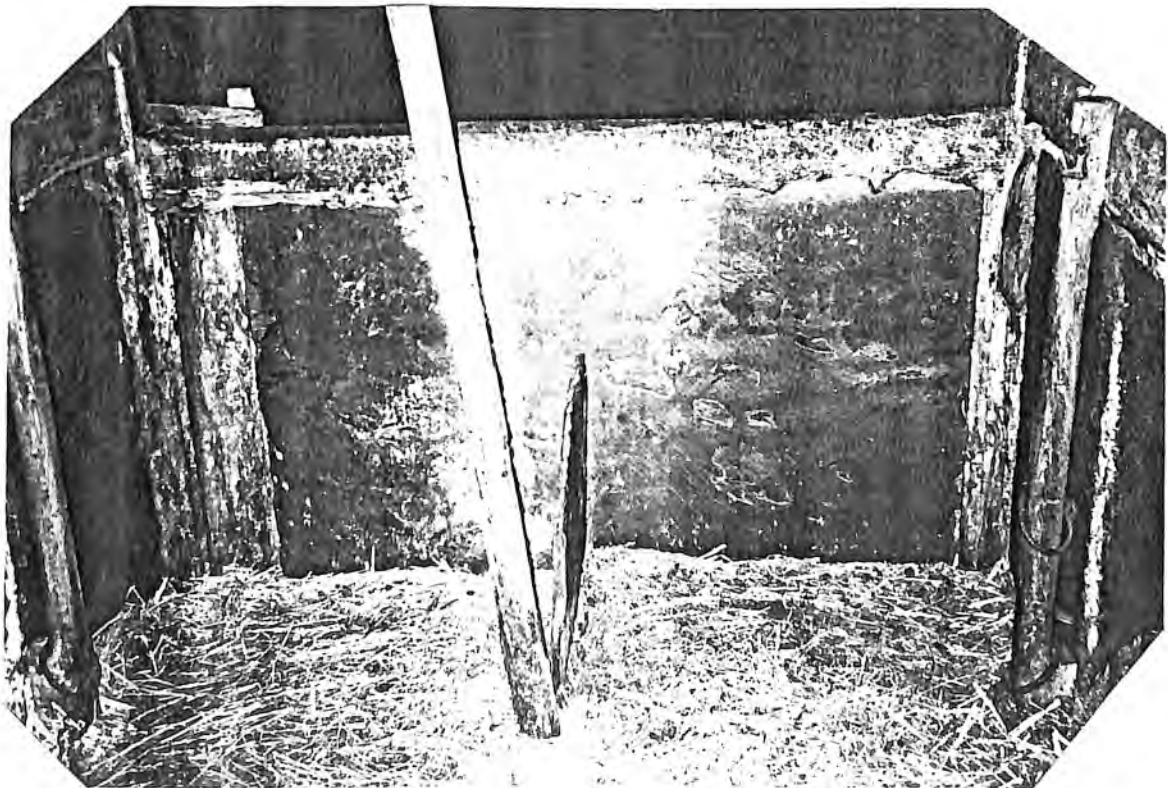
photo ⑥

Boskin with slate infill  
& tethering post



photo ⑦

Slate infill to boskins  
& skullouse



BARN C

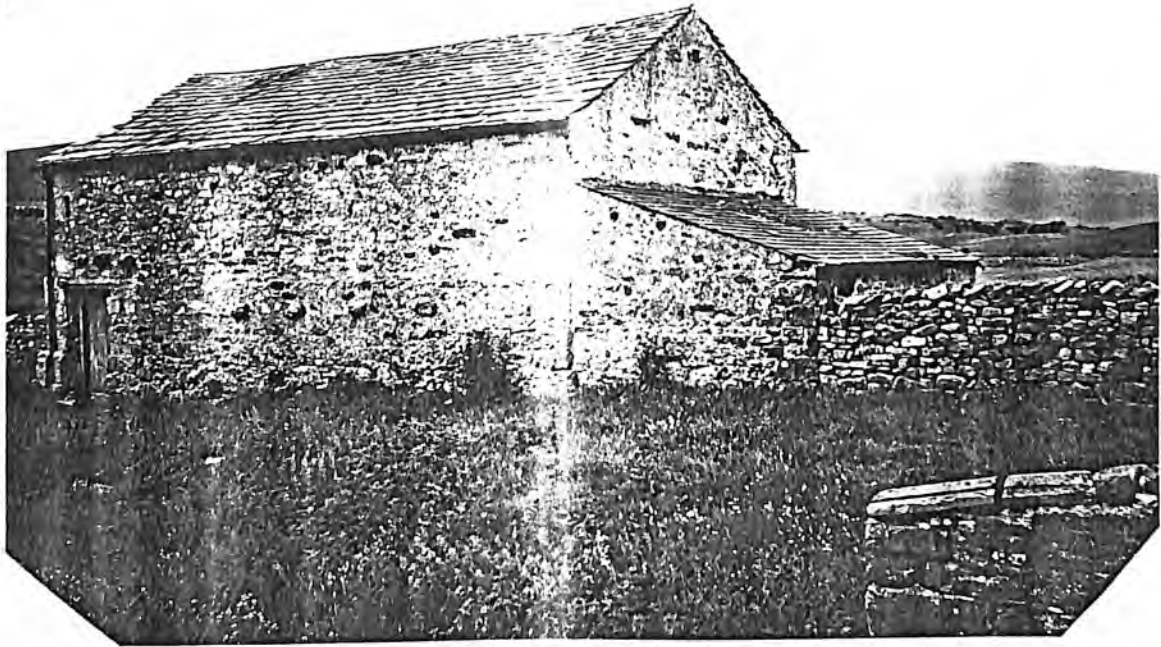


Photo ⑤. The back (Coppin Hill side) showing raised roof line.

Horton in Ribblesdale  
(Parish or township)

Low Birkwith  
Field barn D  
(Name of building)

NGR SD  
79507648

(Building listed?)

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Date of record; 1 July 1995

Names of recorders; A Armstrong, J Bishop, S Degnan, L Moor,  
T Tolhurst

Note of major alterations or demolitions since the survey;  
None

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**DESCRIPTION**

**1. Building type/purpose;**

Field barn, derelict, with cattle shippon (byre) and hay storage but with a porch and cart entry.

**2. Materials;**

Wallstones of very mixed, variously coloured rubble with rough hammer-dressed boulders and limestone rubble. Quoins of local, gritty, Pre Carboniferous rock (ie not Carboniferous gritstone) and more roughly dressed than on barns B or C. Local sandy 'slates' cover the roof. The arched window may be of gritstone. Fallen roof timbers are oak, reused, and the boskins of softwood. Local dark 'slate' was used to infill the boskin and foddergang partitions.

**3. Exterior details;**

The roof of the building and the NW wall in particular have collapsed. The walls are of random rubble of mixed sources of local stone, with throughs and rather rough, long-and-short split quoins at all the corners. Altogether rougher stonework than field barn C or barn B but, like them, have smeared pointing as weather protection.

On the SE or front elevation is a double door cart entry, rather than the usual foddergang door, and this is set under a porch formed by a continuation of the shippon roof. The doors, now lying on the ground, are well made tongue and grooved softwood of 19th C date and were harr hung. The entry at the SW end served the shippon. The end shippon stall, nearest this door is, rather unusually, lit by a fine 'window' formed from an arched, wide-chamfered, pale coloured ?gritstone lintel, probably a reused door or window head. It could be of late medieval date and is unlike the rest of the stonework. There are a number of reasons as to why such an opening was needed. It probably acted as a feeding hole rather than a window. There is a cart entrance here rather than a foddergang and a parked waggon partly in the barn would have made normal internal access difficult. The cart entrance itself would have limited the amount of room for hay storage. The need for a porch created a longer than normal projection of the byre wall, beyond the hay mew, which made feeding difficult from inside the field barn. Perhaps also some hay was brought from the farm so the exterior feeding hole was useful. Alternatively perhaps a special animal was kept here such as a horse or bull.

The NE gable is all of one build and has three rows of throughs and two lines of square ventilators

The NW elevation, facing the exposed fields, has partly collapsed and no openings were seen so the cart entrance could not have been a threshing floor. There may have been a mucking out hole.

The SW elevation had no openings

#### 4. Interior details;

The roof had collapsed into the barn. It was possible to work out that there had been two principal rafter trusses with morticed apexes and a square set ridge, as in barn B, with trenched purlins on each side. Mortices part way along the inside of the principal rafter indicated there were collars or perhaps struts. Two of the three principal rafters found had large halvings with peg holes and were re used cruck-like timbers, or perhaps full cruck blades, from a thatched building. The tie beam was arched but with no visible signs of reuse. The porch lintel also had redundant peg holes arranged as if for halvings on the other side.

The boskins were largely crushed by the fallen roof and only part of the foddergang remained. These were well made in softwood with chamfered edges as in barn C and, like those, were grooved to take 'slate' panels, some of which remained in place.

#### 5. Plan form;

Field barn; variation on the typical Dales two door plan, but of typical Ribblesdale L shape. There is a shippon door but the usual door to the mew/ foddergang is here enlarged to a cart entrance, protected by a porch created by the extended roof slope. Porches next to extended shippons are also seen in Littondale.

---

#### DATING

##### 6. Identify the oldest part of the building and likely date;

The reused cruck -like timbers have come from a thatched roof perhaps of the 16 th C. The building is shown on the 1907 revised OS 1847 map as square but this is certainly due to the standard simplification of detail from the 1847 map and not indicative of a rebuilding since. The large halvings do suggest full crucks.

#### SETTING

##### 8. Orientation;

The shippon and hay mew doors are all on the sheltered SW side of this exposed upland site

##### 9. Relationships;

The barn is on the exposed summit (265m or 875 ft OD) of a drumlin hilltop serving a very large field which may have been taken in from former pasture. It lies some 360m (400 yards) to the WSW of the farm across Cobby Gill. An indistinct track runs from the farm to the barn. The entrances are on the sheltered side and the animals were probably watered in the gill. The exposed hill situation and the huge field may be the reason for the cart entrance and the porch. Carts perhaps, not sledges, were used and the hay mew was filled not from forking holes but internally from the shelter of the porch.

Without historical information one can only speculate as to how this field barn operated.

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OTHER INFORMATION

12 Documentation, maps, inventories etc;  
1847/8 OS map, revised 1907 shows the barn (but note modifications  
of building shape with this Revision)

13. Plans etc annexed (please tick)

block plan of site

ground floor plan ✓

photographs ✓

detail drawings ✓

elevations ✓

copies of inventories, maps etc

Photo 8 shows barn D with its porch and shippon door.

ACA 1995

Waterfalls

Stepping  
Stones

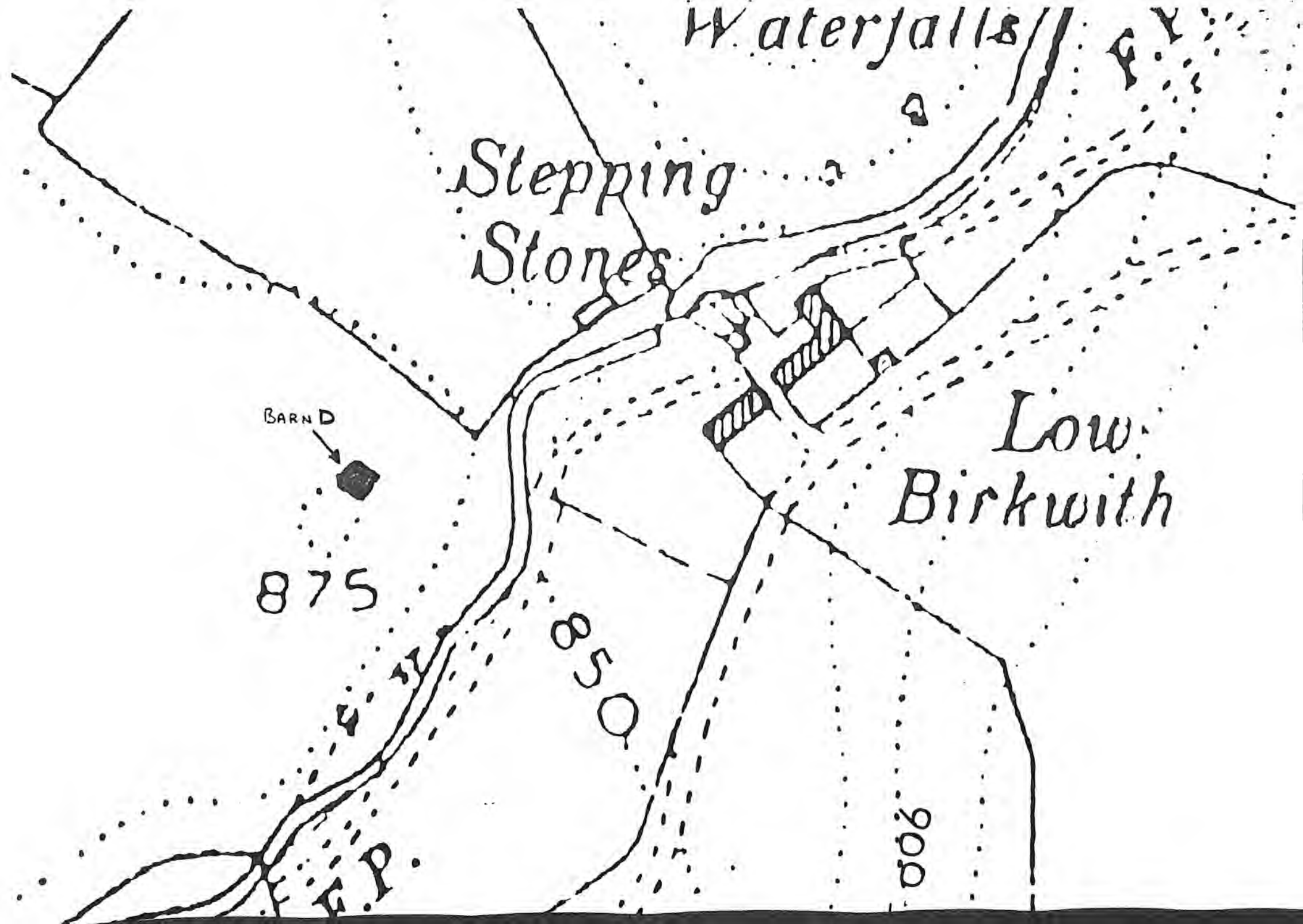
Low  
Birkwith

BARN D  
875

850

800

F.P.



LOW BIRKWITH - BARN D

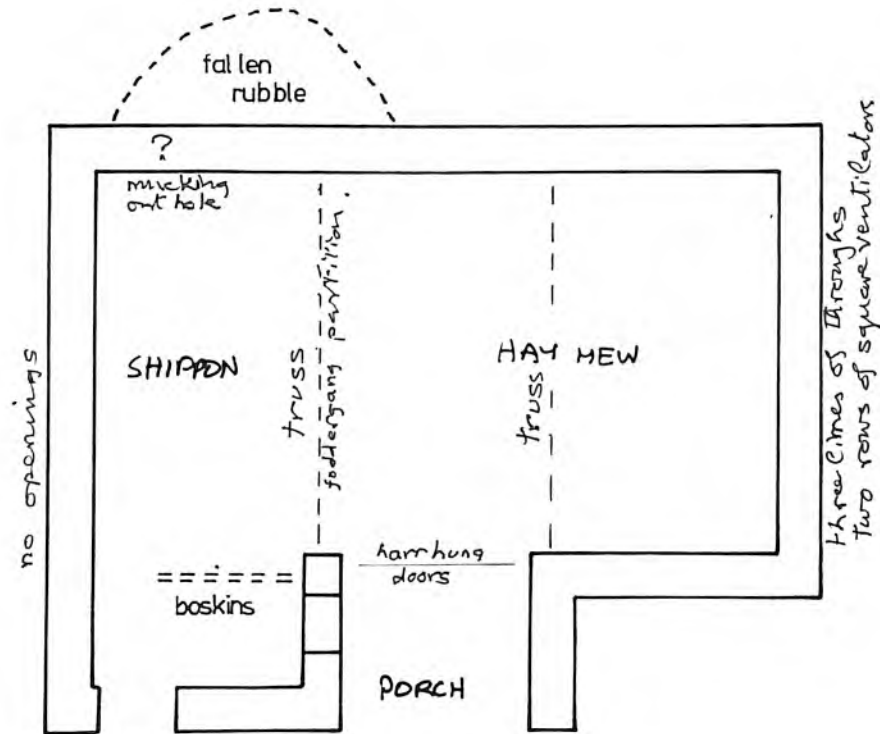
SD 79765

Wall stones of very mixed rubble. Rough hammer-dressed boulders. Quoins of gritty Pre-Carboniferous rock  
Sandy roof "slates"  
oak roof timbers (fallen)  
Boskins softwood.  
- dark slate used to infill boskins and foddergang partition

Trusses of morticed apex type square set ridge  
three principals were reused  
& crane like - 16th Cent.?

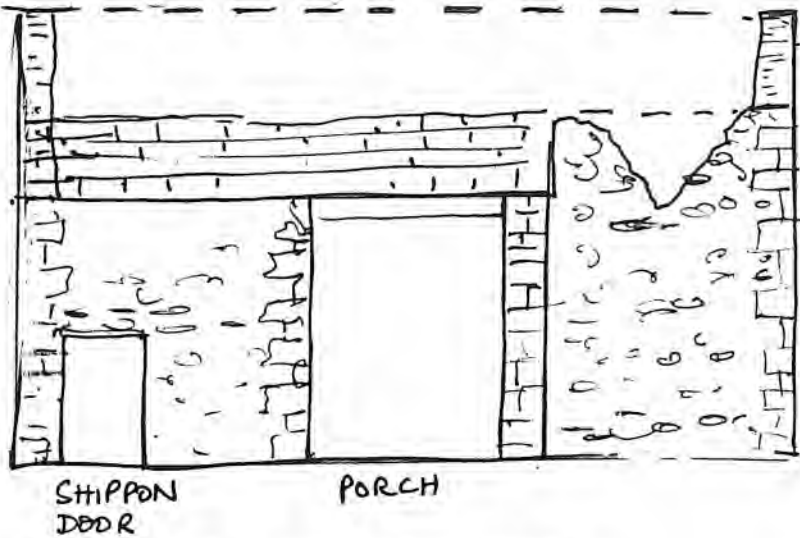
Located on exposed summit of drumlin

No parking holes because barn could be filled from cart backed into porch.

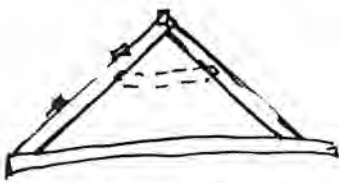


0 5m

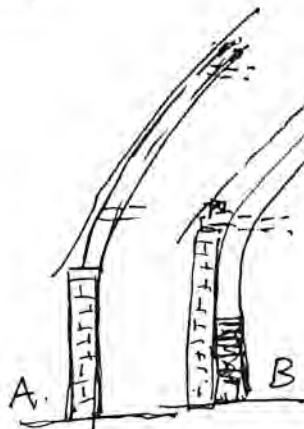
# LOW BIRKWITH FIELD BARN D.



SKETCH OF SE ELEVATION



SKETCH RECONSTRUCTION  
OF ROOF TRUSS IN BARN



A SKETCH RECONSTRUCTION OF CRUCK-LIKE PRINCIPAL

B. RECONSTRUCTION OF FULL CRUCK. LENGTH BETWEEN HALVINGS IS 2.56m

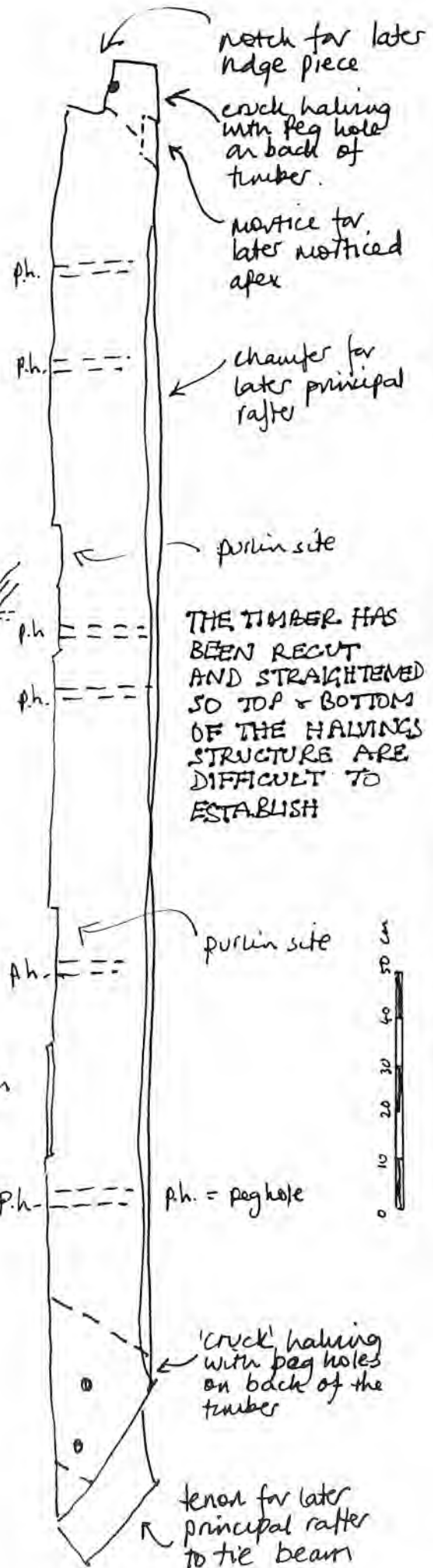
tenon for morticed apex



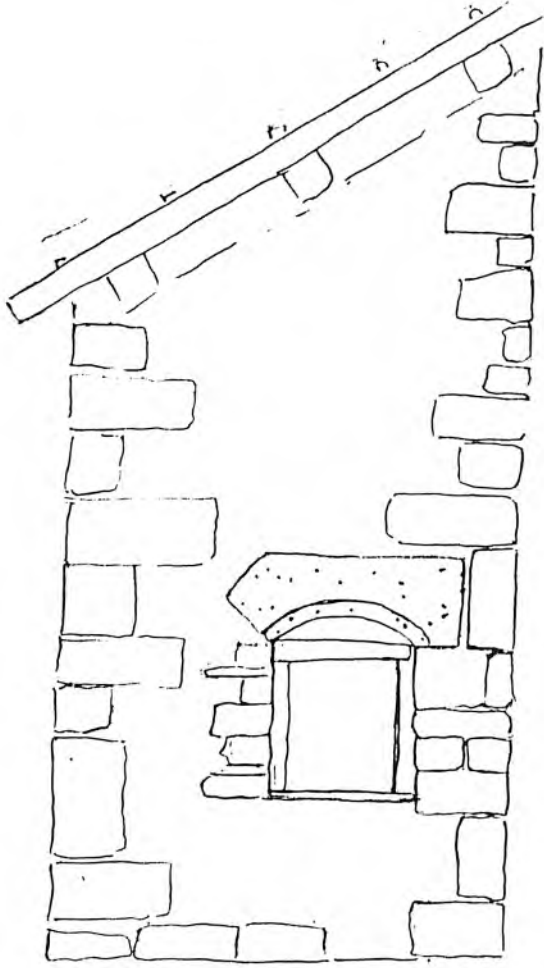
SKETH OF ANOTHER PRINCIPAL RAFTER WITH A HALVED JOINT.



SKETCH OF TIMBER FORMING DOOR LINTEL  
POSSIBLE CRUCK PURLIN?  
(The mortice is for the present door)



# Low Birkwith.

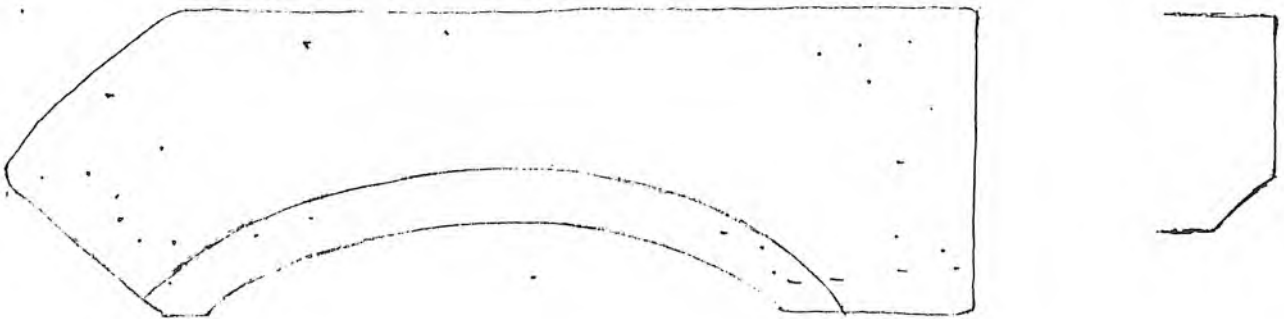


External.

Internal.

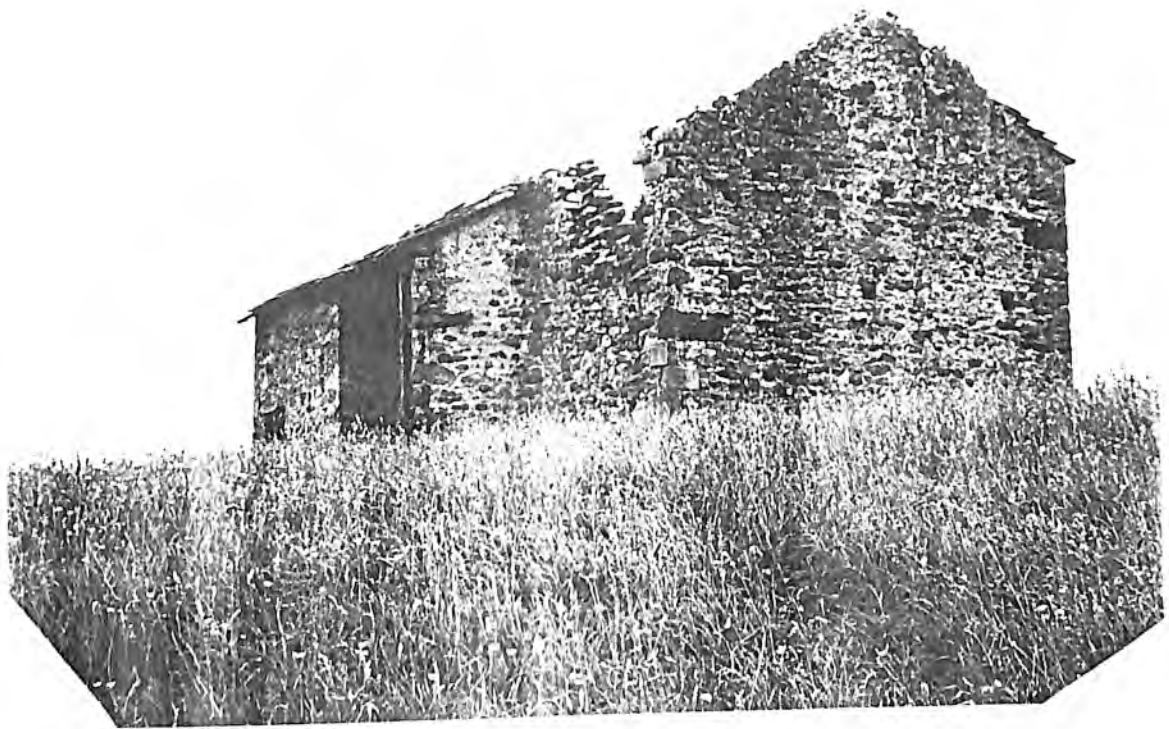
Field Barn 'D'

Sketch.



SCALE 1-10.

JB, 9-9-1995.



BARN D.

E

YORKSHIRE  
VERNACULAR BUILDING  
STUDY GROUP 1499

Horton in Ribblesdale  
(Parish or township)

Hennery-Piggery (E)  
Low Birkwith  
(Name of building)

NGR SD796765

Mr White  
(Owner or occupier)

Low Birkwith farm,  
Horton in Ribblesdale  
(Address)

(Building listed?)

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Date of record; 1 July 1995

Names of recorders; A Armstrong, J Bishop, S Degnan, L Moor  
T Tolhurst

Note of major alterations or demolitions since the survey;  
None

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**DESCRIPTION**

**1. Building type/purpose;**

Hennery piggery (to house hens above and pigs below)

**2. Materials;**

Ceramic ridge tiles, Ribblesdale flag roof slates. Walling materials of various local stones including the black Horton 'slate' to the window sill, lintel over the door and steps to upper door. Wall of poorly coursed rubble composed of limestone with some sandstone boulders and some local 'slate'. Quoins of roughly dressed limestone and sandstone as are the stones around the openings. Timber is softwood.

**3. Exterior details;**

Lintels with quoin-like jambs around the openings suggest an early 19th C date. The little enclosure at the side of the piggery has had part of its wall removed but there was probably a feeding trough near the door where a rectangle remains in the cobbling. There is a small stone trough across the track which may have come from here.

**4. Interior details;**

The hen loft has wide floor boards over sawn timber joists with no access visible with the ground floor. There is a sawn timber ridge and two purlins. The piggery below has a flag floor. None of the doors are original. The lower one is a stable type and the upper door would have had a hen hole probably. All the walls are white washed.

**5. Plan form;**

Typical rectangular hennery piggery (see that recorded in Kettlewell of similar size, also with hens in gable end)

-----  
**DATING**

**6. Identify the oldest part of the building and likely date;**  
All early/mid 19th C

7. Major extensions or alterations;  
Enclosure wall possibly partly demolished with change of use  
There may have been a trough by the door where there is now a gap  
in the cobbles.

SETTING

8. Orientation;

Piggery door face E into the farm yard and facing the farm  
kitchen for easy feeding.

9. Relationships;

The pigs and hens which would supply the farm table with food are  
in the farm yard and within easy reach of the kitchen. The small  
walled yard by the piggery, now partly blocked off, was probably  
for the pigs when outside.

A pig killing stool was found in barn A and may have been used  
here.

-----  
OTHER INFORMATION

10. Initials/date stones

none

11. Oral information from owner/occupier;

none

12 Documentation, maps, inventories etc;

see 1907 revised map

13. Plans etc annexed (please tick)

block plan of site

ground floor plan ✓

first floor plan

analytical plan

copies of inventories, maps etc

sections  
elevations ✓  
detail drawings  
photographs

ACA



Waterfall 1811

Stepping  
Stones

Building E  
Hen. Piggery

BARN C

House

BARN A

Burn B

Low  
Birkwith

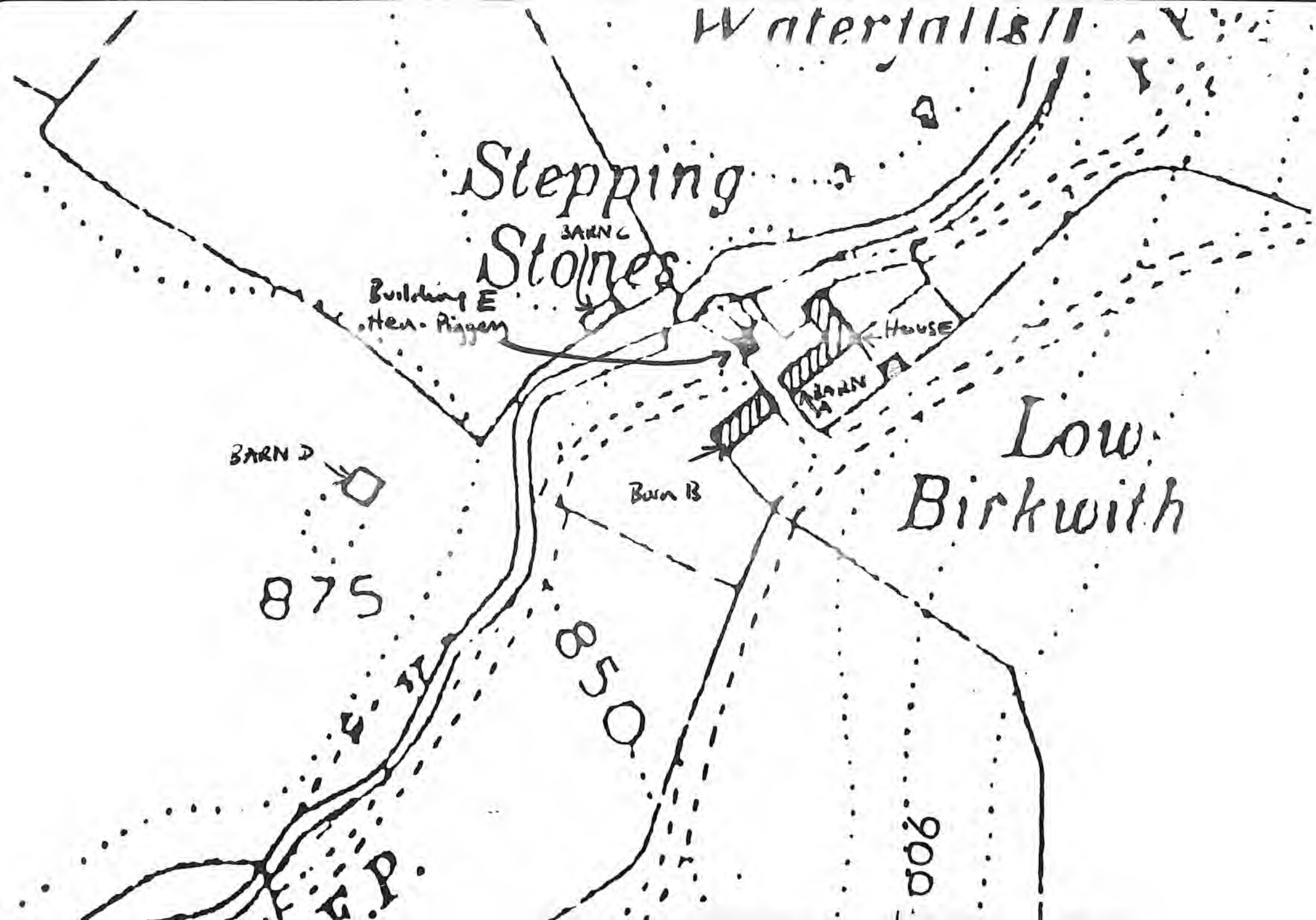
BARN D

875

850

900

EP

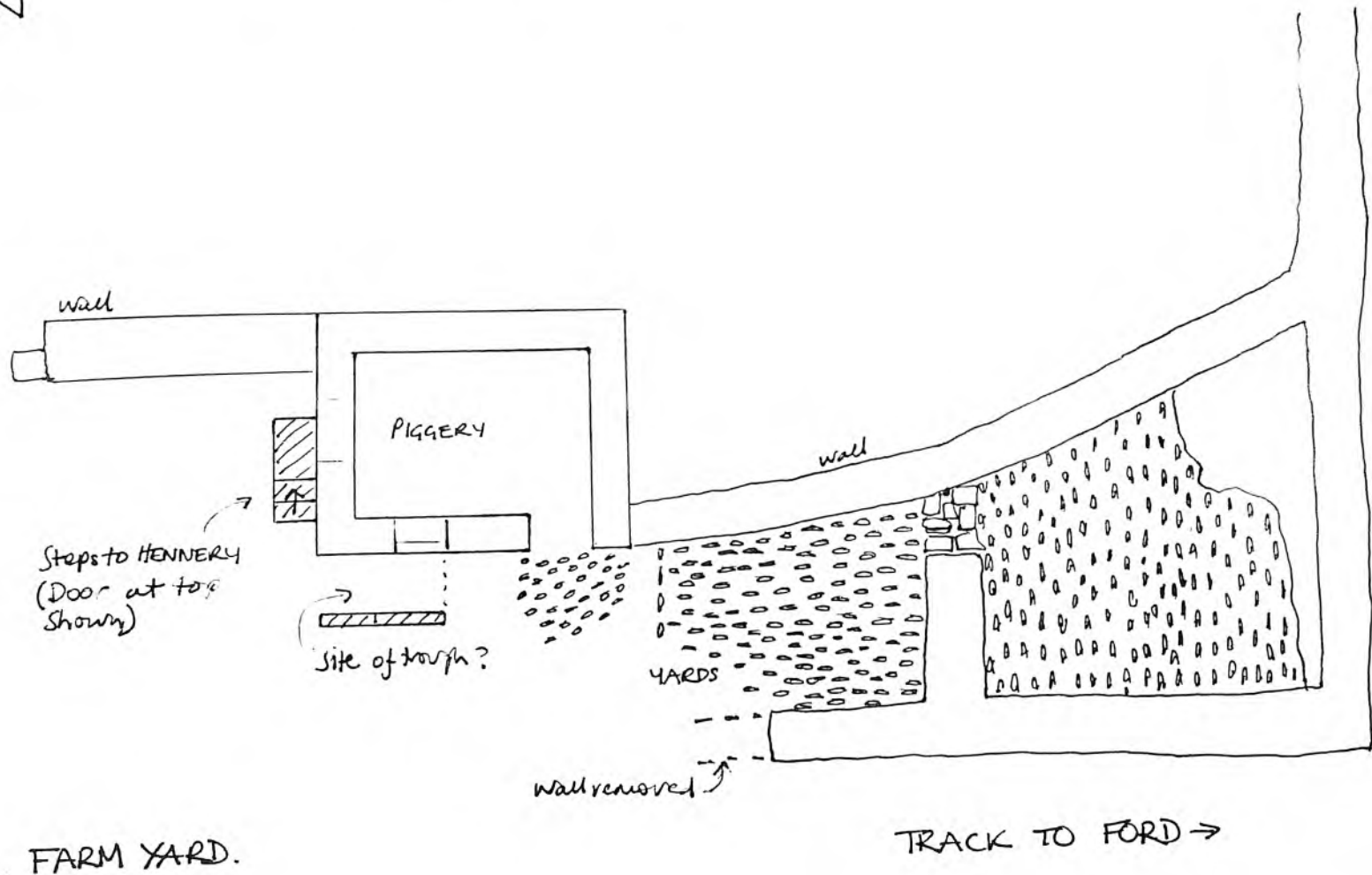
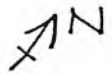


# LOW BIRKWITH (E) HEN - PIGGERY

SCALE 1 : 150

SD 797765

▨ = HORTON SLATE    ○○○ = COBBLES




FARM YARD.

TRACK TO FORD ->

LOW BIRKWITH (E) HEN PIGGERY

SCALE 1:100 SD 797765

 = HORTON SLATE

SW. ELEVATION



SE. ELEVATION

