

'HAMPSTEAD FARM', EYE and DUNSDEN.

Owner:- Phillimore Estates - in hand  
since 1980.

Listed Buildings entry:- All four Barns are listed Grade II. / *Stable listed Oct. 86*



Group of barns looking west from Barn IV  
to Barns III and I.

Hampstead Farm is situated near the northern edge of the parish. It lies just below the brow of the hill looking down on its water meadows in the Thames flood plain, which provided pasture for its cattle. The name indicates a Saxon settlement. 'Ham' in Old English means:- village, estate or home; 'Stede' means:- place, site. So it could just mean homestead but also site of the manor farm, or site of a small settlement. Various field names - Ham Coppice, Little and Great Ham - preserve the same Saxon word.

I have made copies of three maps of the farm (originals at Berks Record Office) showing the gradual increase in the number of farm buildings and their move away from the house and the large pond to the other side of the track.

To-day there are 4 barns and two fold or holding yards, numerous attached sheds and cow houses, a granary and a long brick stable. Mr. J. Maidment, who was the tenant farmer from 1933 until his recent retirement in 1980, told me about the many changes that took place during the past 50 years.

At first there was one tractor, and from 3 to 5 working horses for the arable. 8 men were employed in 1933 and only 4 in 1980. One of the large barns held the ricks, and the threshing machine was housed inside as well, so all the work could be done under cover. Barn I was used to house cows and it was also used for milking. It is painted white inside. A modern milk holding tank was fitted later in an outshut on its eastern side. Many of the barn outshuts were used for rearing calves. Barn IV was always used as a winter shelter for the cows which spent the summer on the Thames meadows.



A dairy in the house with wide shallow sinks or troughs made of slate, was witness to the importance of the milking herd. Modern grain storing and drying equipment replaced the ricks in Barns II and III; these have now mostly been dismantled and the buildings are no longer in use.

Previous tenants of the farm were:- Charles Williams, from about 1923 to 1933, and before him Mr. Harris for ca 40 years. When Mr. Maidment first took the farm over in 1933 it was owned by the Ewen Brothers. Some further owners and tenants are mentioned on the enclosed map tracings.

#### ARCHITECTURAL EVIDENCE.

N.B. the numbering of the barns was merely done to identify the buildings on the site plan, they are not in chronological order. The site is dominated by two magnificent 18th century barns of 5 bays, each with central threshing floors and porches.

On the western side of the yard is BARN I. It measures 23m by 7.05m; it has a high brick plinth. It is timber framed and weather boarded, and the roof has small flat tiles, as have all the other barns and stables. Inner curved principal rafters rise from tie to collar. The rafters meet at a ridge piece. A date, which is very difficult to read indicated a building date of 1771 or 1790, which is certainly consistent with its construction details. All the timbers are painted white.

Next to its south gable is a smaller 4-bay building. It has one large double door facing the fold yard. Nearly all its timbers seem re-used, part of it was probably once lofted over. It has queen trusses, a ridge piece, and stands on a very low brick plinth (only 2 bricks). It seems to have been used as a cow shed, although its original purpose could have been a different one. It was mainly used for preparing animal feed stuffs in the Maidment days.

BARN III with the date 1776 carved on the tie beam measures 23.20m by 8.10m. It is timber framed on a ca 1m high brick plinth and weatherboarded. The trusses have inner curved principal rafters between tie and collar. On the 1763 Estate Map there appears to be only one large barn with porch on the site, however, the map date is 13 years before the tie beam date. Does this mean the date celebrates an occasion other than the building date? Or is it a different barn? Attached to its south gable is a smaller 3-bay barn, called BARN II, built in a traditionally earlier style with middle rail, low plinth and queen trusses. However, it lacks a north gable wall and looks as if it was built later than its neighbour.

The measurements of BARN II are 13m by 6.30m, it has a central threshing floor with two large cart entrances. Outshuts and shelter sheds are attached to the west side of both barns. There is also a modern breeze block built calf pen and a large timber framed granary on 12 staddle stones in this yard.

BARN IV is a 4-bay barn, timber framed with weatherboarding, queen trusses, middle rail, low plinth, no ridge piece, some re-used timbers. It measures 17.04m by 6.04m. From its architectural evidence it is older than the two large late 18th century barns; from the evidence of the maps it was not even there in 1820! It has lately been used as a shelter for the cows, with an internal wooden partition and some wooden troughs and mangers are still in situ. To the south there is a brick and cob wall forming a fold yard with shelter sheds between the barn and the walls. The shelter shed which is built into the



elegantly curving cob wall has still got all its wooden mangers. A large open cart shed is attached to the south side of this wall and the barn gable. It has a king post roof of rather unusual shape spanning the gap between the curving wall and its 6 supporting posts.

#### STABLE OR BYRE.

The only building of which measured drawings were made is a long narrow brick stable or byre flanking the original farm yard near the house on its western side. This is a 5-bay building with loft over. All its doors and windows now face west, but there are several blocked openings on the east side, the former farm yard side. The building stands on a slope, the east side is ca 0.30m lower. The bricks are of irregular sizes from 2-2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " and there is no clearly recognizable bond. Two rows of larger bricks of 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ " run the length of the building and are probably ornamental. The two doors are harr-hung and only 1.80m high by 1.20m wide. The roof is tiled and there are two rows of dentilled bricks under the eaves. Some windows have wooden diamond mullions. The building measures 18.50m by 5.50m, and it is 6m high. It has a loft door in its south gable wall, accessible by external ladder.

Internally the massive cross beams and spine beams supporting the hay loft at a height of only 2.20m are impressive, and the more unusual as they all have neatly chamfered stops at the ends and in the middle where the cross beams intersect the spine beam. There is a feeding gap at the back running the length of the building. The walls have wooden sleepers at regular intervals (indicated in the cross section drawing). At the south gable wall wooden kick boards are nailed to these timbers. Several harness hooks are still in position around the walls. The building was partially filled with straw and it was not possible to see whether any other fixtures remained. The trusses have interrupted tie beams and sling braces to the collar which support clasped purlins. It is possible that the hay loft is not an original feature since all principal rafters show empty mortises just above the purlins.

#### CONCLUSION.

Probably the oldest building on the site, possibly of early 18th century date. It is unusual for this area, perhaps only because not many stables or cow byres survive from before the 19th century. The low and wide doors and low ceiling suggest to me that it was designed not for horses but for oxen. A large, mainly arable farm (342 acres overall in 1842) would have needed several teams of oxen. Arthur Young in his 'General View of Oxfordshire' mentions in 1813 on several occasions that teams of oxen were still very much in use, i.e.: - "Mr. Freeman of Fawley Court has 20 Devon oxen for work". Latterly it had been used for calves, but in 1933 it had stalls for 9 horses and certainly housed Mr. Maidment's working and riding horses. A later brick building at its northern end was a pony stable and harness room.

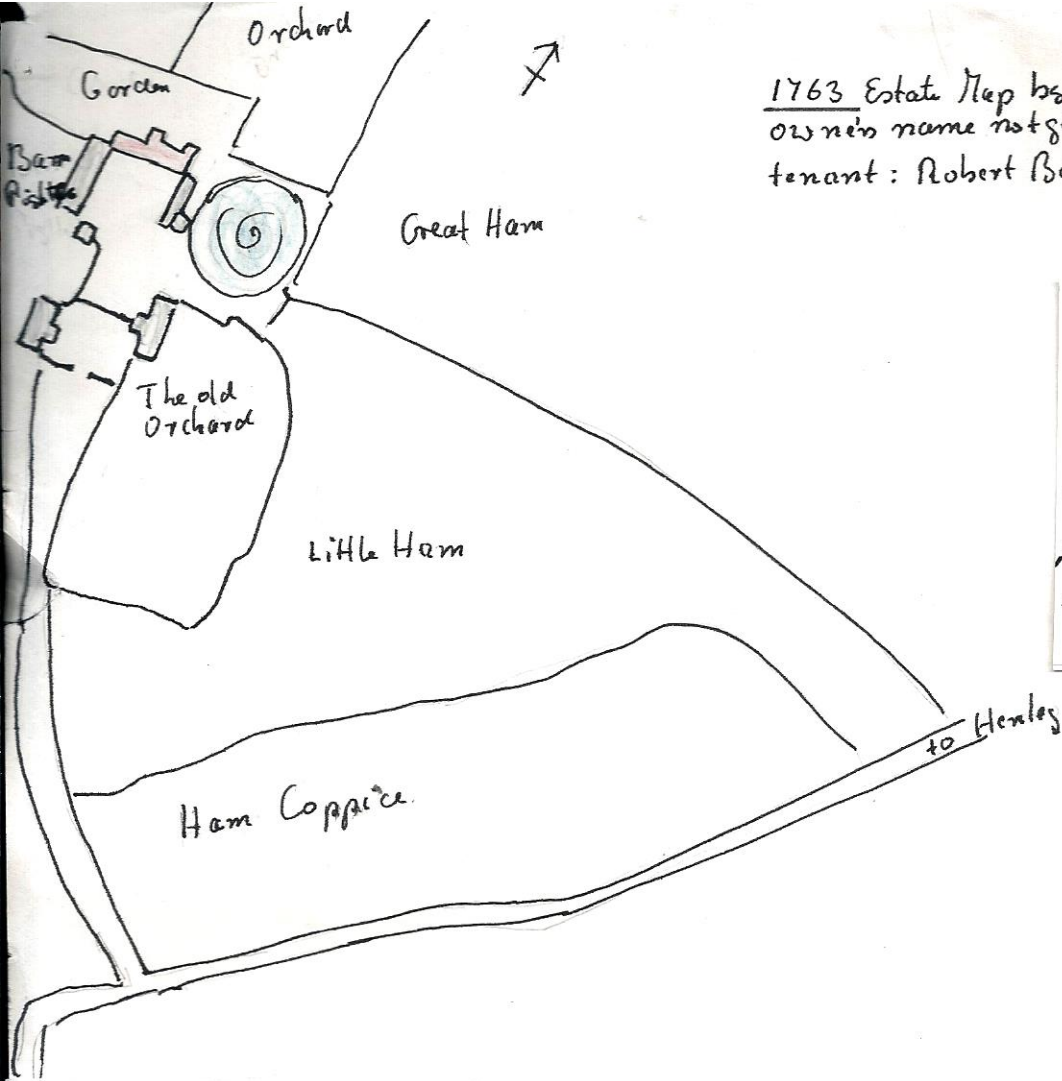
Most of the farm buildings now stand empty, some are used for machine storage. The house was let to a tenant when the farm was taken in hand.

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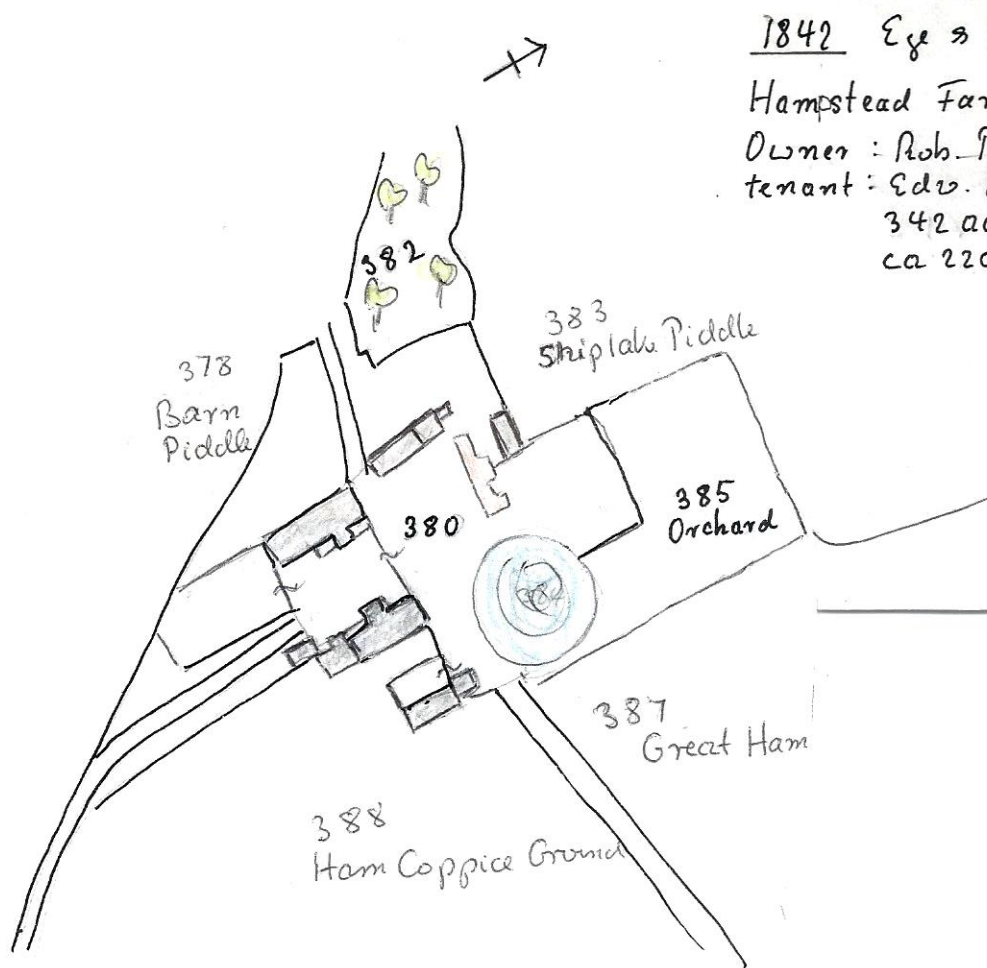
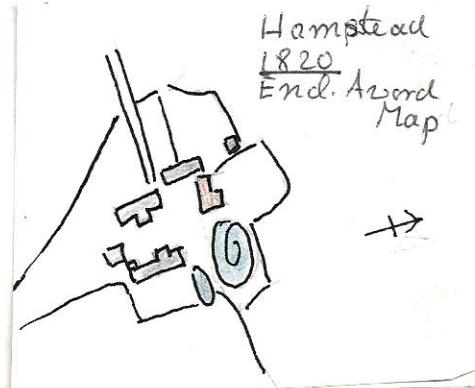
Recorded by members of the Henley Historical & Archaeological Group.

Photographs by:- A. Cottingham, P. Anderson.  
Report by:- R. Gibson.

Copies of this Report will go to the National Monuments Records London, and to the Oxfordshire County Museum, Woodstock.

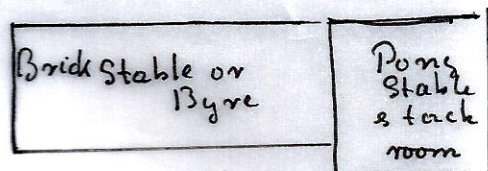
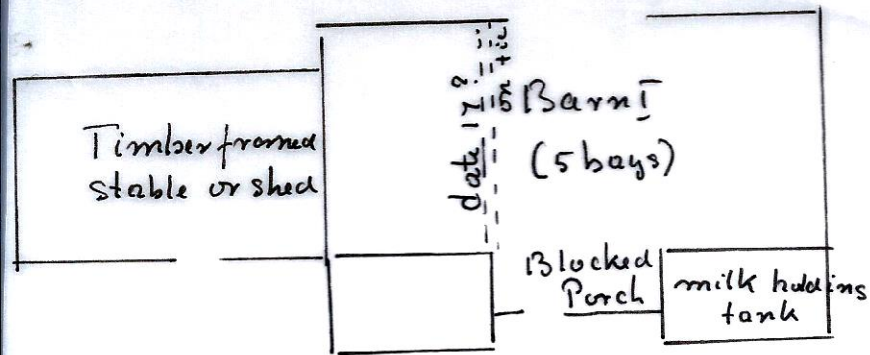


1763 Estate Map by Cross & Marsh  
 owner's name not given  
 tenant: Robert Binfield

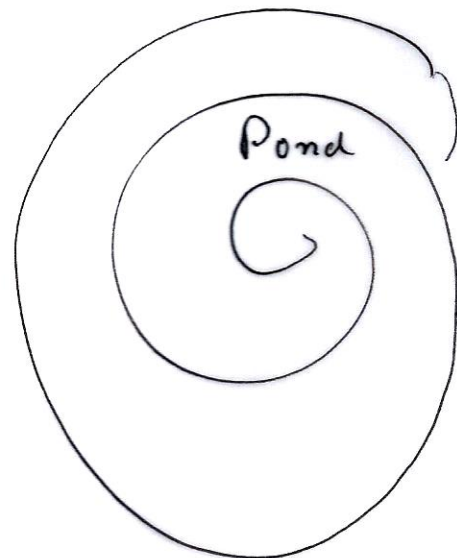
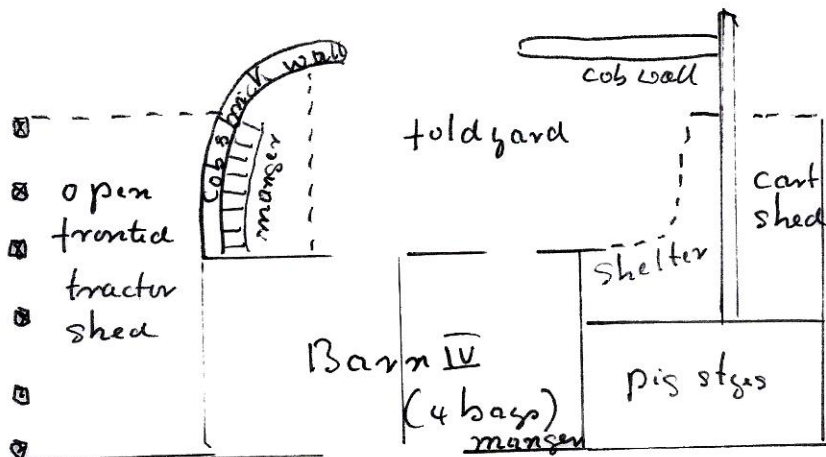
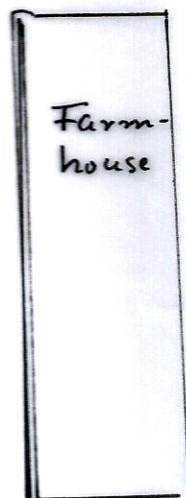
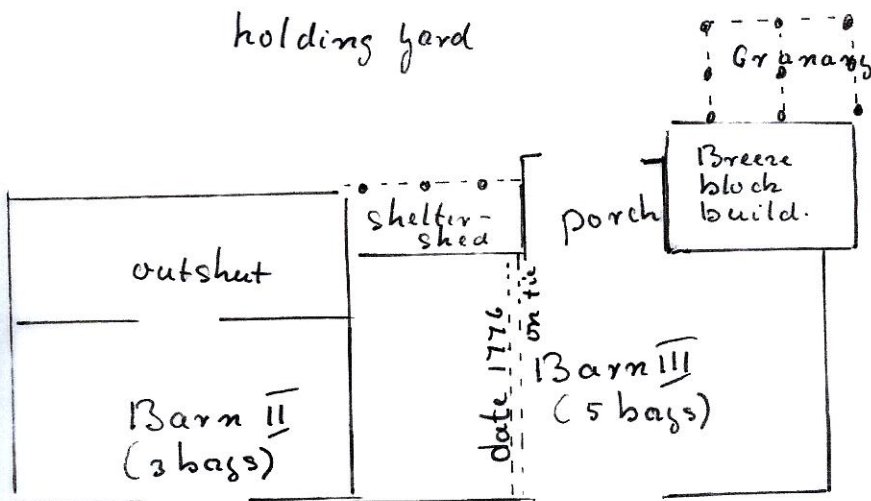


1842 Eye & Dunsden Title N.  
 Hampstead Farm  
 Owner: Rob. Palmer  
 tenant: Edw. Bullock  
 342 acres  
 ca 220 arable





holding yard



'Hampstead Farm' EYE & DUNSDEN

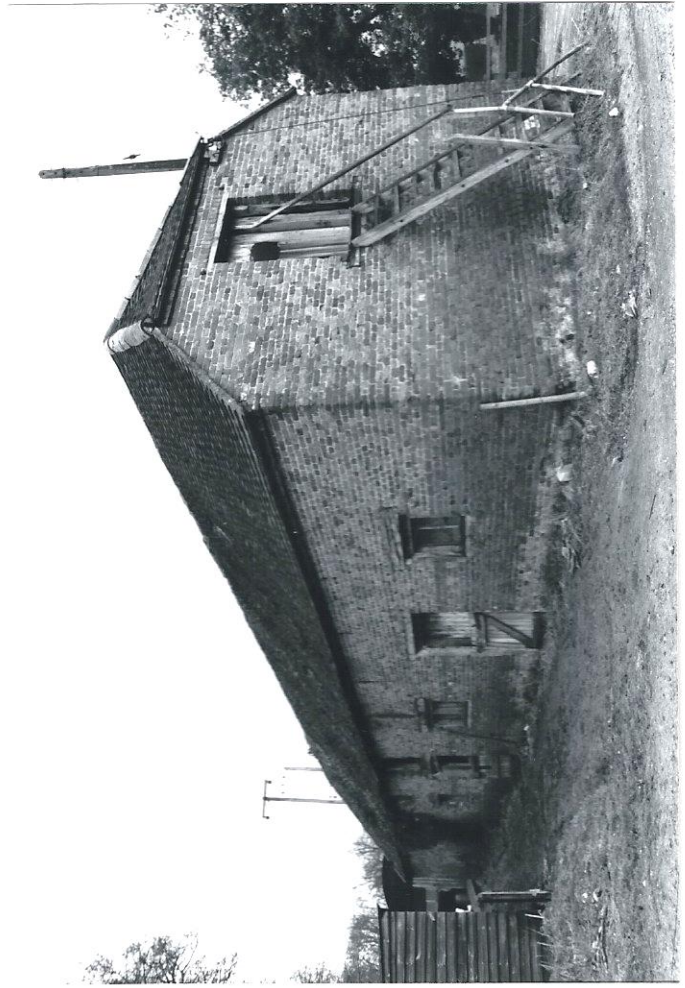
layout - not to scale -

R.G./85





Stable, east side & south gable, pony stable ↑



Stable, west side

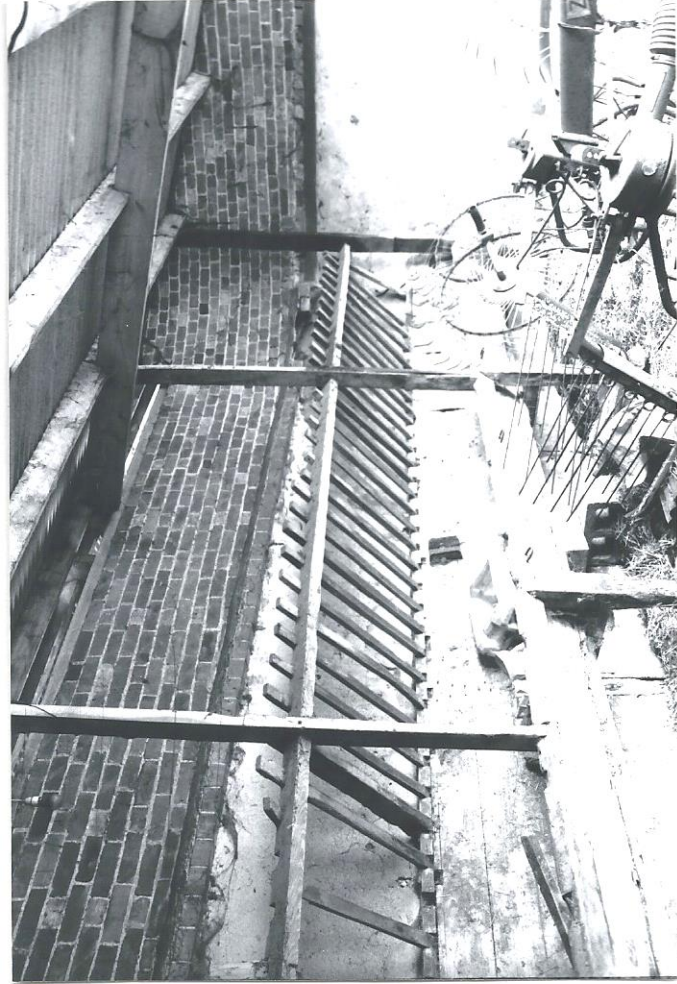


Barn I foreground, granary & barn III beyond



Foldyard with granary & barn III





Shelter shed inside curved cobwall with brick above



Barn IV with cob wall

Barn III with date on tie 1776

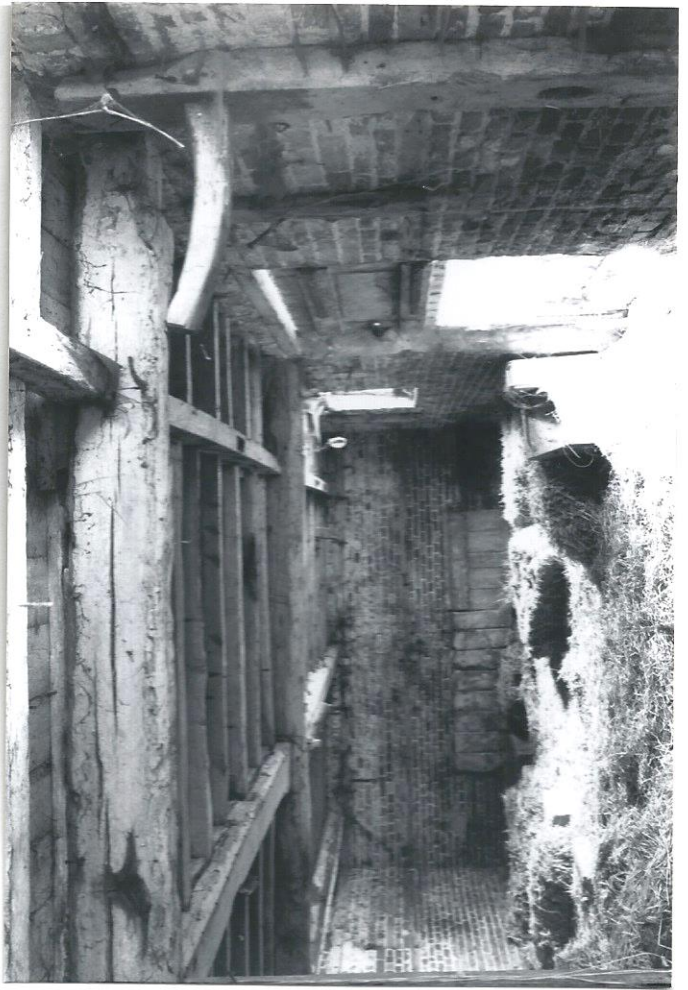


Barn II, queen trusses

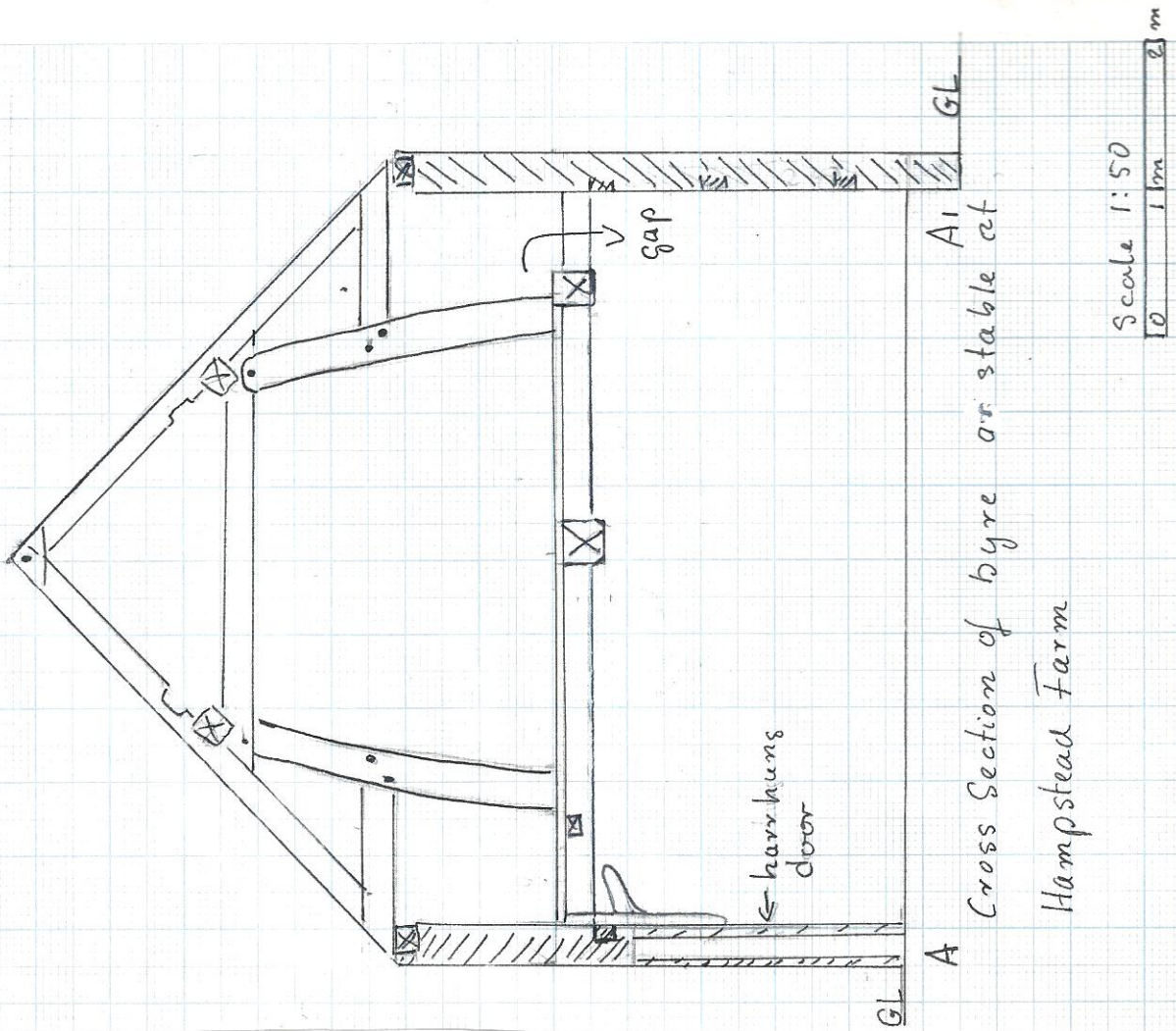




Byre trusses, looking north

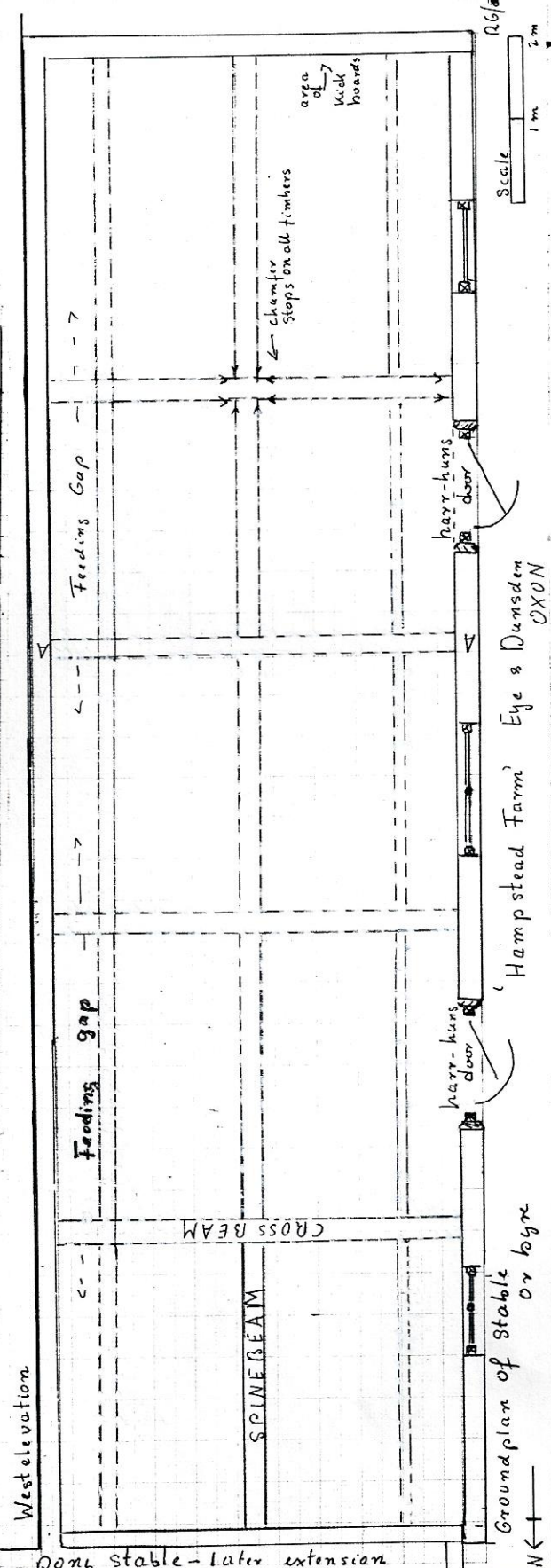
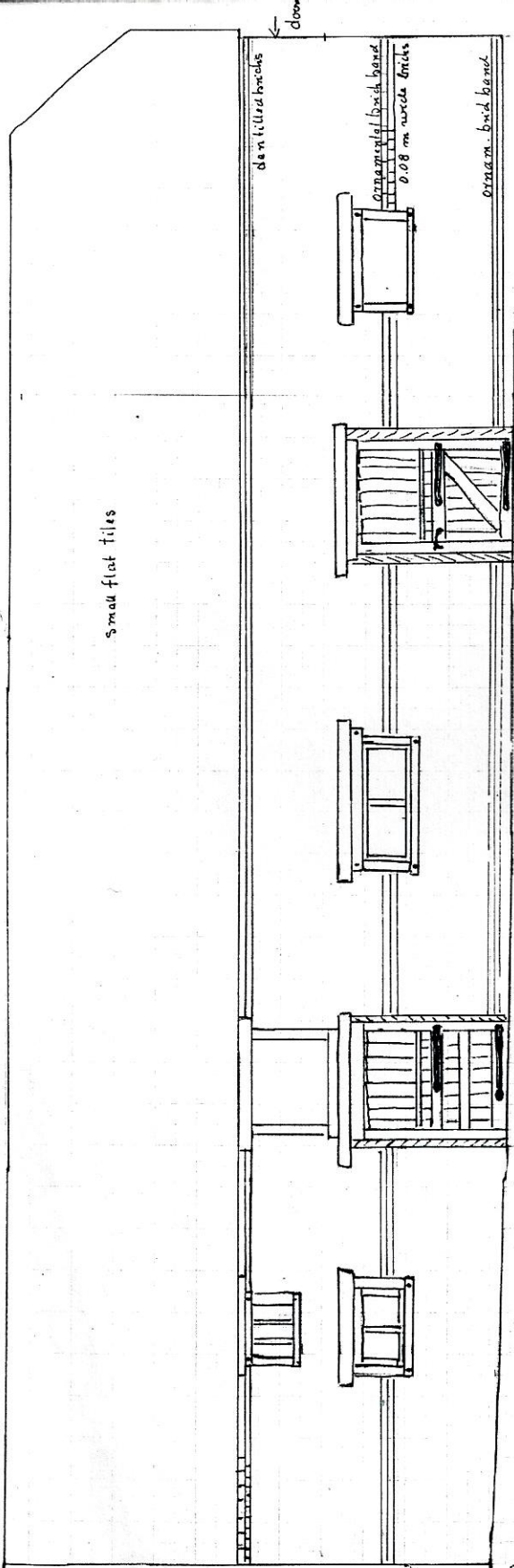


Byre, looking south



Cross Section of byre or stable at  
Hampstead Farm





Elevation & Groundplan of Stable at Hampstead Farm





SCHEDULE

SU77NW

EYE AND DUNSDEN

Hampstead Farmhouse,  
stable approx 15 metres  
south-west

9/183

GV

II

Stable, or possibly oxen byre. C18. Red brick and half-hipped and hipped plain-tile roof. Brick band and dentilled eaves. Single storey with hayloft over.5 bays. 2 stable doors in between 3 window openings. First floor pitching door and window opening to left. Wooden lintels. C19 extension on left end. On right end, below the half-hipped gable, a hayloft door up wooden steps. Blank wall to rear facing farmhouse (not included). Interior: queen-post type trusses carried on tie beams set well below top of walling with struts to eaves level. Subsidiary heavy longitudinal joists set out from walls carry edge of boarding, the gap enabling hay to be pitched directly into the feeding racks below. Ogee-stop-chamfered main cross beams.

(Information supplied by Henley on Thames Archaeological and Historical Group)

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Dated the 10<sup>th</sup> October 1986

Signed by authority of the  
Secretary of State

M. A. L. ROSS  
A Principal in the Department  
of the Environment.