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Outbuilding at 29 Church Street
Ribchester, Lancashire:
Historic Building Assessment

December 2010

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Photographs

SUMMARY

The outbuilding to the rear of 29 Church Street is probably an early 19th century stable or cow house, which has been altered and survives in poor condition. This report provides some historical background information and an assessment of the building's history and features, at the request of the present owner, Mr Russell Milnes.

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OUTBUILDING AT 29 CHURCH STREET, RIBCHESTER, LANCASHIRE:

HISTORIC BUILDING ASSESSMENT

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report concerns a small, detached outbuilding to the rear of 29 Church Street, at Ribchester, in Lancashire. The work was commissioned by the owner Mr Russell Milnes via his architects IWA Architects Ltd, to assist with proposals for the site, as the building lies within the Ribchester conservation area, and close to 29 Church Street, which is listed (grade II). A previous report by this author was submitted as part of a successful planning application to Ribble Valley Borough Council earlier in 2010, for various works to 29 Church Street itself (application numbers 3/2010/0090 & 0091).¹
- 1.2 The outbuilding seems to have been a stable or to have had an agricultural purpose, and is probably early 19th century in date, but has been altered in the 20th century.

2 Site location

- 2.1 The site lies within the historic core of Ribchester, the outbuilding itself standing to the rear (south-west) of nos 30 & 31 Church Street, against the property boundary (NGR: SD 649354) (Figure 2).

3 Background to and aims of the study

- 3.1 The property owner is seeking a scheme to provide a garage and parking for Nos 29-31 Church Street. Given the planning constraints, and the requirements of PPS5, this report is intended to provide information on the outbuilding and an assessment of its historic and architectural significance. It should however be noted that outbuilding is not mentioned in the listed building entry for 28/29 Church Street, although it might be argued that it lies within its curtilage.

4 Historical background

- 4.1 The house at 29 Church Street is dated to 1745 by the rainwater hoppers on the front elevation (shared with no 28), and there is a local tradition that it was once a public house known as the King's Arms, although no documentary evidence for

¹ Stephen Haigh October 2009 29 Church Street, Ribchester, Lancashire: Historic Building Assessment

this has been found². Nos 30 and 31 appear to be late 18th or early 19th century additions to the 1745 building, which probably combined domestic and industrial or warehouse functions, and until very recently remained part of the parent property.

Map evidence

- 4.2 The outbuilding is clearly shown on the tithe map of 1838, with its present proportions (Figure 3), but also with a dashed line adjoining, perhaps intended to represent a pen or proposed structure. The rear croft in which it stands is given number 89, along with the present 31 Church Street, and the tithe apportionment which accompanies the map notes these as the property of John Waterworth's heirs, who also occupied it, and they were described as "warehouse outbuilding yard and croft". The Ordnance Survey's first edition 6" to the mile map, surveyed in 1844 (Figure 4), appears to show that the outbuilding had been extended to the south-east, as do the 1:2500 maps of 1892 - 1930 (Figures 5 - 7). Some of these also show a small adjacent structure against the south-east side, which has not survived.

5 The present outbuilding

- 5.1 The outbuilding is of two storeys, and is built from sandstone rubble with punch-dressed quoins and stone slate roof, materials typical for the district and period. The stonework is slightly better to the north-east front, but this side has had a large doorway inserted beneath a steel lintel, do doubt to enable its use as a garage, in the mid 20th century (photos 1 & 2). All that remains to indicate an earlier arrangement is the jamb of a doorway (with marked diagonal tooling) at the left-hand end of this elevation, but there is also a blocked window or forking hole to the first floor. An unblocked, two-part forking hole survives in the south-east gable (hidden by the conifers), which was probably put in when the earlier opening was blocked. The only openings in the south-west side are one or two breathers, and the cement line of an adjoining lean-to roof is visible here (which fits with the map evidence for there having been a building there, well into the 20th century). It is interesting to note that the boundary wall running to the south-west contains a date-stone of 1834 (carrying the initials J W – presumably those of John Waterworth), but its almost random inclusion suggests that the wall may have been rebuilt. However, as no quoins are visible in the south-west face of the building where the wall adjoins, it does imply that the wall pre-dates the outbuilding.

² Mr Milnes, the present owner, recalls this tradition

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- 5.2 The interior has almost no features and no internal divisions, with only a few recesses and blocked breathers in the south-east and north-west walls, which suggest livestock were kept in here, most likely ponies or horses, or a house cow or two. The walls are whitewashed, as might be expected for such a function. The ground floor appears to be a mixture of stone flags and concrete and it is not possible to see any stalling arrangements, but overhead the first floor is simply constructed from joists and boards, which are in very poor condition. A hole which has been cut through the floor would have allowed access up onto the loft from below, but there is no fixed ladder or other surviving means of ascending. This upper storage space is open to the roof and evidently served as a feed loft.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 The outbuilding probably dates to the early 19th century and seems to have been built to house animals, either horses, ponies or livestock, although the relatively low ceiling and doorway heights tend to suggest bovine rather than equestrian use. In either case its use seems to have been associated with the household, rather than with any farming enterprise. It has few distinguishing features, partly because of the alterations to its north-east elevation and the lack of any internal divisions, and so is not considered to be of particular significance as an individual building, although it does contribute in a small way to the group value of the various historic buildings in this part of the conservation area.

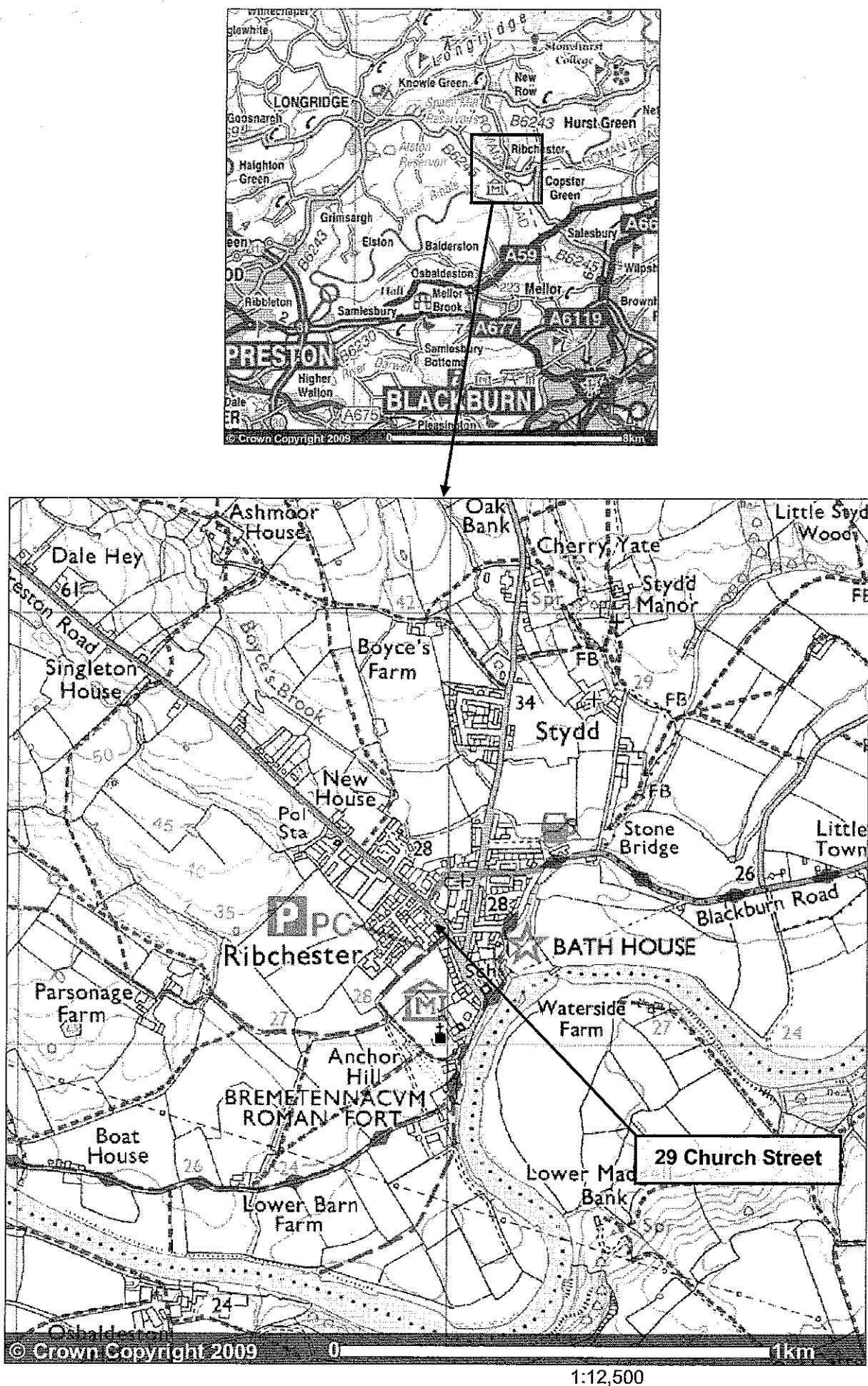


Figure 1: Location maps

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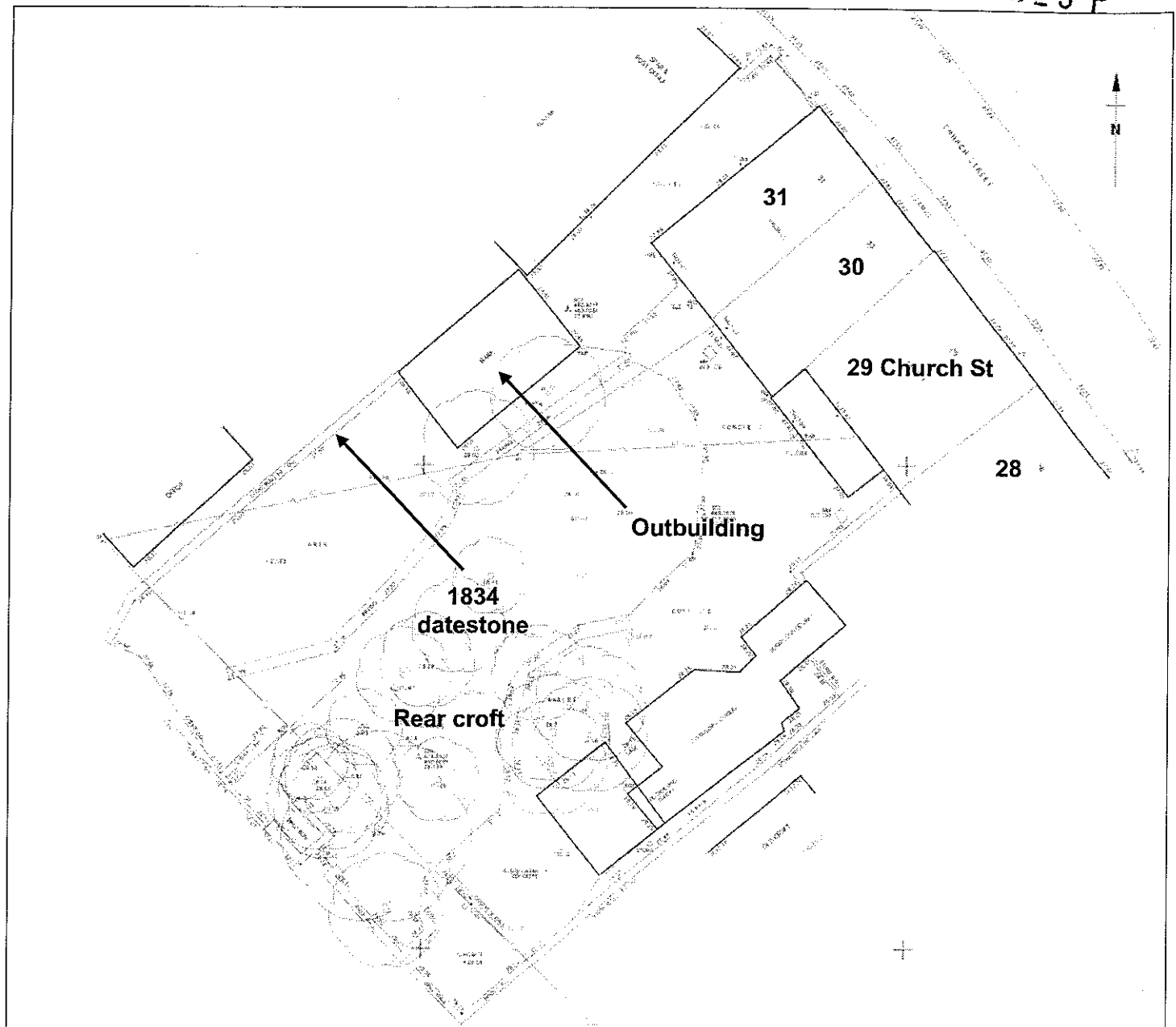


Figure 2: Current site plan

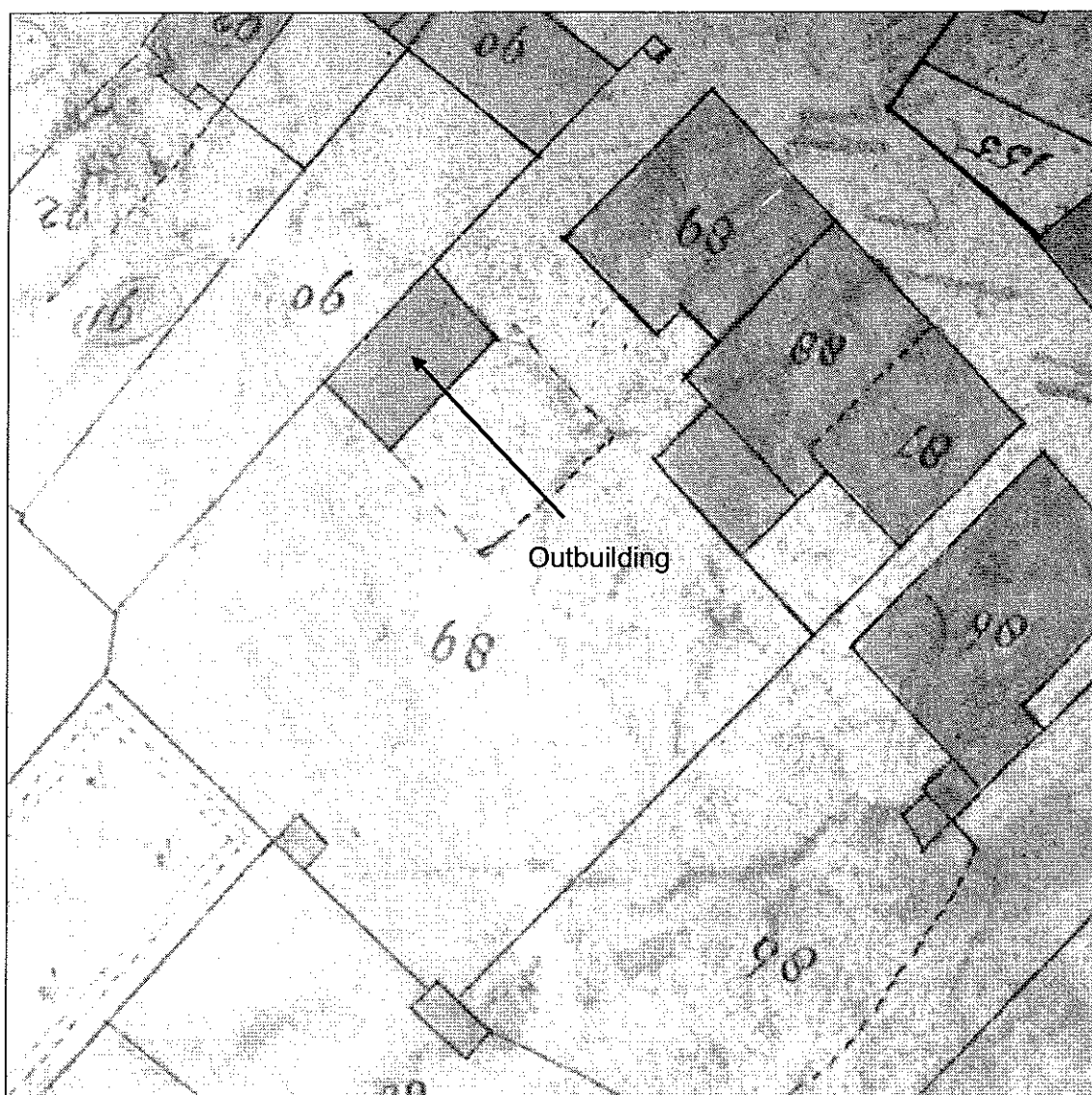


Figure 3: 1838 tithe map (rotated, so as to have north at the top – the numbers appear upside down)
(*A Plan of the Town of Ribchester in the County of Lancaster 1838 LRO PR2905/4/4*)



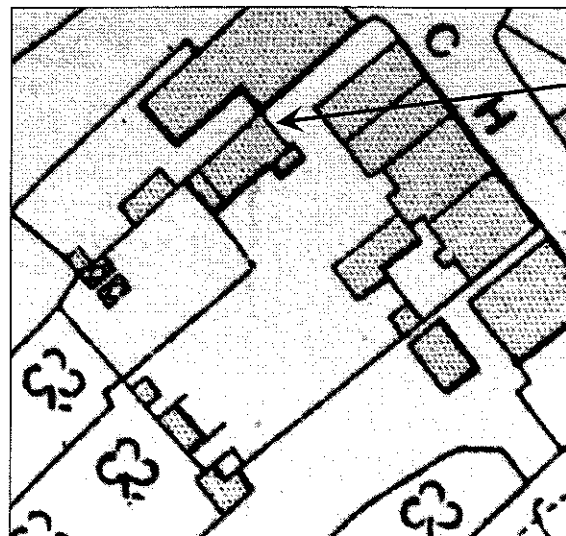
Figure 4: OS 6" to the mile map, surveyed 1844 (Lancashire, sheet 54, published 1847) (enlarged)
Outbuilding appears to have been extended to the south-west



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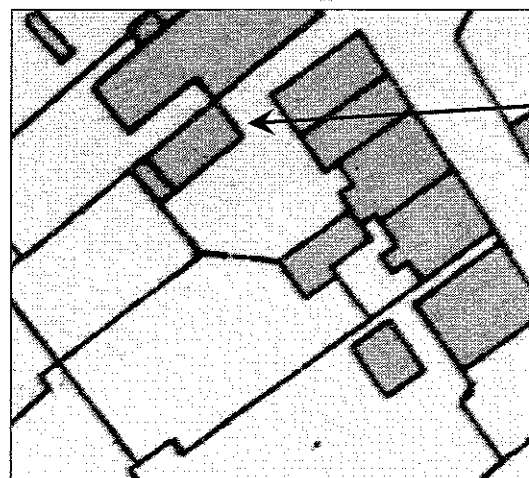
Outbuilding

Figure 5: OS 1:2500 map, surveyed 1892 (Lancashire, sheet 54.14, published 1893)
The outbuilding again shown larger than at present



Outbuilding

Figure 6: OS 1:2500 map, revised 1910 (Lancashire, sheet 54.14, published 1912)
Shows a similar arrangement



Outbuilding

Figure 7: OS 1:2500 map, revised 1930 (Lancashire, sheet 54.14, published 1932)
Shows a similar arrangement

NB: maps not at original scales



Photo 1: North-east elevation

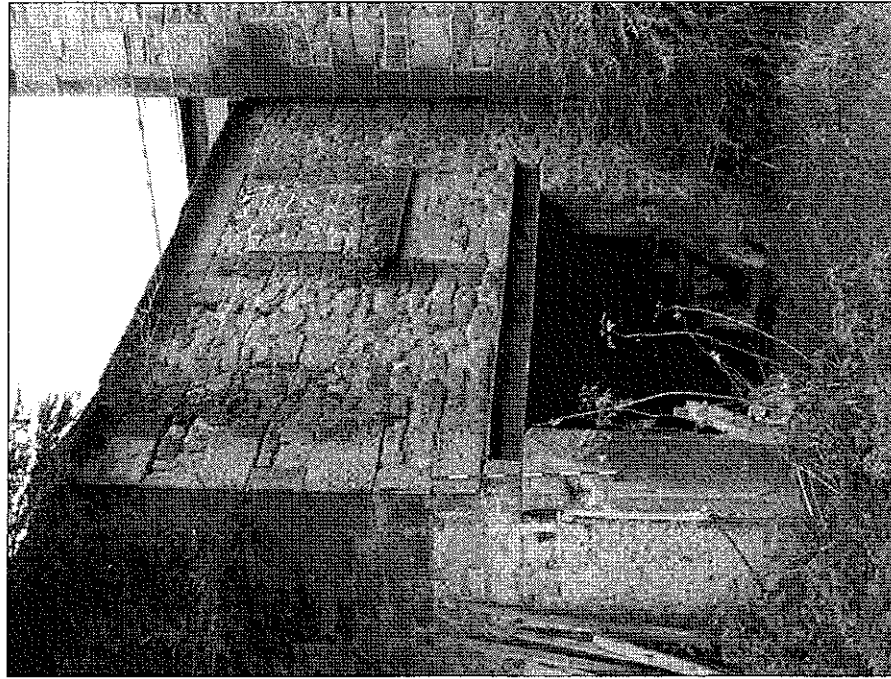


Photo 2: North-east elevation



Photo 3: Date-stone in boundary wall, to south-west of outbuilding

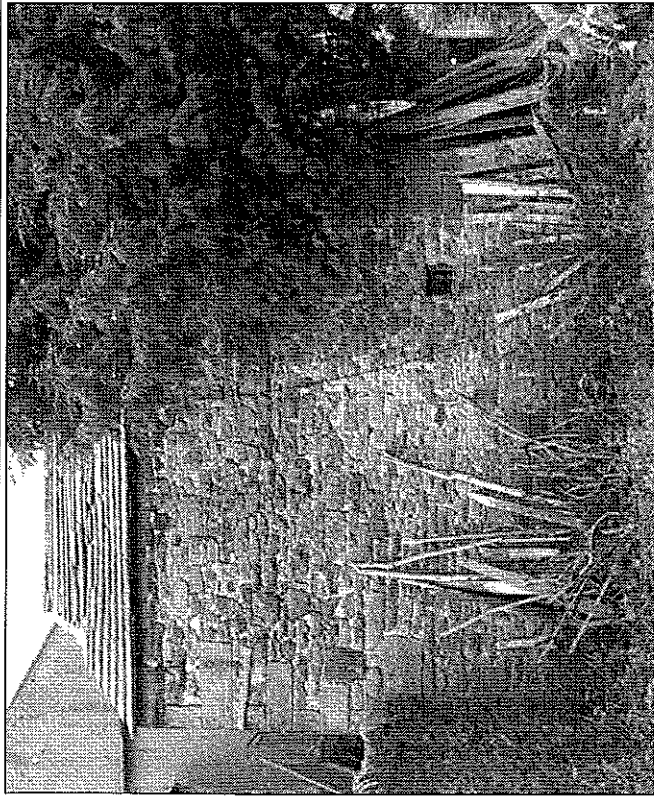


Photo 4: South-west elevation



Photo 6: Interior, from the north



Photo 5: Interior, from the east

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