

8:
The Farm Buildings

8.1 The layout of the farmstead

THE hall and its buildings follow a narrow U-shaped formation around a central yard, with the spaces between the buildings enclosed by stone walls. The yard is approached from the southeast by a narrow track leading off the road from Cockshutt to Baschurch, defined on both sides by low stone walls composed of massive red sandstone blocks. These are probably 18th or early 19th century in date.

On the right, the yard opens out beyond Stanwardine Farm where a shippon for 23 cows forms the southernmost building of the group. At right angles to this, and forming the eastern side of the yard, is a long range of buildings which contains a shippon for 80 cows. Both of these shippons are located upon rising ground and are reached by cobbled paths off the main track, which flank twin depressions in the ground that were probably used as middens. East of them are extensive modern buildings acting as shelters for cattle and also storage.

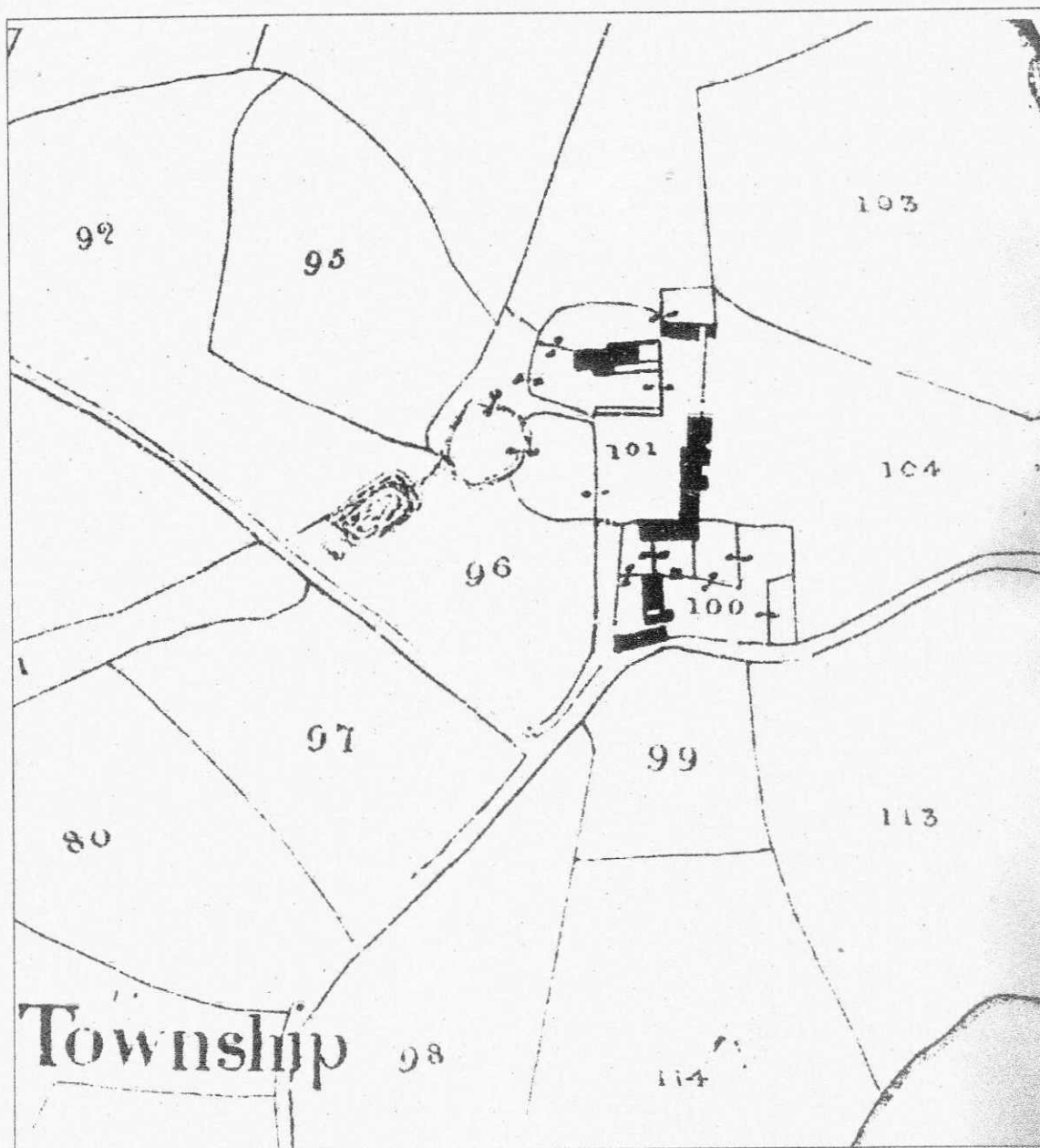
To the northwest of the shippon for 80 is a stretch of red sandstone wall, repaired in places with brick, and, at the northwest corner of the yard, a timber-framed single-storey building, partly derelict, which was probably a stable.

At right angles to this is the northernmost building of the group, a rectangular brick stable. To the west lies the hall itself, and, projecting at right angles from its southeast corner, a series of outbuildings, comprising a store and pig sties. South and west of these stretches the garden terrace of the hall. The eastern side of the garden is enclosed by a high brick wall that extends southeast to a single-storey cattle shelter. South of this runs the red sandstone wall that defines the west side of the track leading to the hall.

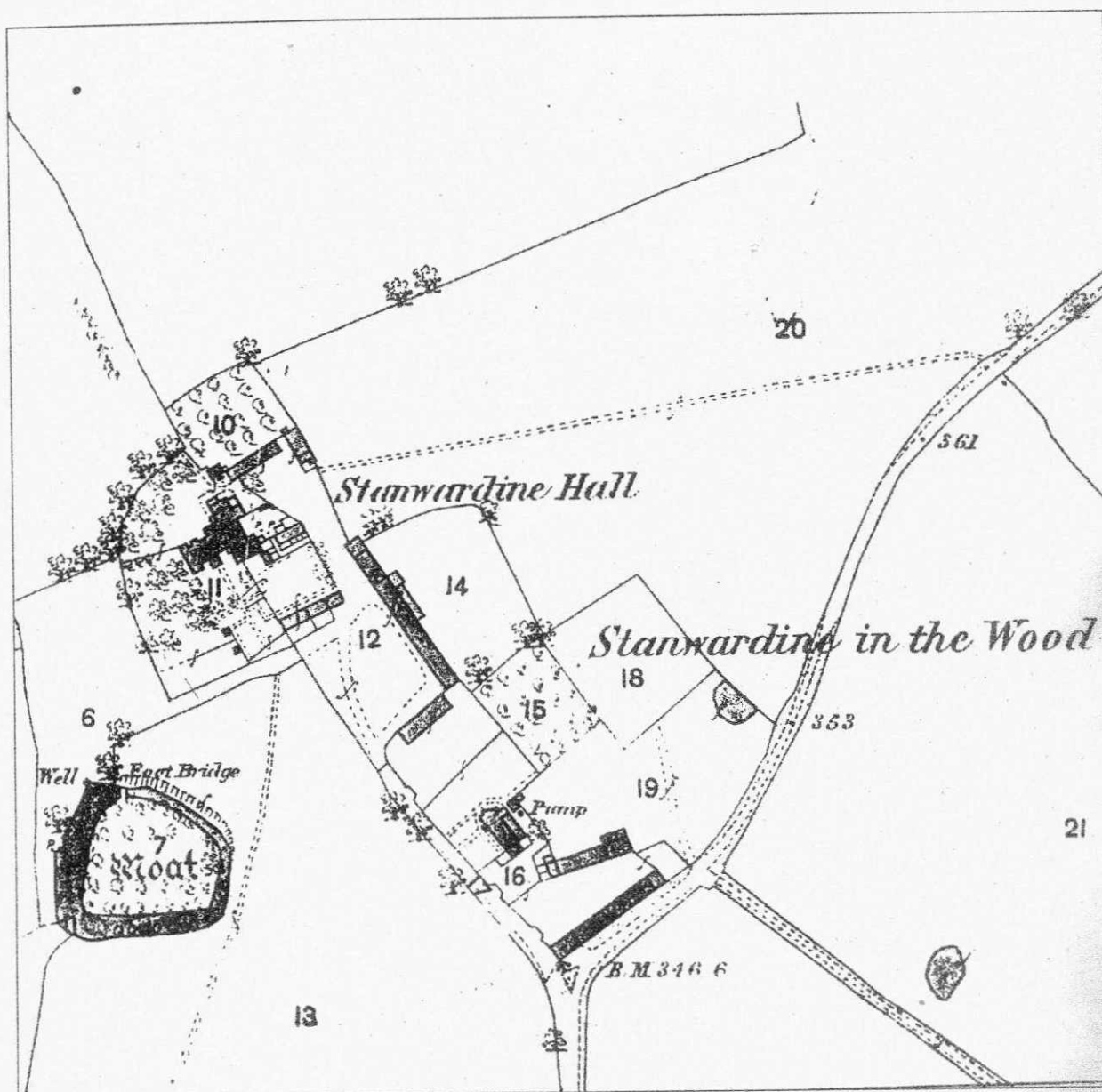
The farmyard has been of approximately similar layout since at least 1842, as the tithe map of Baschurch of that year shows (Map 3). However in place of the 80 and 23 shippons are an L-shaped range of buildings: it is possible these are the present buildings, but not accurately drawn, as the map's rendition of the footprint of the hall itself is not a true one. However, the 1874 25-inch OS map (Map 4) clearly shows the present buildings in place by then. This indicates Stanwardine Hall already functioned as a substantial dairy farm by this time, and that considerable investment had been made by the Petton estate to exploit the market provided by the rapidly-expanding industrial towns of the North and Midlands which the new railway network had brought within reach.

8.2 The terrace

The terrace consists of a raised garden area surrounded by a brick wall. In its south wall, directly in front of the hall, is the former main entrance, with tall brick gatepiers which have weathered datestones.



MAP 3: Section of 1842 tithe map of Baschurch showing Stanwardine Hall, with farm buildings of slightly different plan



MAP 4: The hamlet of Stanwardine-in-the-Wood as shown on the 1874 25-inch OS map: by then the farmstead had taken on its present-day configuration

According to the 1962 restoration report by Leach Rhodes and Walker, they then read:

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A further flight of stone steps leads to a path leading to the porch. The garden is defined on the west and east by brick walls with stone coping with a roll-moulded top. The east wall incorporates a brick potato store, single storey, with barrel-vaulted roof. To the west, steps descend to a vegetable garden, in front of the stores and pig sties. The walls are made of handmade brick and it is possible they were salvaged from the upper wing of the hall when this was demolished.

8.3 The store and pig sties

At right angles to the front of the hall's service wing is a two-storey building, probably of mid-19th century date, used as a store. The brickwork is an unusual type: stretcher bond with one in every three courses containing paired headers. This is also found in part of the shippon for 80. The roof is of slate. During rebuilding work evidence of a former kiln or oven was found on the ground floor, backing on to the stack of the east wing. On the northern side of the store is a lean-to shelter on wooden posts, and to the south a modern greenhouse.

The sties adjoin the store to the east and have stone steps to a hen loft above, where the nesting boxes remain in situ. Between the sties and the stores is a passage with, on its northern side, a studded 16th century door, with segmental arched lintel and sandstone jambs. This, along with some handmade brick in the pig sties, indicates there was an earlier building on this site.

North of the sties is a cobbled yard flanked on the east by a wall of massive red sandstone blocks, again 18th or early 19th century. South of the sties is a modern cattle shelter.

8.4 The stable

Horses were the most valuable beasts on the farm and accordingly this is the finest of all the outbuildings. There were two classes of horse: wagon and hackney. The first did the everyday jobs of ploughing and carting, while the second were more

prestigious and used for riding or pulling carriages. Both classes would have been accommodated in the stable.

This is a two-storey building measuring around 78 ft in length and 18 ft in depth; its brickwork shows evidence of much rebuilding. Sections of handmade brick at the base of the front wall, and on the rear, suggest it may have begun as a building of early 18th century date. It is even possible that brick was reused from the demolished upper wing to construct the stable: the walls incorporate some vitrified brick similar to that found in the house. However, it experienced further rebuilding in the mid-19th century - with brickwork of the stretcher and double-header type found in the pig sties evident on the front wall - and the later part of the century, when the top storey was rebuilt and heightened. The roof is of clay tile.

There are five bays, each with a door in the front wall. The first leads to a tack room which, unusually, is heated, with a fine late 19th century cast iron fireplace whose square opening has a decorative surround flanked by tiles bearing a pretty pattern of flowers and oranges. It is clearly too prestigious for an agricultural building and must have been brought here from elsewhere, probably the house. It suggests the room was inhabited, perhaps by a groom or stable boy. There is a small glazed ventilation window right of the door beneath ceiling level, but signs of a larger blocked window, with 18th century rubbed brick lintel, beneath it.

The second bay contains two stalls, divided by a wooden partition, with a wire feed rack in the second stall. There are again two small windows beneath ceiling level, also with rubbed brick lintels. The third bay is a loose box with wooden feeding rack and brick trough on the rear wall. The crosswall between it and bay 4 has been partly rebuilt in modern blocks, suggesting there was formerly communication between them. Bay 5 is a further loose box with a half-door between it and bay 6. The latter has a wooden partition, with door, to bay 6. Bays 3 to 6 all have wooden feeding racks and brick drinking troughs. In bay 6 is a vertical ladder to the loft above. Added at the east end of the stable is a single storey store, probably late 19th century, accessed via a door in bay 6.

The doors to the second, third and fifth bays have semicircular heads, suggesting they are insertions of the 19th century, and that originally the internal layout was different. The doorways to the fourth and sixth bays meanwhile have rubbed brick lintels.

The ceiling is carried on beams with a narrow chamfer and stop, which are probably 18th century. The first floor served as a hayloft and most of the floorboards are renewed, a common occurrence in stables due to rot caused by condensation from horses perspiring after a day's work.

The roof structure is 19th century, and the trusses have principal rafters supported by wooden posts set in the outer walls. They have no tiebeams; this allowed ease of movement in the loft.

8.5 The timber-framed stable

This building is now partly collapsed and railed off for safety reasons, and thus was not fully accessible for survey.

It is the oldest building of the farmstead and probably of early-to-mid 17th century date, in other words contemporary with much of the hall itself. It therefore displays how timber-framing was regarded by the gentry at this time: for while it was no longer in vogue for their houses at this time, it was still perfectly acceptable for the buildings on their farmsteads – even within sight of their house. In effect, the proximity of this building would have underlined the status of the hall as it was rebuilt in fashionable brick.

The building is of one storey only, and of post-and-truss construction with principal rafter roof trusses. There are three bays, and it measures approximately 42 ft in length and 17 in depth. The outer walls, along with the southeast gable, were rebuilt in brick, probably in the 19th century. The three remaining roof trusses support a ridge and two side purlins, and some windbraces remain in situ. In places the wallplates of the outer walls remain, displaying pegholes where studs were fixed.

The northernmost truss has a collar and two vertical struts, while the two other remaining trusses have angle struts instead. The second truss, between the first and second bays, has clearly-defined carpenters' marks in Roman numerals, where the principal rafters and struts meet. They number left to right and the numerals visible are VI, VII, and VIII.

The presence of a wire feed rack in the second bay indicates the building probably functioned as a stable.

8.6 The shippon for 80

This is the largest of the buildings, a long narrow range running north-south containing shippons and other functions, and reaching in total around 300 feet in length.

It is of two storeys, but with outshuts to the east providing entry to the stalls. The shippon part housed 80 cattle in four lots of 20 arranged crosswise. At the northern end is a driftway with beyond a dairy and pump house. These have lofts above that are reached by stone steps in the driftway. The door is a re-used batten-and-board 16th or 17th century piece. Added at the northern end is a single-storey calf shelter, probably later 19th century, with kingpost trusses.

The shippon was partly damaged by fire in 1923, when the fittings and roof structure were destroyed. The roof is now of corrugated asbestos, fitted after the incident.

The brickwork shows some variations. It is mostly English Garden wall bond, of three stretcher courses to one of headers, but the dairy, and the last 36 feet of the southern end of the range, are in the stretcher/double header variation found elsewhere. This is probably earlier, suggesting the middle section of the range was rebuilt at a later date, perhaps the 1850s; it is shown in its present form on the 25-inch OS map of 1874 (Map 4).

8.7 The shippon for 23

This is a smaller two-storey brick building, 74 ft long and 21 ft deep, which housed 23 cattle, in formations of 11, 7, 7, and 6. This lies at right angles to the west of the 80 shippon. It too dates probably from the 1850s, but appears to occupy the position of the southern part of the L-shaped range shown on the 1842 tithe map (Map 3); however, as we have noted, the cartography of this is somewhat suspect.

The brickwork is English garden wall bond, with headers alternating every three courses. It is therefore similar to the middle section of the 80 shippon and therefore both may be of similar date. Beneath the eaves is some brick dentilled decoration. There are breathers of the first floor in lozenge pattern, but also, on the east gable and the west end of the north wall, some in the unusual formation of a cross Calvary. The roof is of slate.

It is divided into three bays each with a door in the front wall; the first is now used as a store and containing stairs to the hayloft above. This has diamond-shaped breathers on the façade along with a round pitching eye and two segmental-headed ones. The roof is supported on three fine, wide kingpost trusses of typical form found in 19th century agricultural buildings, supported on brick piers.

To the south is an open fronted cattle shelter, probably late 19th century; it is not shown on the 1874 map. The door leading to this in the rear wall of the shippon is another re-used batten-and-board example of the 16th or early 17th century. The west wall of this shelter incorporates some tooled red sandstone blocks which must originally have been part of the farmyard wall.

8.8 The shelter

The final building is a single-storey cattle shelter, which has a modern addition to the front. It has external walling of mid-19th century brick, rounded at the eastern end, with a slate roof. Internally, sections of stone walling are visible.