

HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY, 16 CHURCH STREET

Seymour Cottage

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A survey of Bingham was carried out in 1586 for Sir Brian Stapleton, the then Lord of the Manor. After this ownership passed to the Stanhope family (Earls of Chesterfield) who owned Bingham until 1871. It then passed to the Earl of Carnarvon and eventually the Crown in 1925.

On a survey of the Chesterfield estate in Bingham made in 1776 Seymour Cottage shows clearly in the present position on plot 305 which was held by William Brooks. The plot was listed as having a house and garden. William died in 1780 aged 50. The Creswell and Burbidge Chronicle reported "Thursday morning died at Bingham of an apoplectic fit, William Brookes, Gentleman, in the 51st year of his age. He was endowed with great abilities, of strict veracity and was skilled in Philology and Polite Literature. As a member of society, he was affable, entertaining and instructive. In short, he lived beloved by his neighbours who enjoyed the happiness of his acquaintance and his loss will be regretted by many admirers of the amiable qualities he possessed". Brooks was also listed as holding what is now 2 East Street, next door eastwards. His brother, John was a shoemaker and lived in Newgate Street; we therefore do not know who may have lived in whichever of the cottages was not lived in by William.

At the time of the later Bingham tithe award of 1840 (the earliest known detailed map of the town) the house was one of a group numbered 189. This was held by John Foster who had a house and yard there. Foster held a lot of land and in the 1841 census he was described as a farmer, then living on Banks Street (at what is now Banks House).

Tracing who occupied the building after this time is not straightforward as in 1840 the building may have had a western extension and it may have had a Cherry Street address rather than Church Street, as it has today. Throughout most of the 19th century the buildings at the north end of Cherry Street were occupied by people listed as framework knitters, gardeners, shopkeepers or agricultural labourers. In 1881 the building was almost certainly occupied by gardener Edward Coy, 49, his wife Jane and their four daughters. His address in 1871 was given as Church Gate; the remainder of the street was Church Street. The family was listed here in the censuses in the censuses of 1861, 1871 and 1881; In 1891 they were in Newgate Street.

The outhouse would have been useful for a resident employed as such.

BUILDING DESCRIPTION - EXTERIOR



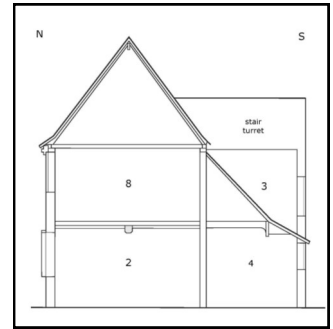
Number 16 Church Street is at the cul-de-sac end of Church Street where Church Lane starts on the south side of the churchyard of the Church of St Mary and All Saints. The building faces north onto the street (left) with an off-centre entrance doorway and canted windows (bay windows not reaching ground level) at ground floor. The east end (above, right) is set behind a brick wall boundary wall to Church Walk (between Church Street and East Street)





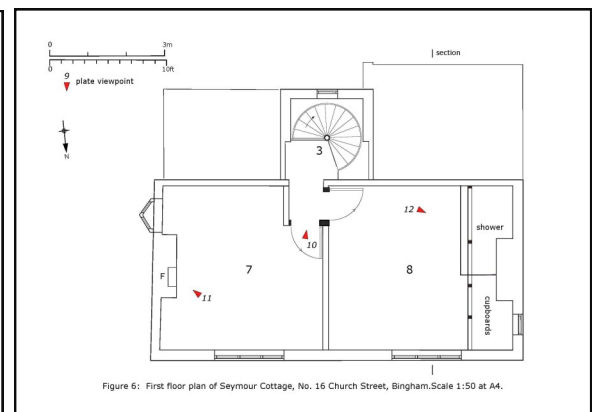
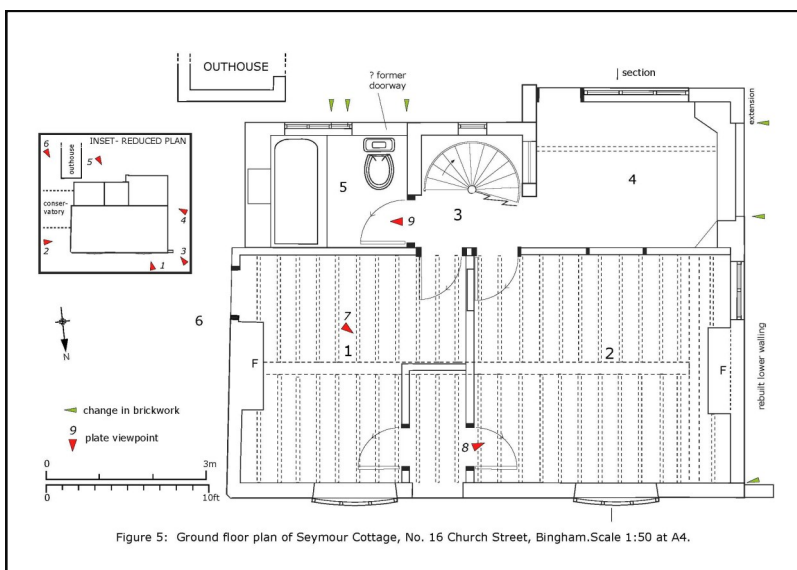
and at the west end (left) there is a side drive / parking area where the building once extended over.

The building is two storeys high (see right) with an attic and end stacks. It is principally brick-built with no obvious stone dressings, although what may be a course of stonework runs across the middle of the exterior of the east end wall. (arrowed in the photo on the previous page) The roof is covered with modern tiles and all the brickwork is painted white. There is some variation in the brickwork on the west and south sides, but the predominant brickwork is composed of bricks $2\frac{1}{4}$ - $2\frac{3}{8}$ inches (57-60mm) thick and $9\frac{1}{4}$ - $9\frac{1}{2}$ ins (235-241mm) long. This is laid in Flemish stretcher bond on the street frontage only, with the other walls being irregularly coursed. The north and south side brickwork is neatly laid (with the north side having a possibly added dentilation course at eaves level) but the side walls have a more irregular appearance.



The building consists of a street-side two-room section, 9.5m long and 4.6m wide, and a rear stair turret extension with a gabled top that is about 2.4m (c.8ft) square. To either side of the latter there is a single-storey room with an angled roof. That to the left of the stair turret has been extended further out from the south face of the latter. The room to the right is on the same line and although its brickwork is not coursed into that of the turret (for reasons explained below), it can be seen to be coursed into the main part of the building near the latter's south-east corner (arrowed, left).

BUILDING DESCRIPTION - INTERIOR



Including the stair turret, there are five rooms on the ground floor (six when including a modern conservatory extension at the east end) and two rooms on the first floor. On the accompanying plans (left and

below) these rooms are numbered 1-8. The principal rooms are separated by a half-brick dividing wall that continues into the attic level. These rooms are about 14 feet (4.3m) across and 14ft and 16ft long (4.85m) long respectively.

The interior is today much modernized and refurbished. The staircase turret (Room 3) now contains a metal



spiral staircase and the rooms to either side (Rooms 4, 5) contain modern kitchen units and a modern bathroom. Although the principal rooms on the ground floor have ceiling beams showing, these are not necessarily of any great age. The only exposed brickwork is the stack in Room 2 (left) and in the end wall of the bathroom (right). However, in both instances these may be examples of modern rebuilding. The windows and doors have all been replaced.

On the upper floor, in room 7, there is a small 19th century fireplace (below, right). The attic has replacement timbers and breeze-block showing in the west gable end (below, left). There is no cellar under the building.



INTERPRETATION

In the absence of dateable original fittings, dating the building largely comes down to map evidence, the house plan and the brickwork; in this instance tree-ring dating cannot contribute. The first of these, the earliest map evidence from 1776, indicates that a building then existed on the site and that its plan appears to match the present building. It is most likely the same building.

The house plan matches that of several other buildings in Bingham, consisting of a basic two-storey T-shape formed by a 2-cell block with a projecting stair turret to the rear, if here seen on a reduced scale. However, this building has ground floor rooms to either side of the turret and could be classified as being similar to a continuous outshot plan or a type of small double-pile house, with a row of rooms at the front and a corresponding row to the rear. Brunskill dates the latter to between 1740-1840 (Brunskill 1997, 82). Whether or not these two rooms were integral to the main build is not totally clear though and it is discussed further below.



Much of the lower walling of the west wall (left) consists of modern 3 inch brick, presumably added at some point between 1840 and 1883 when an adjoining western bay was removed, or possibly a major repair in the 20th century. This brickwork extends beyond the back wall-line of Rooms 1 and 2, where it comes up against some early 2½ inch thick brickwork. The extent of this replacement brickwork was probably to allow for the insertion of the present side window and to replace thinner brickwork coinciding with a flue on the other side of the wall. However, above the 3 inch brick the unaffected higher level earlier brickwork also extends beyond the back wall-line of Rooms 1 and 2, where it is abutted by another phase of replacement brickwork forming

the upper level of Room 5 (arrowed, above right). This walling is curious as it also has straight joints showing at a point between ground and first floor level. The inner brickwork is similar to the surrounding but the coursing is off-set. The joints are also of dissimilar lengths and do not necessarily indicate a later infill. The upper west wall brickwork also includes a small chimney stack that rises within the north-west corner of Room 4.

The corner join of the west and north walls is irregular due to differing brick thicknesses. This might suggest a re-facing of the north wall but the same disjoining is not evident at the north-east corner of the building. This may suggest that when the building was erected it incorporated an existing wall-line as its west wall or, alternatively, that variable building practice was involved. The better quality and slightly thicker bricks were probably used for the main north frontage (the only face that was regularly coursed) and labourers working on the west face may have failed to match the same coursing.

The north street elevation's brickwork is laid in a regular Flemish stretcher bond, most commonly used in Nottinghamshire in lower status buildings in the late 17th and 18th century. The off-centre doorway may have originally led directly into the main living room, opposite a doorway for the stair turret. The entrance hall is a later addition. Room 2 may then have been the kitchen and the staircase led to two bedrooms on the upper floor. Room 4 may have acted as a back kitchen or wash-house.



The brickwork join at the north-east corner is regular and counts against the refacing suggestion. Here the east wall is set at a slight angle to the rest of the building, reflecting the property alignments in this part of Bingham and showing that the building's position was constrained by a likely burgage plot boundary, which incidentally is aligned on the western boundary of the church. The south-east extension, Room 4, is stepped back and not quite in line with the east wall (perhaps to avoid having to follow the same angle), and it appears to be jointed into the back wall of Room 1 (arrowed, left) Why the outhouse, probably built at the same time as the house, extends further to the east is not clear.

The south elevation of the building has the stair turret to centre (bottom, right) with an upper window for lighting the inner staircase, and a gabled roof. Its walling is a brick-length thick, whilst the back wall behind Rooms 1 and 2 is only a half-brick thick. This is most likely a reflection of where the main timberwork was placed. The main beams ran the length of the building and were supported on the brick stacks. That in Room 2

now runs short of the end stack and is connected to a thick north-south beam. The latter is likely to be a modern insertion and probably relates to the rebuilding of the lower part of the west wall and the lower stack. The stair-turret walling will have supported staircase timberwork for a two storey rise.



The back of Room 4 has been extended outwards to provide extra space for the modern kitchen it now contains. The upper side walling had previously been altered prior to this. The back of Room 5 is still on its original line but shows differences in the brickwork. Between its junction and the middle of its window there is 2¾ inch (70mm) thick and 9-9¼ ins (229-235mm) long brickwork. This is likely replacement brick infilling a former doorway and the insertion of the existing bathroom window. The 1840 plan shows an entry in the back wall of the building.

The external evidence suggests two possibilities: either that all the current building belongs to one phase of construction or that part of an existing structure was incorporated at the west end of the building (which included part of Room 4). The plan of 1840 shows an extra bay at the west end of the building. This may have possibly have been part of an earlier cottage running the length of Cherry Street, perhaps originally extending at the back like another building shown on the 1840 map further down on the same side of Cherry Street. This structure may of necessity have been incorporated into the new building, only to be removed in the mid-19th century, according to later maps between 1835 and 1883. This may have dated from the 17th century. The evidence suggests that most of the present building was erected as a two-pile building with all the present rooms, and not as a T-shape structure with cells at the back added later. The main roof has since been altered and is slightly angled at the back to suggest that there may originally have been catslide roofs over Rooms 4 and 5. Both the plan and the brickwork evidence suggest a likely construction date in the early-mid 18th century.

ADDENDUM BY BHTA

The plot boundaries had not changed much by 1776. The plot upon part of which the house stands was occupied as

a house and garden by William Brooks, who also held plot 305, also as a house and garden, now Seymour Cottage on the corner of Cherry Street and Church Street. William Brooks farmed 46 acres in the by now enclosed fields around the parish. He probably used "Seymour Cottage" either as a tied house for a farmworker or for his extended family. His name does not appear in the trades' directory for 1793.

William died in 1780 aged 50. The Creswell and Burbidge Chronicle reported "Thursday morning died at Bingham of an apoplectic fit, William Brookes, Gentleman, in the 51st year of his age. He was endowed with great abilities, of strict veracity and was skilled in Philology and Polite Literature. As a member of society, he was affable, entertaining and instructive. In short, he lived beloved by his neighbours who enjoyed the happiness of his acquaintance and his loss will be regretted by many admirers of the amiable qualities he possessed".

John Brooks held two fields, both measuring 1¼ acres together with a homestead Negate Street. The parish register has a John Brookes as a shoemaker who died aged 62, in 1786. He would not have required much land beyond subsistence activity, perhaps with a cow. He and his wife Ann (d 1779) had a son John who died aged only 2 months in 1756. His gravestone is in the churchyard (SE 134).

The parish registers suggest That John and William were brothers, their parents being Richard and Mary Brooks.

Both present houses probably date from the early to mid-1700s.

