

## Trecott

Trecott (Trycote , Devonshire pronunciation) (*the cottages by the tree*) is one of the several 'hamlets' of Sampford Courtenay Parish and is thought to have developed as a group of pre-Saxon/Celtic Devonian homesteads rather than a village settlement, which evolved much later.

The farmhouse dates back, possibly, to the 16<sup>th</sup> Century and is built of the traditional Devon 'cob' with oak beams and trusses and was thatched until the 1960's. The original roof timbers, and some thatching, can still be seen in the loft and the ends of the timbers are exposed on the outer wall above the bread oven.

The walls are very thick, as can be seen particularly at the window and door openings, and were made by mixing mud with straw, which was built up in sections and trampled down to harden. This gives rise to the characteristic 'lumpy' walls, which lean at odd angles.

The oldest part is the dining room/bedroom 4 region with its inglenook fireplace, magnificent granite chimney and bread oven (the 'bulge' in the external wall). It was probably the only living area at the time, becoming the kitchen in later years, where Phil Reddaway remembered buying the best milk and clotted cream in the village, from the big kitchen table in the middle of the room. The fireplace here was bricked over for some years but it was uncovered and the room restored, using lime plaster and lime-based paint in 2006. In the process, a stone pillar, part of a doorway, was uncovered between the kitchen and the sitting room.

The guest's sitting room/bedroom 3 was probably added in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the kitchen wing, originally the dairy, added in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A cider cellar was added to this and is now used as the utility room. There is evidence that the ceilings were lathe and plaster and even wattle and daub - the holes in the ceiling beams - and the decorative white plaster below the ceiling line in the guests sitting room is of interest and could be Grade 1. (Grading of the house was carried out by external observation only and includes a third chimney, which doesn't exist.)

There is a cross passage beyond the dining room, through which both people and animals once entered the building. The lower part of the house, demolished some time between 1900 and 1929 and rebuilt in the early 1990's, is thought to have originally housed the animals. (see the painting in the sitting room).

Outside, the lincay by the front door became the pump house, The pump is to be re-sited and the bread oven for the sitting room was removed to make room for its huge granite trough, also waiting to be re-sited in the garden.

Copies of letters relating to the house, dating back to the 1870's, are to be found in the back of the Wildlife Folder in the sitting room.

When the house was first built it is likely that it consisted of one main room downstairs and a small room or solar above for the head of the house to sleep in and this was probably sited where the central bathroom is now located. The lower (South) end of the house was a linhay or shippon with a hay store above.

It is likely that access to this upper floor was initially by ladder.

At the bottom of the existing staircase a lintel can quite clearly be seen on the south side, possibly a door. It is my belief that this led to the outside, originally an outer wall at this point as the dairy may not have been constructed. A flight of steps then led up the outside to an entrance coming back into the main building at a site where the fitted cupboard on the northern end is located. This also would have been an exterior wall as the main sitting room may not have been constructed. A lintel to this entrance can be seen on the inner wall of bedroom 1 and it is echoed where the fitted cupboard is sited on the landing. This cupboard must be original as it is fastened by wooden fixtures. I suggest that the stair case was removed when the house was extended possibly in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

The first mention of Trecott in Stephanie Pouya's book on Sampford Courtenay is from the Assize of 1296. The Manor of Sampford Courtenay was acquired by King's College, Cambridge in 1570 and Thomas Ellys was a tenant of indenture at Lower Tricott. Kings College sold it by auction as Lot 19 on 18<sup>th</sup> July 1929 as an excellent mixed Red Land Farm of 61 acres 1 rod and 16 poles.

It was bought by representatives of the late Mrs Mary F Jones –May, Nellie and possibly Bungy or Tom for £550 the money being loaned from Mr Weeks of Hatherleigh.

William Redaway, 7 apprenticed to  
William Arscott of Lower Trecott

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• [See contact details](#)

Reference: 1232A/PO 522

Title: William Redaway, 7 apprenticed to William Arscott of Lower Trecott

Date: 1795

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