



# 1341-1539 BARTON FARM'S MEDIEVAL BUILDINGS

In the Middle Ages ordinary houses and farm buildings were normally built of timber, as the original buildings of Barton Farm would have been, but in the 14th century the wealthy Abbey of Shaftesbury set about replacing them with stone, quarried from the hill above the farm.



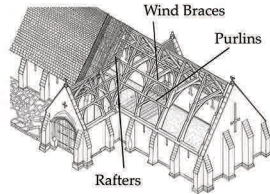
Digging - February. Barton farm had strips of land scattered through the common fields - King's Field, Avon Field, Elms Cross Field and Winterleaze.



Mowing with a scythe - June



Reaping - July.



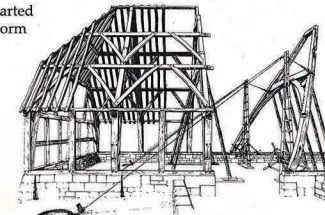
Massive pieces of oak were also needed for the tie beams and curved braces as well as for the purlins, wind braces and rafters. The final stage was fixing battens over the rafters. Stone tiles, each drilled with a hole for an oak peg, were hung on battens to complete the roof, which weighs about 100 tons.

The Great Barn, later known as the Tithe Barn was built in the first half of the 14th century. How was it done? The first task was to go into the woods to find oak trees big enough to form the roof crucks. Only four were found; others were formed by skilfully joining two pieces of oak. All the timbers were cut, shaped and pegged together on the ground before being hauled up into a vertical position.

Up in the quarry blocks of stone were cut out and carted to site where they were cut into smaller blocks to form the walls and buttresses.



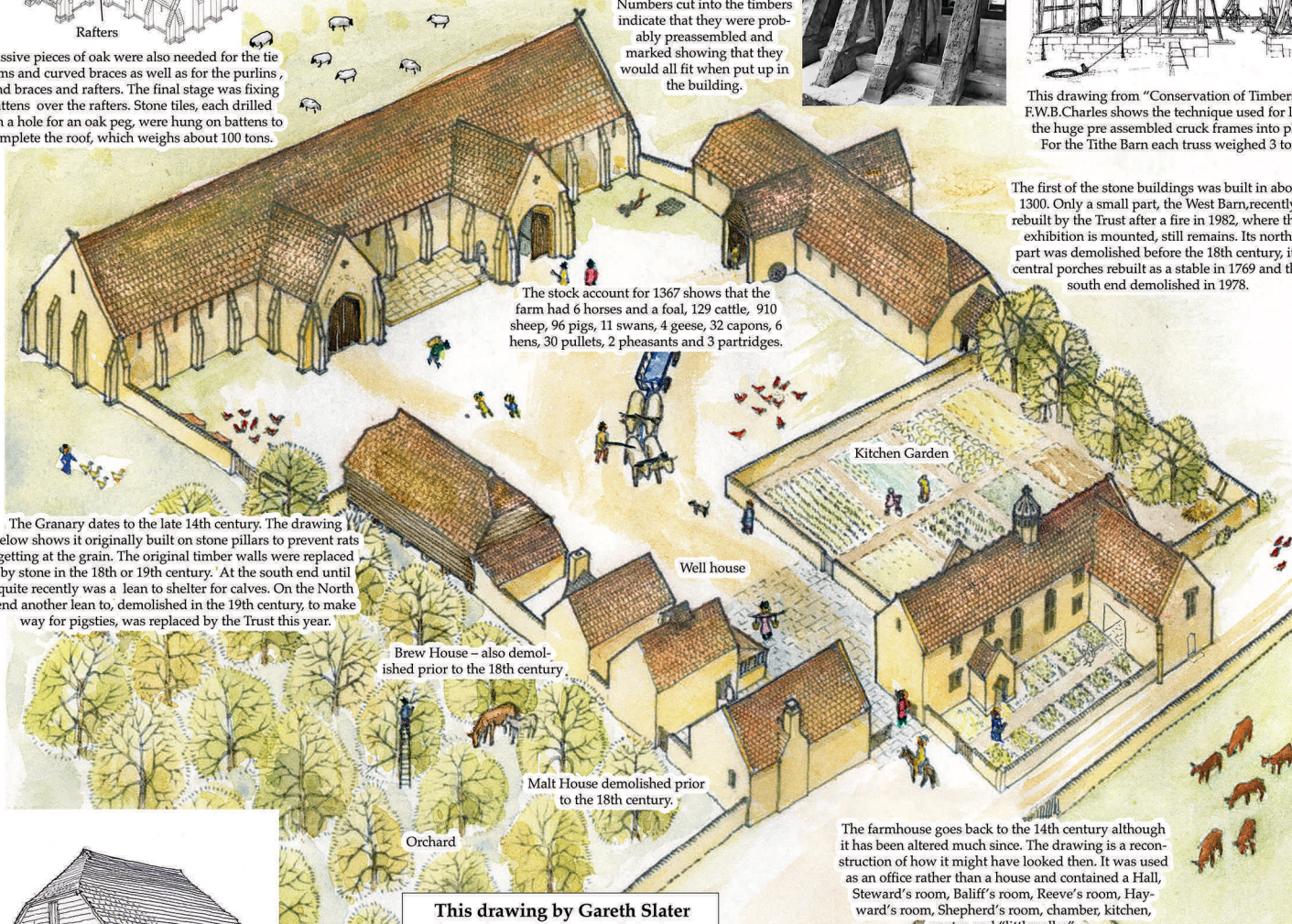
Numbers cut into the timbers indicate that they were probably preassembled and marked showing that they would all fit when put up in the building.



This drawing from "Conservation of Timbers" by F.W.B. Charles shows the technique used for lifting the huge pre assembled cruck frames into place. For the Tithe Barn each truss weighed 3 tons.



Threshing - August. The harvest in 1367 brought in 6 1/2 bushels per acre. 53 bushels were sent to Shaftesbury.



The stock account for 1367 shows that the farm had 6 horses and a foal, 129 cattle, 910 sheep, 96 pigs, 11 swans, 4 geese, 32 capons, 6 hens, 30 pullets, 2 pheasants and 3 partridges.

The Granary dates to the late 14th century. The drawing below shows it originally built on stone pillars to prevent rats getting at the grain. The original timber walls were replaced by stone in the 18th or 19th century. At the south end until quite recently was a lean to shelter for calves. On the North end another lean to, demolished in the 19th century, to make way for pigsties, was replaced by the Trust this year.

Brew House - also demolished prior to the 18th century

Malt House demolished prior to the 18th century.

The farmhouse goes back to the 14th century although it has been altered much since. The drawing is a reconstruction of how it might have looked then. It was used as an office rather than a house and contained a Hall, Steward's room, Baliff's room, Reeve's room, Hayward's room, Shepherd's room, chamber, kitchen, pantry and "little cellar".

This drawing by Gareth Slater shows how the farm might have looked in the 14th century after the Great Barn and the Farmhouse were built.

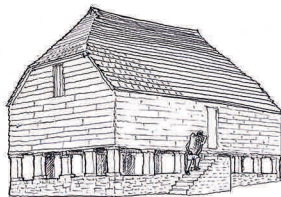
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Sowing - October. The Abbey accounts show that in 1367 136 acres were sown with wheat with an allowance of 1 1/2 bushels of seed grain per acre.



Beating acorns off oaks for pigs to eat. - November



1381 AD Peasants Revolt - due to poll tax regardless of income

1493 AD Johannes Gutenberg invents the printing press

1485 AD France finally defeated England in Hundred Years War

1455-1485 AD Wars of the Roses

1485 AD The last Plantagenet King, Richard III, defeated by Henry Tudor, who becomes Henry VII

1492 AD Christopher Columbus reaches the New World

1513 AD The Battle of Flodden Field in which invading Scots are defeated by Henry VIII's forces

1534 AD The Church of England breaks away from the Roman Catholic Church and recognizes Henry VIII as the head of the Church

1537 AD Thomas Cromwell a Protestant burnt at the stake in town centre of Bradford

1539 AD Dissolution of Monasteries by Henry VIII