

SOME ACCOUNT OF DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE IN ENGLAND, FROM THE CONQUEST TO THE END OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY, WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS OF EXISTING REMAINS FROM ORIGINAL DRAWINGS.

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OXFORD, JOHN HENRY PARKER; AND 377, STRAND, LONDON.

M DCCCLI. [1851]

CHARNEY-BASSET, BERKS.

This house is popularly known in the neighbourhood as the Monk's House. It is situated at Charney in the parish of Longworth, near Wantage, in Berkshire, close to the small church or chapel of Charney, but has a private chapel of its own, though the church being older than the house, it must always have been side by side with it. This may perhaps be accounted for by the circumstance that it was a grange belonging to the abbey of Abingdon, and the occasional residence of the abbot <sup>m</sup>.

It consisted of a hall and two transverse wings; the front of the hall has been rebuilt and its place supplied by a modern building divided into several rooms, but the foundations and part of the back wall appear to be original; it was about 36 feet by 17. The two wings are nearly perfect, the front gables are on the same plane with the front of the hall, but they extend much farther backwards, and the south wing, which adjoins the church-yard, is lengthened still more by the addition of a chapel attached to the upper room at the east end, the principal front of the house facing the west. The place of the altar is quite distinct; the piscina and locker remain; the east window is of two lights, quite plain, the south window is a small lancet with a trefoil head, widely splayed; the roof is modern. It is separated from the larger room by a stone wall, with a small doorway through it, and is itself so small (12 ft. 5 in. by 9 ft. 10 in.) that it appears to have been merely a private oratory for the abbot, or the two or three monks who usually inhabited the house. The whole of the details of this chapel, and of the rest of the original work in the house, belong to the latter part of the thirteenth century, the end of the reign of Henry the Third, or the beginning of that of Edward the First. The ground-floor of the south wing is divided into two rooms corresponding to the solar and chapel above, the larger room is 30 feet by 16, and has an original fire-place in it, the head of which is of the form so common at that period, called the square-headed trefoil; and three original windows, two of them square-headed, the third at the east end, a double lancet; it has a door into the court-yard, and had another into the hall. This room would appear to have been the kitchen, though the fire-place is scarcely large enough for very extensive cooking. The room under the chapel appears to have been a cellar, and is still used as such; in place of windows it has small loops.

The solar, or large room above, adjoining the chapel, has its original open timber roof, which although plain, is of good character; it is canted, of seven cants, with tie-beam, king-post, and struts: the king-post is octagonal, with square abacus, and base, which sufficiently indicate its date. The entrance to the solar is by steps from the yard, and it appears always to have been external and in the same situation, probably by a covered projecting staircase, opposite to one of the doors of the hall, traces of which still remain. The north wing has its walls nearly in their original state, though some windows and doors have been inserted, and the interior arrangements have been altered. In the west gable is a small quatrefoil window, or opening into the roof, and one of the upper rooms retains its original double lancet window; there is also part of an original chimney, but the fire-place is of the fifteenth century.

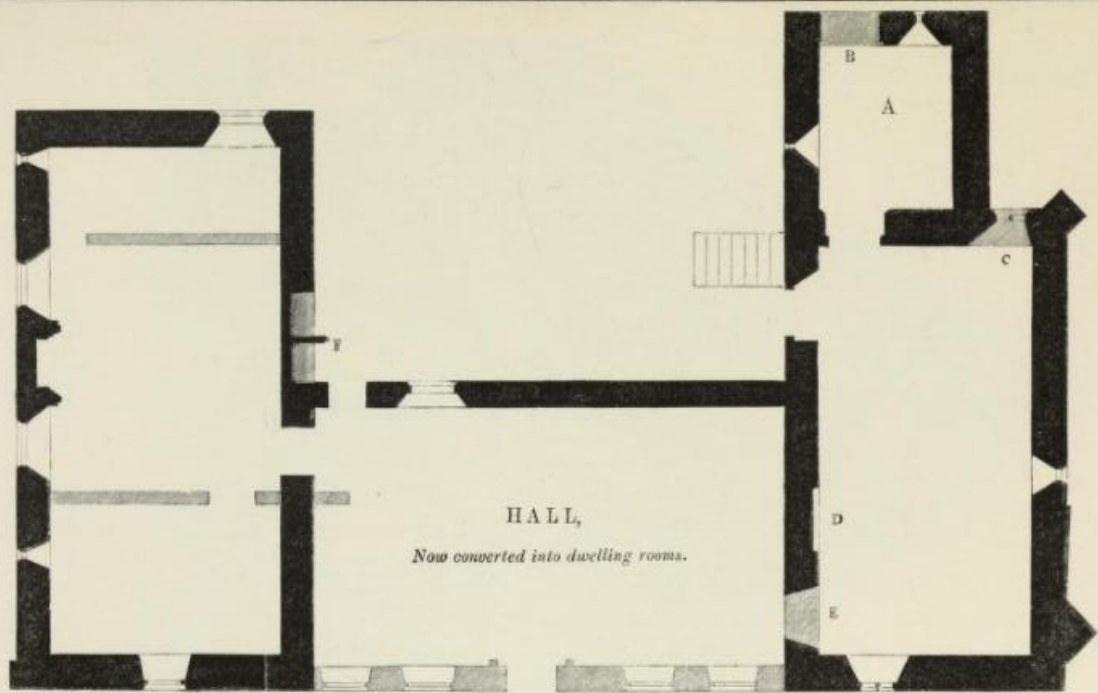
<sup>m</sup> *It was probably at some time a residence of the Bassets; or it may have derived its name from having been given by one of that family to the monks of Abingdon*

DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE : THIRTEENTH CENTURY.



HOUSE AT CHARNEY, BERKSHIRE, WEST FRONT

DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE : THIRTEENTH CENTURY.



GROUND-PLAN OF HOUSE, CHARNEY, BERKSHIRE.

A. Cellar.

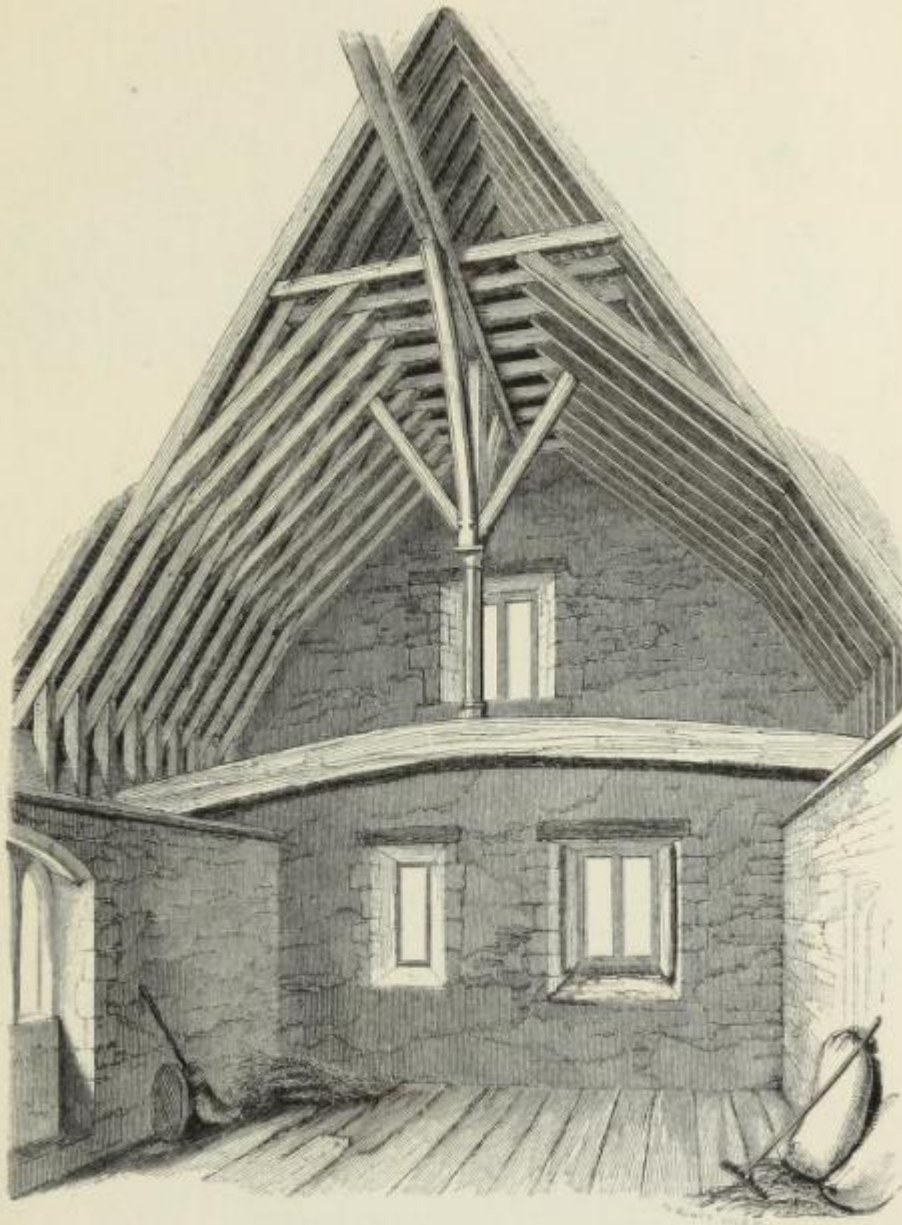
B and E. Doors

C. Window.

D. Fire-place (These are now all blocked up.)

F. Remains of Porch.

DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE: THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

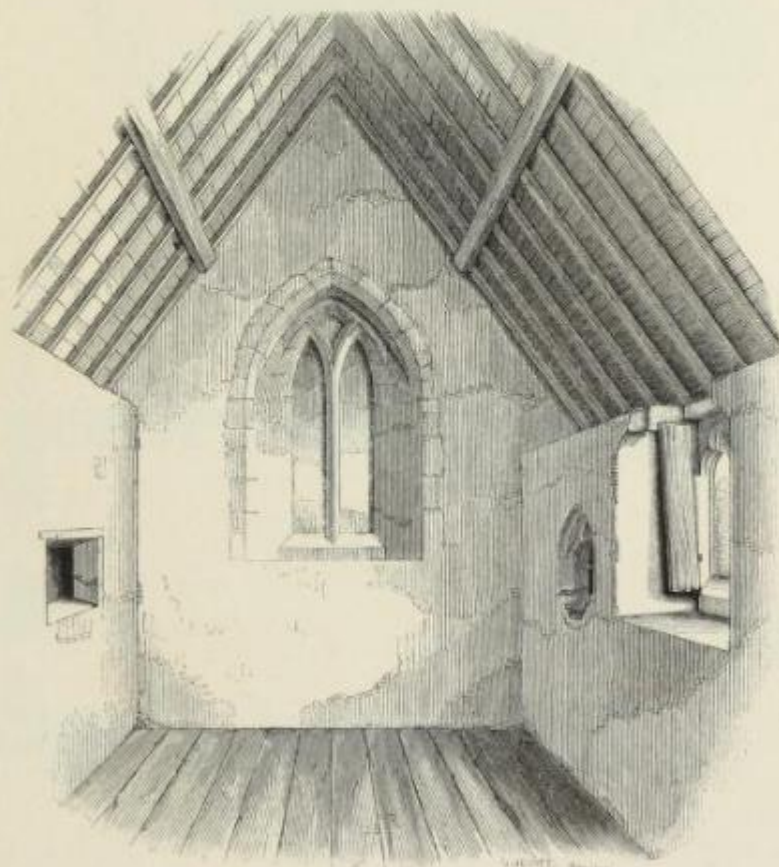


INTERIOR OF SOLAR, CHARNET.

DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE : THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

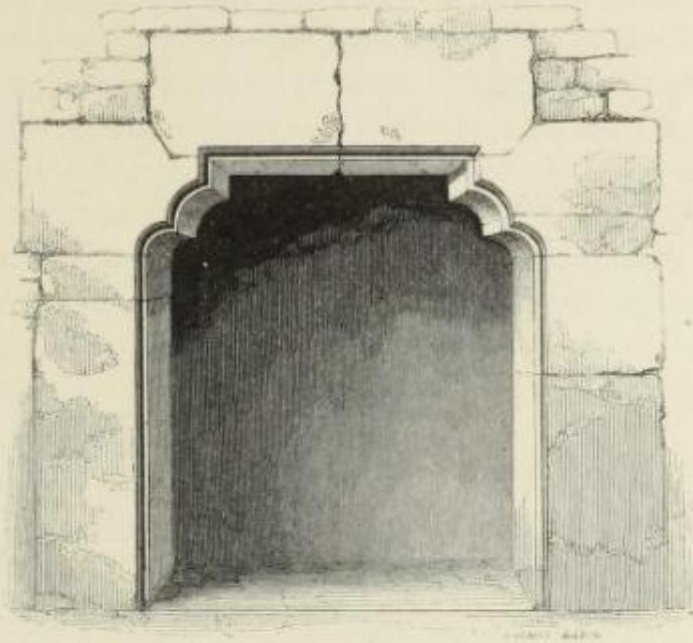


EXTERIOR OF CHAPEL, AND SOLAR, CHARNEY

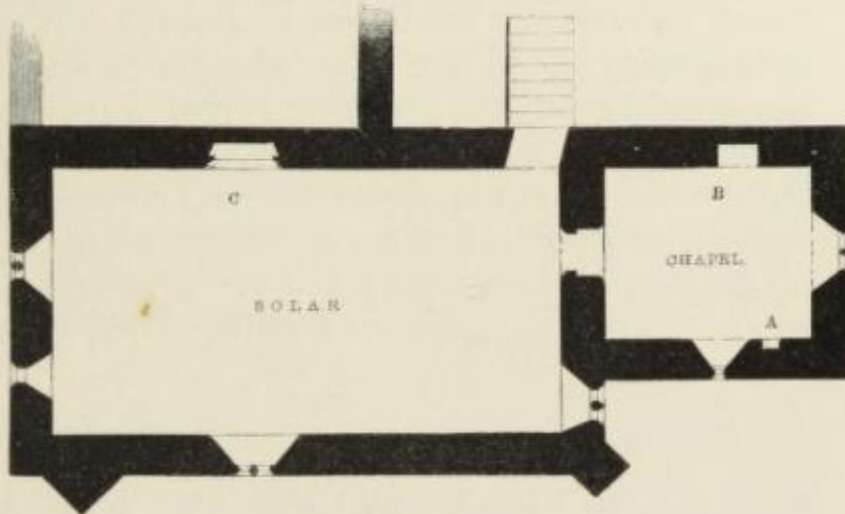


INTERIOR OF CHAPEL, CHARNEY

DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE: THIRTEENTH CENTURY.



FIRE-PLACE IN LOWER STORY OF SOUTH WING, CHARNEY



PLAN OF UPPER STORY OF SOUTH WING, CHARNEY

A. Piscina

B. Ambry

C. Fire place