

**Great Ayton Community Archaeology Project  
2004**

## **Langton House and the Carlen Brewery**

**A History 1751 -2004**



**Produced by Jennifer Deadman  
2004**

# **Langton House and the Carlen Brewery**

## **A History 1751 - 2004**

**A study of the history of Langton House and the Carlen Brewery  
through documentary research and building survey**

**Great Ayton Community Archaeology Project  
2004**

**Analysis and interpretation  
Jennifer Deadman  
Cath Small**



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## Preface

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The Great Ayton Community Archaeology Project began early in 2002. Its aim was to research and record landscape features in Great and Little Ayton. Generous Local Heritage Initiative grants and a Nationwide Building Society Award provided funding for a five year research programme conducted on weekly basis under the guidance of a professional archaeologist.

During the first two years the group discovered an important lowland Mesolithic occupation site, and investigated many agricultural, industrial and Second World War sites which had been acknowledged, but never properly recorded.

Most of the group's targeted areas had been in the open landscape, between village and parish boundary. However, when it was learned that 'Langton Garage' a vacant commercial premises situated within the village of Great Ayton was to be converted to apartments, the response of the project members was to suggest that the local authority ensured the building and its history were recorded before conversion began. When the unlikelihood of this happening became apparent, the group decided to undertake the survey itself.

Langton House, set within the 'Langton Garage' complex was recognised as one of the older buildings in the village. Some sketchy details of its history and that of the surrounding buildings were known, but nothing of their design and construction nor the evolution of the site which for a greater part of its life had been home to a thriving 19<sup>th</sup> century brewery.

After a period of discussion and with the goodwill of the owner and developer, the group gained access permission to investigate and record some of the buildings on the site. Jen Deadman, historic building surveyor, and member of the Agill Research Group agreed to lead the recording and survey work. The result was a detailed survey that would simply not have taken place without the presence in the village of the Great Ayton Community Archaeology Group and the hard work of its team members.

Ian Pearce 6 October 2004

## Acknowledgements

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**Alan Bunn, John Crocker, Peter Morgan** from the Great Ayton Community Archaeology Project, for their photographs.

**David Deans** for his photographs and expertise.

**Mr Reader** for his photograph of Langton Garage

**John Mayfield**, last owner of Langton Garage, for his memories.

**Dan O'Sullivan** for documentary research into the ownership of Langton House and the brewery.

**Amber Patrick**, for her widely regarded expertise and wealth of knowledge on brewhouses and maltings.

**Dr. Ian Pearce**, group co-ordinator and contributor to 'Langton Garage – the Serpent Finial'.

**Dr. John Senior** of Ripplemark Geoconsultancy, acknowledged expert on building and artefact stone, for his comments on the Serpent Finial.

**Cath Small** and the surveying team of **Dave Taylor, Liz Greenhalge, Bob de Wart** from the Great Ayton Community Archaeology Project and **Norman Mahaffey** from the Agill Research Group

**Dave Trotter**, of Arran Construction for his unstinting help and patience even in times of crisis.

**Mr. A. Ward**, owner of Langton Garage and Langton House, for permission granted to members of the survey group to investigate, measure and analyse the buildings.

## Langton House and the Carlen Brewery:

Grid ref. NZ 5565 1060

### Site overview

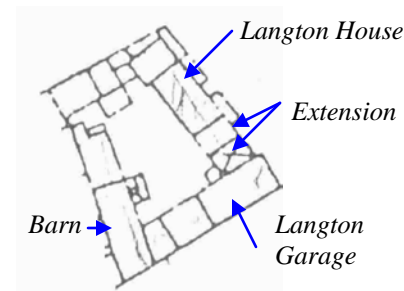
Langton House, brick built and early/mid 18<sup>th</sup> century in date, is situated in the town of Great Ayton at its western end. It lies within a square plan arrangement of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings adjacent to 'Levenside' which bounds the south bank of the River Leven. Gardens and yards form the nucleus, with the buildings facing outwards onto the surrounding narrow streets.



1915 OS 1:25 inch

Buildings adjoining Langton House to the south and west developed from this single unit in the early/mid 18<sup>th</sup> century to form the nucleus of a thriving brewery business fifty years later.

By the 20<sup>th</sup> century the main focus of the site was that of a small garage business.



Langton House is sited towards the north east corner of the square.

It is aligned north-south, with its front elevation facing east directly onto Bridge Street.

Ayton Bridge spans the river Leven fifty metres to the north.



Adjacent to the north is a later 18<sup>th</sup> / 19<sup>th</sup> century domestic building. To the south, a stone extension with an arched carriage way adjoins an east-west linear range latterly known as Langton Garage.

*Langton Garage, far left.*



Behind Langton House is a yard, bounded to the north by domestic buildings, to the west by a large building of 'barn' like proportions, and to the south by the Langton Garage site.

*Buildings viewed from the yard.*



*Langton House.*



*Later extension with carriage way.*



*Langton Garage in the process of demolition.*

Behind, forming the west side of the yard, is the barn to which the linear range/garage formerly adjoined.



By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Langton House, its extension and carriage way, the barn and the linear 'garage' range, formed the greater part of the Carlen Brewery complex.

## Site History from Documentary Sources

Ref. Northallerton C.R.O.

- 1751 James Beadnell sells a house and garden (including a weaver's workshop) to William Rowland, a linen weaver.
- 1771 William Rowland sells the property to John Eldon, yeoman.  
The 'messuage' is described as 'now divided into two tenements, with orchard, yard and garth and occupied by William Rowland and John Banks.
- 1781 John Eldon sells to Thomas Weatherill, 'common brewer' for £145.  
The premises at this date are described as 'all that messuage... with the blacksmith's shop, orchard, yard and garth thereto belonging, late in the occupation of William Rowland and John Banks, afterwards in the occupation of William Burdon, blacksmith, and now in the occupation of Jacob Holborn, brewer as tenant under John Eldon.' Prior to this date there is no mention of a brew house.

The property is further described as being 'bounded by a house and lands of John Sunlay, deceased, towards the west, by the town street towards the north and east, and by a little grass garth of Elizabeth Lawrence, widow, towards the south.'

- 1797 Thomas Weatherill, together with James Davison, a cotton manufacturer and mill owner, obtain a mortgage on the property, which in 1797 was described as 'all that messuage with the brewhouse and other outbuildings,... heretofore in the occupation of William Rowland and John Banks, sometime of Jacob Holborn, brewer, and now of the said Thomas Weatherill... and also all those two messuages with the gardens adjoining in the occupation of John Fordy and John Flintoft... and all that garden or piece of land adjoining to the last named premises in the occupation of the said Thomas Weatherill'
- 1808 Conveyance between Thomas Weatherall and Thomas Biggins (who had arrived in Ayton from Ingelby Greenhow by 1805)

'...messuage with brewhouse and other outbuildings adjoining the same and a house unoccupied adjoining ... and other two messuages lately sold for a Methodist meeting house and a way leave for tenants through the garth to the street.' Also '.. all and every the coppers, vats, coolers, pumps, casks and all other implements and utensils of him the said Thomas Weatherill and now used for carrying on the business of a maltster and brewer being in, upon, or about or belonging to the said maltkiln, brewhouse and premises.'



- 1814 Joseph Carlen, brewer, marries Biggin's sister, and succeeds him to the brewhouse.
- 1823 Baines, Directory lists Joseph Carlen as brewer in Ayton.
- 1831 Joseph Carlen dies aged 45. His widow Jane carries on at the brew house together with her son, Richard, born in 1816.
- 1841 The census names Jane Carlen as 'brewer'  
Richard as 'clerk at the brewery'.  
Also Anne Richardson, 'female servant'  
Also Jane Borrow, 'boarder'
- 1851 The census names Jane Carlen as 'brewer'  
Richard as 'spirit merchant'.  
Also – William Burton, 'servant/carter'  
Also Elizabeth Fenney, servant'  
Also – Esther Blackburn, 'servant'
- 1861 The census names Richard as 'maltser and brewer', now married with three children, Richard, Joseph, Jane.  
Also William Willans, 'malster's servant'  
Also Hannah Bradley, 'domestic servant',  
In close proximity to the brewery live William Rodham, 'blacksmith' with wife and daughter  
Peter Murray, 'journeyman brewer'  
John Watson, 'cooper', with wife and children
- 1862 Richard Carlen buys the 'Temperence Hotel' at the corner of Yarm Lane and Guisborough road. He dies the same year.
- 1871 The census names William Hauxwell, 59, as 'brewer and spirit merchant' at the brewery, with his wife. The three children of Richard Carlen are referred to as 'boarders' - Richard junior, 17, 'assistant brewer': Joseph, 15, 'engineer'; and Jane Alice, 13.  
Also Anne Cook, 'domestic servant'  
Next door – W. Henderson – 'brewer'  
Also J. Henderson, 'ships captain'  
Also R. Henderson, 'scholar'
- 1875 Richard Carlen, junior, marries Sarah Jane Alderson, and subsequently has two daughters.
- 1881 The census shows Richard still living at the brewery with his family, but is now described as a 'retired brewer'.

Also – William Fawcett, ‘agricultural labourer’ and ‘cartman’ plus wife, Mary Jane and three children.

Also – Thomas James Moon, lodger, ‘spirit merchant’.

- 1891 Richard’s widow, Sarah Jane Carlen, continues to operate as a ‘spirit merchant’ with daughters Emily and Mary.

Also – Joseph Carlen, brother in law.

Next door – J. Kitching, ‘carrier and carter’, wife and four children.

- 1901 The census names Sarah Jane Carlen, ‘ale and spirit merchant’

Also – Joseph Carlen, brother in law, ‘traveller, worker’

Also – Mary Bradley, ‘domestic servant’

- 1902 Sarah Jane Carlen, widow, either sells or mortgages the brewery to the three brothers Dixon, grocers of Bridge Street.

The premises are described as ‘messuage with the yard, garden, brew house, warehouse, spirit house, stable, coach house and other outbuildings adjoining.. also three cottages.. now occupied by Henry Shaw, Charles Crooks and James Stevens, bounded on the north and east by the public street, on the south partly by property belonging to William Dixon’s trustees, and partly by a common yard, and on the west by properties belonging to ? Crosby, Thomas James Boynton, and Henry Meggison Cockerill.. plus four other cottages.. bounded on the north by the said common yard, on the east by property owned by ? Thomas, on the south by the public highway, and on the west by property owned by William Dixon’s trustees...’

- 1913 The Land Valuation Records show Sarah Jane Carlen still living at the ‘Brewery’ although there is no indication it was operational at this time.

- 1921 No brewer in Ayton According to Kelly’s Directory of that year.

- 1945+ The east- west linear range becomes a garage workshop shortly after the second world war.

- 1958 Taken over in 1958 by Jeffrey Mayfield and continues in use as a garage.

- 2002 Garage closes and the premises stand vacant, including the house.

- 2003-4 Conversion of all buildings to domestic use.

## Summary of Documentary Evidence

Prior to 1751, the property comprised a house, garden and a weaver's workshop.

It continued in this usage possibly until 1771 when it was sold to a yeoman farmer and described as being 'now divided into two tenements'. The tenants included a blacksmith and a brewer.

By the time the property was sold in 1781 to Thomas Weatherill, a 'common brewer', the premises also included a blacksmith's shop. There is no mention of a brew house at this date, the business obviously being small scale and in all likelihood being managed within the house.

By 1797 the business appeared to have been expanding. A brew house was mentioned for the first time and Thomas Weatherill took out a joint mortgage on the property with James Davison a mill owner, possibly to finance further development.

In 1808 Weatherill sold the business to Thomas Biggins. It comprised a messuage with a brewhouse, a maltkiln and other outbuildings.

In 1814 one Joseph Carlen succeeded to the brewery through marriage.

For twenty or more years after Joseph Carlen's death in 1831, his widow, Jane, managed the business as 'brewer', with her son, Richard, who was employed as 'clerk to the brewery' and later as 'spirit merchant'. In 1861 Richard is recorded as being both maltster and brewer.



Richard Carlen would have recognised this plan of the site where the original house and garden of 1751 had evolved into an arrangement of buildings focused around a yard.

*1856 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 6 inch*

In 1871 the three teenage children of Richard Carlen are described as 'boarders' at the brewery house. During this period a William Hauxwell ran the business, with Richard Carlen jnr. acting as assistant brewer.

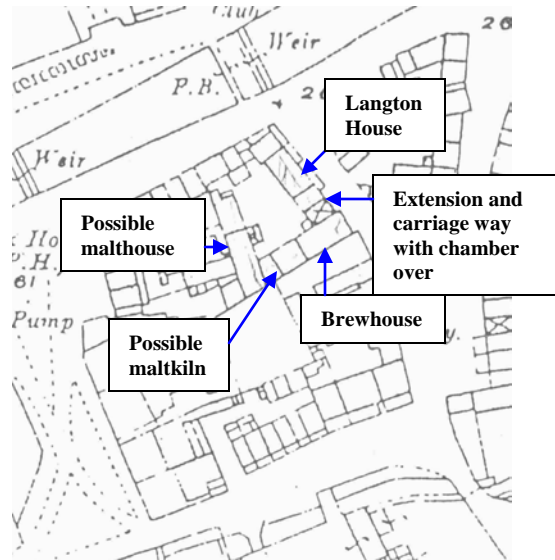
By 1875 the Carlens held the reins once more. Richard jnr. had married, and he and his wife Sarah Jane ran the business.

The census returns record that the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw a period of multiple occupancy at the brewery house. In 1881 records indicate that the Carlen family -

Richard, his wife and two children shared the premises with an agricultural labourer/cartman, his wife and three children, and a spirit merchant, who classed as a lodger.

Between 1881 and 1891, Richard died and Sarah Jane Carlen operated as a spirit merchant.

The 1892 OS map shows the brewery complex in finalised form and as it would have appeared in 1902 when Sarah Carlen sold or mortgaged the brewery to the brothers Dixon.



As evidenced through legal documents of the period, census returns and maps, the steady growth and development of the premises and the acquisition of property would indicate that the Carlen Brewery was a thriving business. Documentary sources show that by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Carlen Brewery premises comprised house, yard, garden, brew house, maltkiln, warehouse, spirit house, stable, coach house and an assortment of outbuildings. At one period the business owned the Temperance Hotel, and seven cottages were held in the family name. These do not appear to have been tied cottages for brewery workers. Casual labour was probably employed as the census returns provide little evidence for people other than family members working at the brewery.

By 1921 the brewery had closed. There is no mention of a brewer in the Kelly's Directory of that date.

Since the Second World War the property functioned as a garage until its closure in 2002.

## The Evolution of Langton House: form and fabric

The core of the Carlen Brewery site is Langton House. It pre dates the remainder of the buildings by at least half a century. Built of small hand clamped 18<sup>th</sup> century brick set typically on a low stone plinth, it stands two storeys high and one room deep. The roof is of pantiles, common to North Yorkshire buildings of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. Directly below the eaves is a brick string course.



*Comparison of old and new brickwork.*



Stone copings at the south gable terminate in decorative, moulded kneelers

The kneeler on the front gable boasts a decorative finial, similar in detail to ornamental features gracing the nearby Ayton Hall.



It is a double fronted building with two ground floor rooms accessed from a central passage way which runs from front to back of the house. The front entrance opens directly onto the road and there is access to a yard at the rear.

The main housebody lies to the left (south) of the passage, with a parlour or sitting room to the north. Modern stairs rise from the house body against the back wall. An end stack heats the housebody and the chamber over, whilst a stack set against a cross wall heats both ground and first floor rooms to the north.

The roof structure is of principle rafter construction, which is limited to only one roof truss set over the housebody. Here the principle rafters are of pine but the roughly chamfered collar tenoned into the rafters is of oak. The two sets of tusk tenon purlins are also of oak. The tie beam is of slight scantling, disproportionate to the size of the

principal rafters. At the parlour end to the north, there is no truss and coupled rafters suffice.



The style of roof truss, with tusk tenoned purlins threaded through principal rafters, and thin, clasped ridge piece are indicative of an 18<sup>th</sup> century date as is the slender scantling of the rafters laid narrow edge on.

In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century Langton House was extended to the south in stone, with further buildings added to the south and west relating to the 18<sup>th/19<sup>th</sup></sup> century brewing business.

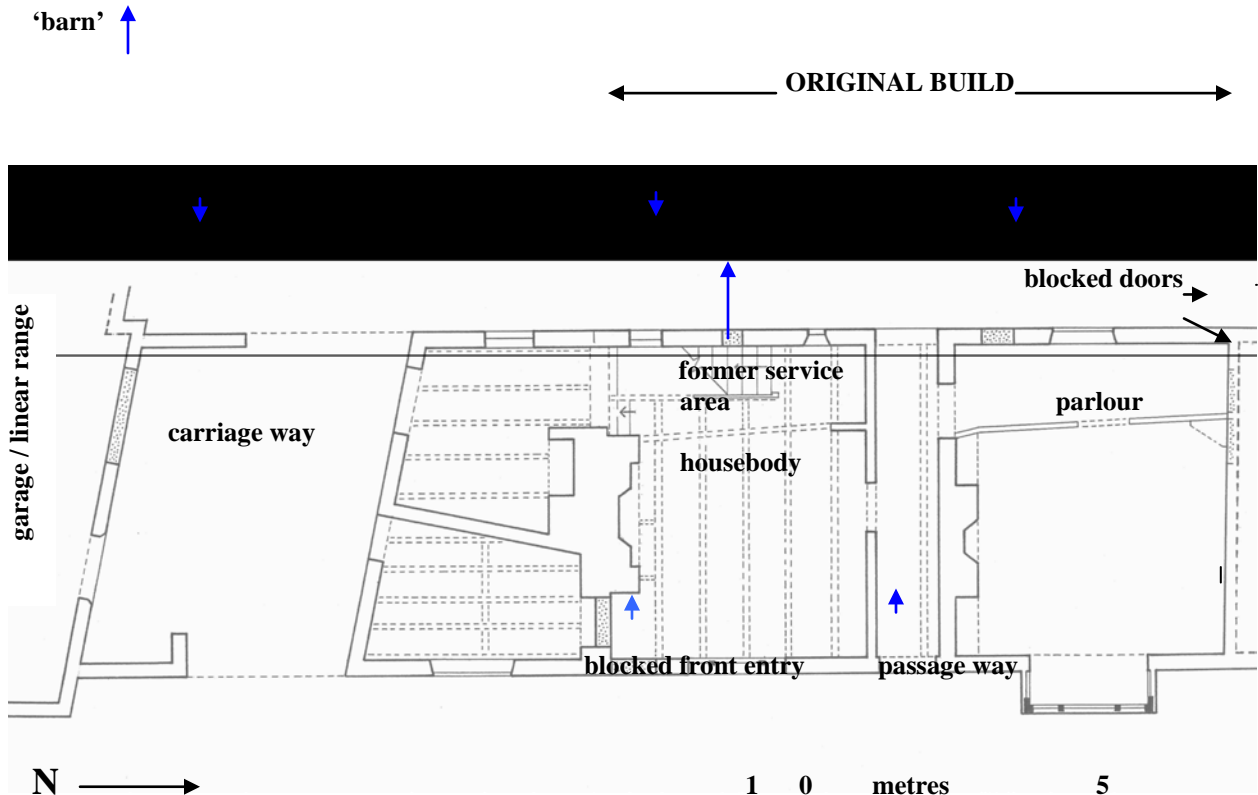
The roof structure of the extension is identical to the main body of the house even in the combined use of oak and pine, indicating a complete re-roof at the time the extension was built.

Alterations to the structure over the years and evidence for internal access to the house adjoining to the north, would indicate that the building had been progressively subdivided and adapted to provide self contained areas as family or brewery needs changed.

The documentary evidence of previous chapters coupled with a more detailed examination of the structure, can help build up a picture of the original form of the building, and provide an insight into the changing use of the internal space over the years.

## Analysis and interpretation: form and function

The original function of Langton House is unknown, although situated on the outskirts of a small rural town its origins were in all probability agricultural. Its cross passage plan form is traditionally found in farmhouses spanning the centuries. However, the lack of any mention of land associated with the premises in 1751 and the reference to ownership by a linen weaver and the existence of a weaver's and later a blacksmith's shop, might imply its being engaged commercially in trade or some form of industry from an early period.

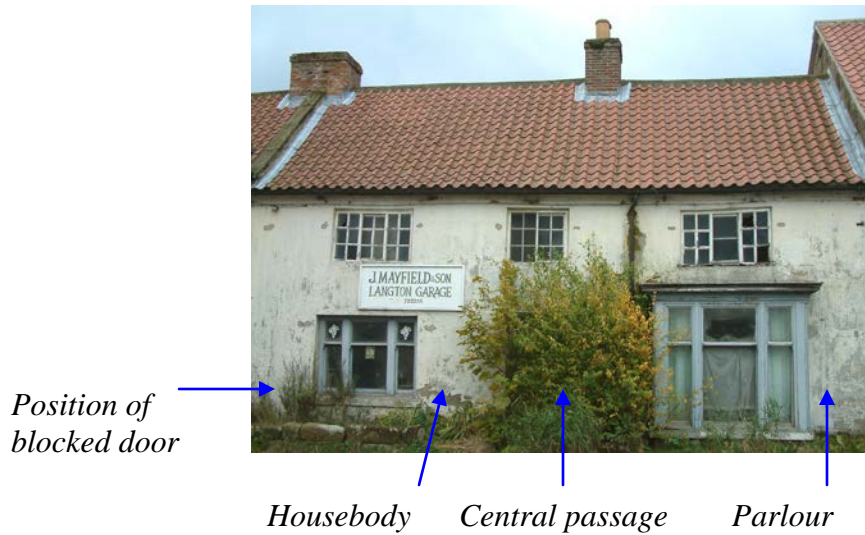


As today, Langton House fronted directly onto the road and had access to a yard at the rear. To the left of the central passage was the housebody with a large cooking hearth. A service area was situated to the rear. To the right was a room which appears always to have been heated, with its stack set against the passage wall.

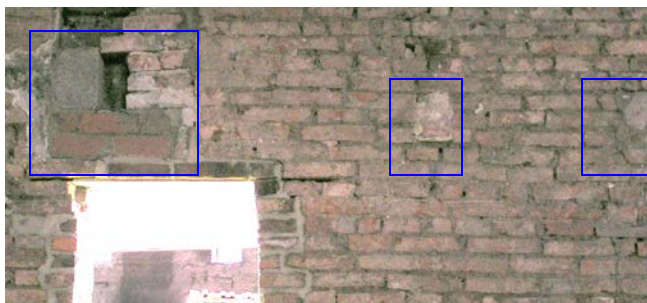
Originally the cross passage would have provided access from the front road to the yard at the back. It may not have functioned as a hallway in the modern domestic sense, but as a link way possibly facilitating trade or business in the back yard.

A door, now blocked, on the front elevation near the south gable end, formerly opened directly into the housebody, assuring private access to this area of the house, away from the passage.





The modern staircase set against the rear wall replaced an earlier stair located at the side of the hearth to the west. Evidence for this lies in the location of a small blocked window on the rear elevation situated between floors, which would have lit a dog leg or ladder stair situated beside the stack. The joists offer no clues as to the precise location as they were truncated when the modern staircase was inserted.



Since the house has been recently gutted and the floors temporarily removed, the blocked stair window and its relationship to the joist holes and openings can easily be seen.

*Blocked window and joist holes.*

A service area comprising pantry and scullery was traditionally set aside at the rear of the housebody. At Langton House this area latterly housed the modern staircase. Small windows set in the back wall lit this former work area.



*Rear elevation*

To the south, prior to the stone extension, a single storey lean-to abutted the house. This is evident from a scar visible on the outside of the original gable wall.



A blocked window high in the gable indicates that the building originally housed an attic at its south end.



A heated chamber with an original partition wall is located above the housebody. It has sturdy joists which support a boarded ceiling for an attic.

*Original partition with boarded floor above.*



At the north end of the house however, the small scantling of the joists above the upper chamber would suggest there was no load bearing floor over this end.

The chamber itself, as the upper room to the south, was heated. Below, a heated room served latterly as a parlour.

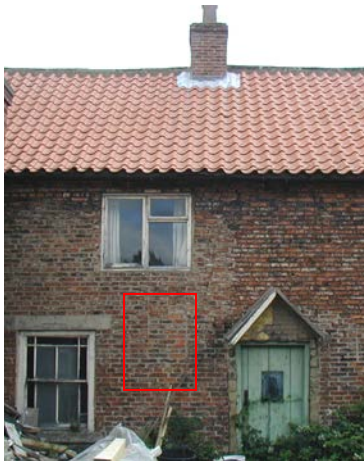
### **Analysis and interpretation: sub division**

The large, impressive, stained glass window, visible through the open door of the parlour, is a later insertion, possibly of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Originally a show piece, it was soon relegated to lighting the back corridor which was created at the rear of the room by the insertion of a partition.



The partition across the parlour provided access from the ground floor of the adjoining house to the cross passage at Langton whilst maintaining the privacy of the parlour room. From the passage there would then have been access to the outside at the front and rear of the building.

Another blocked stair window, this time to the north of the back door, would indicate the position of a second set of stairs accessing the first floor above the parlour. Whether this set was original to the build is uncertain but it does support the documentary evidence that the building was 'divided into two tenements' prior to 1771.





The angle of the partition across the parlour room, as evident on the plan, may have been engineered to provide more space for circulation around the foot of this staircase which was later removed.

It would appear through documentary research and analysis that the history of the building has been one of subdivision and multiple occupancy. However, not only was there subdivision within the building, but at some period there was also access to and from the adjacent house to north, which itself may well have been sub divided. (At present, this latter fact cannot be ascertained as the adjoining building has not been surveyed.)

Access to the adjoining house was evident at ground and first floor level.



This photograph shows two adjacent blocked doorways visible after the ceiling and partition had been stripped out. The line of the former partition is just visible, as is a door at first floor level which allowed freedom of passage between the two buildings at an upper level

*Line of the partition*

However, prior to access to the adjacent present late 18<sup>th</sup>/early 19<sup>th</sup> century house, a door blocked with small hand made bricks in the north west corner of the partitioned parlour would suggest an early blocking to a building of unknown function, predating the present one to the north.

A further larger doorway blocked with 19<sup>th</sup> century machined bricks is visible immediately west of the partition line. This door, if inserted when the partition was erected, would provide access to and from the present neighbouring building via the corridor without impinging on the privacy of the person occupying the parlour room.

## Conclusion

It is evident from documentary sources and an examination of the structure of the building that for the greater part of its life Langton House has been tenanted out to one or more occupants.

Two staircases would indicate separate occupancy of the two halves of the building, although it cannot be stated with any certainty whether initially this was the case.

Later developments would suggest that the adjacent house to the north was in the same ownership and was conjoined with Langton House providing freedom of access from the ground floor of the neighbouring house to the passage way via a short corridor behind the parlour room of Langton House.

Similarly there was access from the upper floor of the adjoining house to the passage way at ground floor level via the north staircase.

*Langton House with the later building adjoining to the north.*



It is impossible to state exactly when all this reorganisation of space was taking place. However the census returns would indicate that from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century occupants of the brewery house included not only the Carlen family, but others, either as tenants or lodgers.

Apart from the mention of a Mr Moon, 'spirit merchant', Mr Henderson, 'brewer', and possibly Mr. Kitching, and Mr. Fawcett as carriers and carters, there is nothing in the census returns to suggest other individuals living at the brewery or the property next door being employed in the brewing or maltings business. Most of the business appears to have been carried on by family members. The seven cottages, accumulated by the family by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century do not appear to have been specifically acquired as tied cottages for brewery workers – the business does not appear to have been large enough to justify it - but may well have supplied additional labour hired on a casual basis.

## The History of Brewing at Langton and related Building Development

In 1781 John Eldon sold Langton House to Thomas Weatherill, a 'common brewer'. At this time the property is described simply as 'all that messuage (house and garden *ref. 1751*)...with the blacksmith's shop, orchard, yard and garth thereto belonging'.

However, under the new ownership the business expanded and by 1808, three years before Weatherill's death, buildings on the site were known to have included a brewhouse and a maltkiln. *Ref. indenture 13 May 1808*

During this period of expansion, an extension was added to the south end of Langton House, built of stone and with architectural details common to late 18<sup>th</sup> early 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings.

The carriage way provided a grand entrance to the cobbled yard with fine stone voussoirs over the arch in typical 18<sup>th</sup> century style.



*Extension viewed from the street and from the yard*



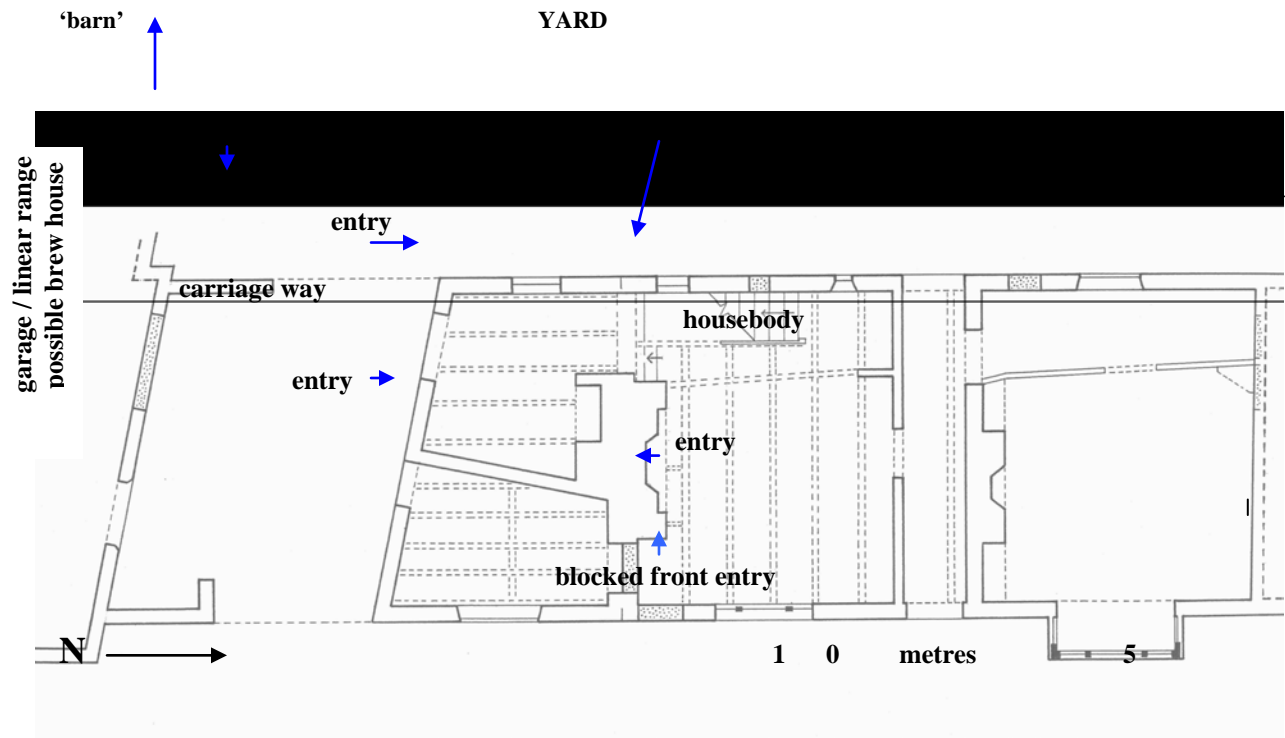
*Voussoirs and a keystone, with herringbone tooling evident on the stonework supporting a late 18<sup>th</sup> century date.*

The carriage way extension comprised two unconnected ground floor rooms with two chambers at first floor level. An external staircase provided access to the chamber over the carriage way. With no fenestration on the front elevation and only a small opening to

the rear, the chamber was probably intended for storage rather than domestic use. Access to the second first floor room was from the first floor of the original build.

The ground floor rooms each had their own access directly onto the carriage way and also into the old housebody through doorways inserted either side of the hearth.

It would be reasonable to expect that the door providing street access directly from the housebody fell into disuse at this period. Free flow of circulation would have proved very difficult if both front door and internal door connecting housebody and the front ground floor room of the new build were in use at the same time. *Ref. plan below.*



The location of the ground floor room on the front elevation with access to carriage way and housebody, would suggest its function was integral to both house and brewery. It would be ideally suited as the brewery office.

It was not linked to the room at the rear. With a hearth range and direct access to the housebody the latter in all probability functioned as a back kitchen, relegating some domestic chores to an area away from the housebody.

At ground and first floor level the extension to Langton House served a dual purpose. It provided extra domestic space at ground floor level with living accommodation above, and added storage area for the brewery, with a possible office for business transactions.



## Ancillary Buildings

The associated brewery buildings set around the perimeter of the yard were not part of the original survey brief and consequently only a summary inspection was undertaken. However with comments provided by Amber Patrick, an acknowledged expert on brewhouses and maltings, to whom photographs and a brief analysis were sent, it has been possible to determine the overall development of the site, if not the detail.

Records indicate that between 1781 and 1808 a brew house and malt kiln were built on the site.



South of the carriage way lies an east west linear building, latterly known as Langton Garage.

This has been identified by Amber Patrick, as a possible brewhouse, although prior to its demolition it had become greatly degraded and difficult to identify.

*Linear range during demolition.*

Here, the shadow of its former gable end is visible against the 'barn', the latter forming the western boundary of the yard.

A door at an upper level can be seen, connecting brew house with 'barn'.



Amber Patrick suggests the possibility of the 'barn' being the malthouse containing the steeping and growing part of the process, with the kiln adjacent in the long range and the brewhouse at the road end of the range. The upper level connecting door may have opened out directly onto the kiln floor. The arrangement suggests a brew house/maltings arrangement, but the buildings are too altered to interpret satisfactorily.



Few distinguishing features remain, although this opening which faces onto the carriage way may have been used as a loading point for barrels.

Note the fine keystone and herring bone tooling on the stone work, consistent with a late 18<sup>th</sup> / early 19<sup>th</sup> century in date.

*North wall of the long range overlooking carriageway.*

There is no doubt however that during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the long range underwent drastic alterations. It would appear that the range was rebuilt at first floor level for part of its length towards the western end where it adjoined the 'barn'. The rebuild is in 19<sup>th</sup> century brick.



*The north wall of the long range with its upper storey rebuilt.*

Below are the roof trusses in the long range. One has the initials R.C. (Richard Carlen) inscribed on it, which supports a 19<sup>th</sup> century date for the rebuild.



In 1861, Richard, son of the founder member of the Carlen Brewery, is named in the census of that date as 'maltster and brewer'.

Interestingly, malt kiln tiles on which the barley was heated in the kiln are seen re-used as flooring in the 'office'

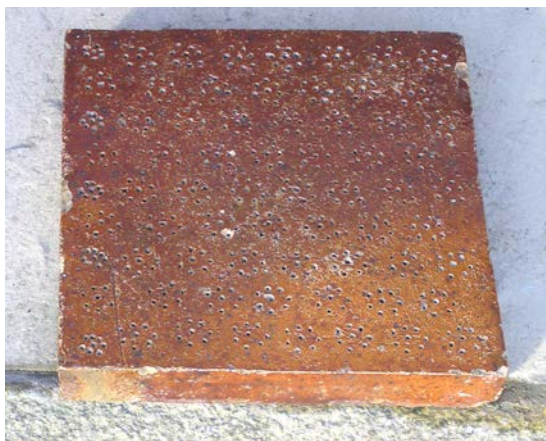


*Tiles re-used as flooring.*



Although the tiles resemble Stanley Bros. (of Nuneaton), or early Fison (of Stowmarket) kiln tiles, Amber Patrick believes they are locally or relatively locally made, due to the fact the little holes appear to be punched from above, - an unusual feature. In size and design they are fairly standard – 29.5 cm sq. x 4.5 cm deep.

*Tile cleaned up.*



*Underside of tile.*



The perforations would have allowed heat to pass from the furnace below to roast the barley placed at first floor level on the kiln tiles.

The suggestion that the ‘barn’ was used for the steeping and growing part of the process, although feasible, cannot be investigated as the interior has not been accessed. However there is believed to be no obvious evidence remaining for the steeping vats associated with malthouses.

Other buildings have disappeared with time. The two earlier roof lines visible on the gable end of the ‘barn’ evidence unrecorded changes to the building stock, which by the time the Carlen brewery was at its most productive in the mid and late 19<sup>th</sup> century also included a warehouse and spirit house.





## The Carlen Brewery

The Carlen family came into the business through marriage in 1814 when Joseph Carlen, already a brewer, married the daughter of Thomas Weatherill's successor, Thomas Biggins.

After Joseph's death in 1831 the business thrived under the careful management of his wife, Jane and her son, Richard. A generation later the brewery appears to have expanded and a spirit house is mentioned for the first time. The Carlen family also acquired a further property, the 'Temperance Hotel', situated at the corner of Yarm Lane and Guisborough Road.

On his death in 1862, Joseph's son, Richard, 'maltster, brewer and spirit merchant', left three children, all of whom were minors, Richard jnr., Joseph, and Jane Alice. Ten years later the children were recorded in the census returns as 'boarders' at the brewery, and a Mr William Hauxwell as 'brewer and spirit merchant'. Richard is described as 'assistant brewer' and his brother Joseph, 'engineer' though whether he was employed at the brewery or on the railways, is uncertain. The boys were 17 and 15 years old respectively, and their sister, Jane Alice, 13.

By 1891 Richard jnr. had died, the male heirs to the Carlen family sadly being short lived. His wife, Sarah continued to operate as a spirit merchant.

By the time Sarah sold out to the three brothers Dixon of Bridge Street in 1902, the property comprised 'a messuage with the yard, garden, brew house, warehouse, spirit house, stable, coach house and other outbuildings adjoining'. Seven cottages within the immediate vicinity had been added to the tally, three 'bounded on the north and east by the public street ie 'Levenside' and Bridge Street, and four situated south of the brewery yard. Whether the house adjoining to the north is included in the count of seven cottages is uncertain, but it was without doubt integral to the brewery and may well have provided accommodation for lodgers and possible members of the workforce.

The date of the demise of Carlen Brewery is at present unknown but it finally closed its doors somewhere between 1902 and 1921. By the latter date, according to Kelly's Directory, there was no longer a brewery in Great Ayton

The lifespan of the Carlen Brewery was short, but typical of many small breweries which peaked at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It covered less than one hundred years of the site's two hundred and fifty years' known history, but in that time expanded from a simple 'brew house with other outbuildings' and two cottages, to a thriving commercial company, with a brew house, malthouse, spirit house, warehouse, stable and coach house. It owned the Temperance Hotel and provided work for local people living close by.

Its contribution to the commercial wealth of Great Ayton during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, until now unrecognised and unappreciated, must have been considerable.

## Conclusion

This, in conclusion, is the known history of Langton House and Langton Garage. It is a site which from as early as 1751 had been involved in small scale commercial enterprise- from a modest start in the linen industry to a thriving brewery and finally a garage.

During this time the house was altered and adapted to accommodate changing needs both domestic and commercial. The absorption of the neighbouring building into the brewery complex and the subdivision of living areas highlights the constant ebb and flow of a community whose focus of work centred on the brewery and its busy yard beyond. North and south cottages were also acquired, some no doubt housing the casual labour required for the brewery and malthouse.

The exact nature of early buildings in the yard is uncertain although two of the first were undoubtedly a weaver's workshop and a blacksmiths shop. The arrival of Thomas Weatherill the brewer in 1781 heralded a period of expansion, which by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had seen the development to completion of a brewing complex with brew house, malthouse, warehouse, spirit house, coach house and stable, all centred on a yard approached from the road by a fine archway with adjacent office.

The twentieth century saw the closure of the brewery, and the brewhouse stripped out to function finally as a garage. It was taken over by Jeffrey Mayfield in 1958 and known latterly as Langton Garage.



Today, possibly for the first time in two hundred and fifty years, the function of the buildings remaining on the site is purely residential. Although all have been converted to domestic use the layout of buildings around a yard has been retained and a sense of its past history still remains.



**References – Langton House and the Carlen Brewery**

Northallerton Archives:-

*Trade Directories*

*Title deeds (ref. ZSM)*

Northallerton Library

*Census Returns*

2004



## Great Ayton Community Archaeology Project

### Langton Garage – The Serpent Finial

John Senior and Ian Pearce

August 2004



#### 1 Introduction

For many years, the south west gable of Langton House on the west side of Bridge Street, Great Ayton, has carried a distinctive finial stone with a carving of a serpent on one face.



The buildings, now known as Langton Garage, were converted into apartments over the period 2003 to 2004. During the course of this work the gable wall supporting the finial partially collapsed, bringing the finial down to ground level and making close examination possible. Closer examination revealed an indistinct carving on the opposite face to the serpent. Subsequently the finial was replaced in its previous position.

In order to find more information about the likely history of this finial Dr. John Senior of Ripplemark Geoconsultancy, an acknowledged expert on building and artefact stone, was asked for an opinion. Briefly this was that it was medieval in origin, probably part of an ornamental tomb. It had been taken from its original location during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when it had been re-cut and the serpent carved. Most of the following history of the finial stone is based on comments from Dr. Senior, and we are very grateful to him for his investigation of the stone.

## 2 The finial in its original form

The finial is 76 cm. high; rectangular, with base measurements approximately 28 x 22cm. It narrows gradually to a degraded top surface of approximately 16 x 16cm – excluding the bosses which are 3 -4 cm. deep. The depth of the serpent is 2.5 cm.

The stone is good quality local Middle Jurassic sandstone ( Saltwick Formation, Aalenian), building stone traditionally used in Great Ayton and quarried locally along the top of the Cleveland Hills escarpment.



The finial is old, probably medieval to sub-medieval. Originally it would have been ornamented with bosses carved at the top of each side face, although one of these bosses was subsequently broken off, possibly when the finial was removed from its original location. One face of the finial still retains a finely incised image of a skeleton holding what seems to be a scythe (the celebrated “grim reaper”).

The top surface of the finial is flat, with tooled marks, suggesting that it was designed to carry a smaller upper finial stone, probably about 300mm. high. Usually such an upper section would have been secured by a metal pin, bronze or wrought iron, embedded in the upper face of the lower finial, in addition to mortar. However there is no trace of such a pin, suggesting that the finial was part of a monument inside a building and therefore not subject to the extremes of wind and climate. Furthermore finials are carved with the stone bedding planes vertical, thus the upper faces of externally mounted finials are prone to weathering as moisture penetrates between those planes.

It is extremely doubtful that the finial would have been so well preserved had it been exposed to weathering from medieval times.

Apart from the face with the “grim reaper” iconography, the other side faces would have been plain, although there is the possibility that the later carving of the serpent motif destroyed an earlier carving.

On opposite faces towards the base of the finial (to the left and right of the serpent face), and on the underside, are tooling marks suggesting that it was built into a wall like structure.

The “grim reaper” carving is now considerably worn, but the skeletal figure with a face surrounded by a halo, holding a scythe, can clearly be made out. There are both chisel marks and point marks present. Such an image would not generally be found on ecclesiastical buildings, although the church at neighbouring Ingelby Greenhow does have what might be seen as pagan images in its interior carvings. The reaper imagery is associated with human fallibility with respect to death: nobody can resist death. Skeletons and scythe bearing figures appear in many medieval to sub-medieval images.

### 3 Possible origin of the finial

**All Saints Church Tower:** Finials are often found on churches, particularly on parapet walls and on the apex of gable walls. It was initially thought that the finial might have come from All Saints Church in Great Ayton, which dates back to the twelfth century. In the fifteenth century a tower was added with a spire, only to be pulled down in 1788, possibly due to a structural fault, and a replacement tower was added. Almost a century later, in 1880, this replacement tower was demolished and the nave reduced in length back to the size of the original Norman nave.

Thus there was plenty of opportunity for a finial to have been removed from the church for later use elsewhere. However it could not have been a corner finial on the tower, since the keying grooves at the base are cut on opposite, rather than adjacent faces. In any case, it is far too small for such an application. Whilst smaller finials might have been incorporated into the parapet walls, the small size of the finial makes this possibility doubtful. Finally the condition of the stone and the absence of a socket for a metal pin contradict an original location on the exterior of a building.

**All Saints Gable Walls:** The finial may have been mounted on a gable wall. The church currently has a stone finial on the top of each end wall, although that on the east wall is broken off just above its base exposing the metal securing pin. Both these finials are built into the coping-stones of the wall; indeed they have side extensions matching the profile of the coping-stones. Earlier and less sophisticated finials could have merely butted up against the upper coping-stones, in which case the keying grooves would have been appropriate. However this would still be an exposed exterior location, and the evidence points to an interior location.

**All Saints Porch:** A reaper image may have been more suited to a Charnel House, where bones were deposited after periodic clearance from the graveyard to make way for new burials. Whilst there is no Charnel House building as such at All Saints, the 13<sup>th</sup> century porch over the south door does have a purpose-made opening at the foot of its east wall indicating intent to use it for that purpose. Thus the porch gable might be a possible original site for the finial.

The present roof of the porch does not seem original, especially when viewed from the inside. The water table stones are relatively unweathered, suggesting that the present roof might only be 100 or 200 years old. It is possible that the medieval finial was mounted on the porch and then removed when the roof was later replaced. Although a “grim reaper” carving would have been an inappropriate greeting to the parishioners entering the church, it might have been discreetly positioned on the reverse side, alluding to the hidden secondary function of the porch. However there is still the evidence that the original finial was not intended for outside use.

**Interior ornamental tomb:** The small size of the finial, lack of metal pinning for the upper section, and its remarkable state of preservation suggest this is its most likely source. This may not have been in Great Ayton, although considering its weight it seems unlikely that it would have been carried too far from its original location. Other possibilities would be the chapels at little Ayton or Easby, both of which have long since disappeared.

Finials of comparable size can be seen on the memorial to Maria Forbes, post 1655, in the churchyard of Saints Peter and John and Saint Thomas of Canterbury at Bovey Tracey in Devon. This house-shaped shrine-like grave cover has three finials with bosses and images of flowers and a mermaid. The earliest depiction of a skeleton with a scythe is mid 14<sup>th</sup> century, and there are similar depictions with Scottish connections from the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century. No such structure remains at All Saints Church today, neither is one visible on the earliest photograph of the churchyard from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There is no sign of any bosses, of any style or size, elsewhere on the fabric of All Saints today.

#### 4 Re-use of finial and appearance of the serpent

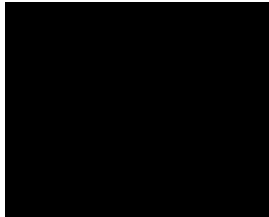


Wherever the finial was originally located, it was removed towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, or earlier, and re-cut. There are obvious soot deposits in the tooling marks on the underside, suggesting that it was left lying around outside, for some considerable time before re-cutting. The stone extension to Langton House, where the finial is now sited, is late 18<sup>th</sup> century in date. The style of the re-cutting with its characteristic dressed square grooves cut into the vertical edges is “antique Roman”, and is also datable to the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The faces were slightly re-dressed, but one face stone was removed to create the serpent image. The pattern on the boss on this face was re-cut at

this time. Some care was clearly taken on the carving, with the stone polished to a smooth finish.

The serpent is nothing to do with the original finial and is crude in concept, although a great deal of care has been taken with the carving of it. This care in carving suggests that it was a deliberate act of some significance and not just an apprentice stone mason's prank. The image of the serpent is naïve and stylised- only one eye is visible and the tongue is arrow shaped. There is no doubt that the serpent carving is much more recent than the rest of the stone, and was cut prior to the finial being mounted on the roof at Langton Garage in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

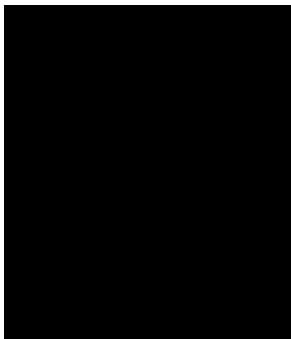


There was sufficient stone on the face below the boss to allow the serpent to be carved.

*Sketch of cross section of finial showing how the vertical grooves and the serpent were cut into the existing stone.*

At the foot of the serpent a groove has been cut into the stone in the profile of a typical stone ridge tile. *Ref. photo above.*

This suggests that the serpent would have faced north-east when originally mounted on the building, looking down along the apex of the roof, with the end stone ridge tight into the base of the finial. However the recent orientation was south-east, suggesting that the finial had been turned through 90° clockwise at some stage.



*Sketch showing how the finial was originally positioned, with the serpent facing down the ridge.*

A quantity of modern cement (post 1840) was found adhering to the underside of the finial. Lime mortar would have been used when the finial was first installed on the gable end in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. We know that the finial was last moved in the 1980s when the building was re-roofed by Spence Brothers, and the modern cement on the underside would date from this time. The finial may have been re-orientated on the roof to make it more visible from the road. In both positions the serpent face would have been shielded from the prevailing west wind, accounting for its continuing good state of preservation.

Of course it is equally possible that the re-cut stone with the serpent carving was initially mounted on the gable end of another building with the serpent looking down the ridge

tiles. It was then moved to Langton Garage at a later date, when it was fixed with the serpent facing south-east.

In this context the serpent was not used as an ecclesiastical image and may have had another connection – serpents for example are traditionally associated with medicine. However there is no evidence that the building was ever used as a doctor's surgery or an apothecary's premises.

## 5 Conclusions

In reconstructing the history of the serpent finial we can say with some certainty that:

- It is local sandstone.
- It is old, medieval or sub medieval in origin.
- Because of its good state of preservation, it is unlikely to have been outside, exposed to the weather, continually since then.
- It carries a carving of a human figure, in the form of a “grim reaper” with a scythe.
- It was designed to be built into a wall, and to carry some additional stonework on its upper surface.
- It was probably part of an ornamental tomb, either inside or outside in a sheltered location.
- At some later stage it was removed and left lying around outside when it was partly covered in soot.
- It was re-cut in the antique Roman style in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, when it was modified to fit against ridge tiles.
- Great care was taken in carving a stylised serpent on one face.
- It was last moved when Langton Garage was re-roofed in the 1980s, using modern cement.

With less certainty we can say that:

- It may have been a finial from All Saints Church, either from the tower parapet or on a gable end wall.
- It may have come from the porch, although the reaper may have been associated with the charnel house imagery.
- It may have come from another local ecclesiastical building; it seems unlikely that a relatively ordinary stone of considerable weight would have been transported very far from the original site.
- It was then (late 18<sup>th</sup> century) placed on the gable end wall of a building, perhaps at Langton Garage, originally with the serpent looking down the ridge.
- At sometime after the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century it was re-positioned at Langton Garage with the serpent facing the road.

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