

“Woodville” – a Victorian villa



Woodville is a handsome double-fronted villa built around 1861 for John Dixon, son of George Dixon, first headmaster of the Friend's School . The house was built of brick (now rendered) and is set well back from the road, with a long (100ft+) rear garden. The decorative railings were acquired (legally) from Stokesley Methodist Church in the 1960s.

Features which support the dating of the house are:

1) solid, plain cupboards with a deep, rolled edge set into niches beside original fireplaces in the original kitchen, present study and one of the bedrooms



2) A wide, classically moulded cornice and frieze in the 'best' room. It is a decorative and distinctive feature, with just one corner where the craftsman's skill has failed and two lines of moulding trail into one another



3) Two rooms – the study and bedroom above – have small, cast iron regency style, round arched fireplaces with Register grates. This style became increasingly popular after the 1850's and could be purchased quite cheaply, as it was mass produced for the housing boom of the industrial revolution



4) The moulded handrail of the dog-leg staircase curves the whole length of the stairs, uninterrupted by newel posts. As with the cornice, this is a feature of quality and likely to be original



5) The large, high ceilinged, single storey addition across the back of the house is floored with red and black quarry tiles. They are very badly cracked and broken in an area inside a door opening from the side access to the house. It is known that a William Chapman (known as 'Milky Willie'), a milk seller, lived in the house between 1927 and 1929 and it is possible that the extension was built to accommodate his business (the damage being caused by the movement of milk churns?)



There are two other features of interest:

- 1) a main, but not load-bearing partition wall upstairs was found to be made of two lath and plaster partitions with the space between filled with sawdust – an early form of sound-proofing?
- 2) in the attic, the roof space above the bedroom and study corner is separated from the rest of the attic by a brick wall with two window-like openings ,crudely framed in rough wood with seatings for 2 vertical bars in each. It is suggested that the openings were indeed windows lighting the attic before the extension containing the study and bedroom was added on.



Windows

The picture on the left shows the glazing which preceeded that of the sash windows in the two pictures on the right, which were taken around 1976



Roof timbers

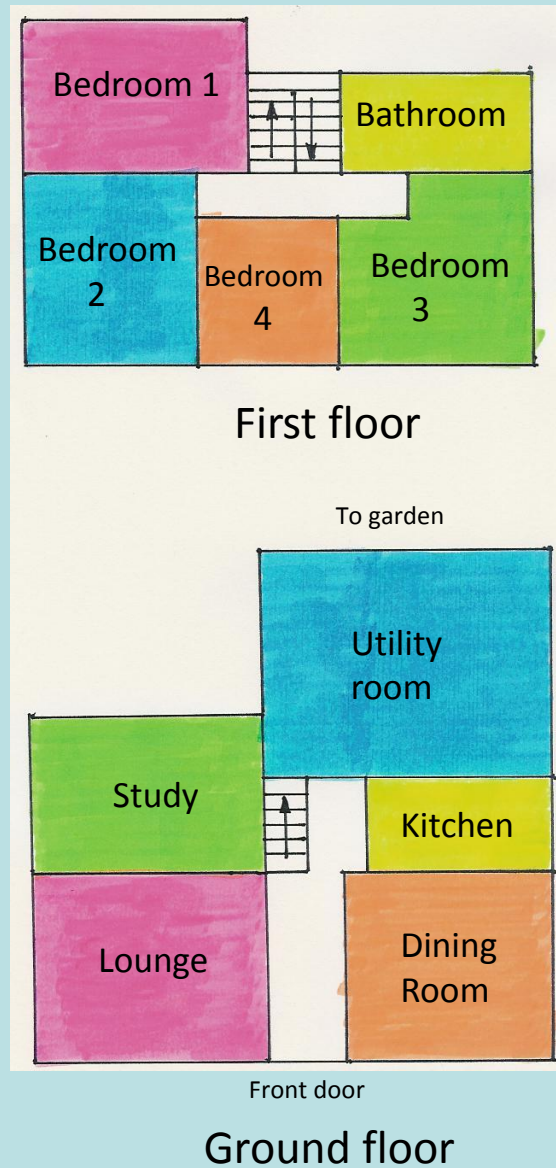


Roof over front of house



Roof over rear of house
(note steeper rake)

Woodville - floor plan



THE END

Surveyed by Cath Small and Ken Taylor
in 2008 prior to extensive refurbishment