

### COTTAGES (built before 1840)

For this study I have omitted the farmhouses, Devoran (which was a separate village created by the Agar Robartes of Lanhydrock) and the Trelissick estate. I have concentrated on the cottages, scattered about the parish, most of which had a few acres of land attached to them and were leasehold. Those at Pill Creek and Point were probably built between 1760 and 1800 by men connected with the trade from the Quays and are more sophisticated in design.

Basically the cottages are rectangular, about 30 ft by 15 ft, with walls about 2 ft thick and window openings 3 ft square. The interior divisions, which are not of structural importance, have probably already been changed several times since the cottage was built. We have looked at some cottages that have not been recently modernised and which show variations in the basic plan.

These small houses grew from the soil like the trees that so often surround them. They are built of stone from a local quarry or from cob and it is difficult to say how old they are. Some must have existed adjacent to Feock Church and La Feock well from a very early period; Trevilla, the site of an old manor, and Chycoose, near the river, are two other old sites. Sandoes smithy, on the old road across King Harry ferry to Haliginick, where the roads crossed on what is now Carnon Downs, is shown on Martyn's Map of 1748. It has been suggested that the cottages facing east, rather than south, are the oldest. There are two in Feock Churchtown, one at La Feock (the old Post Office), one at Trevilla, and one at Haliginick.

Between 1740 and 1840, Carnon Downs were gradually enclosed and broken up into small holdings of about eight to ten acres, each with a cottage facing south, outbuildings for animals, and a well. This provision of a water supply seems to have been general unless there was a surface spring nearby, as at Avondale, The Beeches and Quenchwell, in the north of the parish. The group of cottages at La Feock are the exception and must have used water from the well outside La Feock Grange.

There is one cottage at Carnon Downs, behind the present Pottery, where the date 1742 was found carved on a roof beam, and from about this time new surnames appear in the Parish Registers. It is impossible to say where these new families lived, but the 1813 Ordnance Survey map shows 15 or more buildings in this area.

In 1818 Lord Falmouth advertised Feock Downs to be leased in lots of five to ten acres (Royal Cornwall Gazette, April 2nd), and on the 1842 Tithe Map fields have been enclosed, but not as many cottages had been built as at Carnon Downs.

There is little information about the occupants of the cottages until the Census returns of 1841. These show that the man usually had a trade or some employment that would bring in a cash wage and he would work on the holding in his spare time with the help of his family. It was a life with few reserves to meet emergencies, such as illness or accident, and leisure must have been very limited.

There is no uniformity in the cottages, so they were probably 'do-it-yourself' efforts, with the aid of advice from friends and relatives who were tradesmen. In 1841 there were masons and carpenters living in various parts of the parish, and this was probably a well-established pattern. William Gerrish, who later built Devoran Church, lived at Carnon Downs, as did two carpenters; there were carpenters at Chycoose and La Feock; the Chegwidens lived at Trevilla, one a carpenter and the other a mason.

Existing old windows still show local variations. They all had small panes; some are sash, some casement; some open on side hinges, others open only at the top; windows at La Feock are of the same pattern as those at Chycoose. It should be recorded that, occasionally, where old windows have had to be replaced recently, care has been taken to secure exact copies and so retain the character of the cottage.

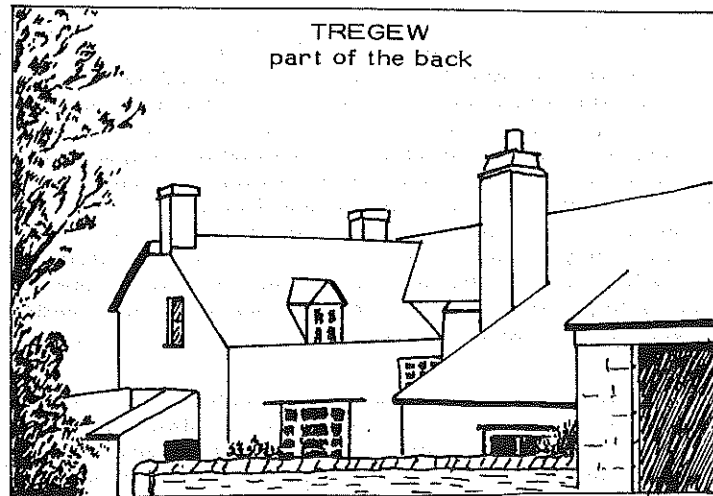
A few thatched roofs still exist, but now a thatcher has to be called in to repair them; they were more usual in the past when agricultural labourers normally thatched hay and corn ricks and long straw was generally available and carefully harvested for this purpose. It provided an excellently insulated roof, but was a fire hazard, harboured rats, and required comparatively frequent repair and renewal. If small slates became available, they provided a long-lasting alternative and received a regular 'cement wash' which welded the slates together. They could be fitted with a launder to catch rain water so that it could be stored in a barrel and reduce the number of trips to the well. The old launders were made from solid wood with a deep, rounded groove cut out with a hand plane.

The Census of 1841 suggests that many of the cottages that are now one house were originally two dwellings. The cottage in Feock Churchtown, opposite the tower, is typical. We know from the Tithe Map of 1842 that Bidy Clyma leased it from Lord Falmouth. The Census shows that Bidy and her husband Josiah, their baby son and Josiah's father, lived in

one part, whilst in the other portion lived Stephen Clyma, aged 50, a son and two daughters all in their teens and a housekeeper aged 50.

Later as living conditions improved, the cottages were remodelled, with a central front door and a staircase between the kitchen and 'front room' leading up to two bedrooms. In the last 50 years many cottages have become freehold, and with the advent of mains water, electricity, better roads and motor transport they have been radically modernised. In the past many had no through ventilation so, having been condemned, they have only survived by being drastically altered; a few have disappeared completely and some are in use as sheds.

To complete this study, a few typical features are listed. Floors downstairs were originally of beaten earth or 'lime ash' which gave a surface superior to the cement which often replaced it. The height of the ceilings varies from six to seven feet, the boards laid over the beams to form the downstairs ceiling and bedroom floor varying in width. The oldest of these are wide, not tongued and grooved, sometimes covered with narrower boards laid at right angles. The narrow, steep stairs, with little room at the top or bottom, make it difficult to get furniture up or down and it is not unusual to find a series of boards forming a trap door resting firmly on the beams in one bedroom, and often called a 'coffin shoot'. Old partitions between rooms were wide boards placed upright with the joints covered with wooden slats, referred to as 'plank and post'.



## TREGEW

The name Tregew (or Tregew as it was once spelt) may be derived from "the farm on the goodland" or "the farm of the javelin" - both descriptive of its position on the fertile land to the east of the parish of Feock and adjacent to the ancient Camp at Roundwood. During the early years of the 17th century the Edmonds, who came originally from Middlesex, transformed the farmstead into a gentleman's residence and it is shown as such in Martyn's map of 1748. "It still has the appearance of a gentleman's seat" said Charles Henderson, writing only some fifty years ago, "with its park-like surroundings interspersed here and there with rows of stately elms".

As a farmstead, Tregew had already been there for many generations and the site is thought to be the oldest in the parish. In 1304, Inquisitions Post Mortem record: "Tregew held of Nicholas Boscawen as of his manor of Trevilla, value 16s.". In 1315 Tregew was mentioned in the Taxation of the Vicarage of Feock, when the Vicar was assigned its Garb Tithe, and in 1327 the Lay Subsidy Rolls referred to John Tregew, with a valuation of 3s. - the second highest in the parish.

It seems that at about this time Tregew became the property of the Gregor family, remaining so for some 300 years. Although the historian C. S. Gilbert said that Tregew became their property subsequent to the Reformation, according to Canon Jennings, the Gregors settled there at the time of Edward III and records confirm this claim. In 1342 John Gregor granted lands in Tregew, given to him by his father, Gregory de Tregew, to his daughter Joan and her husband John Colman of Fowey as a marriage gift. Some years later, their son Robert Colman was the plaintiff in a suit against Thomas Bryant and Joan his wife claiming lands in Tregew and alleging that Elena (John Gregor's second daughter and co-heiress) had died without issue.

### 17th Century - the Edmonds

During the reign of James I, according to Jennings, the Gregor family left Tregew for Truro (and later Trewarthenick), selling the farmstead to a Mr Edmonds. In his history of Feock, written about a hundred years later, William Hals said: "Mr Edmonds, a person well qualified for the purpose, was sent from London by the Company of Pewterers to inspect and try Cornish tin, then corrupted by the blowers thereof, before it was coined, that so the bad metal might be examined and tallied before it was coined proportionable to its badness. In which assay-master's office he thrived so well that at length