

Table 4. Size and Capacity of Measured Limekilns

Limekiln (site)	diameter (m)	height (m)	Volume (m ³)
Shillingstone (228)	3.5	9.1	65.66
Loders Cross (131)	1.8	5.2	9.92
Middle Farm (59)	2.0	3.9	9.18
Bothenhampton (19)	1.85	4.5	9.08
Limekiln Hill (214)	1.75	5.0	9.02
Bucknowle (65)	1.6	5.2	7.85
Nottingham (277)	1.5	5.8	7.68
Whitmore Coppice (116)	1.7	4.5	7.66
Bell House (127)	1.6	4.55	6.86
Gribb Farm (128)	1.6	4.5	6.78
Rodden Ridge (4)	1.6	4.0	6.03
Hill Farm (83)	1.8	3.1	5.91
Cogden Farm (39)	1.65	3.6	5.77
Mythe Hill (144)	1.5	4.05	5.37
Bredy North Hill (36)	1.85	2.5	5.04
Haydon Quarry (141)	1.6av	3.3	4.97
New Lane (253)	1.7	2.9	4.94
West Cliff (254)	1.65	3+	4.81
Gospel Ash (217)	1.57av	3.2	4.65
East Chickerell (56)	1.6	2.8	4.22
Willwood (77)	1.3	3.5	3.48
Hammond Street Farm (145)	1.2	4.1	3.48
Perwen Farm (132)	1.6	2.3	3.47
Manor Farm (26)	1.8	1.8+	3.43
Haydon Hill Wood (105)	1.2	3.3	2.8
Druce Higher Barn (212)	1.15	2.9	2.26
GLOUCESTERSHIRE ¹			
Green's Quarry 4	5.2	8.2	130.2
Green's Quarry 3	3.35	8.2	53.8
Hay Farm	2.06	4.87	6.8
SOMERSET ²			
Tengore Lane	3.0	6.0	31.9
Warren Bay 3	3.0	4.5	23.8
Warren Bay 1	2.2	6.2	17.6
Union Drove	2.0	6.0	14.2
CORNWALL ³			
Moorswater (pair)	2.74	7.0	30.9

Sources: 1. Bick 1984, 91; 2. Daniel and Murless 1992, 11, and 1993, 5; 3. author and M. Watts, see Williams, 1989, 30)

walls built into the bank, as at Compton Valence (site 69) or Mythe Hill (site 144). Good examples of more substantial free-standing sheds still roofed can be seen at Longburton (sites 138-9), Halfway House (site 166), Sturt Farm (site 246) and Yetminster (sites 294 and 298). Beam holes in the wall above the draw arch show that Bucknowle (site 65) also had a lean-to shed. Other lime sheds have gable roofs, such as Bell House (Plate 8), Rodden Ridge and Willwood (sites 4 and 77), the roof of the last having a hipped end. The trace of a pointed gable can be seen on the wall at Limekiln Hill. Maps show many limekilns with sheds, now reduced to a low crumbling wall, or vanished as at the Bishop's Limekiln (site 3). The commonest roofing material is corrugated iron, although there are tiles at Gospel Ash, stone tiles at Willwood and slates at Poxwell Lodge (sites 217, 77 and 211).

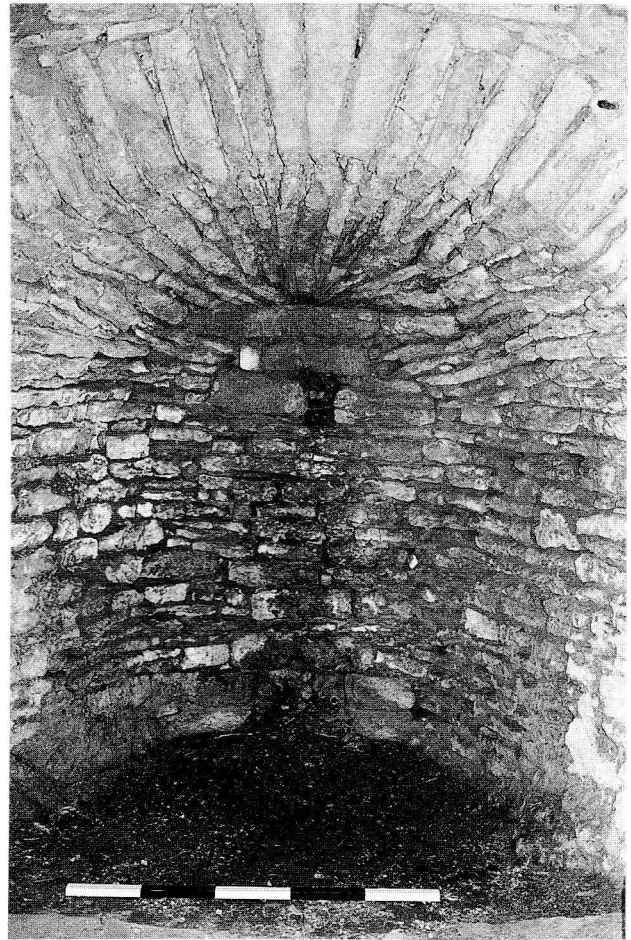


Plate 6. Stone draw arch, recess, poking hole and draw-hole at Old Quarry limekiln, Longburton. July 1993. Scale: 1 metre.

Lime-burners' shelters

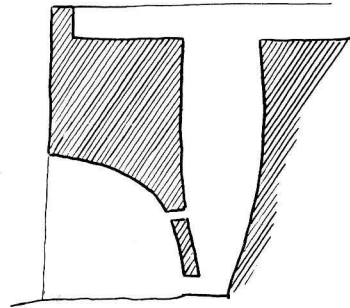
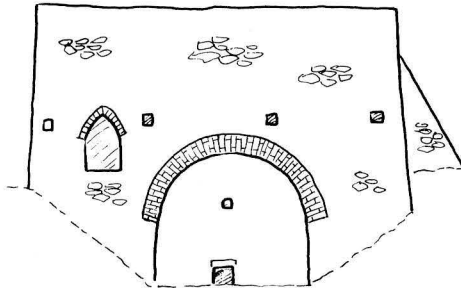
The lime-burner had to be in attendance for many hours at critical times. He may have found a resting place in a corner of the lime shed, unless a special shelter was provided. The most convincing is the unique 'bothy' with Gothic window and fireplace, built within the structure at Bucknowle (Figure 6 and Plate 9). It was refloored during restoration by the Dorset Countryside Volunteers in the early 1980s. Lake (site 256) has a shelter or side store, while a blocked doorway was noted in the side of the tunnel at Ridgeway (site 279). Such rare places are not unknown elsewhere in South-West England.

Conclusion

The humble limekiln represents a rural industry that came and went within a relatively short period. Appendix 1 shows the extent to which the limekilns survived in 1992-3. The 62 kilns graded 1-3 are of particular interest for the amount of preservation (over 60%), although most others have some local merit. Some disused limekilns have been maintained by serving other functions, most usually the lime sheds for storage, but at least two saw duty in the Second World War. Berry Knap (site 2), which commands a valley down to the Fleet, had a small concrete pill-box erected upon it, while Downs Lane (site 294) at Yetminster appears to have had an observation post or similar structure.

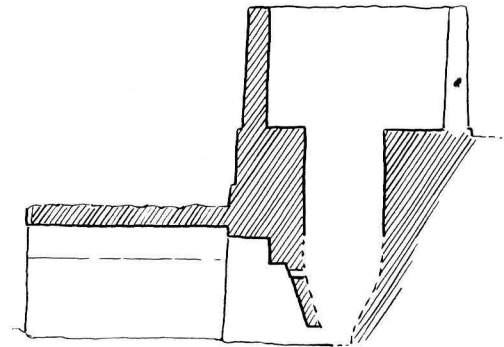
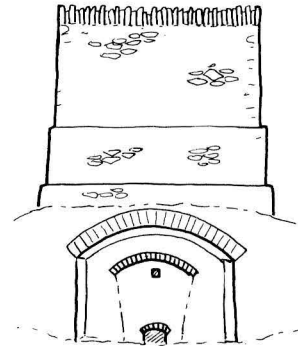
A few limekilns have been restored, such as at Bishop's, Bucknowle, Limekiln Hill (National Trust) and Whitmore Coppice, but many more deserve some form of recognition or preservation. They are as much a part of the landscape heritage as any Roman or prehistoric monument, and it is to be hoped that this initial survey will have drawn attention to a forgotten aspect of Dorset's archaeology.

BUCKNOWLE
site 65

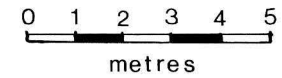


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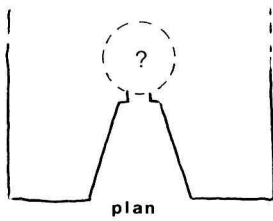
WHITMORE COPPICE
site 116



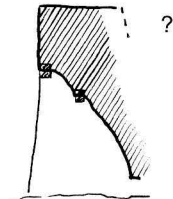
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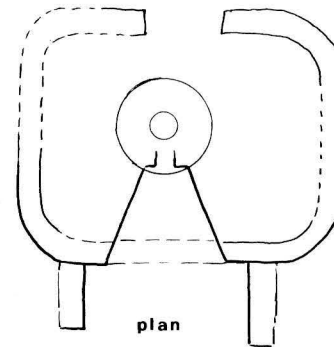
BISHOP'S
site 3



plan

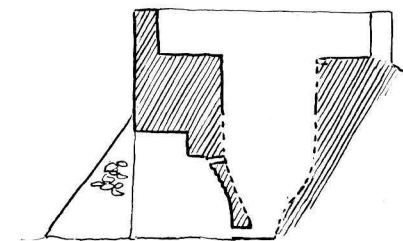
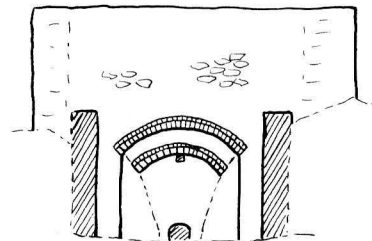


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plan

MIDDLE FARM
site 59



section

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Figure 6. Some Dorset limekilns (part two).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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A NOTE ON HOGSHEADS AND BUSHELS

The hogshead was a common measurement for lime sold from the kiln, and it was said that 1 hogshead = 4 bushels. A bushel of lime weighed between 84lbs and a hundredweight (112lbs), or 38-50.7kg, so one Dorset hogshead could weigh up to 336lbs, or 152.2kg. A packhorse could carry about 400lbs (181kg).

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- D/RWR/E16/9. Plan of Witch and Ower by Samuel Donne, 1772
- D/RWR/P3. A Plan of the Manor of Rollington, property of John Calcraft, drawn by James Asser, 1805.
- D/RWR/T75/4. Leases at Ower dated 25 March 1730 and 25 March 1733.
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Plate 7. Brick-arched draw-hole at Downs Lane limekiln, Yetminster. July 1993. Scale: 0.5 metre.

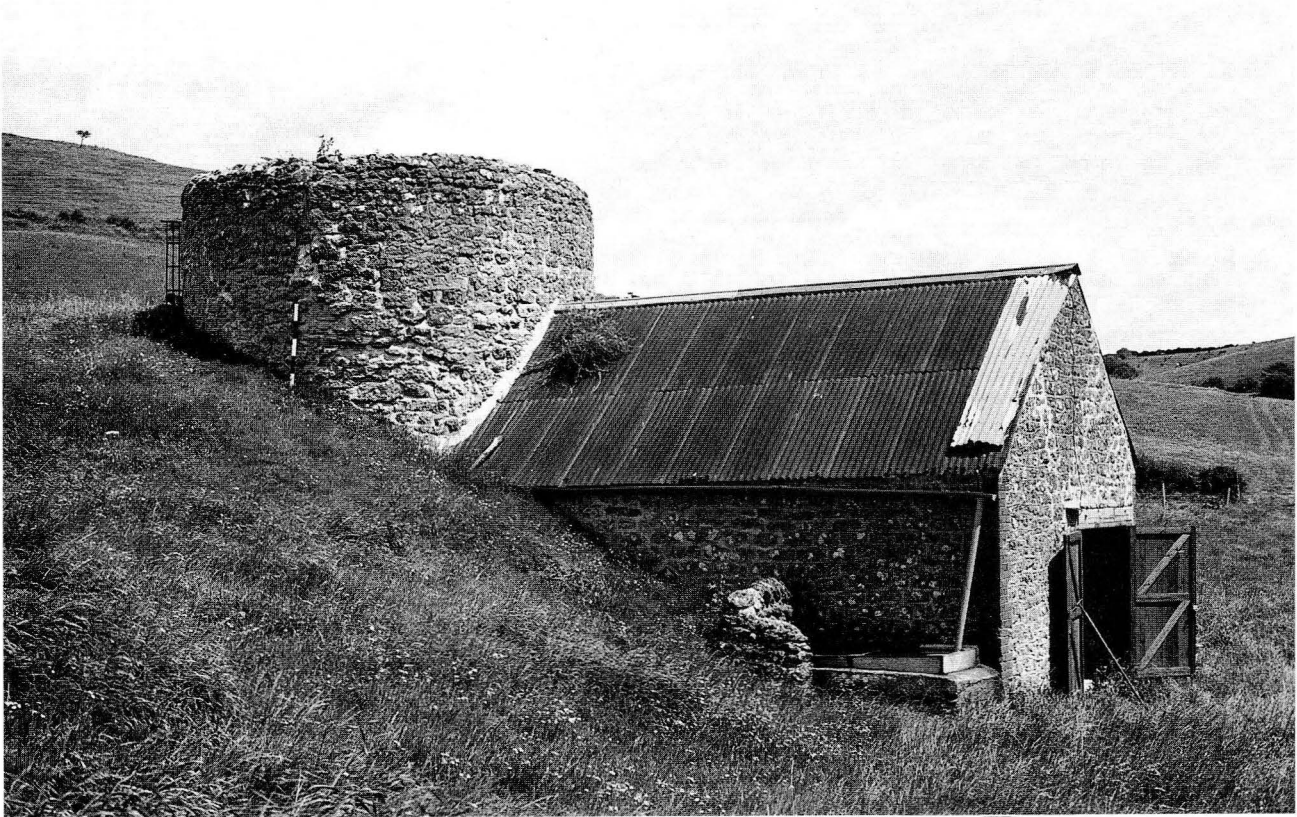


Plate 8. Bell House limekiln, Loders: a well preserved limekiln and lime shed viewed from the west. July 1993. Scale: 1 metre.



Plate 9. Bucknowle limekiln at Church Knowle, showing the brick draw arch and the lime-burner's bothy window. 1988.