



Langdyke
Trust



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THE TORPEL HOUSE CONUNDRUM

EARLIEST HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

The Manor house was first mentioned as a “capital messuage”, (meaning main residence) on the death of Ralph Camoys in 1276.

There was a desire for more comfortable living conditions than in a cold and dark tower. “Hall houses”, built of stone, were the typical dwellings of manorial lords. The great hall extending up to the rafters, was still the centre of domestic life.

KEY DATED 1350-1500



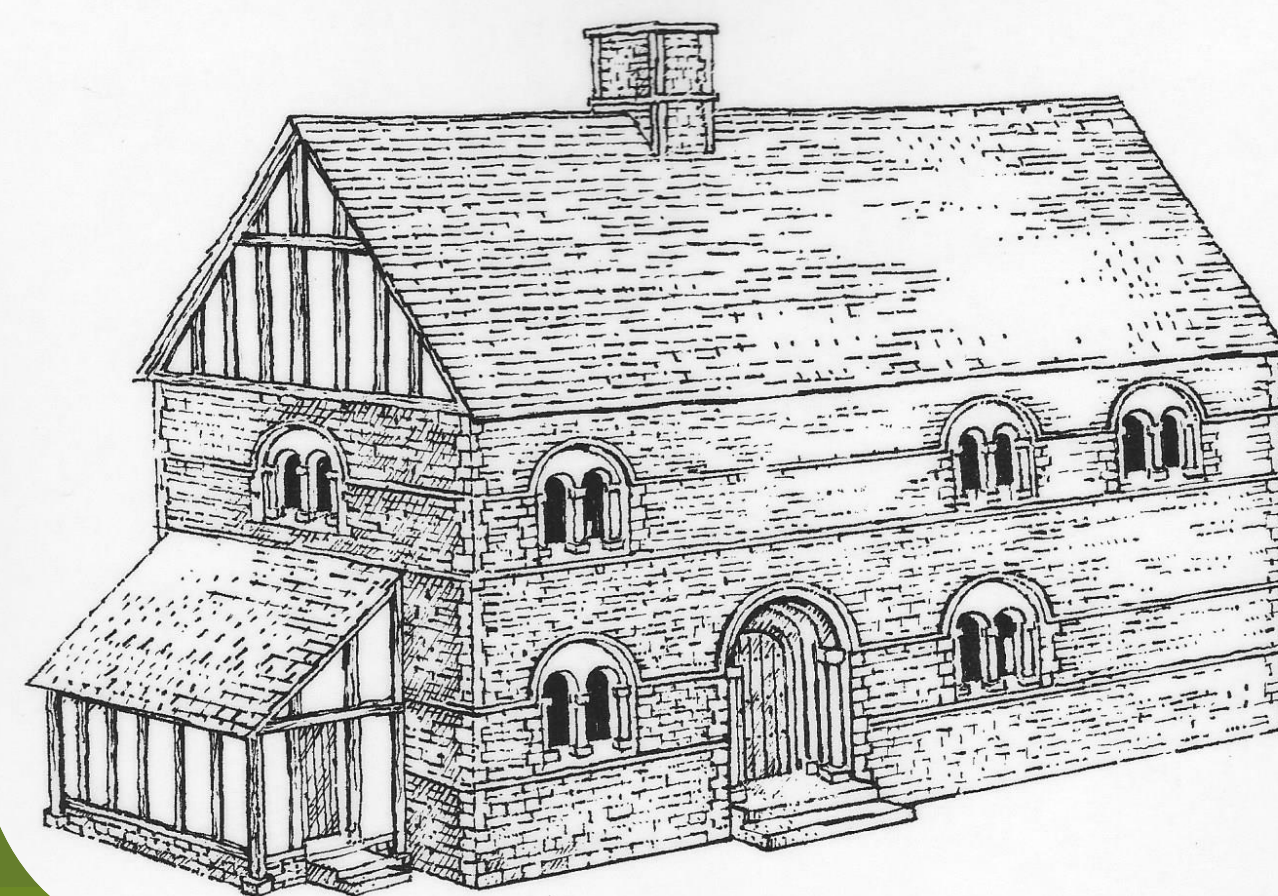
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Torpel Manor Field is designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument so it is not possible to dig pits and trenches but we do have some clues about Torpel House.

- a local farmer found a big door key under a lump of stone on the mound,
- excavation by rabbits has revealed some interesting glass fragments,
- fragments of local slate, probably Collyweston, and glazed roof tiles,
- there are fragments of local oolitic limestone building stone and plaster,
- pottery fragments and pieces of masonry have been seen on the mound and when the pylon was installed,
- building platforms were identified by the topographical survey carried out in 2012 by the York University team.

Their magnetometry and resistivity research has provided more information about floor plans.

ARTIST'S IMPRESSION OF TORPEL HOUSE IN 1300



DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE ABOUT TORPEL HOUSE IN 1624

There was a court case when the owner, who was owed rent, was trying to find out who had allowed the house to fall into disrepair and who had stolen fences, outbuildings and their contents

“That a little chamber over the entree of the dwelling house is decayed in part of the boarded flore being rotten and will no longer serve for use, and that the walls of the same especially the south end is much out of repayre and that the plaster seeling within abovehead is much broaken down and decayed and that the seeling under the said chamber overhead in the entree is almost all fallen downe”.

“That the chamber over the closset on the south side of the said house is in some decay in the wall uppon the south end thereof”.

“That the chamber on the north of the said house over against the said closset is in some decay for want of seeling overhead on the west end of the said chamber”.

“That the corner wall of the kytchen is fallen down and the lean-to at the end of the kytchen over the oven is much decayed both in the wall and in the thack thereof”.

“ That the dwelling house is in decay for want of some slating and pointing”.

“That all the windows of the said house are unglased”, apart from some exceptions.

“That the rain and wett beateth into the great chamber and decayeth it”.

One big question remains unanswered: **WHERE EXACTLY WAS THE HOUSE? WHAT DO YOU THINK?**

It appears that the residents of Helpston moved in over the next few years and carted away window and door frames and stonework and incorporated them into their houses in the village.

Artwork by Ivan Cumberpatch