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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

FOULDEN TITHE BARN



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FOULDEN TITHE BARN

SYNOPSIS

This two-storey and garret structure at the east end of the village of Foulden is identified as a tithe (teind in Scots) barn solely on account of its proximity to the adjacent Foulden and Mordington parish church. It is thought to have been erected in the 17th century, possibly as an extension to a small tower house to its east. It was rebuilt in the 18th century, when the adjacent tower was demolished. The stone forestair on the west was added in the 19th century. The interior timber-work, though missing in parts and fragile, is largely undisturbed.

CHARACTER OF THE MONUMENT

Historical Overview

- 13th century - first mention of the parish church of Foulden, which stands a short distance to the south.
- c. 17th century - the structure is built, probably as an extension to a small tower house to its east. The building has been identified as a tithe (teind in Scots) barn solely on account of its proximity to the parish church; such barns stored the teind, a tax raised on a parochial basis requiring 10% of all production to be given to the Church.
- 18th century - the building is altered, perhaps when the adjacent tower house is demolished. The ground floor is converted into domestic use, with a fireplace and chimney inserted at the east end.
- 19th century - a new upper doorway and outside forestair are formed in the west gable.
- Late 19th century - the building is serving as a granary for the Foulden Estate.
- 1946 - the property is transferred from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (Scotland) to the Ministry of Public Building & Works.

Archaeological Overview

- No recorded archaeological investigations have been carried out in or around the building.
- There is likely to be below-ground archaeological potential at the site, given its proximity to the medieval parish church. The remains of an older structure (interpreted as a small tower house) attached to the east is self-evident in the upstanding walls.
- The building has potential for standing-building archaeology. The large number of timbers internally offers the potential to date and source them.

Architectural/Artistic Overview

- The building is an interesting example of early modern vernacular architecture. Its simple shape belies a complex architectural history.
- The barn seems to have started as an extension to an older building to its east, interpreted as a small tower house. Of this only a low wall survives, plus the ghost of a barrel vault and two wall cupboards in the barn's east gable wall.
- The barn's south wall has three ground-floor doorways, the westernmost of which has an edge-roll moulding of 17th-century date. Above are two windows, with others below the eaves. The north wall has no openings.
- The ground floor was converted for domestic use, probably in the 18th century. It had two rooms, the east one possibly the kitchen, with a timber-lintel fireplace built against the earlier gable wall.
- The upper floor was rebuilt, and there is a characteristically 18th-century round-headed window in the west gable. Below it is a 19th-century doorway reached via a stone forestair.
- Access to the loft was by an internal timber stair. Some of the loft's floor joists rest on stone corbels whilst others are held in sockets.
- The slating of the roof is carried on sarking on the north pitch and battens on the south. The two techniques perhaps reflects Foulden's position close to the English border, and the different building traditions of the two countries.

Social Overview

- The barn forms a notable building on the approach to the village. Its juxtaposition to the parish church is also of merit, though it appears to play no current role in village or parish life.

Spiritual Overview

- Whether the building was ever used as a teind barn is in doubt. It has no known association with the adjacent parish church.

Aesthetic Overview

- The building has a pleasing solidity which is enhanced by the harmonious use of yellow sandstone and its simple detailing.
- The interior has the appearance of being completely untouched, which enhances the sensation of the barn being a special place.
- The north side of the building suffers from being beside a main road.

What are the major gaps in understanding of the property?

- When was the building first constructed, and what was its relationship to the adjacent building to its east, now largely demolished?
- What was the building used for through time?

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Key Points

- Foulden is one of only two known surviving teind barns in Scotland, the other being at Whitekirk (East Lothian).
- The barn is an attractive building with some simple but eye-catching details.
- The large numbers of timbers within the building offer the potential to date this rare building type.

Associated Properties

Whitekirk Teind Barn

Keywords

barn, tithe, teind

Selected Bibliography

Cruft, K., Dunbar, J. & Fawcett, R., *The Buildings of Scotland: Borders* (New Haven, 2006)