

## THE OLD POST OFFICE

The Old Post Office at La Feock is one of the oldest unspoilt cottages in the parish; it was at one time two cottages, the plan showing it as it was before it was made into one house. On this plan the shaded parts in the centre wall show where new openings were cut. The staircase in the larger cottage was removed and access to the bedrooms provided by an opening at the head of the remaining stairs leading into a low passage under the thatch.

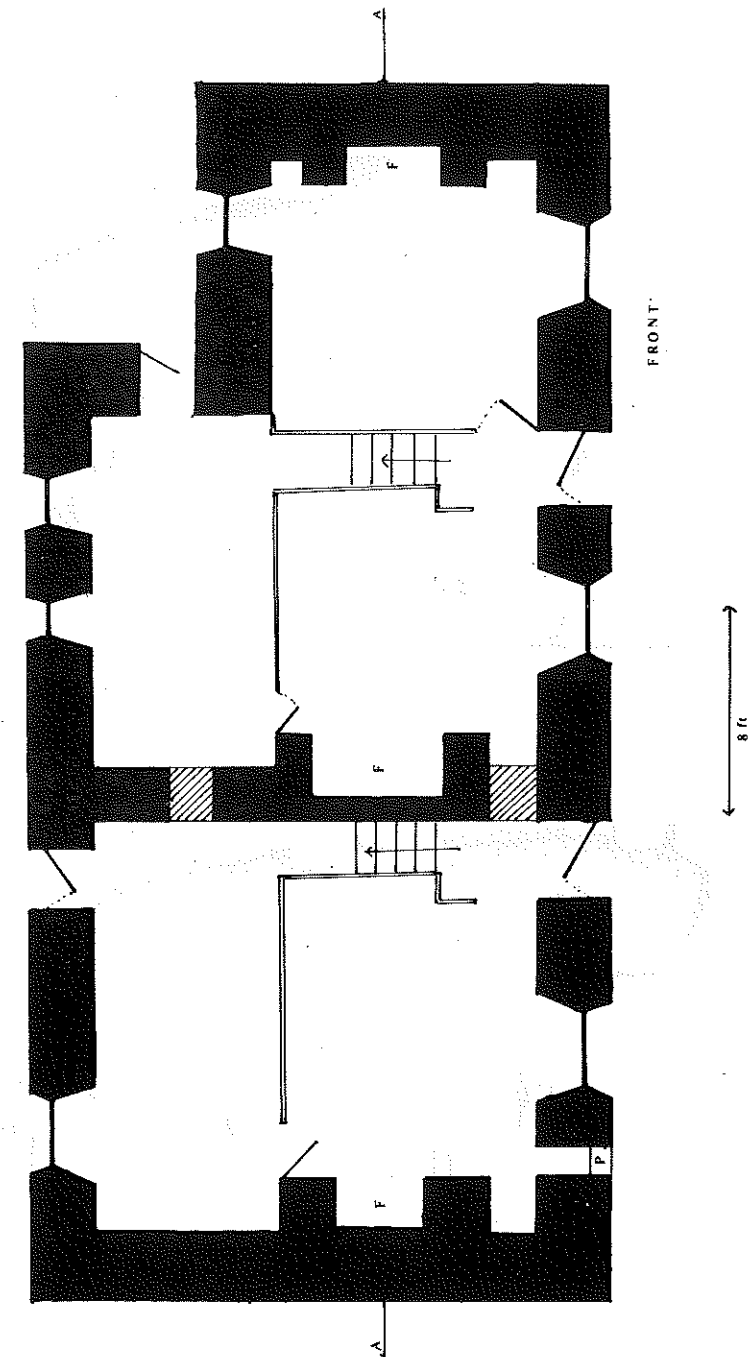
A-A indicates the line of the main beam of the roof; the chimney stacks are a little to the rear of this. At the back the thatch sweeps right down to within five feet of the ground so there are only three bedrooms along the front. The sash windows are old and show irregularities in the glass. The downstairs windows have four panes each way, but, owing to the low roof, those in the bedrooms are only three panes deep and not much above floor level. This feature can be seen in several old cottages in this parish. (see picture)

To take the Post Box, a small opening was cut in the front wall; this can still be seen as an alcove inside the house. On August 13th 1844, this office was given its first Feock post-mark. At that time letters were brought out from Truro by messenger. On September 18th, a messenger resigned as he objected to working on the Sabbath, but the seven day service continued until April 1852. When the railway was built from Truro to Falmouth, mail for Devoran and Feock was collected at Perranwell Station.

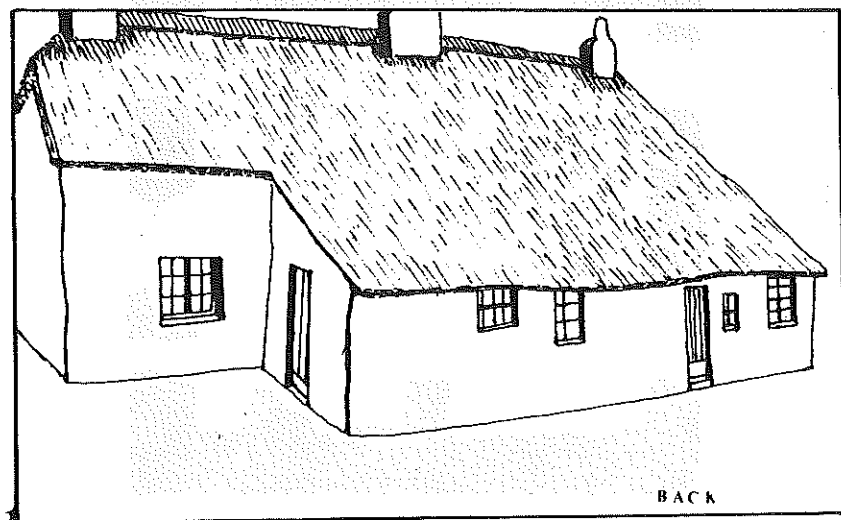
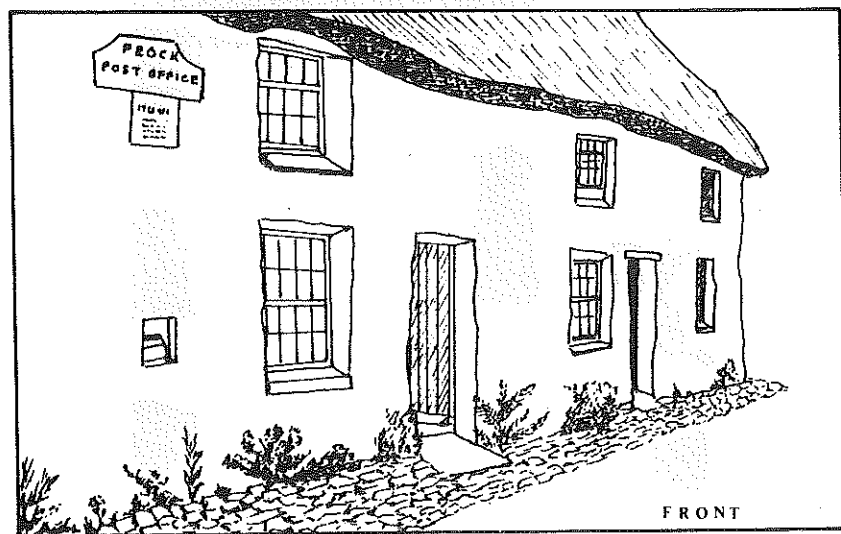
The three fireplaces (F) were probably built as open hearths, the two end ones having been filled in to take modern grates, but the centre one still having a Cornish Slab. Except for some necessary alterations and enlargements to the windows at the back, the present occupiers have maintained the external structure intact.

I wish to thank the present owners for letting us measure the house; also Mr J. E. W. Lewarne of Surrey who sent a photograph of the front of the house taken about 1902 and the local residents who have supplied information. The picture of the back was taken a few years ago when the alterations were just being started.

## OLD POST OFFICE, LA FEOCK



FEOCK POST OFFICE c 1903



## ONE COTTAGE AND ITS LAND

Algarnick 1900-1976

When we first saw Algarnick in 1938 it was a typical example of an unmodernised small-holding. There were eight acres of land sloping gently to the southwest, divided into eight fields of varying size and separated by Cornish hedges covered by brambles and blackthorn, with many untrimmed holly trees growing on them. At the bottom, on the far side of a little fast-flowing stream, were two heavy clay, partially waterlogged moors and another small moor completely covered with willow trees and very marshy, from which clay had been dug to make the cob to build the local cottages. The other fields were down to grass. Mr and Mrs Harris who owned it, had lived there very happily since 1919, brought up their family and were then nearly seventy. Mr Harris, when questioned about the land, described it as 'grateful', responding rapidly to any top dressing of manure.

The cottage was typical; two rooms downstairs with very low ceilings, two bedrooms, a slate-shelved dairy and scullery in the back lean-to, which had a door into the yard only 4 ft 6 ins high! In 1919 the roof was still thatched but this had been replaced with long sheets of thick corrugated asbestos. The open porch protecting the front door was held up by two posts from a wooden four-poster bed. The bedrooms still retained their low plaster ceilings. At some time, before the Harris's bought it, the front of the cottage was said to have fallen out and had been rebuilt in stone. The long lintel over the downstairs windows and front door is a length of old railway line. To keep the cob dry the cottage was faced with cement, lined off to represent rectangular blocks and whitewashed.

The water supply was from a 26 foot-deep well in the yard. This had a granite surround with a wooden trap door down which a bucket on a rope was dropped and hauled up by hand. Drainage was non-existent; there was a 'sentry-box' type of earth closet in the shrubbery beyond the cottage.

The small front garden was full of flowers, including 23 rose trees, some of which were ramblers. There were tall trees to protect the buildings from the southwest wind and along the roadside to the east. Mrs Harris was a keen gardener with 'green fingers'; she remembered the various Chapel festivities from which she had returned with small pieces of the floral decorations to grow in the garden and shrubbery. On the window sills indoors she had a wonderful collection of tall geraniums, which obscured most of the light but flowered magnificently. Lighting was by oil lamps and candles and cooking was