



Plan, elevations, window detail and king-post structural sections of a Breton house.

facture are occasionally found and Bridgwater (Somerset, England) tiles were imported into the northern coastland in the 19th century. Slate began to replace thatch in the coastal areas from the late-18th century onwards. It may long have been used where locally available, but with the coming of railways and the import of cheaper, lighter slates from Anjou, it rapidly gained ground, almost entirely replacing thatch. By the 1970s thatched buildings, in any number, were confined to the southern littoral with only local occurrence elsewhere. Roof-pitch is generally of the order of 42°–45° over most of the region but, south of the Loire, low-pitch roofs of about 22° are ubiquitous.

Roof types include aisled hall structures, kingpost and upper kingpost trusses. The distribution of the full cruck is meagre. With the introduction of chimney stacks and insertion of lofts, the cruck truss seems to have given way to the upper-cruck truss. The collar and tie-beam truss is widespread in the west. Distribution maps show that roofs, without either kingposts or upper kingposts, predominate in the west and that roofs incorporating the kingpost predominate in Haute-Bretagne. Whilst kingposts occur in the east at all levels of society, in the west they are confined to seigneurial and other high-quality houses.

Archaeological evidence shows that the centrally placed open hearth was probably universal in peasant houses of the Middle Ages. By the 16th century, hearths with chimney-stacks incorporated in the gable wall were being constructed at the middling level of society. Rarely was a stack axially placed in a peasant house, although some manoirs were provided with heated upper rooms requiring axial stacks.

Circular buildings survive in large numbers: wellcovers, bake ovens, dovecots, windmills, pigsties and a number of specialist buildings. Subrectilinear buildings provide the link between the typologically-earlier circular forms and the later rectilinear ones.

The single-cell dwelling with a hall on the ground floor and

storage loft above, and of one, one and a half, or two storeys, appears to be the standard form of dwelling throughout Brittany for those not possessing livestock. Others of higher social status, such as the clergy, might have occupied a one-cell dwelling.

In an elementary form the Breton longhouse survived well into the 20th century, with no partition to separate the hall, at the upper end, from the byre at the lower end. Entry was by a common lateral doorway and an evolutionary sequence is discernible in which a low half-partition is first placed to delimit the byre end. There developed in Haute-Bretagne a longhouse subtype with separate entry to the byre. A further subtype is defined in which internal communication no longer exists.

The first-floor hall is widely distributed, both as an independent unit as well as a constituent element in a row of buildings. Many may have functioned as a 'chamber block'. It is chiefly

Longhouse farm, Locmariaquer, Brittany.

