

Fouman

Boundaries: WSW of Rasht in plain
N= Gaskar, the Nourdab, the Toulem
E= Shaft and Pasi Khan River
W= Masal
S= Foucht-i-Kuh-i-Taroum and the mountains of Shaft and Masouleh.

History:

The town of Fouman, one of the oldest towns in the Caspian, was the capital of Bie-Pas until 1575 A.D. when Rasht replaced it as the centre of western Gilan. The palace of Hadji Jamal is in Fouman and his descendants lived there until Naser-ed-Din Shah's reign, when the town lost its importance. At the turn of the century the town of Fouman had four hundred houses and a Wednesday market built in brick and covered in tiles, containing sixty shops¹. It is interesting to note that at this time Fouman imported from Masouleh flour, fat, footwear, horses, nails and hatchets, and exported rice, poultry, eggs and fruits to the port of Enzeli (Bandar Pahlavi).

Population:

The town of Fouman, with a population of 9,226, is the centre of a shahrestan with the same name containing a population of 123,258² and is divided into the districts of Humeb and Shaft which contain 302 villages³.

The plains people in Fouman are Gilak and sedentary, although they spend parts of the summer in the yeqlaq. The inhabitants of the mountains are Galesh and Talesh; they engage in animal husbandry and spend the winters in villages at the foot of the mountains. Many of the Talesh people have now become settled farmers and have formed Talesh villages, such as Dogoor in the Fouman plains. The plains people speak Gilaki dialect while

* Rabino, Les Prov.Casp., p.163.

* Adamec, Gazetteer, p.173.

* Keshavars, Gilan, 1356 A.H., p.89.

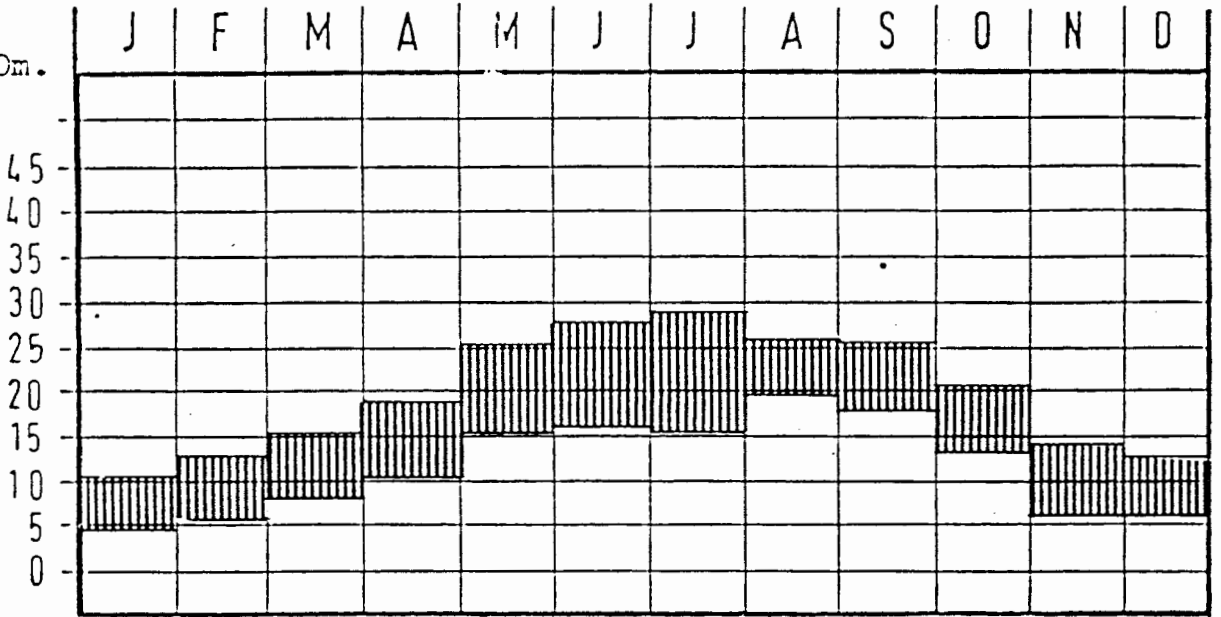
the Talesh and Galesh speak Taleshi. Most of the population in Fouman are Shiites.

Products:

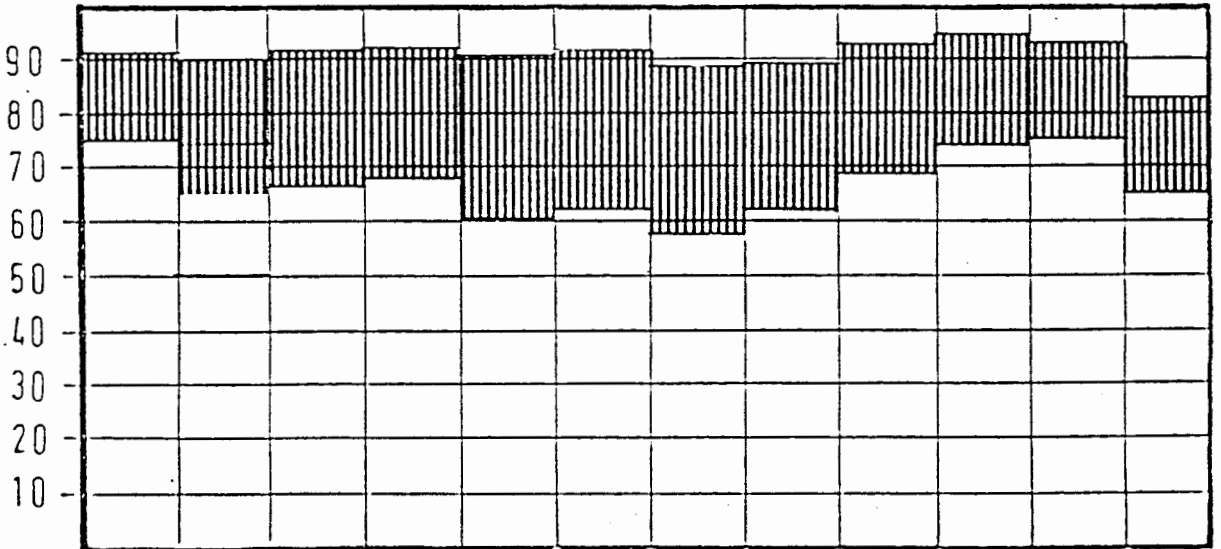
The main products of Fouman are: rice, silk, tobacco, a little honey, and some wheat and barley. Gardens grow melons, watermelons, garlic, onions, and some fruit. The forest furnishes wood for heating and construction, charcoal and wild fruit. They make all kinds of wooden utensils, brooms, mats, reed curtains, leather sandals, wooden combs, spoons, trays, plates and billhooks and hatchets. The people possess livestock, and dairy products give them a source of revenue. They raise ponies for transport and in the mountains have goats and sheep.

FOUMAN
Elevation -10m.

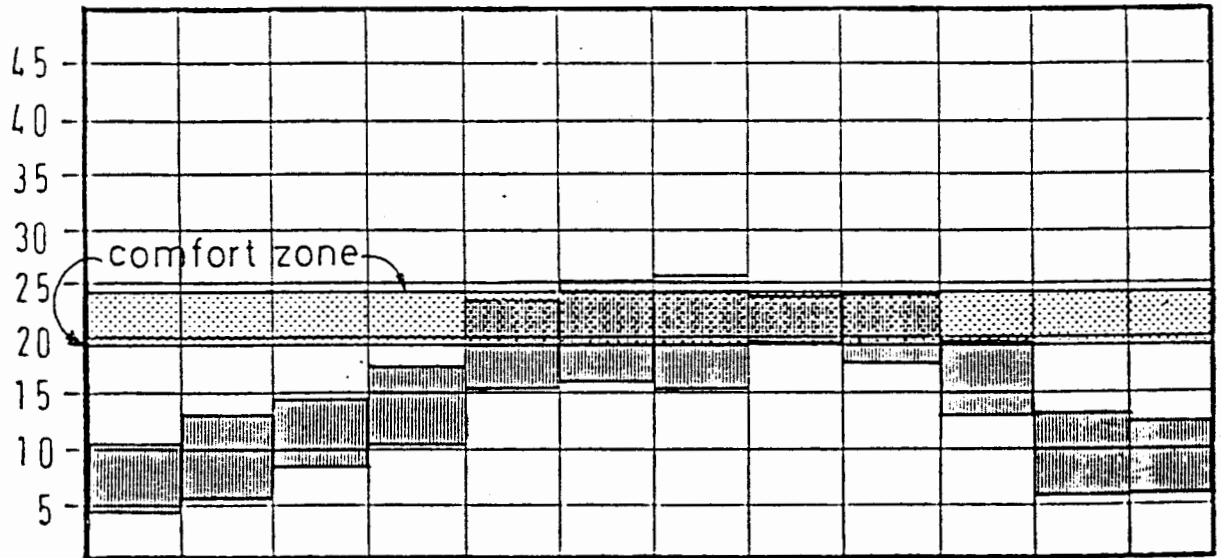
AIR TEMPERATURE °C



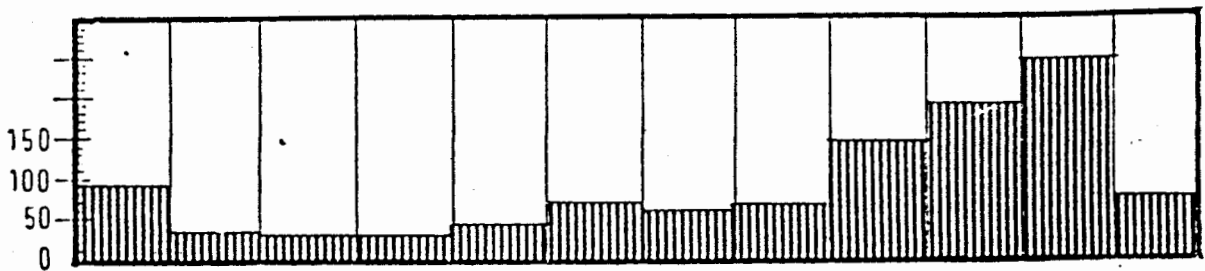
RELATIVE HUMIDITY %



WIND EFFECTIVE TEMPERATURE °C



RAIN mm.



4 The Plain: Dogoor village

In the rice growing plains of Fouman a predominant house type peculiar to this region, that caters for both summer and winter shelter requirements, is the mezzanine or talar house. The case study of the village of Dogoor illustrates the local characteristics of this region.

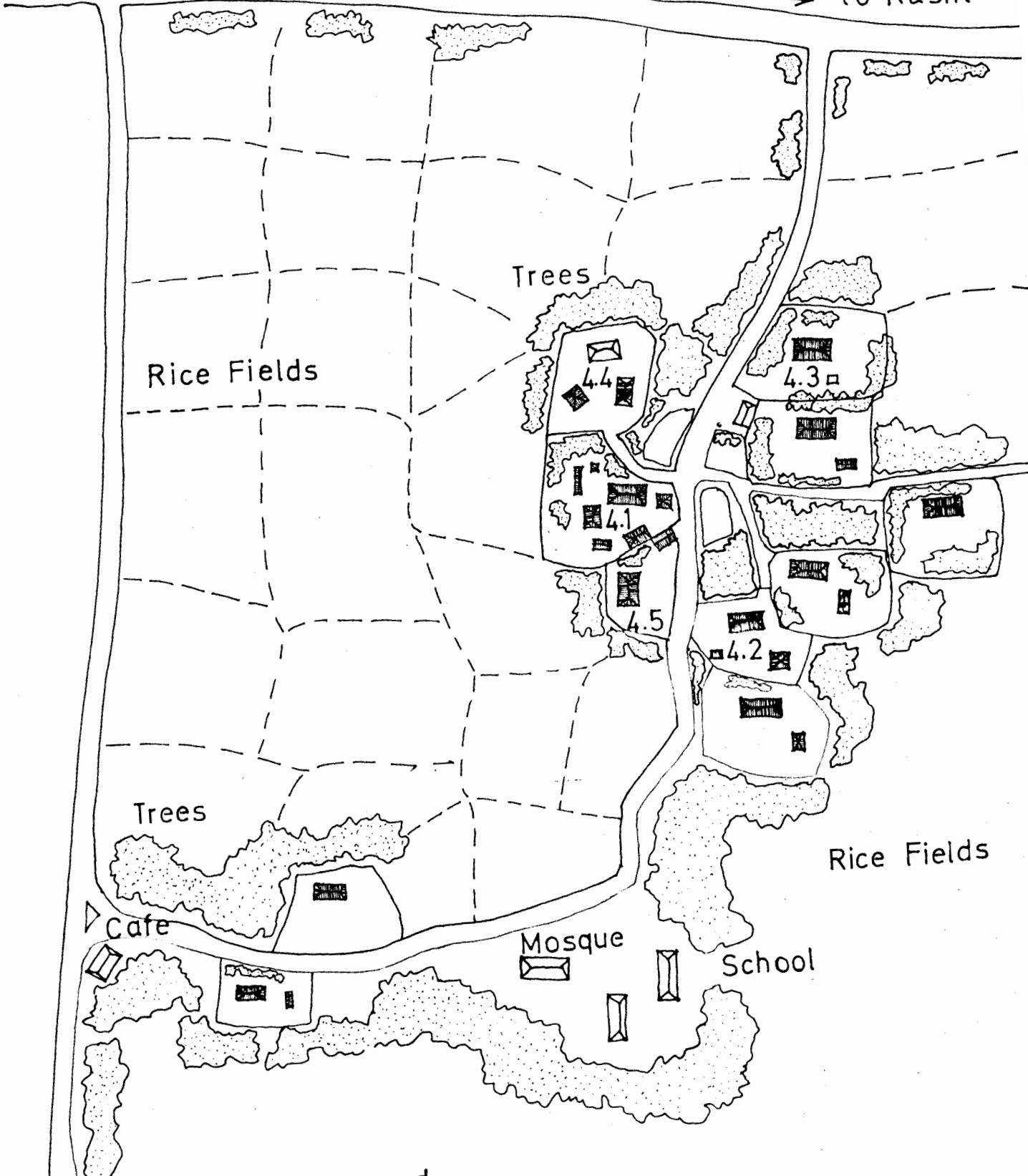
Dogoor is located between Marjehal and Somaeh Sara, off the Rasht-Somaeh Sara road, and is approximately one hundred and fifty years old. It was founded by the Talesh people* who were mainly engaged in animal husbandry, and is still today occupied almost exclusively by them. The land which was covered by forests and marshes became the winter quarters of the semi-nomadic shepherds, and was considered suitable for agriculture. In their transition from animal husbandry to agriculture they began to cut down the trees and later reclaimed the marshland in order to cultivate rice, which is the main agricultural product of the village as well as the surrounding plain. Approximately sixty percent of the population are engaged in agriculture and in addition to rice cultivate tobacco and silkworms. The remaining forty percent are migrant workers in Tehran and Rasht.

The village of Dogoor consists of some two hundred and fifty households living in scattered houses amongst private garden plots. The rice fields surround the linear settlement, and the village is divided into Upper and Lower Dogoor. The village has a school, a mosque and a teahouse which acts as the community meeting place for the men.

The houses are mainly mezzanine or talar type, although some houses only have the front aivan without a talar, as in Shanderman and Masal. The talar house is an extension of the front aivan house which includes a mezzanine with an enclosed room on its lower level; this roof has a flat roof that is used as an open platform on the upper level. Most of the summer activities of the household take place on the talar. The lower room is used either as animal shelter or

← to Somaeh Sara

→ to Rasht



Houses Surveyed
4.1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Dogoor Village
Settlement Pattern

is occupied by the family during winter months. The talar is normally on the eastern side of the house, although in some houses there are two talars both in the east and the west.

House study -

This typical mezzanine (talar) house is occupied by two households. The house owner is an elderly man who lives in a part of the house with his wife and four children. He has in addition seven sons who are working and studying in Tehran; they visit their family during holidays and have helped considerably in extending and renovating the house. The owner is a farmer who cultivates rice on his one hectare plot. He also keeps some domestic animals (ducks, chickens, and cows) and grows vegetables in his garden plot. Two rooms in the west side of the house are rented to a family of four.

The present house, which was built by the owner, stands on the footings of a similar 130 year old house built by his father. His father, a Talesh charcoal maker, founded the third house in the village. Like the other original settlers, he came to reclaim forest land in order to farm. The present owner rebuilt the house on the same plan form and it took him three years to complete. He first built the lower two rooms facing the front aiwan. Later, as the space requirements of the family increased and he could not afford a further outlay of capital, he added the two rooms on the upper and lower level of the mezzanine on the east side of the house. The west mezzanine which is now rented out, was the last section to be built.

At the start of house building, after the owner has specified the number of rooms he needs, the neighbours, the builder and/or carpenter consult with the owner on the method and form of building. The builder/carpenter is responsible for the construction of the house walls and the roof truss, while the owner's family help as labourers. Once the carpenter has completed the roof truss the



The open platform on the upper mezzanine (the talar) is used for most household activities during warm summer months.



The room below the talar is normally an animal shelter or a store (Dogoor).

thatching process begins. The neighbours gather to help the owner and his family in thatching the roof. Fifteen men worked for two days to complete the roof of the house under study and the owner provided them with lunch and breakfast. A few of the neighbourhood women help the owner's wife to prepare the lunch. This community co-operation in the thatching process is rapidly declining as farmers are increasingly becoming wage labourers and new roofing materials such as sheet metal that require specialist skills are replacing thatch roofs.

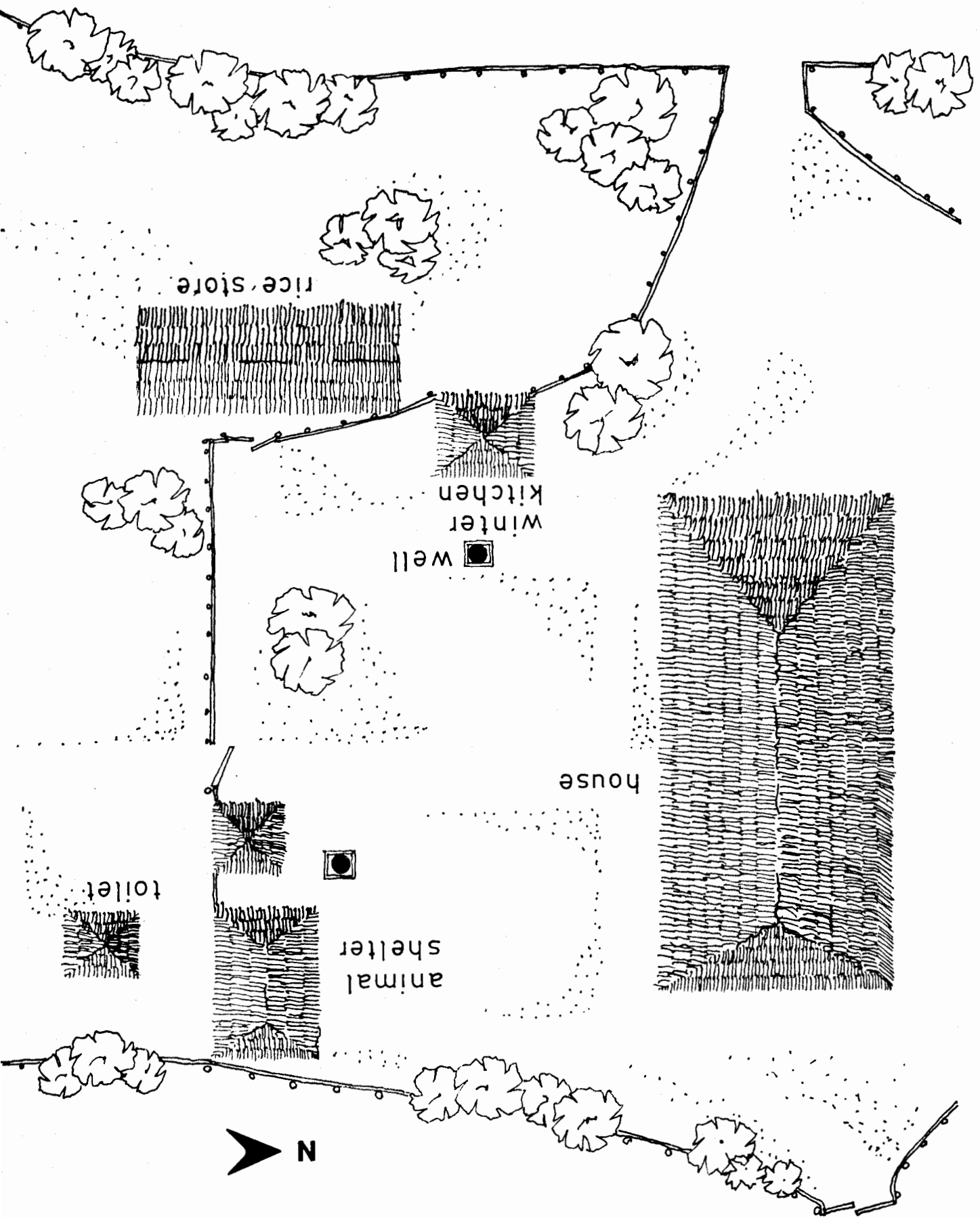
Both houses surveyed in Dogoor are typical of rural dwellings in the Somaeh Sara area.

The roof is hipped in form, with the north and west sides of the roof continuing down to one and a half metres above the ground, where a low wall made of reeds or chineh fills in the gap. The roof covering is thatch, using rice stems, supported on a timber truss framework.

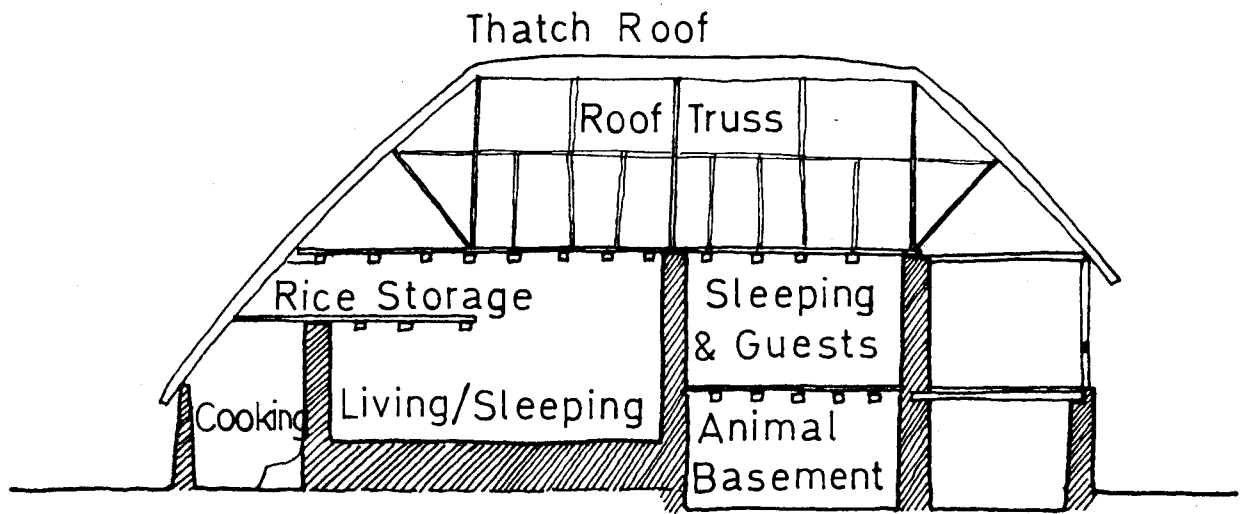
The building has a timber frame, but also has loadbearing walls of chineh. Openings usually face south. Outbuildings are also thatched, but some with reeds instead of rice stems. Walls are made of branches supported by a timber framework, sometimes plastered with mud. Outbuildings are used for rice storage and silk worms and animal shelters.



Scale

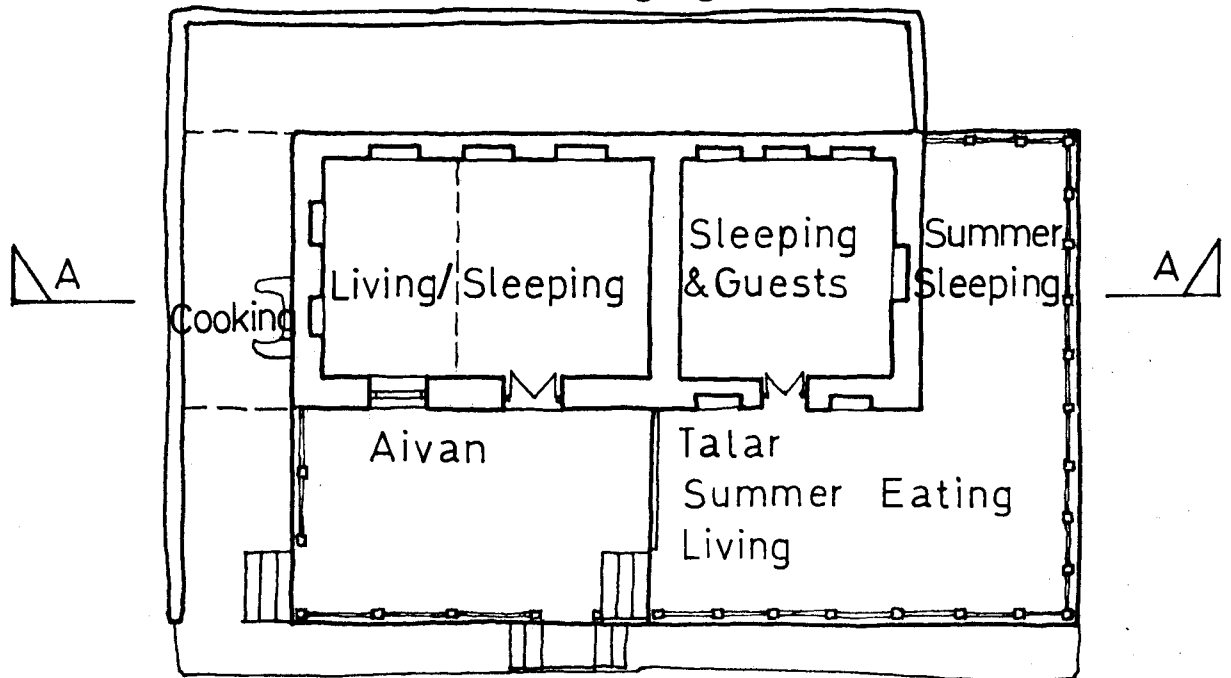


House 4.2 Dogoor



Section A-A

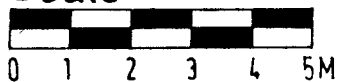
Outer Wall Below Overhanging Eaves.

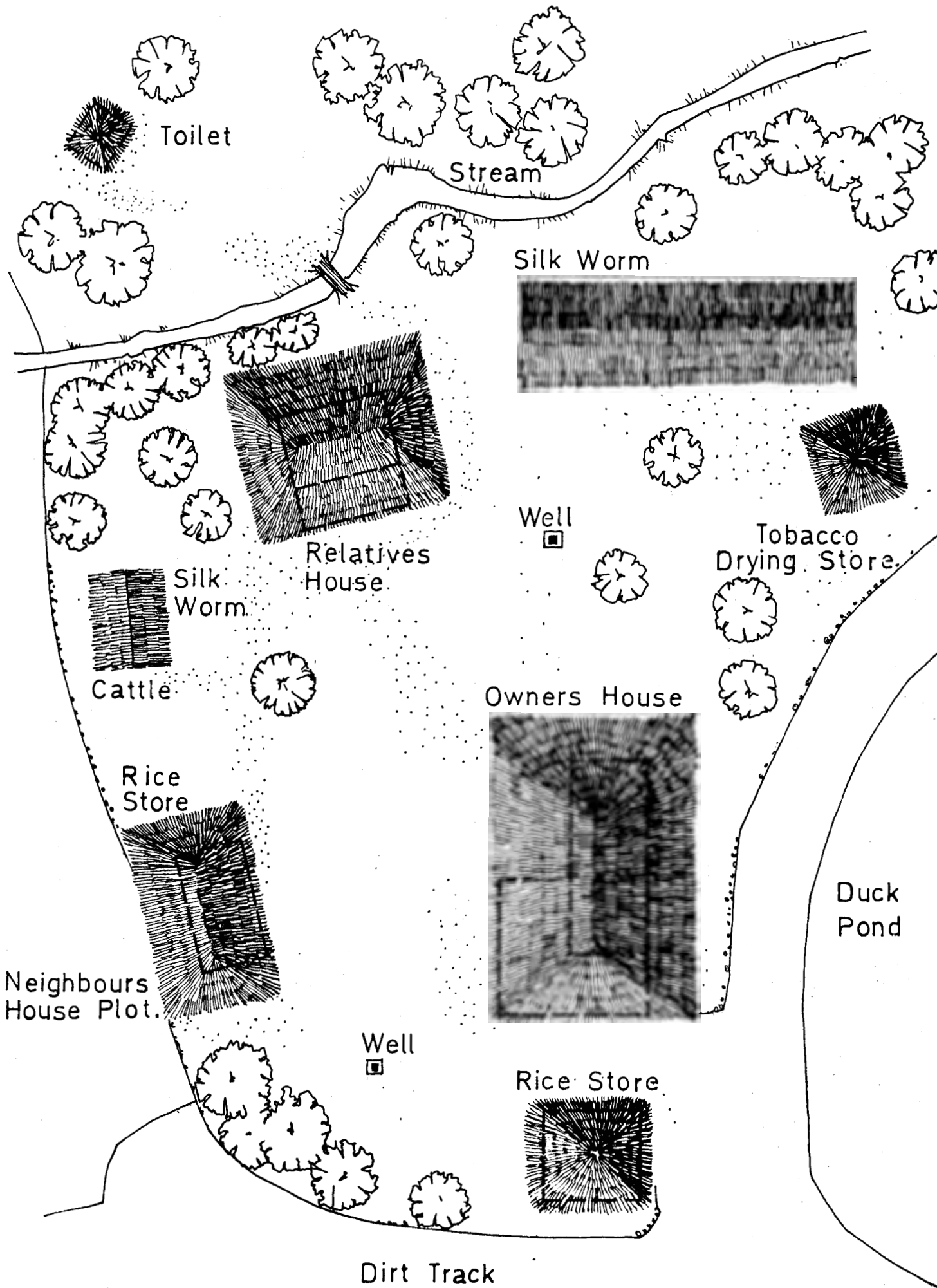


Dogoor

House 4.1 **C2m**

Scale





House 4.1. Dogoor
Scale





The archetypal two room front aivan house with a protective overhang of the roof eaves in the west side in Dogoor village.

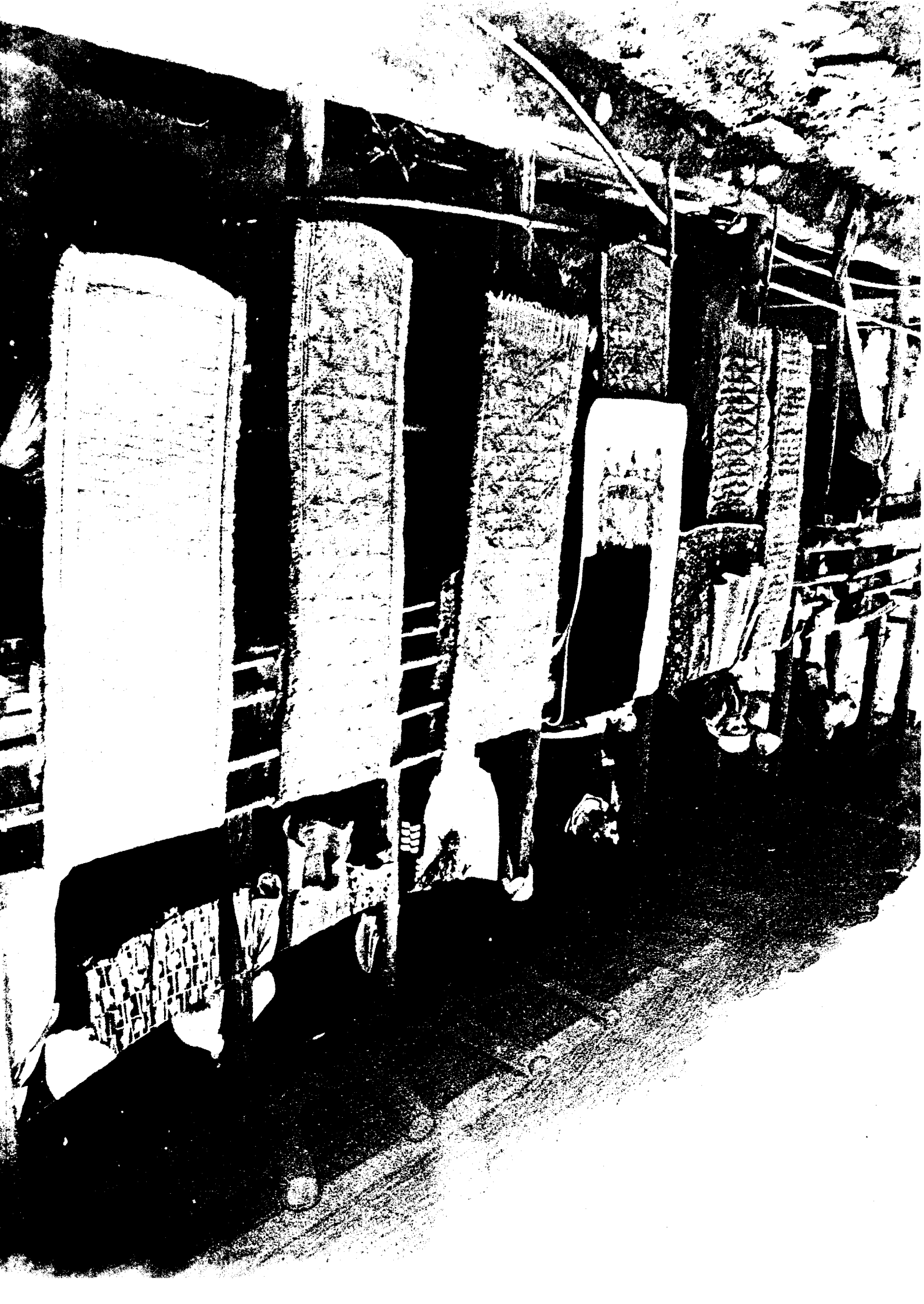


an animal shelter within a house plot (see drawing).

5 Fouman Foothills:

The Talesh foothill villages, south of Fouman, demonstrate yet another development of the basic front aivan house, which is closely related to the pastoral origins of their inhabitants and the cooler, less humid climate of the hillside.

This region is described in two case studies carried out in the villages of Maklavan and Heydaralat.



Heydaralat

Heydaralat was studied by the research team as an example of a foothill village in the Fouman. The authors were greatly assisted by a previous study carried out in this village by Kazim Sadat Oshkuri in 1974 (1353), whose report was published in Honar va Mardom Magazine, Mehr 1354 issue. The following section on Heydaralat has drawn extensively from the mentioned article, and in parts illustrates further changes and developments in the village since that study was carried out.

Heydaralat is a village in the district of Gasht, situated by the Ghale Rudkhan River Valley. It has a population of 284 in 44 households of which one half are farmers, one third agricultural labourers and seven households live by animal husbandry. The economic basis of this village, therefore, is agriculture and animal husbandry, while the fruit orchards and handicrafts such as woolen clothes, woven mats, etc., form a secondary source of income.

Built Environment:

The houses are scattered. Some follow in a linear pattern the course of the river valley and are situated along its banks, while others are hidden amongst the trees in the hills. Each house has a garden (approximately 3000m²*) where fruit trees and vegetables are grown. As in most villages of Gilan, the need for the private garden is a major factor in the decentralised distribution of the village dwellings.

The village was originally formed by semi-nomadic herdsmen who had separate summer and winter quarters. The plot of land in which they kept their animals was first fenced off for protection by using wooden branches. Stables were built on these plots using logs as the main construction material with wooden shingle roofs.

Later, as the herdsmen began to settle as cultivators, the plot of land was gradually transformed into a garden and the stable was expanded to incorporate living quarters for the farmers. The upper floor of most houses in Heydaralat are

* Kazim Sadat Oshkuri, "Housing in Heydaralat". Honar va Mardom, #156, Mehr 1354. p.44.

recently constructed and at least part of the ground floor continues to be animal shelter. This demonstrates the morphology of the house and its relationship to the economic activity of its owner.

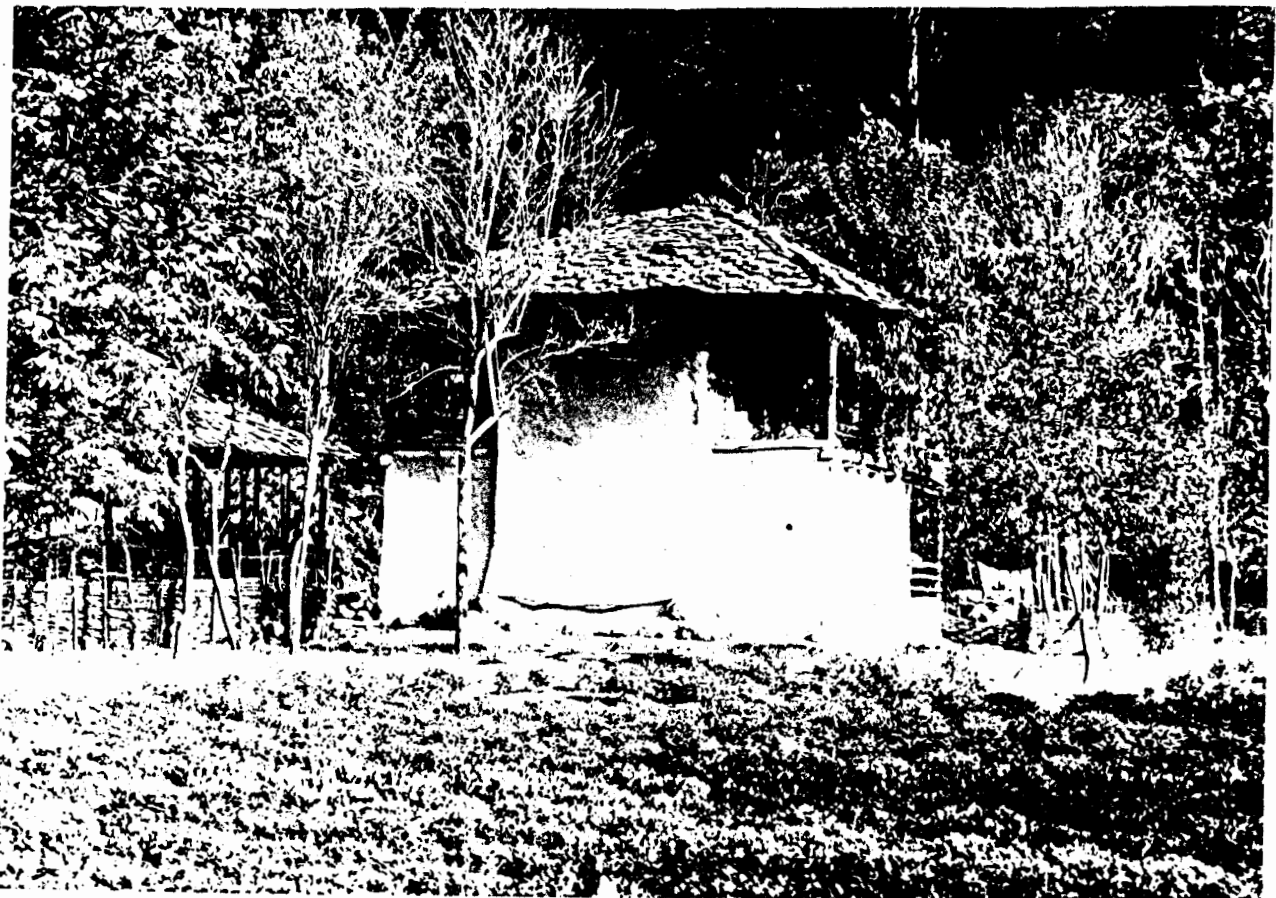
The dominant house type in Heydaralat consists of a two storey building with one to three rooms on the ground floor and usually one, though sometimes two, rooms on the upper floor. An upper floor aivan (telar), which is a large open area, is used in the warmer months for almost all family activities. The ground floor, which has an east facing aivan, is used for animal quarters and storage functions, while the human inhabitants live there in winter months. Single storey buildings can also be seen. These are the older houses which have not been extended to two storeys.

As the village of Heydaralat is near the forests and therefore has easy access to timber, this material constitutes the major parts of the house structure and covering. The walls are constructed either with logs or with timber lathing and mud packing, and the majority of the roofs in the village are covered by wooden shingles. There are six thatch and five sheet metal covered roofs. In a study carried out in 1975, two sheet metal covered roofs were said to exist in the village and had been constructed in 1974. This number has risen to include five buildings at the time of our visit to the village (1978), and it was said that the use of sheet metal is due to increasing difficulties in obtaining permits to cut forest timber. It is expected that by the completion of the village gravel road, which was in the planning stage during the team's visit to the area, the use of non-indigenous materials such as sheet metal and concrete blocks will increase substantially. It is also expected that by opening up the village to the external labour market, the traditional forms of co-operation in the house building process would diminish.

The community co-operation in house building begins after the necessary permits for felling the trees have been obtain-



The predominant two storey, shingle roofed houses in Heydaralat contain three rooms on the ground floor with only one room and an open platform that extends to three sides on the upper level.



ed and the trees have been cut. The neighbours then help in carrying the timber and stones to the building site. A discussion takes place between the house owner, the carpenter, and some close friends on the best method for planning and constructing the number of rooms and spaces that the owner has specified. Then the carpenter cuts the timber to size and takes charge of the construction work until the completion of the infrastructure of the roof truss. The tying of the purlins and covering the roof with either shingles or thatch is again done by the house owner with the community's help. For each day that the community co-operates in building activities the owner has to provide their lunch. For the construction of sheet metal roofs, however, a specialist (Halabzan) has to be brought from the town (Fouman) who charges his fees per metal sheet laid. The community does not participate in this process.

Maklavan

Maklavan is situated approximately ten kilometres southwest of Fouman along the road to Masouleh, and is on the edge of the hills. It is locally said that about two thousand people live in the village. Maklavan is an old settlement, mentioned in Abdol Fattah Foumani's History of Gilan* as a village in the qeshlaq (winter quarter) of the mountains. The Talesh population are engaged in rice cultivation and animal husbandry. There are also some tea plantations in the area. The village contains a shop and a public bath recently constructed. The climate is temperate, somewhat humid in summer with an annual rainfall of 1000mm.

Maklavan is a linear settlement spread out along the road and the bordering rice fields. It is located within a flat valley with wooded hills on the northwest and southeast. The buildings are situated in garden plots containing the usual ancillary shelters. They are invariably two storey structures following the front aivan house form but with the aivan on the ground floor walled in and used as a circulation corridor. The ground floor rooms are used for winter habitation and animal quarters and the upper floor with an open aivan is occupied during the summer months. In some of the houses the upper floor aivan leads to an open platform or talar on the eastern side of the house. The house walls are of interlocking log construction with mud infill and plastered. The roofs are mainly covered by rice thatch although some wooden shingle roofs are still in use.

* Abdol Fattah Foumani, History of Gilan 923-1038 Hejri, published 1274 A.H. Cited in Rabino, Les Prov.Casp. & references in M.Sotudeh, Astara to Astarabad.

In the Fouman foothills two storey houses become predominant. Two storey house in the village of Heydaralat.



A two storey house in Maklavan village shows the taller nature of houses in the climatically less severe foothills areas.



Maklavan (Fouman): houses 5.1 and 5.2

This is a two storey building with upper floor balcony typical of those found in the foothills south of Fouman. The roof is hipped in form, with an eaves projection of one metre on all sides. The roof covering is rice thatch, supported by a timber truss framework. The roof pitch is about 40° .

Walls are of interlocking log construction with mud packed into the gaps between the logs. Internal and external surface is rendered with mud. Ground floor rooms are for winter living and animals. Upper floor has a covered balcony with two rooms on the eastern side. Western wall is of lath and mud construction.

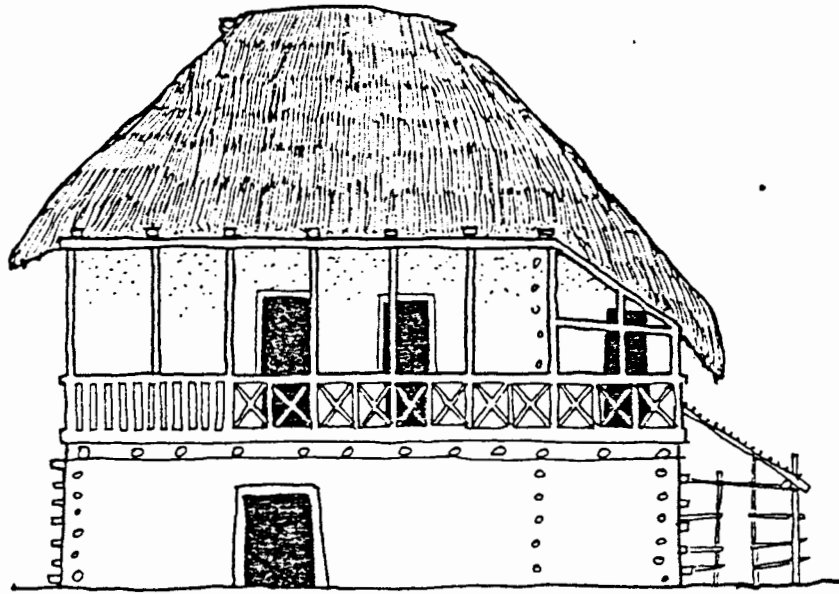
Orientation of the building is to the southwest.

Windows are on all four sides. Downstairs they are small. Upstairs they are one metre square.

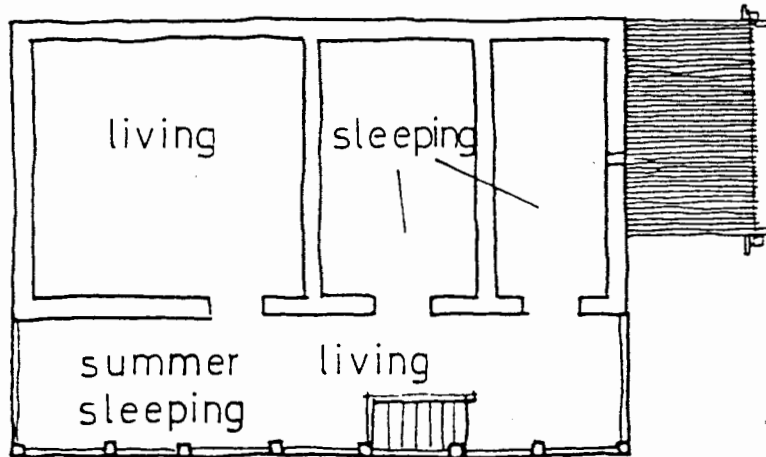
Outbuildings consist of a thatched chicken coop and washing hut, and a shingle roof lavatory. Walls are of lath and mud on a timber framework.

The house stands in a fenced enclosure. Trees to the east where there is a river. Rice fields to the west.

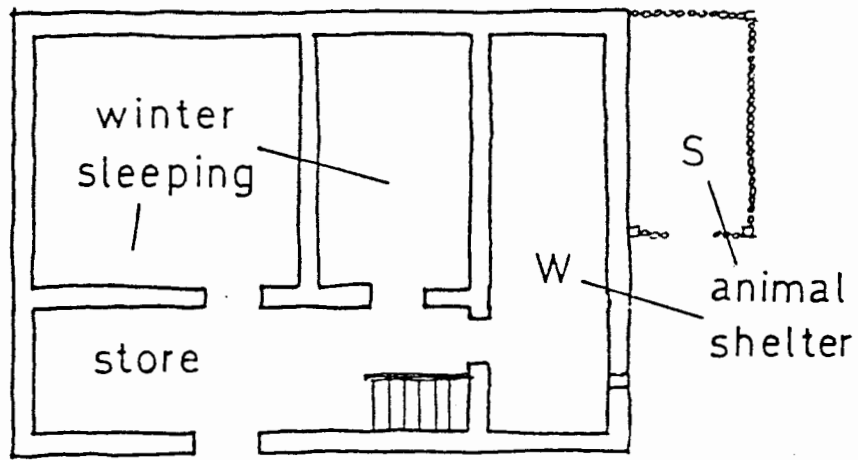
House number 5.1 belongs to the landowner and is occupied by a family of five who are rice farmers. House number 5.2 is lived in by two families of four people each, whose occupation is rice growing and small scale animal husbandry.



Elevation

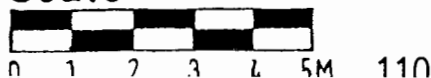


Upper Floor Plan



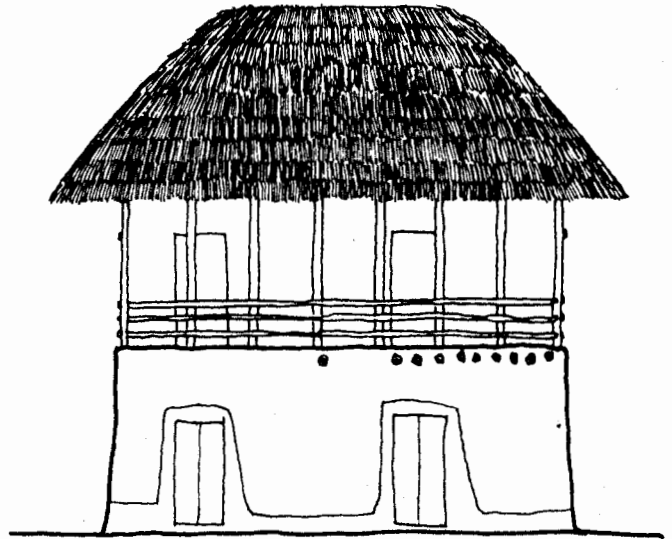
Ground Floor Plan

Scale

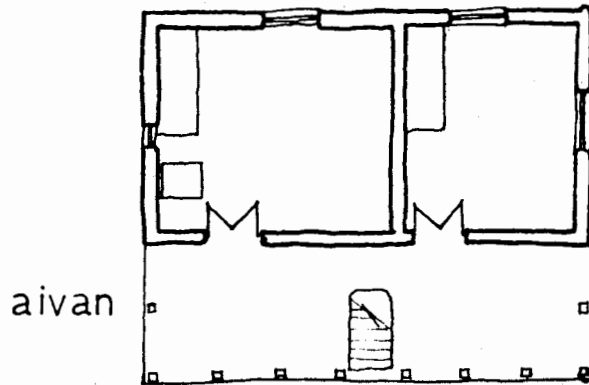


House 5.2 Maklavan C2d2

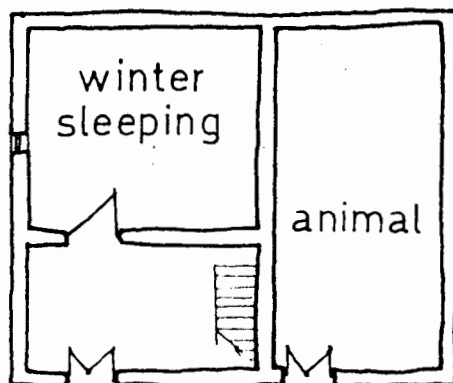
Elevation



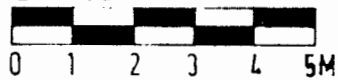
Upper Floor Plan



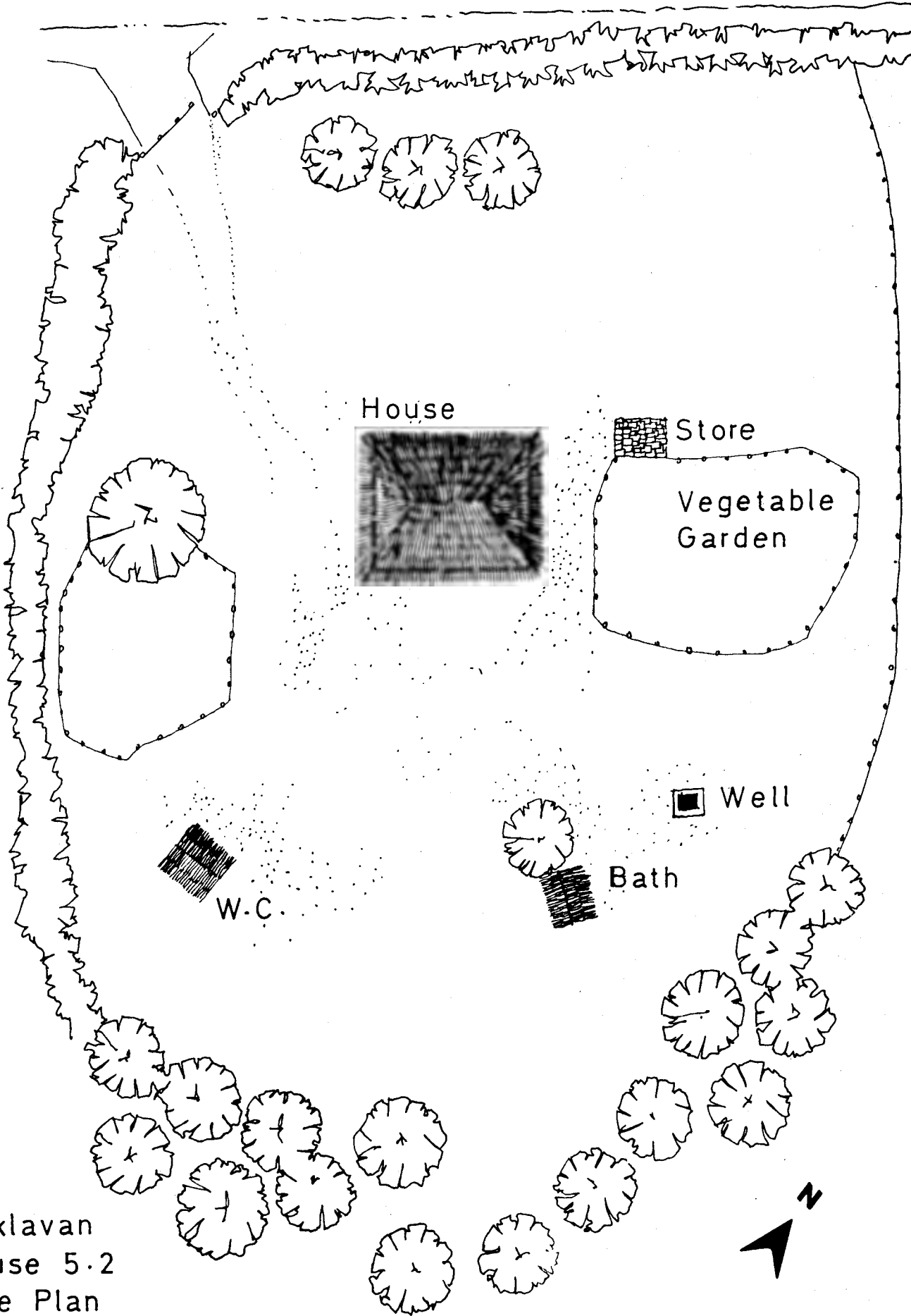
Ground Floor Plan



Scale



Road



House

Store

Vegetable
Garden

Well

Bath

W.C.

Maklavan
House 5.2
Site Plan
Scale

