

even the beginning of the 20th. Their area of distribution extends to the eastern Meuse region.

In the timber-framing area, the western frontier of the small pocket of roofing in the Lorraine style does not coincide with the line of division between the farms of the Marne area with their *porterue* on the street and the farms of the Aube area with their yards. It runs north of Aube to the area around Brienne-le-Château. The farmhouse of the Troyennes region with its farmyard, however, is characterized by its high hipped roof covered with flat tiles. It has a dwelling house unit and a barn standing endways to the street.

The eastern frontier of the timber framing of Champagne merges with the eastern Meuse region. Here, however, the *porterue* to the road and the big interior yard give way to the classic arrangement of Lorraine, with a single ground-level unit and a central multi-purpose barn. These are some examples of roofs with canopies supported on posts on the front facades in the Argonne area of Lorraine. Although not common, they may have been more extensively found in the past.

JEAN-YVES CHAUVET

2.III.5.f Gascon, Aquitaine (France, SW)

The former province of Gascony corresponds approximately to the present *départements* of Gers and the Landes, while the province of Aquitaine covers roughly the *départements* of Lot-et-Garonne and Gironde.

These provinces have been the privileged territory of the aisled farmhouse, although its area of distribution extends beyond their borders (as far north as Périgord and Charente, as far northeast as lower Quercy and as far south as Pays Basque and Béarn).

In the Grande Lande region, where small-scale food crops and sheep rearing had long been dominant before the pine forest (*pignada*) was planted in the second half of the 19th century, the prevalent type of agricultural and pastoral farmstead was the *métairie*, architecturally a house with nave and aisles, that is, a substantial rectangular block extending in depth, single-storey, built of timber-frame and daub infill, under a roof of two low-pitched slopes covered in half-round clay tiles, and with a gable facade. The load-bearing structure consists of several pairs of wooden posts supporting as many trusses. The facade, which looks to the east, comprises a central recessed entrance

porch (*estandard*) which takes advantage of the morning sun, whereas the rear gable, exposed to the rains coming from the Atlantic, is sheltered under a roof hip (*queue de pigeon*). According to the social status of its occupants – one or two sharecroppers (*bourdilé*), a single sharecropper plus the landowner, or *maître* – the nave was occupied by a large living-room which was either single or adjoining to a second living-room, the aisles housing a *souillarde* or kitchen, a bedroom, a storeroom, sometimes a small byre (*boujalet*) for a pair of oxen used for ploughing or reserved for fattening. The space under the roof was used as a granary. The older *métairies* were built between 1750 and 1800, the more recent ones between 1800 and 1850, on behalf of the rural or urban upper classes, on the model of the houses they themselves inhabited in the market towns.

In the Petites Landes region (in the eastern part of the *département*), a bipartite house-plan was at a later date substituted for the tripartite plan, with a partition wall being erected right below the ridge-piece, a new arrangement which allowed a *boujalet* to be added on to one side of the common living-room, from which the team of oxen could be fed through a double opening (*estaoulis*) set into the long wall.

A region of widely dispersed settlement, the Landes was characterized by several *métairies*, together with their dependencies, being sited and scattered across the surface of a wide lawn planted with oak trees and devoid of enclosures and hedges. This space (*airial*) was meant for external communication between buildings as well as being an area intended for the grazing of sheep, the preparation of animals' litter, the making of manure (*soutrage*), the threshing of rye, and so on.

Among the outbuildings strewn over the *airial* were *parcs* or sheep shelters – also of a tripartite plan, cart sheds with a ridge-post roof, *bordes* or apsidal, saddle-backed buildings covered in thatch and used as sheep shelters, stables and cartsheds, as well as perched hen-houses, bread ovens, pigsties, and well sweeps. More *parcs* and *bordes* were found scattered across the grazing grounds.

In the Chalosse area, on the edge of the *département* of the Pyrénées-Atlantiques, the *métairie* with nave and aisles is again the prevailing type, although showing a few variations. For example, the walls are built of limestone blocks or pebbles more often than of timber frame and in some instances, the recessed gable porch is missing, the nave forming a large single room with a cart entrance set into the gable facade: this is called the *séo* or *sol*, an arrangement akin to the Basque *eskaratsa*, connecting ground-floor rooms and serving as a threshing floor and a storage space for farm implements and carts. Also, in some half-timbered specimens, the porch is reduced to a central recess at ground-floor level only: this is called the *bouque aban* (literally, front mouth).

In the *département* of Gers, where the tripartite house ceases to be the dominant type, a few specimens, built of stone and timber frame, are still to be noticed around the towns in the eastern part. Lastly, the architectural type is still observable in the Médocaise and Girondine Landes as sheep shelters, and in the *département* of Lot-et-Garonne as huge barns with a porch in a gable or along a side wall.

See also

1.V.2.q-i Tiling
2.III.7.g Walloon

Reference

Comité du Folklore Champenois, 1977

Gable facade of an early 19th century *métairie* with central recessed porch. Landes, Gascony.

