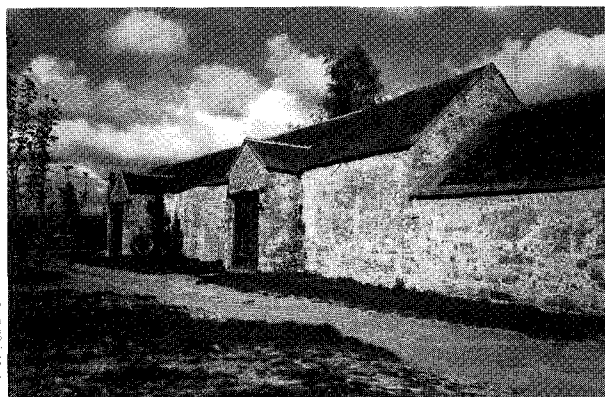


Double entrance barn complex. Farm at Villecerf. Seine et Marne. île-de-France.



hipped. An aristocratic privilege maintained until the French Revolution in 1789 was the dovecot turret, made of masonry, providing a finishing touch to the majestic appearance of these farms, which are organized around a farmyard linking the various farm buildings. These are large in size, to accommodate the carthorses, cattle and sheep which provided manure. Some medieval tithe barns with two or three aisles and large triangular roofs still survive. These structures are comparable to covered market halls, although they were built for a different purpose. The great number of covered markets can be explained by the importance of the agricultural and commercial function of country towns, in particular south of Paris. Under a steeply pitched oak roof covered with plain tiles, rows of posts marked out one to three aisles providing accommodation for fairs and markets.

Housing for farm labourers, found throughout the region, is of the single ground-level unit type. It usually consists of a single room with a door, a window and a dormer window giving outside access to the roof, all on the gutter-bearing wall.

The suburbs of Paris used to be famous for wine-making, and wine-growers' houses still survive. They can be identified by their cart gateways and vaulted cellars.

The need to provide the capital with grain explains what used to be an impressive number of windmills and watermills. The former are either circular masonry towers with a turning top, or wooden mills pivoting entirely above the ground.

The importance of cave dwellings in the limestone cliffs created by erosion should also be mentioned. Such dwellings are still found in the valleys of the Oise, the Seine, the Loire and the Cher. Accommodation of this kind, inside old stone quarries, is not highly thought of today, and the cave dwellings have not reaped the benefit of the Parisians' enthusiasm for second homes. Prosperous city people, suffering from the stress of city life in the concrete jungle, are now in the habit of spending weekends in what is usually an old cottage converted from its agricultural function and fitted out for leisure pursuits. It must be admitted that although this trend does not do much for village life during the week, it has often saved a number of country cottages from demolition.

FRANÇOIS CALAME

2.III.5.h Languedoc (with Roussillon) (France, s)

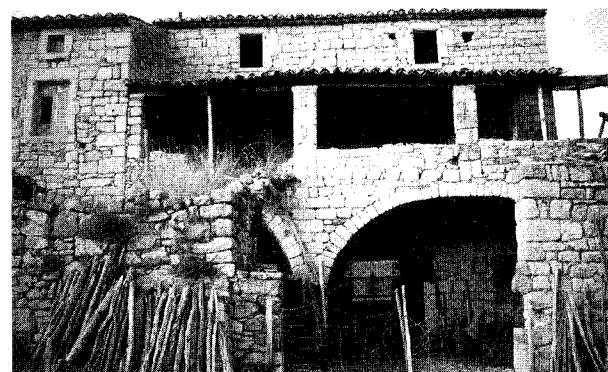
The mountainous borders of the Languedoc area (the Massif Central and the Pyrenees) contrast with the coast of the Mediterranean and the bank of the Rhône. In between sea

level and peaks over 1000 m (3300 ft) high lies a very varied agricultural landscape where geology plays an important part.

The three large regions making up the province can be defined as follows: Upper Languedoc (Tarn and the eastern half of Haute-Garonne); Lower Languedoc (the Gard, Hérault and Aude départements; and the Cévennes country (Lozère, Ardèche, and the eastern part of the Haute-Loire). Aveyron, at least in its southern part, should be regarded as part of Languedoc. Until the 1950s, agriculture in these areas was based on the Mediterranean nutritional triad of cereals, vines and olive trees, supplemented by the rearing of cattle in the mountains and of sheep on the hillsides, in the *causses* (dry limestone plateaux) and *garrigues* (degraded Mediterranean-type forest). Studies show that the majority of existing rural houses were built or extended between 1750 and 1900.

The predominant feature of Languedoc's closely built villages is the house on two or more floors. It consists of a ground floor, often vaulted, accommodating the cellar, stable and shed. The first floor is the dwelling area, with a large living-room which has a fireplace, a cooking stove (*potager*) and a stone sink. The bedrooms are on the same floor, as well as one or more rooms used as a hayloft or a temporary silkworm rearing house. The roof area is sometimes fitted out as a second floor acting as a granary or a drying loft. Access to the level of the living-quarters is by an exterior stone staircase prolonged to form a partly covered terrace (*couradou*), with light falling in through typical round arches. This extra room on the terrace is used as a workshop, a summer living-room or a drying area, but its main function used to be the spinning of the cocoons produced by the silkworms, whence its other name of *fialage*, from the verb *filer*, to spin.

In the 19th century demographic growth, the improvement of agricultural methods and even more certainly the great extension of vineyards hastened the development of the isolated rural house outside the village. Depending on the region, the original, often very modest unit (a small house in the fields or *maset*, a small barn) developed horizontally along a line or at a right angle by the addition of annexes (such as cellar, cart-house, outhouse, or stable), thus creating a square or rectangular yard around which lay the dwelling house and the outbuildings. This yard was sometimes open on one side but more frequently enclosed, with a cart gateway. There was also vertical development, with the addition of bedrooms and silkworm houses, particularly in Hérault, Gard and the south of Ardèche. These farms (*mas*) became the principal type of



Stone house with vaulted ground floor and *fialage* above, near Payzac, Languedoc.