

Economic development in the nineteenth century led to the enlargement of many houses, either in length, or by adding an extra floor. Some two-storey houses have undergone considerable evolution in length and height to reach their present size. Addition of an upper floor helped conserve heat and provide more privacy. Sometimes the upper storey was added over a part of the house only, often above the existing sleeping quarters.

A full two-storey house demonstrated social status and the addition of an upper floor was often a way to attain a grander appearance, emulating the formal houses of the gentry and nobility. These evolved houses have an individual and idiosyncratic appeal and the sometimes irregular placement of windows, chimneys and doors show us how they grew to their present size.

The term “thatched mansion” is sometimes used for the more ambitious farmhouses, and in earlier times even the minor gentry sometimes lived in such houses.

Two-storey slated houses began to be built during the nineteenth century by ordinary farmers. Though formal and symmetrical in elevation many of these follow the vernacular pattern, being one room deep with the traditional hearth and few rear windows. These developed vernacular houses borrow from mainstream architecture, some even having a fanlight over the door.



A two-storey house of the hearth-lobby type



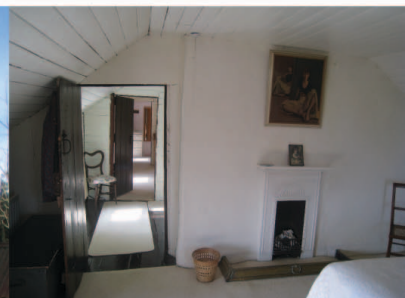
Irregular placement of door and windows suggests the upper floor was added



A two-storey house of strongly vernacular character



Hearth-lobby house with an upper floor added over kitchen



This storey house with round headed door has a traditional spy window in the lobby



Formerly thatched two-storey house of a type still widespread in neighbouring Co. Wexford, probably of mud-wall construction.



This symmetrical two-storey house owes much to the vernacular tradition



Back of a two-storey house with few windows

