

Ice Houses & Dairy Cellar

Constructed c.1830, the two brick ice houses are recessed sixteen feet into the ground and topped with conical roofs. These outbuildings provided the rare luxury of chilled food and drink all year round. During the winter, a layer of straw or sawdust insulated the base and sides of the icehouses. They were then filled with large cakes of ice and covered with another layer of straw or sawdust. As the ice melted, it consolidated into one large mass, helping to preserve it. Melting ice water drained from the ice houses through a lead pipe to a trough in the adjacent dairy cellar where crocks of cream could be chilled. Ice placed in an icehouse in January and February could last until the following October and November.