

The Thatcher

This picture here shows a complete replacement of a thatched roof. Thatcher for some particular reason normally start at the right hand of the house and end on the left and I think it had a lot to do with the prevailing wind cause a lot of the houses faced to the east to get the morning sun coming in through the window but also the prevailing wind coming from the west so they finished on the west side of the house and the south west sometimes and the wind was to do no harm.

Most of the houses in our area were thatched up to the 40s and 50s and here you can see a Thatcher putting on what's called a spar. A spar was about 18 inches or half a meter wide and he appears to be using I think its rye. Rye was a fairly good thatching material the best thatching material in all in this area was wheat because wheat would last at least 25 years and then you sprayed it with bluestone and the bluestone kept the little grubs and insects from living in the thatch and that kept the birds from going after them. Birds usually damaged the thatch.

The Thatcher here you can see him up on a ladder and he's using a heavy scallop and these scallops were usually willows or sallies you know the sally gardens were a big thing then and used mostly for growing sallies for basket making but a lot of the scallops were used for thatching. Now you can see from a foot from the bottom you put a horizontal scallop on and then you took a scallop that was much lighter one about half an inch thick and you bent it and you pushed it right into the roof. That's what he's doing now pushing a little scallop into the roof to hold. Now he's working down at the what we called the eve of the house now the eve would over hang the house about 18 inches.

Disclaimer

The information on this site is for informational purposes only. BEAM assume no liability for any inaccurate, delayed or incomplete information, nor for any actions taken in reliance thereon.