



FIG. 6. Midtown Cottage, Brampton, Westmorland. From Brunskill, "Small House," facing p. 165. Reproduction courtesy of R. W. Brunskill.

plan (built from roughly 1670 to 1770) or late eighteenth-century variations.²⁸ The basic template may be taken from the plans for the Westmorland cottage shown in Fig. 6. From a modern perspective, the outstanding feature here is the lack of differentiation in space. Entrance to the house was by way of a cross-passage conducting on one side to the "downhouse," a service and storage area open to the second story, and on the other to the living unit proper. The ground floor of this unit consisted only of a "kitchen" or "fire-house" (a communal space equivalent to today's living room, dining room, and kitchen all in one) and "bower" (master bedroom or, in later houses, "parlour"). Even less differentiated was the cruck loft on the top floor. If we discount a partition added in modern renovation, the loft in this cottage was simply an open space extending the length of the living unit.

It was in the "kitchen" that servants, with the rest of the family, lived and ate.²⁹ And it was in the loft that they slept, sharing the space with all family members except the master and mistress. John Gough, a firsthand observer of Lakes social customs, describes the use of the loft in the eighteenth century clearly: "here the children and servants lodged, without the least distinction of rank or attention to decorum, except that the men occupied one end of the place and left the other to the women. A rope was stretched across this nocturnal receptacle of the family, upon which coats, gowns, and other articles of apparel, both male and female, hung promiscuously" (p. 12).³⁰ Writing for popular consumption early in the next century, Gough already sounds a certain Victorian uneasiness about the "promiscuity" of traditional sleeping arrangements (intimated here in worry about the intercourse of clothes at night but more directly expressed