

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Cambridge Antiquarian Society,

OCTOBER 28, 1889, TO MAY 19, 1890.

WITH

Communications

MADE TO THE SOCIETY.

No. XXXII.

BEING No. 2 OF THE SEVENTH VOLUME.

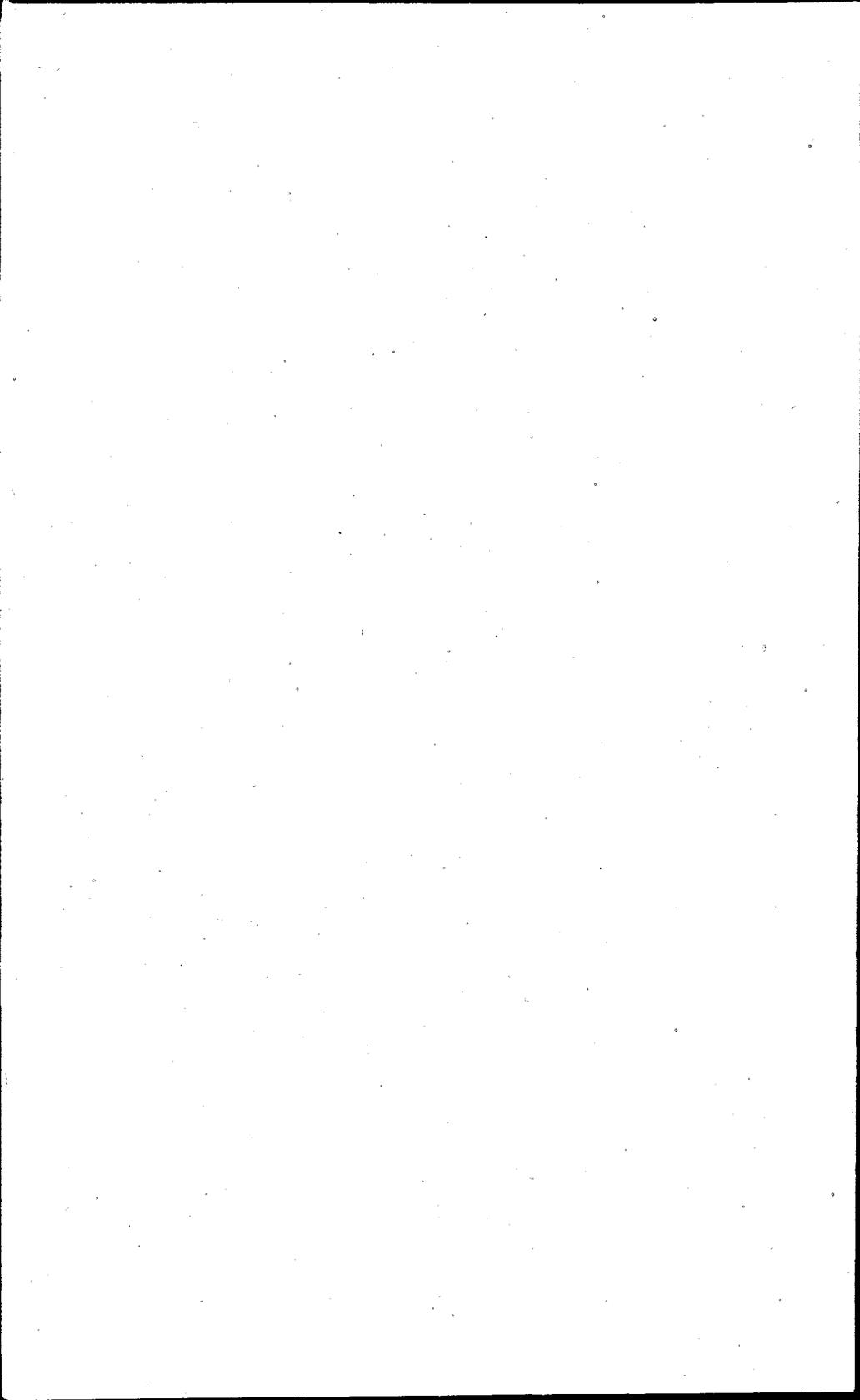
Cambridge:

DEIGHTON BELL & CO.; MACMILLAN & BOWES.

LONDON: G. BELL AND SONS,

1891.

Price 8s. 6d.



Professor MIDDLETON made a short communication on the House of the Veysy family, and had intended to write a fuller account of this interesting building, but finding that Mr T. D. Atkinson, who had made the excellent set of drawings which are here reproduced, really knew more about the subject than he did, Professor Middleton was very glad to transfer to him the task of writing the description of the house. Thus it happens that both the following paper and its illustrations are wholly the work of Mr Atkinson.

Mr J. W. CLARK, in proposing a vote of thanks to Professor Middleton, quoted the contemporary fire-place which had been recently brought to light in the Master's Lodge at Christ's College (*Communications*, vi. 374).

The Treasurer (W. M. FAWCETT, M.A.) mentioned that, although he did not think that any of the family of Veysy remained in Cambridge, the name was a well-known one in Huntingdon, and possibly they were of the same stock. He also mentioned that in the old Manor House at Haslingfield there was a chimney-piece of similar character, only simpler. This example is now covered by a modern chimney-piece. He seconded the vote of thanks to Professor Middleton.

ON THE HOUSE OF THE VEYSY FAMILY IN CAMBRIDGE.

IN October, 1889, a house standing at the south-east corner of the Market Place was pulled down. It was known that part of it dated from the sixteenth century, but it was not until the work of destruction had begun, and the plaster and panelling were removed, that it was seen that the whole house was of that period. It was presently discovered, from the inscriptions on the stone mantel-pieces, that the house had been built by one Veysy, a grocer, in 1538; and it was evident, from its dimensions, and the beauty of its decorations, that it had originally been a very magnificent work of art.

The accompanying plates (Plates XIV—XXV) are from drawings made by myself while the building was being pulled down. They shew all the work that then remained, and nothing more. The few restorations which I have attempted are all noted as such, and have been made only when the evidence did not admit of doubt. The plan of the cellars (Plate XIV) is of necessity inaccurate, as I had only partially measured them when I found, on returning to complete my work, that the floor above, loaded with tons of brick-rubbish, had fallen in. The following is the explanation of the shading¹ used in the plans:

Timber-work, old : black.

 " " modern : white.

 " " probably old, or restored from existing evidence :
 dotted.

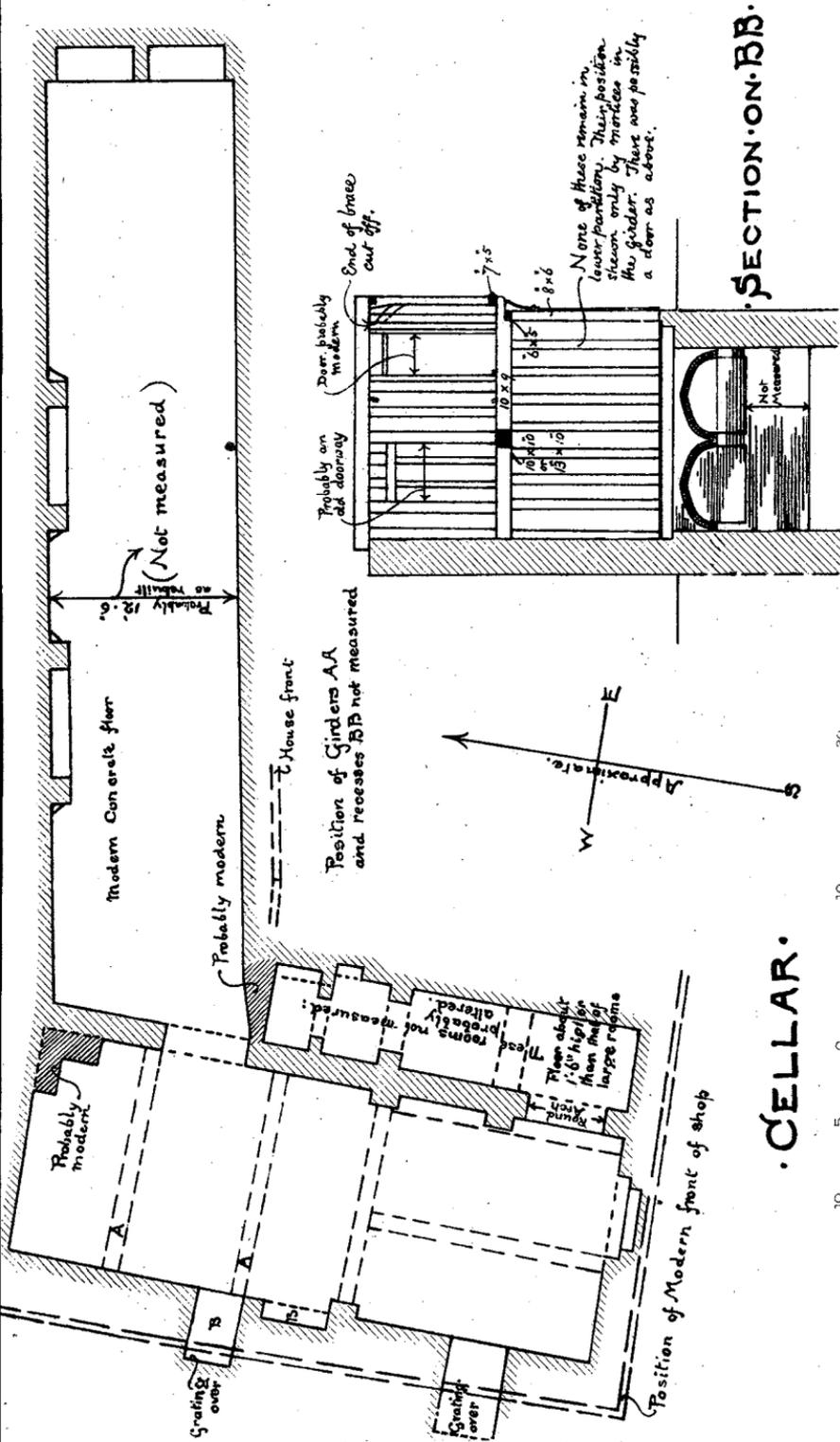
Brick-work, old : light hatching.

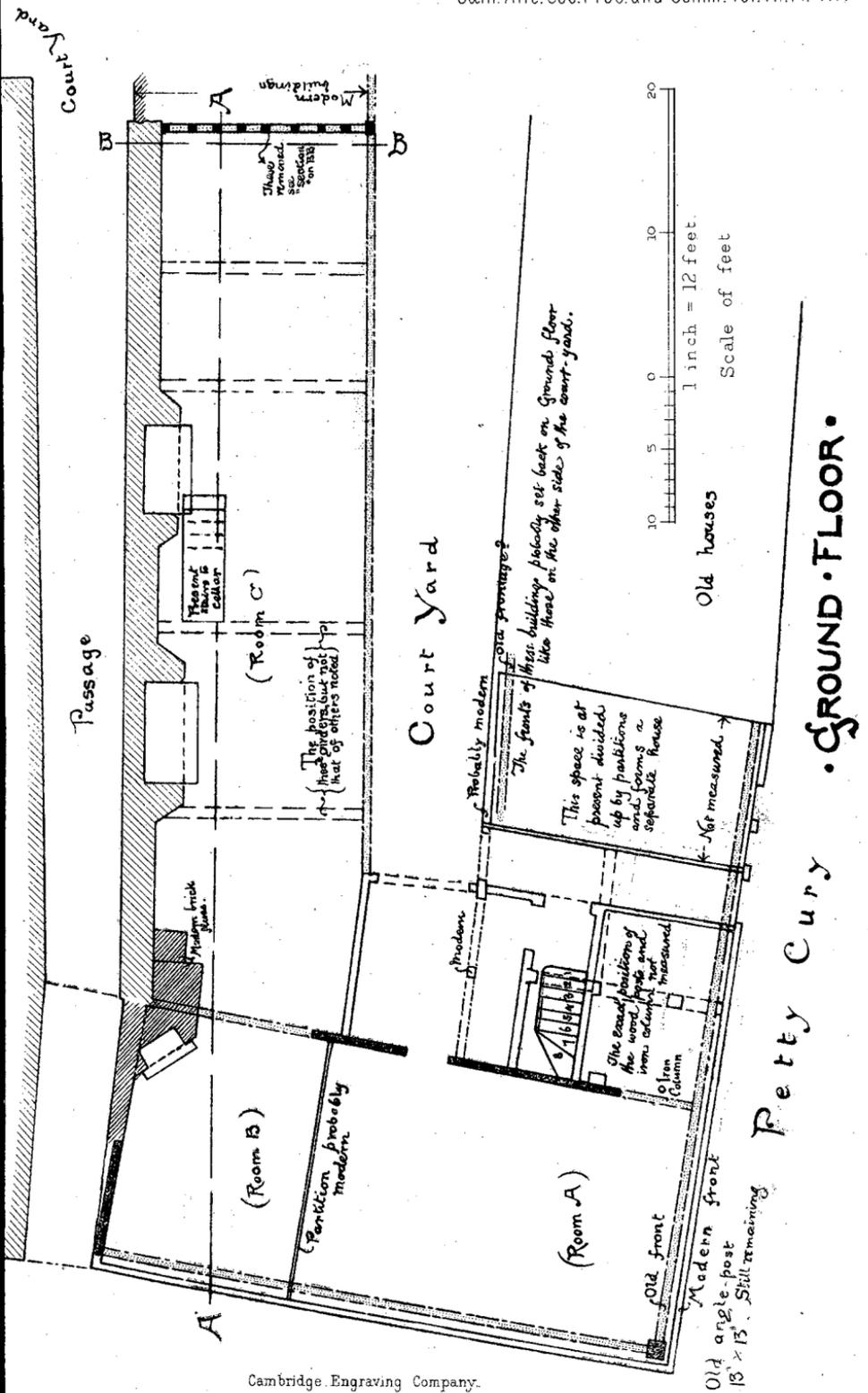
 " " modern : dark hatching.

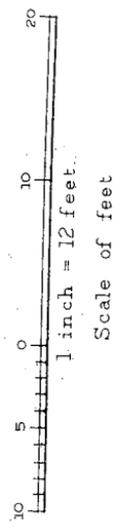
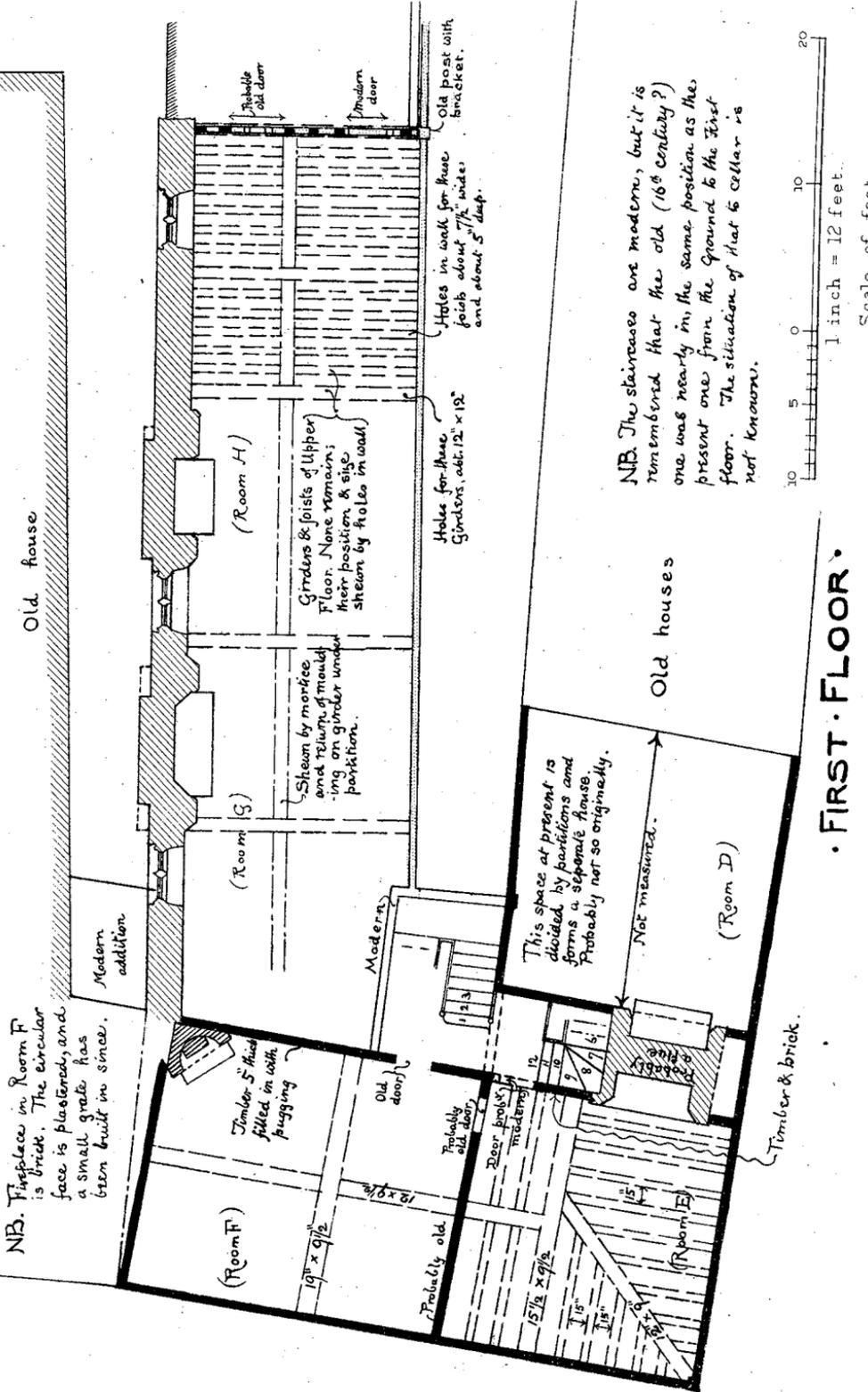
I have been able to ascertain but little respecting the Veysys. The name frequently occurs in the accounts of the churchwardens of S. Mary the Great, but not in the Register of births, deaths, or marriages. Henry Veesy, "potecary," by will dated 15 April, 1503, bequeaths £5 to the building of the church², and £10 to King's College, "for myne obitt yerely to be kept ther in." He had two sons, John and Henry. The former, evidently the elder, was elected churchwarden in 1531 and 1541. The initials, I. V, with a merchant's mark, on the fire-place dated 1538 (Plate xxv, fig. 1) evidently commemorate him. His will is dated 20 October, 1544, and he died soon afterwards, as appears from the accounts for 1544-45 :

¹ The shading does not distinguish between brick and stone except in the small scale plan and section of the windows on Plate xix.

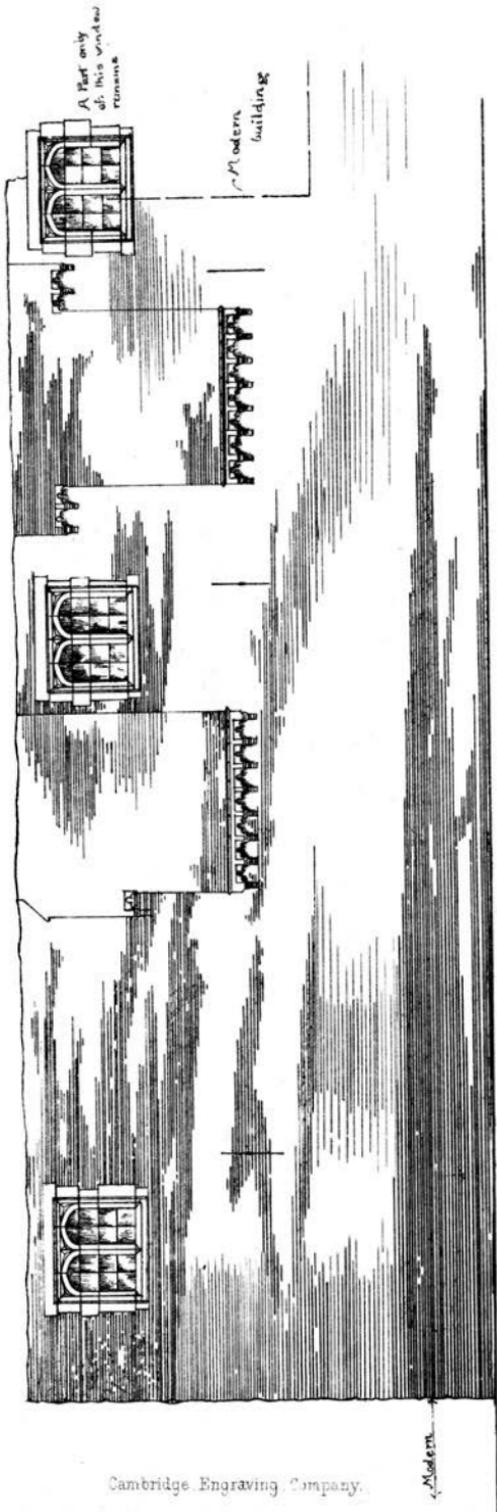
² Notes on Great S. Mary's Church. By Sam. Sandars, M.A. Camb. Ant. Soc. Oct. Publ. No. X. p. 16. This and the other wills here quoted are copied or abstracted in the MSS Bowtell, preserved in Downing College Library.





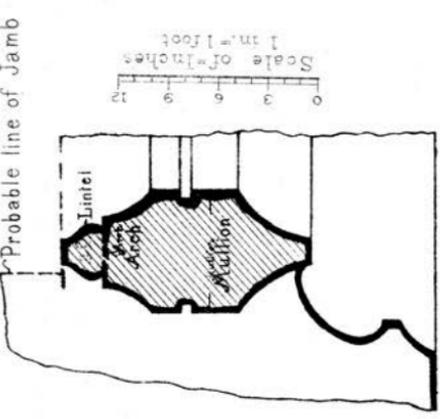


• FIRST FLOOR •

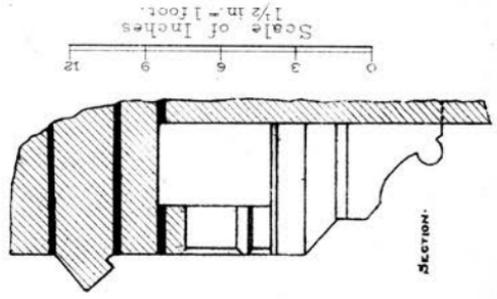


OUTSIDE ELEVATION OF NORTH WALL

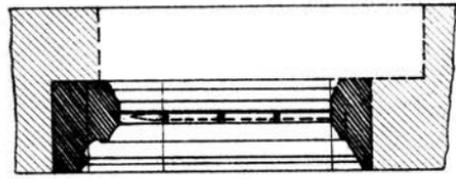
Scale of feet 10 5 0 15 20 25
1 inch = 8 feet



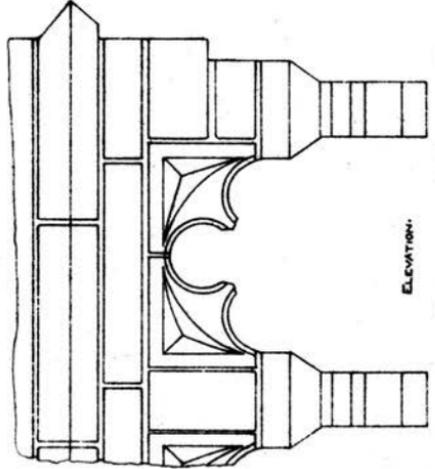
PLAN OF JAMB OF WINDOW



SECTION.

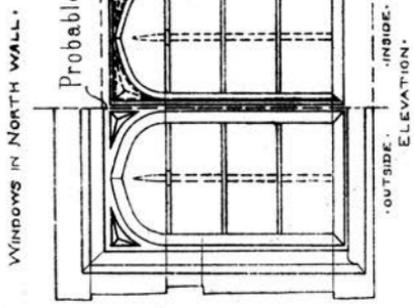


SECTION.

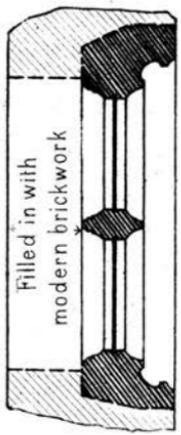


ELEVATION.

CORBELLING OF CHIMNEY BREASTS

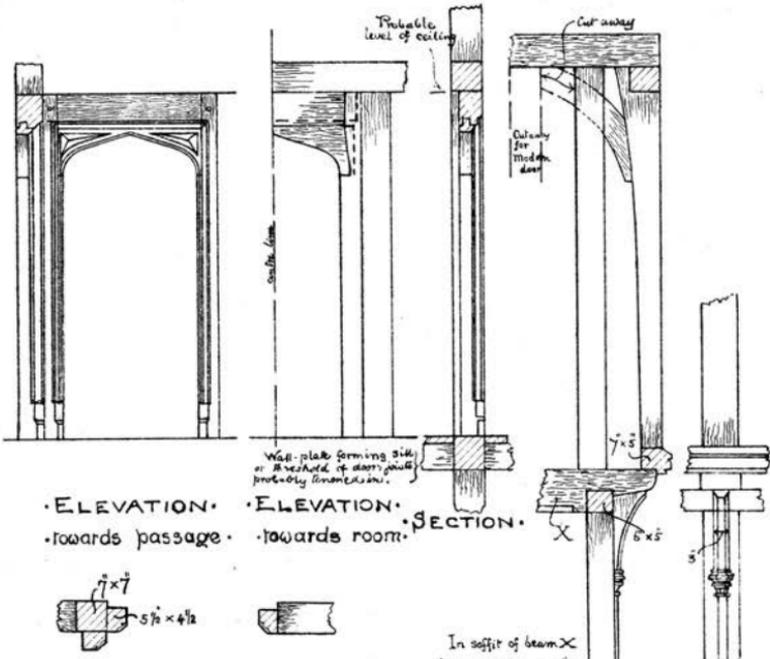


WINDOWS IN NORTH WALL.



PLAN.

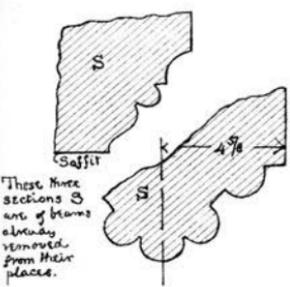
Scale of feet 0 1 2 3
3/8 in. = 1 foot.



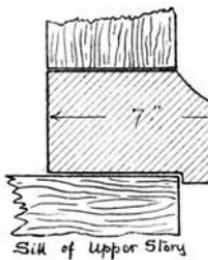
• ELEVATION • towards passage • ELEVATION • towards room • SECTION •

• PLAN •
• DOOR • OF • ROOM • L •

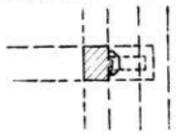
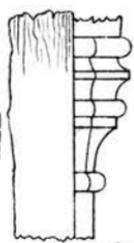
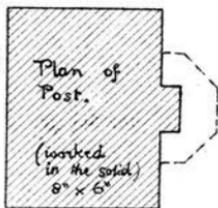
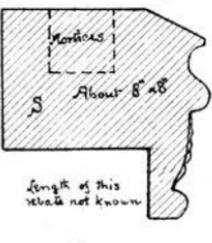
In soffit of beam X there are eight mortises $6\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2} \times 4$ deep with pin holes, and in the side next to the house is one mortise for the longitudinal beam.



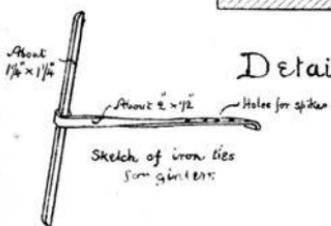
These three sections S are of beams already removed from their places.



• SIDE ELEV. • • FRONT ELEV. •

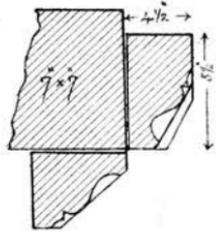


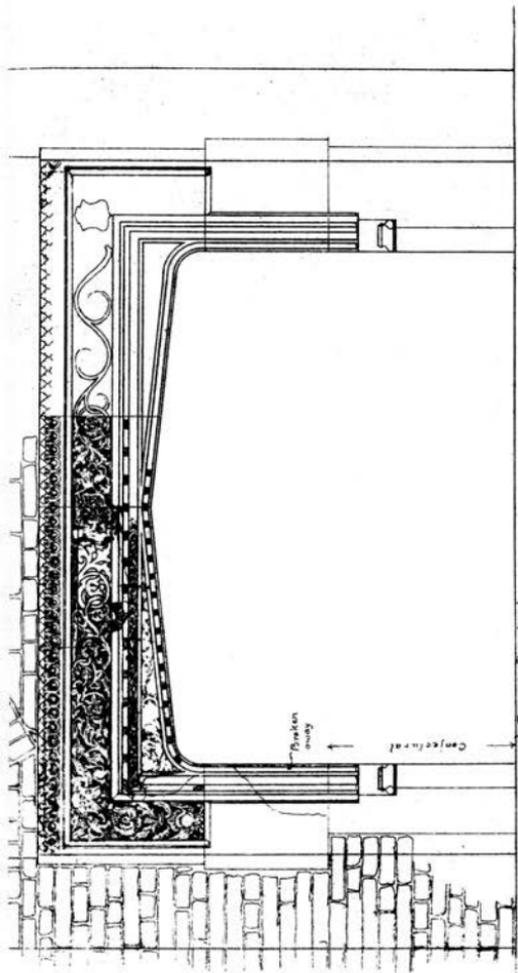
• PLAN •
• POST • AT • EAST •
• END • OF • HOUSE •



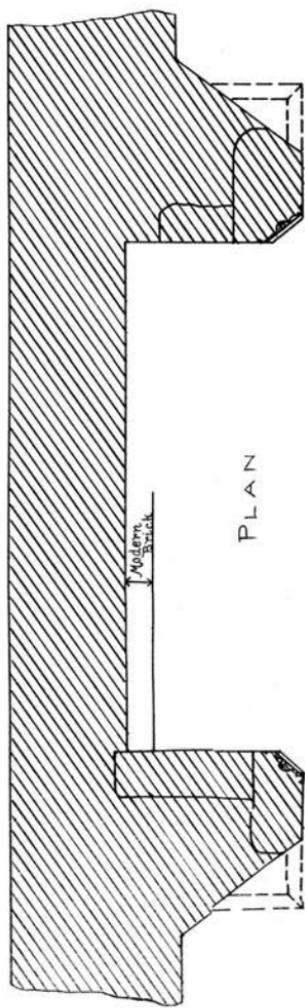
Details of Post &c

Part plan of floor of room L and of adjoining door on second floor.



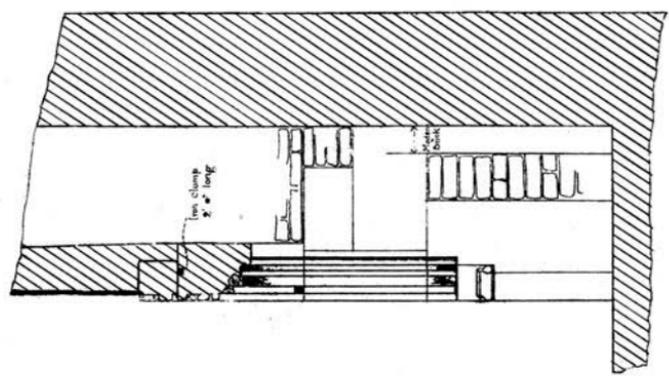


ELEVATION



PLAN

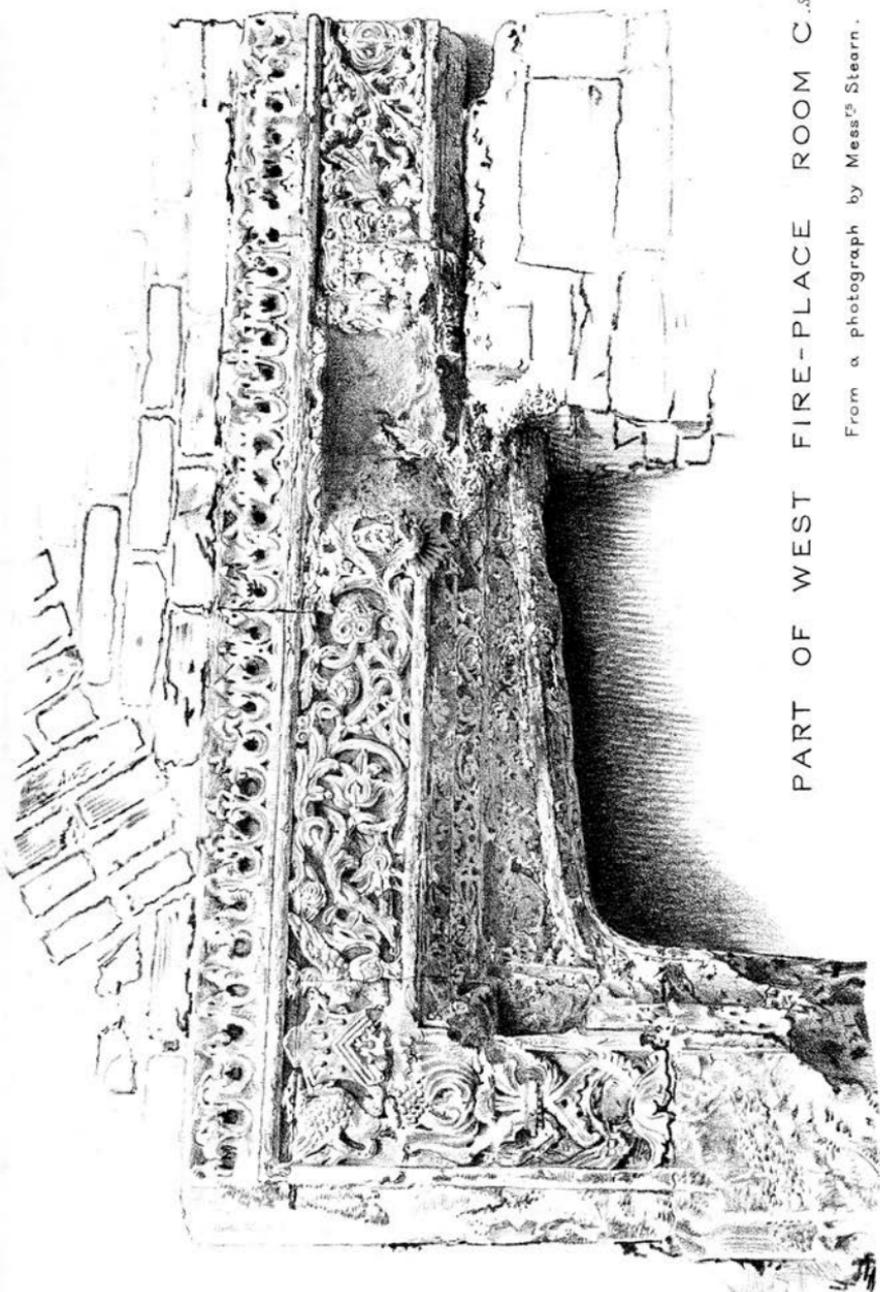
WEST FIRE-PLACE ROOM C, see Plate XV.

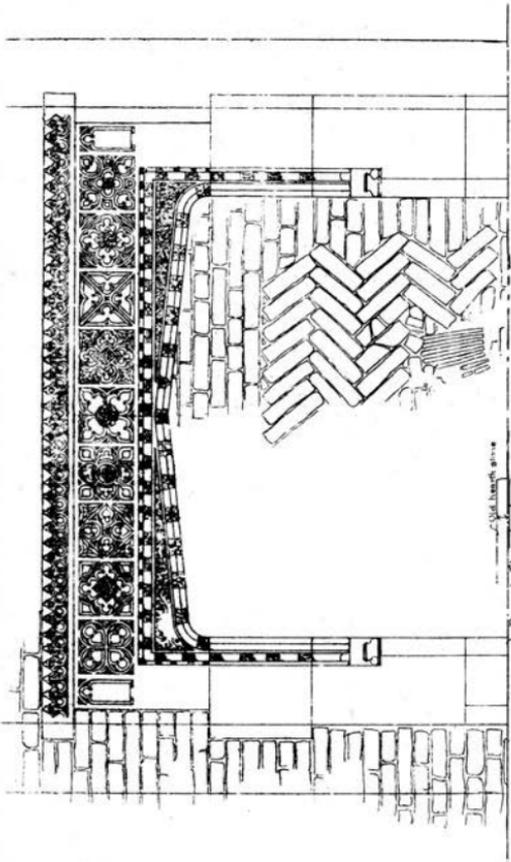


SECTION
 3/8 in. = 1 foot.
 Scale of feet

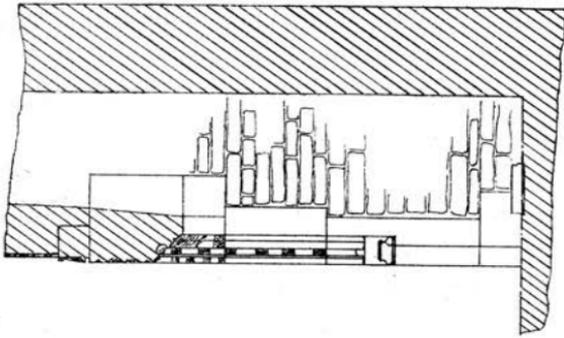
PART OF WEST FIRE-PLACE ROOM C. see Plate XV.

From a photograph by Messrs Stearn.

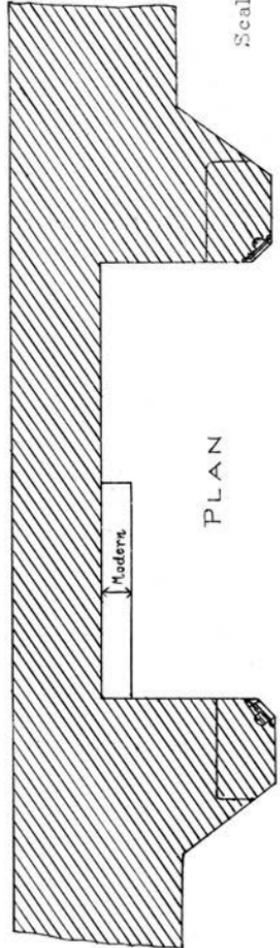




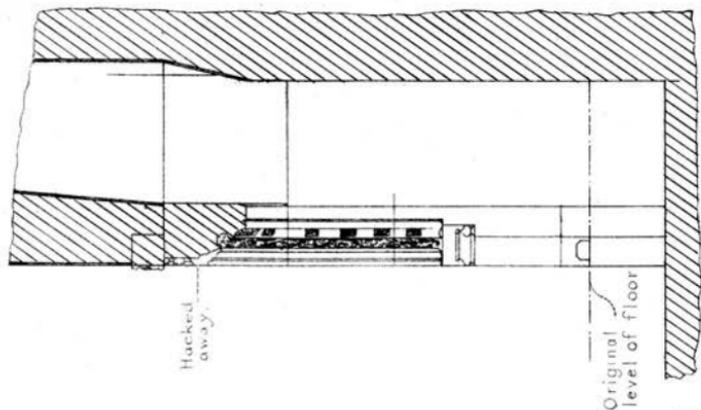
ELEVATION



SECTION



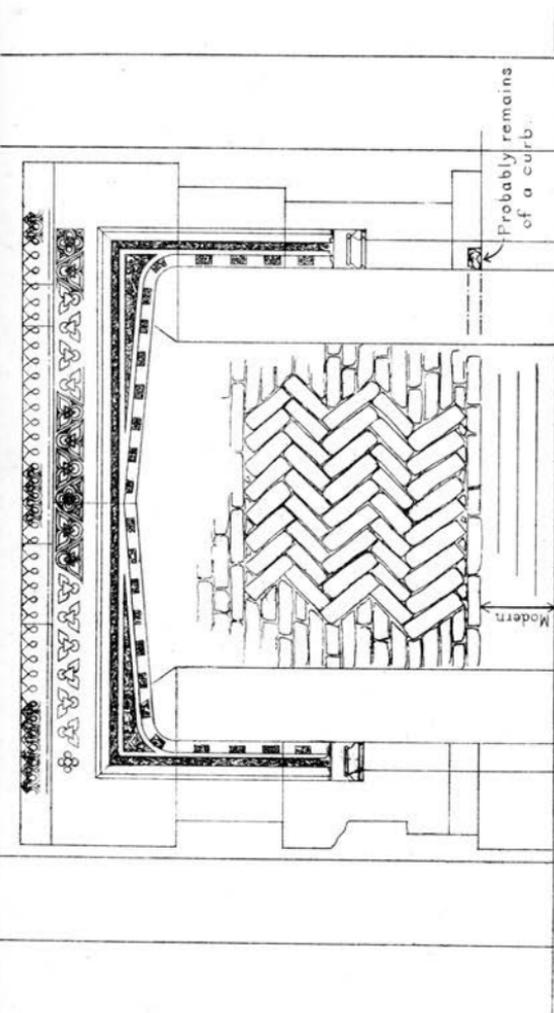
EAST FIRE-PLACE ROOM C, see Plate XI.



SECTION



Scale of feet

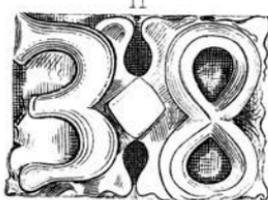
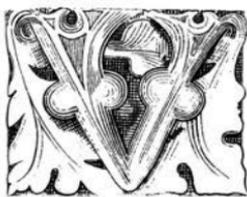
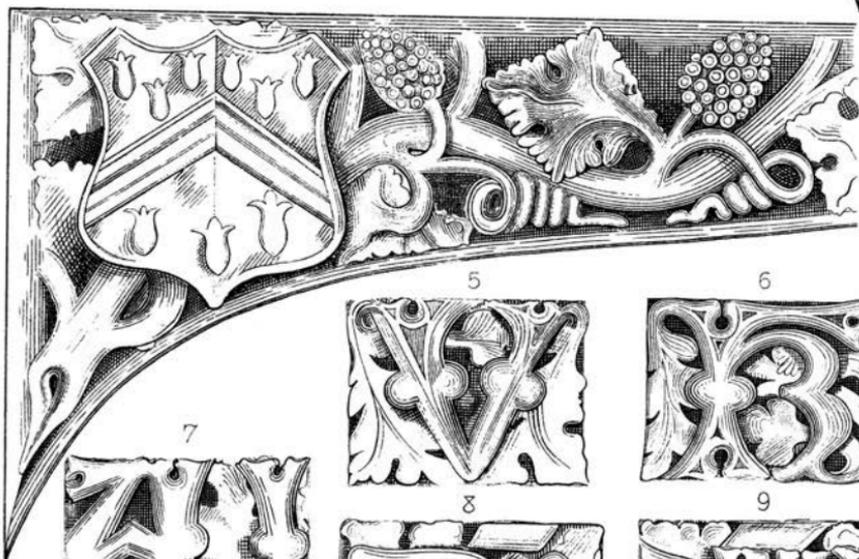
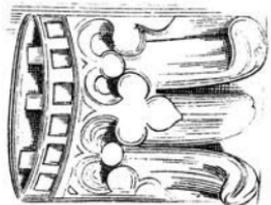
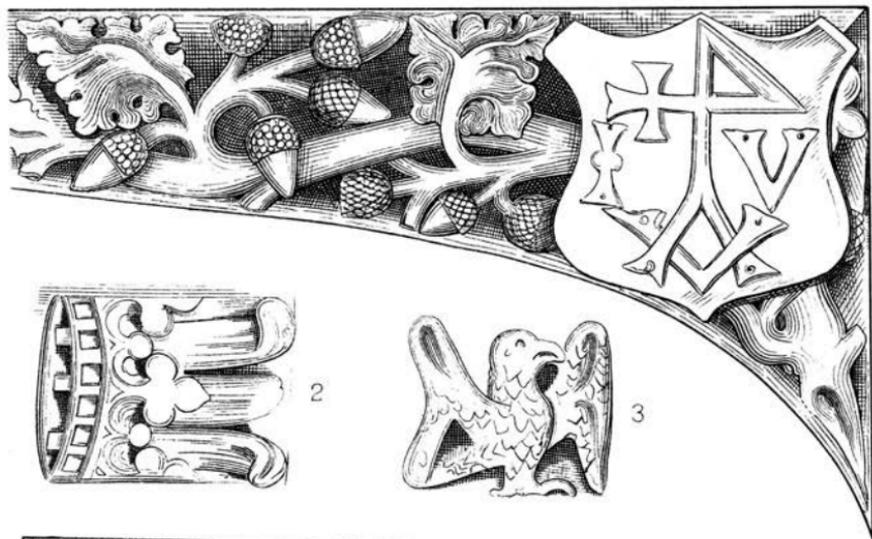


ELEVATION



PLAN

FIRE-PLACE ROOM G, see Plate XVI.



CARVING ON FIRE-PLACE ROOM G.

HALF FULL-SIZE.
see Plates XVI, & XXIV.

Cambridge Engraving Company.

Item of Henry Veysy for his father's bequest.....xx^s.

Item of the same for his father's buryallvj^s. viij^d.

Henry Veysy, brother of John, was guardian of the rood-light and holy sepulchre light in 1528, and churchwarden in 1529 and 1530. He describes himself in his will dated 15 March, 1534, as "appotycary and grocer." He died in 1535 or 1536, as appears from the accounts for 1535-36:

Item receyved for the buriall of Henry Veysy within the chirche ...vj^s. viij^d.

Item for torches boughte his heirst.....viij^d.¹

So far as I can ascertain, the name occurs for the last time in 1550, when a Mr Veysy pays six shillings for "y^e clothe y^t went over y^e quyer in lent, & iij paynted clothes y^t was of y^e sepulter."

The Heralds' Visitation of 1619 mentions a Henry Vescy of Islam (Isleham) in the county of Cambridge, son of John Vescy of Cambridge and his wife Katherine, daughter of — Thurmadge, John being son of Henry Vescy of Cambridge. Probably these are the actual individuals mentioned above, and whose initials are carved on the mantel-pieces. These carvings add to what we already know of the occupants of the house. The flowers and leaves, separating the names, are represented by colons in the following list.

GROUND FLOOR, ROOM C. EAST MANTEL (Plates xv, xxiii)². *Frieze*. *Third panel from left*, iv; *centre panel*, a rose; *third panel from right*, kv. *Lintel*, i : VEYSY : K : VEYSY : H : VEYSY : A : VEYSY. *Spandrils*, *Left hand* (hacked off); *Right hand*, kv. *Arch*, H : V.

DITTO, WEST MANTEL (Plates xv, xxi, xxii). *Frieze*. *Left hand*, Arms of the Grocers' Company. *Centre*, Royal Arms. *Right hand* (removed). *Lintel*, i : v : K : v : K : A : v : i (the rest removed). *Spandrils*, *Left hand* (hacked off). *Right hand* (removed). *Arch*, IHONO : : : : K : : : : : (the rest removed).

¹ In 1536—37, among the "Resceytes for Dyrygies," we find: "For the dirige of Henry Veysy, viij^d."

² The plates are on too small a scale to shew details.

UPPER FLOOR, ROOM *H* (Plate XVI). *Spandrils*. *Left hand*, An eagle and v. *Right hand*, IK.

UPPER FLOOR, ROOM *G* (Plates XVI, XXIV, XXV). *Frieze and part of lintel* (hacked off). *Spandrils*. *Left hand*, Arms of Grocers' Company (Plate XXV, fig. 4). *Right hand*, Initials and Merchant's mark on a shield (Ibid. fig. 1). *Arch.* :: : Plumes (fig. 2) : Eagle (fig. 3) v (fig. 5) : kv : *W* Plumes *N* : *NO DNI* 15 38 (figs. 8, 9, 10, 11) :: :: :

The arms are as follows. The Arms of Henry VIII.: France and England quarterly, supporters a lion and a dragon. The arms of the Grocers' Company: Argent, a chevron gules, between nine cloves sable, supporters two griffins per fess gules and or. Neither the crest of the company:—A camel proper, bridled, with a saddle cloth, argent, thereon, six cloves sable—nor the motto "GOD GRANT GRACE," are given.

Before describing the house in detail it should be premised that the arrangement was peculiar. The plans (Plates XIV, XV, XVI) shew that it was a corner house, consisting of a portion fronting the market-place and returned for a short distance along Petty Cury; and a back portion, extending eastwards along the north side of a small yard. The house was separated by a passage from the house next to it on the north. It will be seen (Plates XIV, XVIII) that a cellar extended under the whole, with the exception of a small portion next Petty Cury; and that the front portion consisted of a cellar and four floors, the back portion of two.

There can be no doubt that Veysy built this house from the foundations. The brickwork of the cellar (Plate XIV) is of the same character as that of the rest of the house, and the arrangement of the cellar is exactly that of the floors above it; the chimney breasts, for example, corresponding with those above. A part of this cellar has been allowed to remain, but the most interesting part—that under the front of the house—has been rebuilt. Its walls contained numerous recesses of

various shapes and sizes, many of them blocked up. This cellar had probably been altered in later times, and these alterations made it difficult to determine positively the uses of the series of small chambers which opened into it on the east side. If they were divided, the southern one may have been an oven, though no signs of a vault appeared. At the farther end was a shaft, probably communicating with the privies above. An arched drain from the adjoining chamber remained still open. Possibly there was originally a similar drain from the aforesaid shaft. The floor of this series of chambers was raised about eighteen inches above that of the rest of the cellar. A curious moulded slab of Purbeck marble¹ was found in this cellar, brought, possibly, from the church of one of the recently suppressed religious houses. It is now in St Benet's churchyard.

In the arrangement of the ground-floor also (Plate xv), there are some doubtful points. The entrance to the court yard may have been from Petty Cury as at present; or it may have been from the Market Place, and in a straight line with the court-yard. The latter is perhaps rather the more likely of the two, but, if so, it was probably only a foot-way, as the cellars extended under the whole of this part, and they did not shew any signs of having been arched over to support a passage for carts, like that at the Falcon Inn, and there could hardly have ever been room for a cart to turn.

The position of the original staircase is another doubtful point. I was told by a workman who was pulling down the existing staircase, that he had himself put it up in approximately the same position as an older one, possibly contemporary with the building of the house.

The north wing originally extended further to the east. The post and bracket in the partition at the east end (Plates XIV, XVI, XX) was one of a series, and did not form an angle

¹ Apparently the top of an altar-tomb.

of the building. Moreover, the partition itself contained a doorway on the upper floor; while the ragged end of the brick wall shewed that it had been continued further. The cellar, on the other hand, ended under the partition. This wing no doubt contained the principal rooms of the house. The hall and parlour, or perhaps the hall alone,—there is no evidence for either view—occupied the ground-floor; and the best bedrooms, or the parlour and a bedroom, the upper storey; while possibly the rooms beyond were the kitchens and butteries.

The front part of the house was probably divided on the ground-floor into two rooms, with the entrance between them. It may be conjectured that these were used as a shop. The northernmost contained a fireplace,—old apparently, but much later than Veysy's time. The southern or corner room probably had a fireplace which joined the huge stack above the oven, but this stack had been entirely cut away on the ground-floor and was supported on wooden and iron columns.

Usually, in even the best houses of this period, most of the bedrooms could only be reached by passing through others, but in the present case I am inclined to think that all the bedrooms were entered from a gallery running round the court, as in the Falcon Inn,—though such an arrangement was less common, because less necessary, in private houses. My reasons for so thinking are as follows. First, the windows of the north wing are in the brick wall on the north side, that is, the side away from the court¹ (Plates XVI, XVII). Windows were sometimes made looking into the gallery, but this was not very convenient, so that though the absence of windows on the north side would not have been proof that there was no gallery on the south, yet their existence there does tend to shew that there was a gallery. Secondly, the remains of the second floor also seem to shew that it was provided with a gallery.

¹ The westernmost window in the north wall has three lights, not two as shewn in the drawings.

Room *D* on the first floor (Plate XVI), and the rooms on the second and third floors, above room *E*, contained fireplaces in a very perfect state, the former richly carved and moulded, the two latter quite plain. Room *E* contained a small fragment of the fireplace, shewing that it also was carved and moulded, but that it differed from all the others in the house in the projection being carried on corbels, about two feet from the floor.

The construction, both generally and in detail, is interesting. The first thing that strikes one is, the very substantial brick wall in a house built,—with this one exception—entirely of timber. Its object—the prevention of the spread of fire from the next house—would obviously have been almost entirely defeated by its stopping short where the houses actually joined (Plate XVI). It is probable, therefore, that it was continued originally to the front of the house,—or was meant to be so continued,—and had been pulled down, or never completed, as the case may be, in order to save room. The building-acts of the middle ages encouraged, and in some cases enforced, the building of brick or stone party-walls between houses; and it is to be regretted that they did not require that the whole building should be of similar materials; we should then have had a hundred old houses remaining for every one we now possess.

The north wing was built in the following manner. On the north side, towards the next house, was the brick wall, 2 ft. 3 in. thick, while on the south side, towards the court-yard, the wall was entirely of timber (Plates XIV, XV, XVI). This timber-wall was steadied by strong beams crossing from it to the brick wall, into which they were built, and to which they were secured by iron bands spiked to them, passed through the wall, and turned round upright iron bars on the outside (Plates XVII, XX). At right angles to these beams, and tenoned into them, were beams running down the centre of the building, and these again supported the floor joists. The latter were built into the brick wall,

and at the other end rested on the timber-framing, both they and the principal cross-beams projecting beyond it and supporting the overhanging upper storey, the ends of the beams having little curved brackets and columns under them (Plate xx). The framing of the wall would correspond to that of the floor; there were posts 8 in. × 6 in. under the cross-beams, and no doubt the framing between them was of upright timbers of scantlings similar to the joists over them. There seem to have been no diagonal braces, for the remaining post has no mortice to receive one. The windows of the ground-floor rooms must have been in this wall, as there are none on the other side.

The front part of the house was entirely of timber. The framing of the first floor is interesting as being the only proof we have that in this part also the upper storeys overhung the lower; the framing of the floor-joists into a diagonal beam (Plate xvi) being the way in which they were made to form brackets for the upper storeys on two sides of corner houses. This construction further shews that the house did face both ways. It is doubtful if the second storey overhung the first and the third the second; the floors were not framed in this way, but it was impossible to examine them with sufficient care to be quite certain that they were original.

The chimney-stacks in the north wing were pulled down many years ago, but those who remember them say that they were quite plain and very large, like that which remained on the south side of the house. This last was probably original, and though there were four fire-places remaining on the stack, and there probably had been five or six, it contained, I believe, only one flue. This, however, measured about 3 ft. square.

Two flues ascended from the fire-place in room G (Plate xvi), the division resting on a wedge-shaped stone with the edge downwards, immediately above the lintel. One of the flues is now blocked up. I cannot suggest any explanation of this curious feature. Chimneys were often made to afford a means

of escape, but it is not clear how that object could be served by the present example.

Some details of construction remain to be noticed. The fire-places and the windows in the north wall are of clunch. The bricks are red, laid in English bond with thick joints. The chimney-stacks of the north wing project on the outside from the face of the wall, at the level of the upper floor, the projections being carried on some simple and very beautiful machicolated work done entirely in red brick (Plates XVII, XIX). The backs of the fire-places are of brick laid in a "herring-bone" pattern (Plates XXIII, XXIV)—a favourite device in this situation. They are laid in a sort of coarse artificial fire clay. The cove of the later fire-place in room *F* is plastered (Plate XVI). Over the fire-place lintels are "relieving arches" formed in the brick work, but as they were not built with a span wider than the opening, their weight has, in all cases, cracked the lintels which they were meant to relieve. Each of these lintels is in two pieces—really two corbels meeting one another in the middle. In that in room *C* (Plates XV, XXI, XXII) they are connected by an iron cramp about 2 ft. long $\times \frac{3}{4}$ in. $\times \frac{3}{4}$ in. turned down into each stone and made tight by molten lead being run in,—another bad piece of construction, for the iron has expanded by heat or rust, and has caused a large piece of stone to split off. Copper would have been better, but it was seldom used in mediaeval work. A small chip in the same stone was caused by the mouldings cutting through a fossil which has come out leaving its impression behind. This may enable a geologist to say where the clunch was quarried¹. All these interesting little defects have been "made good" in "restoration." A small piece of what was evidently the original hearth-stone remained. It was of a hard oolite, about 2 inches thick and worked to a very smooth face. This gives approximately

¹ The fossil is one which occurs frequently in the chalk beds of Cherry Hinton.

the level of the old floor. Some iron bars remain in the west chimney of room *C*, probably to hang a caldron from. Some slight indications of colour remained on the east fireplace of room *C*,—of a greenish grey tint on the tracery and red on the rose in the centre panel. None of the mantels had shelves.

Of the timber-work comparatively little remained. It was of splendid oak, very carefully framed, and of most liberal dimensions, one beam measuring nearly 20 inches by 10 inches. The timbers—as in all old work—were sawn into nearly square, instead of deep and narrow, sections as at present, and were not laid in such a way as to make the most of their strength, their greatest dimensions being horizontal. The bold projection of the capital on the post (Plate xx) was probably obtained by using a naturally curved piece of timber like that above it; otherwise the waste of timber and labour would have been very great. The ends of the girders were not supported on corbels, but were built into the walls, and no provision was made for the ventilation of the timber, as was often rightly done.

In the partitions, the spaces between the timbers were, in some places, filled with a pugging of chalk and chopped straw. This material is still used in the neighbourhood for garden walls, sheds, and so on, cast in large blocks, and built up like stonework. When well coated with plaster, or even only with whitewash, to protect it from the weather, it will last almost for ever. In timber-work, it was thrown in, in a semi-fluid state, often embedding a strong stake, fixed upright between the timbers to give strength to a long piece of pugging and prevent it from falling out. This method was probably used throughout the house, the lath and plaster with which it was covered inside and out being apparently modern. The old plastering—like other examples in the fen district—was not on laths but on reeds. These, of course, could not be nailed to the ceiling joists, so a thin lath was

placed below and at right angles to them under each joist; this was then nailed up to the joist and the plaster made thick enough to cover it. For the partitions, the plaster was probably applied direct to the pugging. The brick wall was covered with plaster¹—tough, from the large amount of hair which it contained, but not very hard, and with very little adhesion to the wall, owing chiefly to the mortar not having been raked out of the joints to form a rough surface or “key” for the plaster.

It is unfortunate that nothing remains to give us any idea of the architectural treatment of the street front; and, as there is no unaltered street front in Cambridge less than a century later than this, we are without means of knowing what the local peculiarities were. The mere fact that no timber-work fronts remain in the neighbourhood, ought perhaps to lead us to the conclusion that they were not very elaborate². But, whether elaborate or simple as a general rule, enough of the Veysy house remains to shew that it was a work of art of great beauty and delicacy³.

¹ I have kept specimens of this and some other materials used.

² During the pulling down of the front part of the Falcon Inn previous to the rebuilding, I noticed, under the overhanging first floor, a very good plaster cove, with rich mouldings in wood at the springing and crown, indicating a certain degree of richness in the original front.

³ I believe that most of the houses on the east side of the Market Place, like many others in Cambridge, though apparently modern, were built in the 16th century. Traces of work of this date exist in many of the houses, and no doubt much more would be found if modern plaster and panelling were removed. A most picturesque building of the same age was pulled down so lately as March, 1891, in the court north of the Veysy house. It consisted of an open timber gallery, supported on posts, at a height of about seven feet from the ground; it projected beyond the line of these, its carved plate being carried by curved brackets springing from the posts. This gallery, which ran along the side of the small court at right angles to the side of the Market Place, connected the back of the house with an out-building of two storeys, the lower of which seemed to be a kitchen. The trough under the yard pump was the bowl of an early

CONTENTS

OF PROCEEDINGS, No. XXXII.

VOL. VII, No. II.

	PAGE
On a sculptured stone from Cheshire. By Professor BROWNE, B.D.	86
On a sculptured stone, with an Ogam Inscription. By the same	88
On the old altar-slab of S. Benedict's Church, Cambridge. By the same	89
On the house of the Veysy Family in Cambridge. By Prof. MIDDLETON and Mr T. D. ATKINSON	93
On a fragment of a book printed by John Siberch at Cambridge. By Mr F. J. H. JENKINSON	104
On alabaster retables from Milton and Whittlesford. By Prof. MIDDLE- TON	106
On the Great Fen Road and its path to the sea. By Mr E. M. BELOE	112
On Syriac and Coptic versions of the Martyrdom of S. George, Patron Saint of England. By E. A. W. BUDGE, M.A.	133
On the Preceptory at Shengay. By Rev. W. H. SHIMFIELD	136
Note on the Cultus of S. George of Cappadocia as Patron Saint of Eng- land. By Rev. E. G. WOOD	147
On British coins found at or near Hitchin. By F. LATCHMORE, Esq.	152
On the formation of the ancient diocese of Ely. By Rev. E. G. WOOD, B.D., and Rev. E. VENABLES, M.A.	157
Annual Report (presented 19 May, 1890).	168
On a sixteenth century Cullen ware jug. By Prof. MIDDLETON	169
On a Christian engraved gem in the Lewis Collection. By the same	171
List of Presents	176
Treasurer's Report, for year ending 31 December, 1889	182
List of Council, elected 19 May, 1890	183