

Report for  
**1 Apiary Gate, Castle Donington, Lecestershire**

*Site Code: CAS-A*

*from*

The Medieval Peasant House in Midland England

by

Nat Alcock and Dan Miles



Fig. 1. View of the house from the south-west

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*Oxbow Books*

CAS-A: 1 APIARY GATE, CASTLE DONINGTON, LECEISTERSHIRE

Grid reference: SK 4463 2731

Survey Date:

By: D. Miles

Illustrations:

1. View of the house
2. Ground floor plan
3. Section of truss T1

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Reference: Derbyshire Buildings Report DBR24, 1981.

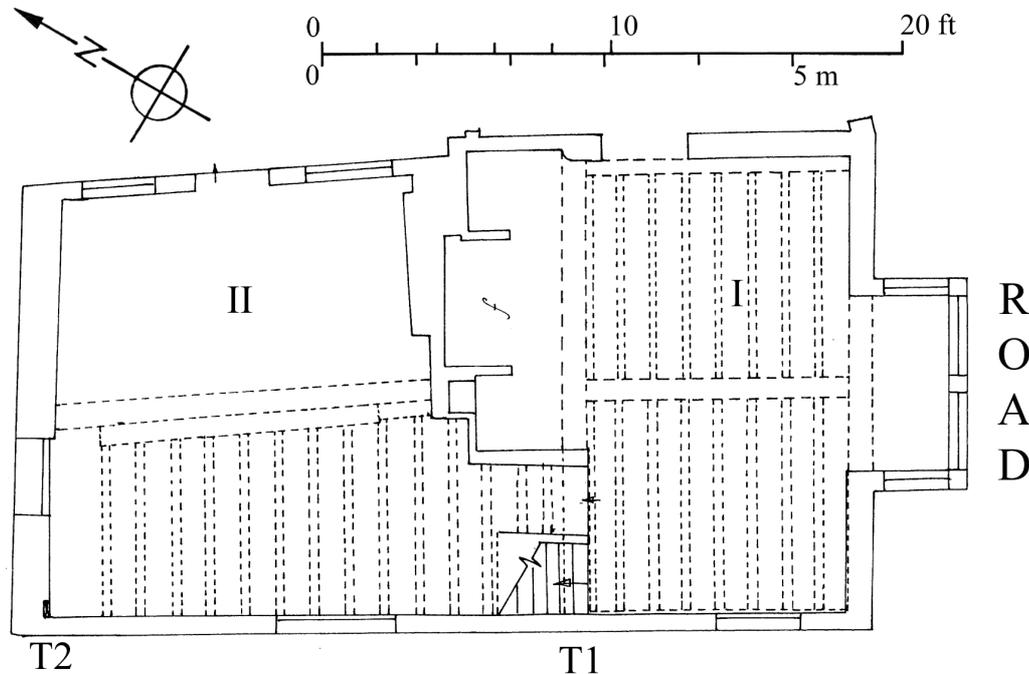


Fig. 2. Plan, showing truss and bay numbering (from DBR24 (1981)).

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The building has been recorded by the Derbyshire Buildings Record, who have kindly made their plan and report available to us.

### SUMMARY AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

PHASE 1: 1 Apiary Gate, Castle Donington retains one bay of a cruck house. It contains one closed cruck truss with a type 'A' apex and the blade to a second open truss, implying the existence of at least one further bay. The first truss (T1) has a single stroke assembly mark suggesting that it was the original end of the building. An estimated felling date range of *1512-35* has been obtained for the ridge piece.

PHASE 2: During the eighteenth century the walls were reconstructed and raised, a sandstone fireplace inserted into bay I, and the rear reconstructed, removing most of the timber frame. The building served as the Bell and Crown Public House, until at least 1921.

### STRUCTURAL FEATURES

PHASE 1: Only the west cruck blade of T2 and the upper part of T1 remain of the original structure. The crucks measure 9 by 10in and taper to about 7in square at the top where they are joined by a yoke 4in below the diagonally set ridge piece. A collar 4½in thick extends beyond the blades to support the purlins, of which only the western one survives (10½ by 8¼in). A tiebeam of similar scantling also extends beyond the cruck blades and probably supported the original wall plates. Truss T2 only has one cruck blade visible, and probably no more survives. It measures 10in wide and has 3in chamfers on both sides. This suggests that it was an open truss. The soffit is concealed, so it is not possible to decide if it was arch-braced; however, this is unlikely, since it be some 30 years later than any other dated arch-braced cruck.

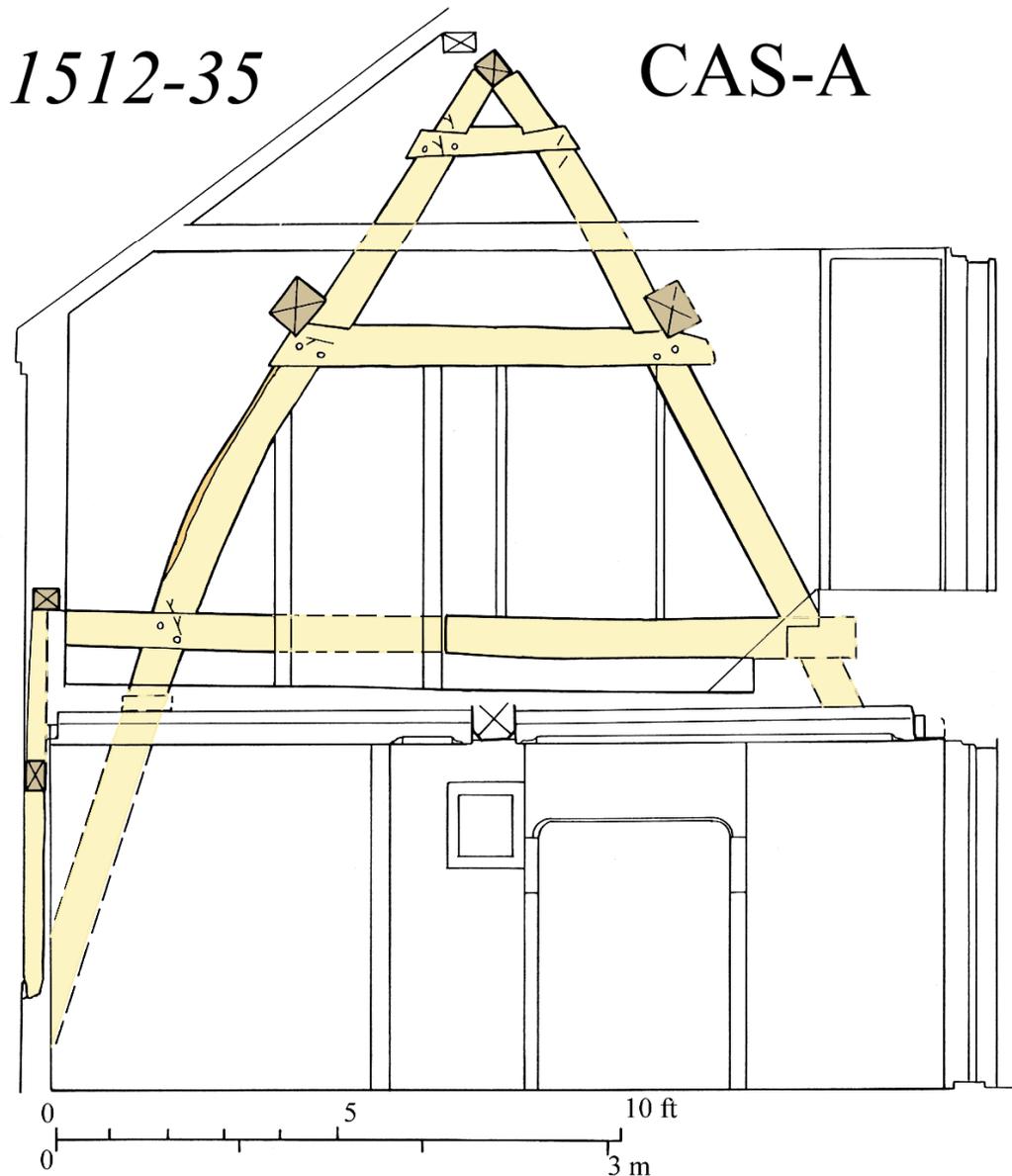


Fig. 3. Section of truss T1.

LATER PHASES: The remains of a smoke hood is evident in bay II immediately behind the stone fireplace in the first bay. The staves run down to the tiebeam, and pass behind the collar at an angle. The staves are very uneven in section and are considerably curved. The floor of the front bay comprises a 9½in axial beam with 3 by 3½in unchamfered joists spaced at about 14in centres. The inserted floor to the rear bay has a similar axial beam with joists 2½-4in by 4½in at 17-19in centres. All these timbers are of elm. The upper floors are of lime/ash construction.

### DENDROCHRONOLOGY

For dendrochronology abbreviations see page facing Introduction.

*Sampling Comments:* seven samples were obtained through coring by Robert Howard on 1st August 1989. A previously suggested tentative date for samples 1, 2, 4 has not been supported in later analysis.

#### TREE-RING SAMPLE RECORD AND SUMMARY OF DATING

Sample Code	Sample Location	Total Rings	Sapwood Rings	FMR Date	LHR Date	LMR Date	Date Cat
CAS-A01	West blade cruck T1	64	17	—	—	—	—
CAS-A02	West purlin bay II	33	04	—	—	—	—
CAS-A03	Tiebeam truss T1	56	17	—	—	—	—

Sample Code	Sample Location	Total Rings	Sapwood Rings	FMR Date	LHR Date	LMR Date	Date Cat
CAS-A04	Collar truss T1	44	21	—	—	—	—
CAS-A05	East cruck blade truss T1	40	05	—	—	—	—
CAS-A06	Ridge piece truss bay II	50	13	1462	1498	1511	3b
CAS-A07	East cruck blade truss T2	18 NM	—	—	—	—	—

Site sequence: Sample 6 dated with *t*-values 4.3 (E.MID), 5.6 (DLHMSQ01, site seq from Manor House, Donington-le-Heath, VA20.89).

95% felling date range: 1512-43 (previously 1512–1536); OxCal refined felling date range **1512-35**.