

Report for

9 The Nook, Cosby, Leicestershire

Site Code: COS-A

from

The Medieval Peasant House in Midland England

by

Nat Alcock and Dan Miles



Fig. 1. View of the house from the south

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Oxbow Books

COS-A: 9 THE NOOK, COSBY, LEICESTERSHIRE

Grid reference: SP 5470 9457 Survey Date: 1989

By: D. Miles

Illustrations:

1. View of the house
2. Block plan
3. Section of truss T2

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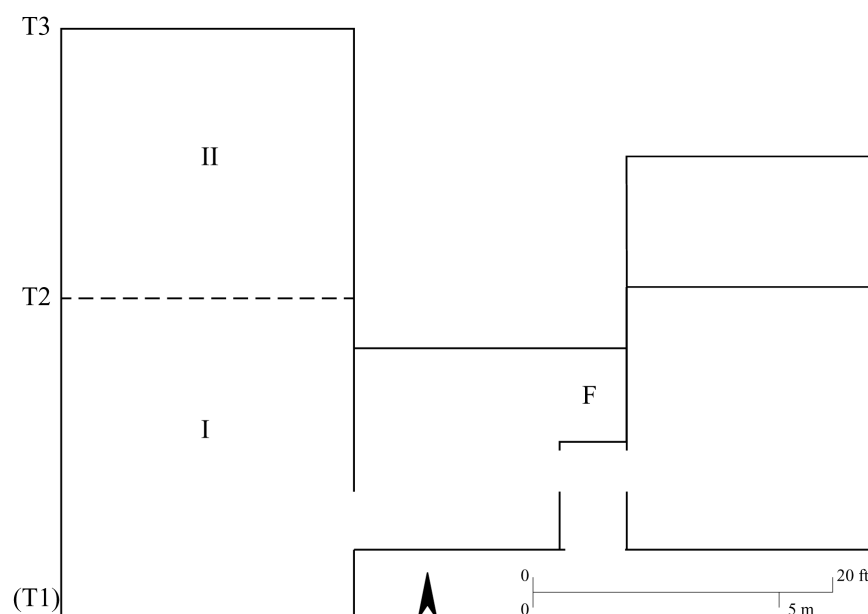


Fig. 2. Block plan, showing truss and bay numbering.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION**SUMMARY AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT**

PHASE 1: The first phase of 9, The Nook consists of the remains of a cruck structure running at right angles to the street. It extended to at least two bays originally but only the centre truss survives above tiebeam level, with a saddle (type 'C') apex, along with fragments of T3 and the west side wall framing (encased in render). No satisfactory dendrochronology date was obtained, but a date in the later fifteenth to earlier sixteenth century can be assigned by comparison to other Leicestershire cruck houses. No evidence of the ground floor plan could be obtained, because of its present use as a shop. The orientation in relation to the street is unusual, though shared by Church Cottage, Cadeby (CAD-A), also a Leicestershire house.

PHASE 2: Probably during the eighteenth century, a block was built to the east which included a large inglenook fireplace with cupboards either side. Also during this period, the front bay of the cruck section was reconstructed, with a doorway cut through the eastern wall plate to communicate with the first floor of the extension. A cruck blade was reused as a new wall plate about three feet above the existing one, and a ridge piece as a purlin along the front hip. These reused timbers have evidence of soot blackening.

PHASE 3: In the nineteenth century, the building was further extended to the east with a two-storey wing and a range of stables and outbuildings was built to the rear of a cobbled yard which was approached by a covered way under the houses immediately to the east. Within the last 30 years, the upper part of the rear bay of the cruck range was demolished, leaving the centre cruck truss (T2) exposed and infilled with modern brickwork. A short section of the cruck blade of truss T3 survives at the rear of bay II.

STRUCTURAL FEATURES

PHASE 1, CRUCK RANGE: Truss T2 has a saddle apex, on which the ridge, since removed, would have rested. The blades are further connected by a tiebeam and a collar; packing pieces rise from the upper surface of the tiebeam to the blades, and are halved over the extended ends of the collar. These packing pieces have mortices for wind-braces on the southern face only. The blades have been severed

about two feet below the tiebeam. The tiebeam measures $5\frac{1}{2}$ by $6\frac{1}{2}$ in thick, although the collar is only measures 4in thick. The crucks, however are much more substantial, boxed heart, 11in thick.

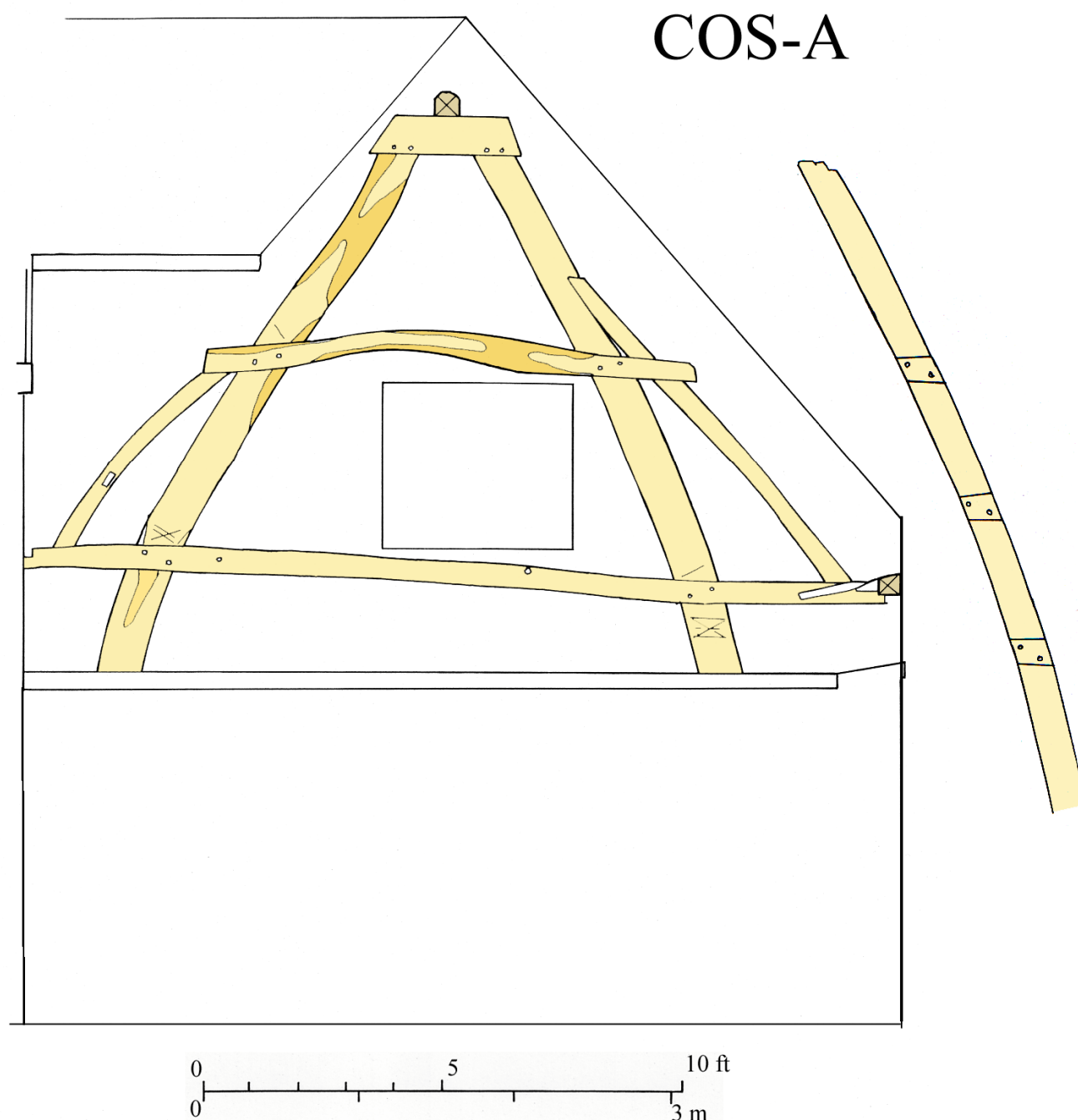


Fig. 3. Section of truss T2. Inset: cruck blade re-used as a wall plate

A $5\frac{1}{2}$ in square section of wall-plate is in situ along the western side of bay I. All the framing of bay II along this wall has had the top two feet removed, at the level of the present flat roof of this bay. A section of ridge has been reused as a purlin in the reconstructed bay I; it measures $6\frac{1}{2}$ by 6in and shows that the rafters were originally spaced at $16\frac{1}{2}$ in centres, offset from one side to the other. An $8\frac{1}{2}$ in wide cruck blade has been reused as a wall plate (Fig. 3, inset). It has three halvings, the middle one for a bare-faced dovetail.

Assembly marks are partly visible on the north face of truss T2. A II with an intersecting stroke is used above the eastern side of the tie, and a I is visible above the eastern end of the collar and above the western end of the tiebeam. Below this is, a 'square' mark. Another interesting carpentry feature not seen elsewhere is the method of pegging. On the face side, the start of the hole has been scalloped out about $\frac{1}{2}$ in wider than the peg hole and almost as deep. The peg which is $\frac{3}{4}$ in diameter has a thickened head

which wedges into the cup, thus making a tight fit. It is not obvious why such a wide cup should be gouged out, as a less tapered hole would grip the peg more tightly.

DENDROCHRONOLOGY

For dendrochronology abbreviations see page facing Introduction.

Sampling Comments: Eight samples were obtained through coring by Robert Howard on 4th August 1989, of which the first three all came from the eastern cruck blade. None could be matched against master sequences.

TREE-RING SAMPLE RECORD AND SUMMARY OF DATING

Sample Code	Sample Location	Total Rings	Sapwood Rings	FMR Date	LHR Date	LMR Date	Date Cat
COS-A01	Front East cruck blade truss T2 (core 1)	47	—	—	—	—	—
COS-A02	Front East cruck blade truss T2 (core 2)	47	—	—	—	—	—
COS-A03	Front East cruck blade truss T2 (core 3)	77	29	—	—	—	—
COS-A04	West cruck blade truss T2	79	—	—	—	—	—
COS-A05	Collar truss T2	44	HS	—	—	—	—
COS-A06	Tie beam truss T2	43	08	—	—	—	—
COS-A07	West packing piece truss T2	31	HS	—	—	—	—
COS-A08	East packing piece truss T2	36	HS	—	—	—	—

Not dated.