

Report for
**Vine Cottage, 9 Main Street, Newtown Linford,
Leicestershire**

Site Code: NEW-A

from

The Medieval Peasant House in Midland England

by

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

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Oxbow Books

NEW-A: VINE COTTAGE, 9 MAIN STREET, NEWTOWN LINFORD,
LEICESTERSHIRE

Grid reference: SK 5201 0989 Survey Date: 6 October 1989 By: D. Miles

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Reference: Webster, V. R. (1954) 'Cruck-framed buildings of Leicestershire', *Leicestershire Archaeol Hist Soc Trans*, **30**, 26-58.

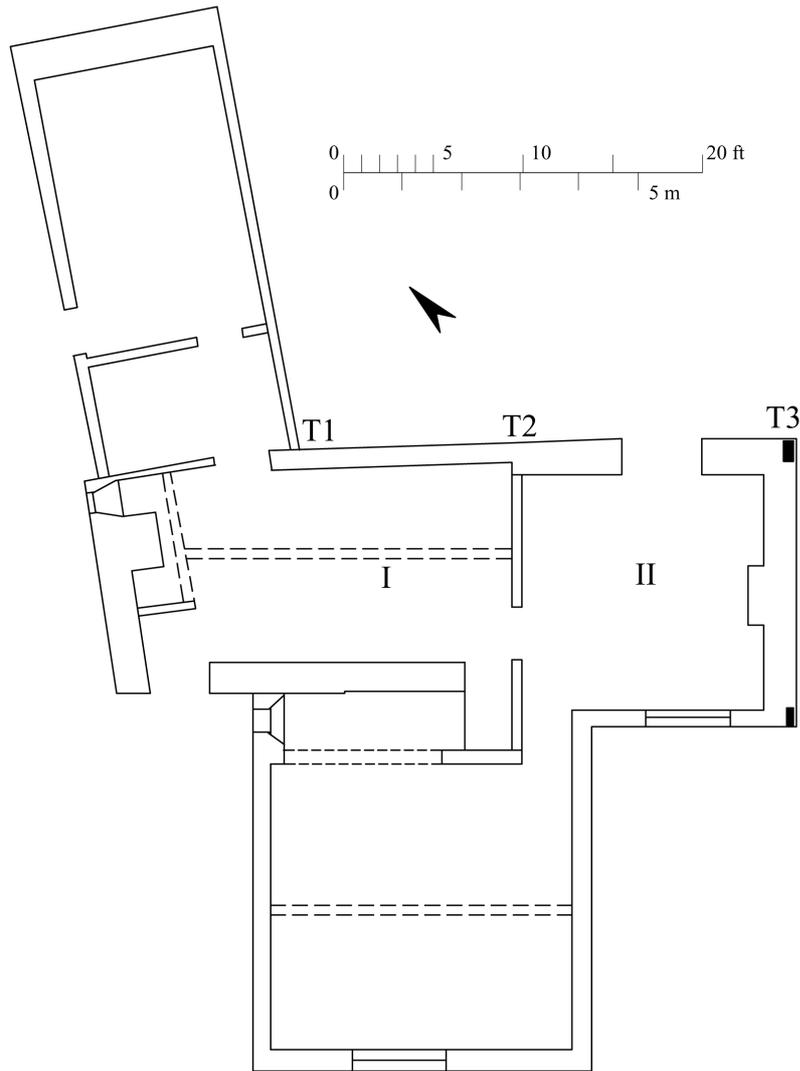


Fig. 2. Plan, showing truss and bay numbering (scale approximate).

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SUMMARY AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

PHASE 1: Vine Cottage originally consisted of at least three bays running from north-west to south-east, parallel to but set back from the village street. Only two bays survive, the south-eastern bay(s) having been demolished. No evidence of soot blackening was noted, so it was not possible to identify the position of an open hall. However, bay II has early wide joists laid flat, which may have formed an original floor. If so, then the hall would have been to the south-east in the now demolished part. The two-bay chamber that this would indicate is unusual, although not unknown. Rose Cottage, Ashbury, Oxfordshire (unpublished), is a house which had a two-bay floored chamber adjacent to a two-bay open hall. It is also possible that bay I had a service or non-domestic function, separate from the main house.

No tree-ring date could be obtained for Vine Cottage, but a fifteenth century date is likely on typological grounds.

LATER PHASES: Sometime between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a further bay was built to the north-west, at a slight angle to the end of bay I. After this, a cross-wing was added to the front of bay I. This provided a parlour downstairs and a bed-chamber upstairs. Still later, probably in the eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries, the north-west bay was extended to the rear.

STRUCTURAL FEATURES

PHASE 1: Little of the structure is visible above the upstairs ceiling. Truss T1 is mostly obscured, with the rear blade possibly a re-used replacement, as may be the front purlin in bay I, although the rear purlin appears to be original. Truss T2 again is not visible above the collar level, but is somewhat higher than T1. The purlins in bay II have evidence for windbraces. Bay II contains substantial joists laid flat which appear to be primary. These run longitudinally between the tiebeams of trusses T2 and T3.

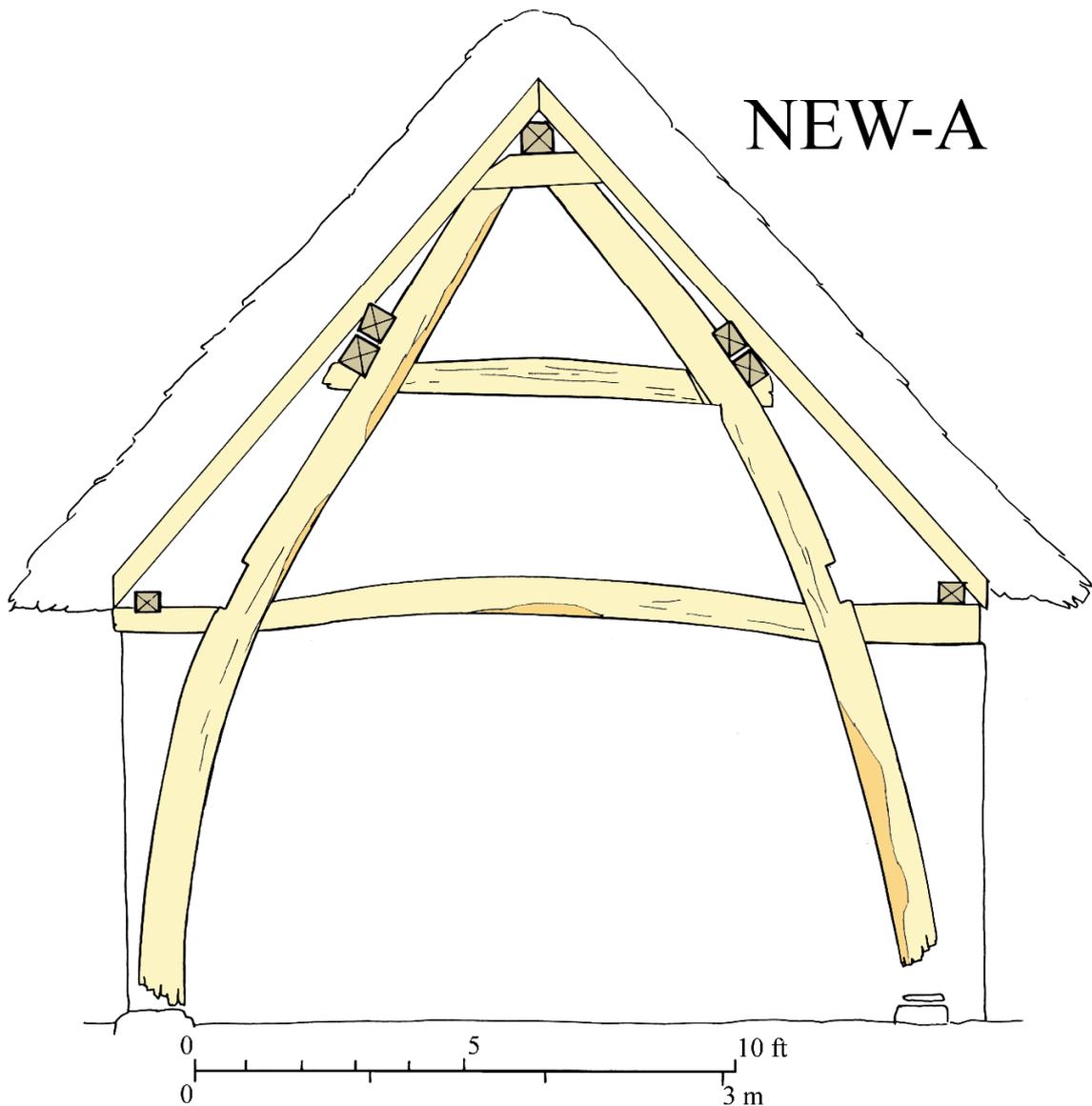


Fig. 3. Section of truss T3.

Truss T3 is visible externally from the ground to the top of the roof.¹ It comprises two cruck blades which are well curved and are joined at the top by a saddle which carries a 7 in square ridge piece. The blades are trenched on the north-west side for a tiebeam and a collar, both of which are not flush on the

¹ Webster(1954) illustrates truss T3 (Fig 2, p. 29), but his drawing is only a sketch.

present external elevation to the south-east. Thus, it was an internal truss, subsequently exposed through the demolition of bay III (and bay IV if it existed). The tiebeam extends beyond the blades to support the 6 by 5in wall-plates. The collars similarly extend to support the 7in square purlins which are also slightly trenched into the back of the blades. The purlins also support the surviving stub ends of the bay III purlins.

All principal timbers were converted from whole trees, and were finished with an axe, and not sawn. No assembly marks were noted. Padstones are present under each cruck blade.

DENDROCHRONOLOGY

For dendrochronology abbreviations see page facing Introduction.

Sampling Comments: Ten samples were obtained through coring by Robert Howard on 6 October 1989. Five crucks, three purlins and two floor joists were sampled. Sample NEW-A07 is from a timber which may be a later replacement. All but one of the samples had less than 60 rings. Three samples matched together to form a sequence of 58 rings, and two additional samples were grouped to form a second sequence of 46 rings. Although a tentative match was obtained for the first sequence, this has not been confirmed.

TREE-RING SAMPLE RECORD AND SUMMARY OF DATING

Sample Code	Sample Location	Total Rings	Sapwood Rings	FMR Date	LHR Date	LMR Date	Date Cat
NEW-A01	Front cruck blade truss T3	41	14	—	—	—	—
NEW-A02	Rear cruck blade truss T3	31 NM	—	—	—	—	—
NEW-A03	Front cruck blade truss T2	46	16	—	—	—	—
NEW-A04	Front purlin bay II	58	20	—	—	—	—
NEW-A05	Rear purlin bay II	52	04	—	—	—	—
NEW-A06	Rear cruck blade truss T2	41	21	—	—	—	—
NEW-A07	Front purlin bay I	117	35	—	—	—	—
NEW-A08	Front cruck blade truss T1	61	06	—	—	—	—
NEW-A09	Ceiling joist	34 NM	—	—	—	—	—
NEW-A10	Ceiling joist	8 NM	—	—	—	—	—

Not dated.