

Report and Documentary History for
22-5 Birmingham Road, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire
Site Code: STO-D

from

The Medieval Peasant House in Midland England

by

Nat Alcock and Dan Miles



Fig. 1. View of the house from the north.

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Oxbow Books

STO-D: 22-5 BIRMINGHAM ROAD, STONELEIGH, WARWICKSHIRE

Grid reference: SP 3296 7276

Survey Date: 1967-1988

By: N W Alcock

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References: Alcock, N. W., Braithwaite, J. G. and Jeffs, M. W. (1971-3) 'Timber-framed buildings in Warwickshire: Stoneleigh village', *Trans Birmingham Archaeol. Soc.* **85**, 178-202; Alcock, N. W. (1993) *People at home: Living in a Warwickshire village, 1500-1800*, Chichester: Phillimore.

For documentary source references, see the bibliography of primary sources.

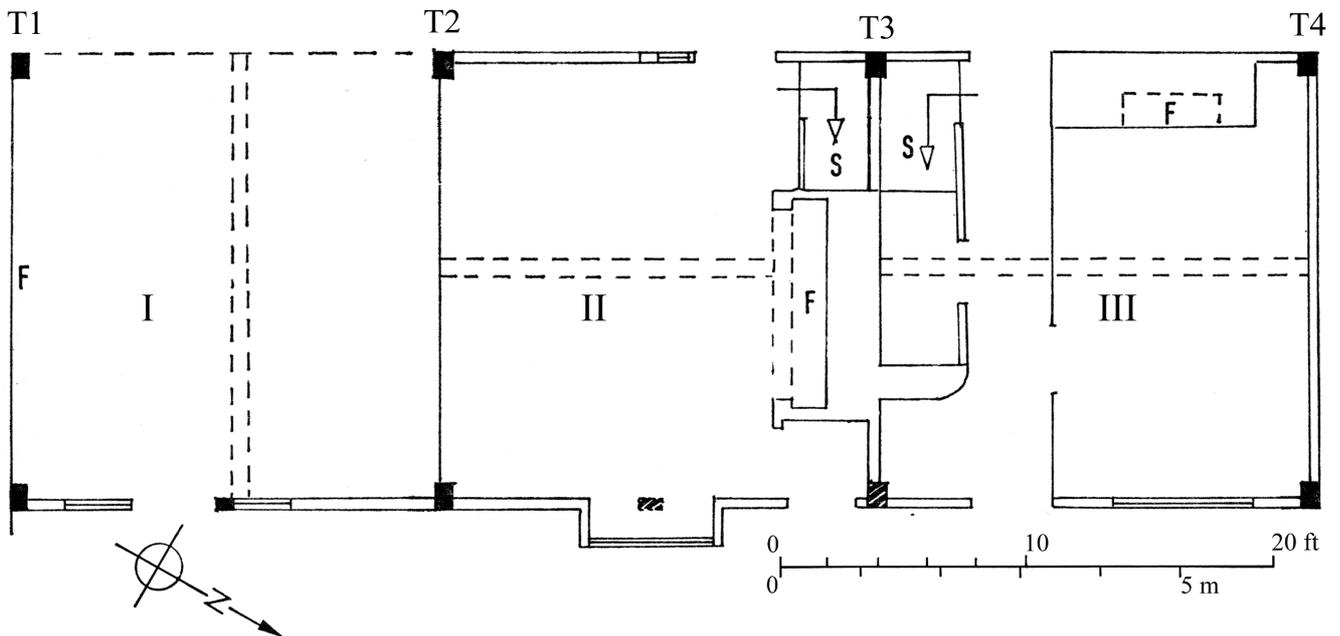


Fig. 2. Plan, showing truss and bay numbering (from Alcock *et al* (1971-3).

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SUMMARY AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

This is a well-preserved cruck house, with virtually complete wall-framing, although not very much internal detail was visible when recorded. It has given a felling date range of 1496-1515. The three bays probably comprised floored inner room; hall; entry and service/kitchen. In the seventeenth century, the hall and kitchen were floored, and a chimney inserted.

STRUCTURAL FEATURES

PHASE 1: Four complete closed cruck trusses define the three original bays. The blades are boxed heart, and the trusses have halved collars, spurs and tiebeams, and they carry packing pieces; none of the trusses have any decorative features. The sill beams are supported on low sandstone walls. Three of the trusses have saddle apexes (T1 and T4), one carrying a kingpost (T3) (types C and F1). Truss T2 has a rather crude form of H-apex, in which the top parts of the blades clasp the two parts of the scarfed ridge.

The simple original wall-framing is virtually complete on the front (north-east) elevation. Each cruck blade has a wall-stud on its outside, carried in a V-cut on the cruck and secured by a face-peg; the cruck spurs are halved across these studs, projecting beyond them. Plank-like studs (8in across) are set in the centre of each bay, and 8in deep mid-rails span from stud to stud; the mid-rail in bay III is a

replacement. The large panels defined by these elements appear originally not to have been subdivided, although some bays now have additional light studs inserted. The wattle-and-daub infill has been replaced in brick, apart from one small panel. No evidence for the original door position survives (contrast STO-F), and no window framing elements can be identified. The windows were perhaps held by light studs set into un-pegged mortices in the rails.

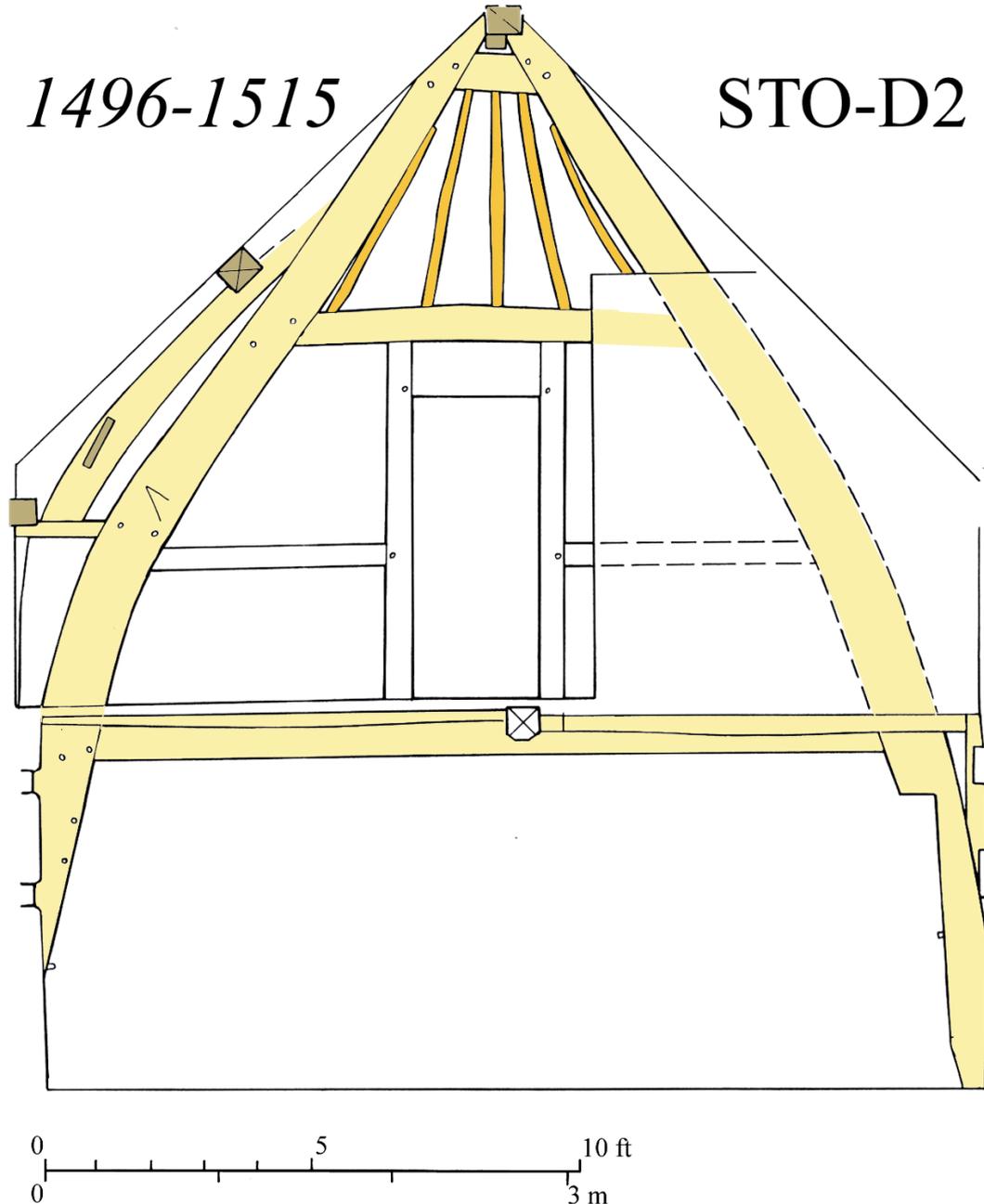


Fig. 3(a). Section of truss T2.

The floor in bay I is carried by a transverse ceiling beam, and is likely to be original, although this cannot be proved. Evidence for soot-blackening is concealed, but the general room functions are likely to be the same as those of 1 Birmingham Road (STO-F): bay I, inner chamber with solar above; bay II, open hall; bay III, entry and kitchen/service (cf Alcock (1993) 23f).

LATER PHASES: In later work, upper floors were inserted in bays II and III, with a chimney in bay II. The ceiling beam in bay II and fireplace lintel have chamfers and scroll stops, indicating a seventeenth century date. An additional bay was added beyond bay III, probably in the late seventeenth/eighteenth century. The north side of truss T4 is weathered, indicating that it was exposed for some time.

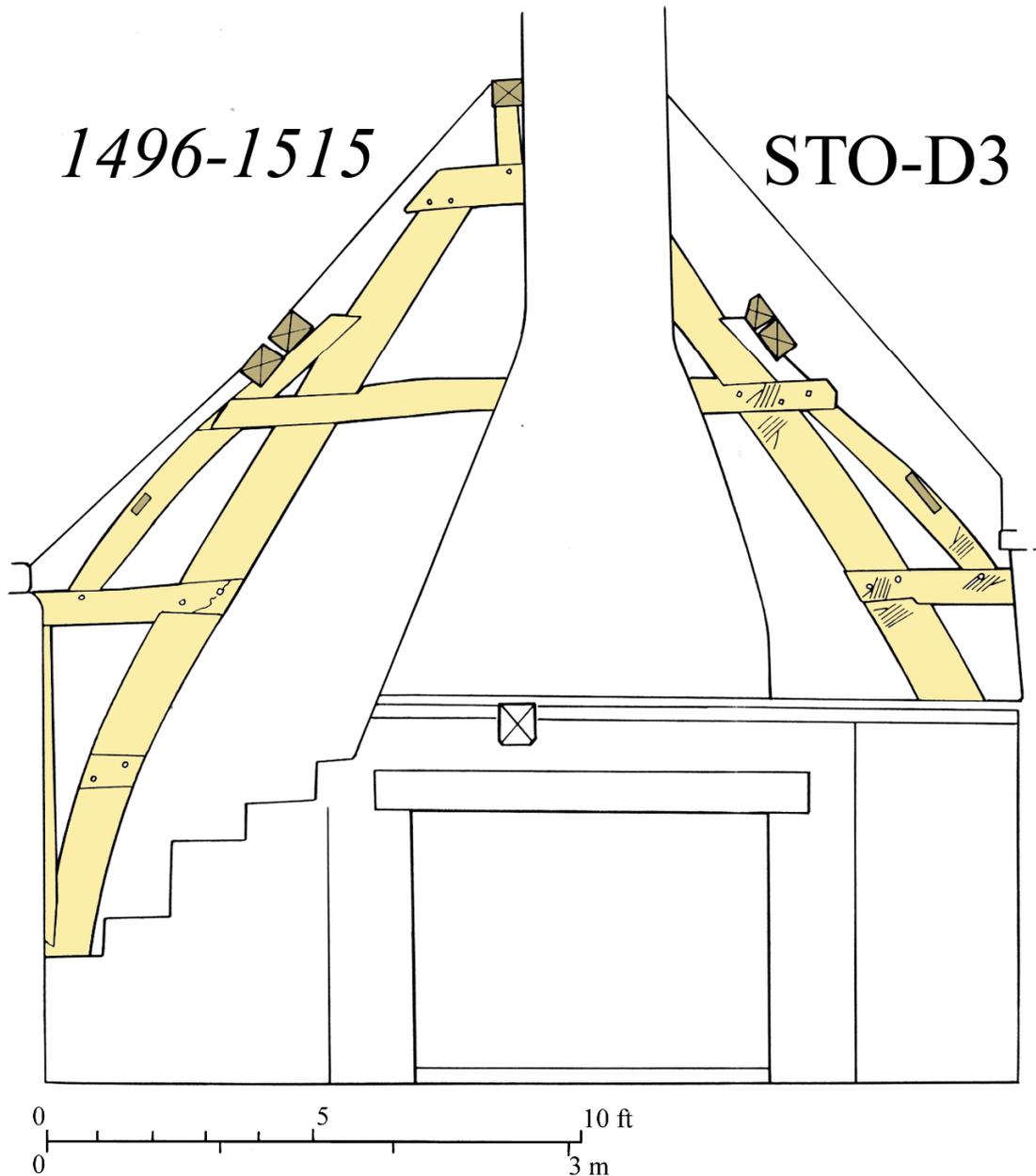


Fig. 3(b). Section of truss T3.

DENDROCHRONOLOGY

For dendrochronology abbreviations see page facing Introduction.

Sampling comments: 6 samples were obtained through coring by Robert Howard on 8th November 1988

REE-RING SAMPLE RECORD AND SUMMARY OF DATING

Sample Code	Sample Location	Total Rings	Sapwood Rings	FMR Date	LHR Date	LMR Date	Date Cat	
STO-D01	Cruck blade truss T4 rear	44	10	—	—	—	—	
STO-D02	Cruck blade truss T3 rear	76	01	1399	1473	1474	2	
STO-D03	Cruck blade truss T3 front	63	HS	1425	1487	1487	2	
STO-D04	Cruck blade truss T2 front	31 NM	—	—	—	—	—	
STO-D05	Spur post truss T3 rear	52	03	—	—	—	—	
STO-D06	Tie beam truss T4	38 NM	10	—	—	—	—	
					Average date of last heartwood ring		1480	

Site sequence: (composed of samples 2, 3), 89 rings long dated 1399–1487 with t -values of 5.3(E.MID), 6.0(HIW-ASQ01, site sequence of Thatched Cottage, Hill Wootton, VA20.89)

95% felling date range: **1489–1521** (revised from 1495–1530, VA20.89, due to new sapwood estimates).

DOCUMENTARY HISTORY

This house can be traced continuously through estate rentals and surveys from 1597 when it was held by Thomas Tym, back to the later fifteenth century, initially paying a rent of 4s per year. Until 1575, it had only 2 acres of enclosed land, but 3 acres in the open fields were then added, from a holding that had been replaced by the newly-built almshouses (Alcock (1993) 141).



STO-D

Fig. 4. Section of the 1597 map of Stoneleigh (SCLA, DR671/3, reproduced with permission).

The probate inventory of Godfrey Parton (1559) lists the following rooms:

Haul, Chamber, Other chamber, Kechen.

The 'other chamber' was probably the upper chamber at the south end of the house. He had considerably more crops (six quarters of malt and rye) and stock (10 cows, 6 pigs and 6 sheep) than could be supported by his very small holding, and he must have farmed additional land. Since he appears nowhere else in the rentals, this might have been sub-leased from one of his neighbours, but is more likely to have been located in the near-by village of Baginton where he had family connections with the gentry family of Goodier.

The 1669 inventory of Dorothy Lockwood, widow, shows that the house had changed very little in the ensuing century. It lists:

Parlour, (boards over the parlour), Little lodging room, Hall house, Buttery

Indeed in one respect it seems less developed, with the only indication of an upper floor being the valuation of boards over the parlour.¹ Her hall and buttery must correspond to Godfrey Parton's hall and

¹ This description probably refers to the original upper floor that the house apparently contained.

kitchen. As well as a bed, the 'little lodging room' contained a barrel and garden tools, so is likely to have been on the ground floor. The upper end of the house may have been axially divided (as at 8-9 Vicarage Road, Stoneleigh, STO-C), or this may have been a small lean-to room.

Table 1. Tenants of the holding

<i>Date</i>	<i>Rent</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Notes</i>
1488-90	4s	Henry Plesans	
1497	4s	Thomas Wyor	<i>Identified from sequence and rent paid</i>
1533	4s	Thomas Partryck	
1536	4s	Roger Slough	
1550	4s	Godfrey Parton	(died 1559)
1559-64	4s	Richard Martyn	
1566-70	4s	Widow Marten	
1570-88	8s	Thomas Tyme	
1597-9	16s	Thomas Tyme	