

the ground-floor hall to one bay. The date of the insertion of the floor is indicated by the beam that spanned the ceiling of the farmhouse hall, or living-room; it was 12 in. wide and 6 in. deep and bore an ovolo moulding characteristic of the period 1575 to 1640. Two beams on either side of the cross-passage ceiling had a similar moulding.

Visible on the S. front of the building to the right of the doorway and above one of the passage-beams was a post, about 9 by 9 in. at its base, that retained the same width to the top but gradually thickened on the inside of the building to form a 16-in. shoulder supporting the first pair of tie-beams at D (FIG. 40). This post was possibly introduced during the alterations made in the early 17th century.

No documentary evidence about the tenure of the building has yet been discovered, but it is a notable addition, a little NE. of the general pattern of distribution, to the growing list of medieval buildings of aisled form, but with a base-cruck truss across the open hall. It was demolished early in December, 1967.<sup>24</sup>

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### A SINGLE-AISLED HALL AT CONISBROUGH CASTLE, YORKSHIRE

When the nave of a church had been built without aisles it was not uncommon for the N. or S. wall to be broken through for an arcade, so that an aisle could be formed beyond it to provide extra accommodation in the church. Alternatively in the later middle ages one of two aisles might be demolished and the arcade blocked up. In either case the result was a single-aisled building, but one created by growth or contraction; it is a very different matter from one designed from the beginning to have only one aisle. Indeed the only reason for building such a lop-sided structure that suggests itself is that a massive obstacle on one side would overshadow the clerestory or make the construction of an aisle difficult. Such clearly was the reason for omitting a N. aisle in the hall that has come to light against the N. curtain-wall in Conisbrough Castle which it is the purpose of this note briefly to record.

Work by the Ministry of Public Building and Works began in 1967 on the long task of disentangling the visible and covered foundations in the inner bailey. It was soon evident that a long building, measuring 77 by 33 ft., had stood in the NW. corner of the bailey. Its N. side was formed by the curtain-wall which curved round through 90 degrees to form also its W. gable-end; as a result the W. end tapered and was much narrower than the E. end. The arcade divided the building into a S. aisle, roughly 12 ft. wide, and a main nave, 19 ft. wide (at the E. end). The two eastern bays (19 ft. wide) are broader than the two western bays (16 ft.) in the four-bay structure. The western 1½ bays are higher than the rest of the hall and retain a stone column-base for a smaller column; the central and eastern columns were marked by paving (the eastern column-base lying a few feet away has been replaced).<sup>25</sup> The base of a central hearth, measuring 11 by 7 ft., adjoins the central column on its N. side, projecting westwards. A series of service-buildings extends eastwards along the inner face of the N. curtain, terminating in the kitchen, close to the famous keep. The range running south at right angles from the W., or upper, end of the hall was two-storied and evidently contained the chamber on its first floor, where remains of a fine fireplace survive in the curtain-wall. This area has not yet been fully explored. The very irregular plan would not have been apparent to the medieval visitor until he entered, since he would have seen only the regular SE. side from the outside. Such slight indications as have been found suggest that the hall was well built and not of very different date from that of the keep, say c. 1200. Fuller descriptions of the work will be available in due course.

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<sup>24</sup> I am indebted to Mr. S. E. Rigold and Mr. M. W. Barley for their advice and help with the text of this note.

<sup>25</sup> This base, already slightly moved from its original position, is shown in the otherwise misleading plan in G. T. Clark, *Medieval Military Architecture in England* (London, 1884), I, 432.