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# LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

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## THE OLD COTTAGE SOUTH ROAD NORTH SOMERCOTES

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### Archaeological Survey

September 1994



# THE OLD COTTAGE SOUTH ROAD NORTH SOMERCOTES

## Archaeological Survey

### SUMMARY

*Archaeological recording was carried out at the Old Cottage, South Road prior to demolition. The cottage was a one and a half storey building with extensions to the north and east. The north outshut was originally mud and stud construction as was the north wall of the main building, the rest being in brick. A detailed photographic and measured survey of the empty building. Selected areas of wall were stripped of wallpaper and render to reveal more clearly the main structural components of the building. A complex history of alterations was uncovered, made all the more difficult to interpret because the same timbers had been reused on several occasions in different parts of the building. It is suggested that the earliest part of the cottage was the mud and stud wall, possibly dating to the 17th century.*

### INTRODUCTION by Naomi Field

TF 4173 9612

Lindsey Archaeological Services was commissioned to undertake a survey of a mud and stud cottage at South Rd, North Somercotes by the owner Mr C. Grantham, prior to demolition. The building was a Grade II Listed Building and a planning condition of its demolition was that a programme of archaeological work would be implemented according to an agreed scheme of work. The survey was undertaken to fulfill the requirements of East Lindsey District Council and the County Archaeological Officer's Brief dated April 1994.

### METHOD

The survey was undertaken on July 11th and 12th after the cottage had been vacated. A full photographic record was made in colour and black and white film of external and internal elevations, with selected details.

A measured survey was also carried out using tapes. Parts of the building were stripped of wallpaper and render to investigate specific areas of interest. There was no recording during demolition because of restrictions on funding.

### DESCRIPTION

The cottage on South Rd, which had no name or number, was situated south of the village centre, although there are one or two properties which lie even further south along the same road (Fig. 1). The cottage had been bought as a smallholding in about 1924 by the father of the present owners. It was set in the NE corner of the property, gable end to the road, surrounded by a hedged garden on all sides, including a large vegetable plot to its west (Pls. 1-6). A single earth closet is located in the garden just west of the cottage (Pls. 7 and 8). The smallholding also comprised a large field west of the gardens and a plot to the south containing a 19th century brick building, formerly a slaughterhouse. A photographic record was made of the privy but the rest of the property was not included in the survey.



The original cottage was a 1 1/2 storey building with 2 rooms on each floor. The central entrance on the south elevation gave access to the living room/kitchen. To the left was the smaller front room (parlour). Access to the bedrooms was originally via a ladder or stair in the NE corner of the living room next to the chimney breast (removed when the cottage was enlarged). The two bedrooms were interconnecting, the far bedroom being the smaller of the two, just as the rooms downstairs were of unequal sizes.

A single storey outshot extended the full length of the building on its north side which was originally of mud and stud construction and comprising a scullery, larder and wash house with a coal house on its west end, accessible only from outside.

A later single storey brick extension had been added to the east side comprising a passage leading to an inserted stair to the bedrooms and a ground floor room which had been a shop, with a large east window (blocked) and adjacent door, reached by a short path from the main road.

In the angle between the outshot and the east extension was a single storey brick wash house with the position of the copper still clearly marked. The wash house was last used for laundering in the 1950s.

A full photographic survey was undertaken of internal and external elevations in colour print and black and white. A full measured survey of the building was carried out using tapes (Figs. 2-8).

## **ROOM DESCRIPTIONS**

The names of the rooms described below are those used by the Grantham family with more universal terms in brackets.

### **1. Front Room (Parlour)**

Left of main entrance, single door access in the south-east corner leading off the living room and front door. There is a single vertical sliding sash window in the south wall. The fireplace in the west wall is cast iron with Art Nouveau style decoration c. later than 1900 complete with grate and separate trivet hob and brown square tile surround, possibly as late as 1915 in date (Pl. 9). The hearth comprised oblong brown tiles of the same glaze as the fireplace surround. Upon removal the opening was examined but there was no trace of the original fireplace, which must have been smaller. The fireplace was carefully removed prior to demolition for disposal by the owner.

The binder for the upper floor joists ran from the centre of the window at the front of the building, resting on the window lintel to the back of the room where it was inserted into a vertical wooden post which formed part of the timber frame of a mud and stud structure (Pl. 10).

This was the only ground floor room to be boarded and not tiled, as would be expected in the best room. The boards were 140mm (5 1/2") wide, 30mm thick, tongue and groove laid west-east and completely rotten (Pl. 10). They



were laid on wooden joists but there was hardly any cavity below the boards which meant they had suffered from dry rot.

The front room door was boarded tongue and groove with three ledges (Pl. 11). The brass door knob was a replacement (by Mr Grantham's father) and dates to c.1870.

## **2.The Living Room**

The largest ground floor room was the Living room which had contained the kitchen range in the east firestack (Pls. 11 and 12). The original range was replaced after the war with a slightly smaller second-hand range bought from Grainthorpe. Called 'The Yorkist' it was new in 1939 (Pl. 12 and 13). The chimney breast projected into the room and the niche to its south was boarded across to form a small cubby hole (Pl. 13). Its door was of 3 boards and 2 ledges with an attractive open spring catch and bolt (Pl. 14). To the north of the fireplace was the original position of the stair/ladder access to the first floor bedrooms (Pl. 12). This was revealed when the ceiling was stripped of the cellotex board cladding, which was installed after the original ceiling had collapsed during the War. The binder was the same as that recorded in the Front Room, similarly supported at the front of the building on the window lintel. Here the joint was too decayed to record. Its north end was inserted into the side of a vertical post, part of the mud and stud frame.

The quarry tile floor was badly worn around the edges, the result of many years of traffic around a central table. The tiles were 190mm (7 1/4-7 1/2' ) square, with staggered joints (Pls 11 and 12).

The doors leading off the Living Room were probably all contemporary (Pls. 11 and 12). The door to the Front room has been described above. The door in the north wall led to the scullery. It was made of 3 boards with 3 ledges. The Norfolk latch had trefoil terminals and a simple thumb latch (Pls. 15 and 16). There were plain strap hinges with a circular terminal; the lower one had been replaced.

The passage door in the east wall was an insertion dating to the extension of the cottage eastwards but it matched the scullery door in every detail. In addition to the Norfolk latch there was a lock with a large keyhole in a wooden stock.

## **3. The Passage**

This was contained within the east brick extension, its west wall being the gable wall of the original cottage. Its west wall was a tongue and groove partition wall separating it from the main room in the extension, the former butchers shop, recently used as a kitchen (Pl. 18). Access to this room was from the south end of the passage opposite the door leading from the living room. At the south end of the passage was the steep ladder stair which had been inserted through the gable wall of the cottage, with a door at its base (Pl. 17).



#### **4. Kitchen**

This room was the butchers shop before the cottage was bought by the Grantham family in 1924 (Pl. 18). No shop fittings survived. The original shop window in the east wall was blocked up many years ago but the adjacent shop door survived although it had not been used for a long time. A single vertical sliding sash window survived in the south wall (Pl. 19). The butter churn was kept in this room when the present occupiers were children. More recently it had been used as a kitchen. The floor was covered in the same quarry tiles as present in the passage and the Living room.

#### **5. Coal House**

This was the west part of the north outshot originally constructed in mud and stud. There was garden access only to this part of the building through a small door in the NW corner. The wall above the door had collapsed c. 1974 and was rebuilt by Mr C.Grantham; the repair was clearly visible.

The east dividing wall was mud and stud with laths. It had been faced with brick on the coal house side, probably to prevent coal dust from contaminating food in the adjacent dairy/larder (Pl. 20).

#### **6. Dairy/Larder**

The dairy lay adjacent to the coal house in the mud and stud outshot. Its brick floor had raised slabs to either side of a central aisle with pine shelving above, three shelves on the south side, one to the west and one to the north. The partition wall between the larder dairy and the coal house was mud and stud with a blocked central access (Pl.21). this suggests that the coal house may once have been part of the dairy. There was a small horizontal sliding sash window in the north wall.

#### **7. Scullery**

The scullery formed the eastern half of the mud and stud outshot and lay east of the dairy. There was access from the living room through the north wall of the main building. Next to the horizontal sliding sash window, in the NE corner of the room, was a white enamelled stoneware sink and drainer with no running water (Pl. 22). Behind the sink in the north wall was a blocked back door which had led to the back garden with a well and a pump by the hedge, c. 2m north of the doorway. The window had been enlarged eastwards at the same time as the blocking of the door (Mr Grantham pers. comm.). The brick floor was the same as found in the dairy and the wash house, with pairs laid alternately

#### **8. Wash house**

An inserted door in the east wall of the scullery gave access to a single storey brick extension in the NE corner of the building which had been constructed after the addition of the butchers shop. There had been a copper in the NE corner of the room with a brick corner flue above (Pl. 23). A small window in the east wall had been boarded up many years ago. Originally there had been a door in the north wall, west of the copper, leading to the



garden but this had been blocked prior to the arrival of the Grantham family in 1924. The wash house was in use until the early 1950s when the chimney fell down; the pot was seen in the garden. The copper had been removed but the brick base was still intact.

### **First Floor (Rooms 9 and 10)**

There were two bedrooms above the parlour and the Living Room. Access was via the ladder stair in the passage (Pl. 24) but the original stair had been north of the chimney stack in the Living Room. Mr Grantham had been told by his father of its existence, which was confirmed when a part-rectangular blocking in the bedroom floorboards was seen after removal of the lino (Pl. 25). (A possible access in the corner of the parlour was found after surface stripping to be simply a ceiling repair.)

The bedrooms lay within the roof cavity with sloping ceilings to north and south giving very restricted headroom over much of the area. Each room had a single dormer with horizontal sliding sash window on the south elevation, where water ingress had been the cause of much rot to the timbers below. There was a small square blocked window in the west gable originally providing extra light in the west bedroom (Pl. 27).

The east firestack projected into the east bedroom but there was no fireplace (Pl. 25), nor was there any provision for heating in the west bedroom.

The floor boards in both rooms were laid north-south and had been patched in several places. There was evidence for the presence of a thin partition, which had been nailed to the floor, along the centre of the east bedroom forming a corridor to the far bedroom (Pls. 25 and 26). The partition wall between the two rooms was constructed in tongue and groove panels (Pls. 28 and 29). Stripping of the wallpaper revealed that there had been two doors in the partition. The north door had presumably been blocked when the original stair was removed when the Butcher's shop extension and new south stair were constructed. It is not known when the partition was removed but being central it could have functioned during the use of either door.

Given the extreme limitations of the usable floor area the alterations of stair and partition access are probably inter-related. The existing south doorway was created by removing the exact area of partition wall required to block the north doorway, transferring the usable floor area, which now included the blocked north stair from south to north. Access from the stair-head had to be achieved diagonally because of the restricted head-room (hence the partition door positions) which was allowed for in the original purpose-built stair (Fig. 4). Access between the stair-head and the west bedroom used up more than 40% of the east bedroom floor area.

When the Grantham family were growing up the girls slept in the west bedroom, the parents in the east and the boys downstairs in the Front Room. In total there were 6 sisters and 3 brothers, although with an age range of 19



years between eldest and youngest there were never 11 people living in the house.

## **ANALYSIS by Michael Clark**

### **FRAME COMPONENTS**

#### **Posts**

The posts in the one and a half storey north wall-frame have two main types of fixing at the eaves-plate:

- an apparently conventional tenon (not seen) evidenced by two nails or pegs (only one occurrence of the latter) or large-headed nails (?coachbolts).
- a vertical face-lapped dovetail (two occurrences) which may originally have been fixed by pegs.

Posts in the outshot north frame were fixed by conventional tenons and pegs (Pls. 40, 41, 42).

The position of these pinning points in the eaves-plate north face suggests a random method of securing (or re-fixing) individual joints. Only one wooden peg was positively identified (at the NE post, Pl.30) but this was face-driven near the top edge of the plate as opposed to the usual position close to the soffit edge. The large eroded nail-heads visible at the centre post could have been driven into previously-existing peg-holes but it is unlikely due to the large shanks required to fill the original hole. No securing nuts were found internally.

The NW (plain-tenoned?) post (Pl.36) was double-fixed near the eaves-plate soffit edge, again with large-headed nails, much eroded, but part of the peg was visible at the internal face (Pl. 54). The mark on the plate face was read as '3', being three carelessly-carved strokes.

A peg was visible on the opposite face (Pl. 54), suggesting that at some joints nails had been driven into loose or damaged pegs, but not necessarily through the whole width of the timber.

Posts in the outshot north wall were of lighter scantling, with conventional tenons (not seen) fixed with pegs.

#### **Tie-beams**

The eaves-plate upper surface displayed an undisputed '3' at the same joint position (Pl. 54), although this was small and precise, resembling punched marks; obviously by a different hand and technique. This mark may have originally referred to the adjacent lap-dovetail mortise for a tie-beam, disused since the build of the brick gable; half the dovetail was obscured by the end of a thin nailed 'tie-beam' (Pl. 50) which was no more than a thick board sandwiched between the brick courses of the west gable; apparently similarly fixed at its south end (Pl. 52). The same arrangement existed at the east gable (Pl. 51, 53), the inadequate structural strength, method of fixing, and their position relative to pre-existing joints, indicated that the ties were contemporary with the main phase of brickwork. If these ties had ever formed



an integral part of the existing frame in an earlier form, it may have been that of gable-width mid-rails, assumed to have been lapped and nailed rather than jointed.

### **Braces**

The braces in the main north wall were all straight and lapped into the north face of posts and eaves-plate (Fig. 6). There was no evidence for pegging or previous use. The only indication of braces rising from the lower part of the posts was to the east of the door-head, where a brace had been sawn off flush to the post, leaving behind the upper end, still lapped and nailed to the post (Pl. 31, 32). No trenching or stains could be seen on the eaves-plate or adjacent post to suggest it could have been an upward brace, which would, in any case, have crossed the brace which rose from the adjacent post. This, apart from thin timber packing pieces underneath some of the posts, is the only evidence for the frame having been underpinned, or at least trimmed and raised.

No other remains of lower braces were found in the main wall-frame. The only two alternative explanations for an up-brace in this position are:

- (a) the post was re-fitted from another part of the original frame (the assembly mark '3' might indicate two further bays to the west) carrying the remains of its up-brace with it;
- (b) the brace position was a mistake, being aligned towards the intended junction of a jamb-post and eaves-plate.

Neither of these possibilities can be proved, given the limited scope of the survey.

Braces in the north outshot wall were of similar if not identical scantling and fixing (Fig. 7b; & Pl. 41, 42), but due to considerable decay it was not confirmed whether pegs were utilised for post-head and tie-beam fixings only or if the whole framework was a re-use of main elements such as posts and wall-plate to which had been added lapped and nailed braces and rails. No earlier mortises were found, but any such features may have been obscured by infill brickwork. Tie-beam ?dovetail mortises were visible at the top edge of the eaves-plate, but no ties were found that may have fitted these (the existing joist-binders were too broad). The upper surface of the eaves-plate was obscured by cement and pantiles.

The lapped and nailed fragments of the sawn-off braces remaining on the west joist-binder certainly match those in both surviving wall-frames.

### **Joist binders**

The north end sections of the two main floor-joist supports are shown in Fig. 6 (the eastern one is partly obscured by a mid-rail) and in plan in Fig. 4. These binders nearly evenly divide the floor-bearing area of the cottage (minus shop extension), the internal length being 6.65m (21.82ft) with an internal width of 3.62m-3.65m (11.87ft-11.97ft). The parlour (room 1), however is separated from the kitchen by a half-brick wall keyed into both the daub of the north wall (Pl. 34) and the brick plinth-wall below, giving a length



of 2.76m (9.05ft) for the parlour and 3.85m (12.63ft) for the kitchen. The joists over the kitchen, therefore, span lengths of 2.04m (6.69ft) west, and 1.81m (5.94ft) east (excluding the binder width); a ratio of 1.12:1. The joists over the parlour, however, span lengths of 1.74m (5.71ft) and 0.85m (2.79ft), a ratio of 2.05:1. Moving the partition eastwards as far as the west door jamb however, would only halve the discrepancy as the centre of the doorway is c.3.80m (12.47ft) from the parlour west wall; but only 3.00m (9.84ft) from the kitchen east wall. Although the parlour and kitchen windows are not central to the rooms they are symmetrical with the external facade, the latter being based on 4 units of approximately 1.84m (6.03ft) each. The facade of the added butcher's shop does not share these units and it is probable that the main cottage had more or less retained its door and window positions but the applique cement quoins and voussoirs gave it and the shop a cosmetic unity.

The two joist-binders (Fig. 8) appear identical, being from the same source and having the same dovetail joints near their south extremities. The sawn and housed north end fixing prevented close examination and estimation of their original length (Pl. 43, 44). Although it is possible that they might have fitted into the width of the existing building it is unlikely that they are in their original locations for the following reasons:

- there is a bead and quirk moulding on each arris, -the two upper of these would be obscured and interrupted by the ceiling and joists
- the moulding on the west binder (the east binder was not examined) apparently ends at a large unidentified joint (post-head?) visible in the northern soffit; the moulding may have been contemporary with this joint whose south edge may have defined the end of the original span which was at least some 0.40m short of that required for the present building
- The west binder had the flush-lapped and nailed remains of two braces (intervals not recorded) which cut the moulding; this binder was not in a location where braces were appropriate or necessary, although the fixing and scantling matches those found on the main north wall-frame and the remains of the outshot wall-frame
- the south lap-dovetail joint falls short of the present south wall (although the latter may have been built south of an earlier wall-line) and is disused, having simply been ledged on the present window lintel (Pl. 45,46).

A peg-hole through the remains of the dovetail and a possible chamfered end to the timber seems to confirm that its earlier location was on an eaves-plate at a cross-wall position and having a principal rafter seated on it. No other mortises were found along its length. Despite its current use as a main floor support, there was no noticeable deflection present; this may have been, in part, due to the floor having progressively given way at the edges and the window lintels, thus relieving loads otherwise dependent on the binder.

It is conjectured that their present location represents phase 3 of their use, phase 2 being in conjunction with compatible timbers forming the complete version of the remains of that found on site. Phase 1 was in the form of a decorative tie-beam, open-roofed with dovetailed fixing (or decorative rail with or without dovetail end-fixings) but without braces. Use as a visible



element in a chapel or even a vessel is possible. Continuation over the possible post-head joint could indicate a rail with one projecting end.

### **Main north eaves plate**

This is shown in the upper floor plan (Fig. 4) in section (Fig. 5) and in elevation and schematic detail (Fig. 6). Its length was approximately 7m including the wall-housed ends (the exposed length between gable walls was 6.73m (22.08ft). Height varied from 80-90mm. Although the plate was partially obscured by the two sets of rafters, no scarf joints were observed at top, face or rear. At the north-west end, in the upper surface, was a disused dovetail mortise (Pl. 54); this was partly obscured by the north end of the west tie which was half-lapped and nailed to the plate. If this mortise originally received the end of one of the current joist-binders it suggests a closed, braced wall at a bay division, but not necessarily the end-frame of the structure. The inferences from this position and the accompanying assembly mark is that the frame may have been two bays longer to the west, and probably without a first floor, since there are no indications of previous substantial supports or ledges. Without the presence of the conjectured lower brace there would be a tendency to theorise a single-storey frame which had been raised by plinthing to produce a one and a half storey with a first floor.

Fig. 6 illustrates the form of the main north eaves-plate. The pegs and peg-holes surviving were 25-30mm diameter, piercing the full height of the timber. No pronounced taper was evident and the peg upper projection was a few millimetres at most. Though the northward curvature of the plate was quite marked, the run-out of the pegs showed that it had been considerably more so originally; the original width may have been 300mm. It is suggested that this may have been a component of a vessel.

### **Infill material**

Fig. 6 shows the extent of surviving infill, except for small fragments adhering to joints on the outshot frame. Dense straw-daub was applied to roughly-hewn staves of varying thickness closely spaced and nailed to the main frame members (e.g. Pl. 37). The opposite side of the frame was devoid of staves or daub, i.e. the cavity was exposed, with only series of nails or nail-holes remaining to show that the north wall-skin had been removed. Below the level of the outshot ceiling the daub surface and timber frame had been white-washed over a long period. Above the outshot ceiling (in the roof-void) the daub and frame retained their natural surfaces (Pl. 31). The partition (part repaired, and with blocked door and underpinning) between the coal-house and larder also retained staves and daub, but the latter was of a different colour and mix, although a similar proportion of chopped straw was evident (Pl. 20). It is almost certain that the difference here is only a minor one of construction priorities.

The smooth and slightly undulating finish of the main north face (beyond the cavity) showed that it had been applied from the north, onto the rear of the south staves. A further layer was applied from the south, covering the staves; the two processes completely sealing the south (inner) side of the frame. The



main daub material had the appearance of very crude straw-board (possibly consisting of 70% to 80% chopped straw) with a dark reddish-brown bonding material. The whole was in extremely good condition, without any visible deterioration or dampness. To the west of the door frame were several half-bricks infilling the gap between the frame and adjacent post (Pl. 47), possibly supporting that end of the door lintel. The bricks were bonded in the same straw-daub. Contemporaneity between these and the supporting plinth-wall was not proved although both brick-types shared similar colour and texture. It is fairly certain that the half-bricks were contemporary with the infill of the frame.

### BRICKWORK

The north plinth is the only frame-supporting wall in the building (the outshot brickwork is simply panels of infill between posts), although there was no evidence that any brickwork in the main cottage was not of the same build. The main south wall was not examined in detail and it is possible that a similar earlier-phased plinth may have existed contemporary with that on the north and later raised to eaves height after removal of any remaining south frame.

Fig. 7, (not to scale) shows the first phase of brickwork (the outlined outshots are all of later infill, the butcher's shop, also later, is omitted). This includes two full-height tumbled gables (Fig. 2) (the upper stacks being rebuilt); one (or two?) plinth side-walls, the junctions of that on the north incorporating a thinner 'wrap-around' angle up to eaves-height to clasp the corner-posts of the timber frame. It is likely that a north and south doorway, both set off-centre were left in the 1.24m high plinth walls. The north frame daub seals the plinth and the partition wall indicating that if the frame was under-pinned or raised it was re-infilled afterwards.

The clasping angles at the gable ends (Fig. 3 & Pls. 30, 36) show deliberate retention of a half or full-height wall-frame, even though there were no end-frames, cross-frames or any connecting timbers to make the operation worthwhile. The inference here is that oddments of timber framing and traditional make-do methods were still the easier option over the availability and cost of sufficient bricks to complete the whole structure.

Dimension of bricks measured at the west gable:

220-230 x 100-110 x 55-65mm    bonded in white -creamy grey gritty mortar.

Outshot infill bricks:

230-240 x 105-110 x 65-70mm    similar mortar to main walls.

### MAIN ROOF (Fig. 5, Pl. 55)

These trusses may have been contemporary with the brickwork, since their numbering (roughly scratched on the thin collars) began at the west gable. The rafters rose directly from shallow seats at the eaves-plates; being half-lapped at the apex. The collars were lapped to the rafters, the purlins being



clasped between the two. All joints were nailed. Truss spacing was erratic at the west end (the only part exposed), with two or three collars closely-spaced as if to give extra bracing at that point. Scantling was light but apparently adequate with no appreciable distortion or sag.

#### OUTSHOT ROOF(Fig. 4 schematic plan; Fig. 5 section)

These all rose from unexamined seatings on the north eaves-plate and sawn to fit the angle of the main rafters to which they were nailed. All displayed signs of reuse in the form of half-lap mortises for collars and ?braces, no fragments of which remained. No peg-holes were evident, all components having been nailed originally. The collar mortise was of a traditional notch form with slight variations in dimensions and shape.

The length of these rafters was not measured, but they could easily have been appropriate to the main roof span and pitch of the original timber frame. None seemed to display features of more than one phase of fitting. Only one assembly mark was found, this being on the west side of the easternmost rafter at the upper end. The mark was large, widely-spaced and deeply cut, reading: IIXII This may have represented an unconventional '14', but it was not certain if the timber had been shaved, rendering a possible 'V' as two separate strokes; originally reading '17'.

#### **Discussion (Michael Clark and Naomi Field)**

In conclusion, even a small cottage has a far more complex building history than might at first be imagined. A two-day survey allowed the main components to be recorded but it should be borne in mind that the above report does not constitute an exhaustive record. There are several points where the structural evidence is contradictory and alternative interpretations are possible. The reuse of elements in the timber framing has contributed to the confusion.

Generally speaking Lincolnshire mud and stud cottages have a central stack, with baffle entry and stair/ladder access behind the stack to an upper storey, a layout different from that found at North Somercotes. It is not entirely clear that an earlier phase of this cottage ever was constructed in mud and stud. Little is documented about local variations in the layout of farm cottages or if cottages built in different materials were different in form. So without further research, which was beyond the scope of the survey, it is not known whether the cottage on South Road was typical of the area.

There is no surviving relationship between the mud and stud work in the north wall of the cottage and that in the north wall of the outshot, but its different character suggests that the two walls were of different phases.

It is puzzling that only the upper half of the main north wall should survive as mud and stud in the main part of the cottage. There are at least two alternative interpretations:

a) There was a similar brick plinth with mud and stud wall on the other elevations entirely replaced with brickwork



b) The north wall remnant is all that survives of a complete mud and stud frame, underpinned when upgrading the cottage with brick gables and front elevation.

Neither of these alternatives is satisfactory. A vital component in the history of the building was missing or missed. The daub infill appears contemporary with the brick plinth, but may have been a replacement. The north side of this wall does not appear to have been weathered suggesting the presence of an outshot. This raises the possibility of an earlier outshot replaced by the mud and stud construction.

What is clear is that the upper floor of the main cottage was inserted, using timbers which may have been tie-beams in the original building, although they were, even then, re-used from elsewhere.

A simplified phasing of the cottage may have been as follows:

- *?Late 17th century* timber frame, part pegged, part nailed; incorporating some reused elements; single storey cottage
- *Mid-late 18th C* ?Shortened frame on north wall, part replaced by brick; firestacks, first floor and dormers added; tie beams reused as joist binders for inserted upper floor ,creating a 1 1/2 storey cottage
- *unknown date* Mud and stud outshot added/ or replacing earlier structure
- *Early 19th C* Existing outshot part replaced/part infilled with brick ,
- *19th C* Butcher's shop added, cottage windows all replaced,
- *Later 19th century* Outshot extended to create wash house, after construction of Butcher's shop, using old bricks
- *c.1930* Textured cement render to face of cottage; applied cement quoins, cement voussoirs to doors and windows.

By way of a footnote to the survey it is common to meet owners of timber-framed and mud and stud buildings who are convinced that timbers in their homes were originally ships'.timbers. The curving north eaves plate, with its over-sized pegs, is the first example encountered by the authors which just possibly could have come from such a source, given its coastal location. Unfortunately this timber was not seen after removal from the building.

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Michael Clark and Naomi Field  
September 1994





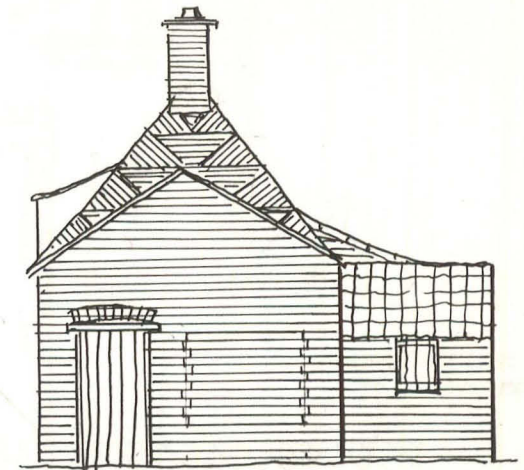
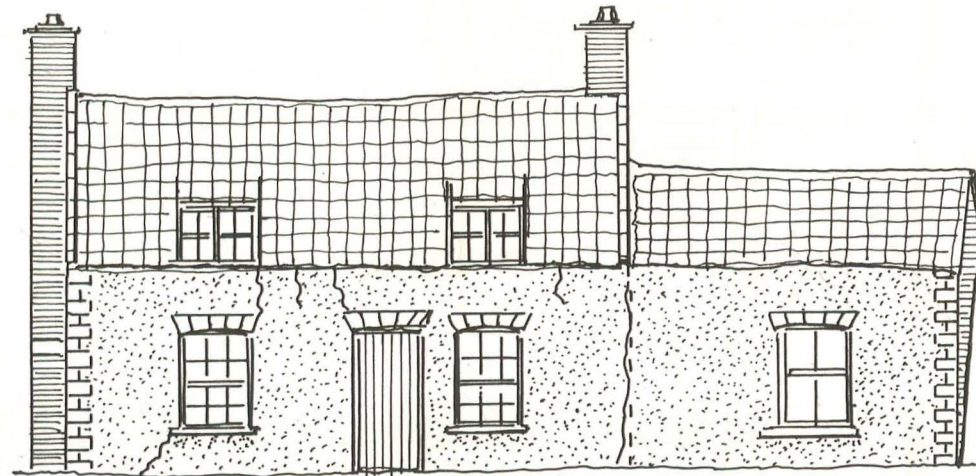
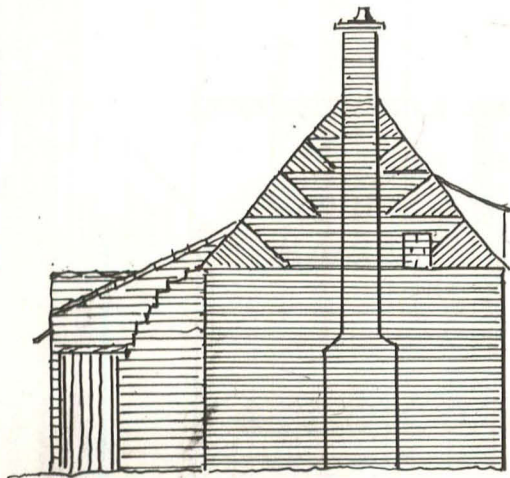
Fig. 1 North Somercotes Cottage. Site location. Reproduced from the 1:10,000 OS map with the permission of the Controller of HMSO, Crown copyright. Licence no. AL50424



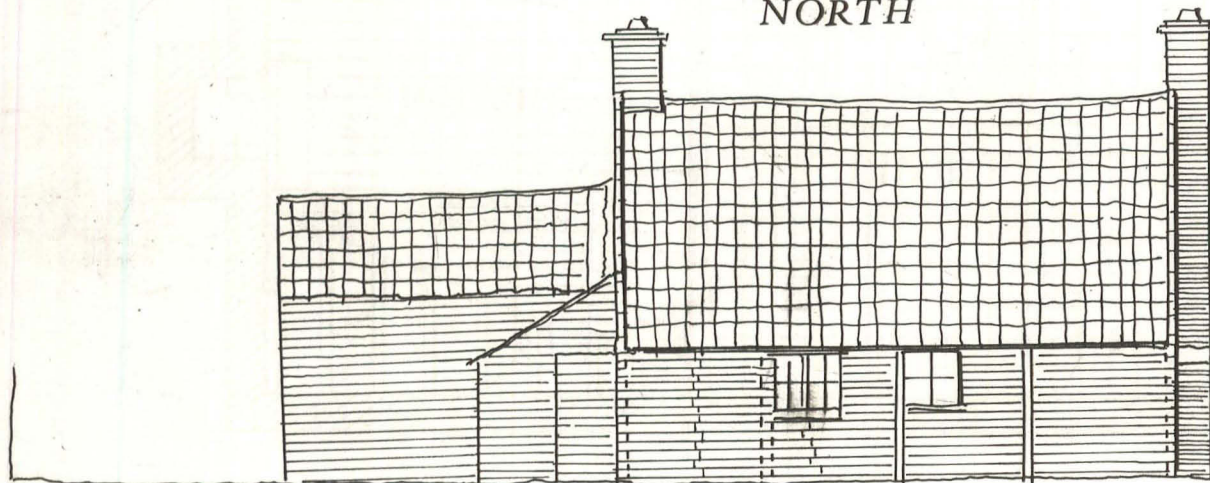
WEST

SOUTH

EAST



NORTH



← APPROX → PRIVY



Fig. 2 North Somercotes Cottage. Building elevations



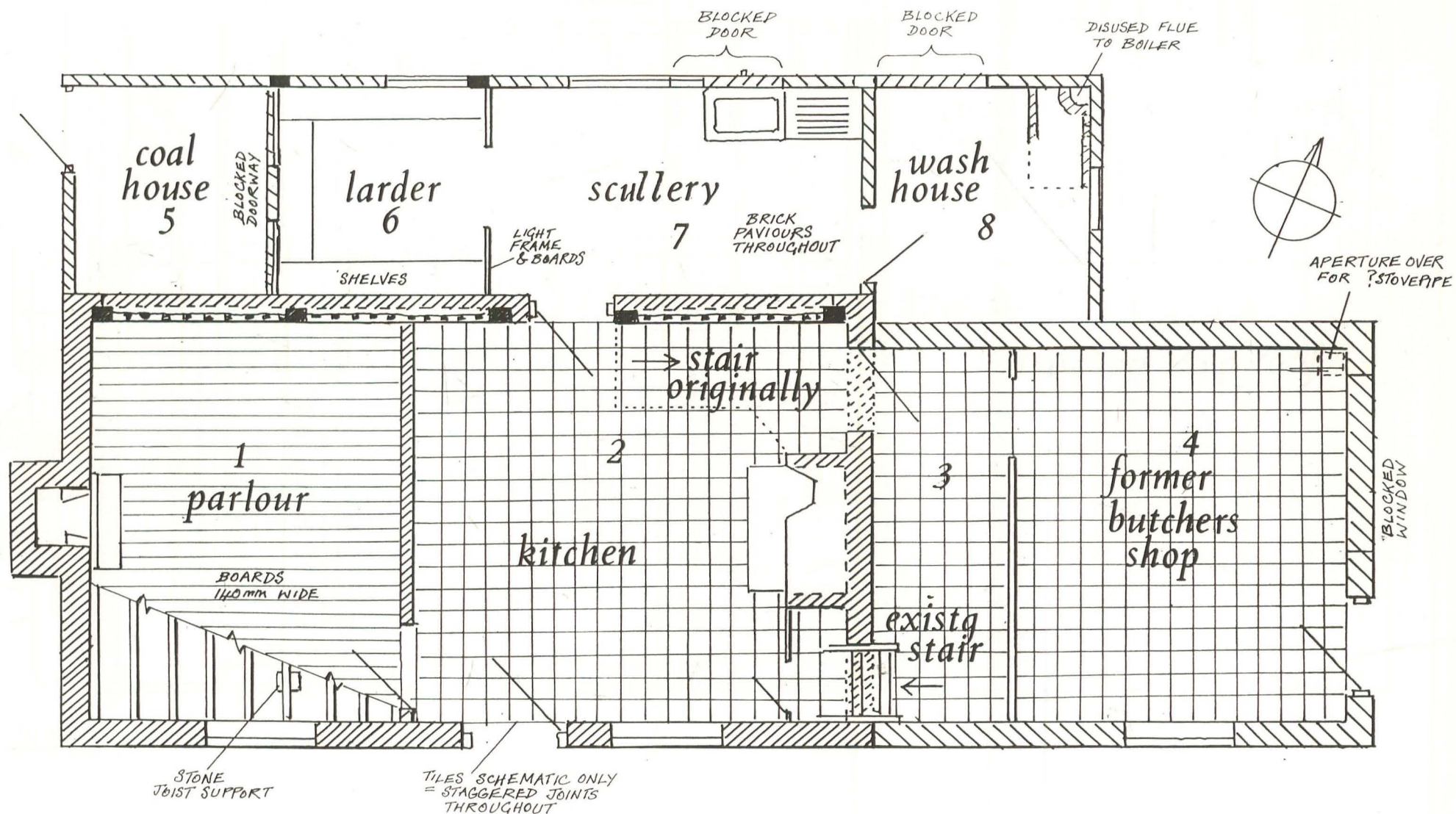


Fig. 3 North Somercotes Cottage. Ground floor plan



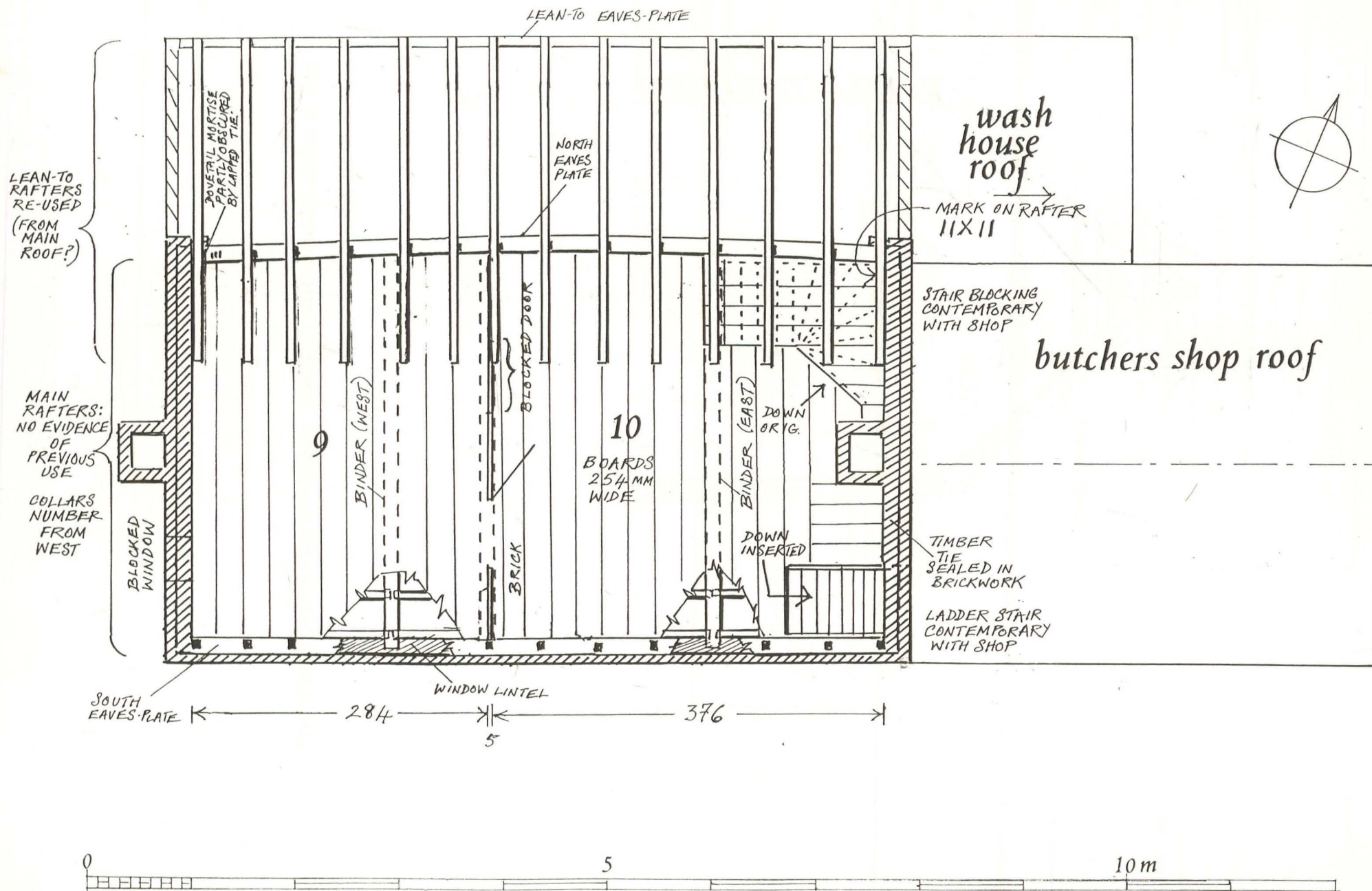


Fig. 4 North Somercotes Cottage. First floor plan



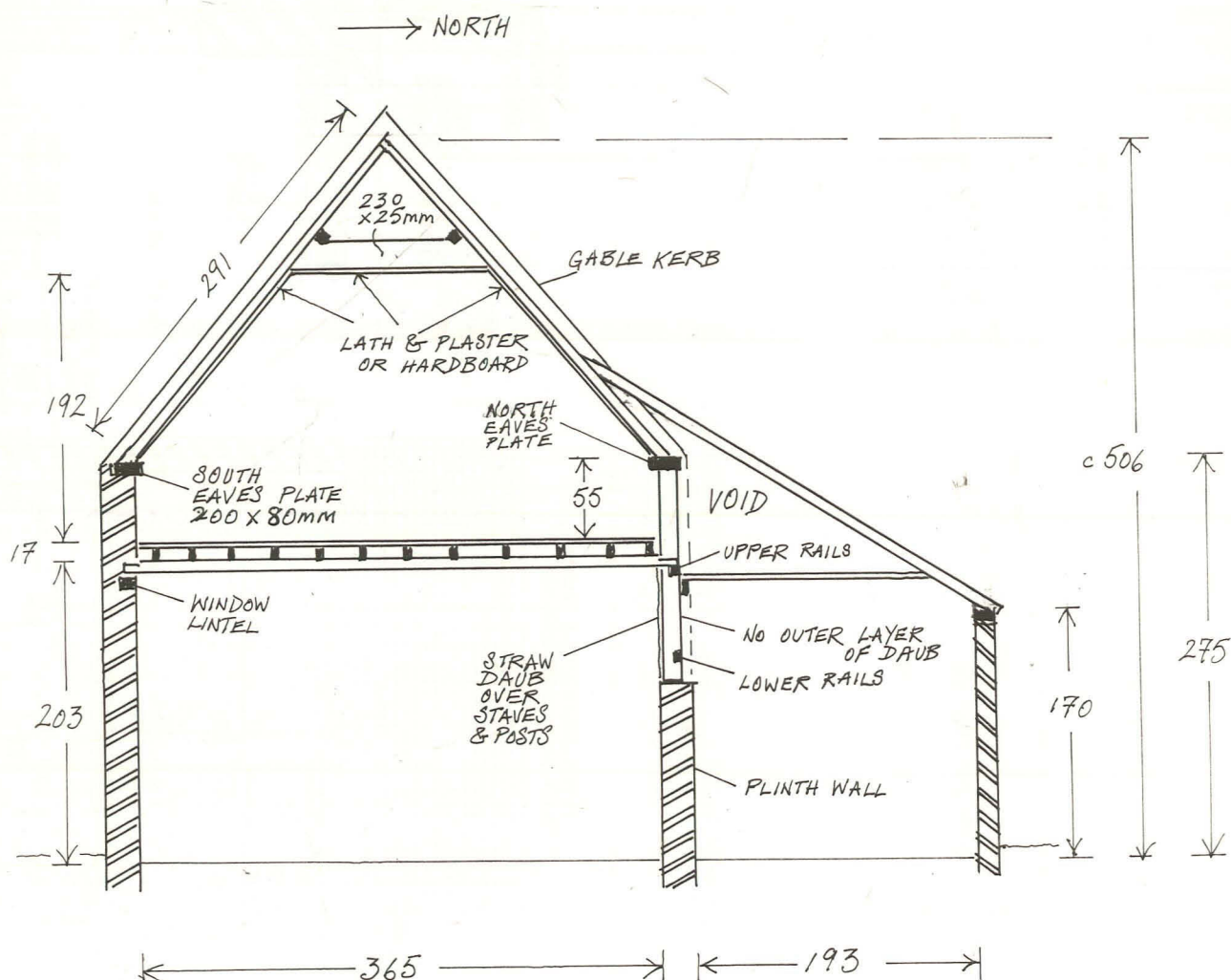
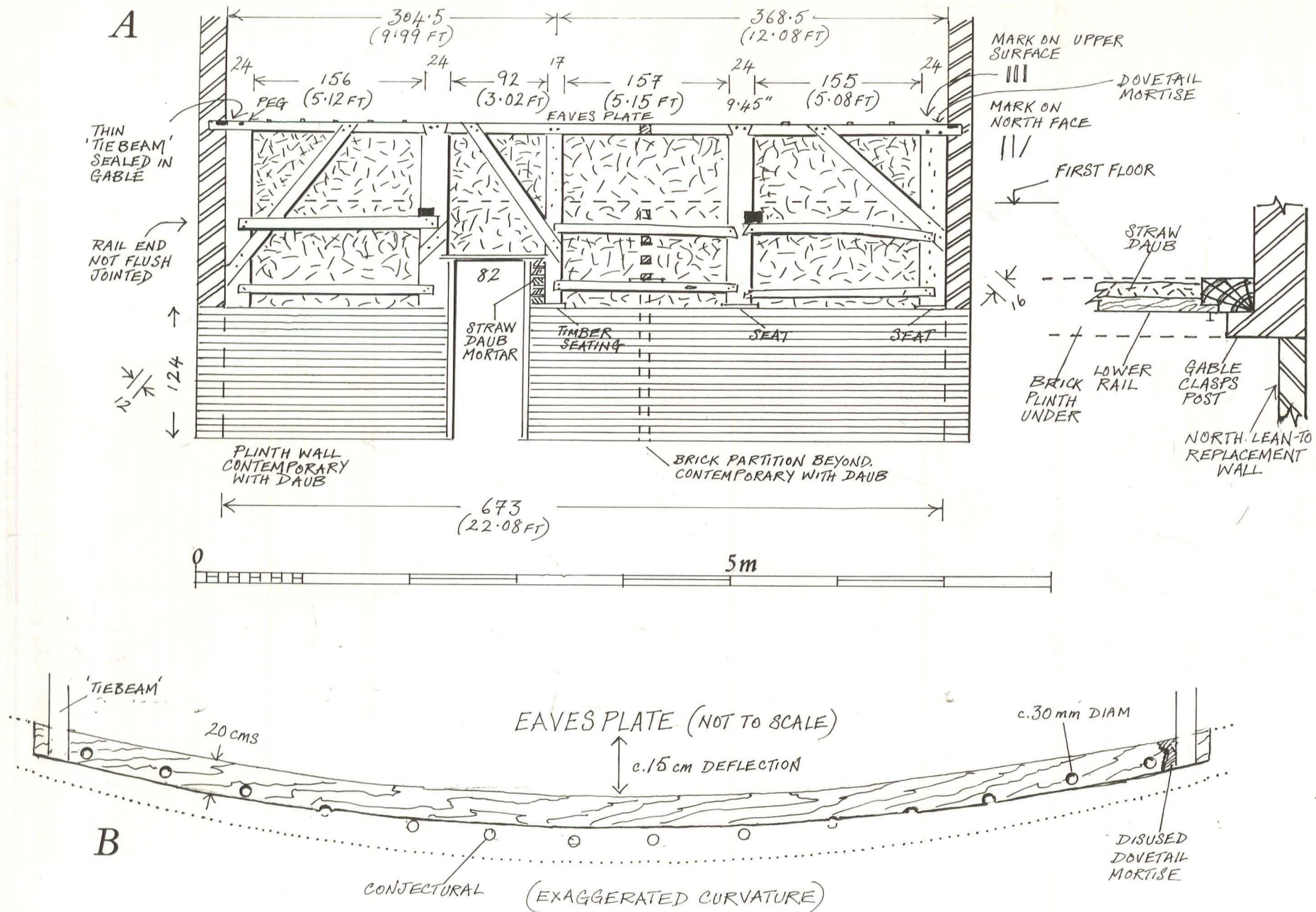


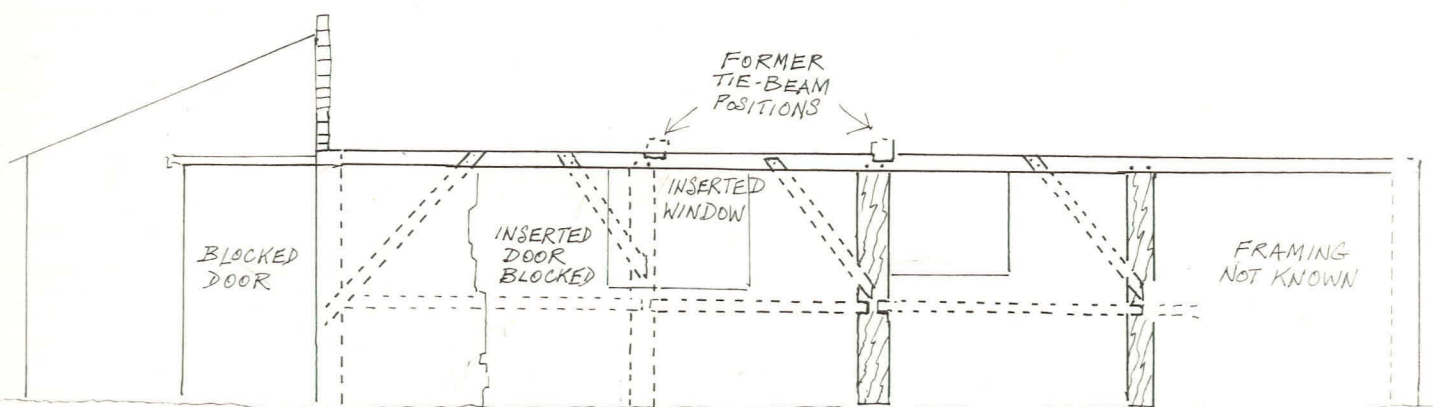
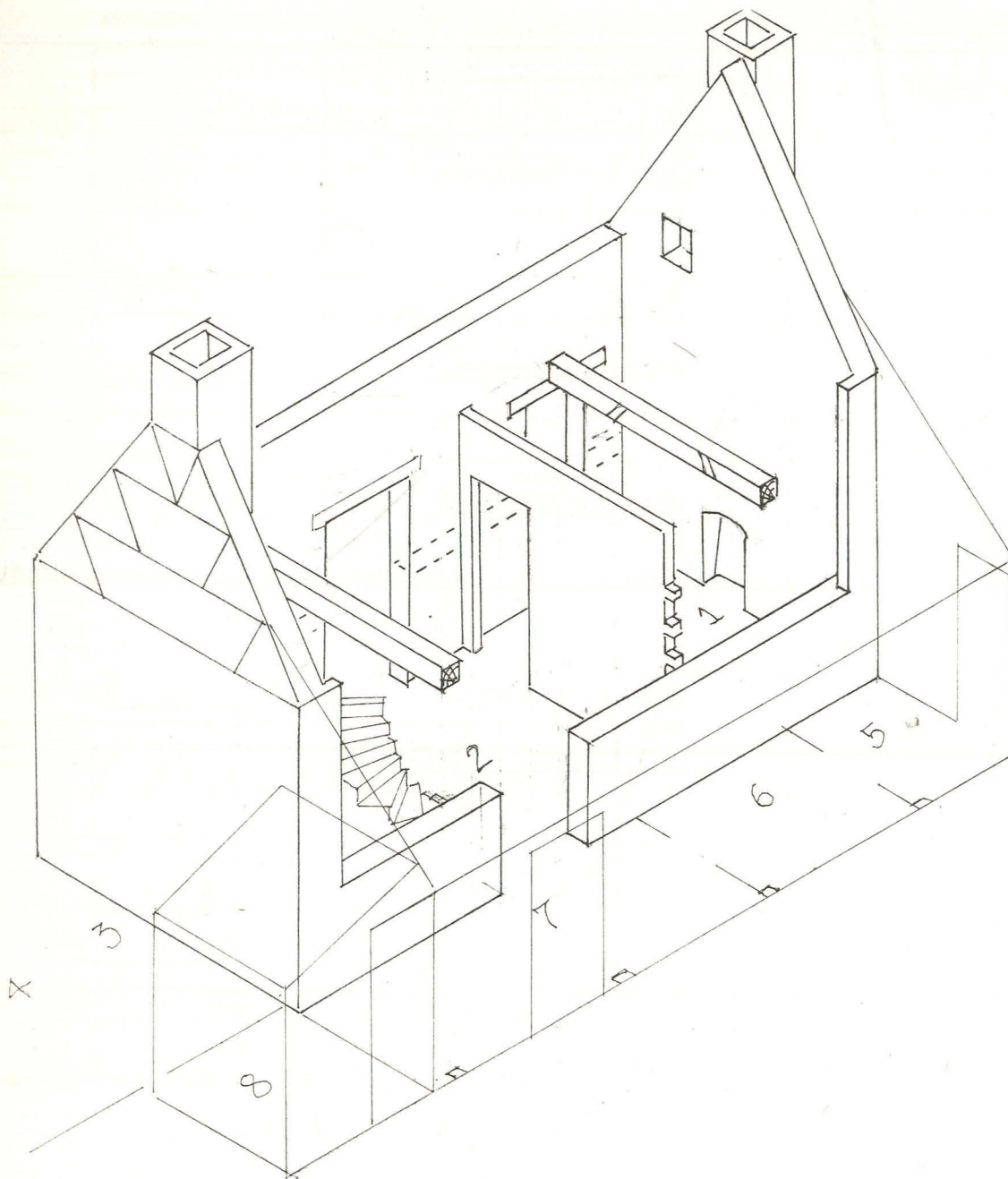
Fig. 5 North Somercotes Cottage. Cross-section through building





**Fig. 6 North Somercotes Cottage. a) Main north elevation  
b) Detail of eaves plate**





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Fig. 7 North Somercotes Cottage. a) Cut away plan showing earliest brickwork. b) Outshot north elevation



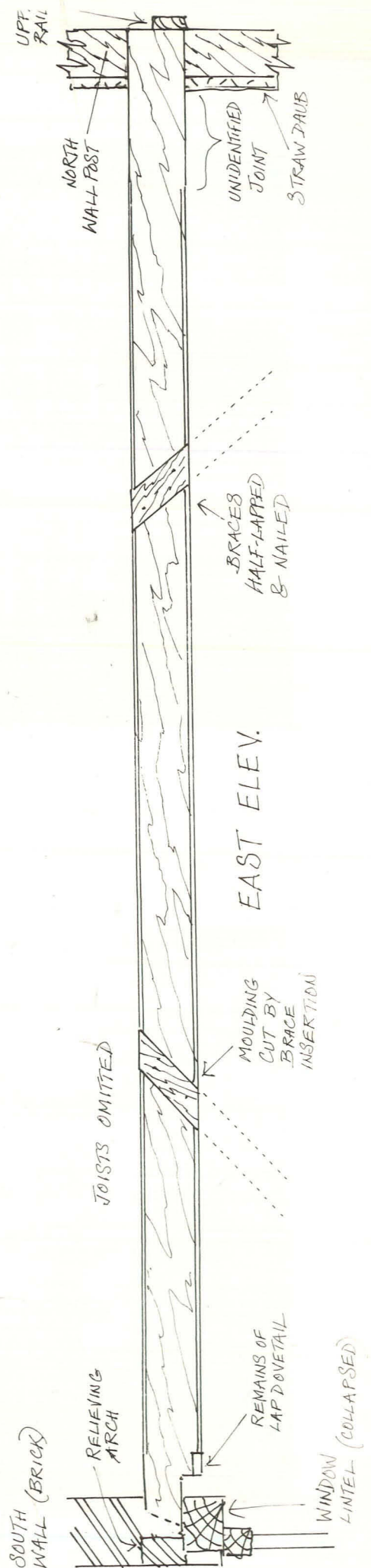
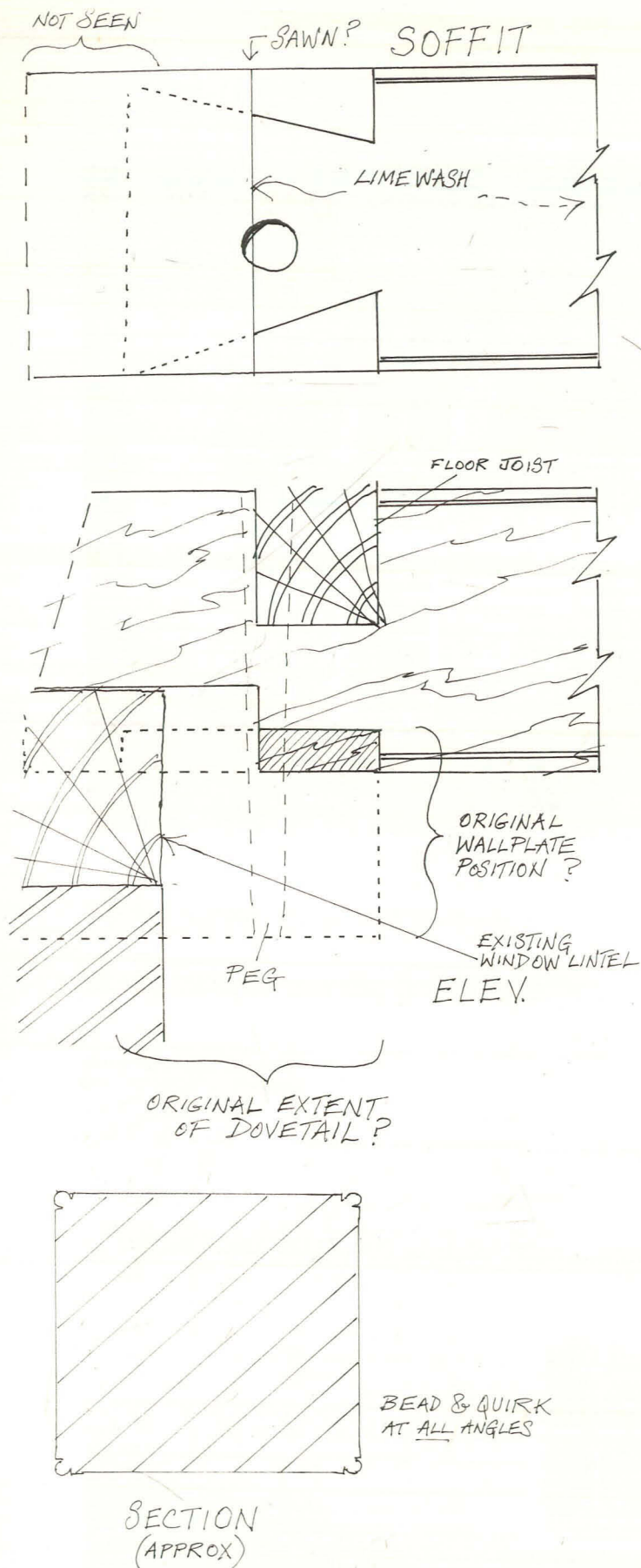


Fig. 8 North Somercotes Cottage. Detail of tiebeam reused as floor joist binder





Pl. 1. Cottage, south elevation.

Pl. 2. Butcher's shop, south elevation.







Pl. 3. Butcher's shop, east elevation.

Pl. 4. General view, north elevation.







Pl. 5. North outshot, north elevation.

Pl. 6. North outshot, west elevation.







Pl. 7. Privy, from south-east.

Pl. 8. Privy interior, from east.







Pl. 9. Front room, from south-east.

Pl. 10. Front room, from south.







Pl. 11. Living room, from north-east.

Pl. 12. Living room, from south-west.







Pl. 13. Living room, from west.

Pl. 14. Understair cupboard door latch.







Pl. 15. Latch on door to scullery, south side.



Pl. 16. Latch on door to scullery, north side.





Pl. 17. Passage and stairs from north.





Pl. 18. Kitchen (butcher's shop) from east.

Pl. 19. Kitchen (butcher's shop) from north-west.







Pl. 20. Coal house (east wall), from west.

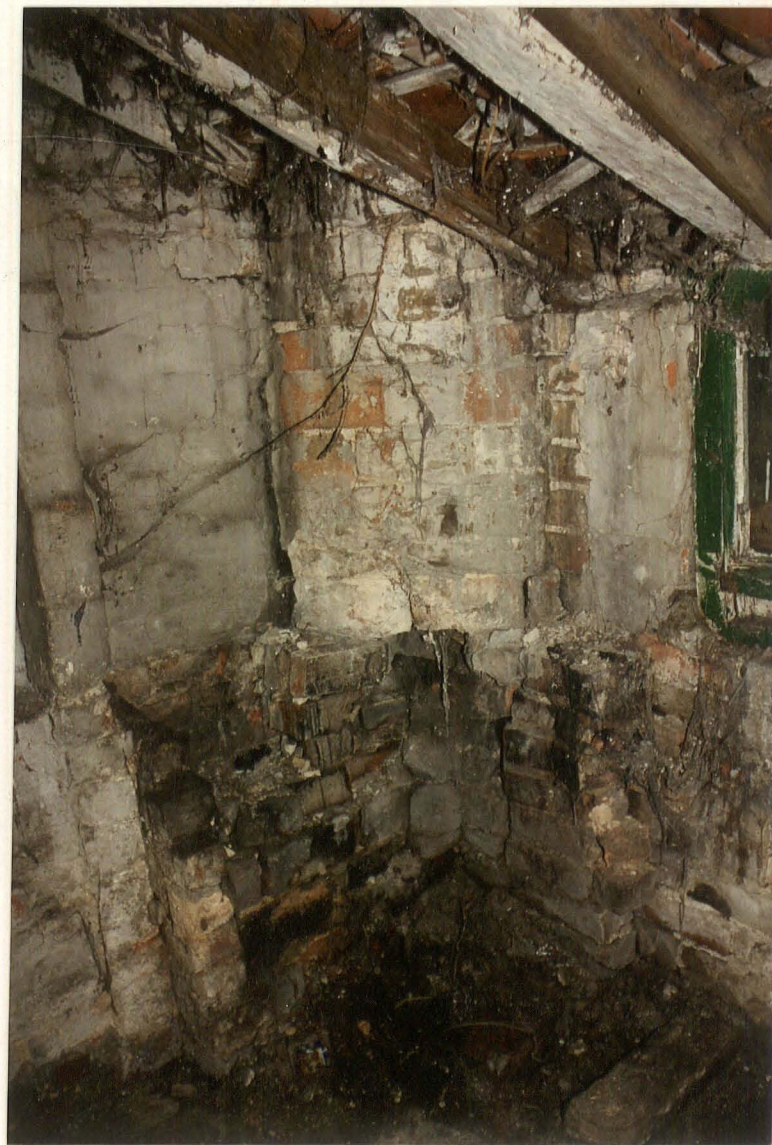


Pl. 21. Larder, from east (coal house beyond).





Pl. 22. Scullery, from west (wash house beyond).



Pl. 23. Wash house showing boiler position and flue, from south-east.





Pl. 24. Stairs, from east.

Pl. 25. East bedroom (room 10) and stairhead, from west.







**Pl. 26. East bedroom (room 9 beyond) from east.**

**Pl. 27. West bedroom (room 9) from east.**







Pl. 28. Bedroom partition from east

Pl. 29. Bedroom partition from west







Pl. 30. East gable, clasp ing north-east corner of frame (plinth below), from west.



Pl. 31. North wall-frame at scullery door; sawn-off brace, from north.





Pl. 32. North wall-frame, scullery, from north.

Pl. 33. North wall-frame, scullery/larder partition, from north-east.







Pl. 34. North Wall-frame, kitchen/parlour brick partition visible in larder.

Pl. 35. North wall-frame, larder: Rail fixings.







Pl. 36. West gable clasp and north-west corner post (plinth below), from north.



Pl. 37. North-west corner post, internal, (parlour, room 1). From south.





Pl. 38. Outshot north wall: exposed post, from north-west.

Pl. 39. East end of outshot north wall: blocked doors and sawn braces.





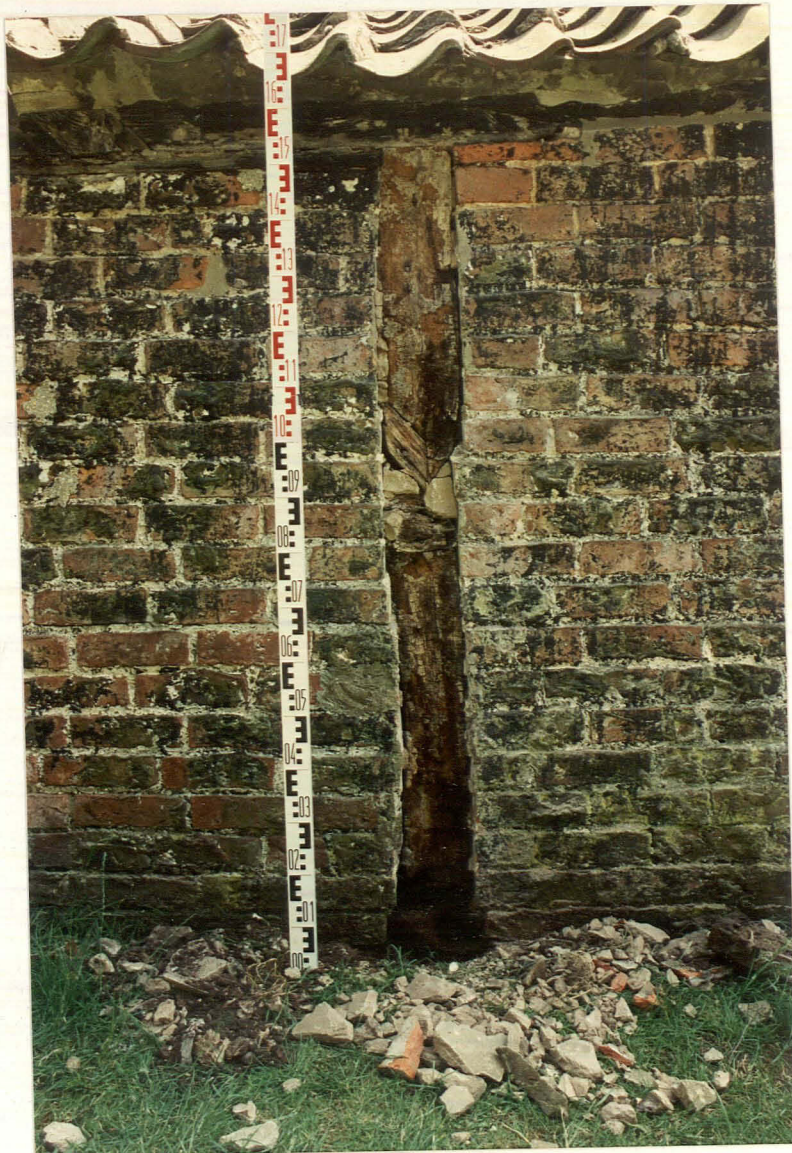


Pl. 40. Outshot north wall: exposed posts, from north.

Pl. 41. Outshot north wall: sawn rails and braces.







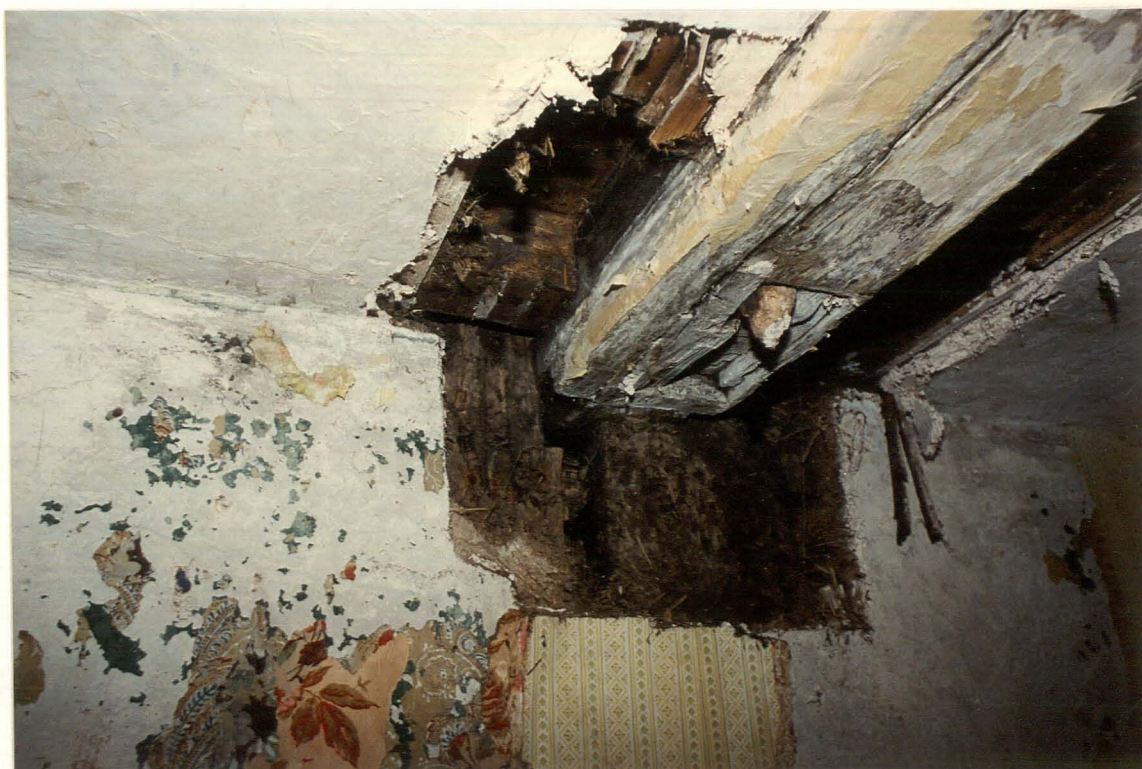
Pl. 42. Outshot north wall: sawn rails and braces.





Pl. 43. West binder, north end; daub and unidentified joint (parlour).

Pl. 44. West binder, north end, half housed in post (parlour).







Pl. 45. West binder, south dovetail cut for ledging (parlour).

Pl. 46. West binder, south soffit, detail of dovetail (parlour).







Pl. 47. Post and half-bricks on plinth wall in kitchen north wall.



Pl. 48. Post and lintel-rail mortise in kitchen north wall.





Pl. 49. Kitchen north wall, scullery beyond, from south.





**Pl. 50. Eaves plate and west gable tie; room 9, from south-east.**

**Pl. 51. Eaves plate and east gable tie; room 10, from south-west.**







Pl. 52. South-west corner: plate and gable tie detail.



Pl. 53. North-east corner: plate and gable tie detail.





PI. 54. North-west corner: eaves plate and gable tie. Dovetail mortise.

PI. 55. Roof at west gable: Nailed truss assembly, from east.





