

The Bede House, Church Lane, Lyddington, Rutland

Tree-Ring Analysis of Oak Timbers

Alison Arnold, Robert Howard, and Cathy Tyers





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SUMMARY

Dendrochronological analysis was undertaken on 100 of the 113 samples obtained from this building, producing five dated site chronologies comprising 81 samples. Interpretation of the sapwood indicates a number of different phases of felling of timbers ranging from the late-twelfth/early thirteenth centuries to the late-eighteenth century. A small number of timbers have been identified that may be associated with the early development of the medieval palace of the bishops of Lincoln of which the Bede House is the sole surviving block. The majority of the dated timbers were felled during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries and appear likely to be associated with several different documented phases of redevelopment or remodelling of the medieval palace. The later timbers identified appear to be associated with the change of use to an almshouse and subsequent repair works or modifications.

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INTRODUCTION

The Grade 1 listed Bede House, also a Scheduled Monument, stands immediately north of the church in Lyddington (Figs 1a–c). The site and its buildings have been the subject of a number of historical and archaeological surveys (Page 1935; Thornton 2009; Woodfield and Woodfield 1983, 1988) from which the following information is summarised.

The existing early seventeenth-century almshouse has its origins as part of a medieval palace of the Bishops of Lincoln, Bishop Remegius (AD 1067–1092) having been granted the Lyddington estate towards the end of the eleventh century. Although the understanding of the early development of the site is uncertain, it is thought that a house and park were already present at the time of King John (AD 1199–1216). It was clearly in use as a major residence from at least the time of Bishop Grosseteste (AD 1235-53) with the Great Park thought to have been created at this time or possibly a little earlier in the thirteenth century. Bishop Burghersh (AD 1320-40) undertook major redevelopment and was given a licence to crenellate in AD 1336. It is thought that the extant building, the bishops private accommodation, was remodelled at this time and that the Little Park was established. There is only limited survival of architectural evidence linked with the continuation of works during the later fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries and that of the apparent remodelling of this block by Bishop Alnwick (AD 1436–49), prior to the major works carried out in the later fifteenth century by Bishop Russell (AD 1480–94) and Bishop Smith (AD 1496–1514) when the extant building began to take on its current appearance. The Lyddington estate was transferred to the crown in AD 1547 with it being granted to Gregory Cromwell in AD 1548 and then, after his death in AD 1551, to William Cecil, Lord Burghley. It lost its status as a major residence which resulted in much of the complex becoming redundant and falling into a state of decay with extensive demolition probably occurring during the latter half of the sixteenth century. Following the death of William Cecil in AD 1598, his son, Sir Thomas Cecil, 1st Earl of Exeter, inherited the remaining buildings and it was he who is believed to have converted the bishop's residence into a hospital or almshouse. It functioned as an almshouse until the 1930s, still under the ownership of the descendants of the Cecils, and was taken into guardianship in 1954.

The north side of the extant Bede House block probably faced onto a courtyard, a timber pentice to this face probably replacing a two-storeyed gallery (Fig 2a). Doors off the pentice lead to the individual Bedesman rooms, formed by partitioning the original large ground-floor chamber. Towards the east end of the pentice, a projecting porch leads to both other ground-floor rooms and, via a stone staircase, to the Great Chamber on the first floor (Fig 2b), through which access is gained to the Presence Chamber, which retains a blocked doorway to a now lost gallery. Further west, beyond the Presence Chamber is a smaller inner chamber, perhaps an Oratory or office, as well as a garderobe. To the east of the Great Chamber are two

rooms, the inner one of which may have been a Chapel, but both of which are thought to have subsequently been Bedeswoman rooms.

The roof appears to have originally been of nine arch-braced trusses with collars, wind-braces, and moulded tiebeams (Fig 3a). A ceiling was subsequently inserted, probably in the early sixteenth century, with the attic being accessed by a set of wooden stairs. The extant roof to the east end is a post-medieval replacement (Fig 3b). Also of note are a number of plank or board doors of which some are of relatively simple construction (eg those to the Bedesman rooms), whilst others are more substantial with cross-board backing and ironwork straps and studs (Figs 4a/b).

SAMPLING

Dendrochronological analysis was requested in order to provide independent dating evidence relating to the historical development of this extant block of the medieval palace. It was hoped that this would inform understanding and significance and hence add to the research program that was being undertaken by the English Heritage Properties Historian team. Dendrochronological assessment of the potential of key areas/elements (Figs 5a–c), as identified by the Properties Historian team, was undertaken and following further discussion sampling proceeded on those key areas/elements of the building with good dendrochronological potential.

Thus, a total of 113 samples was obtained during a number of separate sampling visits, necessitated by the need to undertake some sampling outside of public access times. The majority of these samples, 92, were obtained by coring. However, 21 from plank doors and floorboards, were obtained by *in situ* measurements. Whereas core samples are normally measured twice by the Nottingham Tree-ring Dating Laboratory, the *in situ* measurements were single-measurement series.

The locations of these samples were recorded at the time of sampling on drawings, sketch plans, or on annotated photographs (Figs 6a–20b). Each sample was given the code LYB-H (for Lyddington Bede House) and numbered 01–113 (Table 1). The trusses, frames, beams, joists, and any other appropriate elements have been numbered from east to west or south to north, with individual elements then being further identified as appropriate, apart from the door planks, stair-treads, and floorboards, which have also been located in plan or photograph (Table 1 and Figs 6a-20b).

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Each of the 92 core samples obtained from the Bede House was prepared by sanding and polishing. It was seen at this time that 13 samples had less than the minimum of 40 rings here deemed necessary for reliable dating and so they were

rejected from this programme of analysis. The annual growth ring widths of the remaining 79 core samples were measured, the data of these measurements, plus those of the 21 elements measured *in situ*, are given at the end of this report.

The data of the 100 measured series were then compared with each other by the Litton/Zainodin grouping procedure (see Appendix). This comparative process allowed five separate groups of cross-matching samples to be formed, the samples of each respective group cross-matching with each other as shown in Figures 21–25. The samples of each group combined at their indicated offset positions to form site chronologies LYBHSQ01–LYBHSQ05, these five chronologies between them accounting for a total of 81 measured samples.

Each of the five site chronologies was then compared to an extensive corpus of reference material for oak, this indicating consistent and repeated matches for each of them (Tables 2–6). Each of the five dated site chronologies was also compared to the 19 remaining measured but ungrouped samples, but there was no further satisfactory cross-matching. Each of the 19 ungrouped samples was then compared individually to the full corpus of reference data, but again there was no satisfactory cross-matching and all 19 must, therefore, remain undated.

This analysis may be summarised as follows:

Site chronology	Number of samples	Number of rings	Date span AD (where dated)
LYBHSQ01	5	137	1085-1221
LYBHSQ02	8	305	1110-1414
LYBHSQ03	49	250	1245-1494
LYBHSQ04	7	101	1498–1598
LYBHSQ05	12	131	1623-1753
Ungrouped	19		undated
Unmeasured	13		undated
Total	113		

INTERPRETATION

Dendrochronological analysis of a series of samples of timbers in the Bede House has produced five dated site chronologies comprising 81 of the 100 measured samples. The dated samples indicate, perhaps not unexpectedly given the history of the Bede House, that these timbers represent a number of different felling episodes related to various phases of construction/modification. To aid interpretation, the results are presented area by area below and in Figures 26a—b, with a summary of the interpretation for each area presented in Figure 27. In each case, where sapwood is not complete (ie the sample does not have the last ring produced before the tree was felled), the estimated felling date is calculated on the basis of the 95%

confidence interval for the amount of sapwood the trees are likely to have had which is 15–40 rings.

Great Chamber/Presence Chamber roofs

Eighteen samples (LYB-H01 – LYB-H15 and LYB-H98 – LYB-H100) were obtained from these roofs (see Fig 5c). All 18 samples were measured of which 11 were dated (Figs 23 and 26a). Ten of these samples, representing a tiebeam, two collars, two archbraces, and five principal rafters, appear likely to be coeval. The date of the heartwood/sapwood boundary on those eight samples varies by only 16 years with the average boundary being dated AD 1429. Using the standard sapwood estimate gives these timbers an estimated felling date in the range AD 1444–69.

The remaining dated sample (LYB-H14) from this roof has a later heartwood/sapwood boundary, this being dated AD 1476. This, therefore, provides this timber, a tiebeam, with an estimated felling date in the range AD 1491–1516.

East-end roof

Eight samples (LYB-H16 – LYB-H23) were obtained from this roof (see Fig 5c), of which one (LYB-H23) was not measured as it contained too few rings for reliable dating. The remaining seven measured samples, representing a purlin, two collars, and four principal rafters, all dated and appear to be coeval (Figs 25 and 26a). All seven have retained the heartwood/sapwood boundary, which varies by only five years. However, four of these samples have retained complete sapwood, the outermost ring dating to AD 1744 in each case, indicating that this group of dated timbers were all likely to have been felled in AD 1744.

Presence Chamber ceiling (westernmost bay)

Five samples (LYB-H24 – LYB-H28) were obtained from the ceiling beams accessible from the attic area above the Presence Chamber (see Fig 5b). All five were measured but only one, LYB-H27, could be dated (Figs 23 and 26a). The heartwood/sapwood boundary on this sample is dated AD 1387 which, using the standard sapwood estimate, gives this ceiling joist an estimated felling date in the range AD 1402–27.

Bedesman room ceilings

Main ceiling beams were sampled in Bedesman rooms 1 and 2, as well as a series of ceiling joists in Bedesman rooms 2 and 4 (LYB-H29 – LYB-H43), the other

Bedesman rooms on the ground floor either having no exposed timbers or none that were accessible and suitable (see Fig 5a). Three of these samples were not measured as they contained too few rings for reliable dating purposes. Eight of the 12 measured series dated, indicating two distinct periods of felling (Figs 21, 23, and 26a).

Four samples, all from ceiling joists in room 3, appear to be coeval. The date of the heartwood/sapwood boundary on those three samples with it varies by only seven years with the average boundary being dated AD 1219. Using the standard sapwood estimate gives these timbers an estimated felling date in the range AD 1234–59.

The remaining four dated samples, representing a main ceiling between rooms 1 and 2 and ceiling joists from room 2, also appear likely to be coeval. Two of these have the heartwood/sapwood boundary present which varies by seven years and produces an average boundary date of AD 1478. This indicates that these four timbers were all probably felled in the range AD 1493–1518.

West roof over small inner chamber

A small number of timbers that looked potentially to have sufficient rings for analysis in this room (see Fig 5b) were sampled (LYB-H44 –LYB-H47). Three samples proved to have too few rings for reliable dating purposes so only one of these samples (LYB-H46) was measured. It was successfully dated and, with a heartwood/sapwood boundary date of AD 1461, a felling date in the range AD 1476–1501 is obtained for this principal rafter (Figs 23 and 26a).

Pentice

A total of 13 samples (LYB-H48 – LYB-H53 and LYB-H89 – LYB-H95) were taken from the pentice located on the north elevation of the Bede House block (see Fig 5a). Two of these samples were not measured as they contained too few rings for reliable dating purposes and, of the 11 measured series, only one failed to date. Interpretation of the sapwood on the 10 dated samples suggests that three distinct periods of felling are represented (Figs 23–26a).

The earliest period of felling is represented by four samples, all from tiebeams, which are probably coeval. Two of these have the heartwood/sapwood boundary present which varies by 10 years, the average boundary being dated AD 1477. This gives these four timbers an estimated felling date in the range AD 1492–1517. The second period of felling is represented by two samples, one from a post and one from a tiebeam, which again appear coeval having heartwood/sapwood boundaries varying by five years. The average heartwood/sapwood boundary dates to AD 1584

and, thus, an estimated felling date in the range AD 1599–1624. The latest period of felling found in the pentice structure is again represented by four samples, all from posts, which appear to be coeval. All four have the heartwood/sapwood boundary present which varies by six years. The average heartwood/sapwood boundary on these samples is dated AD 1750 and hence, using the usual sapwood estimate, these timbers have an estimated felling date in the range AD 1765–90.

Stair treads up to attic

Six samples (LYB-H54 – LYB-H59) were obtained from the wooden treads of the stairs leading up from the east end Bedeswoman rooms (former Chapel and adjacent room) landing to the attics above (see Fig 5b). All six samples were measured and dated (Figs 23 and 26b). In this case, because of the square-cut nature of the treads and the wear which they have undergone over the years, none of the timbers retain the heartwood/sapwood boundary. They do, however, show a very high level of similarity between the ring sequences (*t*-values ranging from 6.6 to 14.8) suggesting that these are derived from either a single tree or trees growing within a discrete area of woodland and are hence coeval. This means that not only are all the sapwood rings missing, but an unknown number of heartwood rings as well. It is thus not possible to provide a felling date range for the timbers. However, given that the latest ring on any sample, LYB-H59, is dated to AD 1449, and allowing for a minimum of 15 sapwood rings, felling of these six timbers is likely to have taken place after AD 1464.

Great Chamber/Presence Chamber partition wall

Four samples (LYB-H60 – LYB-H63) were obtained from the partition wall between the Great Chamber and Presence Chamber at first-floor level (see Fig 5c). All four samples dated indicating two distinct phases of felling (Figs 23 and 26b).

The earlier phase of felling is represented by one sample, representing the main post, this having a heartwood/sapwood boundary date of AD 1412, and thus an estimated felling date in the range AD 1427–52. The later phase of felling is represented by three samples that appear coeval having heartwood/sapwood boundary dates varying by 13 years. These three have an average heartwood/sapwood boundary date of AD 1473 giving these two cross-rails, and a stud, an estimated felling date in the range AD 1495–1513 allowing for the outermost measured sapwood ring present on LYB-H61.

Cupboard under stairs adjacent to porch

Four samples (LYB-H64 – LYB-H67) were obtained from joists forming the ceiling of an under-stair cupboard adjacent to the projecting north porch (see Fig 5a).

Again all four samples dated, and again indicating two distinct phases of felling (Figs 23 and 26b).

The earlier phase of felling is represented by one sample, LYB-H64, this having a heartwood/sapwood boundary date of AD 1373, and thus an estimated felling date in the range AD 1388–1413. The later phase of felling is represented by three samples that appear to be coeval having heartwood/sapwood boundary dates varying by eight years. These three have an average heartwood/sapwood boundary date of AD 1406 giving these joists an estimated felling date in the range AD 1421–46.

Doors

Fifteen planks from five different doors were measured *in situ* (LYB-H68 – LYB-H82). Three of the doors were to Bedesman rooms, one door to the Chapel/Bedeswoman room 1, and another to Bedeswoman room 2, the room immediately adjacent to the stairs to the attic (see Figs 5a–b). All 15 samples dated (Figs 22, 23, and 26b). Again, given the square-cut and well-trimmed nature of these planks, none of them retains the heartwood/sapwood boundary. This, again, means that not only are all the sapwood rings missing, but an unknown number of heartwood rings as well. It is thus not possible to provide a felling date range for the planks.

The planks from each of the individual doors appear broadly coeval. Thus, the four dated planks from the door to Bedesman room 1 were probably felled after AD 1484, the two dated planks from the door to Bedesman room 2 were probably felled after AD 1467, and the three dated planks from the door to Bedesman room 4 were probably felled after AD 1484. The four dated planks from the Bedeswoman room 1 (former Chapel) were felled after AD 1482. The two dated planks from the Bedeswoman room 2, adjacent to the stairs, unlike the other door planks which appear to be of native origin, are derived from timbers imported from the Baltic. Thus, using the appropriate sapwood estimate of 8–24 rings, the 95% confidence interval (Tyers 1998), they were probably felled after AD 1357.

Attic floorboards above small inner chamber

Six of the floorboards in this attic room were distinctly different to the others present and these were measured directly on site (LYB-H83 – LYB-H88). All six samples dated (Figs 22 and 26b) but again, having been heavily worked, none of the samples retains any sapwood and it is not possible to produce a felling date range for these floorboards.

Five of these floorboards have last measured heartwood ring dates ranging from AD 1391 (LYB-H84) to AD 1414 (LYB-H85). In this instance, with the floorboards being derived from timbers imported from the Baltic, allowing for the minimum number of missing sapwood rings (Tyers 1998) indicates that these timbers were all probably felled after AD 1422.

The sixth dated floorboard sample, LYB-H86, has a much earlier last measured heartwood ring, this dated to AD 1194. Allowing for the minimum likely number of sapwood rings, this timber was felled after AD 1202. It is possible that it was derived from a tree felled significantly earlier than the other floorboards. However, it crossmatches LYB-H87 with a high *t*-value (7.3) which, combined with the fact that its ring series starts at AD 1110 within a few rings of the very long series of LYB-H83 (AD 1119) and LYB-H87 (AD 1124), suggests that it is more likely to simply represent the inner part of a longer-lived tree and hence, coeval with the five other dated floorboards.

Porch

The porch entry, projecting from the north elevation of the Bede House (see Fig 5a) and housing the steps to the Great Chamber, contains a small number of timbers in its west flanking wall of which two were considered suitable for sampling (LYB-H96 and LYB-H97). Sample LYB-H97 proved to have too few rings for reliable dating purposes but sample LYB-H96 was measured and dated (Figs 25 and 26b). It has no heartwood/sapwood boundary and has a last measured heartwood ring dating to AD 1716. Allowing for a minimum of 15 sapwood rings, this post was probably felled after AD 1731.

Attic partition wall above the Great Chamber/Presence Chamber

Three timbers from the partition wall in the attic above the Great Chamber/Presence Chamber were sampled (LYB-H101 – LYB-H103). One, containing too few rings for reliable dating, was not measured, while neither of the two measured samples could be dated.

Chapel/Bedeswoman rooms partition walls and stair framing

The partition walls between the Bedeswoman rooms (former Chapel and the adjacent room) and the timbers support and framing the wooden stairs leading up the attics (see Fig 5b), appear part of an integral structure. Eight samples (LYB-H104 – LYB-H111) were obtained from these timbers although two samples were not measured as they contained too few rings for reliable dating. Five samples dated out of the six that were measured and appeared likely to be coeval (Figs 24 and 26b). The heartwood/sapwood boundary on the four samples with it varies by five

years, with the average boundary dating to AD 1581. This gives these five timbers - a jamb, a newel post, two cross-rails, and a door head, a felling date in the range AD 1599–1621, allowing for the outermost measured sapwood ring on LYB-H110.

Presence Chamber niche (cupboard)

Sample LYB-H112 was obtained from an east-west timber in a niche or small cupboard to the south wall of the Presence Chamber (see Fig 5b). This sample was measured and has a last heartwood ring date of AD 1405 which, allowing for a minimum of 15 sapwood rings, indicates that it was probably felled after AD 1420 (Figs 23 and 26b).

Chamber (shop) ceiling

Finally, sample LYB-H113 was obtained from an east-west ground-floor ceiling beam to the Chamber (currently the shop; see Fig 5a). This sample was measured and has a heartwood/sapwood boundary of AD 1171 which, with the usual minimum/maximum complement of sapwood, gives the timber an estimated felling date in the range AD 1186–1211 (Figs 21 and 26b).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The successful dating of 81 timbers has identified a series of different episodes of felling from the late-twelfth/early thirteenth century through to the late-eighteenth century (Fig 27). The complex history of this remnant of a medieval palace, and hence the possibility that timbers have been salvaged and reused from buildings elsewhere in the medieval palace complex, even in the absence of clear evidence of reuse, highlights the importance of the dendrochronological evidence being combined with detailed documentary and architectural records in order to ensure that the results are placed in an appropriate context. Thus, the following discussion, based on the episodes of felling identified during the dendrochronological analysis, should be viewed in conjunction with detailed documentary and architectural analysis.

Late-twelfth – mid-thirteenth century

The earliest timber, the ceiling beam in the shop, felled in AD 1186–1211, pre-dates the documented residency of the medieval palace by Bishop Grosseteste. Thornton (2009) states that "it is possible that the residence had already developed beyond a typical manorial establishment by later 12th century". Hence, this timber may well be associated with the early development of the medieval palace on the site but caution over its wider interpretation is needed as it is only a single timber. However, there is a group of four ceiling joists in Bedesman room 3 that were felled in AD

1234–59 which appear most likely to coincide with Bishop Grosseteste's residency but could possibly relate to the subsequent bishops, Henry of Lexington or Richard of Gravesend.

Late-fourteenth to mid-fifteenth century

Although it is documented that Bishop Burghersh undertook major redevelopment (Thornton 2009), including the remodelling of the bishops private accommodation (the Bede House range), no timbers were identified as dating to this period. There is little architectural or documentary evidence in relation to works undertaken in the later fourteenth century or early fifteenth century but it is believed that Bishop Alnwick remodelled the Bede House range (Thornton 2009) and a series of 25 timbers have been identified as having been felled in the late-fourteenth to midfifteenth centuries.

The earliest felling date range identified, AD 1388–1413, is for a single joist in the cupboard under the stairs adjacent to the porch and the latest felling date range identified, AD 1444–69, is for 10 timbers from the roof of the Great Chamber and Presence Chamber. Thus, some of these timbers clearly pre-date Bishop Alnwick, indicating at least limited works in the late-fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, whilst others could be associated with Bishop Alnwick or just post-date his residency.

A number of timbers included within this group of late-fourteenth to mid-fifteenth timbers only have a *terminus post quem* date for felling, these being the single timber from the Presence Chamber niche (after AD 1420), as well as the two groups of timbers derived from Baltic imports, namely the two planks from the Bedeswoman room 2 door (felled after AD 1357) and the attic floorboards above the small chamber (felled after AD 1422). Although all could be felled significantly later than the *terminus post quem* this seems unlikely. The niche timber is a substantial timber and would have to have been trimmed very heavily, and hence derived from a very large tree, if it was to be associated with the later fifteenth- to early sixteenth-century felling episodes, whereas Baltic imports tend to be only relatively lightly trimmed to produce the relevant element, with the timbers within groups of imported material generally having outermost heartwood ring dates that are usually very similar (eg Groves 2004).

Later fifteenth – early sixteenth century

A series of 32 timbers have been identified as having been felled in the later fifteenth century to early sixteenth century, most of which appear likely to be associated with the major works that Thornton (2009) indicates were undertaken during the residencies of Bishop Russell and Bishop Smith to this Bede House range.

The earliest felling date range identified, AD 1476–1501, is for a principal rafter from the small chamber roof and the latest felling date ranges identified all span the late AD 1490s to early AD 1510s. These latter comprise a single tiebeam from the Great Chamber/Presence Chamber roof, four tiebeams from the Pentice, four timbers from the ceiling of Bedesman rooms 1 and 2, and three timbers from the partition wall between the Great Chamber and Presence Chamber. The tiebeam from the Great Chamber/Presence Chamber roof, truss 1, is notably slightly later than the other dated timbers from this roof (felled AD 1444–69), including the tiebeam from truss 2, and it is noticeable that neither of the principal rafters or the collar from truss 1 were successfully dated.

Again, a number of timbers included in this later fifteenth-century to early sixteenth-century group only have a terminus post quem date for felling, these being six samples from the stair treads up to the attic (felled after AD 1464), two planks from the door of Bedesman room 2 (felled after AD 1467), four planks from the door of Chapel/Bedeswoman room 1 (felled after AD 1482), four planks from the door of Bedesman room 1 (felled after AD 1484), and three planks from the door of Bedesman room 3 (felled after AD 1484). The stair treads, potentially derived from either a single tree or trees growing within a discrete area of woodland (see above), show high levels of similarity with the two long sequences derived from tiebeams in the Pentice (felled AD 1492–1517) and, thus, it seems likely that the stair treads were felled at a similar time. The planks from all four of these doors show a consistent level of cross-matching and include at least one possible same-tree derivation for three planks (LYB-H69 from Bedesman room 1/LYB-H78 and LYB-H79 from the Chapel/Bedeswoman room 1, *t*-values ranging from 9.8 to 11.3). This indicates the all thirteen dated planks from these four doors are likely to be coeval and the overall similarity in the dates of the outermost heartwood rings suggests that most are only likely to have lost a relatively small number of heartwood rings during conversion and hence, whilst these were felled after AD 1484, it seems likely that they were felled no later than in the early decades of the sixteenth century.

Early seventeenth – late-eighteenth century

The Lyddington estate was transferred to the Crown in AD 1547 and then subsequently granted to the Cecil family with the bishops private accommodation being converted to an almshouse in AD 1601 by Thomas Cecil (Thornton 2009). A number of timbers clearly relate to the ownership of Sir Thomas Cecil, 1st Earl of Exeter, the five dated timbers from the Chapel/Bedeswoman rooms partition walls and stair framing being felled in AD 1599–1621 and the two dated timbers (a post and a tiebeam) from the Pentice being felled in AD 1599–1624. These seven timbers cross-match consistently well and are likely to all have been felled at the same, or a very similar time, and probably relate to the conversion to an almshouse.

A series of twelve timbers have been dated to the eighteenth century during the ownership of the Bede House by Brownlow Cecil, 8th Earl of Exeter (died AD 1754), and his son Brownlow Cecil, 9th Earl of Exeter (died AD 1793). The six dated timbers from the east-end roof were felled in AD 1744, indicating works to the almshouses being undertaken during the ownership of the 8th Earl of Exeter, whereas the four dated posts from the Pentice were felled in AD 1765–90, indicating works to the almshouses during the ownership of the 9th Earl of Exeter. The remaining eighteenth-century timber is a wall plate from the porch dated as being felled after AD 1731. It is not possible to determine whether it is coeval with either of the other felling episodes identified but the fact that it cross-matches well with the posts from the Pentice suggests that it could also be related to the later eighteenth-century felling episode, although this is not proven.

Woodland Source

As may be seen from Tables 2, 4, 5, and 6, although site chronologies LYBHSQ01, LYBHSQ03, LYBHSQ04, and LYBHSQ05 have been compared with reference chronologies from every part of Britain, there is a tendency for the highest *t*-values (ie the greatest degrees of similarity) to be found with those from other sites in the surrounding areas, most notably Leicestershire and Northamptonshire. Although, of course, the precise woodland sources of the trees used at these reference sites are themselves not known, such matching would suggest most of the timber used at the Bede House was obtained from a similarly relatively local source.

The exception to this use of relatively local woodlands are the timbers represented by site chronology LYBHSQ02. As may be seen from Table 3, these are clearly of eastern Baltic origin, although is not possible to say exactly where due to the lack of a local network of reference data for the relevant regions.

The high level of cross-matching between various samples, furthermore, may be taken to indicate that the source trees for some timbers were growing close to each other in the same woodland and in some instances the level of similarity is such that some timbers may have been derived from the same tree. It is likely that at least some of the trees used for the trusses of the roof to the Great Chamber/Presence Chamber (LYB-H01 – LYB-H15) were growing close to each other, or at least in the same general woodland area, with a number of *t*-values in excess of 7 being produced between the samples, including a possible same-tree match between LYD-H04 and LYD-H07 which represent principal rafters. The east-end roof timbers (LYB-H16 – LYB-H22) show strong similarity with each other, with several of the principal rafters having *t*-values with several of the principal rafters having *t*-values in excess of 8. The ceiling joists to Bedesman room 3 (LYB-H39 – LYB-H42) also cross-match well with each other (*t*-values ranging from 5.1 to 10.8, although with one exception). The stair treads (LYB-H54 – LYB-H59) produce *t*-values ranging from 6.6 to 14.7 which is suggestive of them being derived from the same woodland

area with some elements potentially being derived from the same-tree. Given that each tread is a relatively short length of timber, a number of pieces could be taken from a single tree. Three of the joists (LYD-H65 – LYD-H67) from the cupboard under the stairs adjacent to the porch show strong similarity (*t*-values ranging from 6.6 to 9.4). The planks of English origin from the doors of Bedesman rooms 1, 2, and 4 and the Chapel/Bedeswoman room 1 show good similarity with many *t*-values in excess of 5, including possible same-tree matches between LYB-H69, LYB-H78, and LYB-H79. There are also a number of pairs of samples of possible same-tree derivation, including two of the dated Baltic origin floorboards, LYB-H83 and LYB-H87 (*t*-value = 10.9) and two posts (LYB-H91 and LYB-H92) from the Pentice which match with a *t*-value of 11.5.

Interestingly, with the exception of two of the doors, no possible same-tree derivations have been identified between areas. There is, however, as can be seen from the above, a coherence of woodland source within areas, or groups within areas, which is apparent throughout all of the periods of felling identified.

Undated timbers

Nineteen of the 100 measured samples remain ungrouped and undated. With some of these undated samples, though they have sufficient for reliable dating, the ring numbers are towards the lower end of the usual acceptable limits. Other undated samples, however, have higher ring numbers, the longest undated sample, LYB-H24, having 100 rings. None of these samples show any particular problems such as compression or distortion which might affect their growth pattern. It is, however, a common feature in tree-ring analysis to find that some samples remain undated for no apparent reason. In this respect, the analysis at the Bede House has been successful in dating 81 out of the 100 samples obtained, thus, achieving the broadly expected success rate of 70–80% for historic standing buildings.

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TABLES

Table 1: Details of tree-ring samples from The Bede House, Lyddington, Rutland

Sample	Sample location	Total	Sapwood	First measured	Last heartwood	Last measured
number	(trusses/frames/beams etc usually numbered from N–S or E–W)	rings	rings	ring date AD	ring date AD	ring date AD
	Great Chamber/Presence Chamber roof					
LYB-H01	Collar, truss 3	66	6	1361	1420	1426
LYB-H02	North archbrace, truss 3	56	no h/s	1372		1427
LYB-H03	South principal rafter, truss 4	55	h/s	1378	1432	1432
LYB-H04	North principal rafter, truss 4	53	h/s	1383	1435	1435
LYB-H05	South archbrace, truss 4	54	no h/s			
LYB-H06	North archbrace, truss 4	55	no h/s	1374		1428
LYB-H07	South principal rafter, truss 5	54	h/s	1382	1435	1435
LYB-H08	North principal rafter, truss 5	52	h/s			
LYB-H09	South archbrace, truss 5	54	no h/s			
LYB-H10	Collar, truss 6	57	h/s			
LYB-H11	South principal rafter, truss 6	50	h/s	1384	1433	1433
LYB-H12	North principal rafter, truss 6	48	h/s	1383	1430	1430
LYB-H13	Collar, truss 7 (westernmost truss)	69	h/s	1352	1420	1420
LYB-H14	Tiebeam, truss 1 (easternmost truss)	91	h/s	1386	1476	1476
LYB-H15	Tiebeam, truss 2	103	h/s	1324	1426	1426
	East-end roof					
LYB-H16	Collar, truss 1 (east truss)	63	17C	1682	1727	1744
LYB-H17	South principal rafter, truss 1	67	13c	1671	1724	1737
LYB-H18	North principal rafter, truss 1	84	21C	1661	1723	1744
LYB-H19	North purlin, truss 1–2	54	8	1682	1727	1735
LYB-H20	Collar, truss 2	64	20C	1681	1724	1744
LYB-H21	South principal rafter, truss 2	87	6	1645	1725	1731
LYB-H22	North principal rafter, truss 2	89	18C	1656	1726	1744
LYB-H23	South common rafter 1, bay 3	nm				

Table 1: continued

Sample	Sample location	Total	Sapwood	First measured	Last heartwood	Last measured
number		rings	rings	ring date AD	ring date AD	ring date AD
	Presence Chamber ceiling					
LYB-H24	Ceiling joist 1 (from south)	100	h/s			
LYB-H25	Ceiling joist 2	82	h/s			
LYB-H26	Ceiling joist 3	54	h/s			
LYB-H27	Ceiling joist 4	104	h/s	1284	1387	1387
LYB-H28	Ceiling joist 5	65	h/s			
	Bedesman room ceilings					
LYB-H29	Main north-south ceiling beam between rooms 1 & 2	68	h/s	1414	1481	1481
LYB-H30	Ceiling joist 3 (from south), room 2, bay 1	94	h/s	1382	1475	1475
LYB-H31	Ceiling joist 5, room 2, bay 1	87	no h/s	1367		1453
LYB-H32	Ceiling joist 8, room 2, bay 1	nm				
LYB-H33	Main east-west ceiling beam, rooms 1 & 2	nm				
LYB-H34	Ceiling joist 1, room 2, bay 2	73	h/s			
LYB-H35	Ceiling joist 3, room 2,bay 2	62	no h/s	1381		1442
LYB-H36	Ceiling joist 5, room 2, bay 2	nm				
LYB-H37	Ceiling joist 6, room 2, bay 2	66	no h/s			
LYB-H38	Ceiling joist 3, room 1 / 2 lobby	83	h/s			
LYB-H39	Ceiling joist 1 (from south), room 4	90	no h/s	1116		1205
LYB-H40	Ceiling joist 2, room 4	102	h/s	1114	1215	1215
LYB-H41	Ceiling joist 3, room 4	137	h/s	1085	1221	1221
LYB-H42	Ceiling joist 4, room 4	99	h/s	1123	1221	1221
LYB-H43	Ceiling joist 5, room 4	56	h/s			
	West roof over small inner chamber					
LYB-H44	Wall post	nm				
LYB-H45	Cut-off tiebeam	nm				
LYB-H46	Principal rafter	120	h/s	1342	1461	1461
LYB-H47	Wall plate	nm				

Table 1: continued

Sample	Sample location	Total	Sapwood	First measured	Last heartwood	Last measured
number		rings	rings	ring date AD	ring date AD	ring date AD
	Pentice					
LYB-H48	Tiebeam 1 (easternmost)	102	no h/s	1319		1420
LYB-H49	Tiebeam 2	59	h/s	1528	1586	1586
LYB-H50	Tiebeam 3	58	h/s	1415	1472	1472
LYB-H51	Tiebeam 4	nm				
LYB-H52	Tiebeam 5	76	h/s	1406	1481	1481
LYB-H53	Tiebeam 6	174	no h/s	1290		1463
	Stair treads up to attic					
LYB-H54	Tread 2 (from bottom)	135	no h/s	1269		1403
LYB-H55	Tread 3	149	no h/s	1270		1418
LYB-H56	Tread 4	126	no h/s	1245		1370
LYB-H57	Tread 5	155	no h/s	1286		1440
LYB-H58	Tread 6	133	no h/s	1300		1432
LYB-H59	Tread 7	129	no h/s	1321		1449
	Great Chamber/Presence Chamber partition wall					
LYB-H60	Central main post	94	h/s	1319	1412	1412
LYB-H61	South cross-rail	101	15	1394	1479	1494
LYB-H62	North cross-rail	62	h/s	1406	1467	1467
LYB-H63	Upper stud 4 (from north)	90	5	1389	1473	1478
	Cupboard under stairs adjacent to porch					
LYB-H64	Joist 1 (easternmost)	94	h/s	1280	1373	1373
LYB-H65	Joist 2	90	h/s	1314	1403	1403
LYB-H66	Joist 3	94	h/s	1313	1406	1406
LYB-H67	Joist 4	73	h/s	1338	1410	1410
LYB-H6/	JOIST 4	/3	n/s	1338	1410	1410

Table 1: continued

Sample	Sample location	Total	Sapwood	First measured	Last heartwood	Last measured
number		rings	rings	ring date AD	ring date AD	ring date AD
	Doors					
LYB-H68	Bedesman room1, plank 1	76	no h/s	1383		1458
LYB-H69	Bedesman room1, plank 2	150	no h/s	1318		1467
LYB-H70	Bedesman room1, plank 3	103	no h/s	1302		1404
LYB-H71	Bedesman room1, plank 4	99	no h/s	1371		1469
LYB-H72	Bedesman room 2, plank 1	73	no h/s	1356		1428
LYB-H73	Bedesman room 2, plank 2	115	no h/s	1338		1452
LYB-H74	Bedesman room 4, plank 1	189	no h/s	1281		1469
LYB-H75	Bedesman room 4, plank 2	95	no h/s	1364		1458
LYB-H76	Bedesman room 4, plank 3	80	no h/s	1344		1423
LYB-H77	Chapel/Bedeswoman room 1, plank 1	116	no h/s	1352		1467
LYB-H78	Chapel/Bedeswoman room 1, plank 2	118	no h/s	1332		1449
LYB-H79	Chapel/Bedeswoman room 1, plank 3	137	no h/s	1327		1463
LYB-H80	Chapel/Bedeswoman room 1, plank 4	96	no h/s	1363		1458
LYB-H81	Bedeswoman room 2 (adjacent to stair), plank 1	144	no h/s	1206		1349
LYB-H82	Bedeswoman room 2, plank 2	121	no h/s	1171		1291
	Attic floorboards above inner small chamber					
LYB-H83	Floor board 1	288	no h/s	1119		1406
LYB-H84	Floor board 2	147	no h/s	1245		1391
LYB-H85	Floor board 3	160	no h/s	1255		1414
LYB-H86	Floor board 4	85	no h/s	1110		1194
LYB-H87	Floor board 5	284	no h/s	1124		1407
LYB-H88	Floor board 6	132	no h/s	1268		1399

Table 1: continued

Sample	Sample location	Total	Sapwood	First measured	Last heartwood	Last measured
number	1	rings	rings	ring date AD	ring date AD	ring date AD
	Pentice (additional samples)					
LYB-H89	Rail, posts 1–2	nm				
LYB-H90	Rail, posts 2–3	55	no h/s			
LYB-H91	Post 5	55	h/s	1697	1751	1751
LYB-H92	Post 6, upper part	54	h/s	1699	1752	1752
LYB-H93	Post 8, upper part	76	h/s	1507	1582	1582
LYB-H94	Post 10, upper part	54	h/s	1694	1747	1747
LYB-H95	Post 11, upper part (westernmost)	66	4	1688	1749	1753
	Porch					
LYB-H96	West wall plate	94	no h/s	1623		1716
LYB-H97	West wall post	nm				
	Great Chamber roof (additional samples)					
LYB-H98	South principal rafter, truss 1	54	h/s			
LYB-H99	North principal rafter, truss 1	55	h/s			
LYB-H100	Collar, truss 1	52	h/s			
	Attic partition to Great Chamber/Presence Chamber					
LYB-H101	Stud post	74	h/s			
LYB-H102	Door jamb (hanging)	nm				
LYB-H103	Top rail	61	h/s			
	Chapel/Bedeswoman rooms partition walls/stair framing					
LYB-H104	Stair head closing jamb	54	h/s	1527	1580	1580
LYB-H105	Stair head hanging jamb	nm				
LYB-H106	Stair support post	nm				
LYB-H107	Newel post	56	10	1539	1584	1594
LYB-H108	Under-stair rail	76	h/s			

Table 1: continued

Sample	Sample location	Total	Sapwood	First measured	Last heartwood	Last measured
number		rings	rings	ring date AD	ring date AD	ring date AD
	Chapel/Bedeswoman rooms partition walls/stair					
	framing					
LYB-H109	Party wall, north cross-rail	57	no h/s	1498		1554
LYB-H110	Party wall, south cross-rail	69	17	1530	1581	1598
LYB-H111	Corridor rail/door head	59	h/s	1522	1580	1580
	Presence Chamber niche (cupboard)					
LYB-H112	East-west beam in niche to south wall	115	no h/s	1291		1405
	Chamber (shop) ceiling					
LYB-H113	East – west ceiling beam	65	h/s	1107	1171	1171

nm = sample not measured

h/s = the heartwood/sapwood boundary ring is the last ring on the sample
c = complete sapwood is found on the timber, but all or part has been lost from the sample in coring
C= complete sapwood is retained on the sample, but in this instance the outermost rings of CPS-B14 cannot be reliably measured

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Table 2: Results of the cross-matching of site sequence LYBHSQ01 and some relevant reference chronologies when the first-ring date is AD 1085 and the last-ring date is AD 1221

Reference chronology	Span of chronology	<i>t</i> -value	Reference
Billingsgate (BIG82), London	AD 611-1243	9.5	(Tyers and Hillam pers comm)
Nevill Holt, Leicestershire	AD 1274-1534	8.8	(Arnold et al 2008a)
Manor House, Medbourne, Leicestershire	AD 1068-1287	8.0	(Howard et al 1999)
Southview Cottage, Norwell, Nottinghamshire	AD 1132-1306	7.7	(Hurford et al 2010)
Angel Choir, Lincoln Cathedral, Lincolnshire	AD 904-1257	7.5	(Laxton and Litton 1988)
Blackfriars Priory, Gloucester, Gloucestershire	AD 1024-1237	7.4	(Howard et al 2002)
7 Buttermarket, Thame, Oxfordshire	AD 1161-1289	7.4	(Howard et al 1993)
The Gatehouse, Polesworth Abbey, Warwickshire	AD 1095-1342	7.1	(Arnold and Howard 2007a)

Table 3: Results of the cross-matching of site sequence LYBHSQ02 and some relevant reference chronologies when the first-ring date is AD 1110 and the last-ring date is AD 1414

Reference chronology	Span of chronology	<i>t</i> -value	Reference
East Pomerania, Poland	AD 996–1985	8.7	(Wazny and Eckstein 1991)
Niedersaxon Nord, Germany	AD 915-1873	6.1	(Leuschener pers comm)
Neils Hemmingsensgade barrel, Copenhagen, Denmark	AD 1124–1399	12.0	(Daly 2000)
Copper wreck group 4, Gdañsk, Poland	AD 1094-1402	10.3	(Bonde and Wazny pers comm)
Vejby Skip Hanseatic cog, Denmark	AD 1109-1370	7.5	(Bonde and Jensen 1995)
Southwark boat planks (GAS88), London	AD 1052-1370	12.9	(Tyers 1996a)
Magistrates Court coffins, Hull, East Yorkshire	AD 1078-1369	11.7	(Tyers 1998)
Chapel Lane Staith boat planks, Hull, East Yorkshire	AD 1110-1393	10.7	(Tyers 2000)
St Helen's Church, Abingdon, Oxfordshire	AD 1117-1379	10.0	(Howard <i>et al</i> 1992)
St Lawrence's Church, Little Waddingfield, Suffolk	AD 1131-1339	9.7	(Bridge pers comm)
Thornham Parva retable, Suffolk	AD 1053-1309	8.8	(Tyers 2003)
Tadlow Granary Cambridgeshire	AD 1140-1406	8.4	(Laxton et al 1984)
The Guildhall, Hadleigh, Suffolk	AD 1157-1431	8.0	(Howard <i>et al</i> 1990 unpubl)

Table 4: Results of the cross-matching of site sequence LYBHSQ03 and some relevant reference chronologies when the first-ring date is AD 1245 and the last-ring date is AD 1494

Reference chronology	Span of chronology	<i>t</i> -value	Reference
Halesowen Abbey, Dudley, West Midlands	AD 1310-1535	12.1	(Arnold and Howard 2008a)
Leicester Castle, Leicester, Leicestershire	AD 1353-1482	10.5	(Laxton et al 1984 unpubl)
Cathedral Barn, Hereford, Herefordshire	AD 1359-1491	10.1	(Tyers 1996b)
Ulverscroft Priory, Charnwood, Leicestershire	AD 1219-1463	9.9	(Arnold et al 2008b)
Combermere Abbey, Combermere, Cheshire	AD 1363-1564	9.8	(Howard et al 2003)
Lower Brockhampton Manor, Brockhampton, Herefordshire	AD 1304-1543	9.8	(Arnold and Howard 2014 unpubl)
Apethorpe Hall, Apethorpe, Northamptonshire	AD 1292-1740	9.7	(Arnold et al 2008c)
St Leonard's Church, Apethorpe, Northamptonshire	AD 1211-1403	8.9	(Arnold and Howard 2008b)

Table 5: Results of the cross-matching of site sequence LYBHSQ04 and some relevant reference chronologies when the first-ring date is AD 1498 and the last-ring date is AD 1598

Reference chronology	Span of chronology	<i>t</i> -value	Reference
Apethorpe Hall, Apethorpe, Northamptonshire	AD 1292-1740	11.3	(Arnold et al 2008c)
Flore's House, Oakham, Rutland	AD 1173-1392	11.1	(Hurford et al 2008)
Church of St Nicholas, Bringhurst, Leicestershire	AD 1502-1687	8.7	(Arnold et al 2005)
St Leonard's Church, Apethorpe, Northamptonshire	AD 1211-1403	8.6	(Arnold and Howard 2008b)
Cressing Temple farmhouse, Essex	AD 1514–1608	8.1	(Tyers 1995)
Manor Farm, Stanton St John, Oxfordshire	AD 1480-1646	7.9	(Miles and Worthington 1998)
Moyns Park, Birdbrook, Essex	AD 1431–1606	7.9	(Tyers 1999)
Church of St Andrew, Welham, Leicestershire	AD 1443-1633	7.8	(Arnold et al 2005)

Table 6: Results of the cross-matching of site sequence LYBHSQ05 and some relevant reference chronologies when the first-ring date is AD 1623 and the last-ring date is AD 1753

Reference chronology	Span of chronology	<i>t</i> -value	Reference
Apethorpe Hall, Apethorpe, Northamptonshire	AD 1292-1740	9.2	(Arnold et al 2008c)
Stoneleigh Abbey, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire	AD 1646-1813	9.0	(Howard et al 2000)
Sarehole Mill, Hall Green, Birmingham	AD 1677-1767	8.6	(Howard 2008 unpubl)
Church Farm, Bringhurst, Leicestershire	AD 1664-1781	8.4	(Groves <i>et al</i> 2004)
Bingham, Nottinghamshire	AD 1445-1752	8.3	(Arnold and Howard 2013 unpubl)
Quenby Hall, Quenby Leicestershire	AD 1648-1765	8.0	(Arnold <i>et al</i> 2008a)
Green's Mill, Sneinton, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire	AD 1664-1787	7.9	(Laxton et al 1982)
The Gatehouse, Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire	AD 1623-1727	7.4	(Arnold and Howard 2007b)

FIGURES

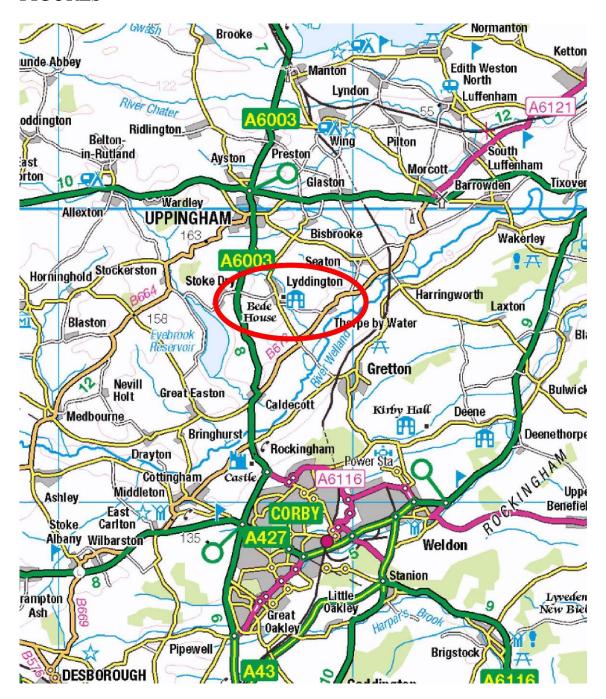


Figure 1a: Map to show the general location of Lyddington © Crown Copyright and database right 2018. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100024900

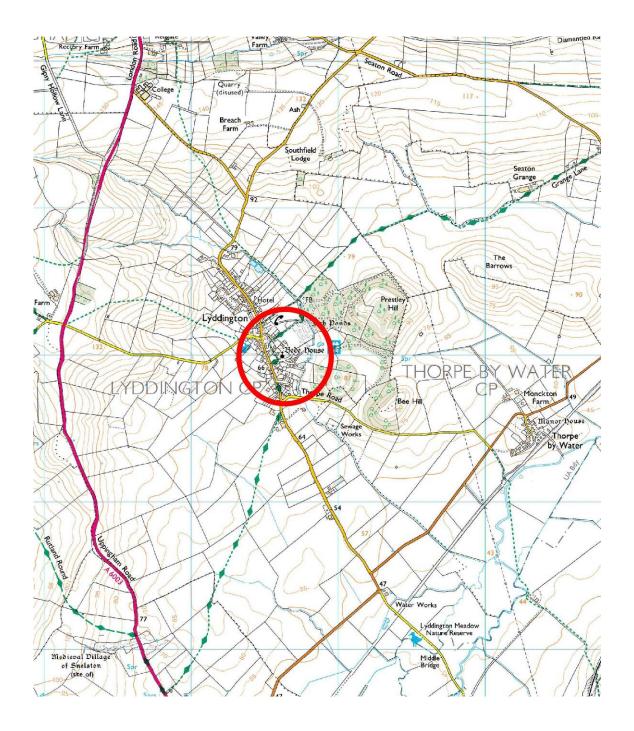


Figure 1b: Map to show the general location of the Bede House, Lyddington © Crown Copyright and database right 2018. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100024900

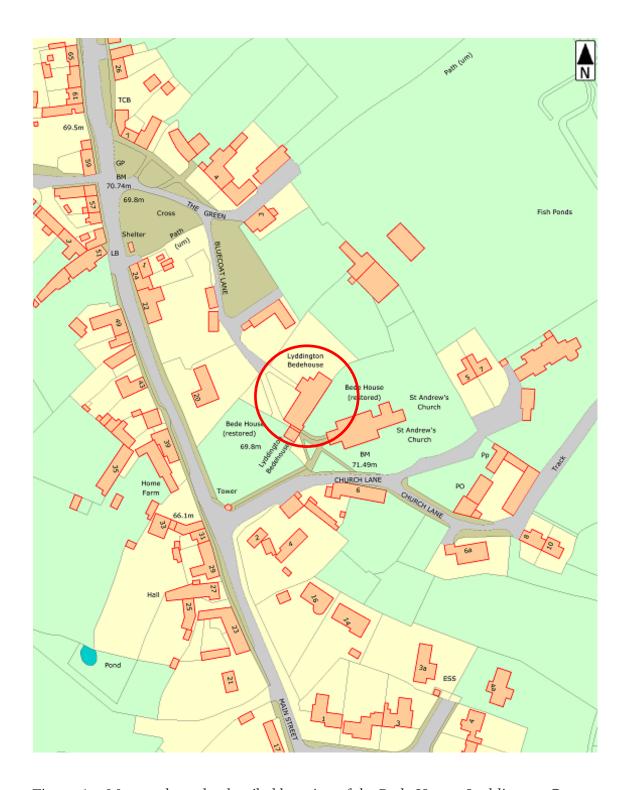


Figure 1c: Map to show the detailed location of the Bede House, Lyddington © Crown Copyright and database right 2018. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100024900

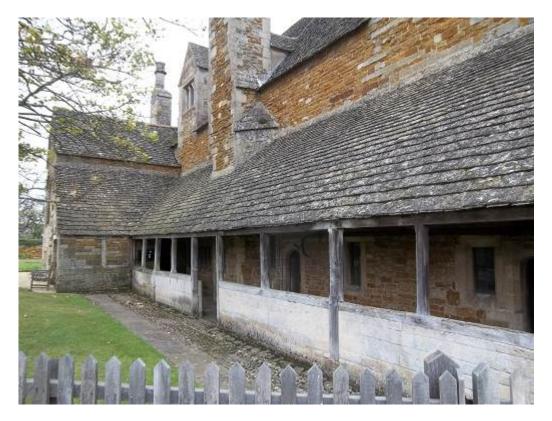




Figure 2a/b: The Pentice to the north wall of the Bede House (top) and the Great Chamber, with Presence Chamber and small chamber beyond (bottom) (photographs Robert Howard)





Figure 3a/b: The roof above the Great Chamber looking east (top) and the roof at the east end of the Bede House (bottom) (photographs Robert Howard)

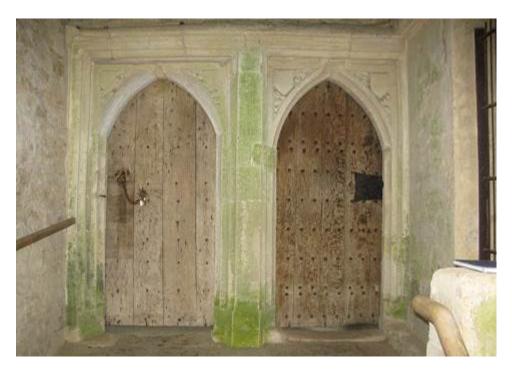




Figure 4a/b: Examples of the wooden doors to the Chapel/Bedeswoman rooms landing (L) and Great Chamber (R) (top) and to Bedesman room 5 (bottom) (photographs Robert Howard)

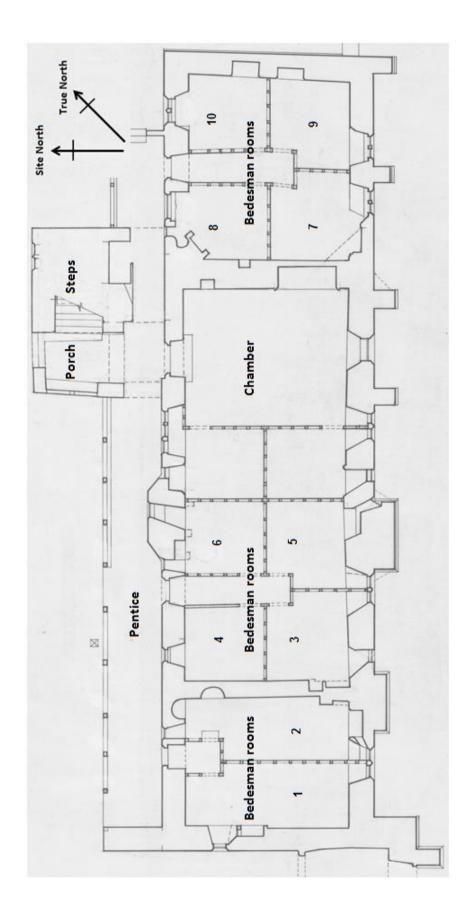


Figure 5a: Ground-floor plan of the Bede House (after HBMC 1986)

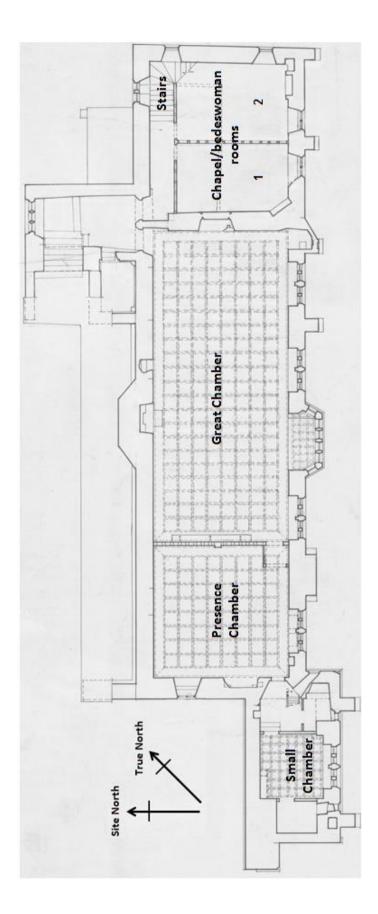


Figure 5b: First-floor plan of the Bede House (after HBMC 1986)

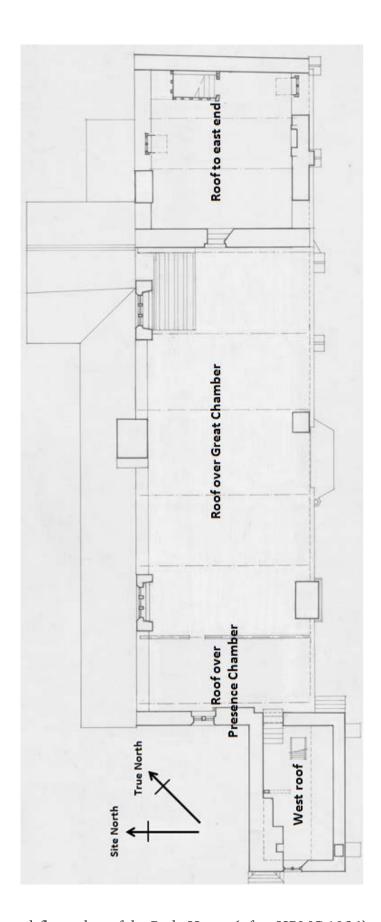


Figure 5c: Second-floor plan of the Bede House (after HBMC 1986)

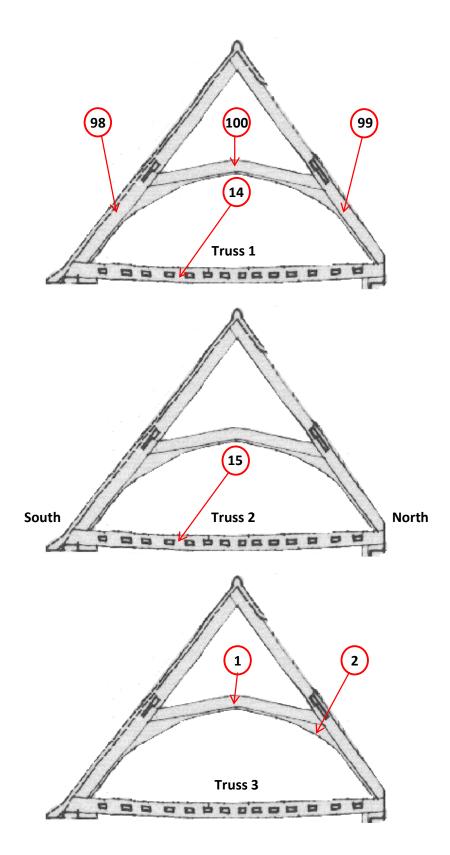


Figure 6a–c: Roof trusses above the Great Chamber and Presence Chamber to locate sampled timbers (after Ministry of Works Ancient Monuments Branch 1954)

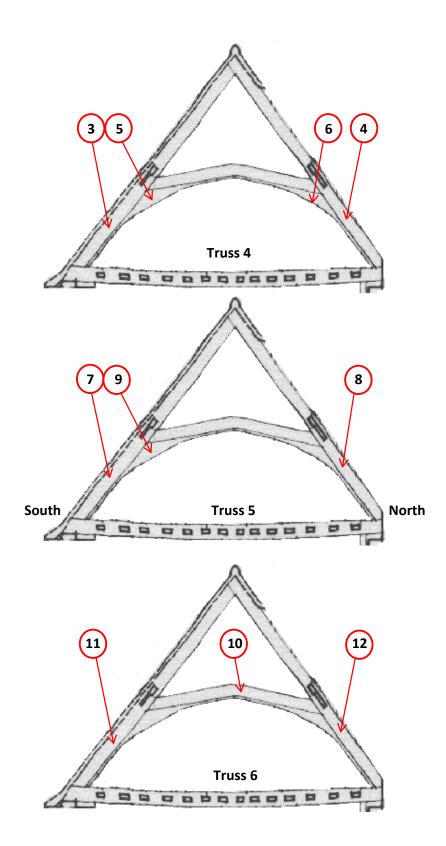


Figure 6d–f: Roof trusses above the Great Chamber and Presence Chamber to locate sampled timbers (after Ministry of Works Ancient Monuments Branch 1954)

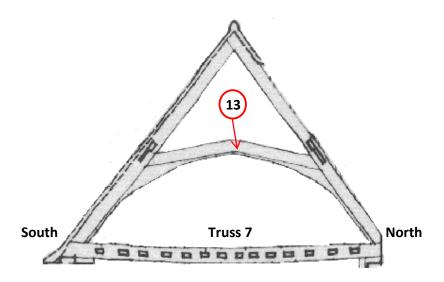
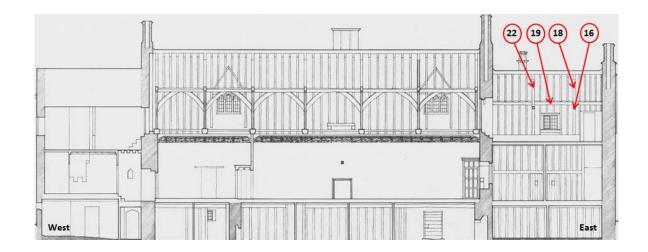


Figure 6g: Roof truss above the Great Chamber and Presence Chamber to locate sampled timbers (after Ministry of Works Ancient Monuments Branch 1954)



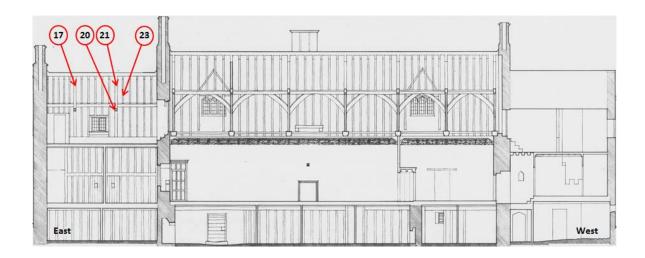


Figure 7a/b: Sections through the east-end roof to locate sampled timbers (after Ministry of Works Ancient Monuments Branch 1954)

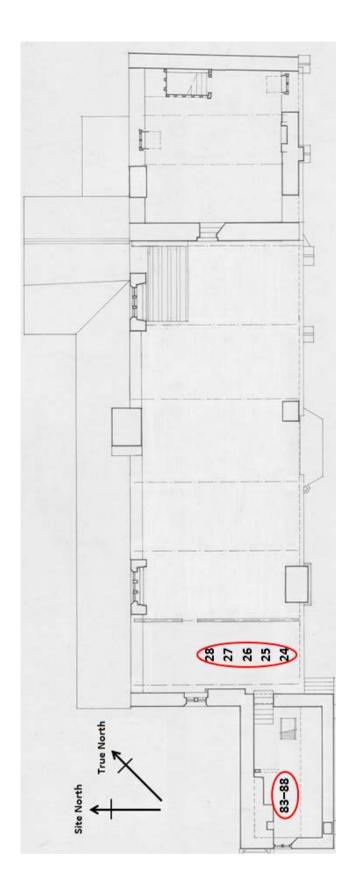


Figure 8: Plan at attic-floor level to locate sampled ceiling timbers (after HBMC 1986)

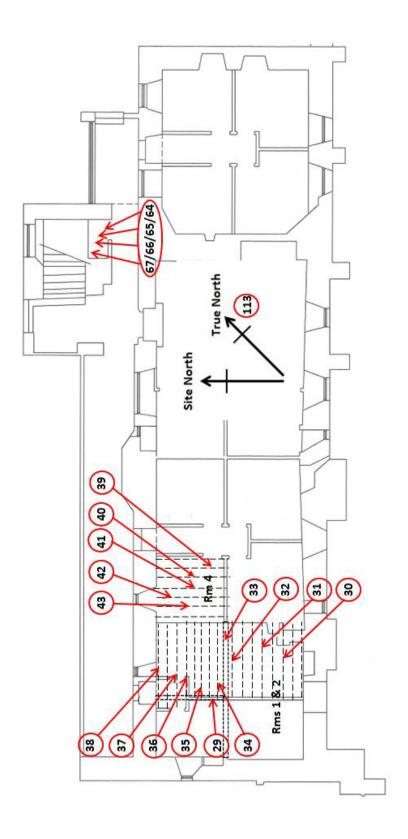


Figure 9: Ground-floor plan to locate samples from the Bedesman rooms and the under-stair cupboard (after HBMC 1986)



Figure 10: View of the west-end roof above the small chamber to locate sampled timbers (photograph Robert Howard)

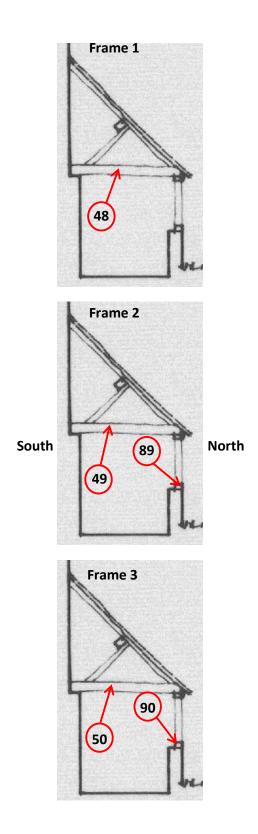


Figure 11a—c: Section through the Pentice to locate sampled timbers (after Ministry of Works Ancient Monuments Branch 1954)

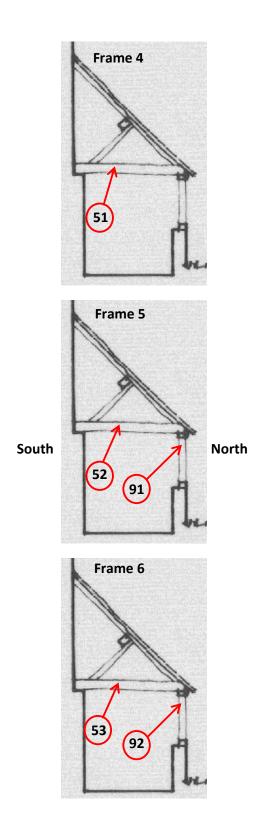


Figure 11d–f: Section through the Pentice to locate sampled timbers (after Ministry of Works Ancient Monuments Branch 1954)

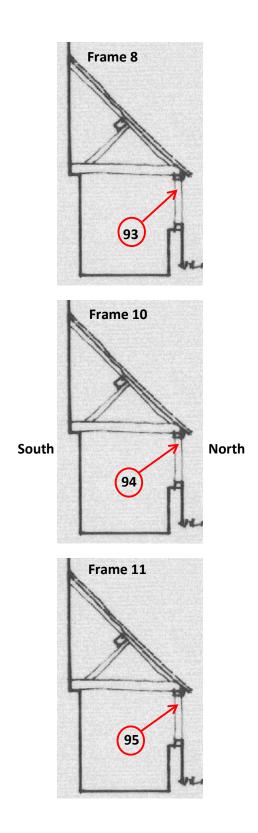


Figure 11g—i: Section through the Pentice to locate sampled timbers (after Ministry of Works Ancient Monuments Branch 1954)

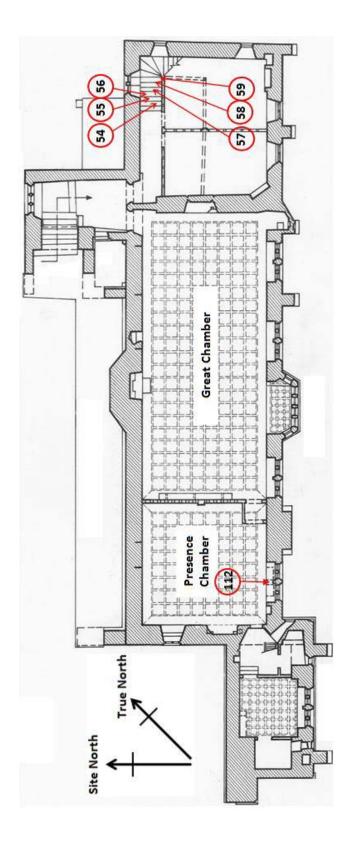


Figure 12: Plan to locate stair tread samples (after HBMC 1986)

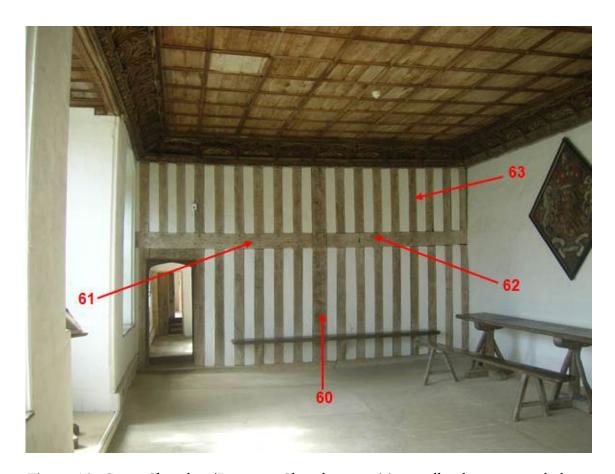
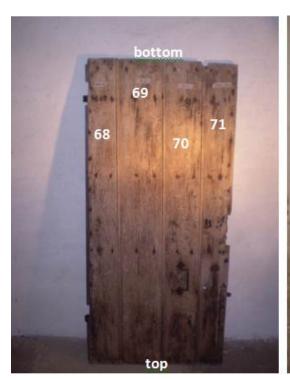


Figure 13: Great Chamber/Presence Chamber partition wall to locate sampled timbers (photograph Robert Howard)





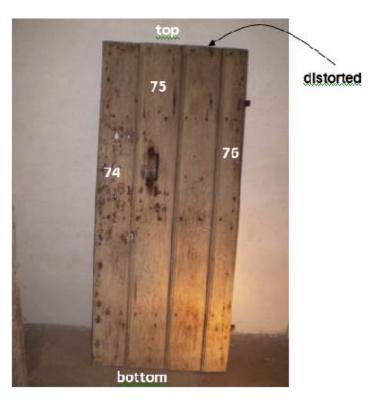
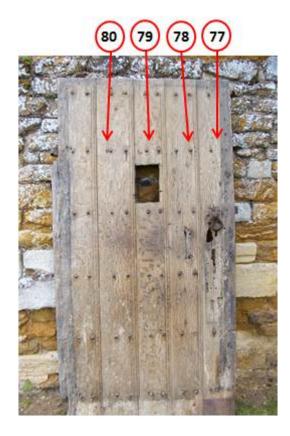


Figure 14a–c: Bedesman room doors to locate sampled timbers (photographs Robert Howard)



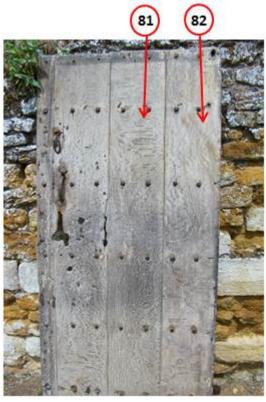


Figure 15a/b: Chapel/Bedeswoman room 1 door (top) and Bedeswoman room 2 door (bottom) to locate sampled timbers (photographs Robert Howard)



Figure 16: View of the floorboards to the west roof attic space to locate sampled timbers (photograph Robert Howard)

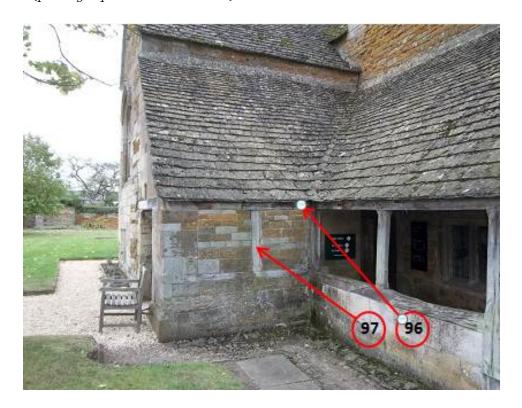


Figure 17: View of the porch to locate sampled timbers (photograph Robert Howard)





Figure 18a/b: Views of the partition wall and ceiling at the west end of the roof above the Great Chamber/Presence Chamber to help locate sampled timbers (photographs Robert Howard)





Figure 19a/b: Views of the Bedeswoman room 2 partition walls and stair framing to help locate sampled timbers (photographs Robert Howard)



Figure 19c/d: Views of the partition walls to the Chapel/Bedeswoman rooms 2 and 1 to help locate sampled timbers (photographs Robert Howard)





Figure 20a/b: View of the niche (cupboard) in the south wall of the Presence Chamber (top) and the ground-floor ceiling beam in the Chamber (currently the shop), to help locate sampled timbers (photographs Robert Howard)

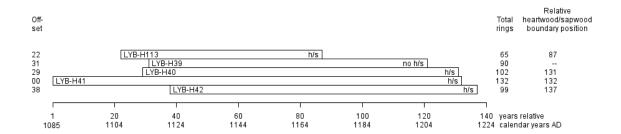


Figure 21: Bar diagram of the samples in site chronology LYBHSQ01. White bars $= heartwood\ rings;\ h/s = heartwood/sapwood\ boundary$

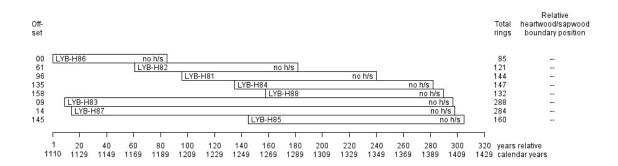


Figure 22: Bar diagram of the samples in site chronology LYBHSQ02. White bars = heartwood rings; h/s = heartwood/sapwood boundary

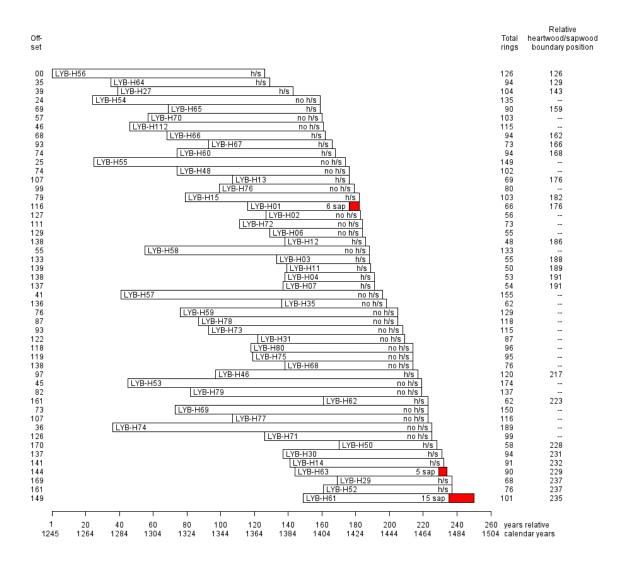


Figure 23: Bar diagram of the samples in site chronology LYBHSQ03. White bars = heartwood rings; red bars = sapwood rings; h/s = heartwood/sapwood boundary

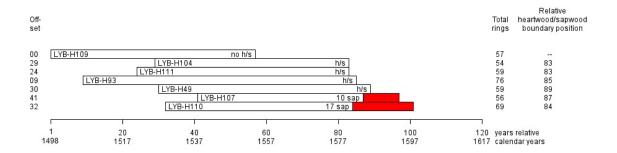


Figure 24: Bar diagram of the samples in site chronology LYBHSQ04. White bars = heartwood rings; red bars = sapwood rings; h/s = heartwood/sapwood boundary

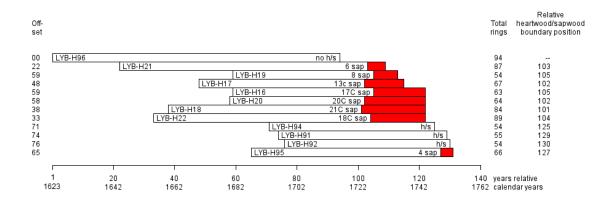


Figure 25: Bar diagram of the samples in site chronology LYBHSQ05. White bars = heartwood rings; red bars = sapwood rings; h/s = heartwood/sapwood boundary; C = complete sapwood is retained on the sample, the last measured ring date is the felling of the tree represented

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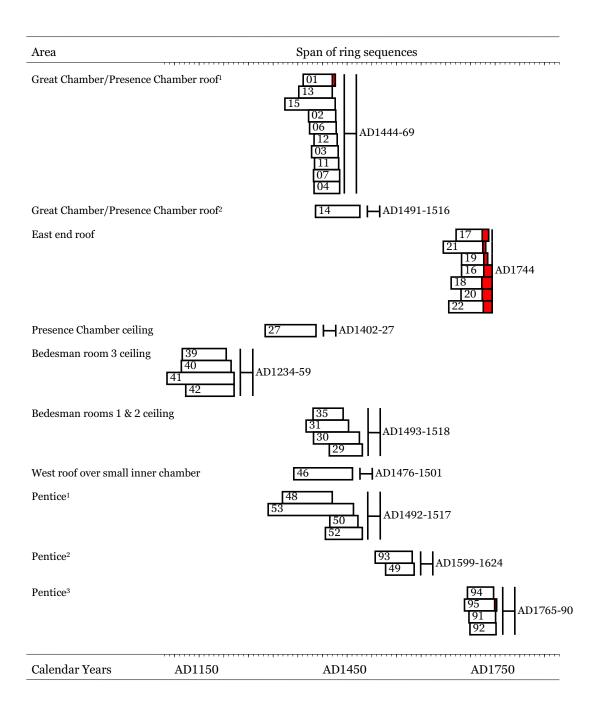


Figure 26a: Bar diagram showing the dated samples area by area with associated felling dates / felling date ranges / felled after dates. White bars = heartwood rings; red bars = sapwood rings

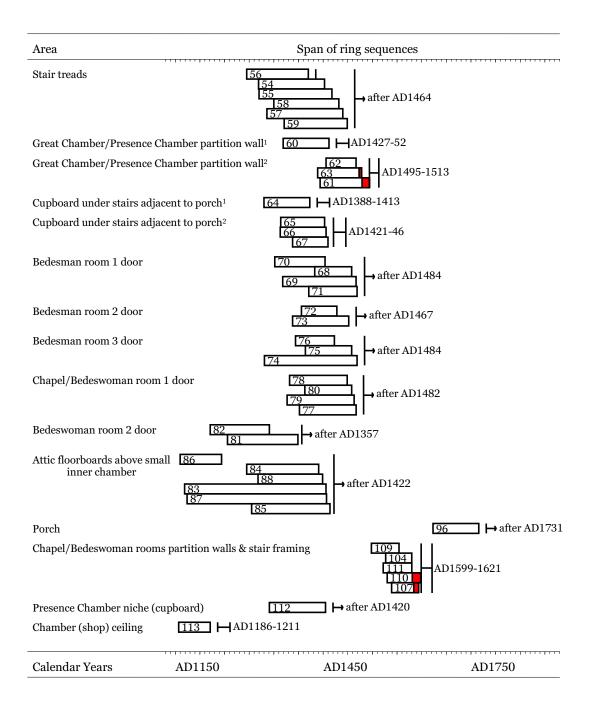


Figure 26b: Bar diagram showing the dated samples area by area with associated felling dates / felling date ranges / felled after dates. White bars = heartwood rings; red bars = sapwood rings

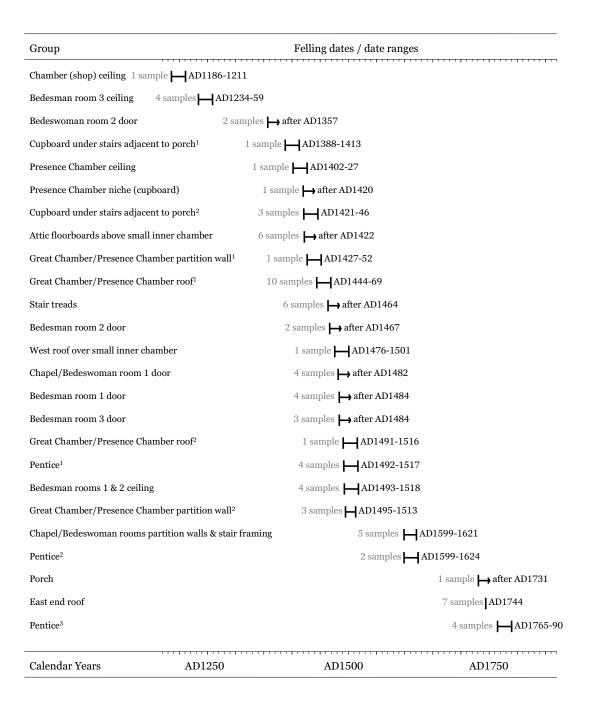


Figure 27: Summary of the felling dates / felling date ranges / felled after dates for the associated groups of timbers from each area in date order

DATA OF MEASURED SAMPLES

Measurements in 0.01mm units

LYB-H01A 66

339 376 340 456 265 341 241 320 343 304 252 311 290 301 186 256 303 314 365 319 317 361 258 249 244 315 376 369 274 260 322 164 304 202 124 171 136 132 178 160 168 191 253 212 202 173 137 138 132 110 105 150 154 120 140 169 150 143 107 147 116 134 124 159 172 171

LYB-H01B 66

321 390 320 434 278 321 263 300 352 265 246 328 289 285 196 234 296 293 389 338 294 377 273 226 247 317 368 380 284 268 315 148 326 187 124 176 118 128 189 156 177 187 252 231 184 180 149 148 126 105 122 144 155 107 152 166 145 145 111 136 123 130 132 142 169 166

LYB-H02A 56

468 342 361 299 461 304 382 417 299 340 539 439 505 465 535 585 592 519 608 740 534 549 433 478 346 406 338 339 362 610 628 748 488 605 528 474 426 405 340 349 356 208 251 269 295 340 275 249 403 244 244 338 243 275 311 328

LYB-H02B 56

462 329 356 300 450 310 370 406 300 340 508 445 501 413 528 540 639 510 557 764 541 545 425 497 357 404 342 309 368 615 648 747 511 632 484 470 439 407 344 335 372 214 236 273 308 330 295 243 398 249 236 331 251 284 281 341

LYB-H03A 55

206 314 105 140 212 256 185 193 374 424 392 306 313 375 331 296 338 334 395 333 361 394 355 375 399 359 413 380 364 301 253 359 350 322 356 323 315 256 274 219 275 220 347 293 324 335 356 259 212 292 327 272 252 253 283

LYB-H03B 55

143 304 116 134 208 261 168 198 377 444 392 314 309 374 321 294 339 335 399 342 346 405 342 380 400 361 403 384 340 338 254 366 359 314 361 318 305 269 270 212 280 210 360 287 311 340 346 287 200 275 334 285 222 266 277

LYB-H04A 53

245 180 191 369 429 388 300 311 252 328 315 356 369 455 481 536 547 508 448 509 663 667 554 431 373 303 390 239 270 278 258 299 297 273 233 220 259 404 292 313 366 369 247 245 340 303 343 291 329 360 329 280 285

LYB-H04B 53

239 176 181 358 418 378 299 310 223 322 313 354 382 444 491 527 513 472 440 529 657 653 548 432 357 315 376 266 261 281 265 290 305 268 219 274 262 370 266 324 330 377 306 215 344 326 330 300 324 364 301 306 297

LYB-H05A 54

381 437 539 421 511 398 471 360 364 326 428 319 383 434 289 150 233 268 330 316 323 303 386 408 344 337 538 499 468 438 391 301 422 296 346 340 313 300 269 277 238 304 282 274 270 258 277 405 573 492 578 420 560 311

LYB-H05B 54

402 422 500 445 502 374 472 338 358 316 459 314 376 426 306 129 252 288 316 319 323 286 385 395 343 333 540 528 452 443 364 291 430 340 342 324 332 293 261 343 214 287 254 308 267 274 285 425 560 478 559 422 560 300

LYB-H06A 55

359 319 431 322 376 429 290 148 228 272 327 311 319 479 340 420 472 604 417 705 491 630 621 576 749 765 647 707 714 801 625 629 714 562 866 742 572 623 853 625 616 560 656 492 660 326 866 436 373 540 372 414 278 321 450

LYB-H06B 55

350 311 419 312 377 418 281 139 220 261 320 308 311 483 350 433 443 606 320 715 507 634 620 581 780 806 603 707 702 830 643 603 714 564 847 744 559 623 872 612 630 574 661 496 655 315 843 455 343 558 385 368 298 318 461

LYB-H07A 54

208 260 178 190 369 420 389 300 311 370 328 300 396 358 434 454 503 506 464 425 516 628 666 561 455 413 311 390 271 295 309 297 314 321 311 244 260 255 436 297 301 390 364 288 255 345 361 320 310 330 369 325 301 339

LYB-H07B 54

210 249 180 179 354 415 378 306 310 366 321 290 365 367 436 451 504 507 457 432 504 638 671 567 445 410 330 388 272 313 286 300 308 341 314 204 270 251 446 272 343 370 368 304 225 362 366 304 323 313 376 303 303 336

LYB-H08A 52

500 618 643 542 446 314 240 296 388 350 400 315 282 264 202 225 174 232 325 388 414 461 369 283 425 343 328 403 511 382 397 387 320 316 357 335 220 212 168 133 161 173 176 156 171 252 327 160 117 136 343 329

LYB-H08B 52

503 609 633 529 440 323 243 302 366 374 434 318 350 236 200 232 168 242 310 396 394 462 349 294 393 361 298 363 532 364 425 352 329 315 367 313 215 232 158 120 163 188 173 158 167 212 328 166 113 161 297 310

LYB-H09A 54

104 118 281 398 391 345 368 423 247 211 403 368 480 376 584 303 295 271 296 467 391 254 258 272 145 173 256 266 311 216 194 297 237 261 349 257 223 187 335 324 234 213 237 229 333 238 273 198 234 261 217 189 271 267

LYB-H09B 54

101 112 273 400 378 352 359 407 258 206 400 435 502 403 542 315 311 262 320 459 416 260 258 276 154 165 262 264 312 226 198 296 223 250 348 285 211 174 322 336 248 245 204 234 295 234 276 198 226 250 225 170 280 269

LYB-H10A 57

322 494 247 247 411 386 576 439 635 548 537 183 240 324 362 317 324 390 492 567 572 350 343 342 195 163 255 204 217 212 299 308 321 290 297 391 466 311 219 196 120 153 150 102 94 111 148 133 89 108 67 59 142 172 189 187 206

LYB-H10B 57

314 493 268 246 415 387 560 443 616 550 529 187 227 330 337 323 332 376 498 562 585 355 351 338 233 125 246 181 175 222 275 299 306 288 292 382 450 339 217 168 125 159 138 118 76 135 131 121 86 102 72 63 133 157 212 173 201

LYB-H11A 50

100 122 278 400 387 355 370 418 253 215 408 387 409 403 438 537 491 492 513 590 524 459 404 382 358 416 326 329 384 352 351 283 252 241 255 188 272 287 237 393 296 244 247 366 364 262 285 297 389 281

LYB-H11B 50

104 128 273 389 378 349 366 411 246 209 394 390 419 408 442 522 494 504 499 588 527 459 407 343 328 398 342 335 344 351 354 276 239 260 237 201 276 277 259 385 284 243 258 351 351 247 286 305 422 298

LYB-H12A 48

166 93 118 282 416 398 360 366 420 249 220 266 211 250 286 296 346 317 273 380 453 443 431 389 305 285 302 288 241 274 295 289 221 230 202 259 206 359 279 209 311 294 258 179 277 283 233 242

LYB-H12B 48

116 77 127 260 435 395 361 361 422 248 212 282 224 256 296 310 345 316 284 350 446 418 418 422 263 290 316 287 228 296 283 299 245 231 226 245 216 331 277 209 298 281 263 181 283 296 237 240

LYB-H13A 69

105 155 140 162 185 158 217 227 208 157 263 188 189 146 212 203 182 256 227 183 151 151 201 155 240 178 220 157 177 159 218 173 111 147 203 181 173 122 109 151 66 141 101 82 129 78 107 124 110 108 90 128 121 132 140 118 123 133 119 107 156 108 111 135 160 103 107 82 103

LYB-H13B 69

94 165 147 159 183 234 224 240 202 156 265 193 197 151 217 185 182 244 247 177 158 156 190 153 242 184 219 172 173 156 216 172 98 146 202 171 165 143 118 126 63 141 100 85 128 86 100 136 110 91 94 126 118 142 137 115 135 138 109 112 183 113 111 139 157 102 97 93 106

LYB-H14A 91

706 710 453 465 596 465 497 521 399 423 487 485 402 431 539 503 219 582 364 446 340 280 206 332 143 184 155 254 468 415 325 222 205 96 213 220 184 199 163 190 98 151 167 195 183 171 216 196 98 113 153 171 151 156 160 129 110 89 103 72 110 84 143 111 127 175 147 189 175 195 188 166 129 120 93 124 128 132 126 129 166 123 89 86 155 104 151 154 122 162 136

LYB-H14B 91

695 722 463 460 538 517 447 522 434 422 465 511 397 417 538 508 206 591 383 415 324 286 211 319 135 175 166 284 492 369 311 220 206 99 224 221 193 192 160 210 91 173 167 180 186 169 213 194 100 124 148 187 172 133 167 121 110 95 94 77 110 75 143 124 104 179 125 171 165 221 184 165 132 113 88 132 126 129 132 145 169 127 94 89 150 107 157 158 131 157 146

LYB-H15A 103

186 128 85 176 212 331 200 127 118 150 168 270 229 252 202 286 272 240 216 194 146 261 265 305 342 431 213 332 233 198 227 135 131 138 99 114 124 132 210 284 356 220 226 174 97 129 152 153 148 140 90 97 99 105 148 142 131 110 81 103 125 135 138 172 152 120 97 107 85 113 80 103 127 108 129 116 121 93 96 124 161 126 133 97 113 97 108 101 79 111 93 92 79 82 115 99 127 102 100 183 173 108 138

LYB-H15B 103

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LYB-H16A 63

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LYB-H16B 63

408 366 312 228 357 315 342 291 206 323 232 265 264 240 232 226 160 87 155 181 186 255 193 145 237 133 171 227 162 191 153 91 80 73 92 150 97 114 125 165 117 91 189 142 129 177 151 117 57 126 137 159 139 208 173 156 163 129 111 68 90 93 77

LYB-H17A 67

616 361 352 218 185 150 392 347 318 402 230 431 212 210 179 203 142 211 257 243 301 204 302 172 237 179 227 221 129 159 157 187 289 228 149 195 163 131 187 165 177 234 241 189 265 213 195 141 130 158 182 181 151 251 195 128 168 177 183 156 182 227 246 156 221 124 139

LYB-H17B 67

595 368 360 215 192 140 399 346 324 393 223 424 221 237 181 214 127 228 257 254 274 208 299 175 252 186 228 218 129 163 146 194 288 213 151 186 167 130 185 157 178 257 242 202 255 228 189 149 120 162 194 177 158 249 190 123 161 194 183 147 195 224 230 160 194 123 125

LYB-H18A 84

236 251 306 291 233 281 225 349 351 419 494 323 301 232 209 153 293 324 396 361 289 493 320 234 303 303 227 299 309 298 290 241 304 192 224 224 238 230 164 184 154 160 261 262 134 171 182 136 218 157 179 211 219 155 183 223 170 128 119 174 149 183 126 201 225 131 164 203 169 119 174 171 188 129 236 157 140 224 199 159 156 146 148 153

LYB-H18B 84

228 251 318 278 236 269 256 359 352 404 490 324 305 235 192 159 324 332 403 389 316 509 330 239 315 297 221 298 330 275 294 250 301 187 231 222 232 238 161 175 150 162 274 256 134 169 185 151 205 153 183 207 217 169 158 227 173 127 122 173 149 177 135 208 221 132 163 206 154 138 158 166 195 131 246 156 140 235 180 160 142 160 146 154

LYB-H19A 54

476 384 228 145 194 207 321 274 253 366 287 262 225 248 181 193 157 65 82 79 100 235 343 167 196 270 194 150 77 148 166 225 155 172 199 161 141 163 187 247 264 179 289 214 262 308 216 273 168 263 282 305 257 259

LYB-H19B 54

466 378 212 146 198 211 317 268 241 370 264 279 213 234 197 189 160 67 75 89 86 272 367 178 201 278 209 199 79 118 139 238 176 167 196 154 132 169 171 257 250 171 239 189 305 311 223 267 167 243 257 301 236 282

LYB-H20A 64

233 384 248 327 281 484 294 227 285 207 278 199 298 265 333 300 292 191 90 141 145 113 180 244 169 287 155 165 195 130 257 282 232 133 117 106 110 111 116 153 205 169 134 191 111 107 165 119 113 80 167 177 193 172 235 97 106 126 116 90 49 60 89 86

LYB-H20B 64

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LYB-H21A 87

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LYB-H21B 87

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LYB-H22A 89

235 370 356 283 328 261 231 290 252 241 290 265 224 323 411 494 368 303 204 164 123 238 278 336 347 212 399 271 233 163 215 135 204 314 215 218 142 280 163 209 155 184 245 169 182 188 225 303 224 163 183 123 105 186 185 191 165 160 136 162 195 160 96 85 102 140 182 116 189 175 131 207 220 185 142 160 218 197 199 243 136 111 229 231 205 150 160 184 150

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LYB-H67B 73

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LYB-H68A 76

270 200 230 270 200 210 220 180 230 200 200 150 120 210 180 200 210 250 210 200 270 230 180 200 220 230 200 210 210 200 220 200 220 170 170 140 130 230 240 200 330 250 240 220 150 160 180 250 200 250 200 200 250 200 180 240 160 200 180 170 170 150 150 130 200 160 170 200 210 200 180 170 190 220 160 150

LYB-H69A 150

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LYB-H70A 103

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LYB-H71A 99

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LYB-H72A 73

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LYB-H73A 115

LYB-H74A 189

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LYB-H75A 95

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LYB-H76A 80

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LYB-H77A 116

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LYB-H78A 118

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LYB-H79A 137

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LYB-H80A 96

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LYB-H81A 144

LYB-H82A 121

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LYB-H83A 288

LYB-H84A 147

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LYB-H85A 160

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LYB-H86A 85

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LYB-H87A 284

LYB-H88A 132

LYB-H90A 55

302 261 262 298 334 206 179 242 222 202 222 319 229 156 240 229 292 210 217 294 258 326 314 336 295 219 223 251 259 194 205 199 156 153 340 224 167 215 290 238 288 302 264 215 176 209 191 170 233 215 174 218 158 220 233

LYB-H90B 55

212 295 265 303 326 210 175 240 208 197 235 304 227 166 242 242 275 206 225 303 276 307 321 327 291 203 229 253 273 189 208 198 146 155 363 225 180 198 303 222 294 282 278 223 168 219 171 173 251 217 178 217 145 199 234

LYB-H91A 55

259 339 292 349 290 264 406 477 289 383 337 448 253 150 176 295 398 214 495 372 519 452 330 394 374 331 201 287 343 244 386 215 273 270 195 251 215 303 306 198 161 180 210 151 161 216 196 138 227 226 278 240 263 156 268

LYB-H91B 55

249 333 300 339 287 260 407 465 293 387 331 449 257 150 185 308 398 219 493 363 539 436 338 379 373 324 204 299 346 231 378 224 272 297 196 260 205 310 329 200 178 184 206 162 162 220 197 142 223 235 273 251 251 160 269

LYB-H92A 54

291 401 391 231 239 455 327 391 290 456 204 92 125 224 302 171 365 255 408 320 244 338 308 304 190 272 314 218 352 235 301 333 218 276 202 268 288 275 179 243 255 178 202 264 274 238 319 303 266 264 265 182 319 350

LYB-H92B 54

303 398 373 227 251 463 334 380 291 464 214 108 123 217 291 184 360 244 413 325 244 339 308 295 198 271 305 225 351 227 310 330 228 272 199 266 288 274 173 255 244 183 197 264 282 234 315 300 284 267 269 201 303 355

LYB-H93A 76

465 337 316 382 374 475 373 275 331 311 229 265 388 267 242 266 263 211 174 173 242 183 199 151 149 105 97 97 194 144 152 163 223 135 160 157 223 206 260 142 71 138 198 112 116 105 143 166 201 205 101 158 161 172 220 271 260 204 202 171 184 242 216 226 243 196 151 90 155 214 134 99 134 212 155 148

LYB-H93B 76

490 330 325 375 366 468 371 275 322 313 229 264 393 262 236 283 252 233 155 174 237 181 201 153 144 102 102 92 195 148 156 157 219 137 158 169 210 209 271 157 70 144 184 120 113 111 148 167 186 209 98 169 143 181 226 265 272 187 190 174 188 253 215 229 250 193 143 86 152 208 127 99 132 204 165 141

LYB-H94A 54

169 220 263 255 344 289 396 382 236 242 318 331 359 331 296 277 225 382 400 346 329 343 372 456 353 266 224 305 272 236 289 259 275 271 200 225 171 178 241 295 299 310 226 231 274 295 217 160 129 152 156 169 212 156

LYB-H94B 54

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LYB-H95A 66

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LYB-H95B 66

114 241 222 202 150 193 203 172 163 232 213 219 251 259 169 291 198 243 257 227 248 240 192 336 317 349 294 387 362 440 264 206 216 247 223 180 215 209 286 256 210 184 168 156 159 159 131 153 120 134 191 197 139 138 134 139 151 119 198 152 155 158 130 140 133 86

LYB-H96A 94

83 106 194 252 288 274 326 339 183 244 248 192 203 215 262 364 251 260 313 125 88 110 188 160 125 155 154 114 95 45 57 78 179 148 109 100 72 78 94 101 105 96 114 138 119 185 186 295 336 246 241 194 110 92 138 133 153 164 125 292 300 167 147 239 227 242 173 114 138 88 89 72 60 67 108 158 87 131 132 123 225 254 171 189 144 144 221 177 209 203 143 121 174 133

LYB-H96B 94

96 101 201 245 298 267 316 344 186 236 242 199 196 218 245 375 251 270 290 139 88 121 186 165 131 150 141 121 86 50 55 83 199 160 108 90 75 69 99 92 95 99 116 130 107 200 179 282 328 229 252 189 115 90 135 138 155 169 128 308 297 176 147 227 225 244 183 120 134 92 87 70 59 73 105 158 93 129 127 122 229 246 181 188 141 136 217 171 213 202 155 132 167 106

LYB-H98A 54

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LYB-H98B 54

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LYB-H99A 55

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LYB-H99B 55

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LYBH100A 52

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LYBH100B 52

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LYBH101A 74

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LYBH101B 74

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LYBH104A 54

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LYBH104B 54

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LYBH107A 56

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LYBH107B 56

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LYBH108A 76

389 173 74 79 87 110 82 72 90 116 112 138 129 126 122 155 167 145 99 115 84 60 129 65 49 69 113 62 73 53 53 45 22 29 62 73 81 119 110 62 63 105 63 81 84 139 135 76 80 134 74 112 125 69 132 142 136 172 110 124 100 73 71 102 63 124 113 139 120 114 157 129 62 107 77 95

LYBH108B 76

363 154 90 80 92 109 76 74 87 120 106 160 108 126 119 150 163 149 101 117 64 81 118 61 58 73 111 61 75 53 50 52 28 28 57 69 84 115 105 65 53 87 73 75 80 143 145 85 77 128 75 110 120 71 134 147 145 167 115 117 90 63 66 111 59 119 113 141 121 121 140 120 60 93 70 96

LYBH109A 57

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LYBH109B 57

296 427 350 402 504 315 306 335 401 304 287 473 449 481 484 492 309 241 314 145 291 307 183 141 243 218 310 165 195 182 239 190 173 272 151 172 222 255 255 186 237 194 133 145 126 165 158 325 108 115 194 220 183 147 216 397 208

LYBH110A 69

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LYBH110B 69

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LYBH111A 59

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LYBH111B 59

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LYBH112A 115

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LYBH113B 65

426 589 434 297 282 328 500 473 463 398 434 365 271 301 177 141 205 310 226 298 216 195 125 228 242 186 168 129 166 173 79 141 122 326 328 185 131 82 77 98 144 170 230 162 142 134 195 216 199 173 162 147 175 214 164 104 121 93 86 115 132 154 205 174 200

APPENDIX: TREE-RING DATING

The Principles of Tree-Ring Dating

Tree-ring dating, or dendrochronology as it is known, is discussed in some detail in the Nottingham Tree-ring Dating Laboratory's Monograph, An East Midlands Master Tree-Ring Chronology and its uses for dating Vernacular Buildings (Laxton and Litton 1988) and Dendrochronology: Guidelines on Producing and Interpreting Dendrochronological Dates (English Heritage 1998). Here we will give the bare outlines. Each year an oak tree grows an extra ring on the outside of its trunk and all its branches just inside its bark. The width of this annual ring depends largely on the weather during the growing season, about April to October, and possibly also on the weather during the previous year. Good growing seasons give rise to relatively wide rings, poor ones to very narrow rings and average ones to relatively average ring widths. Since the climate is so variable from year to year, almost random-like, the widths of these rings will also appear random-like in sequence, reflecting the seasons. This is illustrated in Figure A1 where, for example, the widest rings appear at irregular intervals. This is the key to dating by tree rings, or rather, by their widths. Records of the average ring widths for oaks, one for each year for the last 1000 years or more, are available for different areas. These are called master chronologies. Because of the random-like nature of these sequences of widths, there is usually only one position at which a sequence of ring widths from a sample of oak timber with at least 70 rings will match a master. This will date the timber and, in particular, the last ring.

If the bark is still on the sample, as in Figure A1, then the date of the last ring will be the date of felling of the oak from which it was cut. There is much evidence that in medieval times oaks cut down for building purposes were used almost immediately, usually within the year or so (Rackham 1976). Hence if bark is present on several main timbers in a building, none of which appear reused or are later insertions, and if they all have the same date for their last ring, then we can be quite confident that this is the date of construction or soon after. If there is no bark on the sample, then we have to make an estimate of the felling date; how this is done is explained below.

The Practice of Tree-Ring Dating at the Nottingham Tree-Ring Dating Laboratory

1. Inspecting the Building and Sampling the Timbers. Together with a building historian the timbers in a building are inspected to try to ensure that those sampled are not reused or later insertions. Sampling is almost always done by coring into the timber, which has the great advantage that we can sample *in situ* timbers and those judged best to give the date of construction, or phase of construction if there is more than one in the building. The timbers to be sampled are also inspected to see

how many rings they have. We normally look for timbers with at least 70 rings, and preferably more. With fewer rings than this, 50 for example, sequences of widths become difficult to match to a unique position within a master sequence of ring widths and so are difficult to date (Litton and Zainodin 1991). The cross-section of the rafter shown in Figure A2 has about 120 rings; about 20 of which are sapwood rings – the lighter rings on the outside. Similarly the core has just over 100 rings with a few sapwood rings.

To ensure that we are getting the date of the building as a whole, or the whole of a phase of construction if there is more than one, about 8–10 samples per phase are usually taken. Sometimes we take many more, especially if the construction is complicated. One reason for taking so many samples is that, in general, some will fail to give a date. There may be many reasons why a particular sequence of ring widths from a sample of timber fails to give a date even though others from the same building do. For example, a particular tree may have grown in an odd ecological niche, so odd indeed that the widths of its rings were determined by factors other than the local climate! In such circumstances it will be impossible to date a timber from this tree using the master sequence whose widths, we can assume, were predominantly determined by the local climate at the time.

Sampling is done by coring into the timber with a hollow corer attached to an electric drill and usually from its outer rings inwards towards where the centre of the tree, the pith, is judged to be. An illustration of a core is shown in Figure A2; it is about 150mm long and 10mm diameter. Great care has to be taken to ensure that as few as possible of the outer rings are lost in coring. This can be difficult as these outer rings are often very soft (see below on sapwood). Each sample is given a code which identifies uniquely which timber it comes from, which building it is from and where the building is located. For example, CRO-A06 is the sixth core taken from the first building (A) sampled by the Laboratory in Cropwell Bishop. Where it came from in that building will be shown in the sampling records and drawings. No structural damage is done to any timbers by coring, nor does it weaken them.

During the initial inspection of the building and its timbers the dendrochronologist may come to the conclusion that, as far as can be judged, none of the timbers have sufficient rings in them for dating purposes and may advise against sampling to save further unwarranted expense.

All sampling by the Laboratory is undertaken according to current Health and Safety Standards. The Laboratory's dendrochronologists are insured.



ring to the last ring on the outside just inside the bark. The year of each ring can be determined by counting back from the outside ring, which grew in 1976 Figure A1: A wedge of oak from a tree felled in 1976. It shows the annual growth rings, one for each year from the innermost



Figure A2: Cross-section of a rafter, showing sapwood rings in the left-hand corner, the arrow points to the heartwood/sapwood boundary (H/S); and a core with sapwood; again the arrow is pointing to the H/S. The core is about the size of a pencil



Figure A3: Measuring ring widths under a microscope. The microscope is fixed while the sample is on a moving platform. The total sequence of widths is measured twice to ensure that an error has not been made. This type of apparatus is needed to process a large number of samples on a regular basis



Figure A4: Three cores from timbers in a building. They come from trees growing at the same time. Notice that, although the sequences of widths look similar, they are not identical. This is typical

- 2. Measuring Ring Widths. Each core is sanded down with a belt sander using medium-grit paper and then finished by hand with flourgrade-grit paper. The rings are then clearly visible and differentiated from each other with a result very much like that shown in Figure A2. The core is then mounted on a movable table below a microscope and the ring-widths measured individually from the innermost ring to the outermost. The widths are automatically recorded in a computer file as they are measured (see Fig A3).
- Cross-Matching and Dating the Samples. Because of the factors besides the 3. local climate which may determine the annual widths of a tree's rings, no two sequences of ring widths from different oaks growing at the same time are exactly alike (Fig A4). Indeed, the sequences may not be exactly alike even when the trees are growing near to each other. Consequently, in the Laboratory we do not attempt to match two sequences of ring widths by eye, or graphically, or by any other subjective method. Instead, it is done objectively (ie statistically) on a computer by a process called cross-matching. The output from the computer tells us the extent of correlation between two sample sequences of widths or, if we are dating, between a sample sequence of widths and the master, at each relative position of one to the other (offsets). The extent of the correlation at an offset is determined by the t-value (defined in almost any introductory book on statistics). That offset with the maximum t-value among the t-values at all the offsets will be the best candidate for dating one sequence relative to the other. If one of these is a master chronology, then this will date the other. Experiments carried out in the past with sequences from oaks of known date suggest that a t-value of at least 4.5, and preferably at least 5.0, is usually adequate for the dating to be accepted with reasonable confidence (Laxton and Litton 1988; Laxton et al 1988; Howard et al 1984–1995).

This is illustrated in Figure A5 with timbers from one of the roofs of Lincoln Cathedral. Here four sequences of ring widths, LIN-C04, 05, 08, and 45, have been cross-matched with each other. The ring widths themselves have been omitted in the bar diagram, as is usual, but the offsets at which they best cross-match each other are shown; eg the sequence of ring widths of C08 matches the sequence of ring widths of C45 best when it is at a position starting 20 rings after the first ring of C45, and similarly for the others. The actual *t*-values between the four at these offsets of best correlations are in the matrix. Thus at the offset of +20 rings, the t-value between C45 and C08 is 5.6 and is the maximum found between these two among all the positions of one sequence relative to the other.

It is standard practice in our Laboratory first to cross-match as many as possible of the ring-width sequences of the samples in a building and then to form an average from them. This average is called a site sequence of the building being dated and is illustrated in Figure A5. The fifth bar at the bottom is a site sequence for a roof at Lincoln Cathedral and is constructed from the matching sequences of the four timbers. The site sequence width for each year is the average of the widths in each of the sample sequences which has a width for that year. Thus in Fig A5 if the

widths shown are 0.8mm for C45, 0.2mm for C08, 0.7mm for C05, and 0.3mm for C04, then the corresponding width of the site sequence is the average of these, 0.55mm. The actual sequence of widths of this site sequence is stored on the computer. The reason for creating site sequences is that it is usually easier to date an average sequence of ring widths with a master sequence than it is to date the individual component sample sequences separately.

The straightforward method of cross-matching several sample sequences with each other one at a time is called the 'maximal *t*-value' method. The actual method of cross-matching a group of sequences of ring-widths used in the Laboratory involves grouping and averaging the ring-width sequences and is called the 'Litton-Zainodin Grouping Procedure'. It is a modification of the straightforward method and was successfully developed and tested in the Laboratory and has been published (Litton and Zainodin 1991; Laxton *et al* 1988).

4. Estimating the Felling Date. As mentioned above, if the bark is present on a sample, then the date of its last ring is the date of the felling of its tree (or the last full year before felling, if it was felled in the first three months of the following calendar year, before any new growth had started, but this is not too important a consideration in most cases). The actual bark may not be present on a timber in a building, though the dendrochronologist who is sampling can often see from its surface that only the bark is missing. In these cases the date of the last ring is still the date of felling.

Quite often some, though not all, of the original outer rings are missing on a timber. The outer rings on an oak, called sapwood rings, are usually lighter than the inner rings, the heartwood, and so are relatively easy to identify. For example, sapwood can be seen in the corner of the rafter and at the outer end of the core in Figure A2, both indicated by arrows. More importantly for dendrochronology, the sapwood is relatively soft and so liable to insect attack and wear and tear. The builder, therefore, may remove some of the sapwood for precisely these reasons. Nevertheless, if at least some of the sapwood rings are left on a sample, we will know that not too many rings have been lost since felling so that the date of the last ring on the sample is only a few years before the date of the original last ring on the tree, and so to the date of felling.

Various estimates have been made and used for the average number of sapwood rings in mature oak trees (English Heritage 1998). A fairly conservative range is between 15 and 50 and that this holds for 95% of mature oaks. This means, of course, that in a small number of cases there could be fewer than 15 and more than 50 sapwood rings. For example, the core CRO-A06 has only 9 sapwood rings and some have obviously been lost over time – either they were removed originally by the carpenter and/or they rotted away in the building and/or they were lost in the coring. It is not known exactly how many sapwood rings are missing, but using the above range the Laboratory would estimate between a minimum of 6 (=15-9) and a

maximum of 41 (=50-9). If the last ring of CRO-A06 has been dated to 1500, say, then the estimated felling-date range for the tree from which it came originally would be between 1506 and 1541. The Laboratory uses this estimate for sapwood in areas of England where it has no prior information. It also uses it when dealing with samples with very many rings, about 120 to the last heartwood ring. But in other areas of England where the Laboratory has accumulated a number of samples with complete sapwood, that is, no sapwood lost since felling, other estimates in place of the conservative range of 15 to 50 are used. In the East Midlands (Laxton et al 2001) and the east to the south down to Kent (Pearson 1995) where it has sampled extensively in the past, the Laboratory uses the shorter estimate of 15 to 35 sapwood rings in 95% of mature oaks growing in these parts. Since the sample CRO-A06 comes from a house in Cropwell Bishop in the East Midlands, a better estimate of sapwood rings lost since felling is between a minimum of 6 (=15-9) and 26 (=35-9) and the felling would be estimated to have taken place between 1506 and 1526, a shorter period than before. Oak boards quite often come from the Baltic region and in these cases the 95% confidence limits for sapwood are 9 to 36 (Howard et al 1992, 56).

Even more precise estimates of the felling date and range can often be obtained using knowledge of a particular case and information gathered at the time of sampling. For example, at the time of sampling the dendrochronologist may have noted that the timber from which the core of Figure A2 was taken still had complete sapwood but that some of the soft sapwood rings were lost in coring. By measuring into the timber the depth of sapwood lost, say 20mm, a reasonable estimate can be made of the number of sapwood rings lost, say 12 to 15 rings in this case. By adding on 12 to 15 years to the date of the last ring on the sample a good tight estimate for the range of the felling date can be obtained, which is often better than the 15 to 35 years later we would have estimated without this observation. In the example, the felling is now estimated to have taken place between AD 1512 and 1515, which is much more precise than without this extra information.

Even if all the sapwood rings are missing on a sample, but none of the heartwood rings are, then an estimate of the felling-date range is possible by adding on the full compliment of, say, 15 to 35 years to the date of the last heartwood ring (called the heartwood/ sapwood boundary or transition ring and denoted H/S). Fortunately it is often easy for a trained dendrochronologist to identify this boundary on a timber. If a timber does not have its heartwood/sapwood boundary, then only a *post quem* date for felling is possible.

5. Estimating the Date of Construction. There is a considerable body of evidence collected by dendrochronologists over the years that oak timbers used in buildings were not seasoned in medieval or early modern times (English Heritage 1998; Miles 1997, 50–5). Hence, provided that all the samples in a building have estimated felling-date ranges broadly in agreement with each other, so that they appear to have been felled as a group, then this should give an accurate estimate of

the period when the structure was built, or soon after (Laxton *et al* 2001, fig 8; 34–5, where 'associated groups of fellings' are discussed in detail). However, if there is any evidence of storage before use, or if there is evidence the oak came from abroad (eg Baltic boards), then some allowance has to be made for this.

- Master Chronological Sequences. Ultimately, to date a sequence of ring widths, or a site sequence, we need a master sequence of dated ring widths with which to cross-match it, a Master Chronology. To construct such a sequence we have to start with a sequence of widths whose dates are known and this means beginning with a sequence from an oak tree whose date of felling is known. In Figure A6 such a sequence is SHE-T, which came from a tree in Sherwood Forest which was blown down in a recent gale. After this other sequences which crossmatch with it are added and gradually the sequence is 'pushed back in time' as far as the age of samples will allow. This process is illustrated in Figure A6. We have a master chronological sequence of widths for Nottinghamshire and East Midlands oak for each year from AD 882 to 1981. It is described in great detail in Laxton and Litton (1988), but the components it contains are shown here in the form of a bar diagram. As can be seen, it is well replicated in that for each year in this period there are several sample sequences having widths for that year. The master is the average of these. This master can now be used to date oak from this area and from the surrounding areas where the climate is very similar to that in the East Midlands. The Laboratory has also constructed a master for Kent (Laxton and Litton 1989). The method the Laboratory uses to construct a master sequence, such as the East Midlands and Kent, is completely objective and uses the Litton-Zainodin grouping procedure (Laxton et al 1988). Other laboratories and individuals have constructed masters for other areas and have made them available. As well as these masters. local (dated) site chronologies can be used to date other buildings from nearby. The Laboratory has hundreds of these site sequences from many parts of England and Wales covering many short periods.
- 7. Ring-Width Indices. Tree-ring dating can be done by cross-matching the ring widths themselves, as described above. However, it is advantageous to modify the widths first. Because different trees grow at different rates and because a young oak grows in a different way from an older oak, irrespective of the climate, the widths are first standardized before any matching between them is attempted. These standard widths are known as ring-width indices and were first used in dendrochronology by Baillie and Pilcher (1973). The exact form they take is explained in this paper and in the appendix of Laxton and Litton (1988) and is illustrated in the graphs in Figure A7. Here ring-widths are plotted vertically, one for each year of growth. In the upper sequence of (a), the generally large early growth after 1810 is very apparent as is the smaller later growth from about 1900 onwards when the tree is maturing. A similar phenomenon can be observed in the lower sequence of (a) starting in 1835. In both the widths are also changing rapidly from year to year. The peaks are the wide rings and the troughs are the narrow rings corresponding to good and poor growing seasons, respectively. The two

corresponding sequence of Baillie-Pilcher indices are plotted in (b) where the differences in the immature and mature growths have been removed and only the rapidly changing peaks and troughs remain, that are associated with the common climatic signal. This makes cross-matching easier.

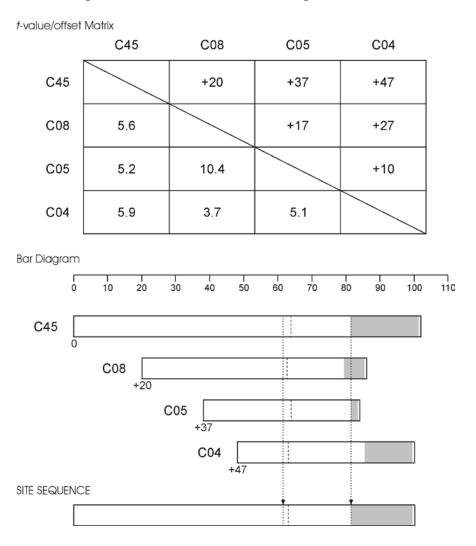


Figure A5: Cross-matching of four sequences from a Lincoln Cathedral roof and the formation of a site sequence from them

The bar diagram represents these sequences without the rings themselves. The length of the bar is proportional to the number of rings in the sequence. Here the four sequences are set at relative positions (offsets) to each other at which they have maximum correlation as measured by the t-values. The t-value/offset matrix contains the maximum t-values below the diagonal and the offsets above it. Thus, the maximum t-value between C08 and C45 occurs at the offset of +20 rings and the t-value is then 5.6. The site sequence is composed of the average of the corresponding widths, as illustrated with one width.

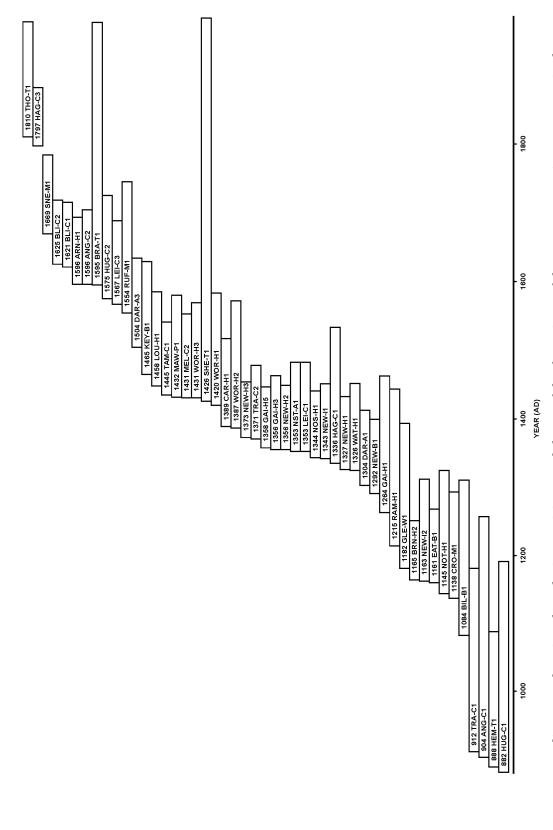
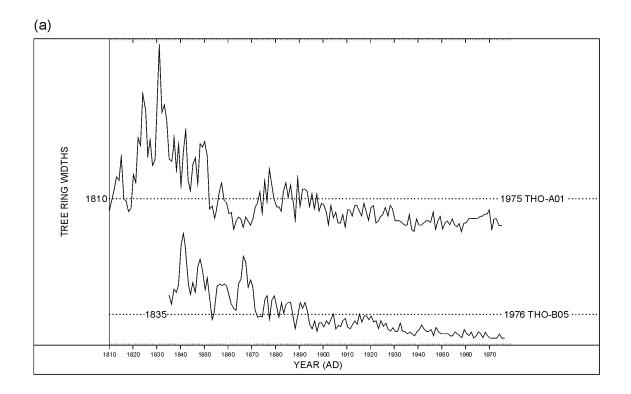


Figure A6: Bar diagram showing the relative positions and dates of the first rings of the component site sequences in the East Midlands Master Dendrochronological Sequence, EM08/87



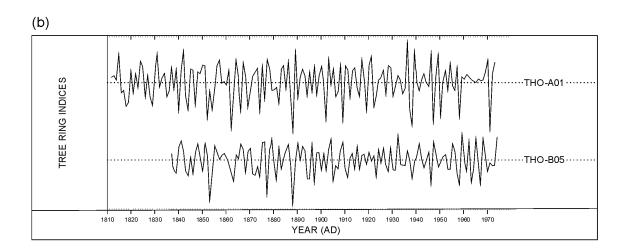


Figure A7 (a): The raw ring-widths of two samples, THO-A01 and THO-B05, whose felling dates are known

Here the ring widths are plotted vertically, one for each year, so that peaks represent wide rings and troughs narrow ones. Notice the growth-trends in each; on average the earlier rings of the young tree are wider than the later ones of the older tree in both sequences

Figure A7 (b): The Baillie-Pilcher indices of the above widths

The growth trends have been removed completely

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