# 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 lateeighteenth 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, $1^{\text {st }}$ 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 2125. 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 <br> (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 $\mathrm{AD} 1765-90$.

## 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 $\mathrm{AD} 1388-1413$. 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 142146.

## Doors

Fifteen planks from five different doors were measured in situ (LYB-H68 - LYBH82). 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 LYBH83 (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 (LYBH104 - 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 $12^{\text {th }}$ 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, $\mathrm{AD} 1444-69$, 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 LYBH79 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, $1^{\text {st }}$ 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, $8^{\text {th }}$ 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 8 ${ }^{\text {th }}$ 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 $9^{\text {th }}$ 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 LYDH04 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, LYBH24, 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 number | Sample location <br> (trusses/frames/beams etc usually numbered from $\mathrm{N}-\mathrm{S} \text { or } \mathrm{E}-\mathrm{W})$ | Total rings | Sapwood rings | First measured ring date AD | Last heartwood ring date AD | Last measured 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 number | Sample location | Total rings | Sapwood rings | First measured ring date AD | Last heartwood ring date AD | Last measured 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


Table 1: continued

| Sample number | Sample location | Total rings | Sapwood rings | First measured ring date AD | Last heartwood ring date AD | Last measured 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 number | Sample location | Total rings | Sapwood rings | First measured ring date AD | Last heartwood ring date AD | Last measured 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 number | Sample location | Total rings | Sapwood rings | First measured ring date AD | Last heartwood ring date AD | Last measured 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 |

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

Table 2: Results of the cross-matching of site sequence LYBHSQO1 and some relevant reference chronologies when the first-ring date is $A D 1085$ and the last-ring date is $A D 1221$

| Reference chronology | Span of chronology | $t$-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 $A D 1110$ and the last-ring date is $A D 1414$

| Reference chronology | Span of chronology | $t$-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 et al 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 et al 1990 unpubl) |

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

| Reference chronology | Span of chronology | $t$-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 $A D 1498$ and the last-ring date is $A D 1598$

| Reference chronology | Span of chronology | $t$-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 $A D 1623$ and the last-ring date is $A D 1753$

| Reference chronology | Span of chronology | $t$-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 et al 2004 ) |
| Bingham, Nottinghamshire | AD 1445-1752 | 8.3 | (Arnold and Howard 2013 unpubl) |
| Quenby Hall, Quenby Leicestershire | AD 1648-1765 | 8.0 | (Arnold et al 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 $7 a / b$ : 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


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 0.01 mm units

LYB-H01A 66
339376340456265341241320343304252311290301186256303314365319 317361258249244315376369274260322164304202124171136132178160 168191253212202173137138132110105150154120140169150143107147 116134124159172171

LYB-H01B 66
321390320434278321263300352265246328289285196234296293389338 294377273226247317368380284268315148326187124176118128189156 177187252231184180149148126105122144155107152166145145111136 123130132142169166

LYB-H02A 56
468342361299461304382417299340539439505465535585592519608740 534549433478346406338339362610628748488605528474426405340349 356208251269295340275249403244244338243275311328

LYB-H02B 56
462329356300450310370406300340508445501413528540639510557764 541545425497357404342309368615648747511632484470439407344335 372214236273308330295243398249236331251284281341

LYB-H03A 55
206314105140212256185193374424392306313375331296338334395333 361394355375399359413380364301253359350322356323315256274219 275220347293324335356259212292327272252253283

LYB-H03B 55
143304116134208261168198377444392314309374321294339335399342 346405342380400361403384340338254366359314361318305269270212 280210360287311340346287200275334285222266277

LYB-H04A 53
245180191369429388300311252328315356369455481536547508448509 663667554431373303390239270278258299297273233220259404292313 366369247245340303343291329360329280285

## LYB-H04B 53

239176181358418378299310223322313354382444491527513472440529 657653548432357315376266261281265290305268219274262370266324 330377306215344326330300324364301306297

LYB-H05A 54
381437539421511398471360364326428319383434289150233268330316 323303386408344337538499468438391301422296346340313300269277 238304282274270258277405573492578420560311

LYB-H05B 54
402422500445502374472338358316459314376426306129252288316319 323286385395343333540528452443364291430340342324332293261343 214287254308267274285425560478559422560300

LYB-H06A 55
359319431322376429290148228272327311319479340420472604417705 491630621576749765647707714801625629714562866742572623853625 616560656492660326866436373540372414278321450

LYB-H06B 55
350311419312377418281139220261320308311483350433443606320715 507634620581780806603707702830643603714564847744559623872612 630574661496655315843455343558385368298318461

LYB-H07A 54
208260178190369420389300311370328300396358434454503506464425 516628666561455413311390271295309297314321311244260255436297 301390364288255345361320310330369325301339

LYB-H07B 54
210249180179354415378306310366321290365367436451504507457432 504638671567445410330388272313286300308341314204270251446272 343370368304225362366304323313376303303336

LYB-H08A 52
500618643542446314240296388350400315282264202225174232325388 414461369283425343328403511382397387320316357335220212168133 161173176156171252327160117136343329

LYB-H08B 52
503609633529440323243302366374434318350236200232168242310396 394462349294393361298363532364425352329315367313215232158120 163188173158167212328166113161297310

LYB-H09A 54
104118281398391345368423247211403368480376584303295271296467 391254258272145173256266311216194297237261349257223187335324 234213237229333238273198234261217189271267

LYB-H09B 54
101112273400378352359407258206400435502403542315311262320459 416260258276154165262264312226198296223250348285211174322336 248245204234295234276198226250225170280269

LYB-H10A 57
322494247247411386576439635548537183240324362317324390492567 572350343342195163255204217212299308321290297391466311219196 12015315010294111148133891086759142172189187206

LYB-H10B 57
314493268246415387560443616550529187227330337323332376498562 585355351338233125246181175222275299306288292382450339217168 12515913811876135131121861027263133157212173201

LYB-H11A 50
100122278400387355370418253215408387409403438537491492513590 524459404382358416326329384352351283252241255188272287237393 296244247366364262285297389281

LYB-H11B 50
104128273389378349366411246209394390419408442522494504499588 527459407343328398342335344351354276239260237201276277259385 284243258351351247286305422298

LYB-H12A 48
16693118282416398360366420249220266211250286296346317273380 453443431389305285302288241274295289221230202259206359279209 311294258179277283233242

LYB-H12B 48
11677127260435395361361422248212282224256296310345316284350 446418418422263290316287228296283299245231226245216331277209 298281263181283296237240

LYB-H13A 69
105155140162185158217227208157263188189146212203182256227183 151151201155240178220157177159218173111147203181173122109151 66141101821297810712411010890128121132140118123133119107 15610811113516010310782103

LYB-H13B 69
94165147159183234224240202156265193197151217185182244247177 15815619015324218421917217315621617298146202171165143118126 6314110085128861001361109194126118142137115135138109112 1831131111391571029793106

LYB-H14A 91
706710453465596465497521399423487485402431539503219582364446 34028020633214318415525446841532522220596213220184199163190 98151167195183171216196981131531711511561601291108910372 1108414311112717514718917519518816612912093124128132126129 1661238986155104151154122162136

LYB-H14B 91
695722463460538517447522434422465511397417538508206591383415 32428621131913517516628449236931122020699224221193192160210 91173167180186169213194100124148187172133167121110959477 1107514312410417912517116522118416513211388132126129132145 1691279489150107157158131157146

LYB-H15A 103
18612885176212331200127118150168270229252202286272240216194 14626126530534243121333223319822713513113899114124132210284 3562202261749712915215314814090979910514814213111081103 1251351381721521209710785113801031271081291161219396124 1611261339711397108101791119392798211599127102100183 173108138

LYB-H15B 103
18612784176209276178143121145177269230240198294272237222186 128262277310329431206300212240238150129133103119122138191293 360217224172103127153133114110101881061061471421371097995 12514113917614011710110283116771051221061341201099996134 1561281339910598109909011396728678113104114116100180 173108137

LYB-H16A 63
41437529722138134233929421433022825826724624521516979156174 20526719714023314916822816417415392797698145107106133179 126971601511321771461027112913516412122314717015011312071 888975

LYB-H16B 63
40836631222835731534229120632323226526424023222616087155181 1862551931452371331712271621911539180739215097114125165 117911891421291771511175712613715913920817315616312911168 909377

LYB-H17A 67
616361352218185150392347318402230431212210179203142211257243 301204302172237179227221129159157187289228149195163131187165 177234241189265213195141130158182181151251195128168177183156 182227246156221124139

LYB-H17B 67
595368360215192140399346324393223424221237181214127228257254 274208299175252186228218129163146194288213151186167130185157 178257242202255228189149120162194177158249190123161194183147 195224230160194123125

LYB-H18A 84
236251306291233281225349351419494323301232209153293324396361 289493320234303303227299309298290241304192224224238230164184 154160261262134171182136218157179211219155183223170128119174 149183126201225131164203169119174171188129236157140224199159 156146148153

LYB-H18B 84
228251318278236269256359352404490324305235192159324332403389 316509330239315297221298330275294250301187231222232238161175 150162274256134169185151205153183207217169158227173127122173 149177135208221132163206154138158166195131246156140235180160 142160146154

LYB-H19A 54
476384228145194207321274253366287262225248181193157658279 10023534316719627019415077148166225155172199161141163187247 264179289214262308216273168263282305257259

LYB-H19B 54
466378212146198211317268241370264279213234197189160677589 8627236717820127820919979118139238176167196154132169171257 250171239189305311223267167243257301236282

LYB-H20A 64
23338424832728148429422728520727819929826533330029219190141 145113180244169287155165195130257282232133117106110111116153 205169134191111107165119113801671771931722359710612611690 49608986

LYB-H20B 64
18439525632825149330223024820726520831025533531329118392141 153107180244171284162169186137259283239135107111107101132137 1871631221731171131641111139517116820117321410011112412774 506875110

LYB-H21A 87
30729119629016622019617013191221167261364332456344343295290 231222201170224321393262192178186155324314216257173299269217 191295245269343235316177223207210128161188137133159162248189 113147140138235151197178168871791411438492134147159106183 140126166179163186181

LYB-H21B 87
28830619228915822119917512885191157248417340466350325297289 226236210149232310382280189177188149327310238251182306286222 180291244282337243308202201203207137155184143142153160251179 1111551431512041561821811649718014012810091144154164111186 134110159167167181198

LYB-H22A 89
235370356283328261231290252241290265224323411494368303204164 123238278336347212399271233163215135204314215218142280163209 155184245169182188225303224163183123105186185191165160136162 1951609685102140182116189175131207220185142160218197199243 136111229231205150160184150

LYB-H22B 89
259361369276331251245279257237294255241320404491362301219162 122247291346345226390272225158209142214296166260155294174196 147202233171173204230284225151191136107170181191170169120171 18315610281122121185131173169117202236176126164222210188235 114129245232196121161181138

6762394158625310081705020253411716415451121155 1035330192135417183128854572799566701427661 37717393127123185714853568584889887931217253 651302151461167989107182173130194250106113103177151291151 1541171397990195149150120886968516891140149233182134

LYB-H24B 100
565845484477518893586025262712016415451119174
974743272325338276137815369809165701437564 5655699313411219073435361739972107821001187253 75120216128113818511017817111920324981119114170154278149 1661101288389174145161124877558528086153141228189202

LYB-H25A 82
42244736850932821727615817918820616613920614912612695145217 185264344349209292277200142114141113171297236184176171126121 122144138145120755043628572624859425064738172 1061049612377881248513210312217414217012514513676108111 107115

LYB-H25B 82
38444237850634721126417418419917917912219916512913295141209 199284336327229271276199139116144140169287243189173170108123 111153144142130643759576876604460474865697864 9110710113878931129012812212016614417413414812984105136 90131

LYB-H26A 54
23453168239216228279336352237190186256266258269218229209220 2062712632732411721622031772262241922141147414515015480131 151187216931211155710695100103978859

LYB-H26B 54
26758174238217226281333349233199168268263265264223225220215 2112762542622441721621941982192221632141177914315516072132 16517921796115123561039298100928353

LYB-H27A 104
1881251418910616015716010912711396529011510510914013684 93821231499613015995101121106848265586075595767 3244446960807454628869876357797655455733
50736473778358835848756999104204140136137186113 109595372536861416070956470651089899837584 6480120145

19913114381116153160154111131105102441021129712614112391 71851031459811417696106114119857554685963554854 3648395756817368549374826256728452464641 606958796869659645498071101107193144127129198101 10164585664736742587293737766999594886688 6272114138

## LYB-H28A 65

253182182223227276215150136202198279186181198204172141137132 106121133124871099813616213215180857390112124109133132 1231511321321241231161451201008971778191100108105104108 931009696134

LYB-H28B 65
232181188224234283206126133197200277194166192207169126120133 120129131138909512314115613614586827190115128113131130 12114513612512912611615311998100767581831079996106111 10482100112149

LYB-H29A 68
394332463409769355612376244335356216173297431301314386610317 276360461464324196251367272552512243196222331316329472317343 412364406264297304427265260297239321239373376530432290239234 346398258270251297273412

LYB-H29B 68
391332460399778352612376236342348214168289411332336444610319 278348446488333192233368264542515251207222342311320481324341 416362398276288304424281255300232322241373380515429298250233 324406279260247324254421

LYB-H30A 94
3092672693313303053501641692082201675371120128245219176168 3051791631151757319520214297158193137139868414467233136 13820217510613010414716310612511411266159116190126193134158 158194163145101132151176157172122113126123117107126115147134 9298891161291431331091169871746291

LYB-H30B 94
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LYB-H43A 56
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LYB-H43B 56
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LYB-H46A 120
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LYB-H49B 59
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LYB-H67A 73
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LYB-H74A 189
120170180160130130110120110150130110110140150160150130120120 150170120140160140170130110120130120100110130140140120170130 150170140150130100150130120807090908018012090130140100 110120100110130130100140150120110701201301201207012010070 901701301309011090100130140120908011010010090130140150 10014013012010010011090120100120809070901307090100170 808013014014090801301201309010060130110130908070110 1301101801101201109013011014010017011011010080100130120130 12070120110100100801001008013011011013090120100110110120 14013012011090140130140150

## LYB-H75A 95

250150170140120180110120150130170180130140150250220130180170 130120180180170200180200190150170150250170160140200140150180 170150160160230230170100200180170190130120150130220180190230 20023015014019027014010015010010012015015025015017015012090 150110110140150180150150130140150130140120130

LYB-H76A 80
120130100110120130130100110110100100909080808070150110 150100110805090907090801208090809011010010011070 10080809090906010080806060110801001007010050100 908090709010070601005050606050606080110100170

LYB-H77A 116
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## LYB-H78A 118

170180100150180160200150160160140150150160150140140200140140 1201401501301101201501501009014017018015018016090130120120 1301501701401301201501601301001101001201101401301008070100 809010011013015015013012014010015015015016012013016014090 1005013012013014012080130140120150130130110100130130130100 1501001101601301001009011010080100130120120100130110

## LYB-H79A 137

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LYB-H80A 96
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LYB-H81A 144
    70 80 80 80 90 100 70 120100 70 80 90 100 80 90 70 70 80 60 80
    508080707070 80 601006080120110 9011080 70 90 70 80
    90100100 90120110150130130150140150100110 90 80 110110120120
    110100 110110110170100140120150100120100110100120110120130130
    130100100100150150150140150110120150140130110100 90 80 70 100
    7060100120110 90110120120130160110110110130130140130100120
    130140140130120120100110130130130130100 90 80 110 90 70 80 70
    70 807060
LYB-H82A 121
    120110110130140140110100130120 130120140110120120150100100180
    14012011012013012011012013012012011013012080 70 90 70 80 100
    1001101008070 80 90 8011070 80 80 90 60 80 70 100 90 100120
    8010080100 80 701007010070706010060 90 100 100 100 110 100
120801308015080130100110100100110110150120120 90 120100 100
70100 801101207010070100 90 100 70 70 80 110100100 90 90 80
1 1 0
LYB-H83A 288
    6070100701109010090 80 80 70100 90 90 6070 80 6070100
    70701006070 90 80 70 8010010080 80 60100 90 100 70 80 90
    9010070100 90100 90 80 70 100 70 80 70 80 6070 60 70 70 80
    60704050 90 50 6070 70 60 70 6050 304050605070 80
    1001108090 90 70 70 70 70 80 8010080 90 90 100 80100 90 80
    100807070 90 60 80 70 607011070 80 80 70 90 70 50 80 50
    605050407050706060 80 90 100 110 90 100 80100 100 70 60
    7010070708080908080100100 8012080 90 70 100 80 80 70
    80 80 8070 80 70 80 90 70 70 70 70 100 70 60100 70 100 70 70
    100 100100 90 120 60 80 50 70 70 90 90 80 120 100 90 100 100 90 80
    100100100110 90 70 100 110 80 70 80 80 80 70 70 50 60 60 80 80
    8070808070606060100 90 90 80 90 80 80 80 100 100 90 80
    801108010010070130 90 100 90 110100 100 80 100 80 130 90 120150
    10011013011013080100 100110 80 130 90100 90 100 80 70 80 80 70
    9010090 80 70 70 60 80
LYB-H84A 147
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    808070 90 90 100 130100 80 100 80 90 70 100 120100 80 15012080
    8050120100 1107070100 90 70 70 120 80 80 100 80 70 90 90 80
    80 80 80100 80 80 70 80 606070707080 80 90 80 80 60 50
    8070605070 70 70 80 60100 90 80 70 90 100 100 80 90 100 70
11011090100 80 100 80100 90 80 100 70 90 140120 130 100 70 90 70
100707060100 80 90
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LYB-H85A 160
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LYB-H86A 85
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90607010011080709013013013080901001001201308012080 120110120901001301009010010010010010012090110100908050 7080705080

LYB-H87A 284
807080808060120100907010080707010060801007070
80707080908080709011010080708080100100709090 1008010080110608080706070808070708060707080 6070708070706060505060707080701101007010090 708060701008010080909010070901007012060708090 70100808070901001009080100706090508060706080 607070807080100608010011010011070708080708070 908010080908080120809090807090707080807060 701008060707070807060110601007060100909010090 80707070801001009015090100100100909010090100100100 7010010090801009080608060707070609070806050 80707080708070801009080901009090809070100100 1001209080901001001109090100120100130150100130130100110 90120801008010060110100100807080609010090908070 708090100

LYB-H88A 132
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## LYB-H90A 55

302261262298334206179242222202222319229156240229292210217294 258326314336295219223251259194205199156153340224167215290238 288302264215176209191170233215174218158220233

## LYB-H90B 55

212295265303326210175240208197235304227166242242275206225303
276307321327291203229253273189208198146155363225180198303222 294282278223168219171173251217178217145199234

LYB-H91A 55
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LYB-H91B 55
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LYB-H92A 54
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LYB-H92B 54
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LYB-H93A 76
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71138198112116105143166201205101158161172220271260204202171 1842422162262431961519015521413499134212155148

LYB-H93B 76
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LYB-H94A 54
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LYB-H94B 54
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LYB-H95A 66
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LYB-H95B 66
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LYB-H96A 94
83106194252288274326339183244248192203215262364251260313125 8811018816012515515411495455778179148109100727894101 1059611413811918518629533624624119411092138133153164125292 300167147239227242173114138888972606710815887131132123 225254171189144144221177209203143121174133

LYB-H96B 94
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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

1261161031045110517116711198131941011241417073377094 16416011211315610094921501982502381681811591691141017398 141165296309484569342171164198235289132739470107169213202 144134110124112891311097363127248303361

LYBH103A 61
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LYBH103B 61
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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
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100737110263124113139120114157129621077795
LYBH108B 76
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LYBH109A 57
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LYBH109B 57
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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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LYBH112B 115
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LYBH113A 65
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LYBH113B 65
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## 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 crosssection 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 150 mm long and 10 mm 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.


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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).
3. Cross-Matching and Dating the Samples. Because of the factors besides the 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 C 45 best when it is at a position starting 20 rings after the first ring of C 45 , 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 0.8 mm for $\mathrm{C} 45,0.2 \mathrm{~mm}$ for $\mathrm{C} 08,0.7 \mathrm{~mm}$ for C 05 , and 0.3 mm for C04, then the corresponding width of the site sequence is the average of these, 0.55 mm . 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 20 mm , 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; 345 , 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.
6. 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.
$t$-value/offset Matrix



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.

(a)

(b)

|  |  |
| :---: | :---: |
|  |  |

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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[^0]:    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 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

