

**The Stable Block,
Dalham Hall,
Dalham, Suffolk
DAL 027**

Historic Building Record

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(TL 724 627)

Historic Building Record

This report provides a written and photographic record at English Heritage (2006) Level 2 of a grade II-listed stable block. It has been prepared to a brief written by the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (Edward Martin, 9 March 2009, Ref. SpecHBR_DalhamHall_2009) and is intended to fulfil a condition of planning permission for conversion (Forest Heath District Council application F/2008/0791/LBC).

Introduction

The report is accompanied by a CD containing a full photographic record in the form of 48 digital images (Appendix 1) but also includes printed photographs of key features to illustrate the text (Appendix 2). Each image is separately described and includes a scale rod with half metre divisions wherever possible. The site was inspected on 31st March 2009.

Summary

Dalham Hall is a substantial Queen Anne mansion built in 1704/5 for Simon Patrick, Bishop of Ely, and subsequently owned by the Affleck Family and Cecil Rhodes. The hall is flanked by a contemporary red-brick stable block to the north-west and the medieval parish church to the south-east, and the hilltop site represents a fine example of a siegneurial landscape which dominates the surrounding countryside. The imposing external appearance of the two-storied stable is largely original, with symmetrical pedimented gables to its front elevation, and the building remains among best of its kind in Britain. The interior has been much altered however, with its upper storey recently converted into domestic apartments and its ground-floor stalls renewed in the late-19th or early-20th century. The recent renovation included the loss of the original pointing and redde to the external brickwork, considerably depleting its historic character. The main stable block is flanked by two single-storied axial wings dating in their present form to the mid- or late-19th century but incorporating earlier walls. The western wing, which now contains a gardener's store and tack room, occupies the site of at least two previous structures as indicated by the scars of old roofs and the irregularity of the building's outline on a detailed plan of 1808. Part of the original stable's rear wall was probably rebuilt by Cecil Rhodes' brother in 1906, as indicated by a dated rainwater hopper, but there is no reason to believe the western wing is of the same period.

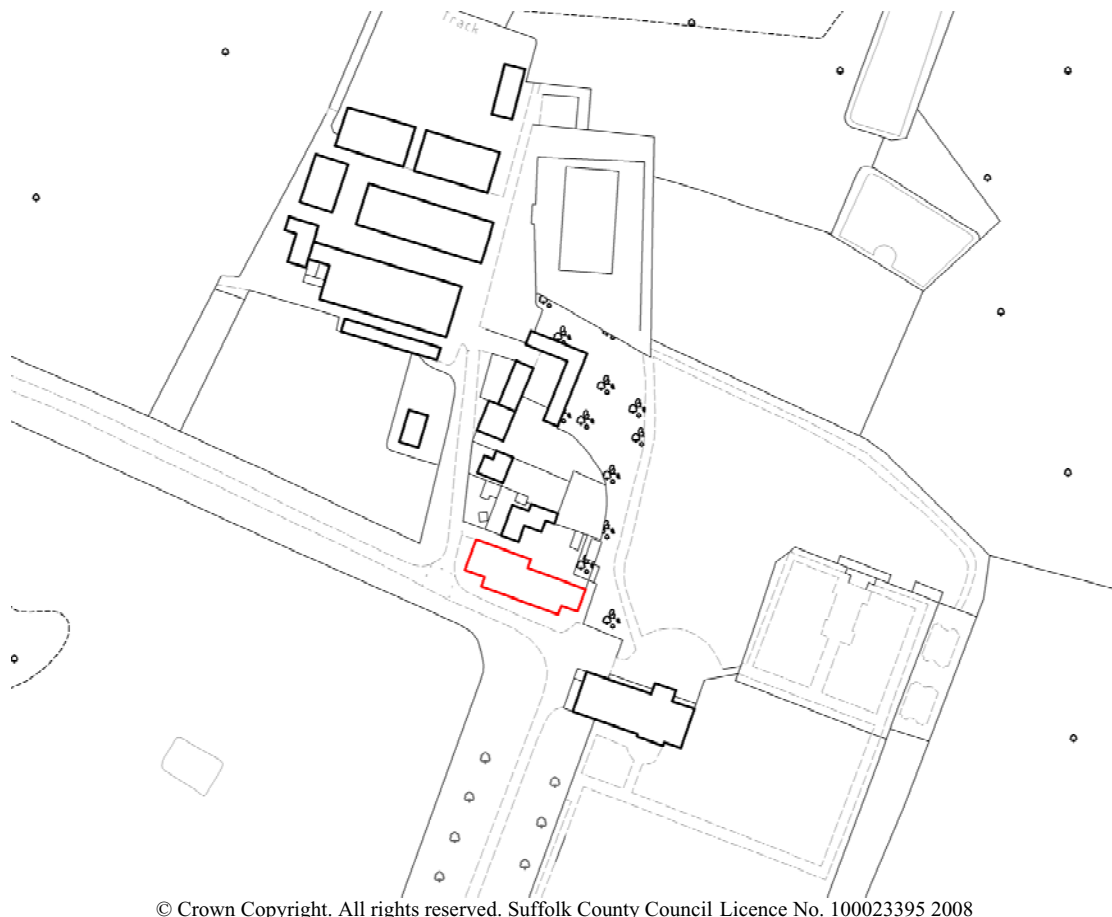


Figure 1
Existing Ordnance Survey Site Plan
Showing the stable block in red with Dalham Hall immediately to the south-east

Historic Context: Documentary & Cartographic Record

Dalham Hall is a substantial Queen Anne brick mansion built in 1704/5 for Simon Patrick, Bishop of Ely (Pevsner). The grade II-listed structure lies on an eminence which commands fine views across the valley of the River Kennet to the south, and is surrounded by parkland between the 14th century parish church to the south-east and an impressive contemporary or slightly later stable block to the north-west (illus. A2.1). The site represents a fine and largely intact example of an early-18th century seigneurial landscape, although the upper storey of the hall was removed after a fire in 1954 (Schedule of Listed Buildings, and see A2.3).

The manor of Dalham was held of the Honour of Clare during the Middle Ages, and the present hall replaced a mansion which had been occupied since 1417 by the Stuteville family whose monuments dominate the church (W.A. Copinger's *Manors of Suffolk*, 1909). On Bishop Patrick's death in 1707 the property became the seat of the Affleck family who served as Members of Parliament for Cambridge and Suffolk during the 18th century, and sold it to Cecil Rhodes in 1901. On Rhodes' death the following year it passed to his brother, Colonel Frederick Rhodes, when the estate was said to contain 3,475 acres, and in 1927 was acquired by the shipping magnate Lord Milford, whose descendants still own it.

The Suffolk Record Office does not possess a tithe map for Dalham, but a plan of the park in 1808 is reproduced in figure 2. Both the house and stable block appear to be accurately surveyed, but the western end of the stable differs significantly from its present arrangement and the hall is shown before the addition of its single-storied western wing. The outline of the

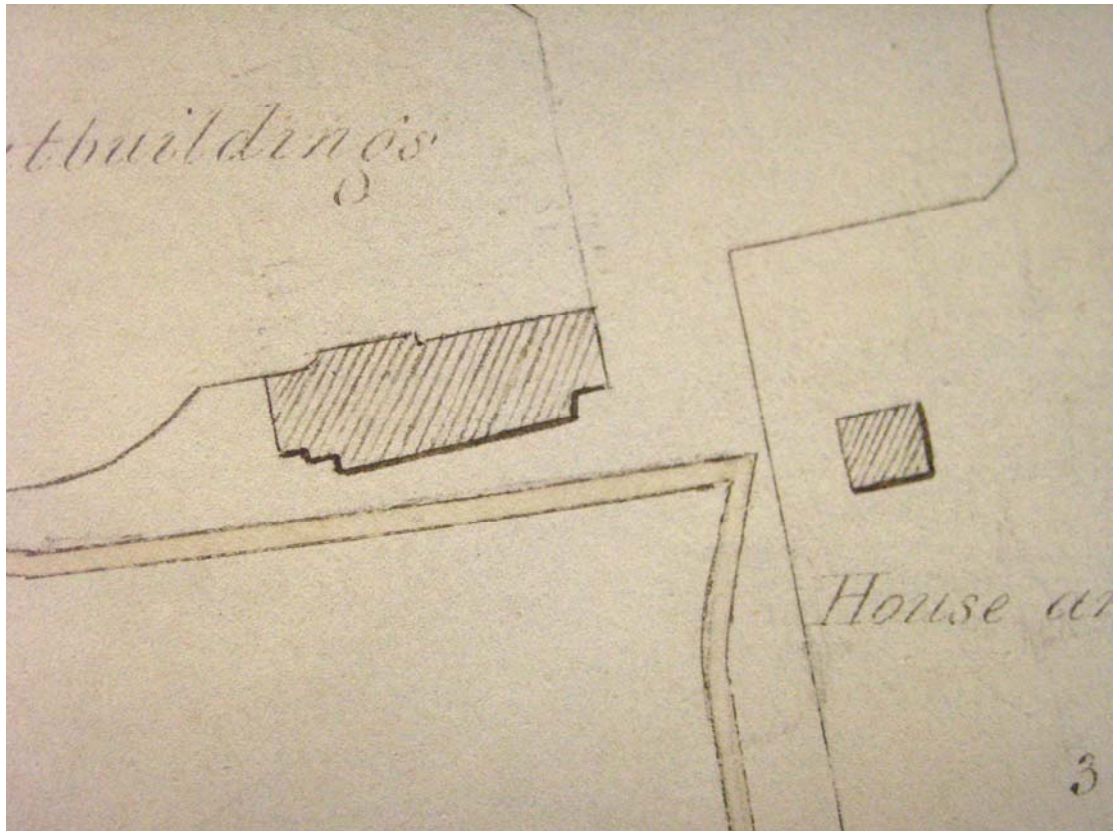


Figure 2

Detail of a plan of Dalham Hall Park in 1808 (SRO M547/3) showing the 'house and gardens' to the right and 'outbuildings' to the left. The indented outline of the stable block's western gable differs significantly from that shown on later plans.

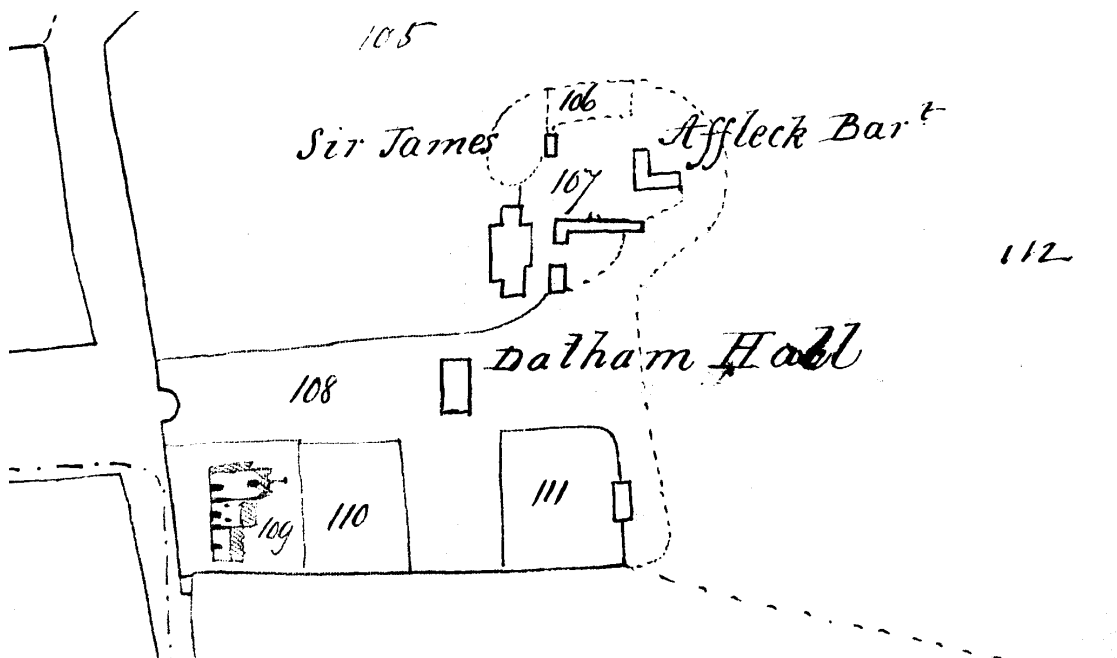


Figure 3

The site as depicted on the Dalham enclosure map of 1818 (SRO M547/5), showing north to right. This plan appears to be less accurately drawn than that of 1808, but still shows a relatively narrow projection from the stable's western gable

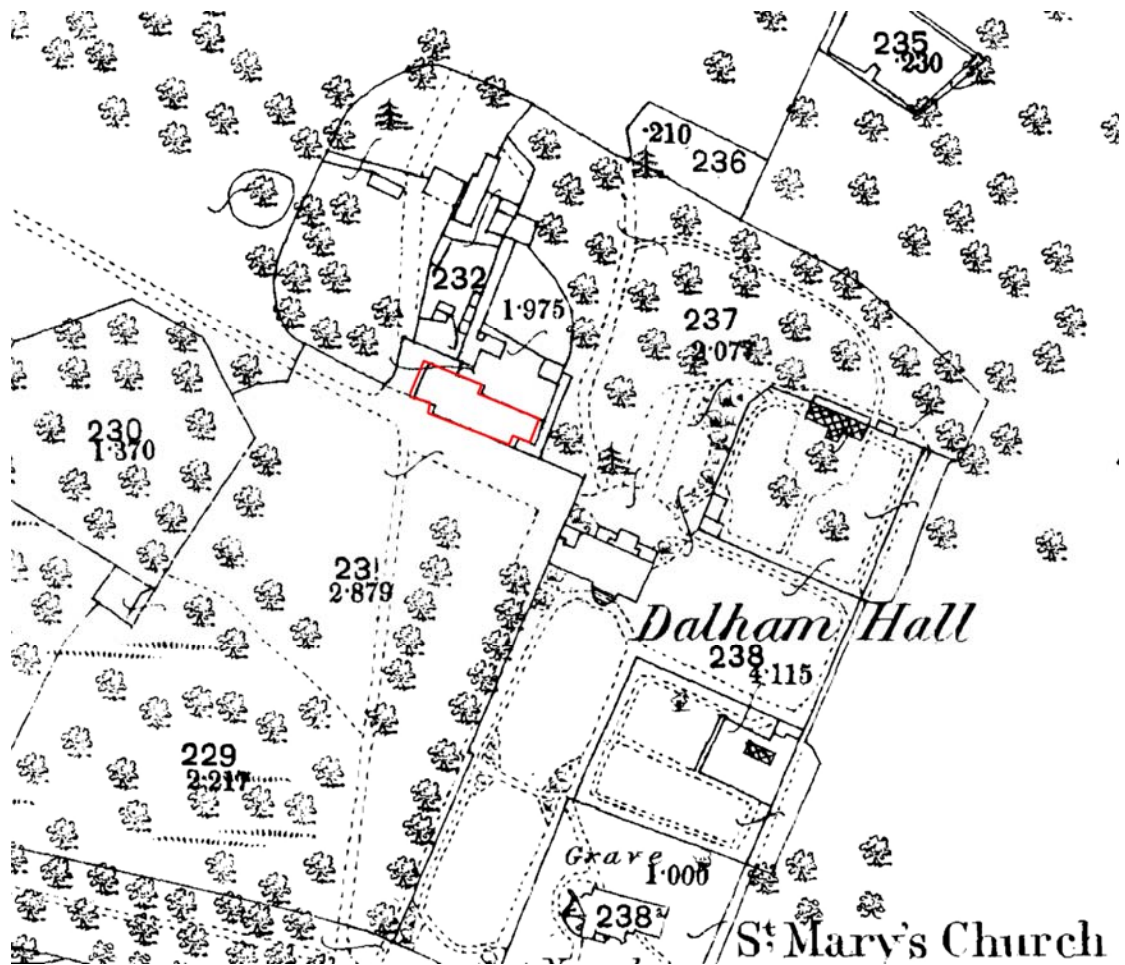


Figure 4

First Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1884, outlining the stable in red
 The stable is shown with its present outline, where the single-storied projection from its western gable is aligned with the (rear) northern elevation of the main structure.

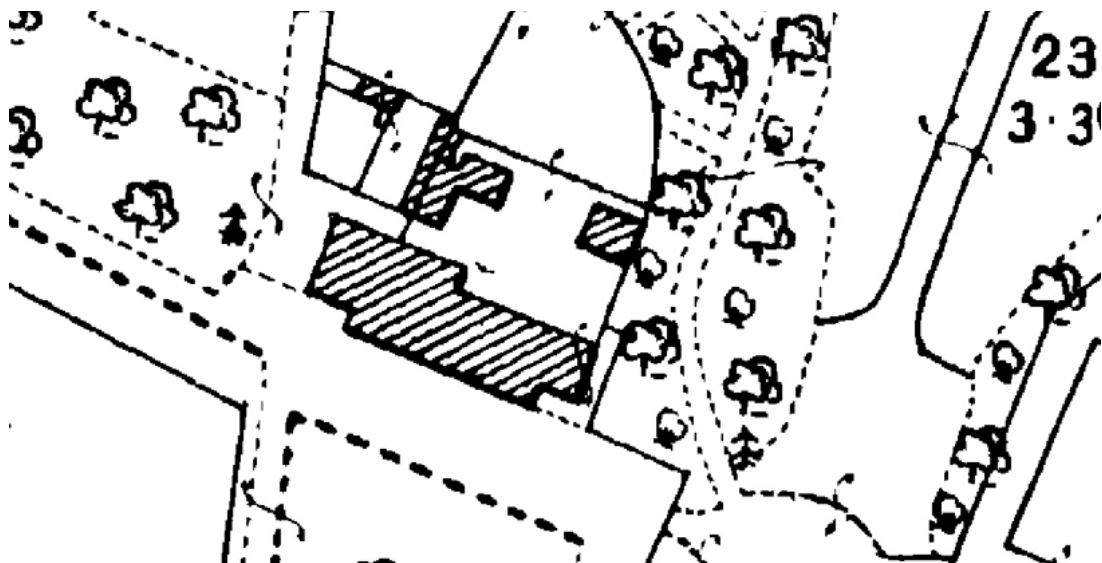


Figure 5

Second Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1904, showing the distinctive modern outline of the stable in more detail.

stable's eastern gable is identical to that of today, with a narrow, single-storied projection which continues the line of the rear, northern wall but is indented to the south; the western projection is indented to both front and rear, however, with two 'steps' to the south, in contrast to the present structure which reflects its counterpart to the east. The enclosure map of 1818 (figure 3) is less accurately surveyed and omits the second step in the south-western corner, but shows the same general outline as in 1808. By the time of the first edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey in 1884 the stable had acquired its modern outline, and the existing single-storied western wing had evidently replaced the more complex arrangement indicated by the earlier plans and the presence of old roof scars discussed below.

Building Analysis

N.B. Conversion work to the stable block was largely complete at the time of inspection, with domestic apartments on the upper storey of the main range and an office in the single-storied eastern wing. These alterations are understood to have occurred under an earlier planning application, and included the loss of the original reddled finish to the southern façade as mentioned in the Schedule of Listed Buildings. This report is therefore focused on the single-storied western wing, which forms the subject of the current planning application, but refers to the rest of the stable for the purpose of historic context.

Proportions and Structure

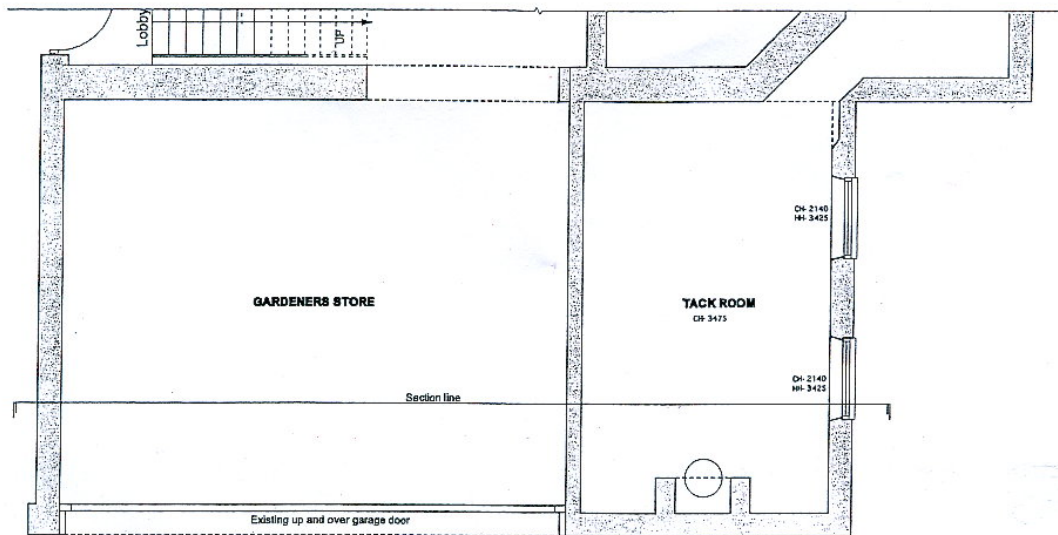
The stable block at Dalham Hall is an exceptional red brick building of the early-18th century which is probably contemporary with the adjacent hall of 1704/5 and represents one of the finest examples of its type in the country. The two-storied main range lies beneath a double-pile roof with hipped gables on an approximately north-south axis and extends to 28.8 m in length. The western half of the building projects by 2.5 m to the rear (north) and at 15 m the western gable is wider than its counterpart of 12.5 m to the east. The symmetrical southern façade contains two pedimented gables which project forwards by 30 cm and the external corners are embellished to front and rear with rusticated stucco quoins. A series of late-19th or early-20th century stalls extends along the entire front range, with various carriage sheds which now operate as workshops to the rear.

Alterations

The southern façade is largely original, with the exception of its ground-floor windows which were reduced in height during the late-18th or 19th century; they were initially identical to those of the upper storey but straight joints in the brickwork beneath their present sills reveal the extent of their truncation. This brickwork has recently been subjected to particularly unsympathetic re-pointing which has destroyed the 'reddened joints' mentioned in the listing description of 1984. The brickwork would have been reddled in this way from the outset and much of its historic integrity has been lost accordingly, although a section survives on the eastern gable. The listing also refers to a plaintiled roof instead of the present slate. A substantial section of the ground-floor wall at the western end of the rear elevation has been rebuilt in brickwork of early-20th century appearance, which alteration probably relates to the date of 1906 cast into an adjoining rainwater hopper. The stalls may also belong to this period, shortly after the estate's acquisition by the Rhodes family.

Single-Storey Wings

The stable is flanked by single-storied brick and slated axial wings which project from each gable. The eastern wing appears to have been much rebuilt in the mid-19th century but includes brickwork of 18th or early-19th century appearance in the lower courses of its southern elevation and probably represents an extension of this period. A structure of similar size is shown on the plan of 1808 (figure 2).



PLAN AS EXISTING

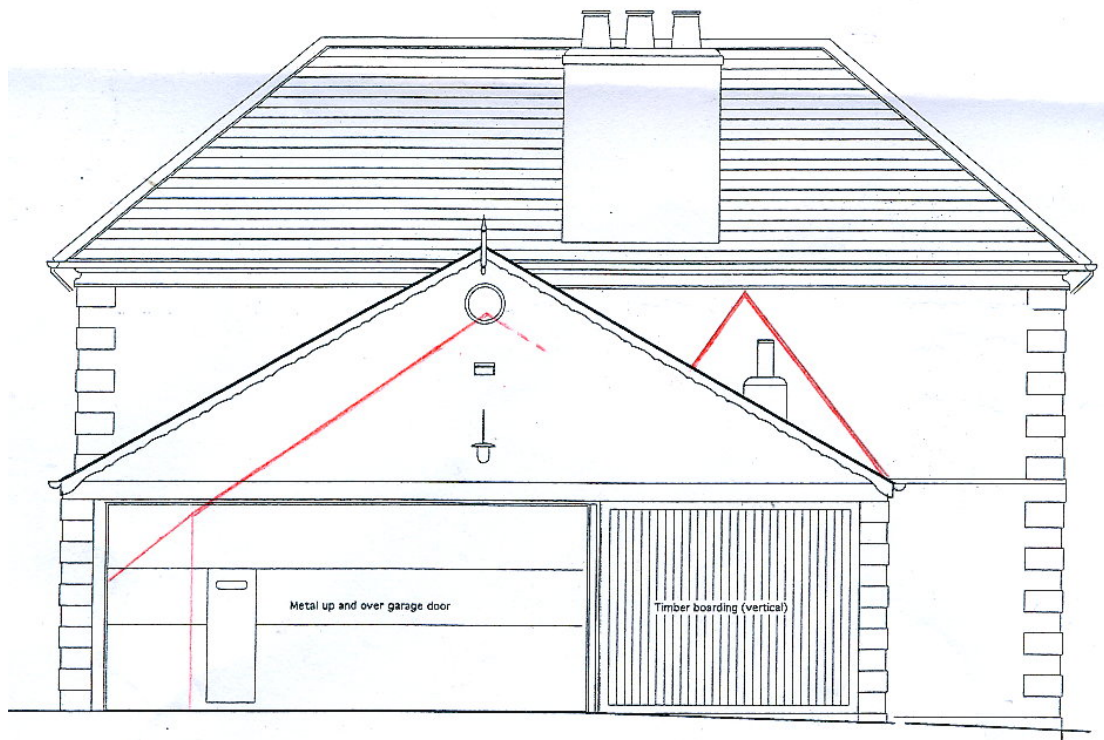


Figure 6

The single-storied projection at the western end of the stable block. The ground plan (top) shows the gardener's store and tack room, and the external western elevation (bottom) shows in red the scars of two earlier roofs visible on the western gable of the original building.

The western wing shown in figure 6 contains evidence of several phases of construction and has been heavily altered. It projects by 6.4 m from the original gable (0.6 m more than its eastern counterpart) and contains a narrow tack room to the south and a general storage area known as a gardener's store to the north. The tack room is entered from the stable and the

store by a 20th century garage-type ‘up-and-over’ door in its western gable. Both spaces are now spanned by a slate roof of late-19th century pre-fabricated king-post trusses, but the scars of at least two earlier roofs are visible on the gable of the original structure (shown in red in figure 6, and see photos A2.11 & 12). The external brickwork of the tack-room’s southern elevation is of late-18th or early-19th century appearance, and contains two shallow windows which reflect the secondary ground-floor fenestration of the main façade. This structure possessed its own narrow roof structure before its replacement by the present king-post trusses. The shallow-pitched roof which formerly existed to the north may have belonged to an original axial wing, but precise analysis is impossible. The northern elevation of the gardener’s store is of late-18th or early-19th century appearance to a height of 2.4 m but was raised to its present height of 3.2 m in the late-19th century – presumably when the present roof was built. This secondary brickwork does not resemble that associated with the rainwater hopper of 1906, and neither phase is keyed to the main range. The roof-scar within the gardener’s store seems to have belonged to a demolished structure which stopped short of the northern elevation, and this is consistent with the outline of the building in 1808. The additional ‘step’ in the south-western corner of the same outline suggests that the two structures were of differing lengths, but figure 4 indicates that the modern arrangement existed by 1884.

Historic Significance

The stable block is a rare and nationally important example of its type which is of particular interest given its relationship to the contemporary Queen Anne hall and medieval church (which has not been masked by secondary building). Its external appearance remains largely original, despite alterations to its ground-floor windows in the late-18th or early-19th century, although the historic character of its brickwork has been destroyed by recent re-pointing. The single-storied axial wing to the west probably adopted its present form shortly before 1884, when its outline was depicted on the first edition Ordnance Survey, but incorporates elements of two older structures on the same site. Given the extent to which this wing has already been altered it is unlikely that further internal change would significantly affect the historic integrity of the stable block as a whole.

Appendix 1 (on accompanying CD): Full Photographic Record

Description of Photographs in Appendix 1

Photograph no.

1. General view of site from south-west showing conspicuous position in landscape.
2. Southern facade of hall showing proximity of stable to left.
3. Southern facade of hall before loss of upper storey.
4. Southern approach to site showing hall to right and stable to left.
5. Southern facade of stable showing tack room projection to left.
6. Exterior from south-east showing converted office against eastern gable.
7. Detail of converted office showing early brickwork to lower courses.
8. Detail of original reddled brickwork to exterior of eastern gable.
9. Detail of eastern pediment of southern facade showing recent re-pointing.
10. Detail of re-pointed brickwork to facade, showing blocked original window to right.
11. Detail of carved console bracket and re-pointing to eastern door case.
12. External northern elevation.
13. Northern external elevation from north-east, showing projecting wing to west.
14. Detail of projecting angle in northern elevation.
15. Detail of northern elevation showing Edwardian brickwork to lower storey of western wing.
16. Detail of 1906 dated rainwater hopper to western end of northern elevation.
17. Detail of Edwardian brickwork to western end of northern elevation.
18. Detail of original brickwork at western end of northern elevation showing gardener's store to right.
19. Detail of northern elevation showing junction between stable (left) and gardener's store.
20. Northern elevation of gardener's store showing earlier brickwork of lower courses.
21. Detail of northern elevation showing earlier brickwork to lower courses of gardener's store.

22. Exterior of gardener's store from north-west showing 19th century upper courses and quoins.
23. Exterior of western projection showing northern elevation to left.
24. Exterior of western projection showing southern facade to right.
25. Exterior of western projection showing gardener's store to left and tack room to right.
26. Exterior from south-west showing scar of steeply pitched earlier roof above tack room.
27. Southern external elevation of tack room.
28. Exterior of eastern gable of office conversion from south-east.
29. Interior of stable from west.
30. Interior of stable from west showing detail of late-19th century fittings.
31. Interior of stable from east, showing entrance to tack room in rear.
32. Entrance to tack room and blocked stair at western end of stable.
33. Interior of converted apartment above stable from west.
34. Interior of converted apartment above stable from east.
35. Detail of roof structure of stable from converted apartment.
36. Interior of tack room from east showing gable chimney.
37. Interior of tack room from west showing door to main stable.
38. Interior of tack room showing trophy hooks to northern elevation.
39. Detail of fox's head dated 1950 to northern elevation of tack room.
40. Detail of fox's head dated 1927 to northern elevation of tack room.
41. Interior from south-west of workshop adjoining gardener's store, showing external wall of 1906.
42. Interior of gardener's store from west showing scar of earlier roof against original western gable.
43. Detail of earlier roof scar to western gable seen from gardener's store.
44. Detail of northern end of earlier roof scar, showing northern elevation of gardener's store to left.
45. Internal northern elevation of gardener's store showing earlier brickwork in lower courses.

- 46. Internal southern elevation of gardener's store.
- 47. Detail of king post roof truss of gardener's store from east.
- 48. King post roof structure of gardener's store from north-west (spanning tack room to right).

Appendix 2 (pp. 11-16): Selected Printed Photographs



A2.1 General view of site from south-west showing the highly conspicuous position of the buildings in the landscape: Dalham Hall lies between St Mary's church on the right and stable block to the left.



A2.2 Southern facade of Dalham Hall showing the proximity of the stable block (visible in the rear to left)



A2.3 Southern facade of Dalham Hall before the loss of its upper storey to fire in 1954
(West Suffolk Illustrated, 1907)



A2.4 Southern facade of stable block showing projection of tack room and gardener's store from western gable to left



A2.5 Detail of original reddled brickwork to exterior of eastern gable, showing stucco quoins of south-eastern corner to left



A2.6 Detail of recently re-pointed brickwork to southern facade, showing vertical joint of blocked original window to right and projection of eastern pediment to left



A2.7 Area of Edwardian brickwork to ground storey at western end of northern elevation (the rainwater hopper dated 1906) with original doorway and brickwork to right and single-storied projection of gardener's store beyond



A2.8 Exterior of single-storied projection from western gable showing earlier brickwork in lower courses of northern elevation to left.



A2.9 Interior of stable from east, showing southern elevation to left and entrance door to tack room in rear.



A2.10 Interior of tack room from east showing chimney against western gable and southern external elevation to left.



A2.11 Exterior of single-storied tack room & gardener's store projection from south-west showing scar of steeply pitched earlier roof above tack room on western gable of main block.



A2.12 Detail of western gable in gardener's store showing scar of earlier low-pitched roof beneath present king-post structure (the tack room lies under the galvanised tank to the right).