

**An Historic Building Assessment and Record  
of the Standing fabric forming the Grade II\*  
Listed Building known as Bradgate Stables  
(Bradgate House) Groby,  
Leicestershire (SK 092 517)**

**TR Projects**

For Lafarge Aggregates Ltd

**Checked by Project Manager**

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**AN HISTORIC BUILDING ASSESSMENT  
AND RECORD OF THE STANDING FABRIC FORMING THE  
GRADE II\* LISTED BUILDING (NOW RUINOUS)**

**KNOWN AS**

**BRADGATE STABLES**

**( BRADGATE HOUSE )**

**GROBY**

**LEICESTERSHIRE**

**NGR: SK 092 517**

***SUMMARY***

*TR Projects were asked by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services to undertake an historic building assessment of the ruinous, Listed Building known as Bradgate Stables, Groby, Leicestershire. The building's deteriorating condition had been a matter of concern to officers at English Heritage, Leicestershire County Council and Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council for several years. In 2002 the decision was taken to remove the remaining, collapsed, roof structures and reduce the building to those parts of the fabric that either retained their structural stability or were capable of being stabilised with minimum intervention. The chief outcome of this work was to remove all existing free-standing gable walls and chimney flues. The surviving walls were then to be re-pointed and their tops capped to provide basic weather proofing for the future. In addition there was a requirement that the massive, clock tower with cupola roof which forms the central feature of the stables façade was to be retained, stabilised and made weather proof. The entire Bradgate Stables complex retains its Grade II\* Listed Building status but is now officially described as a 'Ruin'.*

**OBJECTIVES**

This survey has been produced in response to a planning requirement of the Senior Planning Archaeologist of Leicestershire County Council. The chief objectives of the survey have been to provide a comprehensive, photographic and drawn record of as many of the features and fixtures of the original Bradgate Stables complex as possible and to provide a record of the materials used in the Stables' construction. Some of the details only survive in fragmentary form within the standing fabric or as fallen masonry.



It is intended that henceforth Bradgate Stables should retain its Listed Status but be regarded as a 'Ruin'. In these circumstances there was a requirement for certain works to be undertaken in the form of demolition, resulting in loss of fabric in several areas as a means of ensuring the surviving standing structure was stable. This survey has endeavoured to record either by notation on elevation drawings, photography or simple annotation all decorative features associated with the original Bradgate Stables.

The photographic work has been carried out at a level consistent with the requirements of the Royal Commission on Historic Building's *Recording Buildings : A Descriptive Specification* "Level 1 Photography"

## METHODOLOGY

The methodology for this historic building assessment is based on the requirements laid out in the Brief, from the Senior Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council, County Hall, Glenfield.

- [1] Search of documentary sources, e.g., maps, illustrations and directly relevant secondary sources, including planning records held by the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Record Office, (hereafter LLRRO).
- [2] An inspection of the historic building including photographic recording and drawn records being made of all, surviving, significant details.
- [3] In addition and wherever it was safe to undertake such work, a record was made of details of the building, such as chimney stacks and gables, that were demolished as part of the 'stabilisation' process.
- [4] Much of the recording work was based on a series of survey drawings of Bradgate Stables undertaken by Spencer & Spencer, *Architects*, Market Bosworth, in 1992. Using these drawings enabled a simple, comparative analysis to be made of the extent to which natural and hastened decay had caused deterioration to the fabric of the building and provided a base on which to plot the numerous architectural details identified during the course of this survey.
- [5] Consideration of requirements for further recording work with the appropriate justifications and proposals.

## ORGANISATION OF THE REPORT

This report consists of **Part 1**, an *Introduction* containing contemporary descriptions of Bradgate Stables based on information from Trade Directories and Sales Brochures of the 1920s as well as illustrative and archive information relating to the Grey family particularly the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Stamford & Warrington, who built both Bradgate House and Bradgate Stables.

**Part 2**, is an illustrated *Survey* containing descriptions of the basic construction methods and fabric of the various decorative details associated with the original Stables and the *Building Description* it includes drawings of some details of the building recorded during the period of the survey August 2003 - October 2005, these are included as a *Building Elevations and Details* section at the end of **Part 2**. In some cases the decorative details are reconstructed from surviving fragments recovered from the undergrowth which grew in abundance across



the entire site for much of the time the Survey was being conducted. The series of *Drawings* numbered *1 - 14* are included at the end of **Part 2**. A series of superimposed, circled Letters and Numbers on *Drawings 1 - 5*, refer to more detailed drawings included as *Drawings 6 - 14*.

**Part 3, Commentary** contains descriptions of a selection of photographs and reports that are part of a substantial photographic and documentary archive of Bradgate Stables held by the Building Conservation Section of Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council. No catalogue exists for this material. This Commentary relates to photographs that helped inform interpretations in this report and lists the selected illustrations in date order cross-reference numbers are given in *[bold]* in the main body of the text.

**Part 4** consists of a brief *Supplementary Note* concerning the **Rase Marked Timbers** identified within the Stable ranges.

For ease of cross-reference this report has adopted the reference system originally devised by Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council for identifying the different areas of the Stables namely: **South Range, West Range, North Range, and East Range**. Wherever possible the names used for areas within these four ranges of buildings correspond with those used by Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council and by Messrs A. Spencer, Market Bosworth, on their survey drawings of 1992, (*see Fig. 3, p.6*).

## PART 1 INTRODUCTION

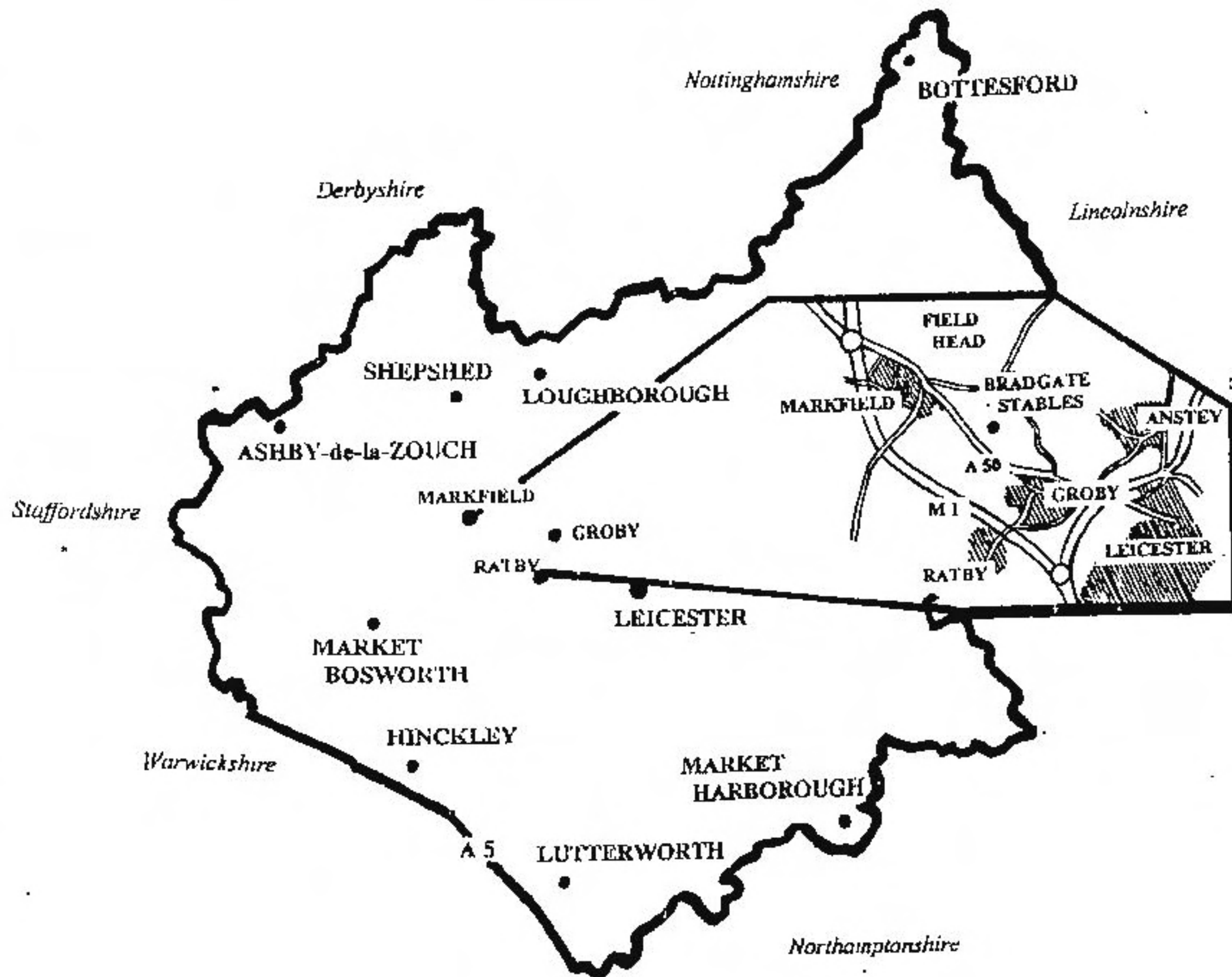
The courtyard complex forming Bradgate Stables is situated approximately 400 metres, (440 yards), north-west of the present Bradgate House, a large, inter-war, domestic residence with extensive, additional office ranges of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These are situated on the site of the original, Bradgate House which was built in 1856 and demolished c.1925-6, (*see Fig.1 Location - Bradgate Stables, p.4. and Figs.2 and 3, pp. 5, 6*)

Both Bradgate House and Bradgate Stables were built on land that was originally part of the medieval assart known as *Steward's Hay*.<sup>1</sup> In his book *Leicestershire and the Quorn Hunt*, Colin Ellis noted that "*Steward's Hay was the official residence of the Earl of Stamford's Steward...[which] Ld Stamford and his brother Booth Grey, used as a hunting seat in the season... [it]...stood back from the Groby Road on the site where the Earl afterwards built Bradgate House - now itself demolished.*"<sup>2</sup> The mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Bradgate House was built on the site of the earlier house and after the death of Lord Stamford was let to a William Thomas Everard, DL, JP, until it was put up for sale with the rest of the Bradgate Estate in 1925.<sup>3</sup> Having been sold in 1925 Bradgate House was demolished in 1926. Sometime later a new Bradgate House was built on the same site. This second Bradgate House is first mentioned in Kelly's *Directory* in 1932, when its occupant was Mr J.D. Mantle.<sup>4</sup> This later house was subsequently extended and converted into offices which survive to the present day.

The overall external dimensions of Bradgate Stables are approximately 53 metres x 53 metres, (58 x 58 feet), the overall measurements of the inner yard are approximately 39 metres x 39 metres, (42 feet 9 inches x 42 feet 9 inches). The main frontage of the Stables, which contains the massive, centrally located Clock Tower with the entrance archway under it, faces due south.



**Fig.1 Location - Bradgate Stables, Groby.**  
 Site location shown superimposed on general location diagram



Location Description

With no adaptation other than the insertion of metric distances to compliment the Imperial measurements used in the original, the location description contained in the 1925 Bradgate Estate Sale Catalogue provides an eloquent introduction to the subject of this report - Bradgate Stables - the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Stable complex to Bradgate House, the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century house built by the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Stamford and Warrington for his own use in 1857.

*"Lying on the North side of the Main Road from Leicester to Ashby-de-la-Zoiuch, one and a half miles (2.41 kms) from the village of Groby and six miles (9.66kms) from Leicester in delightful park-like and well timbered surroundings, with principal aspects south and east, and an elevation of about 300 feet (91.4 m) above sea level."*<sup>5</sup>

The 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Stamford & Warrington, Bradgate House and Bradgate Stables.

Reference has already been made to the fact that the land on which both Bradgate House and Bradgate Stables were built was part of the medieval, forest assart known as Stewards Hay described in White's *Directory*, (1846) as: "... a pleasant seat in the woodlands, on the north side of Groby ... occasionally visited by the Earl as a hunting retreat - The Earl's extensive but useless Park of Bradgate, is in this neighbourhood; and near it is that romantic district



called Charnwood Forest..."<sup>6</sup> In 1857 the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Stamford & Warrington demolished the house at Stewards Hay replacing it on the same site with a massive house built in the fashionable 'Jacobethan' style made popular by the English architect Edward Blore, (1787-1879). The house was designed by Mr M.J. Dain a partner in the London architectural practice Dain & Parsons. This new house, which became known as Bradgate House, was later described in Kelly's *Directory*, (1881), as: "...the hunting and shooting box of the Earl of Stamford & Warrington... a large and handsome building in the Elizabethan style, erected in 1856, it is surrounded by extensive pleasure grounds; the stabling is on an extensive scale, having standing for more than 50 horses."<sup>7</sup>

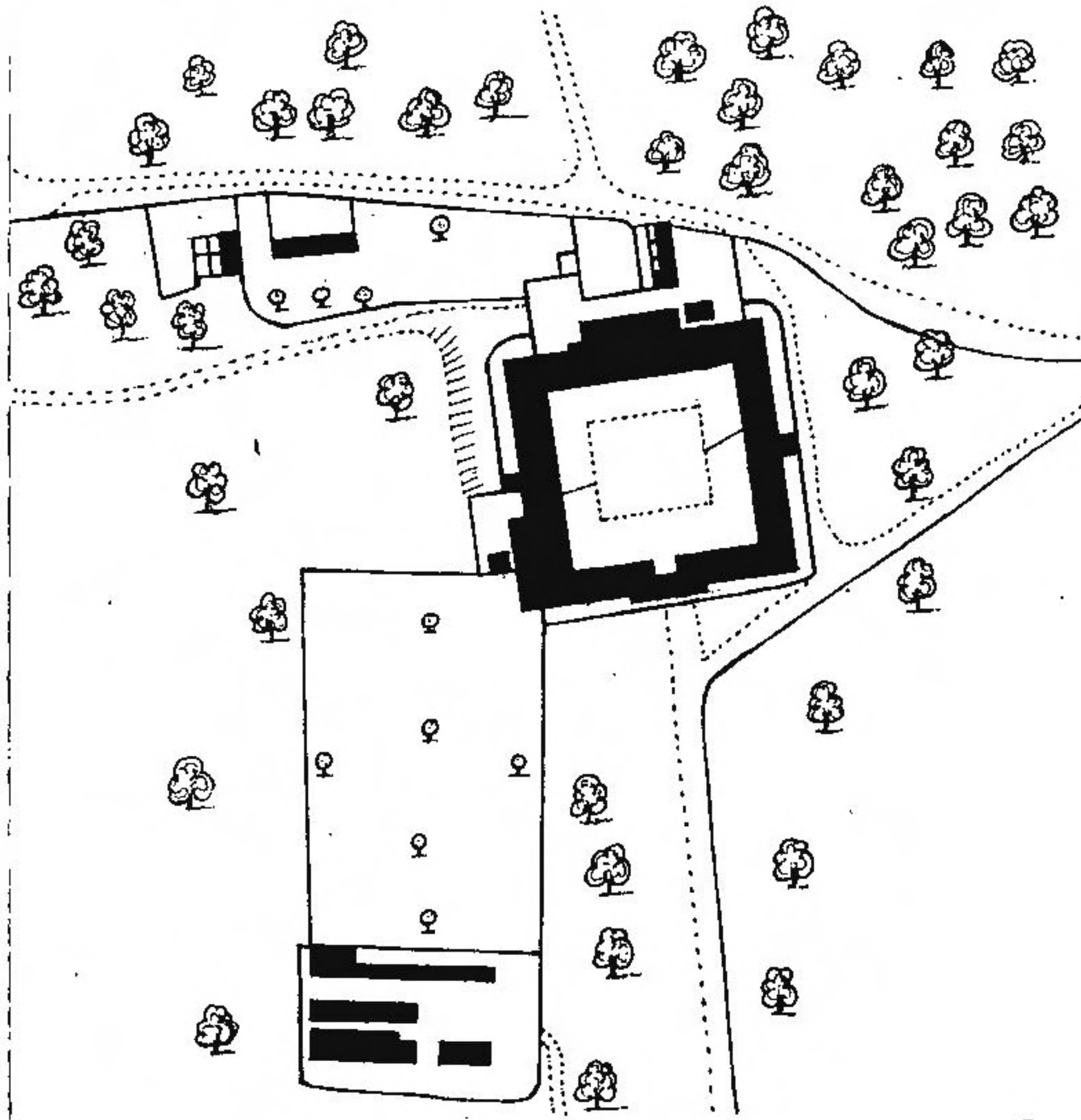
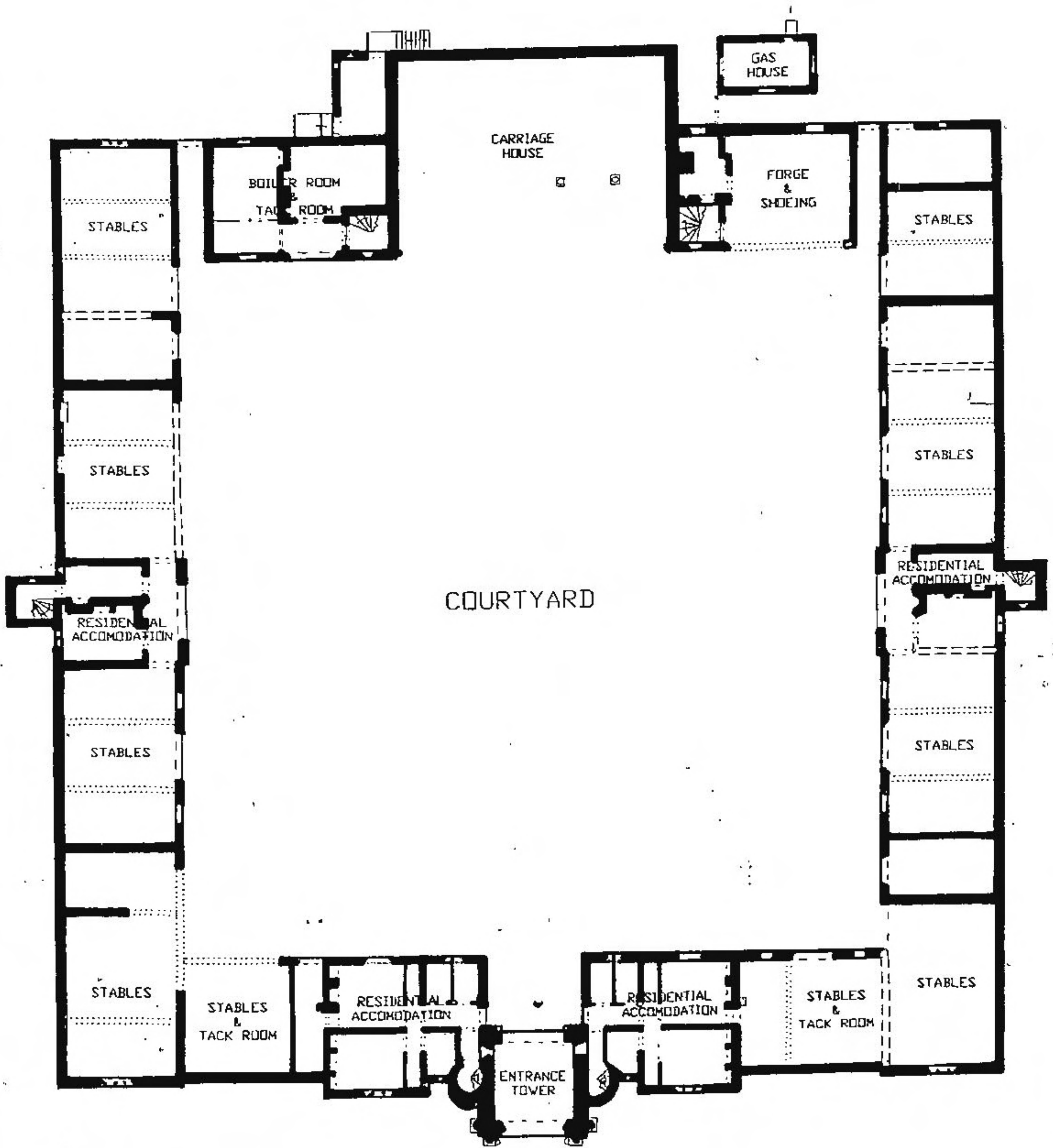


Fig.2 Layout - Bradgate Stables Enlarged detail based on First Edition, Ordnance Survey, 1:2500 map, 1883, Sheet XXIV.4

Although sharing the common name Bradgate, Bradgate House and Stables lay some 4.4 kms (2¾ miles) from the site of the late-15<sup>th</sup> century house, in Bradgate Park, which the 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Stamford had abandoned in 1719 in favour of the other family estate - Enville Hall, Staffordshire. Ellis suggests the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Stamford, one of whose predecessors had kept hounds at Bradgate Park in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, may have had ambitions to bring the Quorn Hunt to Bradgate Stables which it is claimed cost £30,000 to build.<sup>8</sup>

**Fig. 3** *Layout Plan of Bradgate Stables with specific areas named.*  
(Based on a Site Plan produced by A. Spencer, (Architects),  
Market Bosworth, Leics., 1992/3. With Acknowledgements)





The 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Stamford had married for a second time in 1855, his first wife having died the previous year. His second wife, Lady Catherine, was: "...the daughter of a Norfolk\* gamekeeper ... whose previous career had been as an equestrienne in a circus ... Naturally the affair caused a great commotion. Her origin and career were quite well known and some people assumed more than they knew." <sup>9</sup> Stevenson and Squires, in their study of Bradgate Park, observed that Lady Catherine was frequently referred to as a "hippodrome dolly" ... [whom]... The men were more inclined just to admire the sight of...in the saddle.' <sup>10</sup> The Countess of Stamford certainly had considerable prowess as a horsewoman in the hunting fields of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, no less an authority than Burke's *Complete Peerage* observed that: "...she was a first-rate rider to hounds." <sup>11</sup> All of which may have influenced the Earl's decision to accept the Mastership of the Quorn hunt, which he was offered in 1856 while he was Master of the Albrighton Hunt and living at Enville Hall, Staffordshire. However the Countess did not enjoy being the focus of gossip and took exception to the scurrilous comparisons made between her and another notable horsewoman and 'fast' lady of the late 1850's and early 1860's hunting fields, Miss Walters, widely referred to as 'Skittles.' As a consequence around 1860 the Countess abandoned the hunting field.

A report of Lord Stamford's acceptance of the Mastership of the Quorn Hunt, in *The Sporting Magazine*, 1856, noted that: "...the Quorn Kennels and stables ... [then at Quorn Hall, had been placed] ... at the disposal of the Earl of Stamford who would live himself at Bradgate House. The Earl had announced that he would dispense with a subscription provided that an adequate fund was raised to put the covers in order." <sup>12</sup> The repeated failure of the Hunt to meet the Earl's requirements in respect of the Covert Fund seems to have been the main reason for him losing interest in hunting as Master of Hounds, though it was always felt that the Earl's distractions were numerous. "It must have been rather a shock to the Quornites to learn that when he visited Leicestershire in January, 1856 ... [Lord Stamford] ...did not go out with hounds but had a tremendous week's shooting at Bradgate." <sup>13</sup>

Writing about the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl's enthusiasm for hunting, Ellis noted that: "The most justifiable criticism of Lord Stamford...was that he was not really keen. He was quite fond of hunting - he was quite fond of all sports - and he was prepared to do the thing in style as he was prepared to do anything in style. His chief passion, from before he assumed the mastership until the end of his life, was shooting and game preservation.... The fact is that Lord Stamford had altogether too many irons in the fire, and the result was not satisfactory either to himself or to anyone else. He gave up the hounds in 1863." <sup>14</sup> Some indication of the extent to which the Earl's quest for 'style' extended may be judged from the fact that in March 1861, some two years after the Stables were completed, the decennial census recorded nineteen 'Grooms' and a Coachman living at the Stables. <sup>15</sup> Relinquishing the mastership of the Quorn Hunt meant an inevitable downturn in Lord Stamford's interest in maintaining such a vast Stable retinue and at the end of the 1862-63 hunting season Tattersalls held a sale of the Earl's hunters at Bradgate Stables which press reports claimed was attended by eight thousand people. Although the decline of this purpose built Stables complex probably commenced soon after 1863, sometime between 1871 and 1877 Lord Stamford built a small gas plant behind the north-east corner of the stables. White's *Directory*, 1877, includes George Cole, Gas Works Manager in the list of estate staff at Bradgate House and Stables and in 1881 he was recorded living at 'Gas Works Cottage.' <sup>16</sup> The Gas Works provided gas lighting for the Stable complex and some of the early group photographs of families living at Bradgate Stables show a Gas Lamp, and a metal silhouette figure of a stag, as central features

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\* Stevenson & Squires (*ibid* 6 p.46) give more detailed information about Lady Catherine's background, as the fifth of seven children of a Dorset farmworker and Gipsy mother which Burke's *Peerage*, (*ibid* 11. p. 226) confirms but states she was the second of seven children.



of the Courtyard, (see *Insert Illustn 1, after p.10*). However by 1881 the truly active period of life of this substantial complex was in decline and in March of that year the decennial census records the Head Groom, his wife, daughter and a grandchild along with three Grooms as the only people living-in at Bradgate Stables.<sup>17</sup>

The newly built Bradgate House, which at the height of its social prowess employed a staff of 13 male and 16 female, indoor servants,<sup>18</sup> was the centre for numerous great house parties where shooting in Bradgate Park was the main attraction. In January 1882 the Prince of Wales, (later King Edward VII), attended a shoot at Bradgate. The occasion was reported on and commemorated by an engraving in the *Illustrated London News* of January 21<sup>st</sup> 1882. The Prince arrived at the Midland Railway Station in Leicester and was driven in an open carriage through the decorated streets of the town. The engraving shows the carriage, now with its hood up, arriving at Bradgate House in the winter twilight with the house staff and tenants lined up alongside the lantern lit carriage drive to the house where lights blaze in every window. Silhouetted against the evening sky are a series of Dutch gables and a cupola roof over the main entrance, (see *Insert Illustn. 2 after p.10*). The same details can be seen with greater clarity in a late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century photograph, (see *Insert Illustn.3, after p.10*), which also shows the extensive use of decorative, strapwork ornament associated with both doors, windows and the gable ornament as well as the ornamental brickwork of the chimney stacks. Similar ornamental details, though on a much reduced scale, can be seen on No.100 Regent Road, Leicester, which carries a datestone of 1851, (see *Plate 1*).

#### Bradgate Stables 1857 – 1929

Two early photographs of the main elevation of the Stables were located in the archive relating to Bradgate Stables held by Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, the more informing of which is shown as *Insert Illustn.4, after p.10*, and is discussed in greater detail in the **Survey** section below, (see *p.12*).

On the death of the Countess Catherine, widow of the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Stamford, in 1905, the three main Grey estates were, in accordance with the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl's will, split up. Dunham Massey, Cheshire, went with the title. Enville Hall, Staffordshire, passed to a favourite niece of the Countess and the Bradgate estate became the property of Mrs Katherine Henrietta Venezia Duncombe, daughter of the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl's sister, on condition that she and her husband added the name Grey to that of Duncombe. In 1925, Mrs Duncombe Grey, placed the entire Bradgate Estate on the market. A year later, 1926, some seventy years after it was built, Bradgate House, which had been bought by an architectural salvage contractor at the Estate Sale, was stripped of its architectural details and demolished.

The Stable Block, which the 1925 Sale Catalogue described as being: "*At a convenient remove from the house,*" was one of several estate properties that failed to find a buyer. The Catalogue description of the Stables merits inclusion in its entirety as a means of indicating their scale and function and also the extent of loss of original fabric that had occurred by the time this survey was undertaken, 2003-2005. In 1925 the Stables were described as being:

*"... contained in a well managed Quadrilateral Range of Buildings in brick and stone, with tiled roofs surrounding a spacious grass courtyard with well paved margins, approached through a wide gateway entrance with massive double doors surmounted by a Clock Room Tower inset with marble panel and decorated coat of arms.*



*The accommodation provides Stabling for FORTY-SEVEN HORSES arranged in thirty-four Stalls - eleven double and single Boxes together with a COMMODIOUS COACH HOUSE or GARAGE (50 x 35ft: 15.24 x 10.7m) Served with five pairs of double doors, having heating and gas installed and channelled and drained runways.*

*FITTED HARNESS and CLEANING ROOM, EXTENSIVE HAY and CORN STORAGE with two pairs of unloading doors, SHOERING BOX and FORGE and EXCELLENT LIVING ACCOMMODATION for Men in FOUR SELF-CONTAINED and CONVENIENT SUITES.*

*These rooms are occupied by Mr Parrott on Service Tenancy and by Mr Palfrey, Mrs Henstock and Miss Spiby as servants at Will without rent. GAS and WATER laid on.*

*Adjacent and rear to the Main Stable Block are the following premises.*

*Drying Room with heating pipes. Furnace Chamber fitted 'Quorn' independent boiler for heating installation. Detached Brick and Tiled Engine House containing a Crossleys 'Otto' gas engine and pump for water supply to the Stable Block.*

*Range of pigstyes, food store, one water tank and lavatories. Large manure yard.*

*[At the rear of the Stable Block] ... detached range of two loose boxes and large poultry house with lofts. Small paddock and garden adjoining."* <sup>19</sup> (See Fig.2, p.5).

In June 1928 Mrs Duncombe Grey endeavoured to dispose of those Estate properties that had failed to sell in 1925. The Sales Particulars made specific reference to the "... Low Reserves to Clear..." of the properties contained in the portfolio. Lot 26 was:

*"THE IMPOSING STABLE BLOCK AND LAND now utilised as a Greyhound Training Establishment."* This Lot also included the "Excellent Garden with Glass Houses" which can be seen on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of the Ordnance Survey map, (see Fig. 2, p.5), and "The Bradgate Fish Pond." The description of Lot 26 also notes that: "A number of the Buildings have now been adapted by the tenants as kennels, etc., for the business now carried on" i.e., greyhound breeding and training.<sup>20</sup> In 1928 the tenants identified in the 1925 Sale Particulars were still in residence and had been joined by The Greyhound Racing Association (Leicester) Ltd" whose initial tenancy ran for three years from October 1927. An entry in the notes relating to Lot 26 advises: "...this Lot is sold subject to said tenancies and to Agreements affecting the same..." A pencilled superscript note "£ 650" is entered in the margin alongside the details of Lot 26. As the provenance of the Catalogue is unknown there is no certainty whether this figure refers to the reserve price or to a bid price. However as the Stables appeared for a third time in another of Warner Shepherd and Wade's, property sales held in 1929, the superscript note may indicate the point at which the bidding stopped below the reserve price in 1928. Once again the tenants names are the same as those of the staff in 1925.<sup>21</sup>

After 1925 Kelly's *Directory*, which was the only commercial directory to survive into the second half of the twentieth century, contains no further mention of Bradgate Stables and for some 30 years the documentary evidence is insufficient in its detail to provide an informing line of interpretation.

Early in the 1960's Bradgate Stables and the adjacent quarry were acquired by the mineral extraction company Redland Aggregates. In 1968 Redland Aggregates were granted planning permission to use the Stable Yard as an area for storing vehicles. Quarrying activity in the quarry lying some 230 metres (250 yards) north-east of the Stables increased



significantly. Writing about the condition of the Stables in the 1968 Haywood<sup>22</sup> noted that: "...at this stage the majority of buildings were still intact but, over the next twenty years, much was lost to decay or theft." A Leicestershire County Council, aerial photograph of 1969 shows the Stables with all the roofs intact apart from the roof over the building in the north-west corner of the North range. This photograph also shows the complete layout of the Kitchen Garden, which lay to the south-west of the Stables, and appeared to still be under cultivation in 1969.<sup>23</sup> A series of photographs taken by Mrs K. Burrows, of Groby Old Hall, and simply dated '1970' show the Entrance Gateway complete in every detail including the weathervane still in position on top of the small tower rising above the cupola.<sup>24</sup> Subsequent photographs taken during the 1980s show a significant decline in the condition of the Stables buildings. In 1988, Bradgate Stables was included on the then Department of the Environment's, Statutory List of Buildings of Architectural and Historic Significance. The full Listing Description of Bradgate Stables is given as Appendix One, (see p.X). A series of un-attributed, professional photographs, also taken in 1988, show a series of structural defects present in the building fabric of all four ranges.<sup>25</sup> One year later, 1989, a photograph of the North range Carriage House's inner elevation shows a section of first floor walling had fallen away.<sup>26</sup> The importance of Bradgate Stables was confirmed in 1991 when it received the dubious honour of being declared the 'winner' of SAVE's 'Crumbling Heritage Hunt.' In 1992 the Royal Commission on Historic Monuments (England) undertook a detailed photographic survey of the site which showed a substantial amount of diagnostic material had survived the ravages of the previous quarter century of indifference.<sup>27</sup> Despite the notoriety achieved by winning the 'Crumbling Heritage' award in 1991, a further four years were to elapse before a serious intervention strategy for the building was to be initiated.

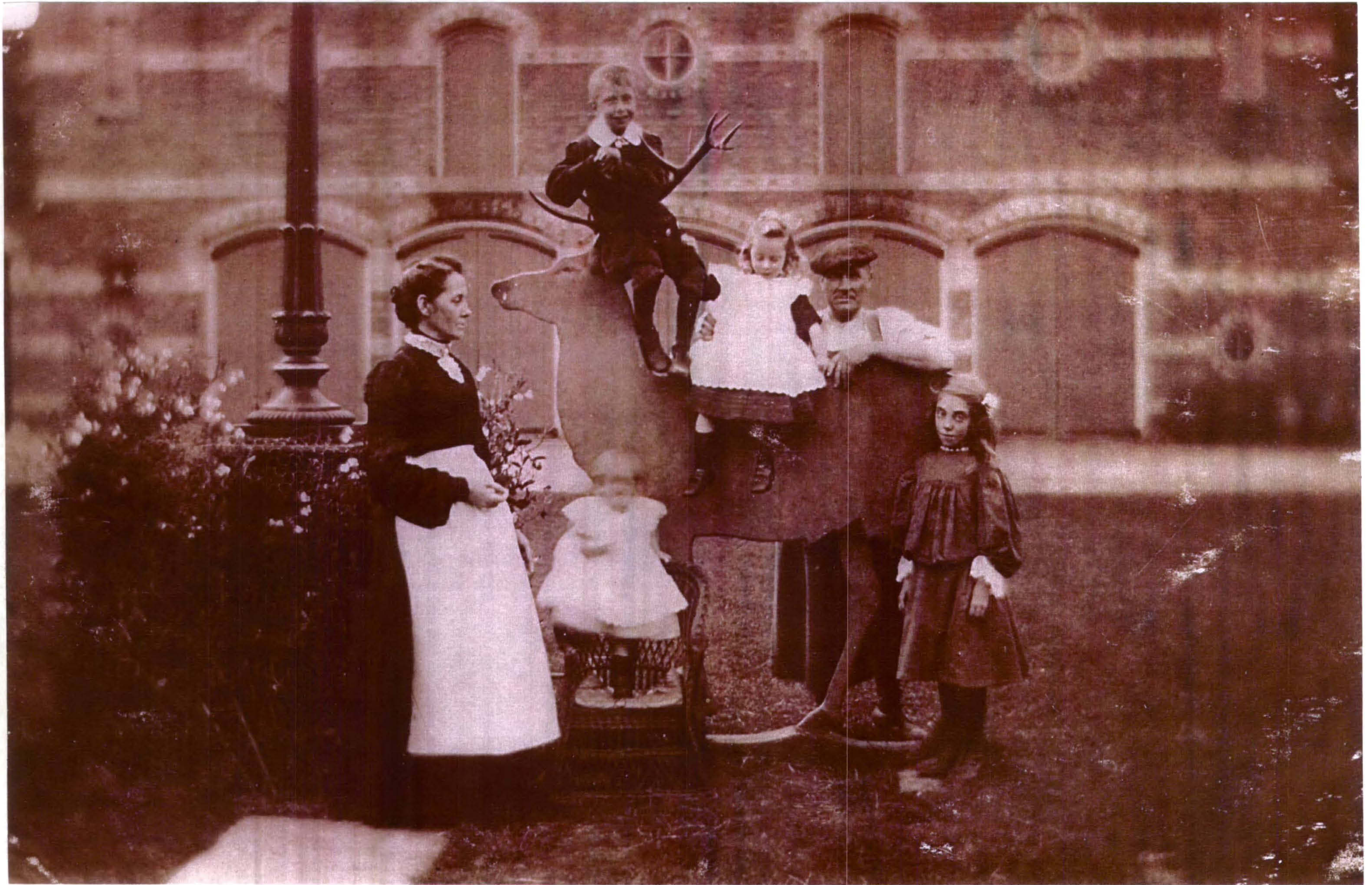


## REFERENCES

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1 Stewards Hay is marked on an estate map of 1757. However the earliest reference to the site is 1343 *ywords heye* was described as 'pasture'. [HER Ref: LE 2757/1]
- 2 Ellis, CBR 1951 Leicestershire and the Quorn Hunt Backus, Leicester. p.11, *fn.2*, p.35, *fn 3*
- 3 Kelly's Directory of Leicestershire & Rutland (various) 1908 – 1922
- 4 Kelly's Directory of Leicestershire & Rutland (various) 1932 - 1941
- 5 DE 1032/8 Bradgate Estate Sale Catalogue 17.xi.1925 Lot 174, p.76
- 6 Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland Record Office (hereafter LLRRO): 942.2 White, W. 1846 History, Gazetteer & Directory of Leicestershire and the small county of Rutland Sheffield p.586
- 7 Kelly's Directory of Leicestershire & Rutland 1881
- 8 Stevenson, J & Squires, A 1994 Bradgate Park Kairos Press, Leicestershire p.4  
also: personal communication: D. Ramsey, Groby
- 9 *ibid 2* p.83 and footnote on same page
- 10 *ibid 6* p.49
- 11 White, GH 1953 The Complete Peerage or a History of the House of Lords and all its members From the earliest times London p.226 *fn (b)*
- 12 *ibid 2* p.82 Ellis, from where this quotation is taken, does not give a dated reference for the The Sporting Magazine article. It appears from contemporary sources that the Earl continued to live for much of the year at Enville Hall and removing to Bradgate House chiefly for the shooting season.
13. *ibid 2* p. 86
14. *ibid 2* p.86
- 15 1861 Decennial Census Ref: RG 9 /2266, p.51, Groby District: Schedule 29
- 16 1881 Decennial Census Ref: RG 11/3136, p.26 Ratby District: folio 58
- 17 1881 Decennial Census, Ref: RG 11/3136, p.26, Ratby District: folio 58
- 18 1861 Decennial Census, Ref: RG 9 / 2266, pp. 51-53 Groby District, Schedule 292, 293
- 19 Sale Particulars - Bradgate Estate Warner, Shepherd, Wade and Kirby 17 November 1925 Lot 174, pp 76-77
- 20 Sale Particulars - Bradgate Estate Warner, Shepherd, Wade and Kirby June 12, 1928
- 21 Sale Particulars - Warner, Shepherd & Wade 1929 included the remnants of the original Bradgate Estate
- 22 Haywood, Frank 1996 "Historic Fabric Analysis" in: Goom, JC *et al*, Feasibility Study into the Re-use of Bradgate Stables, Groby, Leicestershire
- 23 Leicestershire County Council, aerial photograph (vertical overhead) showing The Stables and Kitchen Garden - see entry [19] in Commentary section
- 24 Photographs by Mrs K. Burrows, Groby Old Hall, taken at various dates in the 1970's – see entry [20] in Commentary section
- 25 Series of photographs showing structural defects evident in 1988 [21]
- 26 Colour photocopy of photograph of North range, Carriage House 1989 [22]
- 27 Royal Commission on Historic Monuments (England) 76 b/w photographs of Bradgate Stables 3 March 1992. [23]





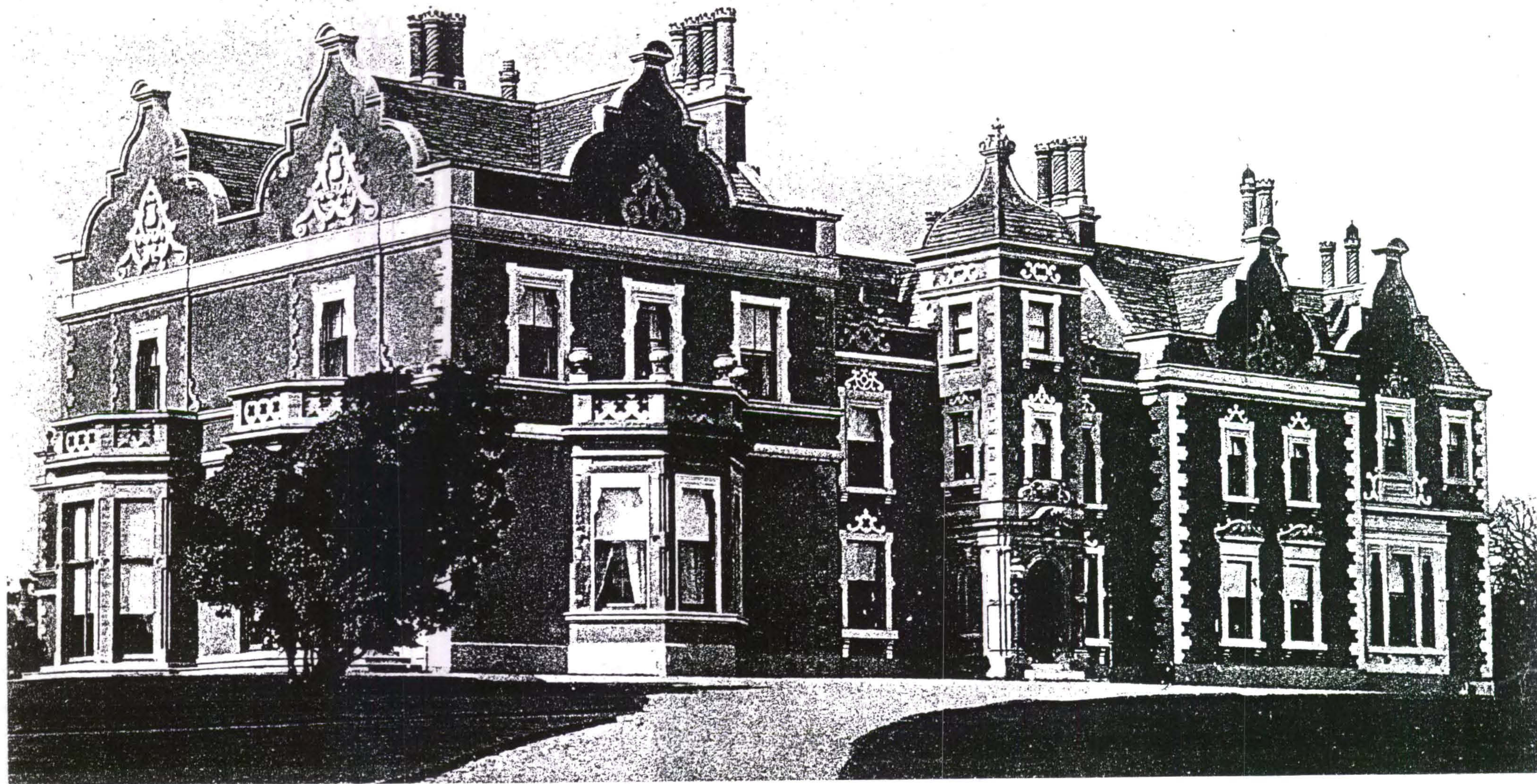
*Insert Illustration 1* Family group with two children sitting on the stag silhouette and a centrally positioned gas lamp to the left of the group. The leather apron on the man would suggest this is the family of George Fitchett who was the Estate's Farrier - c.1861 – c.1887. The five doors of the Carriage House in the North Range, with two first floor pitching doors, can be seen behind the group.





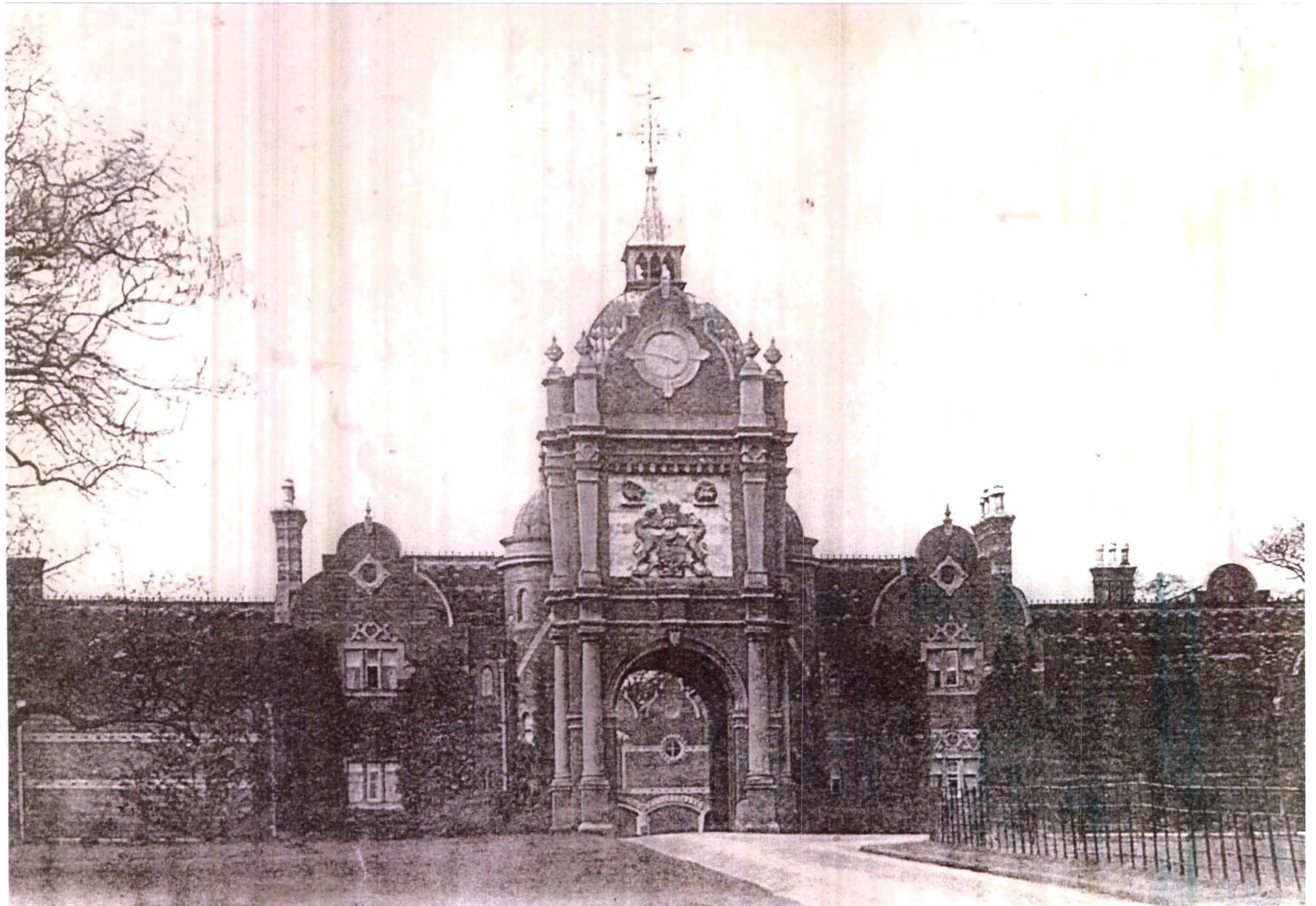
*Insert Illustration 2 Engraving from "The Illustrated London News" 22 January 1882, showing the Prince of Wales arriving at Bradgate House.*





*Insert Illustration 3 Enlarged postcard photograph of the south elevation of Bradgate House, c.1900. The extensive strapwork ornament over several of the windows and in the Dutch gables is clearly visible, as are the ornamented chimneys.*





*Insert Illustration 4* Enlarged photograph of the Clock Tower of the South Range front elevation, c.1870-1890. Showing the strapwork ornament over the windows of the residential units and banded tile decoration on the outer face of the stable roofs.



## PART 2 : SURVEY

*(For ease of reference the survey photographs taken of Bradgate Stables and a series of sixteen sheets of elevations and detail drawings associated with features on Bradgate Stables are included after page 18 of this report.)*

### Materials used in the building of Bradgate Stables

#### BRICK

The basic range of materials used in the building of Bradgate Stables consist of red clay, facing bricks for all four external and internal elevations. Many of the facing bricks had a shallow frog impressed with the legend: 'Broadbent Victoria Works Humberstone' Broadbents were builder's merchants who were based at 36, Humberstone Road, Leicester. Brick decorative banding on the main internal and external elevations used a very light, buff bodied brick, frequently described as 'white', these carried no identifying name, *(see Plates 2, 15, 17 and 19)*. The external walls are raised in courses of English Bond as are substantial sections of the internal walls. In the main body of the South elevation several sections of wall were raised as 340mm (13½ inch) sections. Internal partition walls that were to be rendered used 'commons' while some other interior walls contained substantial quantities of 'Flettons.' The quality of the surviving brickwork of the interior partition walls appeared inferior to the workmanship of the external and internal facing walls. In a number of places softwood, timber bonding courses were introduced into the fabric of the brick walls, these have now rotted, causing the walls to deflect. There are several places where walls with softwood bonding courses span virtually the complete width of the building and form an integral part of the structural inner face of the Dutch gables. Many of these walls are only 115mm (4½ inches) thick. Although most ornamental detailing used stone mouldings, moulded bricks were used to form the openings of the wooden oculus windows found in the Dutch Gables, *(see Plate 3)*. Chamfered bricks were also used for doorways and some window openings, *(see Plate 4)*.

#### STONE

##### Dressings

Ashlar limestone dressings for chimneys, windows and extensively on the entrance tower, *(see Plates 5, 6, 7, 8, 15, 16, 17 and 18)*. *In situ* and reconstruction drawings of several of these details are included as *Drawings 10, 11, 12 and 13, (see end of this Section)*.

##### Courtyard

The central courtyard of the Stables was surfaced with granite sets produced from the nearby granite quarries.

##### Slate

All the stalls in the stables area were lined with slate slabs to a height of some 1.5metres, (5 feet). The slate, which was drawn from Groby Slate Quarries owned by the Grey's, was machine cut, *(see Plate 9)*, several of the slabs had sections chased out of them to form the base and sides of mangers that were also formed from slabs of Groby Slate, *(see Plate 10)*. The mangers were raised on piers made of waste slate, none of the piers survived at the time of this survey.

##### Marble

The large coat of arms mounted above the Entrance Gateway to the Stables has a series of marble slabs forming its base, *(see Plate 16)*.



iron shoes has recently been recorded in a deal roof construction of the 1860's at Launde Abbey, Leicestershire.

## BUILDINGS DESCRIPTION

*(Wherever possible this descriptive Section progresses round the building in the following sequence: South Range - Outer Elevation, Inner Elevation: West Range - Outer Elevation, Inner Elevation: North Range - Outer Elevation, Inner Elevation: East Range - Outer Elevation, Inner Elevation: Other Outbuildings.)*

### SOUTH RANGE *(see Drawings 1 and 2, and Plates 15, 17, 18 and 19)*

#### Clock Tower

Pevsner described Bradgate Stables as "... a quadrangle with the craziest entrance tower. [Bradgate] House and stables were meant to look Jacobean, but the tower, above a two-storeyed frontispiece with columns and tapering pilasters, and behind a big shaped gable, has a French pavilion roof."<sup>1</sup> The façade of the south range of the Stable Block is dominated by the Clock Tower which originally had an elaborate cupola with leaded roof surmounted by a spire supporting a weathervane, *(see Insert Illustn 4)*. Early photographs show that the clock face was set within a stone oculus in a large Dutch gable. Pevsner's description of the Stables suggests the Dutch gable was still in place when he undertook the fieldwork for his first compendium of Leicestershire & Rutland buildings, c.1982, *(see above)*.

By 2003 only the wooden framework of the cupola and the lower part of the Dutch gable survived *in situ* and only one of the four stone orbs set on pedestals now survives, *(see Drawings 1 and 12, and Plate 15)*. A centrally located marble panel of massive proportions flanked by 'Jacobean' pilaster forms, carries the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Stamford and Warrington's coat of arms with supporters and Earls coronet. What appear to be two Beasts of Heraldry - a wyvern and a unicorn, the latter superimposed on a sun in splendour, are set in the top left and right corners respectively of the panel, *(see Plate 16)*. The wyvern's forked tongue and the unicorn's horn are made from thin, sheet copper. The narrow frieze forming the topmost section of this inset panel is probably intended to represent the bottom of a raised portcullis. A fox's mask, now broken, forms the central feature of the keystone of the entrance archway. The broken fragment of the fox's mask was recovered by workmen from debris in front of the Stables during the course of the stabilisation programme, its current whereabouts are unknown.

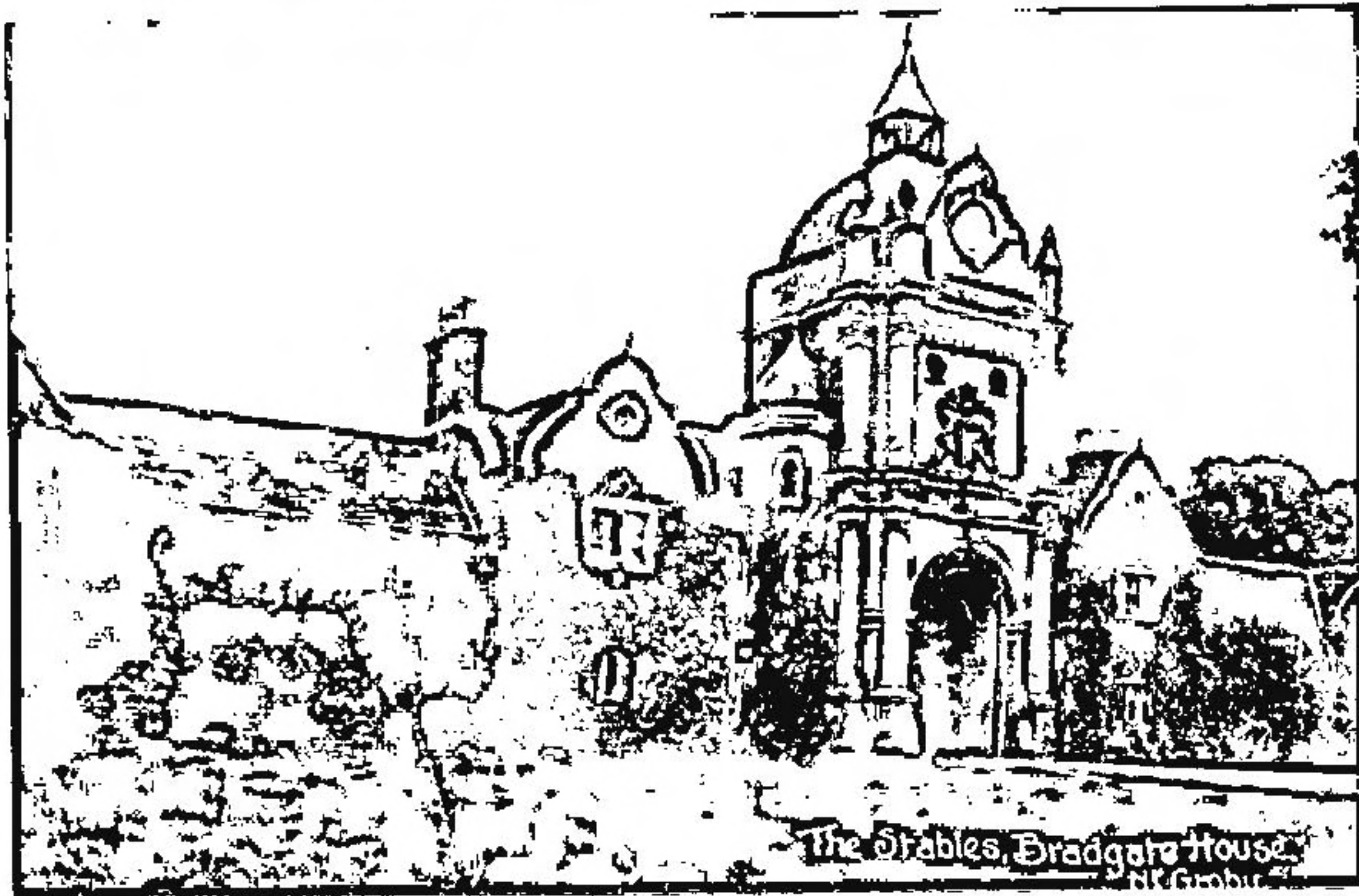
A network of scaffolding that rose within the Entrance Tower had been installed in the 1980's as a means of providing additional stability to the building. This was assessed as being too hazardous to be climbed upon and the survey of the clock deck and cupola construction, had to be undertaken from the externally erected scaffolding, *(see Drawings 6 and 7, Plate 20)*.

#### Residential Units on east and west sides of the Clock Tower

Flanking either side of the Entrance Gateway are a pair of residential units, *(see Insert Illustration 4)*. These are accessed by doorways set in the side-walls of the entrance gateway. Brick stair towers, situated adjacent to the side-wall of the Entrance Gateway, have a spiral of buff brick marking the rise of the internal, stone, newel stairs giving access to the upper floors, *(see Plate 4)*. The roof of each tower had a onion-dome with a wooden spike set on top of it, *(see Insert Illustn 5, p.15)*. At both ground and first floor the principal rooms of the



residential units set either side the Entrance Gateway were lit by three light, stone mullioned windows having stone strapwork set into the brickwork over them and Dutch gables. A stone oculus with wooden framed window lit the attic levels of the two Dutch gable units on the front elevation, (see Plate 21), at the rear a chamfered brick oculus contained the wooden framed window. The finial feature at the apex of the east Dutch Gable appears to carry the date 1856. The brickwork of the external elevation of this range carried three bands of buff coloured brick in its two storey section and two bands of buff brickwork in its single storey sections, the whole of the range being set upon a plinth course of buff brickwork, (see Drawing 2). The buff brick bands consisted of a buff brick course top and bottom, the centre course was laid with buff stretchers and red-brick headers, (see Plates 2 and 5). Wherever banded brickwork occurred it consisted of this arrangement. Internally the brickwork contained three banded courses for the two storey sections either side of the entrance gateway. On the internal elevations the residential units had two, differing sized Dutch gables to them, (see Drawing 2). Two light stone mullioned windows lit two first floor chambers to each residential unit. At ground floor only one complete, two-light mullion window had survived on the west side of the entrance gateway. Both residential units had cellars which at the time of the survey were filled with brick rubble.



*Illustration 5 Bradgate Stables - reprint of a sepia toned postcard c.1900, showing the complete Entrance Gateway, with the onion-dome cap and diagonal buff brick band of the west, stair tower. The banded and barbed tile decoration of the roof can also be discerned.*

No floors had survived in either unit and the presence of rudimentary bracing to stabilise the external walls restricted movement within the existing shell of the building, (see Plates 22, 23). Some evidence of brick chimney flues and cupboard alcoves remained and in the east unit there were substantial areas where the plaster remained. The east unit also contained decayed fragments of boarded floors set over transverse floor beams, (see Plate 24). Archive photographs showed deal, boarded floors in the unit on the east side of the Entrance Gateway. The Royal Commission series of photographs, 1992, [23], includes an upward, vertical shot from within the Entrance Gateway showing a fragmentary section of *cyma recta* moulded cornice. No other diagnostic details survived within these two areas.



The east residential unit had a direct access into stabling that formed the remaining feature of the east side of the south range, (see *Drawing 2*). The access may have been cut through at a later date. The segmental headed, access door into the end part of this range was built to accommodate horses and had semi-circular headed windows either side this entrance. On the west side the Entrance Gateway the interior elevation showed a standard access door leading into the yard. Internally and to the west of the Entrance Gateway the residential unit had a doorway which passed through the west, end wall of the residential unit into what may have been a wooden partitioned passageway giving access to the Courtyard area. This additional doorway probably indicated this was the Head Grooms accommodation. All other evidence relating to the access arrangements for the remaining section of building running to the return angle of the inner elevation of the west range of building had fallen down. The final range, set behind the south-east and south-west Dutch gables at the ends of the South range were stables that were actually accessed from entrances in the East and West ranges respectively. In contrast with all other Dutch gables of the Stables this pair of gables had both convex and concave curves. Three light, mullion windows with strapwork ornament set in the gable brickwork over them lit the ground floor stables and a stone oculus is set in the apex of the gables.

### WEST RANGE (see *Drawing 3*)

#### External Elevation

The external elevation of the West range consists of two continuous runs of plain, red-brick walling, a substantial part of which is two storeys in height. Both sections of brick wall have a single, two light, mullion window set close to the base of a centrally positioned, square brick, stair tower which has two stone windows set one over the other in its west face but has now lost the sprocketed, capped roof visible in earlier photographs, (see *Plate 25*). The brick tower separates the two sections of brick walling of the external elevation. The internal elevation of the West range has a more active design. In plan and layout and in terms of surface treatment the West and East range elevations mirror each other. The ruinous state of both ranges means it is not possible to determine the full extent to which the functions of their various areas was the same.

#### Internal Elevation

Internally the series of brick bands that were described in detail on the South range internal elevation continue to run the length of this internal range, with four bands distinguishing the two storey part of the range from the three bands of the single storey sections. The central entrance section of this range, which includes the part described as "*Residential Accommodation*" on plans, projects slightly further forward than the main body of the range. Immediately opposite the central entrance archway to this block there is a stone, drinking water fountain. The brick stair tower at the rear of this central unit has already been mentioned but the core of the central part of the range was a substantial brick chimney which gathered flues from both storeys as it rose through the building. At the time of this survey, the failure of all associated roofing meant this substantial brick detail was extremely vulnerable to weathering, (see *Plates 26, 27 and Drawing 15*). The chimney stack has now been brought down to rooftop level. Weathering had also affected the stability of the Dutch gables in this range and thus the overall stability of the walls, with several sections of stone capping having been dislodged, (see *Plate 28*).

A further contributor to the instability of some of the structural walls was the use of wooden bonding courses, *Plate 29*, shows two of these wooden features set in close proximity one above the other in the inner gable wall of the Stables with a third section set beneath the



pocketing for the floor joists of the lofting over this south-west part of the Stables situated adjacent to the central core of the building. In this example the wall is raised in courses of English Bond but the insertion of these softwood sections reduces the wall at that point to a single brick thickness. *Plate 30* shows another example of a bonding course insertion in the East Range Stables.

#### Windows and Doors

The West range also retained sufficient fragments of framing of the semi-circular headed windows, doorways and the larger, double door entrances having overhead and side fenestration, to enable a reconstruction drawing, aided by earlier photographs to be made of their original layout, (*see Plate 31 and Drawing 9*). Both the windows and doors were set within chamfered, brick recesses and the carpentry of the doors and windows was in hardwood with the window mullions and transoms having quarter-round outside sections and flat, ribbed sections on the inner face.

#### Roof Timbers

A section of roof timbers including bolted principal rafter trusses, common rafters and purlins was still standing when this survey commenced, (*see Plates 32, 33*). The principal rafter trusses had the cast-iron apex collar and shoes for the base of the principal rafters and the raked struts, (*see Drawing 8*). Rase marks were also recorded on the surviving principal rafters. A wooden bonding course spanned the full width of the north gable.

#### NORTH RANGE (*see Plates 34 -38 and Drawing 4*).

The scale of deterioration of the North range between the 1992 Royal Commission site photographs and site survey by Spencers, (Architects), and the present day is difficult to comprehend. The central feature of this range was a large, two storeyed, Carriage House which links with two single storey units that stop short of the north-west and north-east corners of the range to allow footways to lead out to the rear of the building.

#### External Elevation

The north elevation of the North range was the only asymmetric elevation with a one and a half storey lean-to building which had an outside access flight of steps and a half cellar under it set against the west side-wall of the centrally located Carriage House. The Carriage House had stair towers, contain stone newel stairs leading to what had been a large open area set over the main body of the ground floor Carriage Store set at either end of the central, Carriage House block.

Single storey buildings were set either side the Carriage House unit. On the west side the building contained a boiler room and tack room and on the east side a building of similar proportions served as the forge and shoeing box for the estate's farrier. Both these buildings had pitched roofs that were carried over footways leading to semi-circular headed, doorways whose original doors were missing, set in chamfered brick arches. The doorway gave access to separate buildings lying beyond the north façade of the North range. The doorway in the north-west corner of the Yard lead to a small range of detached buildings, these consisted of two loose boxes, pig styes and a hen house. The pitched roof at the north-east corner of the same range over-sailed the passageway leading to another rear door that lead directly to the small, detached, purpose built, Gas House. A brick vaulted cistern, largely concealed by undergrowth, lay at the edge of the wood immediately behind the main Stables.



### Internal Elevation

The internal elevation of the North range continued the same buff, brick banded motif that has already referred to on the inner elevations of the South and West ranges. The Carriage House consisting of five, double door, brick arched, entrances formed the dominant feature of the inner elevation. The stair towers set at either end of the Carriage House range had low set oculii with chamfered, alternating buff and red-brick brick surrounds lighting the lower section of the stairs. The upper section of the stairs was lit by narrow, windows having stone surrounds and strapwork ornament at their heads. The uppermost band of buff brickwork, whose level coincided with a position halfway up these windows also formed the decorative surround to the large oculii lighting the first floor area. By the time of this survey, insufficient chamfered, brickwork from the first floor oculii survived to enable an accurate description to be made of any deliberate pattern that might have occurred at this point. None of the five Dutch gables that formed the central feature of the inner elevation of the Carriage House survived. Earlier photographic evidence and recovered debris indicate the gables had stone edgings to them similar to that used on the smaller Dutch gables of the South Block interior elevation. None of the five, small oculii set in the apex of the Dutch gables survived to record *in situ*. Comparative brickwork in the oculii of the South range, inner elevation, shows the chamfered bricks were a randomly laid series of red and blue bricks, (*see Plates 3, 21*).

The windows and doorways of the single storey range of buildings lying to the west and east of the Carriage House maintained the same proportions as those recorded on the West and East ranges.

### Interior Details

Reference has already been made to the fact that the five-bay Carriage House forming the main feature of the North Range was largely destroyed by the time of this survey was undertaken, (*see Plates 34, 35, 36*). Internally only two of the cast-iron columns and one section of the two longitudinal, deal, spine beams that carried the joists and columns of the first floor, survived.

Early photographs and the RCHM(E) Survey Photograph, (1992), show the wall-plates carrying the small, principal roof trusses of this area were supported by a second series of cast iron columns the bases of which straddled the longitudinal spine beams carrying the first floor, (*see Drawing 4*). *Drawing 4* also shows the first floor area was lit by five large oculii above which were five small, oculii each set within the apex of the small gables that formed the most prominent feature at the rear of this range.. Two stair towers situated at either end of the Carriage House unit rose higher than the gables and had water tanks at their heads, (*see Plate 37*). The tanks were shielded from view by brick and stone parapets. At the rear, the ground floor of the Carriage house was lit by three, two light, stone mullion windows.

The single storey unit lying to the west of the Carriage House is described on the 1992 Survey Plans as a Boiler Room and Tack Room. The floor of the area adjacent to the west, end wall of the Carriage House appeared to have a sunken floor and only one feature had survived - small fireplace with straight brick arch formed of tumbled brick. This would suggest the area was a possible tack room, (*see Plate 39*). No evidence of features associated with a boiler room were identified in the other bay of building lying to the west of the supposed Tack Room. The north-west corner building has already been described in the West range section.



The smaller, inner area of the single storey building lying on east side of the Carriage House contained a blacksmith's forge, the larger outer part of the building being the shoeing box. The entire façade of this building was missing by the time of this survey, (see Plate 38). A chamfered brick archway gave access to the stair tower, the stairs of which also descended to a half cellar area whose access was blocked by a large discarded boiler, (see Plate 39). A narrow passageway, originally roofed over, lead to a rear door set in a chamfered brick arch giving access from the Yard to the rear of the North range opposite the Gas House, (see Plate 40).

#### **EAST RANGE** (see Plates 41, 42, 43, 44 and Drawing 5).

Consisting of a central two storey, residential block with single storey Stables flanking both the north and south sides of the central block, the design, basic form, layout and materials of build of the East Range of the Stables mirrors that of the West Range in every respect. The inner elevation of the East range has the same decorative, brick banding as used on the West Range, (see Plate 41). As the basic form of this range reflects what has already been written descriptively about the West Range it is not intended to provide a description of the East Range other than to re-emphasise the mirror-image form of the East Range with the West Range. The one exception was that the stair tower of the East Range retained, virtually intact, the wooden construction of the roof over the stairs, (see Plate 42). At the commencement of this survey a full range of roof construction survived in the north-east corner of this range, (see Plate 43).

The location of scaffolding for works on the property enabled an overall view of a characteristic Stable layout to be obtained at the south-east corner of the East range, (see Plate 44). The generous dimensions of the five, stable partitions can be detected from the tell-tale lines of the wooden, stable partitions in the brick flooring of the accommodation. The irregular ends of these lines indicate the excavations for the stable door-posts associated with the wooden partitions. Two complete, slate panels remain *in situ*. Each stable box has its own drain and a central floor drain can also be discerned. In the open area of the Stables the raised tops of the grip bricks can be identified.

The extent of deterioration of the East Range's fabric bore a remarkable resemblance to that of the West Range. This may be due to stabilising work undertaken in relation to *Section 48* repairs works to a Listed Building undertaken by the Quarry owners under direction from Officers of Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council and English Heritage, c.1992.

#### **OTHER BUILDINGS**

##### Gas House

Just beyond the rear doorway at the north-east corner of the North Range there was a single bay of brick building, now roofless. It was not possible to gain access to this unit whose windows and doorway were securely boarded up. The building is identified as that which the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl built to accommodate the gas engine which provided heating and light for the Stables sometime between 1871 and 1876.

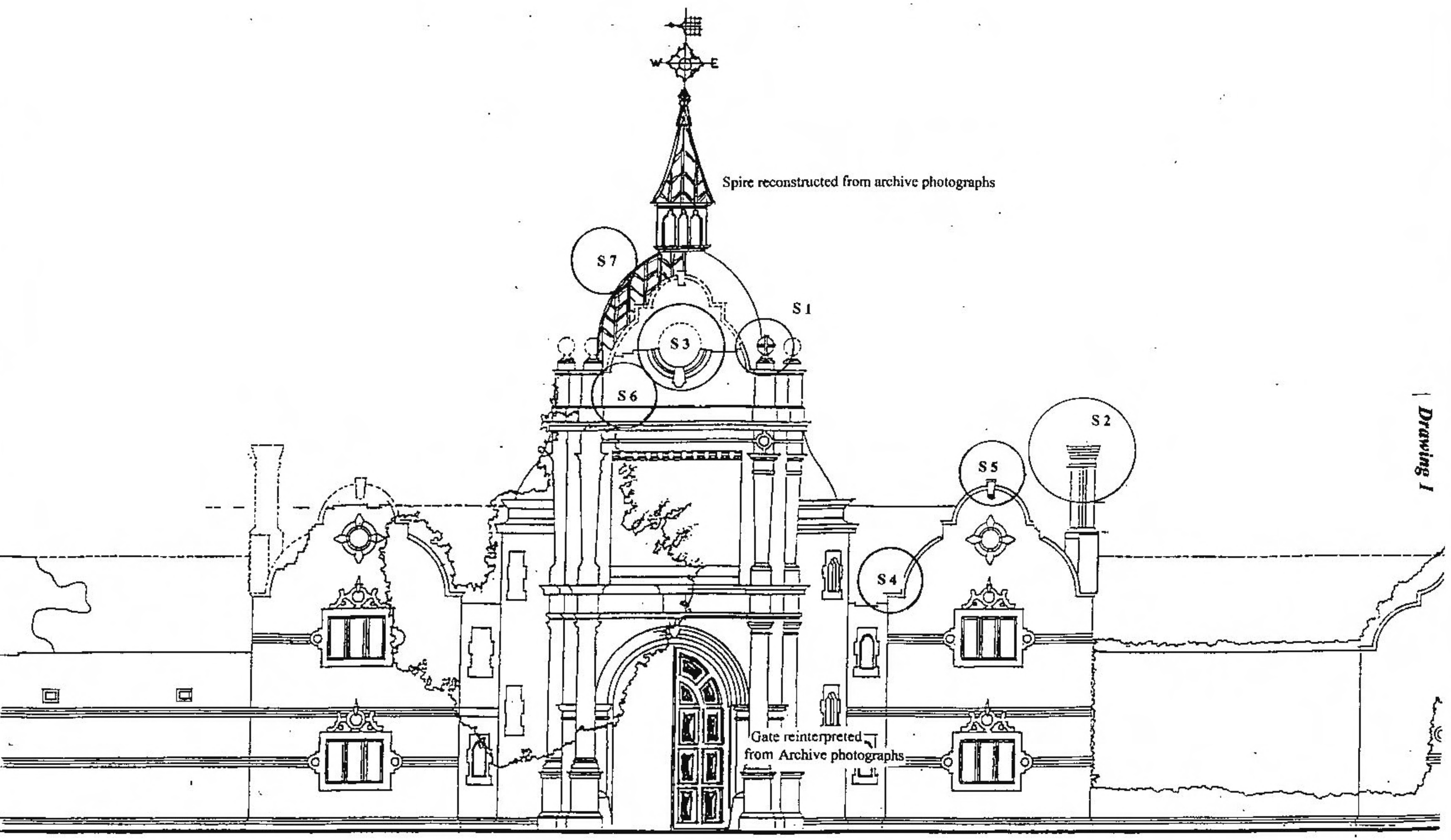
##### Loose Boxes, Pig Styes and Hen House

The brick remnants of another small group of brick buildings lay some 80 metres north-west of the rear doorway in the north-west corner of the North Range. These were all that remained of two loose boxes, occasionally identified as 'Kennels.' In addition there were a series of free-standing slate slabs with some surviving diagonally set slate sections resembling



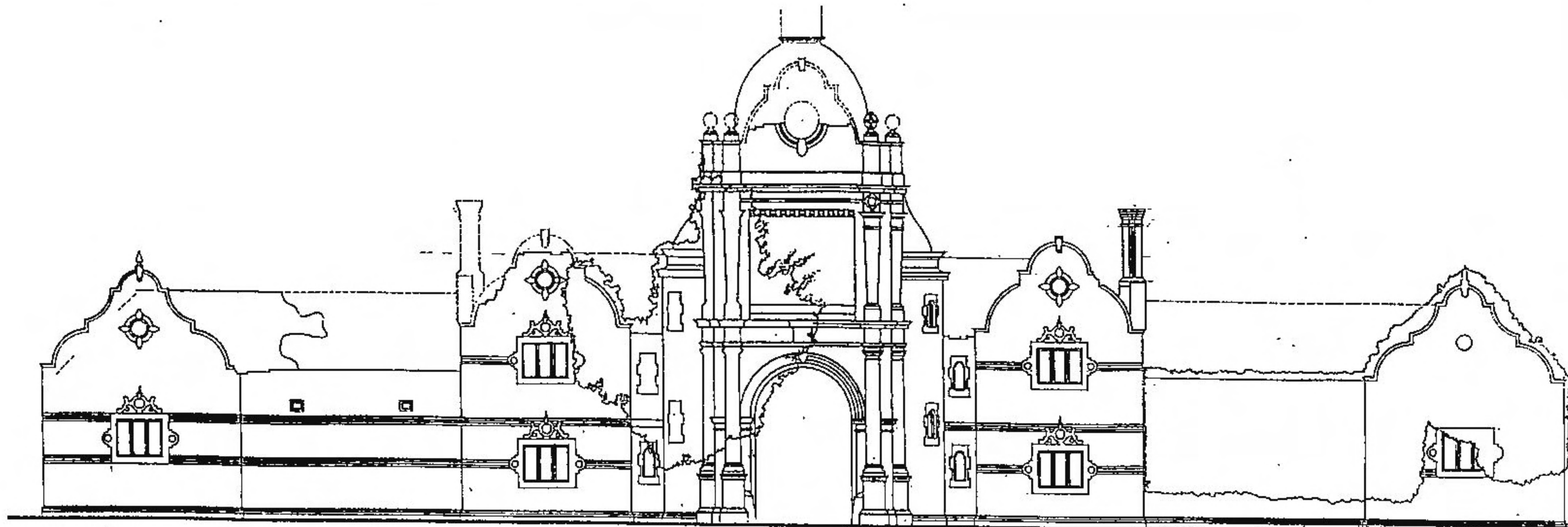
Spire reconstructed from archive photographs

Gate reinterpreted from Archive photographs

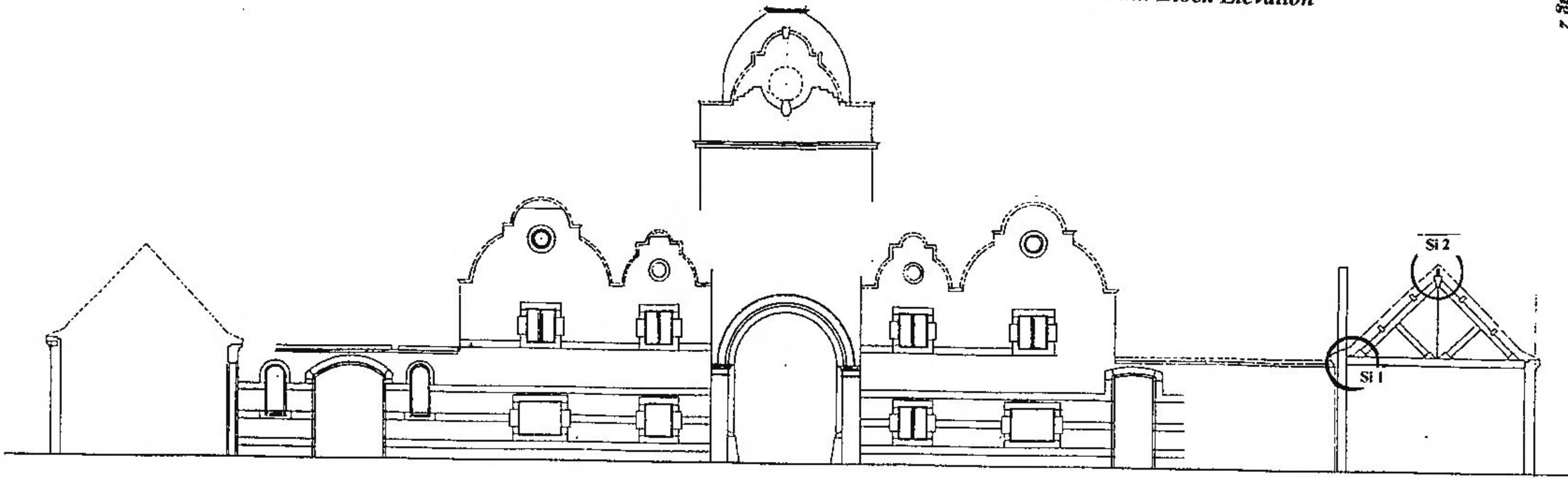


BRADGATE STABLES South Range Frontage



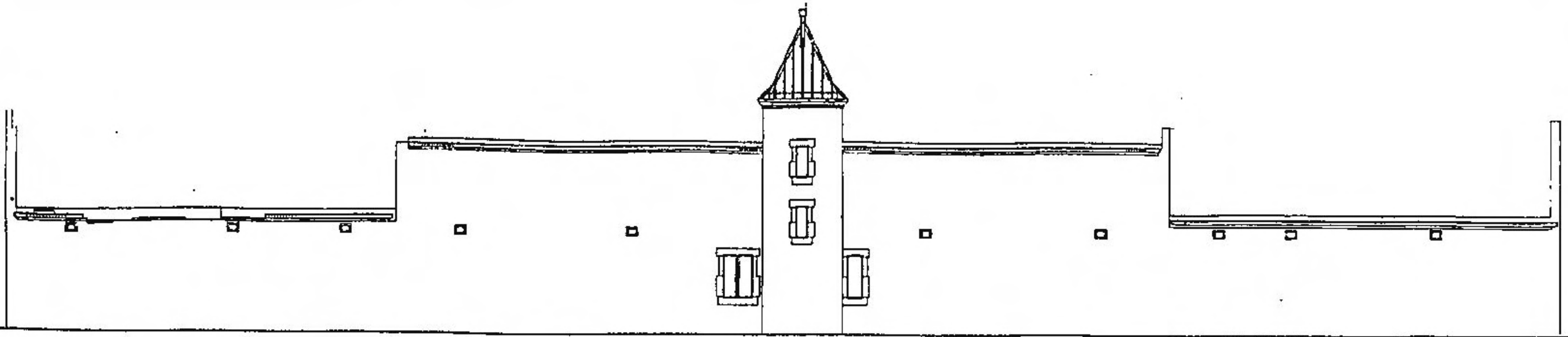


*South Block Elevation*

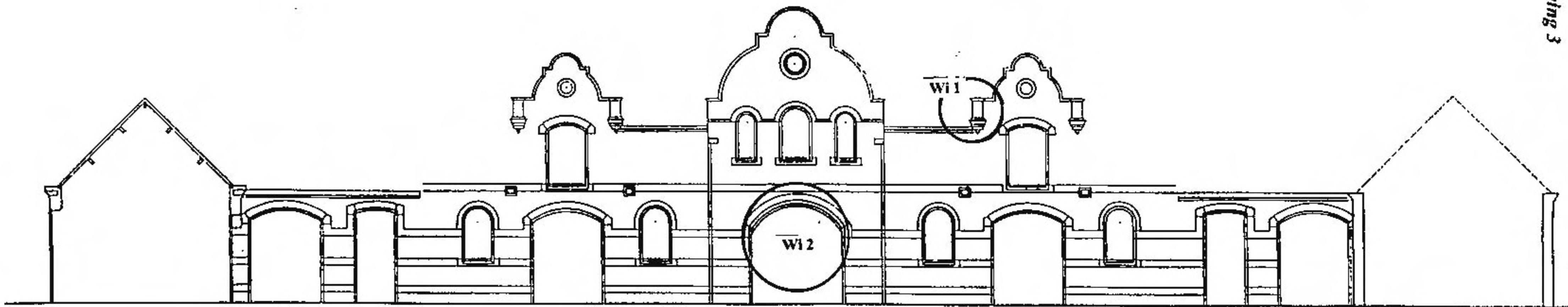


*South Block Interior*



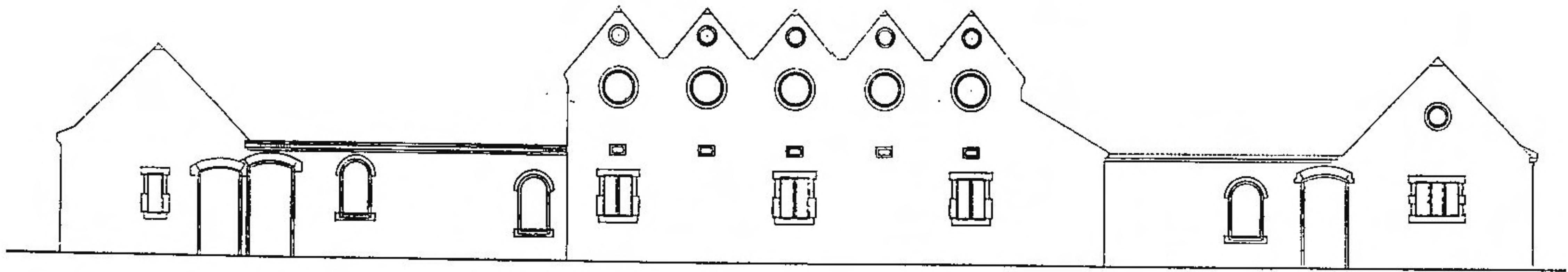


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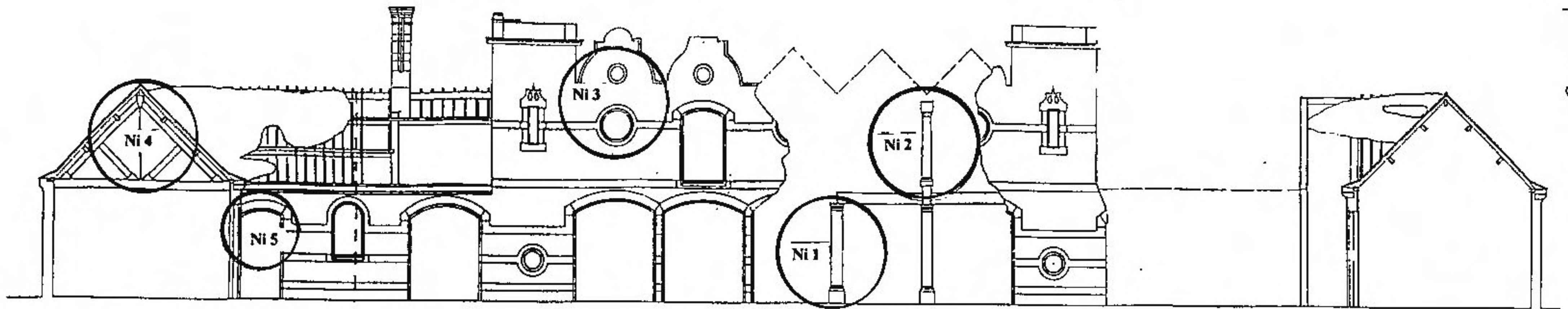


*West Block Interior*



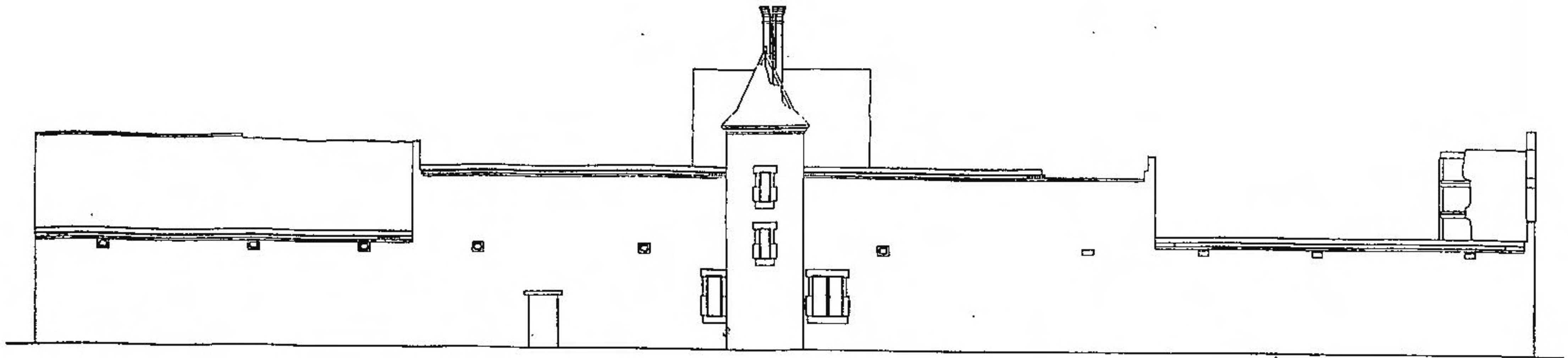


*North Block Elevation*

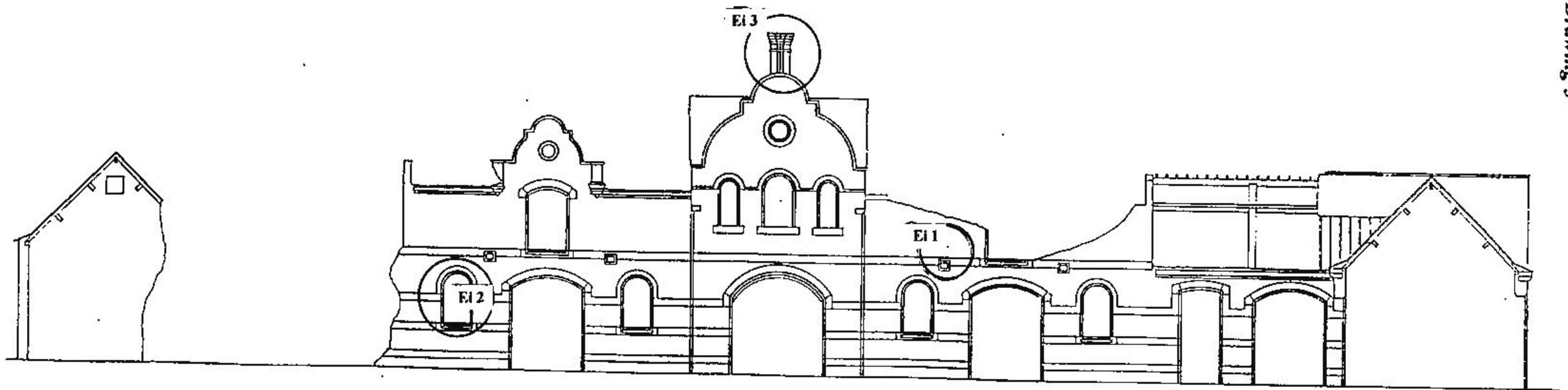


*North Block Interior*





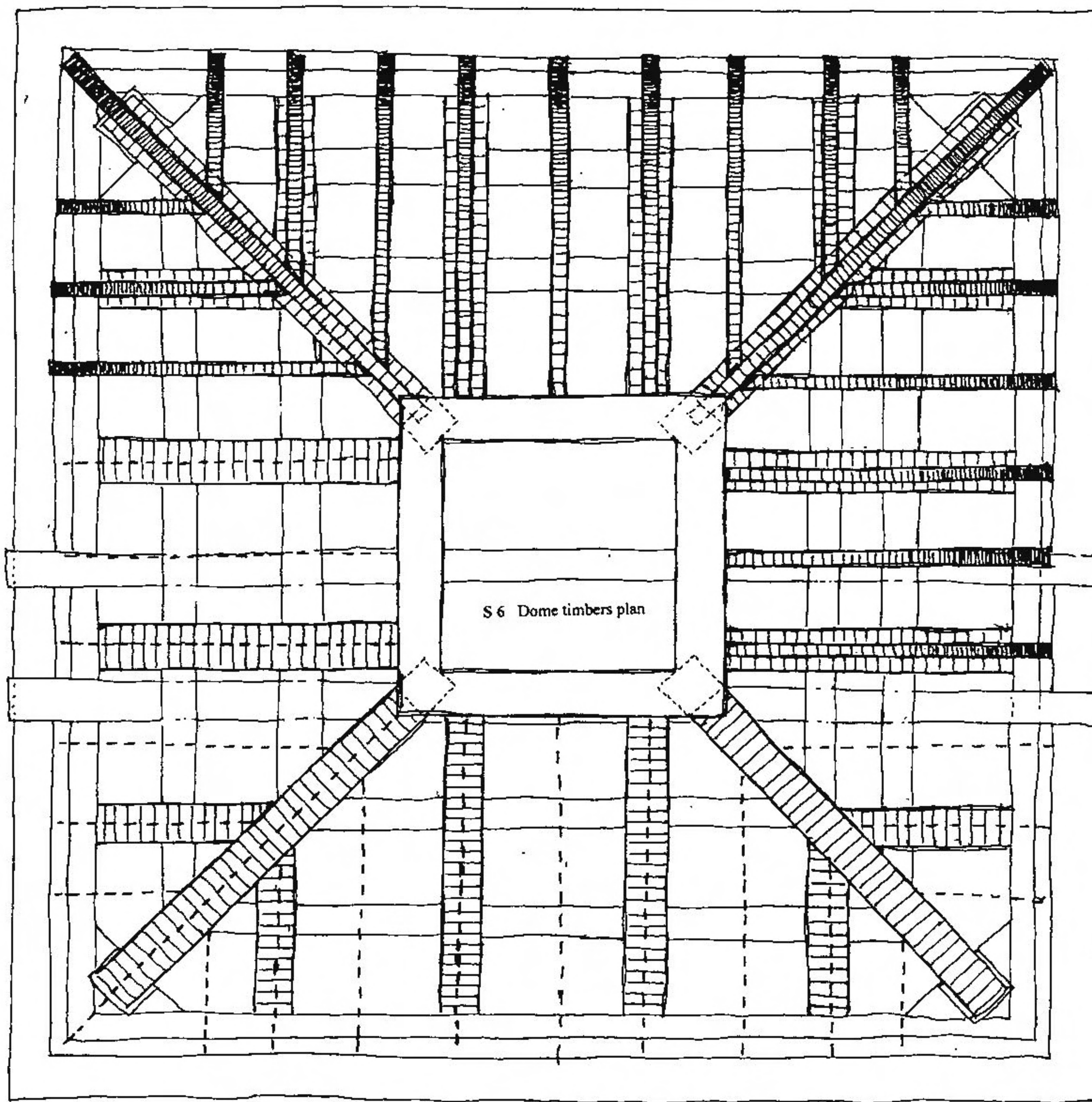
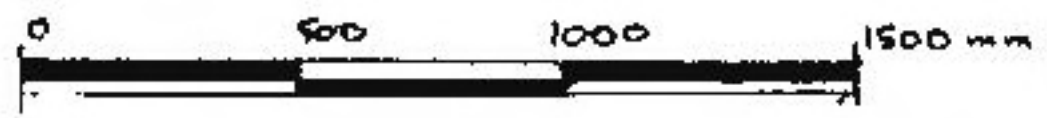
*East Block Elevation*



*East Block Interior*



Drawing 6



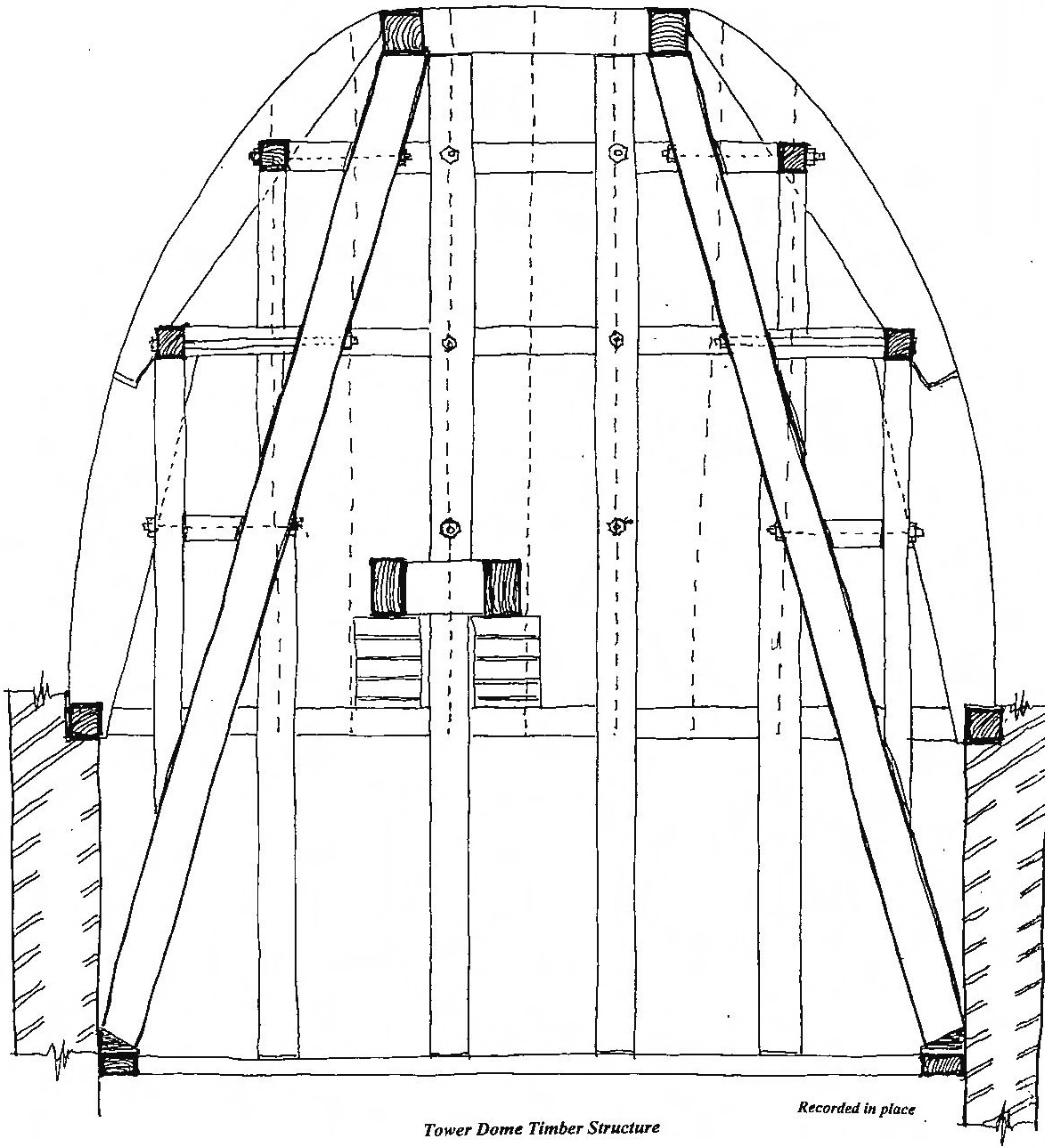
*Recorded in place*

*Tower Dome Timber Structure*



*Drawing 7*

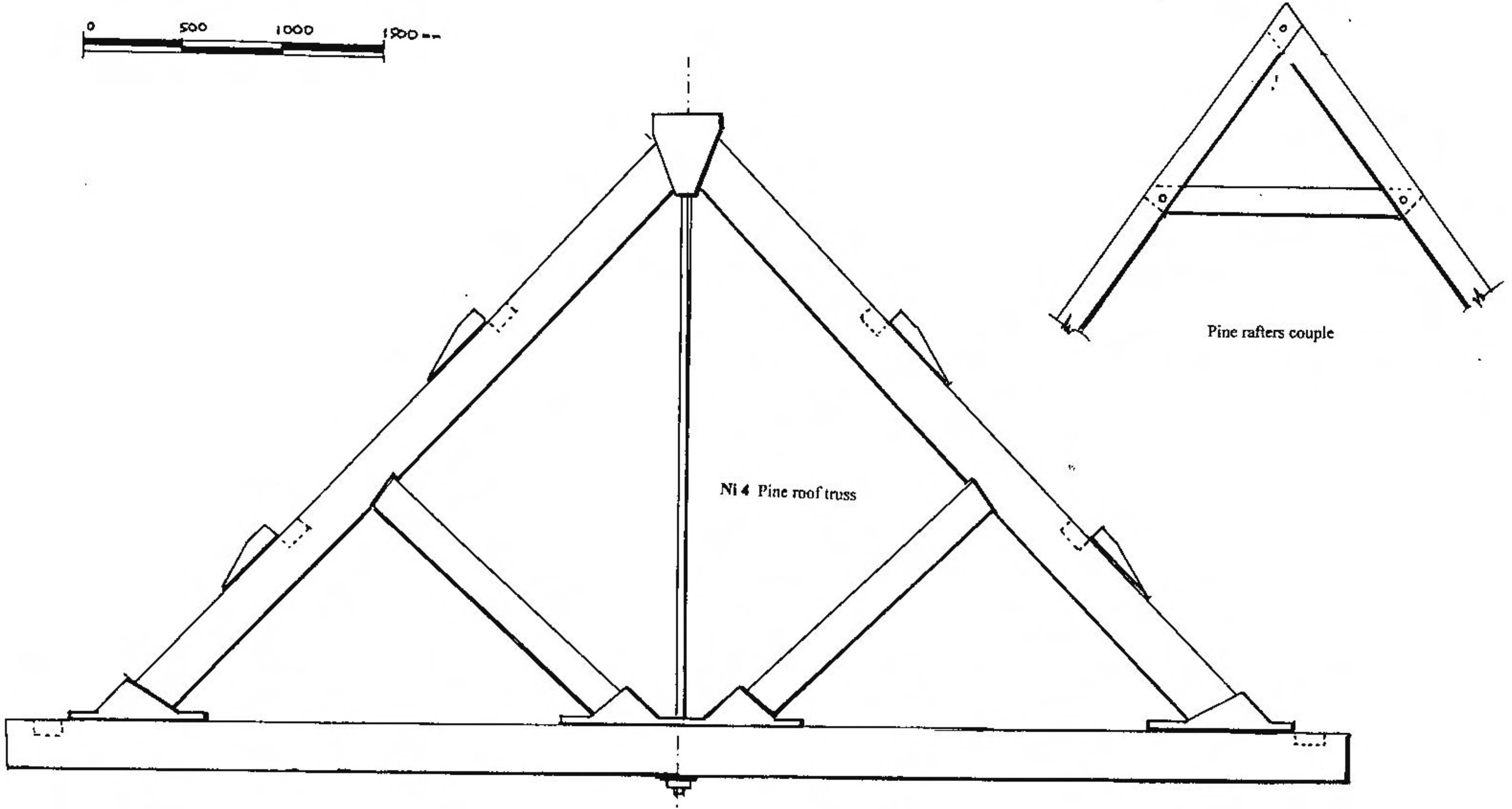
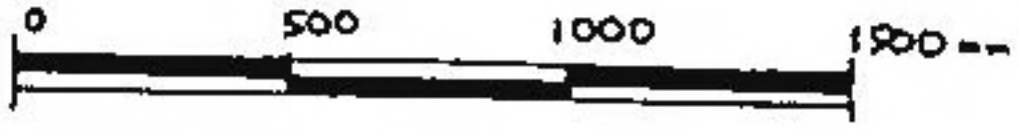
S 7 Dome timbers section



*Tower Dome Timber Structure*

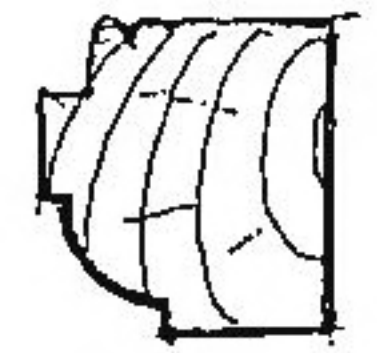
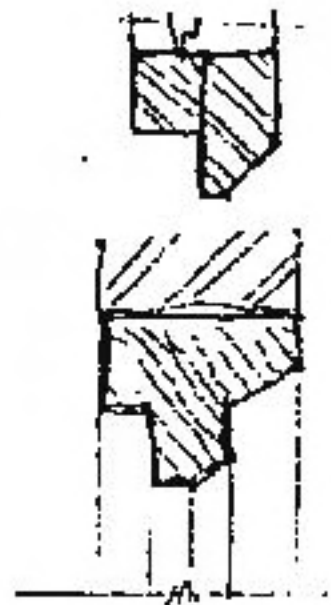
*Recorded in place*





Drawing 8

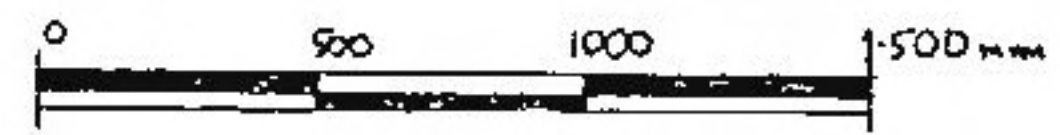
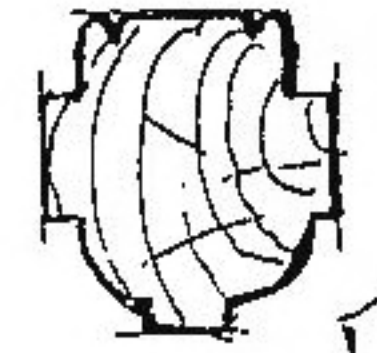




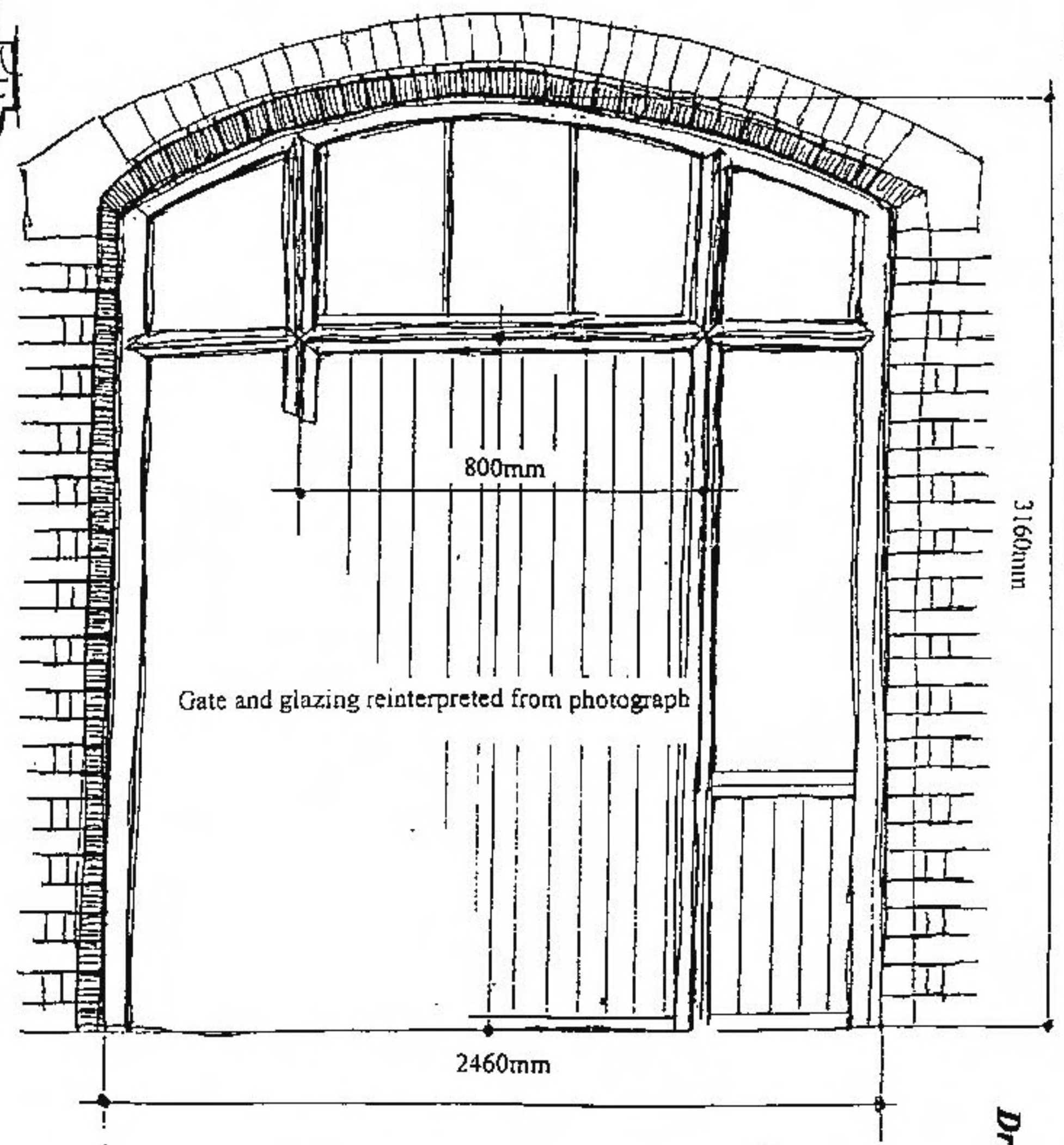
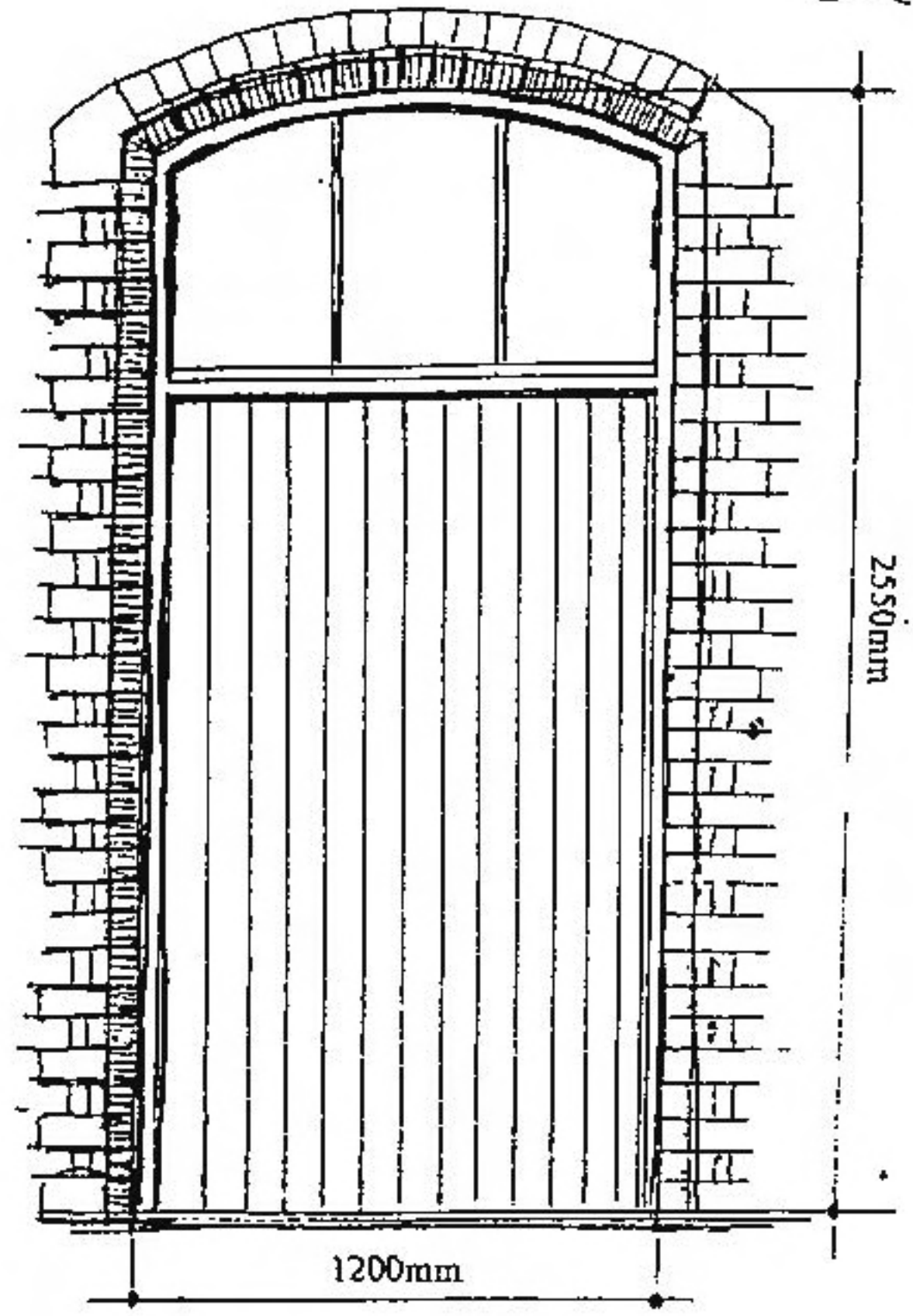
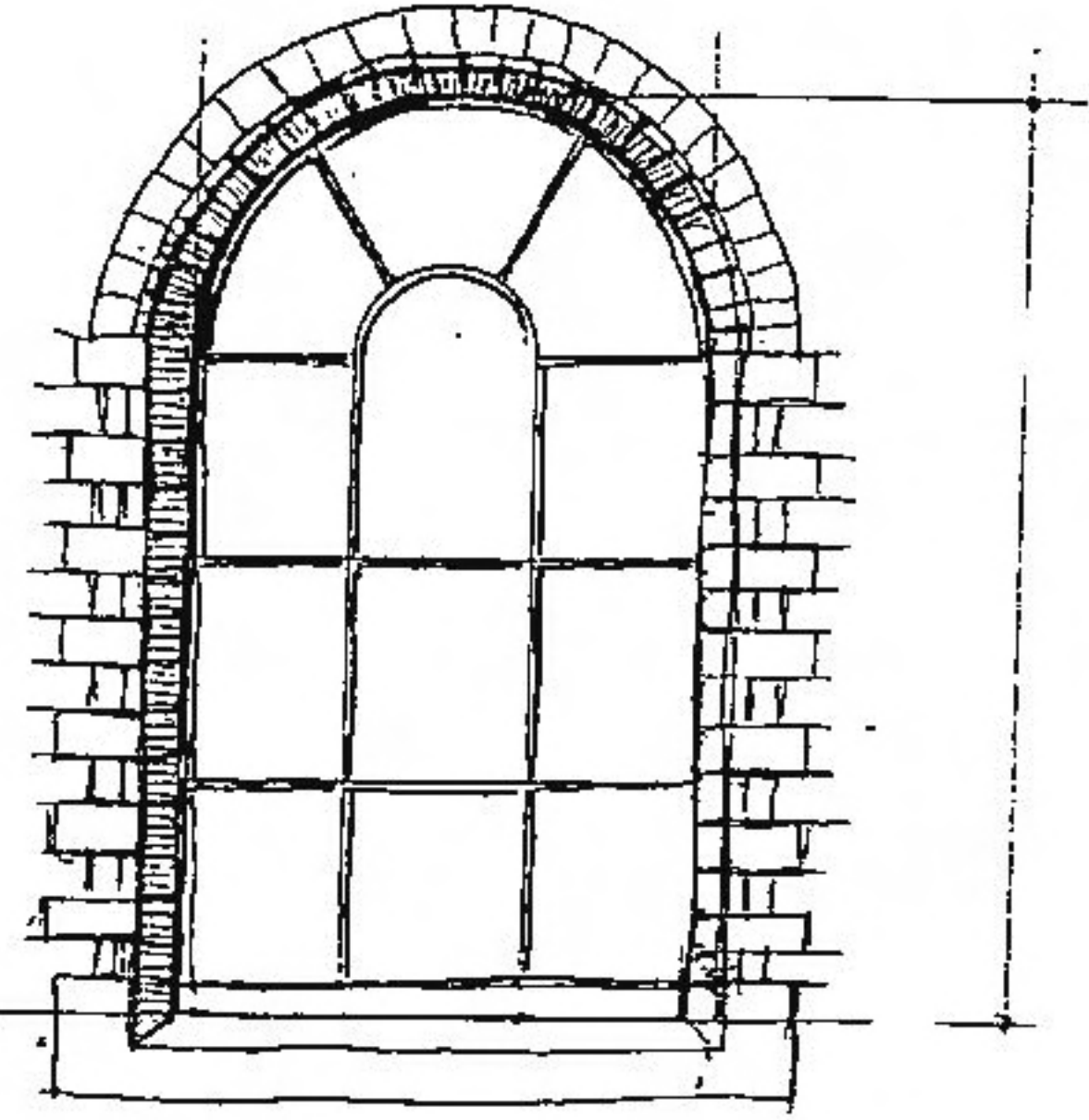
Gate Frame Sections

Wi 2 Brick surround to door and glazing

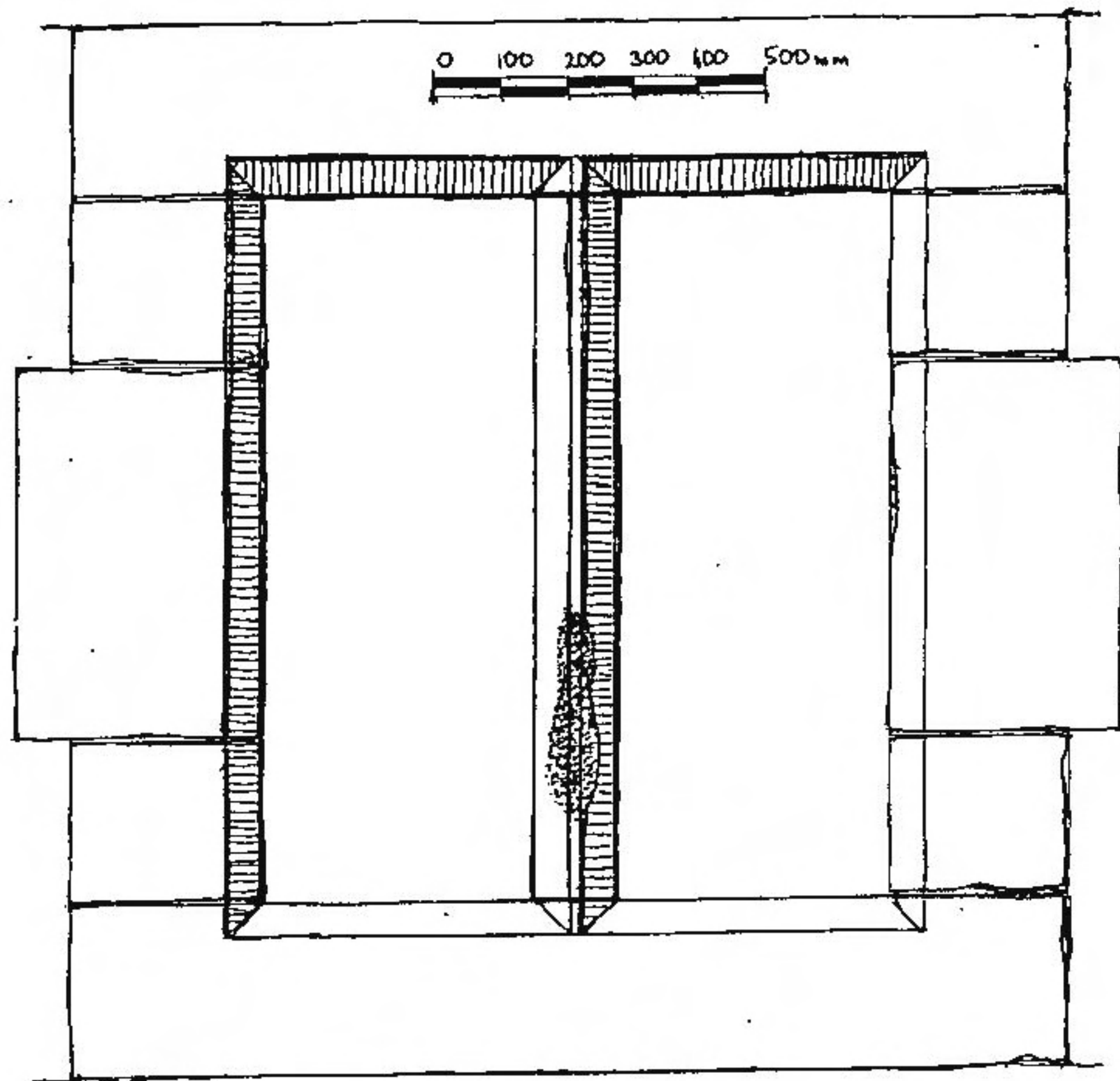
Ni 5 Door to personal accommodation



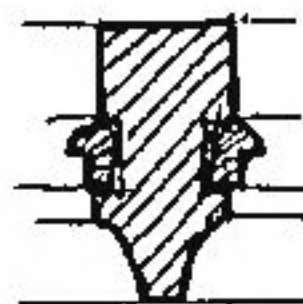
Ei 2 Brick arched window







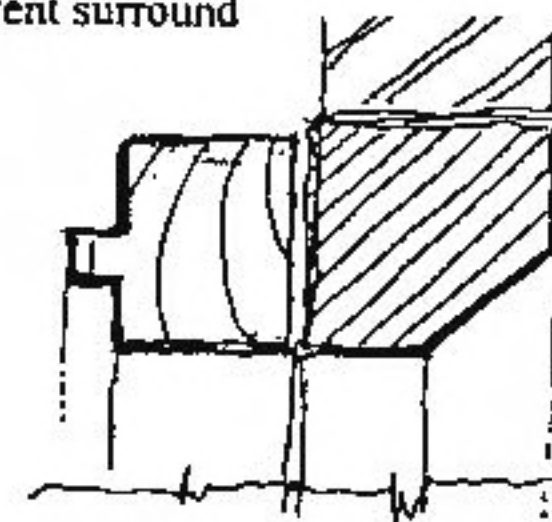
Si 3 Stone window surround



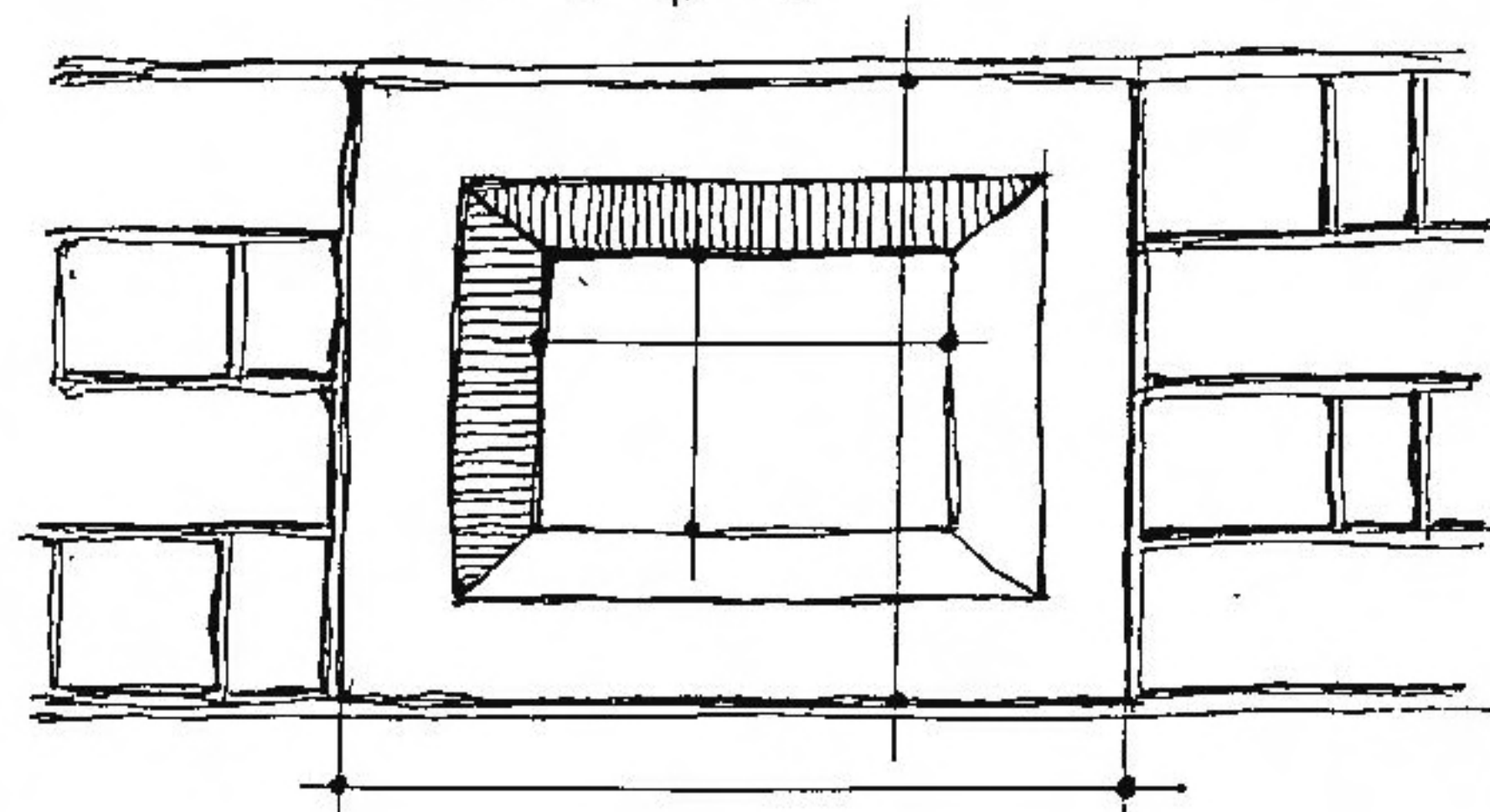
*Stone Framed Openings*

*Recorded in place*

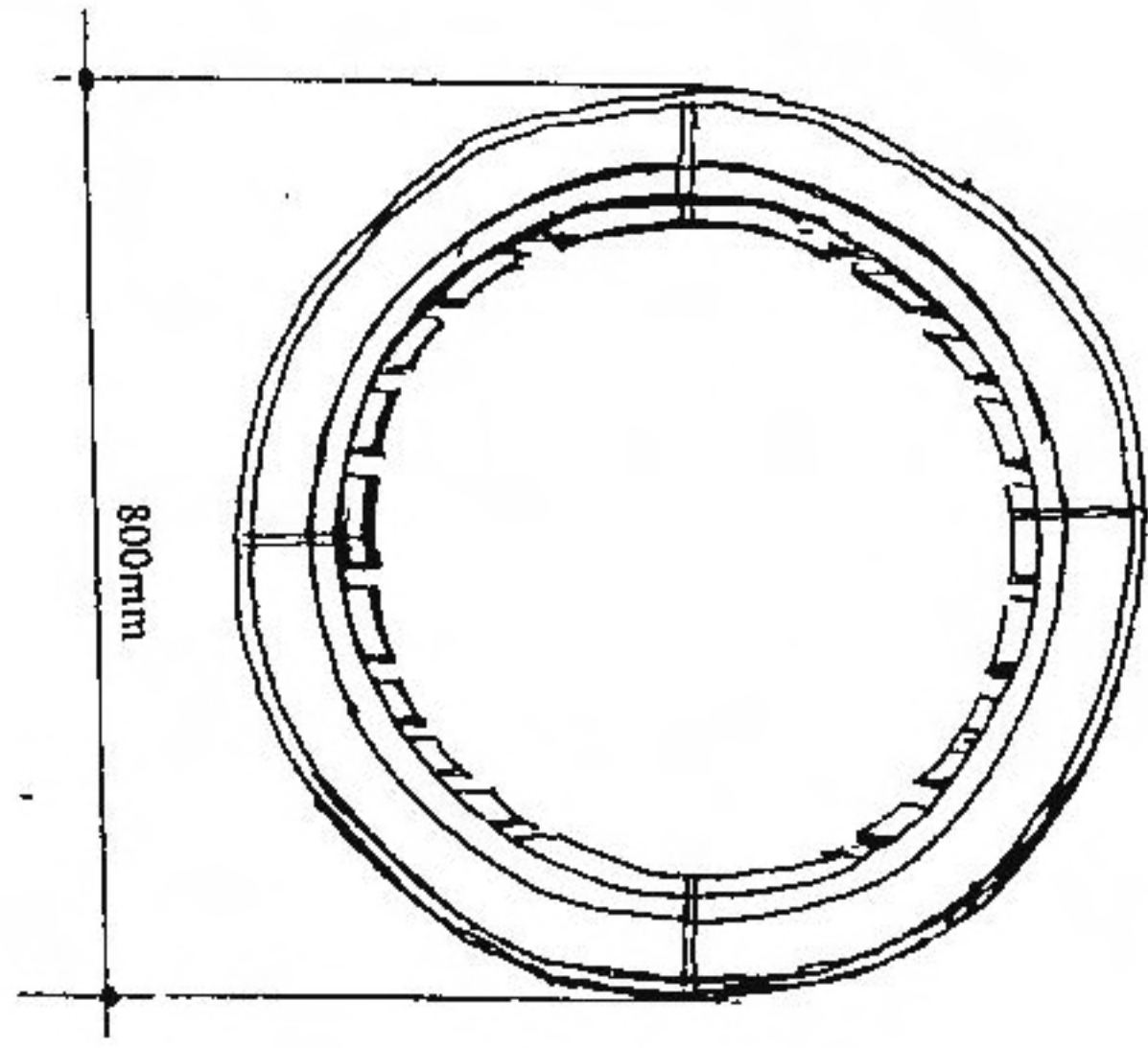
Ei 1 Stone vent surround



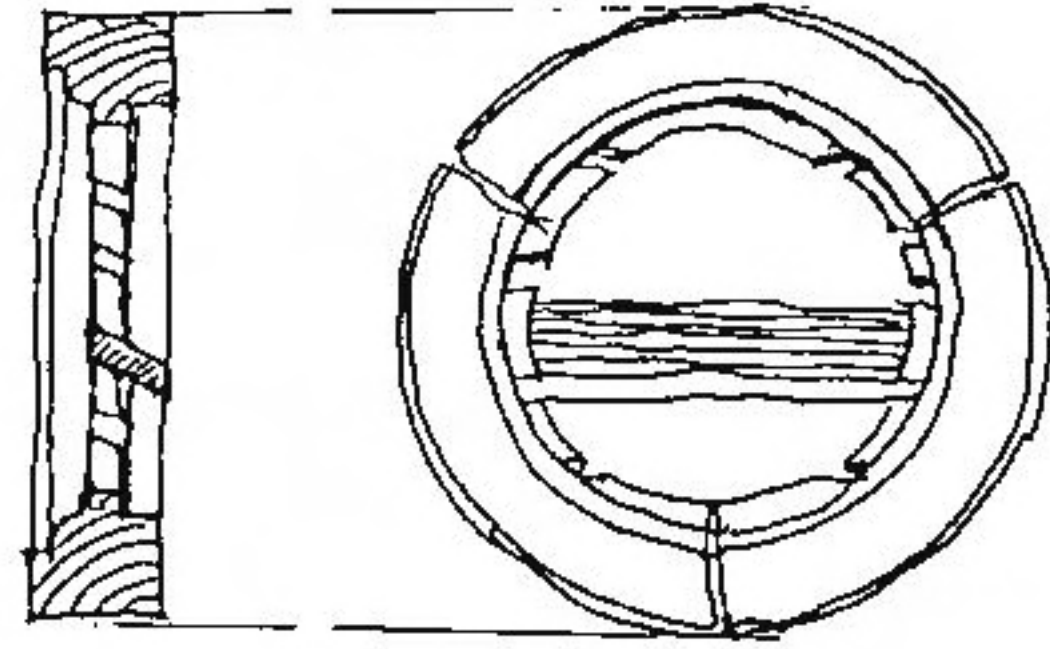
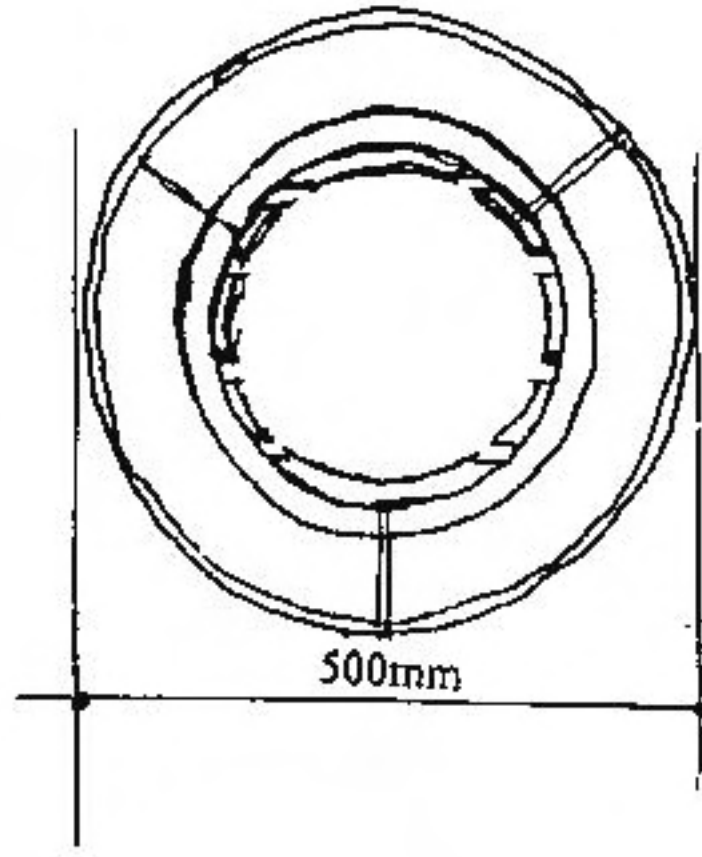
Vent Frame Section



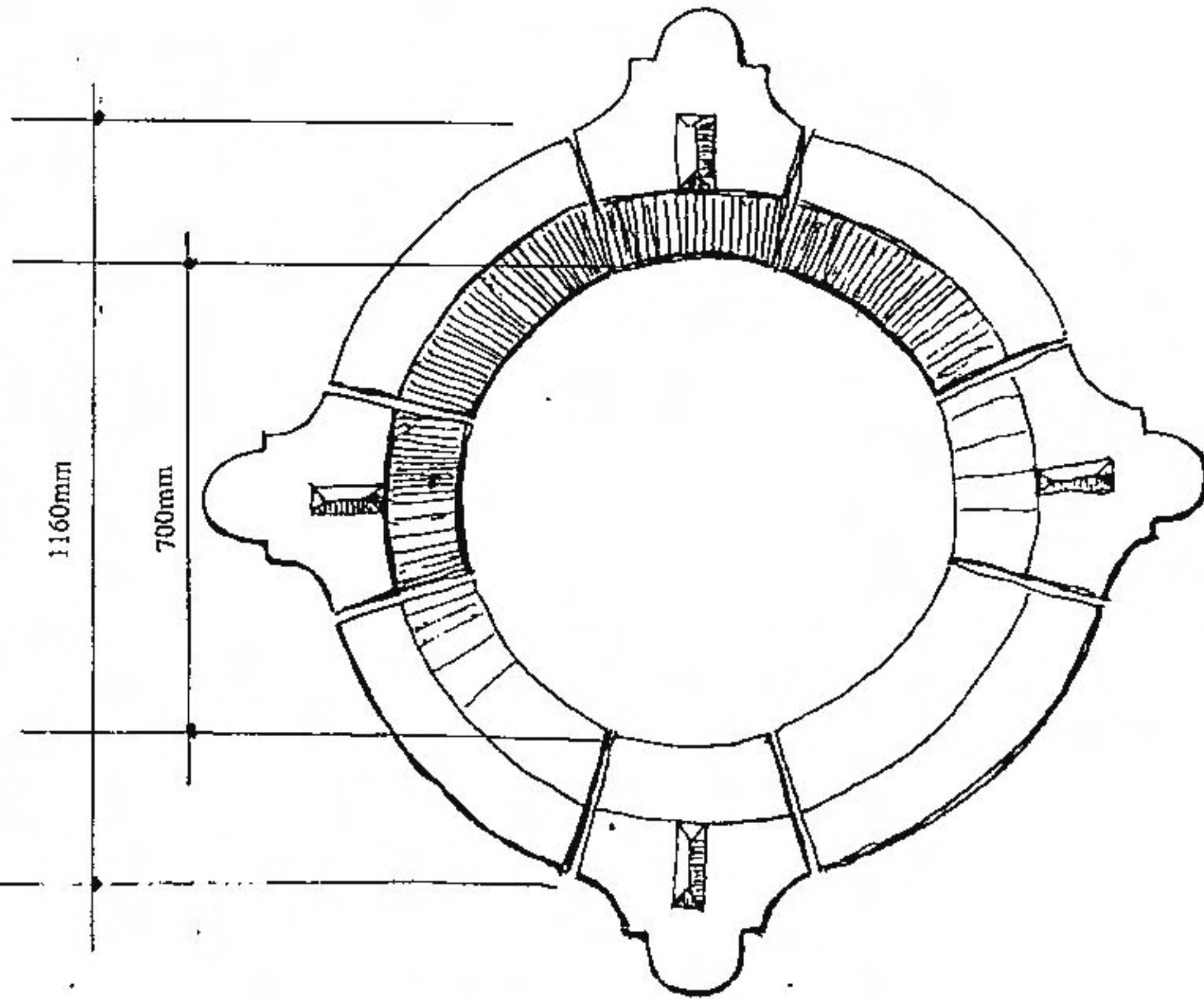
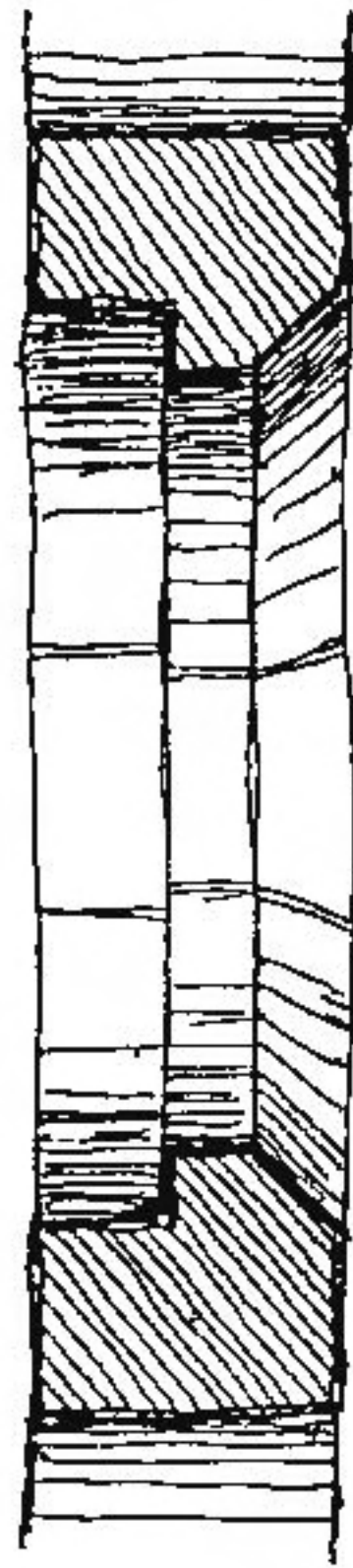




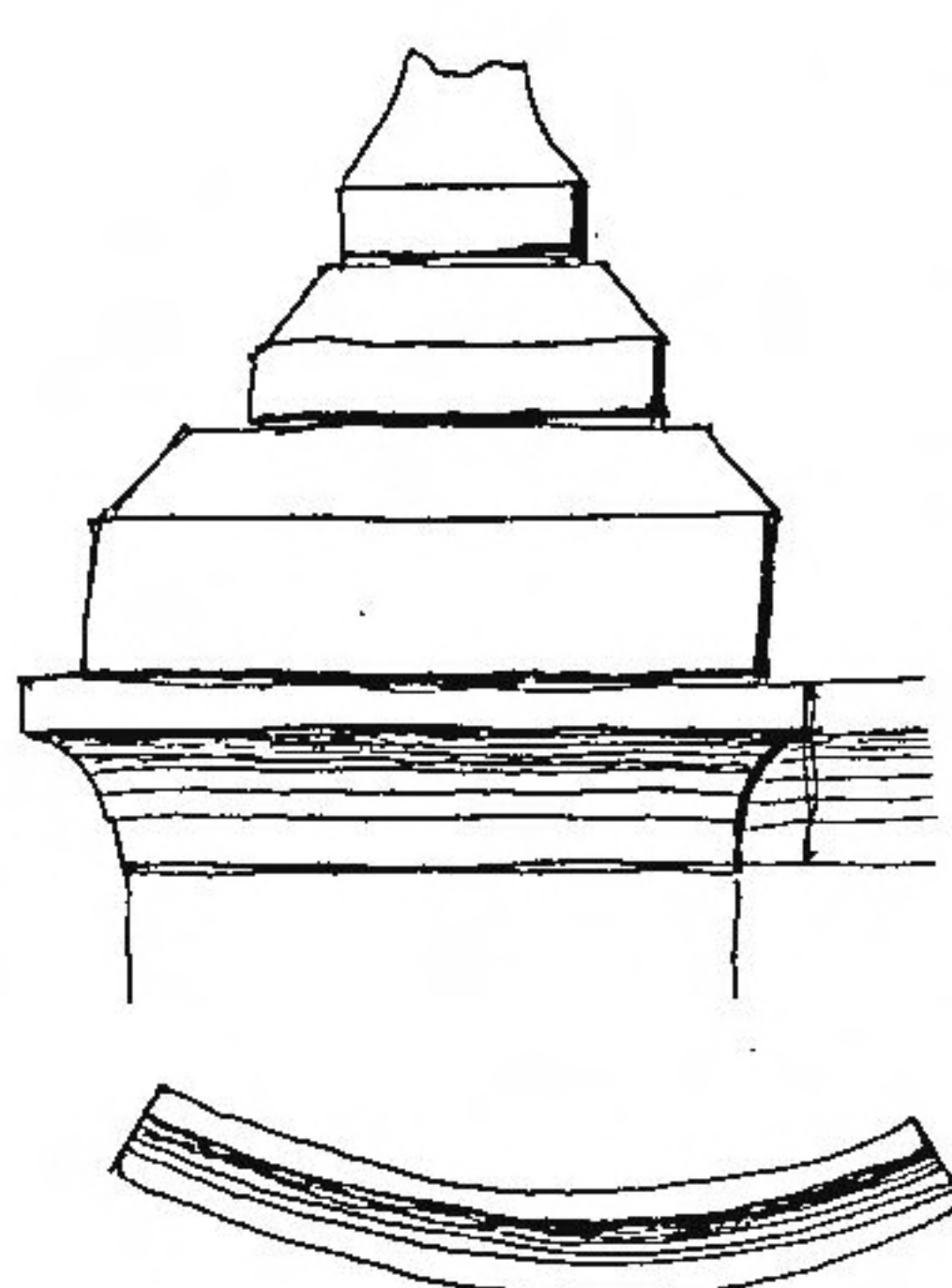
Ni 3 Oculus timber frame



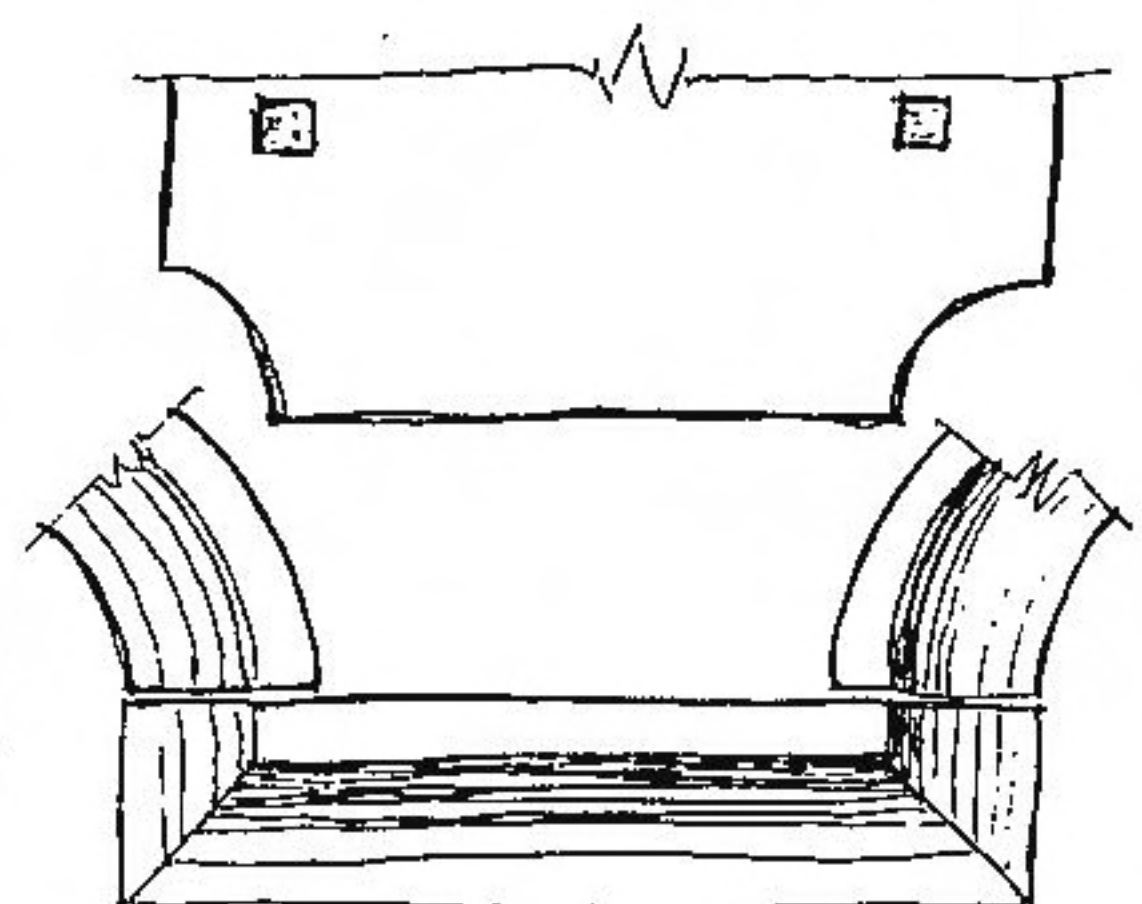
S 3 Stone oculus







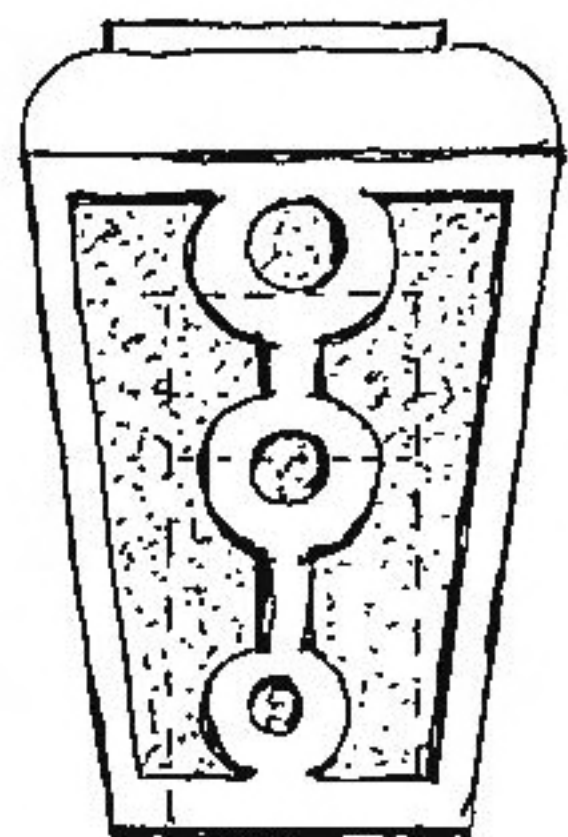
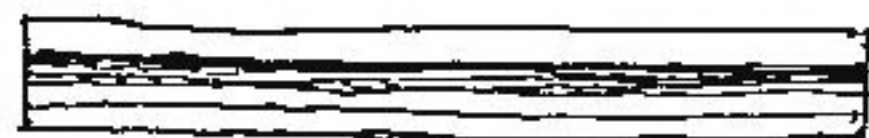
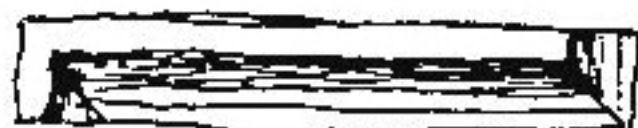
*Recorded in place*



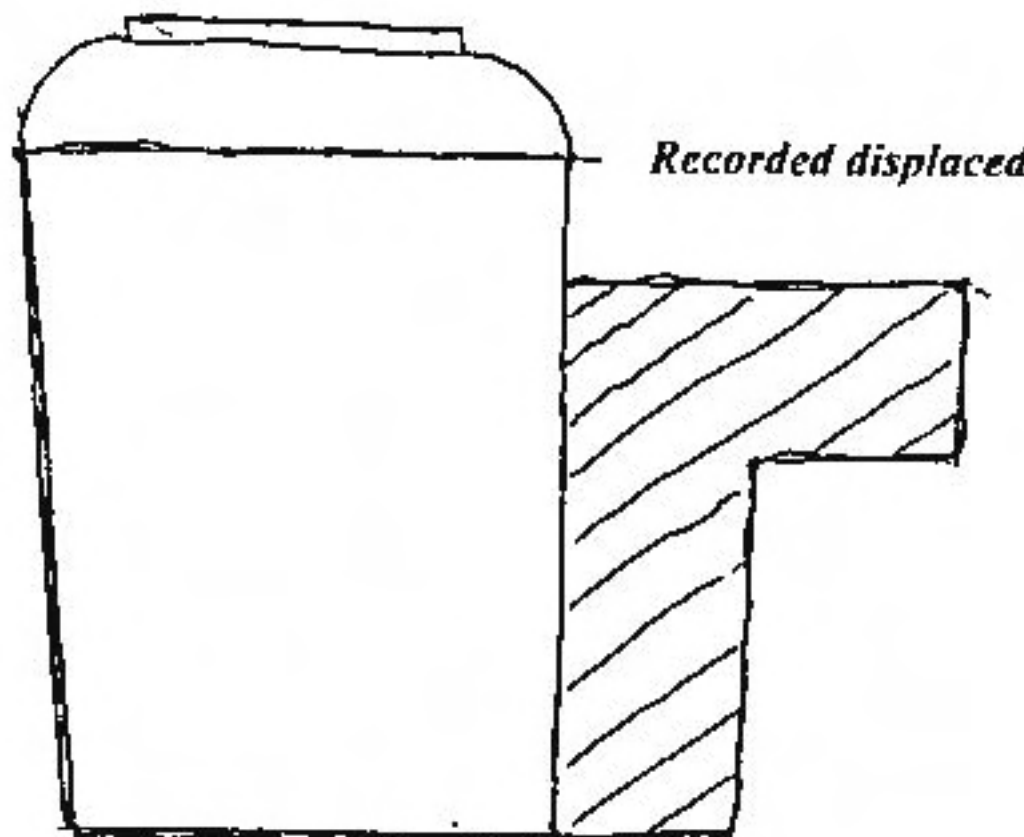
S 4 Pediment coping stone sections



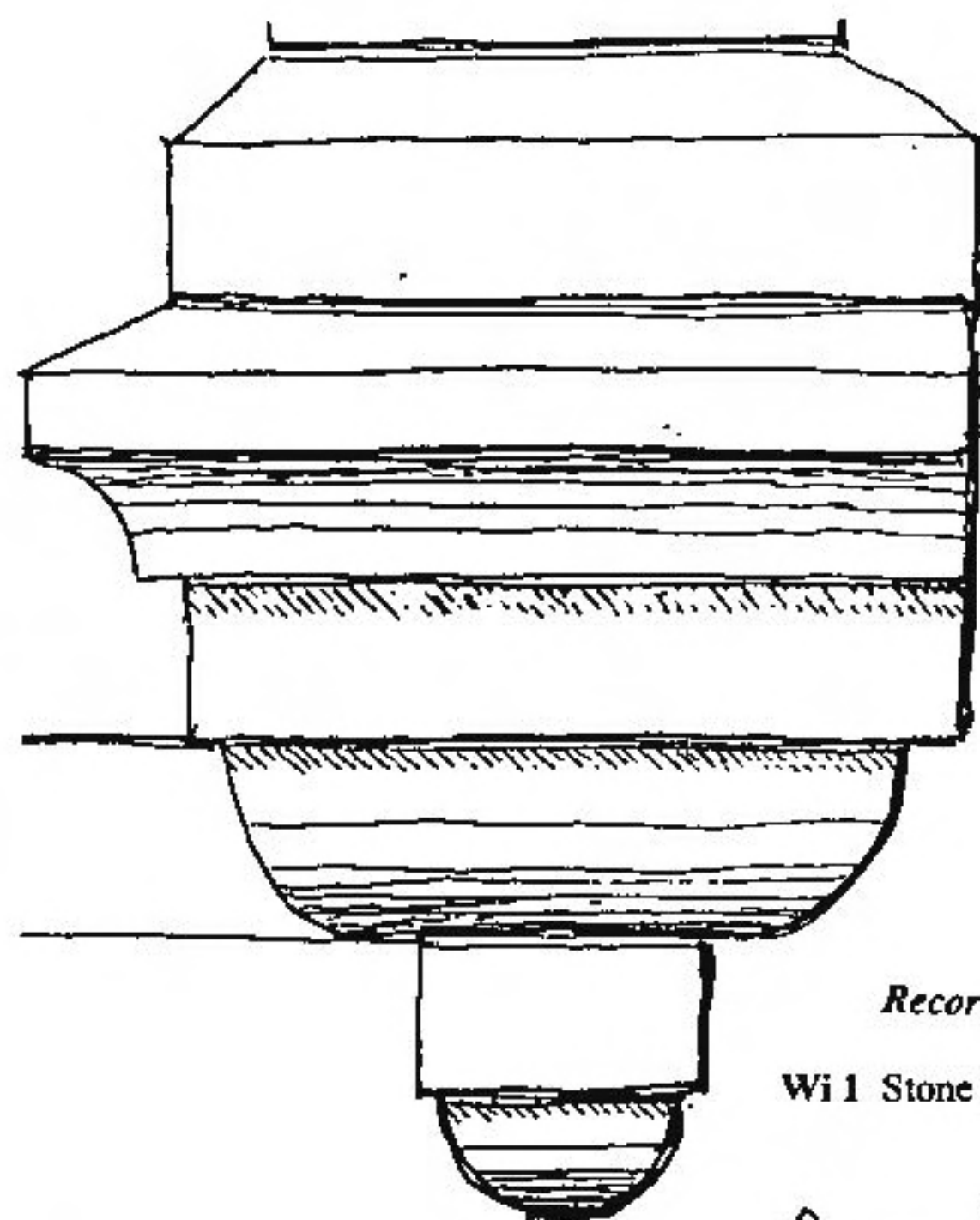
*Recorded displaced*



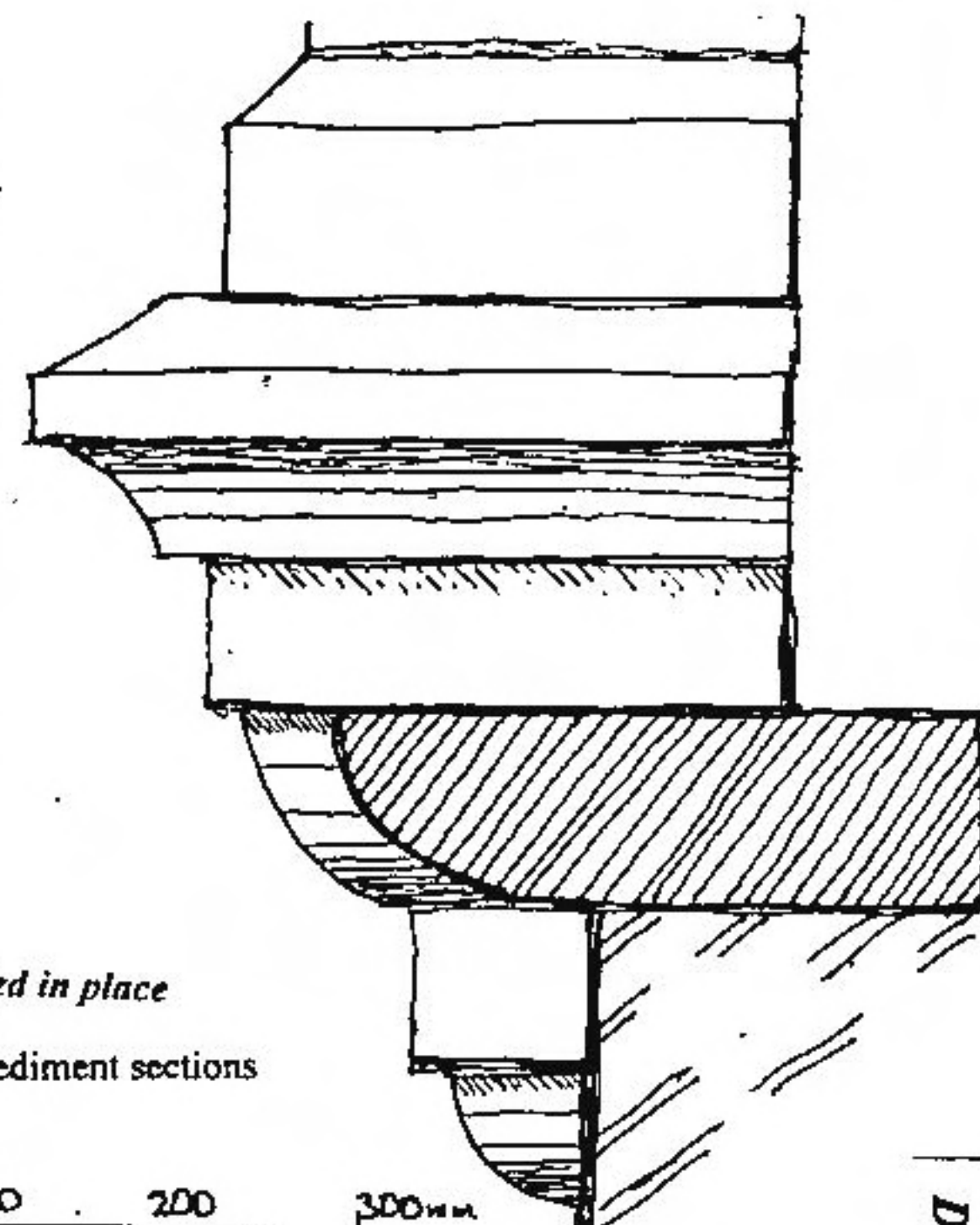
S 5 Pediment decorative keystone



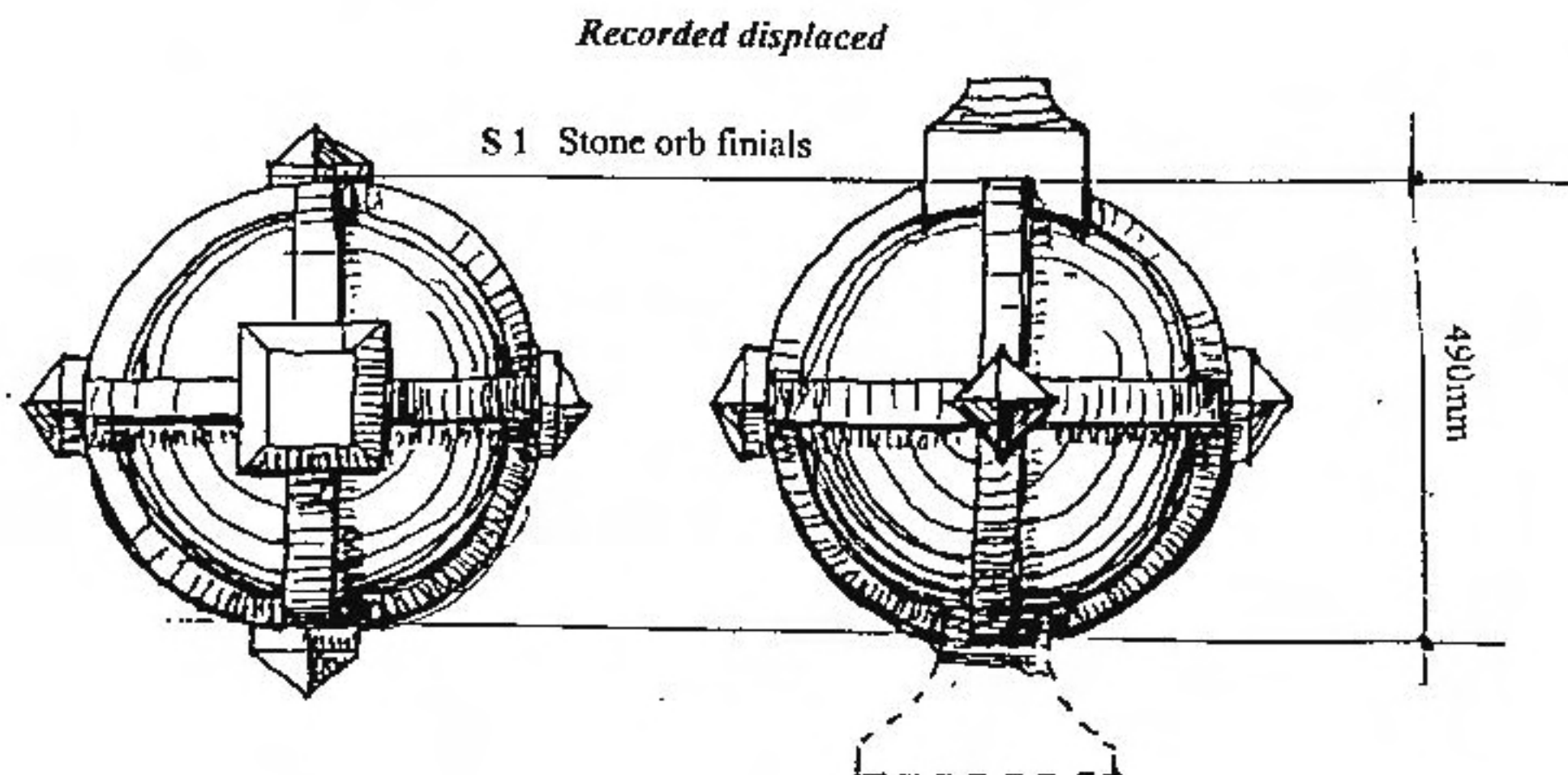
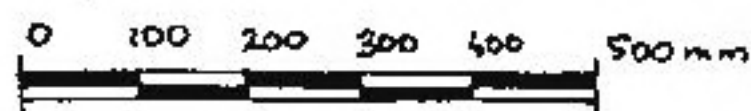
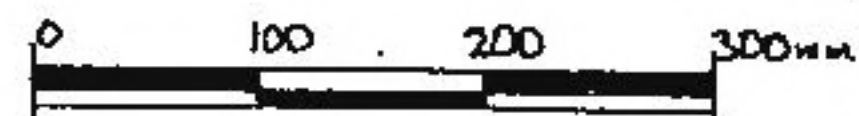
*Recorded displaced*



*Recorded in place*



Wi 1 Stone pediment sections

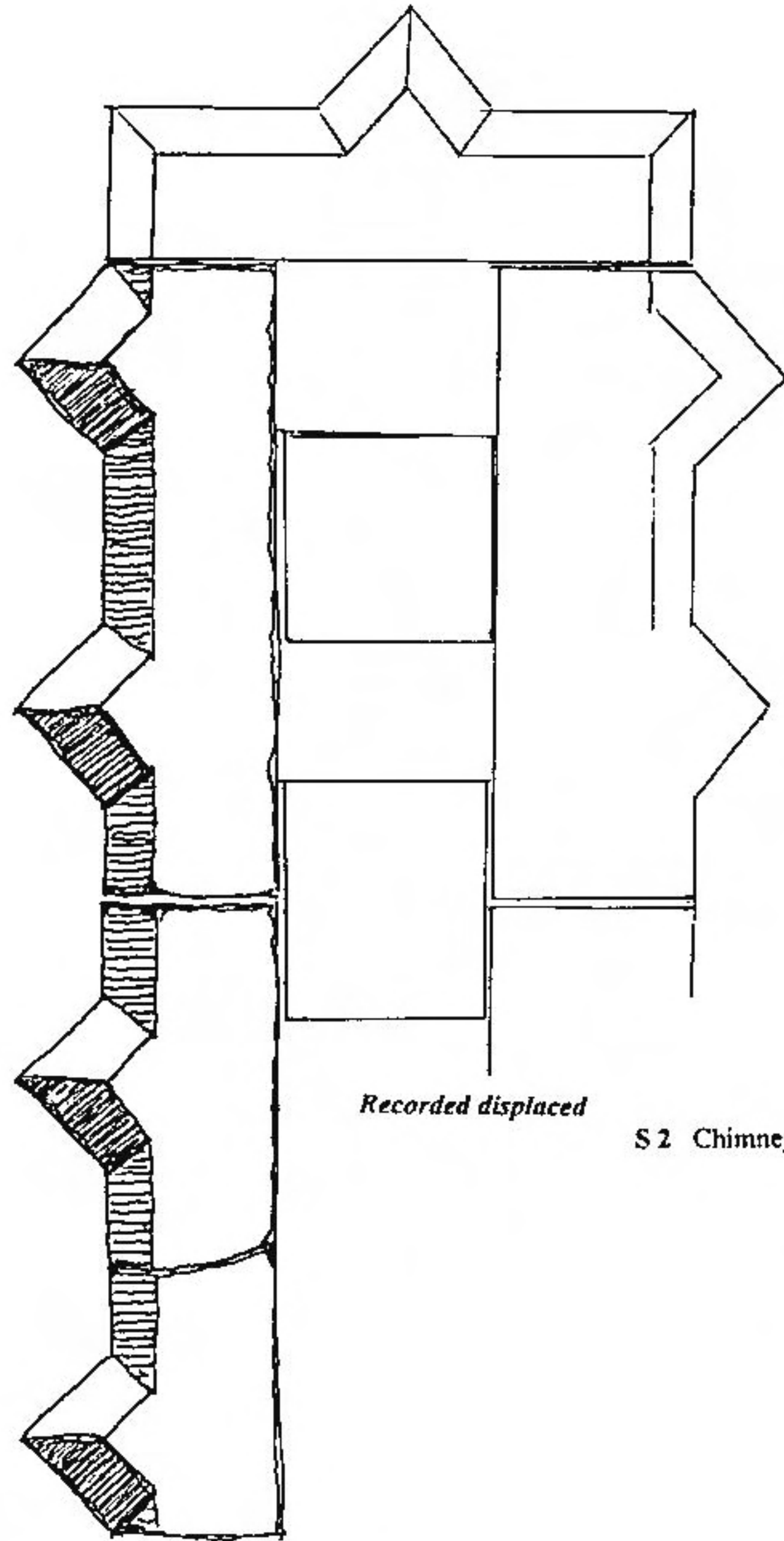


*Recorded displaced*

S 1 Stone orb finials

490mm

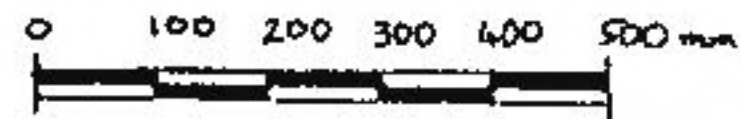
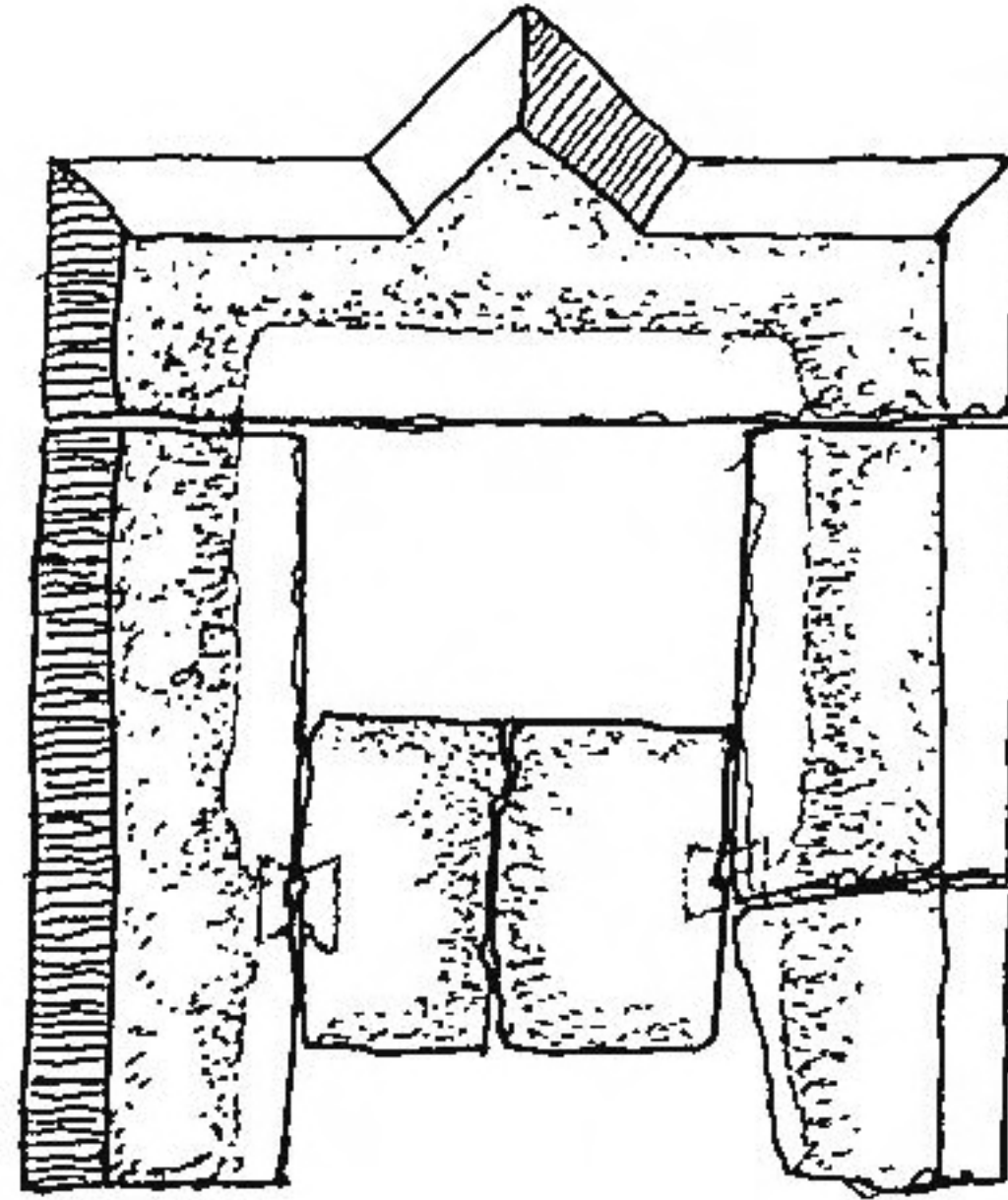




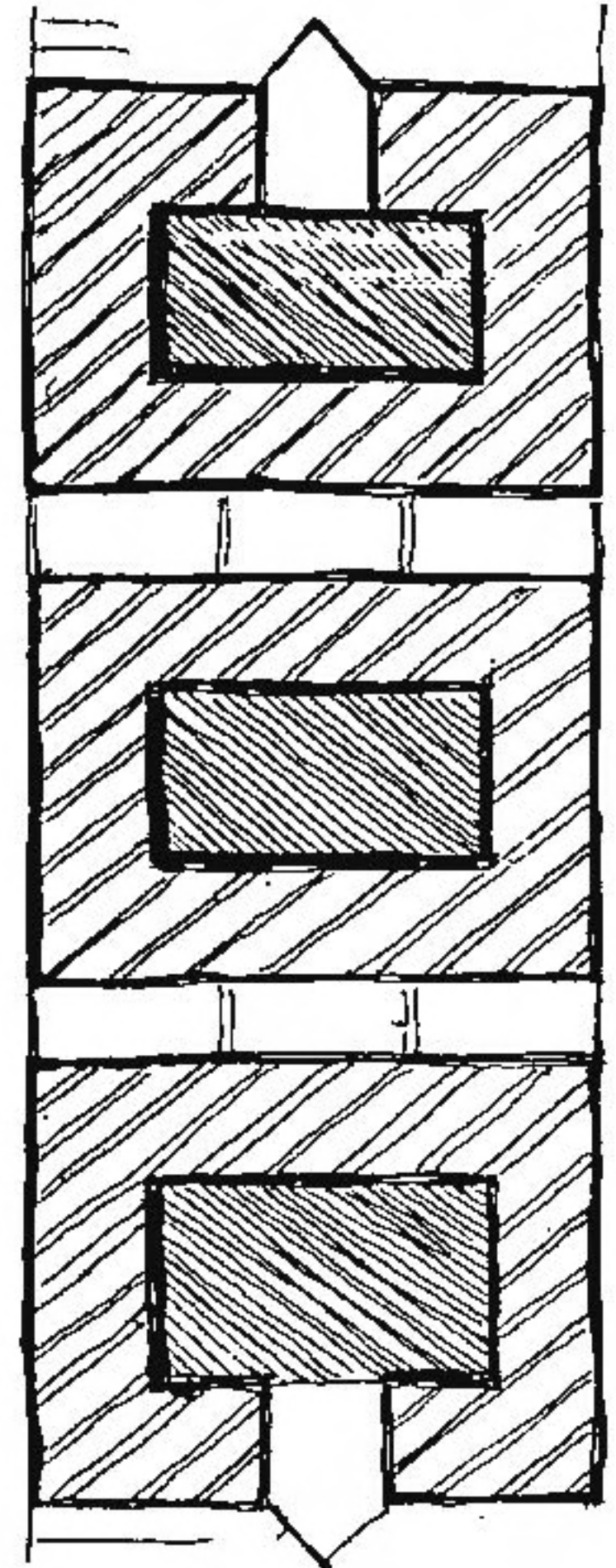
*Recorded displaced*

S2 Chimney stack capping stones

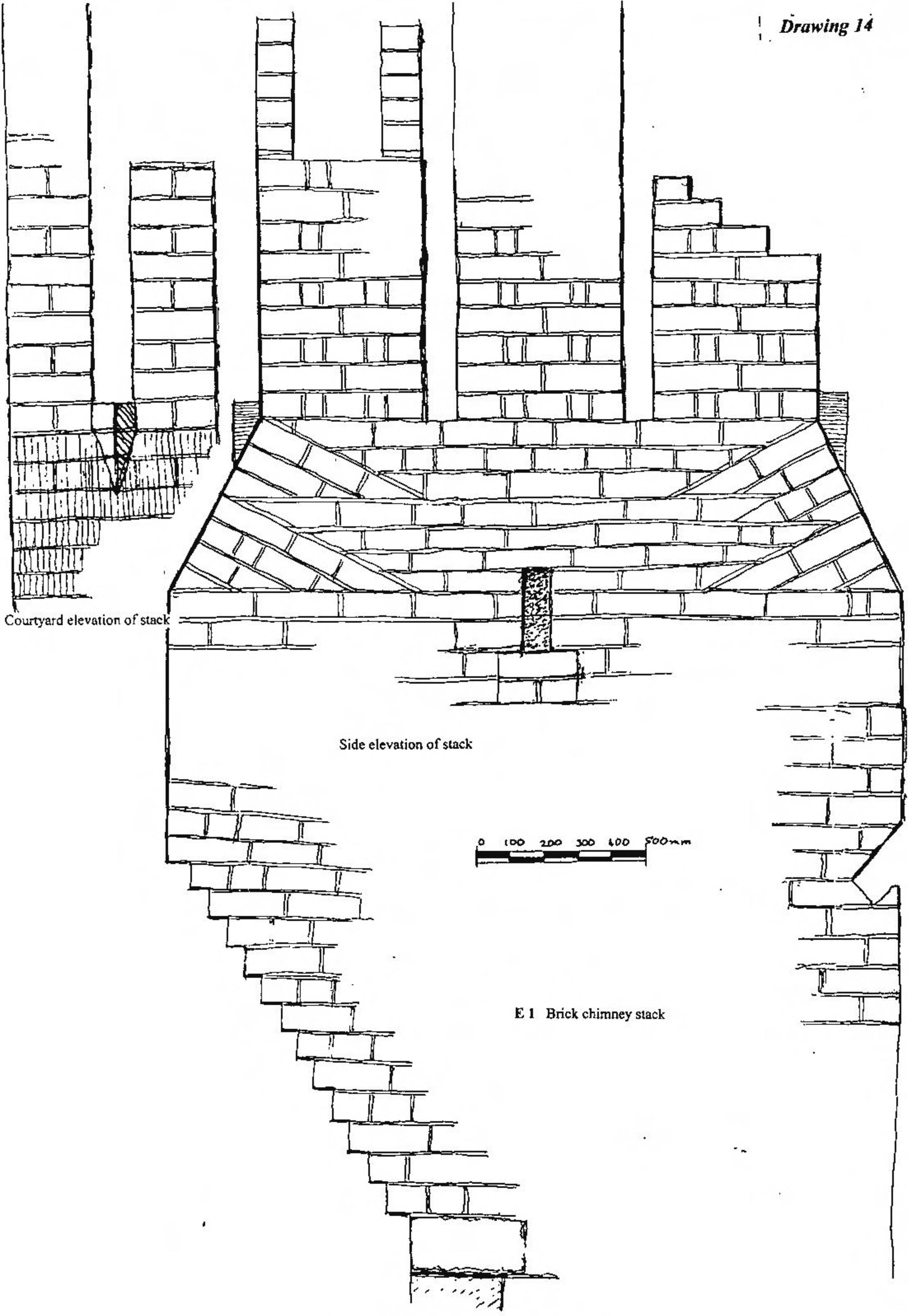
*Recorded displaced*



Ei 3 Brick chimney stack plans section  
*Recorded in place*







Courtyard elevation of stack

Side elevation of stack

0 100 200 300 400 500mm

E 1 Brick chimney stack

Chimney Stack Brick Structure

Recorded in place



### PART 3 : COMMENTARY

*The following list refers to certain items identified in a substantial collection of material concerning Bradgate Stables contained in two large, file binders and a number of folio sized envelopes currently held in a store room in the offices of Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council at Argents Mead, Hinckley. The collection consists of copies of photographs, a few of which date from the final quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In addition there are a substantial number of later photographs of the Stables spanning the period from the 1970's to the mid-1990's. This collection also contains copies of various reports on the Stables commissioned during the 1980's and 1990's. Though incomplete the collection represents the most substantial archive of material relating to Bradgate Stables held in one place. The originator of the collection seems to have been the late Richard Hobson, who was the Conservation Officer at Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council responsible for bringing the plight of this particular monument to the attention of a wider audience. Material in this collection has assisted our interpretation of the Stables and it is considered sufficiently important to provide a list of those items in the collection that have aided interpretations made in this report.*

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#### Photographs

*(NB Italic Numbers in bold in square brackets indicate items referred to in text and cross-referenced to this Section.)*

**Photofile** - largely compiled by the late Richard Hobson - information taken from dated photographs taken by various individuals

**[19]** 1969 - photocopy of an aerial photograph (vertical overhead) from a survey commissioned by Leicestershire County Council. This shows the Stables with all roofs intact apart from roof over the Tack Room and Hay Loft of the North range - i.e., the north-west corner. This photograph also shows the layout of the Kitchen Garden lying to the west of the West Range.

**[20]** Photocopies of photographs taken by Mrs K. Burrows of Groby Old Hall at various dates in 1970's. One of this series shows the Entrance Gateway tower intact with weather vane still in position.

Envelope: Marked Mr Seal, Thorndy Design, Jacklyn Drive, Field Head, Markfield.  
*Various Photographs 1980-1990s includes 19 prints showing building prior to Listing in 1988*

Photocopy - 1980 shows carriage house intact front with free-standing strapwork ornament visible on top of west tower.

1980 A3 photocopy shows complete Fox Mask over Entrance Arch

Photocopies of photographs c.1986, (unattributed) West Range almost intact - Same horizontal bar and barb pattern tile roof as recorded on outer elevation of West Range as on South front. Shows West range Central Stable block with oculus on South facing Dutch Gable

**[21]** (Photographs in envelope marked "Summer 1988") Series of apparently professional photographs, (unattributed) showing structural defects evident in 1988.

May 1989 Envelope "Bradgate Stables and Kennels"  
(phot. 9) West range interior - Roof trusses in position - transverse beam with joist housings as survives to present.



(phot.26) Carriage House Roof - North range - principal rafter truss with mortised collar and bridled apex joints.

[22] (un-numbered photo) Showing Carriage House with only one bay breach to front elevation.

7.viii.1990 [2] has finial clearly visible against ivy - good details

[6] West Range roof partially lost but some of patterning can be discerned on Main Front Range:

SAVE Award - colour photographs 11 August 1991 4 general views of Stables

30.i.1992 (individual photographs numbered)

9.10 North range external

14 Part of front of Carriage House

[23] Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England. Photographic survey, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1992. 76, black & white photographs, approx: 16 x 22mm

(Almost all the photographs carry a miniscule number on the reverse. As no description is given on the backs of the photographs it is assumed these numbers relate to an Index, which was not present in the collection of papers. It has been possible to identify most locations and the ones noted in the following list are those that provided additional visual information about the Stable complex.)

- [4] Spiral Brick Banding on the staircase towers of the Entrance Gateway
- [10] Heavy infestation of Entrance Gateway with ivy
- [13] Roof of East range - shows two horizontal bands of lighter coloured clay tiles, cf. front elevation seen in earlier photographs
- [15] North/West corner view - shows similar, two horizontal bands of lighter coloured clay tiles to roof of West range. This view shows roof missing from North range building adjacent to Carriage House exposing a series of wooden battens fixed to the internal brickwork at first floor.
- [16] North/West corner view - shows now sealed off accesses to cellaring under the North range and Doorway leading from rear of yard to outside North range. Also confirms the two horizontal Bands of different coloured tiling on the West range roof.
- [17] Complete series of saw-tooth gables at rear of North range
- [19] Dutch gable fragment to residential unit/Stables in South/East part of East range.
- [32,33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 42, 48] Series of photographs showing the horizontal beam carrying the cast iron columns at first floor of the Carriage House, viewed from various angles. The floor is already missing.
- [50] Stone, drinking water point, with base bowl already missing, in the central block of West range, tell-tale evidence shows a similar feature existed in the East range.
- [62] Vertical shot up through Entrance Gateway shows moulded plaster cornice run to ceiling of Gateway.

8 July 1993 Colour photographs - total of 61, taken for Hinckley & Bosworth BC as record, prior to Section 48 works being undertaken. Includes : detail of cupola timbering. Also shows brattishing of stone on chimney stacks from overhead. Clock mechanism still *in situ*. Side stair towers, the timber roof structure over staircases E and W Range can be seen to be sprocketed.

10 August 1993 Series of photographs showing outcomes of Section 48 work. Stonework of oculus and chimney detailing now laid out on ground within yard as indicatives. Stacks of bricks and tiles beginning to be formed. Piles are opposite East and West Ranges - i.e. 2003 positions. Tower shown scaffolded and strutting in place in several areas where walls showing weaknesses.

5.vi.1995 No roof structure remaining on East range Buildings Central section, except for single purlin on outer face and structure of stair tower woodwork.

13.ii.96 Common rafters to Bay Stables - South range = 16 no interim truss apparent in photograph - confirmed by earlier photograph 19.vii.1995 - by this date a pile of roof trusses were already stacked with cast iron columns in courtyard. An adjacent pile of granite setts well colonised with grass by this date. Indicative features laid out in 1993 still in same positions - and remained so at time of survey commencement



unattributed and und-dated photographs

photograph showing stair tower timber cap with finial piece *in situ* west side main frontage - cf retained fragment.

Photograph : Carriage House - East Tower - noted as Water Tower (over stair head)

[Plain Brown envelope marked R. Hobson] this contains the negatives of series of photographs taken by R. Hobson, c.1990. R.Hobson describes area E of Carriage House and area with inner workshop *Blacksmiths Stable Interior* suggests Stable and waiting area + forge in inner feature. Pipes in latter area will be water pipes from tower tank.

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### Documents

*Feasability Study - Bradgate Stables, Groby, Leicestershire* 1996

JC Goom *in association with* Gordon Lain, Frank Haywood & Associates; R. Laughher, John Samuels.

Various Appendices relating to the above study and produced over period 1995 – 1996.

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### **OTHER SOURCES and MISCELLANEOUS ASSOCIATED PAPERS consulted**

White, W. 1846 *History, Gazetteer & Directory of Leicestershire and the small county of Rutland* Sheffield p.586

White, Wm 1862 *History, Gazetteer and Directory of the Counties of Leicester and Rutland*

White, Wm 1877 title as above

*Barker's 1875. General Topography and Historical Directory of Leicestershire and Rutland* (p.60)

*Leicester Advertiser* 13 Jan 1883. Obituary to the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Stamford :

Sale Particulars – Bradgate Estate Warner, Shepherd, Wade and P.L.Kirby June 12, 1928  
Photocopy of original Sale Particulars in Bradgate Stables file; Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, Conservation Section.

Sale Particulars : Warner Shepherd & Wade 1929

Keil, I., Humphrey, W., Wix, D. 1991 *Charmwood Forest in Old Photographs* Sutton p.35

1992 - Leicestershire County Council - Conservation Section : *Annual Report* - photograph of inner elevation of West Range of Stables with much of decayed tiled roof fabric still *in situ* p.20 of Report.

*Feasability Study - Bradgate Stables, Groby, Leicestershire* 1996

JC Goom, *in asociation with*: Gordon Lain; Frank Haywood & Associates; R. Laughher, John Samuels.

Diamond Wood Partnership, (Consulting Engineers) July 2002

*"Report: Inspection of Structure : Bradgate Stables, Groby, Leicestershire"*  
for Lafarge Aggregates Ltd. Ref: 02/5771

(original report includes 29 colour plates reproduced in black & white and thus only registering in silhouette and lacking all details)

Diamond Wood Partnership (Consulting Engineers) Feb 2003 Ref: 02/5771

*"Specification & Schedule of Works, Bradgate Stables, Groby, Leicestershire"*

unprovenanced and undated, colour illustrated report: *"The Stabilisation of Bradgate Stables"*  
2 pp.



## PART 4 : SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

### **RASE MARKED TIMBERS**

Apart from loss through deterioration most of the roof timbers of the Stable buildings were removed during the early 1990s as part of the programme of works intended to stabilise the surviving structures. As a consequence of these works several complete trusses as well as individual truss members, spine beams, joists and common rafters were found stacked in two precariously balanced piles within the courtyard area of the Stables at the time of this survey. All these timbers were of European Pine (*Pinus silvestris*) which was used throughout the Stables complex for the main structural beams, rafters, purlins and floor boards. The reinstatement and site clearance programme which this survey was related to required all the removed timbers to be destroyed. Prior to their incineration and wherever they were accessible the exposed faces of the timbers were checked for carpenter's construction marks or rase marks. None of the pine timbers carried the characteristic Roman numeral forms of carpenter's construction marks but several had the equally characteristic rase markings commonly associated with Baltic timbers on them. Where these marks were accessible they were recorded and eighteen examples representing the most complete forms are illustrated in this Supplementary Note.

Experience has shown that complete rase marks are extremely rare to locate. All the examples recorded at Bradgate Stables, like most examples that have been recorded elsewhere in Leicestershire, are incomplete. The reason for the incomplete nature of the marks seems relate to the origins of the marks themselves. The marks found on timber sections in buildings in England probably represent a cumulative process. After felling the tree had its branches removed and the basic trunk form was floated down-river to the Baltic ports where it was graded into one of three categories. At this stage the tree bark, which had been retained to minimise damage to the timber through being dragged with chains in the forests and hitting submerged objects during the river passage, would be removed and an initial box trimming took place. The trimmed timber form was then marked with its quality code. At Gdansk this is believed to have involved inscribing the letter K – for first quality, B (later W) for second quality and BB (later WW) for third quality.<sup>1</sup> A rasing knife, which consisted of a V-shaped blade attached to a handle, was used to inscribe marks into the face of the timber to a depth of 4-5mm, (1/8in). It appears that subsequently other series of marks were added to the timber. These may represent Baltic merchant's marks of ownership that were inscribed prior to sale. In his study of *HMS Victory* MacGowan, noted that: "...rase marks were scribed onto the timber or logs in their original state by the Admiralty timber buyers..."<sup>2</sup> This process, which is likely to have been common practice by any purchaser of timber for export, would have added a further series of rase marks to the timbers. In addition other marks, identified as simple vertical strokes with occasional diagonal slashes across them may represent tally marks indicating the number of items in a particular consignment. Once the timber shipment arrived at one of the Eastland Trading Company's, Baltic trading East Coast ports many of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quality timbers would be sawn into more manageable dimensions before being despatched to timber suppliers located within the vast hinterland area of the ports. This progressive reduction in the size of the timbers fragmented the original sequence of marks on the timbers. Today the same effect can be noted when the coloured die marks used on imported timbers are sawn into board form and stored in modern wood-yards.

Overall what this process means in respect of the timbers at Bradgate Stables is that a partial series of minims, strokes, numerals and circles have been recorded which have limited coherence. Greene considered there were two series of marks, one used hand-cut numerals and strokes, the others were produced using a "...scribing iron capable of producing perfect



*circles (or parts of circles) for numerals 3,6,8,9.*"<sup>3</sup> At Bradgate Stables there are examples of the numbers 3 or 5, 8 and 6 or 9 which contain cut curved forms being present. The 3 or 5 appears to have been cut with a scribing iron but the numbers 8 and 6 or 9 are cut with a rasing knife. On the samples recorded there is only one example of a perfect scribed circle, (see Fig.1). Several samples have a batch of three or four vertical minim strokes with a diagonal slash across them, these appear regularly enough to suggest they may be tally marks indicating the actual number of sections of timber in a particular batch, (see Figs 2,3,4,7,10,15).

## REFERENCES

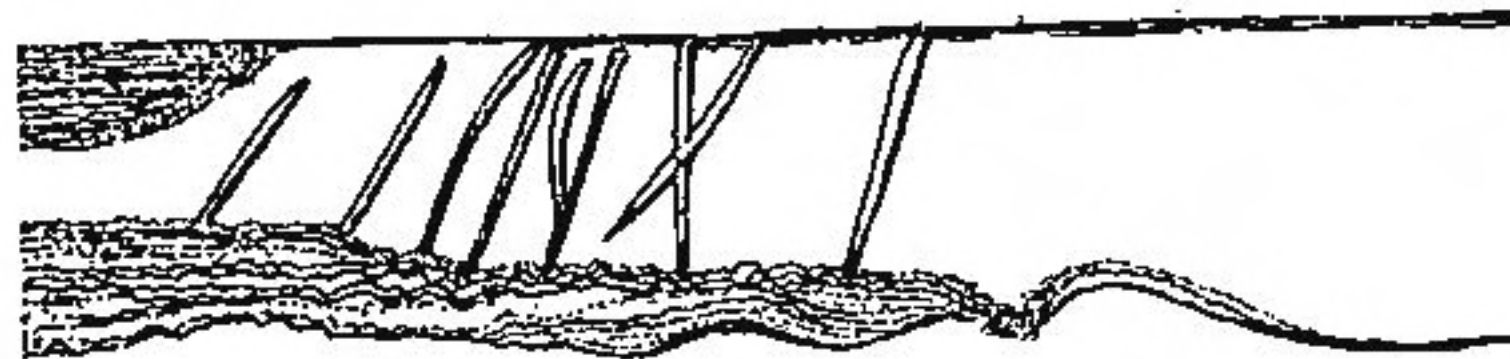
1. Greene, JP 1996 "Enigmatic Marks on Timbers" in: Newsletter No 9, Winter 1996 Institute of Field Archaeologists - Buildings Special Interest Group.
2. MacGowan, A. 1998 *HMS Victory : Her Construction, Career and Restoration* Caxton Edns. p.93
3. *ibid* 1.



*Fig. i* Section of floor board with a parts of a series of rase mark minims.  
*Fig.ii* Rase mark minims and possible numeral 4 incised on a salvaged floor joist.

*For Scale see p.26*

*For Figs. iii - xx see pp.26 - 30*





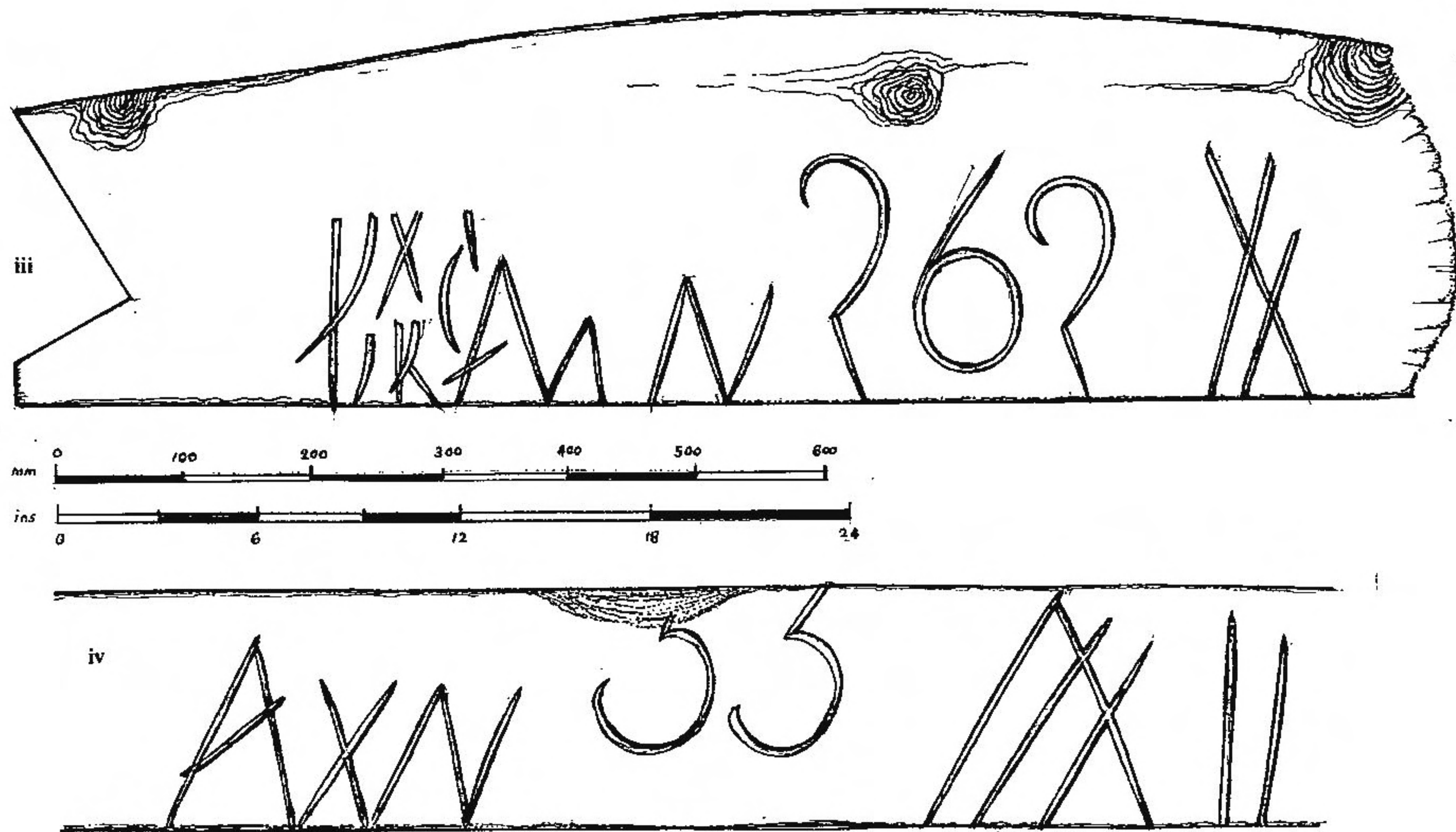
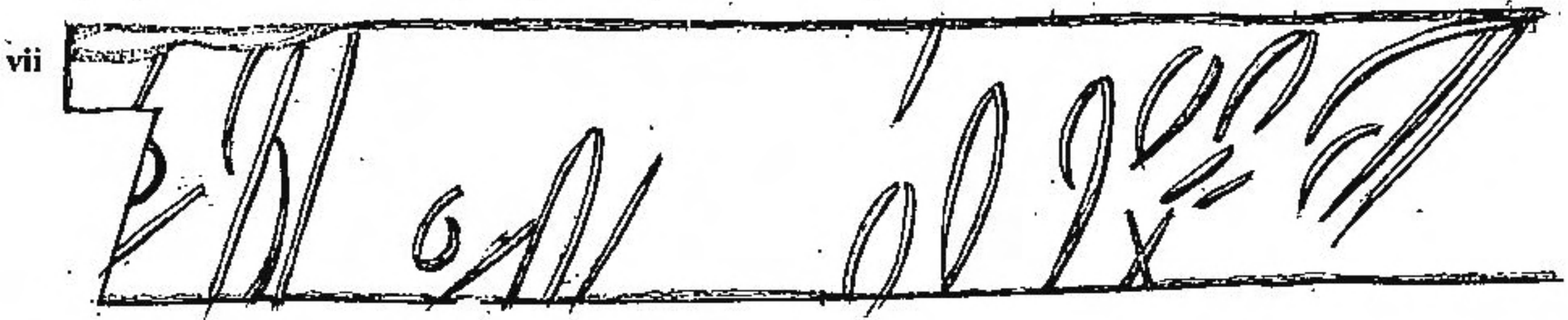
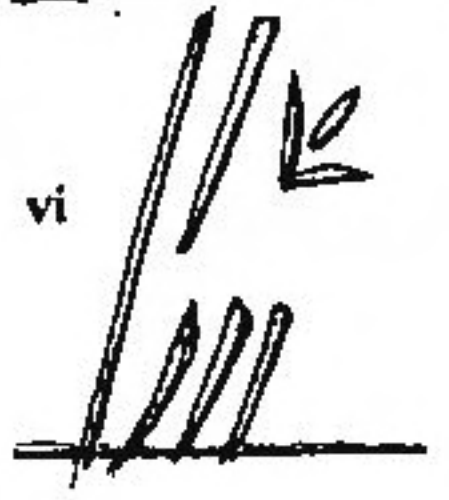


Fig. iii Unprovenanced section of timber with rase marked numerals 262 and two minims with diagonal slash mark to the right of them. The marks to the left of the numerals have not been deciphered. The timber was a sawn fragment, possibly a spine beam, found in a pile of debris.  
 Fig. iv Section of tie-beam from a demolished principal rafter truss, with letters AXN and numerals which may be read as either 5's or 3's. The three vertical minims with diagonal slash may relate to batch marking for shipping.





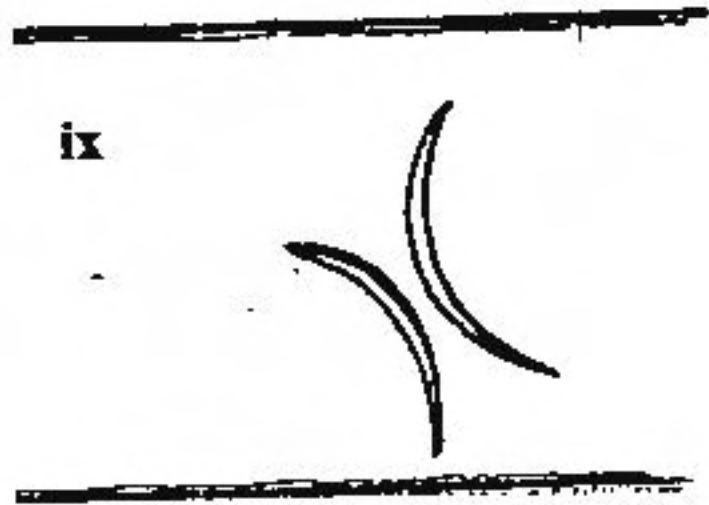
vi



viii

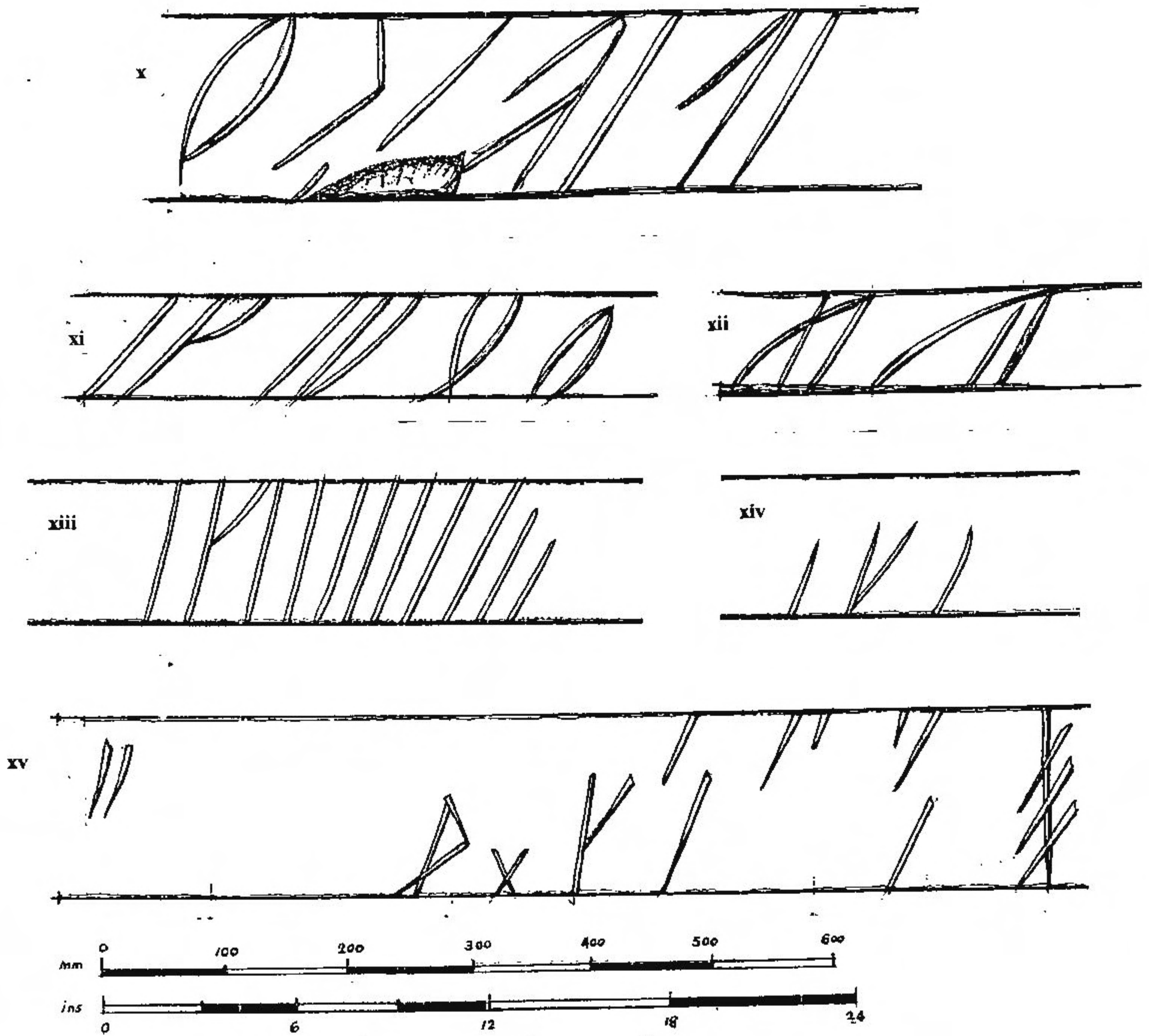


ix



**Fig. v** Tie-beam section with numerals 8 8 (Left) and 4 9 9 (Right).  
**Fig. vi** Additional series of marks at the right end of the same tie-beam.  
**Fig. vii** Demolition cut section of tie-beam carrying the numerals 0 9 or 6 0.  
**Fig. viii** Section of rotted tie-beam with two groups of minims with arms that may denote batch marks for a consignment of twenty two items, also the numerals 1 9.  
**Fig. ix** Back-to-back crescent forms situated at the end of the only roof truss that survived, in situ, in the north-west corner of the West range.





**Fig. x** Timber section, possibly tie-beam, with a series of unidentified minim marks.

**Figs. xi, xii** Demolition fragments of rafter pieces with a partial series of marks that may have been batch marks.

**Fig. xiii** Section of floor joist with what appears to be a series of tally marks

**Fig. xiv** Section of floor joist with part of a series of rase marks, indicative of the fragmentary evidence found on sawn sections of Baltic pine.

**Fig. xv** Partial series of rase marks on a raked strut.



## APPENDIX ONE

### LISTING DESCRIPTION

#### **STABLES and KENNELS to BRADGATE HOUSE**

##### **Grade II\***

Former stables and kennels now a ruin. 1856 by M.J. Dain of 'Dain and Parsons' for George-Harry Grey, 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Stamford, Master of the Quorn Hunt 1856-1863. In the Jacobean style. Red brick with white brick decorative banding, ashlar dressings, plain tile roofs, clustered brick gable and ridge stacks. Quadrangular plan. The main south front is of 5 bays with a central projecting, square entrance tower, 2 storeys plus attics. Round headed archway, with moulded ashlar impost and arch with columns keystone decorated by fox's head. Either side are single Roman Doric columns supporting an entablature, above is a large panel containing the arms of the Earl of Stamford, flanked by tapering columns supporting an entablature and above a Dutch gable containing circular window. The square dome was originally capped by a square cupola. The entrance tower is clasped by lower flanking semicircular towers with small round headed openings to the 2 stages and half domed roofs. To either side are two storey single bay projecting pavilions with brick bands and coped Dutch gables. To each floor is a single 3 light stone mullioned opening decorated with strapwork. In the gables a circular opening in a lozenge surround. Either side are blank recessed wings terminated by single storey pavilions, each with a single 3 light mullioned opening with strapwork surrounds and above a circular window in a Dutch gable. The inner courtyard facades. The southern façade has a central 5 bay 2 storey block including the gate tower, with a central round headed arch and above a 4 light traceried window and above again a circular window and above again a circular window in a Dutch gable. Either side are single 2 light mullioned windows flanked by 3 light mullioned windows, with above 2 light mullioned windows and above again a small and a large Dutch gable both with circular windows. Beyond are single storey stable wings with irregular segmental headed doorways and round headed windows. The east and west fronts are identical, with central 2 storey blocks, each with a central segmental headed archway and above 3 round headed windows with above again a Dutch gable containing a circular window. Either side are single round headed windows, single large segmental headed doorways, then further round headed windows, above are single segmental headed loft doors with small Dutch gables over. Either side single storey wings have 2 segmental headed doors, the outer ones larger. The north front has a central 7 bay section with 5 segmental headed carriage arches flanked by a single circular window. Above a central circular window is flanked by single loft doors, circular windows and small windows with strapwork surrounds. This section is surmounted by a row of 5 small Dutch gables each with a circular window flanked by square towers with parapets topped by ashlar strapwork gables. Either side are single storey wings with irregular segmental headed doors and round headed windows. These stables and kennels were built to accompany Bradgate House built as a hunting lodge for the Earl of Stamford when he was Master of the Quorn Hunt. Bradgate House has since been demolished.





*Plate 1 Leicester : 100 Regent Road showing decorative details of a similar type to those used on Bradgate House and Stables. Building dated 1851.*



*Plate 2 Detail of brickwork showing layout of buff, brick banding in English Bond coursing.*





*Plate 3* Detail showing chamfered bricks forming a small oculus in the brickwork of the South Range Interior.



*Plate 4* Detail showing the chamfered brick doorways to the Stair Tower of the Clock Tower, South Range. Also shows sandstone newel staircase.





*Plate 5 Detail of three-light, stone mullion window with strapwork head on the South Elevation.*



*Plate 6 Detail showing two-light, mullion window with wooden a surviving wooden frame still in position on South Interior.*





*Plate 7 Re-assembled fragments of a smaller stone oculus, (see Drawing 11).*

*Plate 8 Re-assembled fragments of chimney stack capping stones, (see Drawing 13 :).*







*Plates 9 and 10 showing sections of Groby Slate used to line brickwork of the Stables. Both slates have chased out sections for slate manger sections. The slab on the left has a ring for a hay-net installed. Parts of the wooden, wall-mounted battens onto which the slates are mounted can be seen.*





*Plate 11 Timber section with rase markings, see Fig.iii, p.26.  
The beam is sitting on top of two cast-iron columns similar to the  
two surviving examples standing in the Carriage House area.  
Location: salvaged materials area.*

*Plate 12 Hardwood sections of door framing, (see Drawing 9).  
Location: salvaged materials area.*







*Plate 13* Detail showing two cast-iron columns and floor beam surviving in situ. North Range - Carriage House.



*Plate 14* Detail showing a cast-iron show for raked struts set onto the tie-beam of a principal rafter truss. The lower part of the bolt passing through the tie-beam and rising to the cast iron housing at the truss apex can also be seen, as can a carpenter's construction mark II. (Timber dump)





*Plate 15 Bradgate Stables : General View Clock Tower entrance with flanking stair towers.*



*Plate 16 Detail of the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Stamford's coat of arms mounted onto marble and flanked by tapering columns supporting an entablature*





**Plate 17** South elevation - detail of Clock Tower and Stair Tower with part of the residential unit showing Dutch Gable with Keytstone to coping carrying 'S' for Stamford and date 1856. The three-light mullions have strapwork ornament above them



**Plate 18** South-east section of South Elevation. The rear Dutch Gable has the ceramic coving installed that is part of the 'conservation' programme undertaken during 2003-2005.





*Plate 19* South Range Interior - General view across to Clock Tower from Stable Yard, showing the exposed framework of the cupola.



*Plate 20* Detail view of part of the framing to support the clock mechanism in the Clock Tower. Also shows the scaffolding installed c.1992 to reduce the load on the weakened timber framing.





*Plate 21* Detail of large oculus with chamfered brick surround and wooden window base. The stone surround at the top of the Clock Tower, Stair Tower is visible through the opening. The scarring of the Clock Tower brickwork relates to the original cupola of the Stair Tower. (South Range Interior)



*Plate 22* Interior view of the residential area of the South Range – left of the entrance. Revealing substantial sections of single brick walls at first floor. The brickwork of the alcoves and fireplaces are characteristic of those found throughout the house.





*Plate 25 West Range Elevation - south-west, two-storey section with Stair Tower, showing the relationship of stair windows and single ground floor window.*



*Plate 26 West Range Interior showing derioration of brick fabric and stone coping weakened by weathering.*





*Plate 27 West Range : Brick Chimney originally servicing the Horse Grooms dormitory area.*



*Plate 28 West Range – small Dutch gable structure weakened by weathering and general deterioration of the fabric.*





*Plate 29 Interior detail in West Range, Stables. The transverse brick wall can be seen to have three sections of wooden bonding courses built into it.*



*Plate 30 Interior detail, East Range, showing extensive timber bonding course built into fabric of the wall immediately below the joist pockets.*





*Plate 31 West Range Interior. Surviving section of glazed door frame, (see Drawing 9).*

*Plate 32 West Range Internal – north-west corner of range. Bolted principal rafter truss with cast-iron shoe for the base of the raked struts and cast-iron apex junction, October 2003, now removed. A wooden bonding course can be spanning the full width of the bay at the base of the gable brickwork. (see Drawing 8)*







*Plate 33 West Range, north-west corner, showing roof frame intact and roof section over rear passageway, October 2003, roof timbers removed 2004.*

*Plate 34 North Range – general view towards the West Range, showing the void where the Carriage House entrances stood.*







*Plate 35 North Range - Carriage House showing extensive loss of fabric with only two stair towers remaining of the central feature.*



*Plate 36 Shows the surviving pair of cast-iron columns with the floor beam pocketed into the north-east wall of the Carriage House and first floor access from the stair tower.*





*Plate 37 shows the interior elevation of the Stair Tower with decorative brickwork, single light window and low-set oculus lighting the cellar area. The walls of the Blacksmith's Shoeing Bay originally stood to the right of the tower.*



*Plate 38 North Range, north-east corner. Showing void where the Blacksmith's workshop was. Also shows the walls of the passage leading out to the Gas House. The roof to the right is part of the East Range stabling.*





*Plate 39* North Range, detail of brick over lintel to fireplace in possible Tack-room in north-west section of the range.



*Plate 40* North Range – exterior. Doorway in north-east corner of the North Range leading to Gas House area.





*Plate 41 East Range Interior - central, two-storey section.*

*Plate 42 East Range Elevation - showing Stair Tower with pyramidal roof frame still in place, Spring 2004, now removed.*







**Plate 43** East Range – exterior, north-east corner. Showing original trusses and rafters still in place, 2003. Now removed.



**Plate 44** East Range Internal - south-east corner of range showing layout roof of Stabling for five hunters. The window is in south-east gable of the South Elevation.