

**HISTORIC RECORDING BUILDING AT
THE LE CATEAU AND CAVALRY BARRACKS
COLCHESTER GARRISON
ESSEX**



**Essex County Council
Field Archaeology Unit**

April 2008

Cover depicts gun practice on Abbey Field with the Cavalry & Royal Artillery Barracks in the background (<http://www.camulos.com/postcardsh.htm>)

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As part of our desire to provide a quality service, we would welcome any comments you may have on the content or the presentation of this report.

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CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and description

2.2 Planning background

2.3 Historical background

3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

4.0 METHODS

5.0 BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 Layout and general description

5.2 Stable block A

5.3 Canteen & sergeants mess

5.4 Adult school

5.5 Riding school

6.0 DISCUSSION

7.0 CONCLUSION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Appendices

Appendix 1: Archive index

Appendix 2: EHER summary sheet

Figures

- Figure 1. Location and block plan
- Figure 2. General plan of Royal Artillery Barracks, 1875
- Figure 3. Historic floor plans of stable block A, 1875
- Figure 4. Existing elevations of stable block A
- Figure 5. Existing ground and first floor plans of stable block A
- Figure 6. Section A-A1 through stable block A
- Figure 7. Existing elevations of canteen & sergeants mess
- Figure 8. (a) Historic floor plans of canteen & sergeants mess
(b) Interpretive plans of ground floor of canteen & sergeants mess
- Figure 9. Existing ground and first floor plans of canteen & sergeants mess
- Figure 10. Historic sections through canteen & sergeants mess, 1875
- Figure 11. Existing elevations of adult school
- Figure 12. Floor plan of adult school
- Figure 13. Section through adult school
- Figure 14. Historic elevations, plan & section through riding school, c.1864
- Figure 15. Existing elevations of riding school
- Figure 16. Existing floor plan of riding school

Photographic plates

- Plate 1 Main (north-east) façade to stable block A
- Plate 2 Stable blocks A & B viewed to north before conversion works started
- Plate 3 Stable block viewed to west
- Plate 4 Balcony of stable block
- Plate 5 North-west and north-east elevations of stable block
- Plate 6 North-west elevation of stable block
- Plate 7 Central passage and stalls viewed to north-east end
- Plate 8 Central passage and stalls viewed to south-west end
- Plate 9 Detail of stall construction
- Plate 10 Stall flooring (for two horses)
- Plate 11 Iron trough bracket
- Plate 12 North-east stable door and drainage gully
- Plate 13 Stairs to barrack rooms
- Plate 14 Stairs and barrack room landing
- Plate 15 Interior of former harness room 1
- Plate 16 Interior of former forge
- Plate 17 Interior of officers stables
- Plate 18 Interior of fire-damaged barrack room
- Plate 19 Canteen and Sergeants mess viewed from west
- Plate 20 Canteen and Sergeants mess viewed from north
- Plate 21 Main (south-east) façade to sergeants mess
- Plate 22 Roof vent above kitchen in sergeants mess
- Plate 23 Rear (north-west) elevation of sergeants mess
- Plate 24 Sergeants mess & adult school viewed from south
- Plate 25 Yard to sergeants mess with scullery in background
- Plate 26 Bar room 3 viewed to tap room 4
- Plate 27 Tap room 4 partially stripped
- Plate 28 Mess kitchen 6
- Plate 29 Billiard room 9 viewed to blocked former arch
- Plate 30 Blocked arch inside caterer's room 10
- Plate 31 Balustrade on top landing
- Plate 32 Inserted wall to training quarters in former recreation room

- Plate 33 Interior of north-west training quarters in former recreation room
- Plate 34 Contemporary door in inserted doorway between training quarters
- Plate 35 Moulded plaster ceiling in former reading room
- Plate 36 West elevation of adult school
- Plate 37 Adult school viewed to south
- Plate 38 Interior of north classroom
- Plate 39 Main (south-east) elevation of riding school
- Plate 40 Riding school viewed to east
- Plate 41 Original sliding doors to riding school
- Plate 42 Interior of riding school viewed to gallery at north-east end
- Plate 43 Interior of riding school viewed to south-west end
- Plate 44 Viewing gallery photographed through modern mesh screen

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Client: Lexden Restoration & Development

FAU Project No: 1858

NGR: TL 9929 2451

Planning Applications: F/COL/06/1276, 1281, 1282 & LB/COL/06/0558

OASIS Record: essexcou1-39335

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) undertook a programme of building recording works on four listed Victorian structures at Colchester Garrison. The project was commissioned by The Green Edge (on behalf of Lexden Restoration & Development) prior to their conversion to mixed residential and commercial use. The buildings belong to the Cavalry and Le Cateau Barracks, established in 1862-4 and 1874-75, respectively. All four structures are Grade II listed, conferring national importance and statutory protection.

The current survey follows an earlier phase of recording works carried out on stable block B of Le Cateau Barracks in February 2007 (Letch 2007). While the previous report should be consulted, this report builds on the knowledge of the Barracks and its buildings and provides a more detailed insight into the development and importance of the surviving buildings.

Copies of this report will be issued to CBC and deposited with the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER). A digital copy will be uploaded to the OASIS database (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/oasis/index.cfm>). The site archive will be deposited at Colchester Museum.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and description (fig.1)

Colchester Garrison was constructed between the 1860s and 1930s on the southern side of Colchester town centre. The Cavalry Barracks and the Le Cateau Barracks, adjoining each other on the east side of Butt Road (fig.1), were the first permanent barracks to be built in Colchester and pre-date many others in the country. The Cavalry Barracks survives largely intact and therefore has high group value. Less remains of Le Cateau, but its architectural significance is greater. Buildings from each of the barracks were undergoing redevelopment during the recent survey.

The buildings subject to the recording condition performed a variety of military functions. However, in recent years those in Le Cateau Barracks have largely been adapted for army training. The following structures are included in the report. They are listed with their original functions, with recent functions, as far as is known, given in brackets.

- Stables/barrack blocks A (stables/lecture rooms 06). LBS 469540
- Canteen & Sergeants Mess (Lec 09). LBS 469545
- Adult School (Offices/Lec. 08). Built later, c.1884. LBS 469543
- Riding School, built with the earlier Cavalry Barracks in 1862-4. LBS 469542

Most of the buildings became redundant when the barracks shifted to a new purpose-built complex outside the town, but the stable and riding school continued to be used after the Ingram survey was completed in 2000. The structures were listed in 1998 in advance of the garrison redevelopment scheme and all are to be retained, with historic boundaries intact, within subsequent development schemes.

The officers quarters (Lec. 03, fig.1) are another surviving listed component of the Le Cateau group, in separate ownership and now lying within Goojerat Barracks. Future plans for the building are unknown. The previously recorded stables/barrack block B was in the process of conversion to office/residential use while the current works were being carried out.

The group value of the extant buildings is important, according to the garrison historic building assessment (HBA) carried out by the Ingram Consultancy shortly after the majority were made redundant. For full appreciation of the subject therefore, this report should therefore be read in conjunction with the earlier HBA (Ingram Consultancy 2000).

2.2 Planning background

Colchester Borough Council received planning applications in 2006 from Lexden Restorations for change of use and conversion of each of the buildings discussed in this report. The proposed plans were as follows:

- Stable block B: commercial/residential conversion to ground floor restaurant and first floor apartments
- Canteen & Sergeants Mess: conversion to five two-bed apartments
- Adult School: conversion to two two-bed apartments
- Riding School: retail/commercial conversion

Mindful of the listed status, group value and high importance identified in the historic building assessment, the Colchester Borough Council Conservation Officer recommended that a full record be made of the structures in their present form.

In addition to the conversion of the listed buildings, consent was granted for the erection of houses to the west of the standing buildings, which, along with the refurbishment of stable block B, were being constructed at the time of the survey. The stable blocks of the Cavalry Barracks to the south, which are not listed, were also in the process of conversion.

2.3 Historical background

Colchester Garrison and development of the Cavalry & Le Cateau Barracks

Colchester has been a military town since the Roman Invasion. The first garrison was established in AD43 as that of the Legio XX Valeria Victrix.

From the late 17th-century troops were billeted in the town. A military camp was established on Lexden Heath in 1741 for troops on their way to the continent. The camp continued in use alongside billeting until a permanent garrison was built in 1794, during the Napoleonic Wars. Because of its location close to the continent, Colchester became an important military town during this time. In that year, wooden infantry and cavalry barracks were erected on four acres of land to the south-east of Lexden Heath. Additional barracks were built on a 21-acre site bordering on Magdalene Street soon after, in 1797 and 1799. Four brigades of infantry were camped at Lexden Heath by 1803, which by 1805 could accommodate 7,000 men and 400 horses.

Land was steadily acquired by the army during the 19th-century. Colchester Camp was built in 1855-6, during the Crimean War, containing temporary wooden huts for 5,000 infantrymen. The wooden Garrison Church was built at the same time in Military Road and, as one of the most important surviving structures, is the only building to have grade II* listed status.

In 1857, at the close of the Crimean War, a Royal Commission was set up to look at sickness and mortality rates in the army. The Commission for Improving Barracks and Hospitals, chaired by Sydney Herbert, a supporter of Florence Nightingale, recommended improved heating, ventilation and sanitary arrangements in barracks, as well as the provision of permanent married quarters and gymnasia. These recommendations were incorporated into the new stable block design at Aldershot, built between 1856 and 1859 as the first permanent cavalry barracks in the country.

Colchester Cavalry Barracks were the first permanent brick-built barracks in the town. Constructed off Butt Road between 1862 and 1864, they also benefited from the Commission's recommendations. Improved methods for heating, ventilation and sanitation were incorporated into the barrack/stable designs.

However, just after the Cavalry Barracks were built, in 1864, an Army Sanitary Commission stated that quartering men over stables was inherently unhealthy and unacceptable. This did not stop the Royal Artillery Barracks (later renamed as Le Cateau) being built in 1874 in the established form, seemingly in contravention of these guidelines. However, the design of the new stable/barrack blocks included an improved ventilation system, incorporating grilles and wall flues, and state of the art fire-proofing. The six blocks were arranged in two columns either side of the parade ground with officers quarters to the front and sergeants mess to the south. A short while after the sergeants mess was built, or perhaps even during construction, its service areas were re-modelled and simplified and a billiards room and dining rooms included. The adult school was the last of the historic group to be built, believed to be around 1884 (Ingram 2000).

After the First World War, the Field Artillery Barracks were renamed Le Cateau after the British victory over the Germans during the retreat from the Battle of Mons in 1914 (<http://www.1914-18.net/bat2.htm>).

The garrison continued to grow in the 20th-century but by 1962 expansion had reached a level of over-capacity for the modern army, and proposals were submitted to demolish the

Cavalry and Le Cateau Barracks (Ingram 2000). In reality, it appears that only Le Cateau was affected. Buildings at the north end, stable blocks C to F, the married quarters and gun sheds at the back of the parade ground (fig.2) were demolished, making way for the CBC Butt Road car park and an extension to Goojerat Barracks (built 1900-02). Presumably this coincided with the Royal Horse Artillery abandoning the barracks for new accommodation, although the stables were kept for the horses, which had since WWI fulfilled a ceremonial role. The extant buildings, apart from the officers quarters, were converted to army lecture/training rooms. This included the barrack rooms above the stables, the sergeants mess (with first floor divided into living quarters) and the adult school, which was sub-divided into offices. Le Cateau Road was probably built along the former parade ground to link Butt Road and Circular Road North around this time. Circular Road North forms a spinal road serving the garrison located between the wedge-shape created by Butt Road to the west and Mersea Road to the east.

The remaining Le Cateau group and riding school were listed in 1998, when the buildings were vacated and plans for the regeneration of the garrison area were being drawn up. In the listings, their construction date is given as 1863, the date of the Cavalry Barracks, which for the most part is incorrect. The Ingram survey was commissioned shortly after to assess and identify important buildings and groups. At the time (2000) the stables and riding school were still in use, but the other buildings were redundant and empty. Since 2000, a fire has damaged part of the top floor of stable block A. Much of the original layout of the neighbouring Cavalry Barracks remains largely unaltered, forming a more cohesive, though architecturally less impressive, group.

A short overview of the development of the Royal Artillery Regiment is presented in the earlier survey (Letch 2007, 5).

3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main aim of the project was to investigate and record the stable block, sergeants mess, adult school and riding school to English Heritage level 3 standard (2006) prior to conversion. With the agreement of the planning officer from Colchester Borough Council, the new works adhered to the standards laid out in the previous WSI for stable block B (ECC FAU 2007). In doing so, this would provide a permanent record of the buildings in their present condition

considering their construction, plan form, spatial layout, significance and importance on a local and national level.

Background information has been included and adapted from the earlier report on stable block B (Letch 2007), where relevant.

4.0 METHODS

Existing plans and elevations supplied by the client were used during the survey, forming the basis for illustrations shown in this report. Where ever possible, original architect's drawings were sourced and used to aid understanding of building development. Architectural descriptions were made and photographs taken in both digital and 35mm black & white print formats. Photographs were taken both internally and externally.

The survey was commissioned only after building works had started on stable block B and on new houses adjoining to the west, by which time the area around the four structures had become a large, busy construction site. Although this did not interfere with the standard of recording, the level of photography was compromised by the building works, particularly the stable block, which was surrounded by portacabins, fencing, contractor's vehicles and building materials. Therefore general site photographs taken during the previous survey, before building works had started, have been included in the report. Some of the interiors had been stripped-out, but in other areas there was good survival. Elevation drawings (fig.4) are provided for greater clarity and include details subsequently hidden from view. As the ground floor windows were boarded-up, their interiors were recorded and photographed under artificial lighting. All parts were clear and accessible, except for those mentioned under specific sections.

It would appear that many historic fixtures and fittings were removed when the training facilities were created, if not before. More general features such as windows, doors and skirting boards have been retained but important fixtures and fittings have been lost. Most of the rooms are therefore bare and not included as report plates unless there is a specific reason or representative of a certain type or condition. A selection of photographs is reproduced at the back of the report as plates 1-44. The remainder can be found in the archive.

The Garrison HBA (Ingram 2000) was used as primary background research and as much of the background details in this report are relevant to the initial FAU survey on stable block B, the introductory paragraphs are largely the same, though with relevant adaptations to the text. Copies of the 1875 floor plans for the stable block and sergeants mess were obtained from the National Monuments Record (NMR) in Swindon and drawings of the riding school are taken from the Ingram report. These provide useful details on original construction and function, and are reproduced alongside existing drawings towards the back of the report.

5.0 BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 LAYOUT AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION (fig.2)

Three of the four structures recorded in the survey (stable block A, sergeants mess and adult school) belong to Le Cateau Barracks. The barracks occupied a triangular plot defined by Butt Road, the Barracks Folly and the boundary wall with the Cavalry Barracks to the west; the latter to be preserved within the development (fig.1). Goojerat Barracks, built 1900-02 (Ingram 2000), is located to the east, and now includes the area where stable blocks D-F and married quarters once stood, for parking armoured vehicles. The riding school lies within the Cavalry Barracks on the north-east side of the boundary wall with Le Cateau (fig.1) and is slightly earlier in date to the Le Cateau structures. Until recently, there was a paddock area at the front of the riding school. The stable/barrack blocks belonging to the Cavalry Barracks still stand to the south-west (fig.1).

The original layout of Le Cateau was on a regular north-east to south-west orientation centred around the parade ground with the officers quarters and a circular driveway in front facing onto Abbey Field (fig.2), seen during gun practice on the front cover of this report. Flanking the parade ground were two columns of three stable blocks, of which only blocks A and B now remain. Married quarters were provided at the column end. Other buildings, most notably the gun sheds, inhabited the north-west end of the parade ground. Menuges and a lunging circle were located on the east side, bordering Abbey Field. All of these have been removed.

The canteen and sergeants mess is located to the south of the main group, close to the boundary wall, onto which the adult school, built slightly later (c.1884), is attached. The Butt Road entrance formerly opened onto the parade ground but is now the entrance to the CBC car park and Le Cateau Road.

All buildings are in generally good condition, with areas of notable exception, such as the fire-damaged south barrack room and parts of the sergeants mess. For security reasons, the ground floor windows of the stable block, sergeants mess and adult school were boarded-up before the survey, which meant their interiors were recorded under artificial lighting. Original fixtures and fittings appear to have been either replaced over time or taken out when an alternate use was required. Many of the fireplaces have been removed and blocked or else replaced with heavy art-deco style types later equipped with gas fires. No evidence was found for the gas lighting shown on historic plans reproduced as figures 3 and 7.

5.2 STABLE BLOCK A

The configuration of stable blocks A - F is shown in the 1875 plan of the barracks (fig.2), arranged in two groups, either side of the parade ground. Each block has a letter 'I' plan form and comprise two storeys, providing stabling on the ground floor and barrack rooms for the soldiers above. Each contained four 'batteries' - one to each stable quarter (fig.3). A battery comprised the men and horses required to operate and transport a gun and its ammunition. Thirty-one horses and forty-six men were housed in each block, with two sergeants and their horses too. The wings either end contained harness rooms, workshops and officers stables (adjacent to the parade ground in fig.3). Each group of three blocks was self-supporting, containing common functions to those on the opposite side of the parade ground. Hence stable block B contained a wheeler's shop, tailor's shop and forge; the mirror image of stable block D (NMR MD95/1445no.5). In addition there were school rooms for adults (in block C) and infants (block F).

Lighting to the stables (and other buildings) was provided by gas lamps located on the wing corners and inside, marked by an asterisk on the original plans of the stables (fig.3) as well as other buildings.

As part of the group, stable block A faces the south-east and Abbey Field/Circular Road North. Built exactly the same as the others, it has a long rectangular, broadly symmetrical, single-depth plan form with projecting wings to front and back, containing officers stables and workshops/stores. The rear part, facing towards the parade ground, originally had glazed-roofed litter sheds extending from the central gable to wings either side (fig.3). The three stable doors were located facing the parade ground and on the two end walls. A fourth entry point for soldiers into the stables was located on the Abbey Field side. There was no internal

access between the stables and barrack rooms above. A system of drains fed out from the stables, linking to the main system that drained into Abbey Field (fig.2).

The structure is built the same as previously-recorded stable block B, in the neo-Georgian style, with low ranges, pedimented gables and wings. Brickwork is in 9" Flemish bond with yellow brick dressings stood on a low chamfered Staffordshire blue plinth. There is yellow brick banding on the first floor and cast stone and heavy Yorkstone dressings to the eaves and gables, some of which have been removed. Ground floor windows have all been boarded-up and those on the south range of the first floor blocked-in after a fire caused extensive damage in the south-west bays. The roof contains timber king post strut trusses (fig.6). Cast iron plates contain rods pass through the gables, keeping them in tension.

Stable block A has been less altered than block B, externally and internally, most notably regarding the extant gables with their Yorkstone kneelers and wooden roof vents that formed part of the ventilation system. Both blocks have had their chimney stacks reduced. Balcony railings survive better in block A, which has not been spoilt by modern first floor extension as is the case for block B.

Inside, the ground floor stabling remains largely intact, retaining stalls either side of a central corridor. There is better survival of features such as tethering rings and iron trough frames absent in stable block B. However, those rooms in the end wings retain little in the way of original features.

On the upper floor, the two 23-man dormitories have an open plan form either side of the central gable. The north-east bays have been stripped of all internal fixtures and the later training room partitions still present in stable block B. Those in the opposite end are fire-damaged and were recorded from a distance. The central gable provided stairs, ablution areas and two sergeant's quarters. An asphalt-covered balcony (fig.3) is located on the Abbey Field side of the building.

5.2.1 External descriptions (fig.4)

Many common architectural details and features are present on all elevations of the stable block and, as far as possible, are described together at the beginning of this section. More specific aspects are described under the sub-headings of their appropriate elevations. Recording of the building exterior was to some extent hampered by its siting in what had

become a working construction site - with portacabins, vehicles and building materials obscuring views and limiting access.

The two long elevations face stable block B and Abbey Field, the latter of which is the main (south-west facing) façade, although the level of architectural detailing is the same. Each has a central pedimented gable with two-storey stable/barrack ranges extending either side, terminating in single-storey gabled projecting wings (plates 1-3). The end gables are squared-off to accommodate chimney stacks.

Yellow brick banding provides simple architectural detailing to much of the ground floor and all of the first floor. Window sills on both floors are connected by a single projecting band (fig.4, plate 4) and a double band of flush yellow brickwork passes between the window heads at first floor level. Further banding and decoration features belong to the south-east elevation only. The eaves and gables are decorated with a coggled yellow brick cornice also present in the side wings. The gable cornices were originally supported on Yorkstone kneelers. These features have been lost on the north-west central gable and north-east end gable. In addition, the central and wing gables have oculus windows, which have again been lost on the central north-west gable (fig.4 & plates 1-4).

Ground floor fenestration in the stable ranges consists of wooden-framed square six-light tilting stable windows that have been boarded-up since the building was surveyed (fig.4). Some have modern single pane replacements, but most are original to build. Windows on the first floor are long 4 x 4 top hung sashes with thin frames and angled profiles. Those in the south-western bays (plates 1 & 4) were blocked after the fire, but the frames remain *in situ*. Window sills and heads are built from cast stone. Original battened doors retain vented fanlights over most, but are boarded-up from the outside. Only a few external doors have been replaced. Modern skylights over the ablution rooms were inserted to replace the old ones when work was carried out on the roof.

Ventilation, for the release of foul air and introduction of fresh air, was a vital requirement of the building and is an important and interesting aspect of the primary build of the stable block. Rows of cast iron air bricks are located above the stable windows. Single grills are located below, at 3.3m intervals, at ground floor level, acting as fresh air intakes (labelled as 'FAI' in fig.3). Similar grills are located on the first floor between each of the window heads to ventilate the top floor. Those on the south-east elevation (labelled LV in fig.3) correspond to metal foul air pipes protruding from the low part of the roof (plates 1-2 & 6) perhaps to also

create updraught. The foul air pipes are labelled LV in fig. 3, 'venting pipe from stables'. They link through wall flues to iron ventilation grills set high up inside the stables within the sandstone blocking between girder and jack arch (plate 19). Wall flues on the north-west side expelled stable gasses via two wooden louvres either side of the central block/gable (plates 3 & 4), annotated on fig.3 as 'ventilating flue from stables'.

The roofs are slate clad with a shallow pitch of 30°. Like the other structures in the Le Cateau group, the roofs are re-laid, presumably when other work was carried out, i.e. gables rebuilt roof lanterns removed and chimneys reduced. The chimney stacks have been cut off down to the plain yellow brickwork base and capped, as is also the case on stable block B. The full working chimneys can be seen in the cover plate to this report. They are the same as those surviving on the sergeants mess, with a yellow brick base and square red brick shafts decorated with yellow brick and dog-tooth banding (minus the chimney pots which appear to be later in date).

South-east elevation (Abbey Field)

The focal point of the main, south-east, elevation is its central gable. At ground level it features three doors; the central door leading into the stable, with the two outer doors serving the barrack room stairs. All doors are of original planked form with fanlights, although the central fanlight is blocked and the others boarded-up. The stable doorway and two 2 x 6 hung sash windows either side have segmental arched brick heads instead of cast stone, like the doorways.

On the first floor, the main body of the south-east façade of the building is stepped back, with only the central gable projecting flush with the ground-floor stable wall – the flat roof of the stable ranges either side forming a balcony to the barrack accommodation (fig.4a & plates 1-4). On this upper level, the central gable contains five tall, 2 x 4 sash windows headed by a common cast stone lintel. Above, in the roof apex is an oculus window, dressed in yellow brickwork with its dog-tooth eaves cornice and limestone kneelers intact. The balcony either side retains most of its diagonal iron railings, which are to be kept and refurbished as part of the redevelopment. The fire escape (fig.4) was removed before the recording works begun, but is likely to have been a modern feature. Doors led out onto the balcony from the fourth and eighth bays of the barrack rooms. That at the south-west end is now blocked following the fire at this end of the building.

On the ground floor below, the two stable ranges extend either side of the central gable (fig.5). The high stable windows are set seven paces above a double 'I' patterned yellow brick band (plates 1-3). All ground floor window lintels are painted white.

The two, single storey, wings are built in the same style as the central gable and retain all their external features (oculus, eaves cornice, etc). The south wing (plate 2), is entered by a single battened door with 8-pane fanlight over. It was originally a forge, with a roof lantern for light (fig.3) which was removed when it became a kitchen during the barrack's latter function a training centre. Similarly, the north wing (plate 3), which housed the officers horses, has lost its skylight upon conversion to staff quarters (fig.5). A pair of original battened doors led into the wing, surmounted by an 8-pane fanlight and 10-pane vented window. On the other (south-east facing) side, against the stalls, is a single 15-pane tilting stable window.

North-west elevation (parade ground)

Access to the parade ground elevation was limited by construction works on stable block B and by obstacles against the wall. However, there was enough detail already recorded on the architect's drawings and by photographs taken during the earlier survey of stable block B to compensate (plate 6).

The main access from the parade ground was via the central gable, whose doors had been removed and boarded up before the survey. The door was topped by a segmental arch and fanlight (fig.4a), observed internally. A cambered pavement with drainage channels either side led out from the door (plate 6), more apparent than those on the end stable doors. The area either side, and between blocks A and B, is now laid to concrete. A row of in-filled sockets beneath the stable windows relate to the open-sided litter sheds that stood against the wall either side of the gable (fig.3). Fenestration is different on this side, where the stables continue through the gable, resulting in the continuation of high stable windows up to the doorway. Brick banding below the windows is absent from the north-west elevation (plate 4), which was concealed by the litter sheds. Fenestration on the upper floor of the central gable includes fewer windows than the other side (four instead of five) with separate, rather than joined, heads. The gable above has been rebuilt plain.

Windows on the long stable ranges match those on the Abbey Field elevation. Chimneys central to each side have been reduced and capped, probably when the gable was rebuilt. Set upon the low side of the roof either side of the gable are two vented wooden louvres (fig.4, plate 6) whose positions are marked on original drawings as part of the through-wall

ventilation system (fig.3). Their globe/spike finials are similar to that seen on the sergeants canteen/mess' stair lantern.

The wings on this side (harness rooms, wheeler's and shoemaker's shop, fig.3) do not project out as far as those on the south-east elevation and main detailing is as built. Each has extant double brick banding up to the fanlight and dog-tooth corbelling. Oculus windows pierce the gable. The only changes that have been made are to some of the fixtures. The 2 x 6 pane sash window on the south wing has been replaced, while the north wing retains its original. A second window has been inserted into the blocked doorway in the north wing (fig.4c). The south wing retains its narrow planked and panelled doors with narrow five-light fanlight over.

Gable ends

The gabled south-west elevation (fig.4d, plate 2) retains all original features apart from the reduced chimney stack and a blocked 4-pane sash window. All architectural decoration has been removed from the north-east elevation (fig.4b, plate 5). On ground floor level, both ends have boarded stable doors and vented three-pane fanlights. To the side are large tripartite windows with $\frac{3}{4}$ " iron guard bars as shown on original drawings (fig.3). All openings are topped by dressed segmental arched heads.

Windows in the attached wings are more regular and have the usual cast stone lintels. Three relatively high 4-pane stable windows feature on the north wing (officers stables), one for each stall (fig.3). A single 2 x 3 sash window is located in the south wing at first floor level which was blocked after the fire (fig.4d).

5.2.3 Internal descriptions

The stable/barrack block retains the original layout but most of the early fixtures and fittings to all but the stable area have been lost, including fireplaces and workshop features. Moreover, the first floor has been stripped-out, removing internal doors as well. Nevertheless, with the exception of the officers stables, the internal layout was better preserved than in stable block B.

Recording of the ground floor was undertaken under artificial (halogen) lighting due to the windows being boarded up for security. Fire damage meant the south-west barrack room was not entered, but was recorded photographically.

Ground floor

The ground floor has a linear, largely symmetrical, layout the same as stable block B. Long passages extend either side of the central stair block terminating in stores/service rooms located in the end wings (figs.3 & 5). Either side of the passage are rows of cast iron columns that support a high jack-arched concrete ceiling and hold the stall boxes, originally one per bay. Latterly the stalls were enlarged and are to be retained as eating compartments in the new restaurant layout. Double stable doors are located either end of the building, with a third leading out behind stable block B and onto the parade ground. At the rear of the central gable, an enclosed passage leads between the stairs and out the rear, the stairways enclosed and accessed externally to keep the barracks separate from the stables.

The main plan form remains unaltered, with the exception of two breeze block fire walls inserted after the third stall on the south-west bay and at the end of the stalls on the north-east bay (fig.5). The stables and harness/tack rooms remained in use until recently, but all other rooms were converted as offices, a kitchen and staff rooms (fig.5) connected to the training centre. Inevitably fixtures and fittings have been lost in the process, but reference may be made to fig.3 for information on such important historic features.

Stables

Originally, the horses were kept singly, one stall each side of the bay, providing accommodation for 16 horses on the north-east end, and 15 on the other end, giving a total stabling of 31 horses (fig.3). The stalls were quite tight, and the horses would have stood facing the windows. Iron tethering rings are set high on the walls (1.85m), showing these were large horses of around 17 hands (c.1.7m, S. Rowse pers. comm.); large horses being required to pull the gun carriages. Nowadays, horses perform more of a ceremonial role in the military, and the stalls have since been enlarged to create more spacious accommodation for fewer animals.

Stable bays are defined by tall 6" columns with angular fluted ends, which, along with the tall concrete jack-arch ceiling, are the most prominent constructional features, bringing a sense of grandeur to the building (plates 7 & 8). The ceiling rises to 4.4m, enabling better air flow to the interior. Columns are placed 1.65m (5' 6" in fig.3) apart, correlating to the springing points to each arch. Construction is the same either side, the only differences being that the columns running along the south-east side, supporting the first floor, are bolted to longitudinal cast iron plate girders. Those on the north-west side, which are not load-bearing, are bolted to lateral iron ceiling joists (fig.5) that support the jack-arches. Rolled iron ties

provide reinforcement across the arches. The ceiling is referred to as 'Dennett's patent arch and fire-proof flooring system' (Ingram 2000) and created an effective barrier between the stables and barrack rooms. The introduction of concrete in Victorian construction was an important fire-prevention and strengthening measure often used in industrial structures.

The stalls have heavy 1.3m-high battened doors (formed from ½ x 3½" boards) and taller (1.85m) boarded partitions (plate 9). The stall doors and columns are painted royal blue (not their original colour) and the stall divisions and bare brick walls are black. Above stall height, the columns and walls are painted white up to the ceiling, which is light blue. Those columns on the south-west side of the modern partition are black.

Stall partitions have suffered and some have been replaced with chipboard. Others have planks nailed to the bases where the bottoms have rotted. All have been gnawed by horses. The doors are carried by pointed strap hinges initially nailed, but latterly bolted, to the doors. None of the original stall layout remains, each being converted into two or three bay stalls or else rearranged as six 1½ bay stalls in the north-west row (fig.5). To enable this, partitions have been removed and former doors re-fitted to form the fronts of stalls, giving a uniform appearance. Modern long sliding bolts have been added to secure the doors.

Flooring is consistent to each stall, made from 9 x 4½" rivuletted Staffordshire blue stable bricks set diagonally and running either side to a central urine gully, formed from a single lowered row of the same (plate 10). This connected to the main drainage gullies lining the central passage. Original fittings remain inside the stalls, namely the tethering rings mentioned earlier, and iron wall brackets for feeders on the side walls, mounted to a height of 1m (plate 10). High iron spurs on some of the columns (plates 7 & 8) could be saddle racks, but they are probably too high, at 2.75m, and are more likely left over from the manufacturing process, but removed further down where they might harm the horses.

Modern water troughs and feeders are located in the reconfigured stalls on the north-east side. Original stable windows, with glazing bars, are easily-recognisable and many survive, especially on the south-west elevation. Both are the tilting type common to stables, set high and opened by a cord. A row of iron ventilation grills are positioned immediately above the windows for the discharge of foul air through wall flues and out the pipes at roof level.

The central passage between the two rows of stalls, is floored in granite pitcher paving (fig.3) laid in 8cm-wide courses. Their upsides have worn diagonal score-marks for grip. Square-

profiled granite gullies line the passage, collecting urine from the stalls out beneath any of the three stable doors (fig.5). Outside, the gullies linked to drains either sides of the stable blocks that also served the married quarters (fig.2). Flooring in the north-west side stable doorway consists of 8½ x 4" plain Staffordshire blue bricks, with drainage gullies each side that continue onto the cambered paved area outside (plate 6). The stable door has been removed and boarded up, leaving only the arched window above. The window has three vented lights with twelve panes each, similar to those over the end doors, but longer, in proportion with the central gable. The interior of the adjacent battery store has replaced modern shelving and a water tank has been fitted above. A rack is fixed to the left for 'leading ropes'.

The original ledged battened and braced north-east stable door remains under a later inserted false ceiling (plate 12), but that to the other side has been removed for refitting. Both ends have short arched three-light windows above the doors (fig.4b & d), now boarded over.

Side wings

The two wings stand at the north-east and south-west ends of the stalls. The rooms on the north-west elevation have iron I-beam trusses on the line of the north-west load bearing wall (fig.5), while those on the south-east elevation are large single rooms, divided into two bays by timber king post strut roof trusses, the same as the main roof. Fixtures and fittings such as doors and windows have been retained but other features (e.g. fire places) are no longer present, leaving open areas with little of historic value. All except the forge have modern boarded ceilings and concrete floors.

South-west wing

The offices to the south (former wheeler's shop and harness room 1) are connected by a half-heck door (plate 15) with additional external access into the wheeler's shop. Carpets remain, as does an old safe in the alcove (fig.5) manufactured by Whittingham Bros. of Birmingham, possibly an original feature.

The forge, latterly a kitchen, retains its granite (or 'fir block', fig.3) flooring but the benches either side of the doorway and the furnace in the west corner are gone. However, the flue aperture remains (fig.5), as does an oculus window and fanlight (plate 16). At the time of the survey, the interior was used to store building materials.

North-east wing

The two rooms on the north end (harness room 2 and shoemaker's shop) contain little of interest and their florescent lighting and inserted ceilings suggests these were probably also used recently as offices.

The officers stable (for the two sergeants who had quarters between the barrack rooms) is entered by a half-heck door from the central passage. They are well-preserved in stable block B, but retain no features of interest in block A since their conversion to staff facilities, removing the three stalls (shown in fig.3), flooring and saddle racks (plate 17).

Stair lobbies

The central passage between the stair lobbies and Abbey Field is paved the same as the central passage, but without the drainage gullies.

Two stair lobbies are located on the south-east side within the central gable and entered by two doors either side of the central passage (fig.5). Cupboards beneath the stairs show traces of 'army green' paint seen in the sergeants mess, seemingly part of the standard décor.

First floor

All historic fixtures and fittings, and even modern wall partitions, have been stripped out on the upper floor and the south-west barrack room damaged by fire since the 2000 survey. Therefore the previous report on stable block B (Letch 2007) should be consulted for a better understanding of the original use of space on the upper floors of these buildings.

Stairs

A central imperial stair with curving balustrades rises to the barrack room landing (plate 14) from the lobbies below. The stair is made from cast concrete with hexagonal shafted newel post and tapering 4" cast iron columns to hold the landing. Vinyl treads and angular steel edging are modern additions, alongside a vinyl-coated safety rail to the balustrade.

Corridor and ablutions

From the stair, the first floor is entered through a pair of modern fire doors and into a short corridor. Either side of the corridor are the former ablutions rooms and night urinals ('NU's' in fig.3). However any evidence of use, including more recent internal fixtures and fittings, has been stripped-out. At the end of the corridor, lit by a high sky light, the corridor branches off

to the sides, leading to the sergeants quarters to the front and barrack rooms at each end (figs.3 & 5).

Sergeants quarters

The two sergeants were accommodated centrally on the north-east side of the building, between the barrack rooms so they could keep an eye on the soldiers. All features (fireplaces, etc.) have been stripped apart from the blocked observation window into the south barrack room. The one on the north side has been cut out to create a doorway (fig. 5).

Barrack rooms

Each of the two barrack rooms was built identically to accommodate 23 men. Beds were arranged against the opposing long walls and heating provided by fire places set at each end and centrally (fig.3), all now removed. The southern room has been destroyed by fire (plate 18). The north room has been stripped-out, but wall scars of removed lecture room partitions, as recorded in the barrack rooms of stable block B, are still evident. However, their removal brings a certain sense of original internal space that is absent in block B.

Barrack room décor is austere, suiting the practicability of its function. A low, rolled skirting is the only embellishment afforded. Where this is found in other parts of the barracks, it is on later walls though here it is probably original. Twin-light four pane hung sash windows are located at regular intervals and there are doorways from the barrack rooms out onto the balcony, for relaxation.

5.3 CANTEEN & SERGEANTS MESS

The canteen and sergeants mess (plates 19 & 20) provided facilities for the NCOs, including a shop, bar and recreation rooms on two floors. Judging from the evidence of the stable blocks, which housed two NCOs each, there were at least 12 sergeants, perhaps more if combined with the Cavalry Barracks. Extensive changes occurred to the internal layout of the service part of the building quite early on and again during the modern training centre phase when lecture rooms and temporary quarters were created. Analysis of the sources, including the listed building description, suggests the building had been vacated by 1998, when the sergeants mess moved to the officers quarters (Listed Buildings Online). Judging by the interiors, this happened before the training centre was established, believed to be the 1960s.

The officers quarters continued its role outside the training centre and reportedly contains fine interiors (Ingram 2000).

The plan form is square, with projecting gable extending to the north-west and a first floor gable on the south-west side. Single-storey service ranges are attached either side of the main south-east elevation, one of which faces onto a contemporary walled yard containing toilets and a coal store to the north-east. A plain modern porch extends from the south-west over the main entrance to the formal areas on both levels.

The structure is built in keeping with the rest of the barrack buildings and aligned with the stable blocks and officers quarters. In contrast to stable block A, it has a Victorian 'villa' style with bold, quite plain, square elevations and a low roof. Gables project on the least exposed sides, containing gothic flourishes, but the main part of the structure has architectural detail coherent with the stables. Brickwork is again in 9" Flemish bond, with yellow brick and Yorkstone dressings to the eaves and gables, stood on a low chamfered Staffordshire blue plinth. The roof is slate-covered with a central glazed lantern to light the stairwell beneath, used by service staff. The structure was not in use during the Ingram survey and condemned as unsafe. Although no serious defects were noted, failure of rainwater goods was observed and isolated timber decay of floorboards and joists (Ingram 2000).

Original plans and section are included in the report as fig.8. However, the clarity of the former is affected by the inclusion of annotated changes drawn onto the plans at a later date, when the ground floor service area layout was simplified and room function changed. It is not clear when this was carried out, but the changes externally at least were made in keeping with the original style of the building and therefore are interpreted as being relatively soon after construction. They are sketched-in on the historic elevations (included with the archive). It is therefore difficult to establish whether the alterations were made soon after the mess was built or at the design stage. It is worth considering that the adult school, believed to have been built 10 years after in 1884, is built in exactly the same way and could readily be confused as being contemporary with the establishment of Le Cateau. Therefore a speculative date of c.1900 or earlier is given to the plan changes. With close study, the plans and sections present important information, not only on the layout but also as to the original fixtures, shown with a high degree of clarity, including fitted furniture (dressers, presses, etc) and gas lighting, not evident today. However, the plans are hard to follow, and the two layouts have been re-drawn as separate floor plans in figure 8, to aid understanding.

The original ground floor layout contained bars, tap rooms, kitchens, a shop and the sergeants mess. Upstairs were the library and recreation rooms, together with a coffee bar and quarters for the librarian and canteen sergeant (fig.8 a & b). The layout downstairs was changed to provide dining and billiards rooms and more bar facilities, but the first floor remained unaltered. The upstairs layout stayed the same until recent times when the four large rooms were divided into separate quarters and washing facilities installed as part of the training centre. Cellars are shown on the plans (fig.8) but were not observed during the survey, and, as they are not included on the current architect's plans, are assumed to be redundant.

For ease of reference, the shortened term 'sergeants mess' is used from this point forward.

5.3.1 External descriptions

The sergeants mess continues architectural themes common to all the surviving buildings of Le Cateau Barracks. Three courses of yellow brick banding is applied to window heads and two to the sills on both levels below dog-tooth eaves cornices. In the gables, such decoration, along with the Yorkstone copings and kneelers, has been removed when rebuilt, like in the stable block. The reason for this is unclear, but may be due to worries over the weight of the heavy kneelers pulling away from the building. Fenestration comprises 2 x 6, and sometimes 2 x 4, sash windows and cast stone sills and heads, with ashlar centres. Gable windows are more ornate. 'LV' iron ventilation grills are arranged between the window heads.

Chimney stacks survive to their original extent, and are shown to have yellow brick bases, yellow banding and dog-tooth/yellow brick oversailing not present on the other buildings. The chimney pots are not included on original section drawings (fig.8b), but are likely to be contemporary.

Where exposed, doorways are plain, flat-headed with cast stone heads. The stair lantern is a nice feature which could be viewed from all sides. It is a light timber structure with pyramidal slate roof that lit the central staff staircase (fig.8b, plate 24).

Main (south-east) elevation

The main elevation (fig.7a), as named on the original drawings, is really rather plain, but contains all decorative elements listed above. It faces square onto the existing road (plates 19 & 20). Single-storey pitched wings extend either side for the former cloakroom/caterer's

room and mess kitchen (figs. 8 & 10). The dog-tooth eaves cornice has been removed on the south side (fig.7a) and brick banding is discontinued in the north wing. A kitchen window this end was blocked and a buttress built up against it, on the other side of an inserted stove base (or similar) in the mess kitchen here (fig.8).

The windows on this elevation tend to be 2 x 6 pane sashes, with narrow 2 x 4 pane sashes at the northern end. A second narrow window appears to be blocked on the upper right side of plate 21, but this is unlikely since the chimney stack is here and an aperture not shown on the original drawings. Various ventilation grilles and soot traps for sweeping out the chimneys are located between the middle yellow bands.

North-east elevation

The ground floor is obscured by the brick yard wall in which a boarded-up doorway into the yard represents the 'mess sergeant's entrance', labelled as such in figs.7b and 8 (plate 19). Three wooden roof vents, now containing modern motorised fans, are located over the kitchen/scullery (plate 22) whose single storey front contains small 2 x 6 and 2 x 4 sash windows protected by original guard bars, only viewed from inside the yard (fig.8) Otherwise the elevation is as built, except for a neatly blocked door on the side of the north-west projection (plate 20) that is indicated on the early drawings as a double-doored entrance to the shop (fig.8).

North-west elevation

Arguably, this and the south-west elevation have better features than the main elevation, and also better proportions. The main feature is the projecting gable (plate 23), which has a Caernarvon arch containing circular plate tracery above the first floor window giving an unusual Gothic feel. The window itself is in the form of a stone mullioned tripartite sash window flanked by single side sashes. The top of the gable has been rebuilt. On the ground floor are two pairs of sash windows, each pair connected by cast stone lintels at the head.

Aside from the gable, the main part of the elevation contains well-spaced sash windows on both levels. A formal doorway into tap room 4 or 'ante room' was blocked when a small single-pitched porch was built (fig. 7), leaving the cast stone head in place (plate 23). A second doorway into the NCOs tap room and shop, facing the existing porch door, was retained but refitted with a single internal door. The style of the porch is in exact keeping with the main building, showing care was taken in the work to match the two. The lower parts of the external walls were obscured during the survey (plate 23).

The single storey north 'wing' was built blind, but two windows were seemingly added afterwards as they are sketched-in on the historic elevation (NMR 95/1442 no.7 in archive). One was later blocked, leaving little evidence apart from the cast stone head (fig.7c).

South-west elevation

The two main entrances into the sergeants mess were located in the central gable on this side. One led to the sergeants mess on the ground floor and the other, via a dog-leg staircase, up to the first floor recreation rooms. A modern flat-roofed porch now stands in front of the main dual entrances (plate 24). As with the opposite gable, the bottom sash windows are paired and the top ones capped with Caernarvon arches in gauged yellow brickwork. The same window dressings are also present in the officers quarters (Ingram 2000), along with other decorative motifs designed to signal its hierarchical position for the top ranks. On this side of the sergeants mess, however, there is no tracery to the upper sashes. Instead, the windows themselves have rounded heads (plate 24). Again, the gable has been rebuilt (fig.7d). The main part of the structure continues the common themes of paired windows and dog-tooth eaves cornice as seen on the north-west elevation.

5.3.2 Internal descriptions

The Ingram survey suggests the sergeants mess went out of use in 1998, but clearly its role had changed before this, as its last use was as lecture rooms within the training complex. Three lecture rooms are labelled on the doors downstairs and the larger recreation rooms and quarters were sub-divided to provide accommodation upstairs for the trainees, implying residential training. A modern bathroom was also installed.

Floors have been covered in lino and carpet, some of which was removed before the current survey to inspect the floor. Modern fire doors have been inserted to service areas and corridors. Ceilings have been boarded in some of the formal areas, but moulded skirting boards and cornices often remain. Although these fixtures are not elaborate, they are clearly different to the service areas (kitchens, sculleries, etc). Where fireplaces remain *in-situ*, they are likely to be 1930s or later in date, being of mass-produced plain Art Deco style and generally combined with later gas heaters. All areas had been cleared before the building recording began and the billiard room and tap room 4 have suffered from stripped walls and dug-up floors. Carpets have been removed and placed in the central corridor. The overall result is extremely bare interiors and, as there is little of historic interest remaining, the descriptions are therefore minimal.

Most of the remaining fixtures and fittings (the bar, heating, lighting, etc) belong to the 1960s or 70s. Comparison of the historic (fig.8) and existing (fig.9) floor plans shows how extensive the changes were. Differences in hierarchy between the various rooms are demonstrated by the décor. The formal NCO areas often have plastered walls, deep (though not elaborate) moulded skirting and picture rails, while the service rooms (kitchens, sculleries, etc) have low plain skirting (if any) and bare, painted walls. Bearing this in mind, it would be interesting to compare the sergeants mess interior with that of the officers mess and quarters which, in 2000 at least, reportedly still retained a great deal of original fixtures and fittings (Ingram 2000).

Ground floor

Because of the complexity of the changes on the ground floor, the following descriptions are titled under their designated functions, shown in fig.8b, before the training centre was established. When room function has changed from original function (fig.8), the original function is given in brackets. Descriptions begin on the ground floor, which was originally split between service rooms at the north end and formal rooms to the south, but was changed c.1900 to create a more simplified layout and extra formal rooms (fig.8b).

Yard 1

The yard, located along the north-east side of the sergeants mess, is part of the original layout. A slate roofed toilet range/coal shed is brick-built against the main yard wall (plate 25), whose fixtures and fittings have been removed. 'Army green' paint can be seen on the doors under the existing white paint. The corner between the north-west entrance and toilet block now accommodates a modern store with no intrinsic value (fig.7). The main open area is now overgrown, hiding evidence relating to removed walls and drains shown in fig.8a. All windows around the yard are fitted with iron glazing bars as original features.

According to the historic ground plan, the yard was divided into two by a wall across the centre. Each side contained toilets and coal sheds to serve one of the two kitchens. In addition there were urinals in the eastern yard and a drain running between the two parts (fig.8a). Each side had its own entrance. A service entrance remains on the north-west side of the yard for access into bar/kitchen 2, but formerly into the scullery linked to the kitchen. The more formal mess sergeant's entrance is entered from the north-east (fig.9) into a second scullery (7) again with a kitchen attached, mess kitchen 6.

Bar 2 (kitchen)

Originally fully enclosed from the yard with access through its scullery (fig.8a), a doorway was introduced post 1900 to supply the bar and the scullery entrance sealed when it became part of the enlarged mess kitchen (fig.9). The central doorway into room 3 was moved to the side in the change from kitchen to bar.

The extant vinyl floor is surrounded by plain 6" skirting denoting its service function, while the brick walls are bare and painted white. A large opening has been created to accommodate the bar that sits between room 2 and room 3, which is not indicated on the historic plans and therefore likely to date from the 1960s. A safe, manufactured by 'T. Withers & Son' of West Bromwich, stands in front of the blocked fireplace (fig.9) and is a secondary feature probably installed to hold bar takings. Withers & Son traded from Sandwell Road from 1855 to 1982 (Evans 2002) but this particular piece probably dates to the 1960s. The alcove cupboard alongside the former fireplace is an original feature of the kitchen (fig.8) and in more recent times contained training videos for the 'training library'.

Bar 3 (NCOs tap room, shop & bar)

The original doorway between rooms 3 and 2 was blocked before the present bar was inserted and kitchen 2 changed use (fig.9). The new door is fitted with a Yale lock for security. The original tap room and shop contained within bar room 3 were divided by partitions and counters in 1875 (fig.8 and shown in section 7b), supplied by the store on the south-east side. However, these fixtures were soon removed c.1900 to create one large area that merged with room 4. A formal entrance, with tall doors with fanlight over, originally led out of the south-west side of the projecting gable, subsequently enclosed by a porch (also used as cloakroom). A second entrance, its tall cast stone head neatly sat upon brick banding on the north-east elevation (fig.7b), provided similar entry into the shop.

A panelled ceiling is fitted, from which 1960s style lights hang (plate 26). The bar itself also belongs to that era. This more formal, entertaining area is reflected by a higher standard of original décor; i.e. 8½ inch beaded skirting at the base of the walls and a moulded picture rail below the ceiling. Both themes are repeated in room 4.

Ante room 4 (tap room)

A roller-blind partition now separates the bar from the tap room (fig.9) whose dividing wall was removed to open up rooms 3 and 4 into one large area (fig.8). Originally the two were linked by an internal doorway and serving hatch (fig.8). An external doorway was blocked

when the porch was built to create one entrance into the larger room. The re-enclosing of the room was latterly undertaken to create a lecture room (no.1) next to the bar. Large areas of floor and walling have recently been stripped-out and apart from some wall furniture (skirting boards and picture rails) no historic features remain (plate 27).

Dining room 5 (store, passage, larder & cook's room)

A fire door from room 3 leads through hall 8 and into the dining area, known more recently as 'lecture room 2'. Originally, thin partitions divided the room into a service passage between sergeants mess and the mess kitchen and the larder and cook's room (fig.8a & b). These partitions were cleared along with the room 3 store c.1900, to create a large dining room. A new service passage was inserted between the stair lobby and yard, thus bypassing the new formal area and extending access through the whole of the building.

The dining room is fitted with high skirting boards to reflect its status as the sergeants mess. A modern serving hatch is located by the door into room 6 (fig.9) and ceiling tiles have been applied to the original lath and plaster. A heavy swing door leads into the mess kitchen. Any earlier fixtures and fittings have been removed.

Mess kitchen 6 (mess kitchen & store).

The mess kitchen functioned together with scullery 7 and these are the only rooms in the building to have maintained their original roles. Room 6 originally had its own small store (fig.8b) but this and the kitchen 2 scullery were removed c.1900 to create a larger mess kitchen and service passage (fig.8b).

Entry into the mess kitchen was originally from the mess sergeant's entrance through the yard and scullery 7 and this is still the case. The room has a red lino tile floor and tiled walls and is clear of all kitchen appliances and fireplace blocked (plate 28).

Scullery 7

A second scullery that projects into yard 1 is entered from the mess kitchen and is very much the same in fittings as the mess kitchen (modern tiling, flooring, etc). The ledge, battened and braced door is original, facing the yard and close to the mess sergeant's entrance. Windows out onto the yard are fixed four and six pane and on the front, one has been inserted into the south-east wall. Although the window is of the same style as the others, it is not included on the original plan (fig.8a). An original partition and features such as a sink and

boiler (copper stove) shown in figure 8a have left no other evidence for their former presence.

Stair lobby 8

The small open-well staircase was a service stair from the ground floor bar and shop area up to the first floor service rooms (canteen sergeant's and librarian's quarters) through the centre of the building. The larger front stair, on the south-west side, was used by the NCOs and led to the more formal areas. The stairwell was lit by the roof lantern above, a distinctive feature to be retained within the conversion. The stairs originally wound their way round to the top on all sides, off bar room 3 (fig.8a), and not where the present stair begins that created general first floor access when the building was converted to a training centre, post-1962 (fig.9). The modern stair has a functional look, with vinyl treads. On the partition wall between stair lobby and billiard room is an original observation window into the sergeants mess, so the staff could check on progress.

Billiard room 9 (sergeants mess)

When the sergeants mess moved from here to room 5, c.1900, this room became a billiard room (fig.8). Billiards was a popular after-dinner pastime in the late 19th-century and such rooms were included within the larger houses of the day. Entry from the main door in the south-west elevation was made via the hall and either through a large open archway giving access to ?cloakroom 10 or else under the stairs, now blocked-in as a storage cupboard. The archway was partly-filled in the early conversion to a billiard room and then completely blocked in the modern period. Parts of the walls, floor and ceiling have recently been stripped, which has revealed the lower part of the blocked brick arch (plate 29). Wall fixtures (skirting and picture rails) are the same as in rooms 3 and 4, which are of equal status.

Caterer's room 10 (?cloakroom)

It is not clear what the original function of this room was, but its position between the main entrance and dining room 9 suggests it was perhaps used as a cloakroom. In the c.1900 changes, the room became a 'caterer's room' (fig.8). Perhaps caterers were called in for larger or more important dinner functions, especially after the kitchen capacity was reduced from two kitchens and sculleries to one of each (fig.8). With the mess room's move from room 9 to room 6, further into the centre of the building, access to the dining room through the billiard room would certainly have been awkward.

Latterly, with the building of the modern porch and toilets on the south-west side in front of the doorways, the caterer's room became part of the toilet block, removing any earlier fixtures and fittings in the process. The archway into room 9 was blocked, but its former extent may be viewed in plate 30.

Stair hall 11

In the original and secondary plans, the hall was divided by a partition wall into two corridors. One side led up a dog-leg staircase to first floor recreation rooms and the other into the mess and cloak room (fig.8). In the 1960s, the first flight of the front and back stairs, along with the wall in between, were removed to form an extended corridor through to the former bar room 3 and dining room 5. This created a thoroughfare through the lower spine of the building to link the lecture rooms to new toilet facilities in room 10 and the new porch. Fire doors were inserted at the same time. The original ground floor corridor was shortened to create a larger cupboard under the stairs resulting in the blocking-in of the billiard room door here (fig.9). The remainder of the archway the billiard room and toilets was also blocked.

First floor

In contrast to the preceding descriptions, the first floor is described by its original functions, which did not change, as far as is known, until the modern period when the interiors were divided up for residential training accommodation and associated facilities. All original room divisions remain, apart from some minor partitions, thanks to the larger layout upstairs. These larger recreation rooms and living quarters were subdivided with chipboard partitions in the 1960s to form simple modern quarters for trainees, each with sink, gas fire and bed. Their high ceilings were not aesthetically suited to smaller compartments. Most living quarters held one bed but some of the larger ones probably accommodated two, which would give enough rooms for at least 11 soldiers.

Stair landing 12

The original spatial layout of the stair and stair landing remain unchanged, leading off to recreation room 13 and reading room 16 (fig.9), both communal areas for use of the NCOs. The main feature is the balustrade (plate 31), consisting of a wrought iron curled rail combined with a cast iron newel post; the same as those seen in the stable block lobby. The opposite handrail is plain and wooden and likely to be a later insertion as are the chequered vinyl flooring of the stairs and landing, which are of no historic interest.

Recreation room 13

Relaxing pursuits such as games and other pastimes could be carried on here over a cup of coffee from the bar. The original room had a single entrance by the stair, large fireplace and serving window from the adjacent coffee bar (fig.8a), both of which are no longer present. Other original fixtures marked on fig.8a, such as the hat and cloak pegs either side of the fireplace and gas lighting, have left no trace.

The recreation room was divided into three compartments off a side corridor that forms a T-shape, giving access to all the new rooms (fig.9). A doorway was inserted into room 14, the former canteen sergeant's quarters. Although not an original feature, the ledged, braced and boarded door is likely to be contemporary with the building's pre-training function and has a rail and clothes hooks built in (plate 34).

The corridor partition walls have high windows (plate 32) and a low, round-profiled skirting in contrast to the 9 inch bead-moulded skirting retained on the main walls, also seen in plate 33. The same rounded mouldings are also present in the upper floor of the stables and inside the adult school, not always on secondary walls.

Canteen sergeant's quarters 14

Located on the south-west side of the building, the room was lit by the prominent south-west window that has the Caenarvon arch and plate tracery. It was originally divided into two areas (living room and bedroom) with separate fireplaces and an enclosed coffee bar. The living area partition was removed c.1900. The coffee bar had its own shelves and benches (fig.10). The coffee was brought up from bar room 3 by a dumb waiter (labelled as 'lift' in fig.8a) and served to the recreation room via the hatch. The standard of décor is the same as the other rooms on this level, but aside from this, there are no other original fixtures or fittings. Original access was solely off the central stair 17.

During the conversion in the 1960s, the room was again divided in two and the coffee bar removed. A corridor was formed leading from the north-east side of the stair lantern into the two new bedrooms. A third doorway was apparently inserted through to room 13. Two low bedside lights in the alcoves either side of the main fireplace (fig.9) indicates this was latterly used as a twin room.

Librarian's quarters 15

Occupying a position on the north-west side of the building, the librarian's quarters were similar in layout to the canteen sergeant's quarters next door; divided in two, with fireplaces on each side and an enclosed library area with two bookshelves and a serving window, for supplying books to the officers in the reading room next door (fig.8a). Aside from military and training books, it is likely the library held books on general knowledge and self-help to educate officers that had been promoted up through the ranks.

Entry was originally from the stair lantern, but is now from the corridor created after the stairs were removed. The room is divided along its old bedroom/living room partition into training accommodation and a large bathroom and washroom that served the seven first floor bedrooms of the training facility.

Reading room 16

The reading room was open plan with a central fireplace, high moulded skirting boards, book serving hatch and entry points from both stairs. The most impressive feature is the high ornate plastered ceiling (plate 35), the overall effect of which has been spoilt by its division into two bedrooms and corridor/lobby in the 1960s. A trace of green paint on the skirting board provides a glimpse of its original décor.

Stair lantern 17

The back stair was primarily a service feature serving the canteen sergeant's and librarian's quarters. Further access was granted by the landing into the reading room, though probably for the use of the librarian rather than the NCOs. The bare painted brickwork indicates its service function.

Latterly the lantern, which is blocked off in Perspex sheeting, has become obsolete except for lighting the corridor at this end of the training facility. As part of the building's re-development, the re-instatement of the central staircase open to the lantern will again utilise this prominent architectural feature.

5.4 ADULT SCHOOL

Barrack school rooms were provided by the army from the 1840s onwards, to improve education standards of both the troops and their children (listed buildings online). The list description cites the adult school as a rare early survival, though it does date it (erroneously) to 1863, when it actually post-dates the other Le Cateau buildings. Lack of education was a concern in the army in the late 19th-century and perhaps the existing resources, the adults and infants schools built into the side wings of stable blocks C and F (NMR MD95/1445 no.5), were inadequate, prompting the creation of a separate school building.

Despite its later date, the school is exactly the same stylistically to the other extant structures of Le Cateau Barracks, blending in perfectly. Its walls incorporate yellow brick banding, decorated eaves cornice and oculus windows already observed. However, its absence from the Royal Artillery plan of 1875 (fig.2) and Ordnance Survey of 1876 shows that it is later in build. According to Ingram, an archive drawing gives a possible date of 1884, although the date is difficult to read (Ingram 2000). Certainly, the school is built by 1897, when the second edition Ordnance Survey is published. By 1909 it is referred to as 'offices' (Ingram 2000). It retains much of its external character, though a modern extension to the rear elevation has not been sympathetic. There are several wall scars indicating the positions of former attached sheds along the boundary wall.

This is a single storey brick structure built onto the east side of the western boundary wall with the Cavalry Barracks. The layout is broadly symmetrical with a single depth plan, an off-centre porch on the front (east elevation) and a toilet extension at the rear; the latter built in the early 20th-century (between the 1897 & 1924 OS maps). Internally, the classroom on the south side was divided into smaller offices or lecture rooms in the modern period. The opposite classroom maintains its original proportions. It is unclear exactly when the building became redundant, but the 1998 date would seem likely. On the whole the structure is fortunate in retaining a complete exterior (by retaining its original gables).

5.4.1 External description

As a secondary component, the adult school is aligned with the Cavalry Barracks boundary wall (north to south) rather than with the main Le Cateau buildings (fig.1). Indeed, the school is built onto the wall itself, for the yellow brick patterning so prominent on the three other sides is absent on the rear (plate 36). A low stepped brick plinth features on all sides except

for the boundary wall. The roof is slate covered and pitched at 30°. It was re-laid in the modern period when the three chimney stacks, indicated from the interior, were taken down.

The main (north-east) long elevation (fig.11a & plate 37) is fenestrated in 6/6 sash windows whose sills are tied in by a projecting yellow brick band. The moulded stone heads are linked by twin bands beneath the decorated eaves cornice. The small off-set porch has a ramped slate roof and semi-circular yellow brick head that once held a fanlight, now bricked-up (fig.11a).

The gable elevations (figs.11b & c) each have three narrow 4/4 sashes, centrally positioned and connected by a single cast stone head (plate 37). Both gables retain their oculi and Yorkstone kneelers, though the oculus on the prominent south end has been broken (plate 24). Brick banding on the north side ends short of a wall scar of a removed structure, suggesting a contemporary build. There is a simple door on the south end into the large classroom.

To the rear, much of the school wall is hidden from view by two extensions (fig.11c & plate 36). All surviving roofs are slate. Themes of dual brick banding and decorated eaves continue above the height of the wall, which is otherwise plain. Two fixed 4-pane windows light what is now a side corridor from above the wall level. A third extension has been removed recently but appears to have been a lightly-built lean-to, according to the architect's drawings (fig.12). Of the two remaining extensions the modern toilet block in the centre is plain and uninteresting. Its early 20th-century neighbour contains outside toilets and internal kitchen/store and has greater historic character. The kitchen/store wall once contained two flat-arched windows, one of which has been replaced and the other blocked (fig.11c). On the other side of the door to the toilets, the windows are small 4-pane types with square heads and blue brick sills. The arch over the door is also square and there has been no attempt to blend the two together. The north corner of the toilet block has been consolidated in hard blue bricks and also on the north corner of the main building (plate 37). The toilets were not entered and no record made of their interiors.

5.4.2 Internal description

The interior was originally divided into two rooms labelled in the current architect's drawings as the north and south rooms, separated by a central corridor leading through the building from the front entrance to the kitchen/store at the rear (fig.12), but also offering access to

both. The corridor is plainly decorated in painted brickwork with curved coat hooks along the south wall, assumed to be original. The large south classroom has an external entrance at the south end and retains few original fixtures and fittings apart from the windows and two blocked fireplaces. Skirting boards are invariably plain and difficult to date. It was latterly divided into three 'office' areas using plasterboard partitions, connected by a corridor running between its two original doorways (fig.12). Gas heaters and fluorescent lights have been installed and floors carpeted. Ceilings are modern and it is possible it was built open to the king post strut roof illustrated in figure 13.

The north room is the smaller of the two and has not been sub-divided. The standard of décor is slightly higher, with rounded mullion windows on the north side and chamfered corners to the chimney breast (plate 38). Again, the fireplace itself has been removed and apart from the windows, the only other historic features remaining are some low skirting boards.

5.5 RIDING SCHOOL

Riding schools were used to exercise and train the horses and personnel and were thus an essential component to cavalry barracks. This one in particular is part of a near-complete complex, described as the most important one of its type on an English barracks (listed buildings online). It is situated just to the south-west of the boundary wall, within the Cavalry Barracks complex and is therefore dated to 1863, along with the rest of the group that are much plainer in style to Le Cateau. The more ornate architectural finishings of the Le Cateau buildings probably reflect their perceived high regimental status. The regiment belonging to the cavalry barracks is not mentioned in Ingram (2000). However, the absence of an equivalent building at Le Cateau suggests this facility was shared between both barracks.

Little has changed externally, apart from the two gable ends where larger doorways have been inserted. Internally, the original sawdust floor and wall panelling (fig.14) has been lost and the former replaced by a combination of mixed aggregates and block paving. Modern breather pipes rise up from the side walls.

5.5.1 External description

The riding school building is rectangular in plan, its single storey brick built in Flemish bond with gables either end and a contemporary two-storey range at the front (north-east), entered

by an external stair. Windows and the main doors have contrasting red and yellow brick dressed heads, which also happens to be one of the few embellishments to the cavalry barrack blocks further to the south-west. The roof is slate covered with a long wooden ridge vent (plates 39 & 40).

The long sides are divided by tall buttresses into 14-bay ranges, each lit by a high segmental arched 6-light window tilting above the transom. The six windows towards the north end of the south-east elevation are vented at the bottom, rather than glazed (fig.15a). A modern store is attached to the north-east elevation (fig.15c) and the colour of the paintworks at the north end suggests a shed (early 20th-century according to the OS maps of 1897 and 1924) has been removed here recently (fig.15c & plate 40).

An ocular vent is present in the apex of the north-east gable above the two-storey porch (fig.15b). Six flat arched 4/4 sash windows light the ground floor and gallery, beneath a shallow hipped roof (plate 38). Entry points are located to the sides, one into the store and two more on the opposite side into the weigh room and viewing gallery (fig.16). The latter is reached by a dog-leg stair with curving balustrade (plate 39), but could not be entered at the time of the survey. A large pair of modern doors have been cut into the main wall of the stables on this north-east side (fig.15b).

At the opposite end, the south-west gable contains three openings (fig.15d, plate 40). A removed window commands the central ground (its aperture blocked with corrugated iron, but due to be reinstated during the conversion). Lower, to the right, stands the original pair of sliding doors and fanlight (boarded-up for now) and paving (plate 41). The door on the west side of the window has been enlarged in the modern period and nothing of the old frame survives.

5.5.2 Internal description

Original drawings (fig.14) show no change to the open plan layout. However, the sawdust floor has been replaced, and with it the battered wall panels mentioned in the list description, both since 2000. The panels were angled slightly away from the wall (fig.14) to protect the horses. Gas lighting is shown in the original drawings, hanging from the roof trusses.

The internal exposed walls are built in English rather than Flemish bond. Uninterrupted views are afforded from either end showing angle-iron roof trusses (fig.14) kept in tension by wrought iron ties and paired struts (plates 42 & 43). From the south-west end, the three

arches of the gallery can be viewed beneath the oculus (plate 42). Roller shuttering screens the modern doorway to the side. The original internal arch of the replaced doors can be seen on the opposite end walls (plate 43) whose wide opening was required to fit the sliding doors in. Closer inspection of the side windows shows the opening of the upper vents was cord-operated from the ground.

At the north-east end of the riding school, the two-storeyed projection comprises the weigh room and store on the ground floor, with a viewing gallery over that offered good views across the length of the arena. The store has no remaining fixtures and fittings. The weigh room has replaced lower sashes and a modern ceiling and a sturdy dividing door into the main area (plate 42). The gallery above was a slightly grander affair, with diagonal cast iron rails (fig.14) fitted inside the arches similar to those in the stable block, now replaced by iron mesh panels. Caps and capes could be left on the numerous cloak hooks positioned high along the walls (plate 44).

Modern block flooring is probably laid over the original concrete floor that was covered by c.2 ft of tan (bruised oak bark used in tanning) and sawdust (Ingram 2000). Such a surface was necessary to protect the horse's feet and provided good absorptive qualities.

6.0 DISCUSSION

Le Cateau Barracks was built between 1874 and 1875 on a layout similar to the first permanent cavalry barracks at Aldershot, with an officers range at the front and parallel rows of barrack blocks either side of the parade ground. The Cavalry Barracks next door, built slightly earlier in the mid-1860s, was a larger though plainer complex with barrack blocks either side of the parade ground and officers quarters at one end.

The design and innovation of the Le Cateau complex was more advanced than its neighbour, incorporating strong decorative and architectural themes that reflected the position of the Royal Horse Artillery in the military hierarchy; in particular the most prominent group, the officers quarters and stable blocks. These most strongly reflect the Victorian-style gothic and Classical motifs apparent in all the existing buildings. Although the gables and roofs have lost some of their architectural detailing in the post-1960s conversion period, this has not been to the major detriment of the group.

Le Cateau's highly-structured layout and functional components of the group illustrate how the military was improving and better organised toward the end of the 19th-century in terms of welfare, education and recreation. Little has been published on the barracks in the 20th-century, so the following discussion of function and permeability is based on the Victorian phase of activity.

Stable block B

Following the first stage of recording works (Letch 2007), further understanding has been gained of the stable blocks that together provide a reasonably sound record of their form and function. The most prominent aspect is the stalls, which survive well in block A, though in Block B some of the end wing rooms also survive well; in particular the officers stables. Both studies have shown that the troops lived in fairly austere conditions, typical of army life for the lower ranks, but the NCO's who shared the top floors probably didn't have it much better.

The stables are well-built and aesthetically pleasing in a neo-Georgian-style of pedimented blocks and wings. Apart from some of the gables that have been re-built, the structures retain much of their original form and appearance. In terms of form and function, the well-planned layout provided individual stalls linked to internal drainage channels and an external underground network. To limit the risk of infection, the jack-arched ceilings were high and an innovative ventilation system featuring integral wall flues incorporated to channel foul air out of the roofs. A second set of grills provided fresh air into the barrack rooms above, it being appreciated that diseases could be spread by from co-habiting personnel as well as horses. The same ventilation system was also incorporated in the other buildings. The fire-proof ceiling was not only an important inclusion, bearing in mind the use of gas lights and open fires, but also constituted a barrier against bacteria and stench from the stables.

The built-in improvements in ventilation and fire safety recorded in stable blocks A and B can perhaps be regarded as a compromise in what were some of the last of this building type to be constructed. Though knowledge of the early and mid-20th-century period is vague, perhaps it is a testament to the effective design of the blocks that troops continued to live above the horses up until the 1960s.

Each group of three stable blocks either side of the parade ground contained specific functional areas in their wings to do with the welfare of the horses and men, leading to a highly organised degree of planning and self-sufficiency. Not only were there forges and harness rooms, but shoemaker's shops, tailors and school rooms.

Canteen and sergeants mess

From the front, the sergeants mess has none of the elaborate facades of the stable block/officers quarters group, perhaps reflecting the relative position of non-commissioned offices in the military hierarchy. In general too, this is not a grand building. However, there are some nice details, such as the Caernarvon-arched windows and gothic-style tracery and the wooden stair lantern is a good decorative feature.

Non-commissioned officers are divided into Junior NCOs and Senior NCOs. SNCOs are generally Sergeants, whilst JNCOs in the Royal Artillery are Bombadiers and Lance Bombadiers. In all regiments the NCO forms a link between the troops and commissioned officers. Generally, senior NCOs have their own mess, while JNCOs eat and bed down with the troops.

Within the context of the military establishment and the somewhat formal, socially-regulated environment of the Victorian era, the ways in which the sergeants mess worked, functioned and flowed (referred to as permeability), are important considerations. Without the help of original architect's drawings, when so much of the original internal fabric has been removed, this would have been very difficult. As a historical resource the drawings are useful not only in showing the changes in layout but the furniture and fittings included, thus providing a reliable insight into such buildings. The same may be said of the stable plans and quite possibly those of the officers quarters. The plans show a clear division of functional areas between service (staff, servants) and user (NCOs). They also show how radically buildings can change internally without leaving much physical evidence.

Originally the building was arranged with a strong service area, with plenty of preparation, cooking and storage areas, bar and shop. The sergeants mess and social/recreational area accounted for less than half of the total floor area. Two separate service entry points led through the yard into the kitchens and bar areas and via these the central stair up to service rooms/living quarters on the first floor. The more formal 'user' entry points led into the shop and NCOs tap rooms and more conspicuously, through the more formal south-west entrances, to the sergeants mess and upstairs to the recreation rooms. A short while later, it is assumed, the room layout was simplified; the sergeant's areas were increased and enlarged leading to a reduction of the service zone. A date of c.1900 is suggested for this change, as it is known the style and general architectural detailing were still current when the adult school was built around 1884. It is of course possible the changes were carried out during the design stage, but this would be unlikely. The work was carried out to an

exceptionally high standard, leaving little evidence of the windows and doors that were blocked. Further clarity of the dating of these changes would be very helpful. These changes introduced more facilities in the form of a larger bar area, new billiard room and relocated dining room, all linked to facilities in the yard by a new through passage. From the size of the dining room, it could easily accommodate 12 or more sergeants, (i.e. two per stable block and any other staff sergeants, etc) but with the downsizing of the service area, outside caterers were apparently required for larger formal functions, hence the 'caterer's entrance' and room. The central stair area became a general ground floor access point for both groups, although the stairs themselves remained within the service staff sector.

The first floor was equally split between NCOs and service staff and this relationship and layout was maintained until the whole floor was given over to trainee accommodation in the 1960s (figs. 8a & 9). The north part of the floor was occupied as quarters and service areas, with the canteen sergeant in overall charge and equivalent in rank. It is likely the librarian was also an NCO, to justify having his own quarters. Each could be viewed as equivalent to high ranking servants in the Victorian domestic household.

Décor in the upstairs service rooms is basic, but better than the service rooms downstairs. In contrast, the two NCO social rooms, the recreation and reading rooms on the south side, have more formal decor, especially the latter with its moulded ceiling. Neither are particularly large rooms, but would have been adequate for the purpose.

Without key dated features, the implications of the changes recorded on the historic plans is difficult to assess in a historical perspective, but with more facilities provided for the NCOs, they suggest an era of relative military calm, of which there were few before 1902, the end of the Second Boer War.

Comparison with the officers quarters would be a valuable exercise, but is outside this survey and current redevelopment work. Certainly the internal décor is much grander in the officers quarters, demonstrating the divide between commissioned and non-commissioned officers. From the historic drawings, the surroundings of the sergeants mess were pleasant enough, but basic detail like plastered walls were lacking. However, although the conditions the sergeants lived in were little different to the men, their privileges in terms of their own eating, socialising and recreation areas had obvious advantages compared to the communal living of the barracks.

Adult school

Although built slightly later than the main buildings of Le Cateau, the same exacting standards of workmanship and architectural detailing have been used to match this to the existing structures. In fact, it provides an acknowledgement of the importance of education in the late 19th-century, to society and the establishment in general, during a time of great social and industrial change. It is worth bearing in mind that elementary education was only made compulsory in 1870 (Foster's Education Act, Letch 2006) so by 1884, the likely build date, there would still be many army conscripts who had little or no proper education.

In terms of survival, this is the most architecturally complete externally of all the Le Cateau structures surveyed.

Riding school

The riding school belongs to the Cavalry Barracks (1862-64) and was used to train the horses and men. As there was no such building within the boundaries of Le Cateau, it seems likely, given its location, that the facility was shared between the two regiments. Even in today's modern army when tanks and armoured carriers are used, it is still necessary for Royal Horse Artillery officers to have good horsemanship skills (S. Rowse pers. comm.).

Architecturally, the riding school displays themes of detailing evident on the stable/barrack blocks and other buildings of the Cavalry Barracks though, because this has a very specific function, it is very different stylistically and therefore not wholly representative. As so much of this complex survives, it would be useful to undertake a more comprehensive study of its buildings to place them more fully in the development of the Colchester Barracks and garrison design in general. Certainly, the stables/barrack blocks have features similar to those of Le Cateau and it would be interesting to compare the two.

Much of the standing structure is original, although modern doors have been introduced which spoil the exterior. Inside, the loss of the floor, wall panelling and railings to the first floor viewing gallery is regrettable, but otherwise survival is good.

7.0 CONCLUSION

Colchester Garrison has developed over the past 150 years and with it new barracks have been established while others have been demolished and modernised to suit the requirements of a changing army. Generally only one or two of the old buildings survive (Ingram 2000) from quite large complexes. In view of this, it is fortunate that the two earliest, and historically most important of these, the Le Cateau and Cavalry Barracks, remain relatively intact.

Not only are the buildings important because of their group survival but also individually. All the Le Cateau buildings are extremely well-built with a high degree of architectural embellishment and detailing, especially around the officers quarters, the main focus of the group from across Abbey Field. Following on from the recording of stable block B (Letch 2007), the study of stable block A has led to a better understanding of the innovations in ventilation and fire-proofing employed in the traditional barrack block/stable designs. A fuller appreciation of how the buildings functioned and appeared internally is now possible from recording interiors that have survived virtually intact since 1874, aided by original architect's drawings.

The canteen/sergeants mess has an irregular plan form, uncommon in military buildings (Ingram 2000). Unfortunately its interior has been subject to change more than any other building, even soon after its construction. However, with the help of original drawings it has proven possible to reconstruct the layout of the building in the Victorian era and the subsequent development of the building is now documented.

The adult school is a rare survival of an easily overlooked aspect of 19th-century military attitudes to education and social development. Its presence illustrates progressive thought on welfare and training in the military of the time. Although added later, its style blends exactly with the main surviving buildings.

The riding school displays architectural detailing reflected in the other members of the Cavalry Barracks group and retains some important original features. It is described in the List description as the most important remaining building of its type on an English barracks (Listed Buildings Online) and is indeed a rare survival.

In terms of local significance, the barracks are an important part of Colchester's history and illustrate its role in major conflicts and battles, from the French Wars to WW II. They are also important to the development of the town in the last two centuries and in particular the Le Cateau barracks in the regimental history of The Royal Artillery.

The national importance of the group has already been recognised by their grade II listed status and the Historic Building Assessment, which describes them as the only surviving complexes of their kind in England (Ingram 2000). Further analysis has provided a more overall assessment, showing how the barracks functioned as cohesive, self-contained units, providing resources and facilities together on one site, and how the lower ranks lived. While the regular troops were placed in large barrack rooms with shared facilities, conditions for the sergeants were not much better; having their own, though rather small, living quarters next to the men. More importantly perhaps they had the advantage of having their own mess where they could relax and enjoy some of the recreational, social and educational privileges afforded to rank.

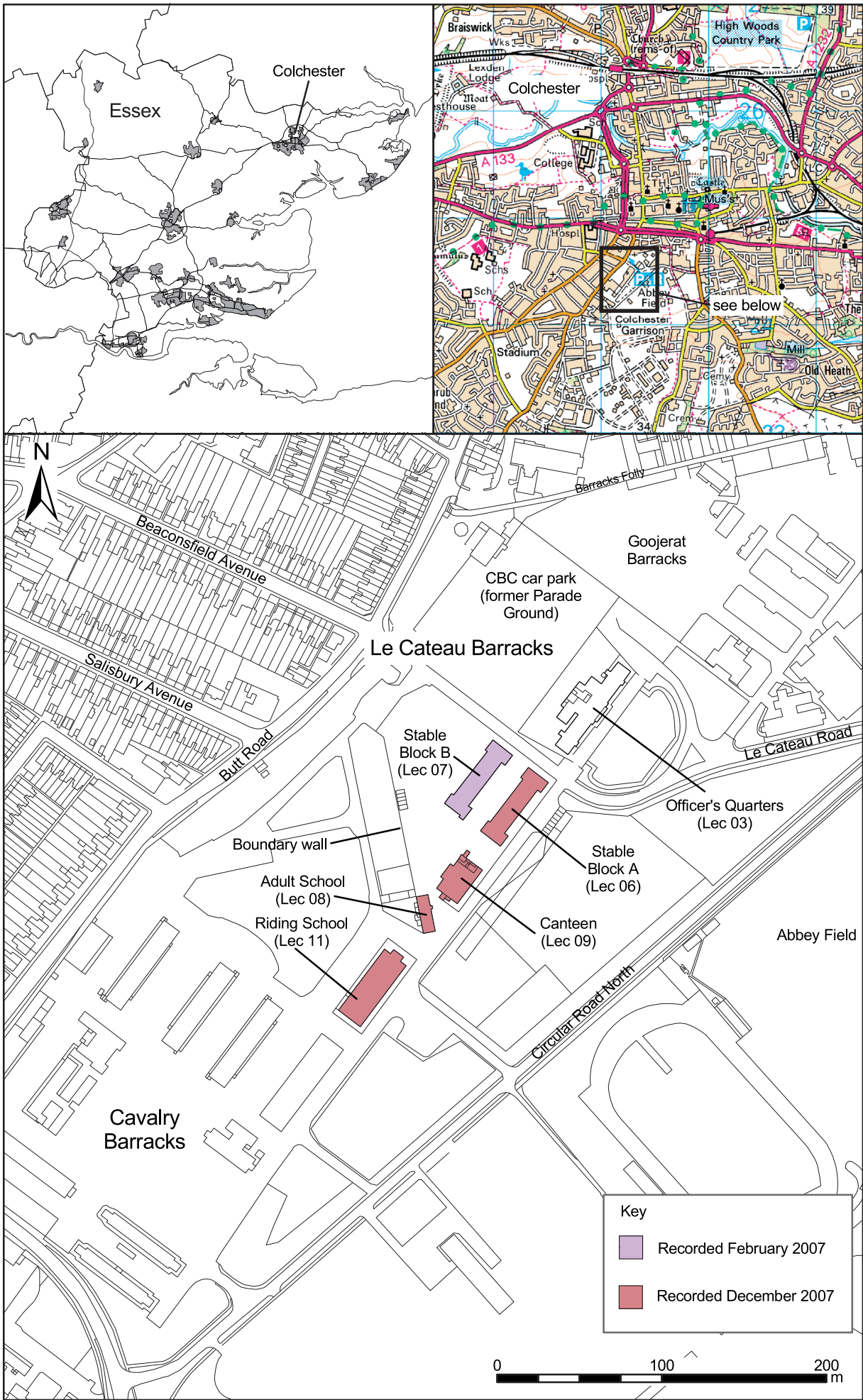
Of the surviving structures at Le Cateau Barracks, all but the officers quarters have now been recorded. The officers quarters is perhaps the most important and internally intact of the group. As and when the opportunity arises, it would be highly desirable to complete the survey by including this building. From the neighbouring Cavalry Barracks, only the riding school has been recorded. This larger and more complete group would benefit from similar works before conversion.

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Fig.1. Location and block plan

COLCHESTER

GENERAL PLAN OF R. A. BARRAGKS.

Nº 1

TABLE OF ACCOMMODATION.

COMPARTMENTS	NUMBER	SQ. FT. AREA	CUBIC FEET	NUMBER	NUMBER	NUMBER	NUMBER	NUMBER	NUMBER	NUMBER
OFFICERS' QUARTERS	2	10	288	32	18	186	114	9	4	1500

Barracks lighted with Gas from Gas Gongs' Main supply. Water supplied by Water Tower in Cavalry Barracks.
 Cubical space per Man 700 Cubic feet
 - - - - - Horse 1740 - - - - -

CAVALRY BARRACKS.

Mode of Ventilation
 Soldiers' Rooms, are provided with 2 Ventilator grates, med size 2 feet air ends & 9 Luan's ventilator, large size. System generally applied to these Barracks.
 Stables - A window over each stall, one continuous course of air bricks above ditto, fresh air inlets to fresh air outlet termination room.
 Adult School for 32 Scholars. Infant School for 30 children.
 Recreation & Reading Rooms; Library & Librarian's Qr; Coffee Bar; Soap Mess & Gaiter Keepers Qr, are all provided in Gaiter.
 Shop carts, Stair cases, Hydrants &c., shown on Plan Nº 3.

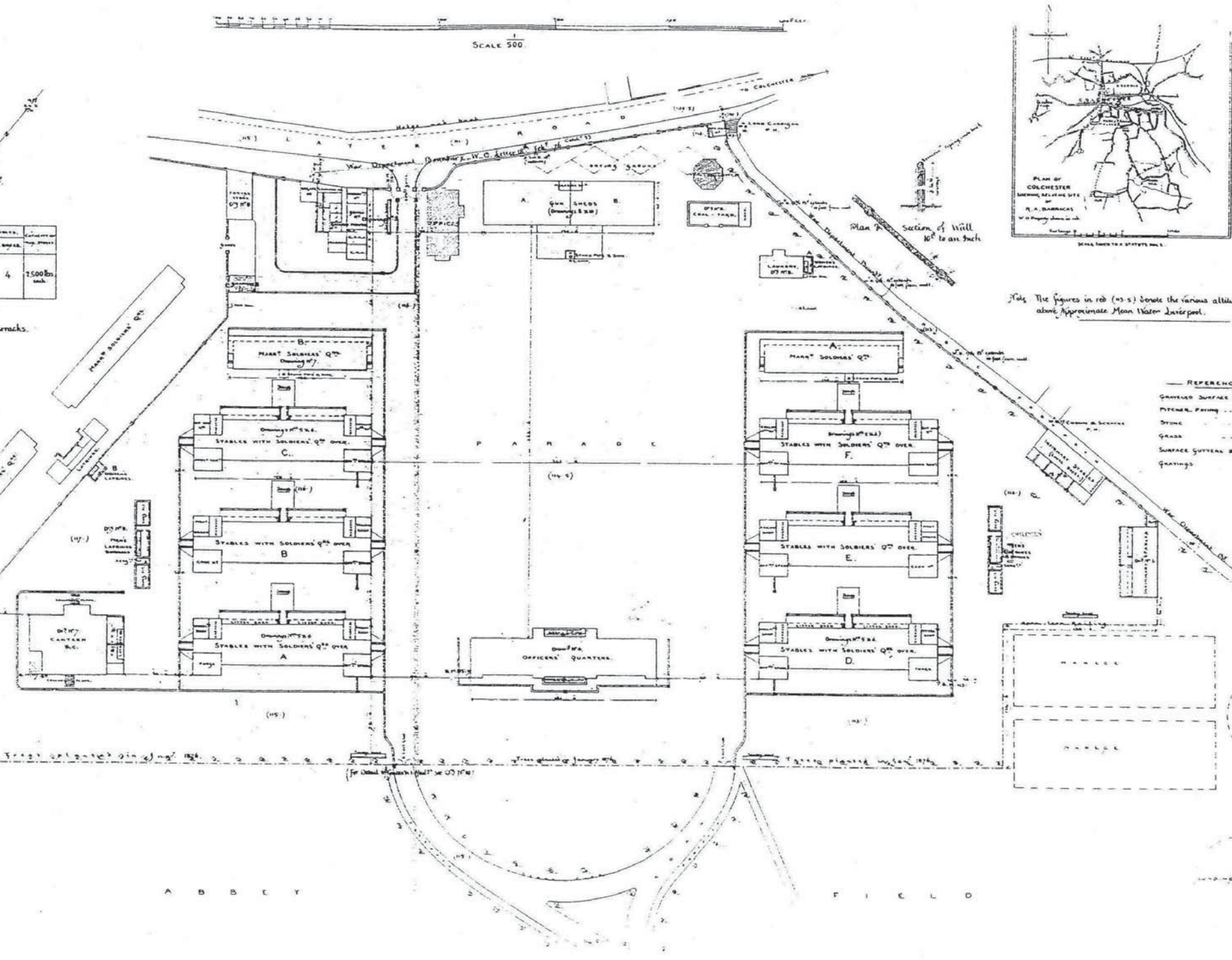


Fig.2. General plan of Royal Artillery Barracks, 1875 (NMR MD95/1431)

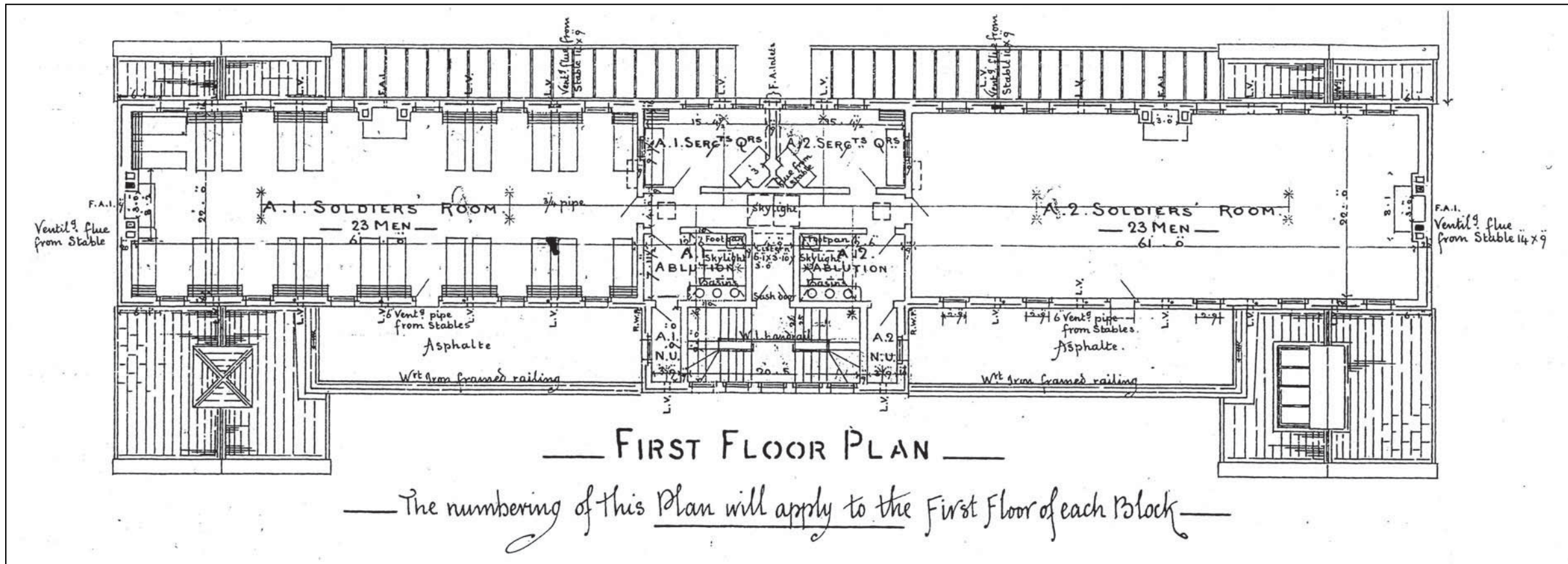
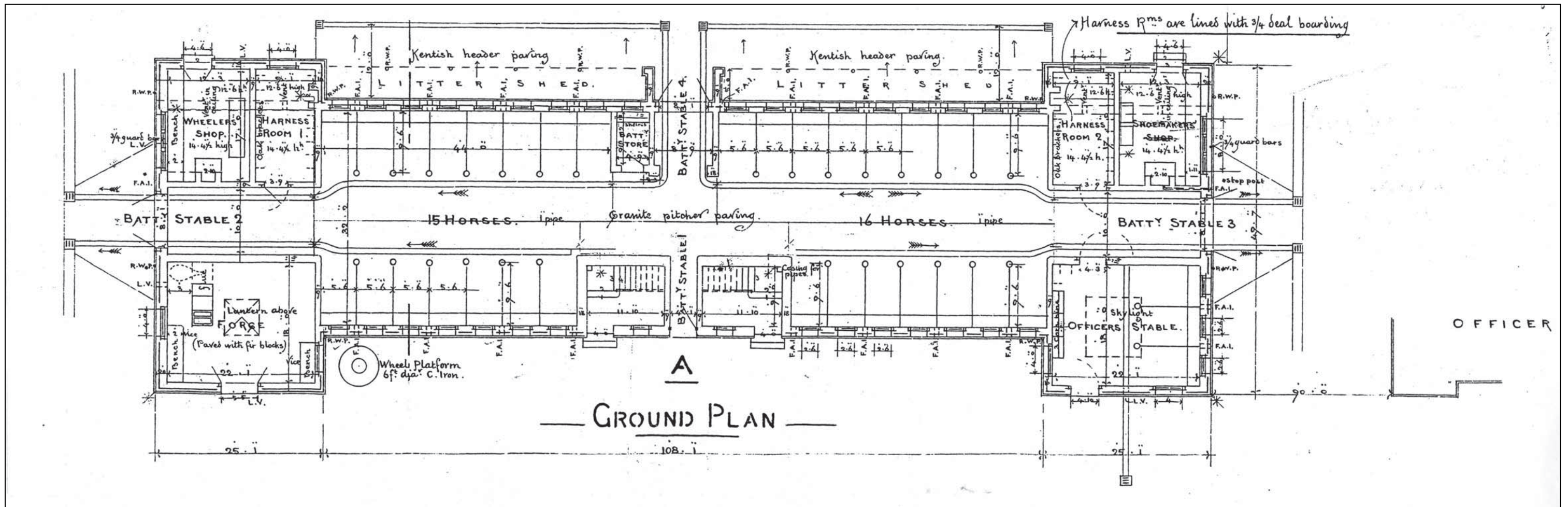
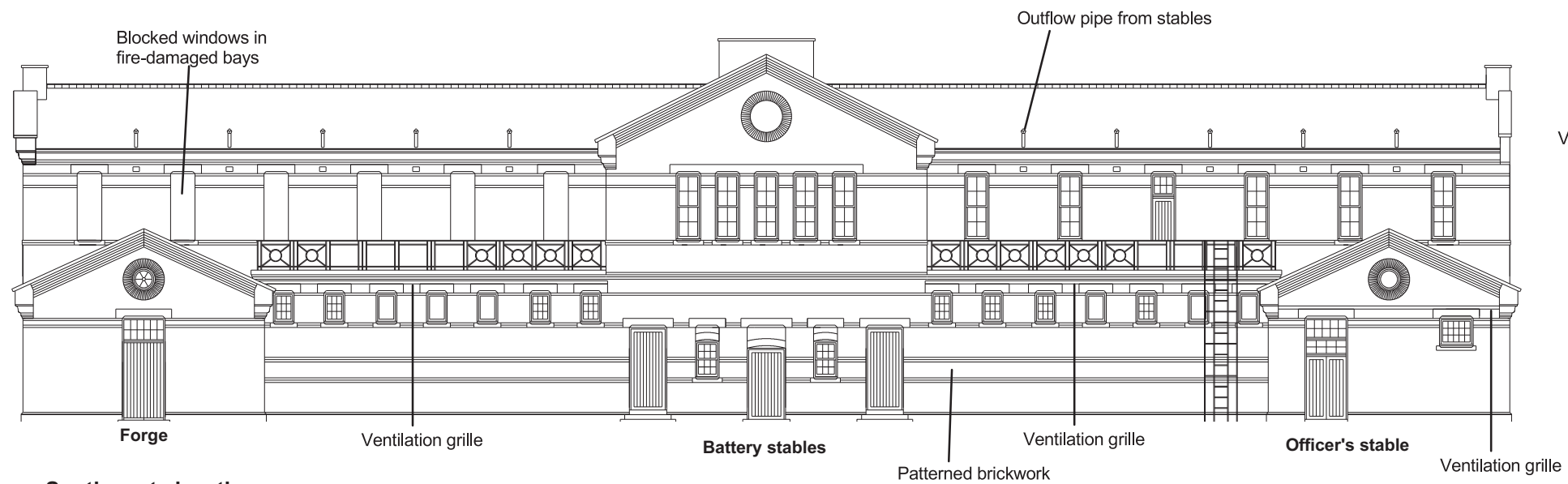
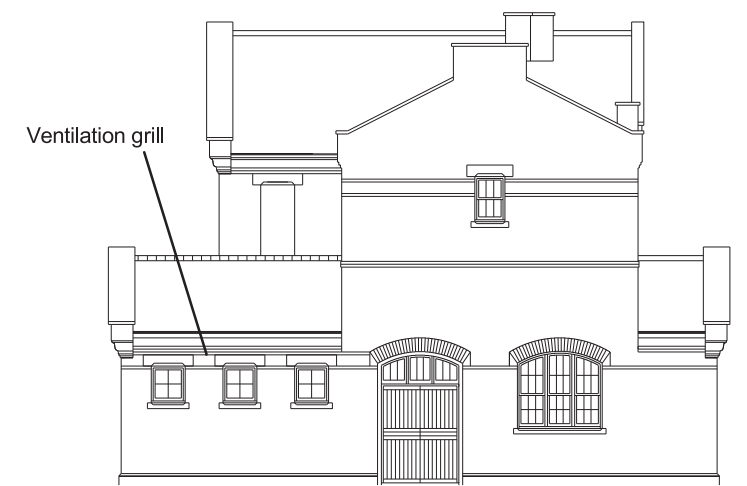


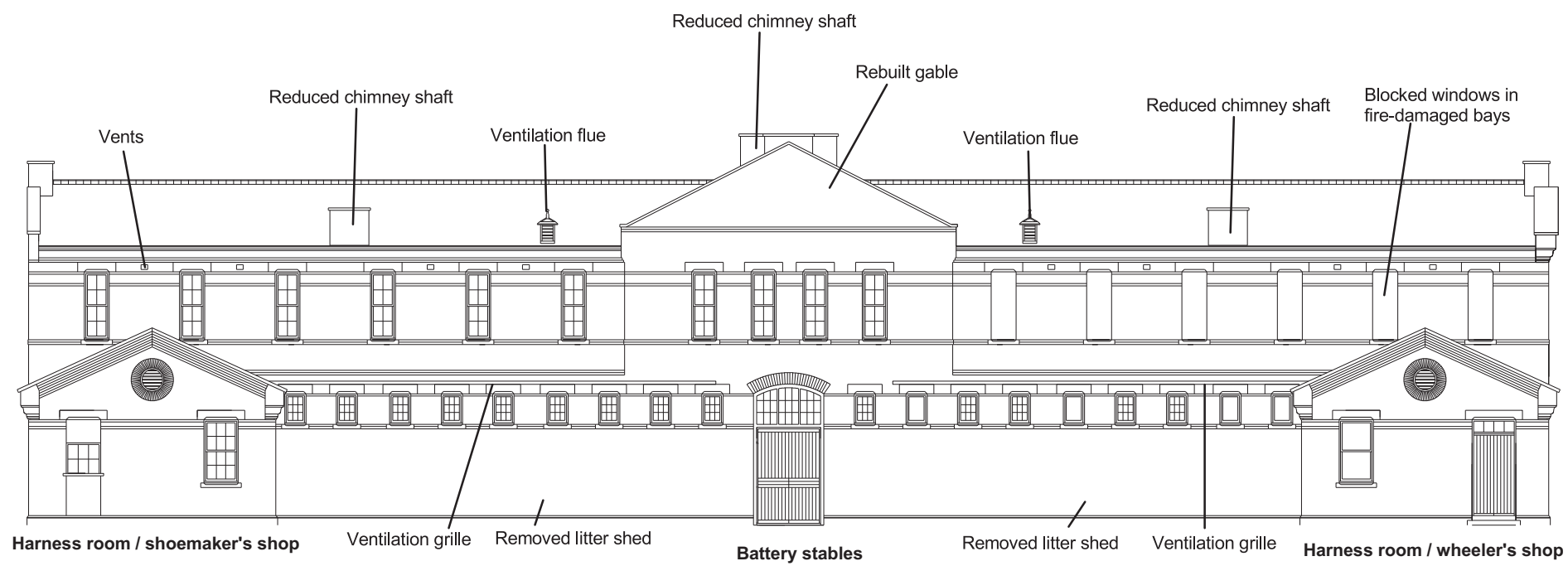
Fig.3. Historic floor plans of stable block A (NMR MD95/1445 no.5)



a. South-east elevation



b. North-east elevation



c. North-west elevation



d. South-west elevation

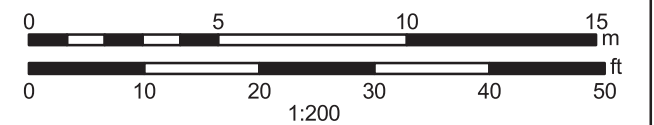


Fig.4. Existing elevations of stable block A

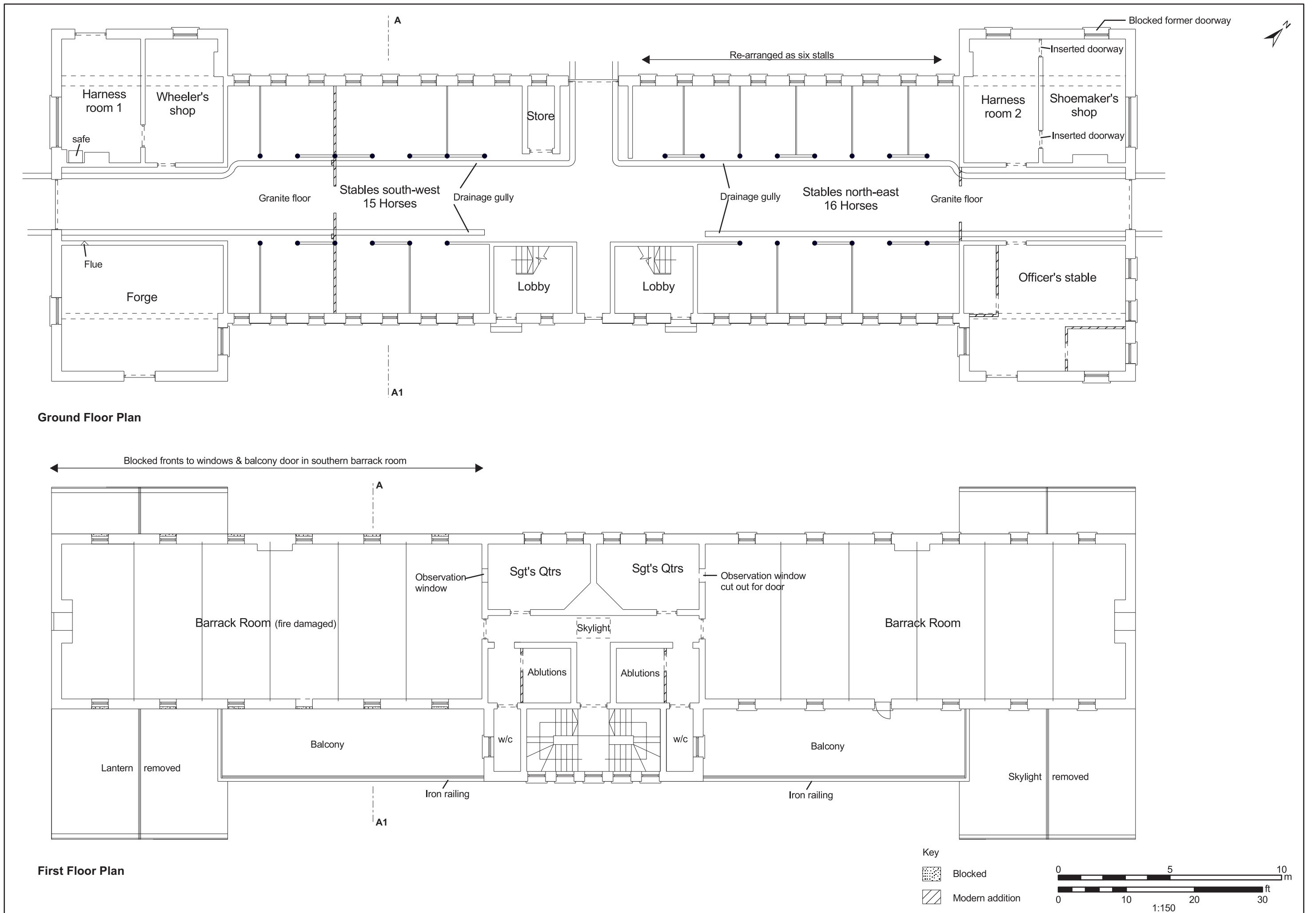


Fig.5. Existing ground and first floor plans of stable block A (original functions labelled)

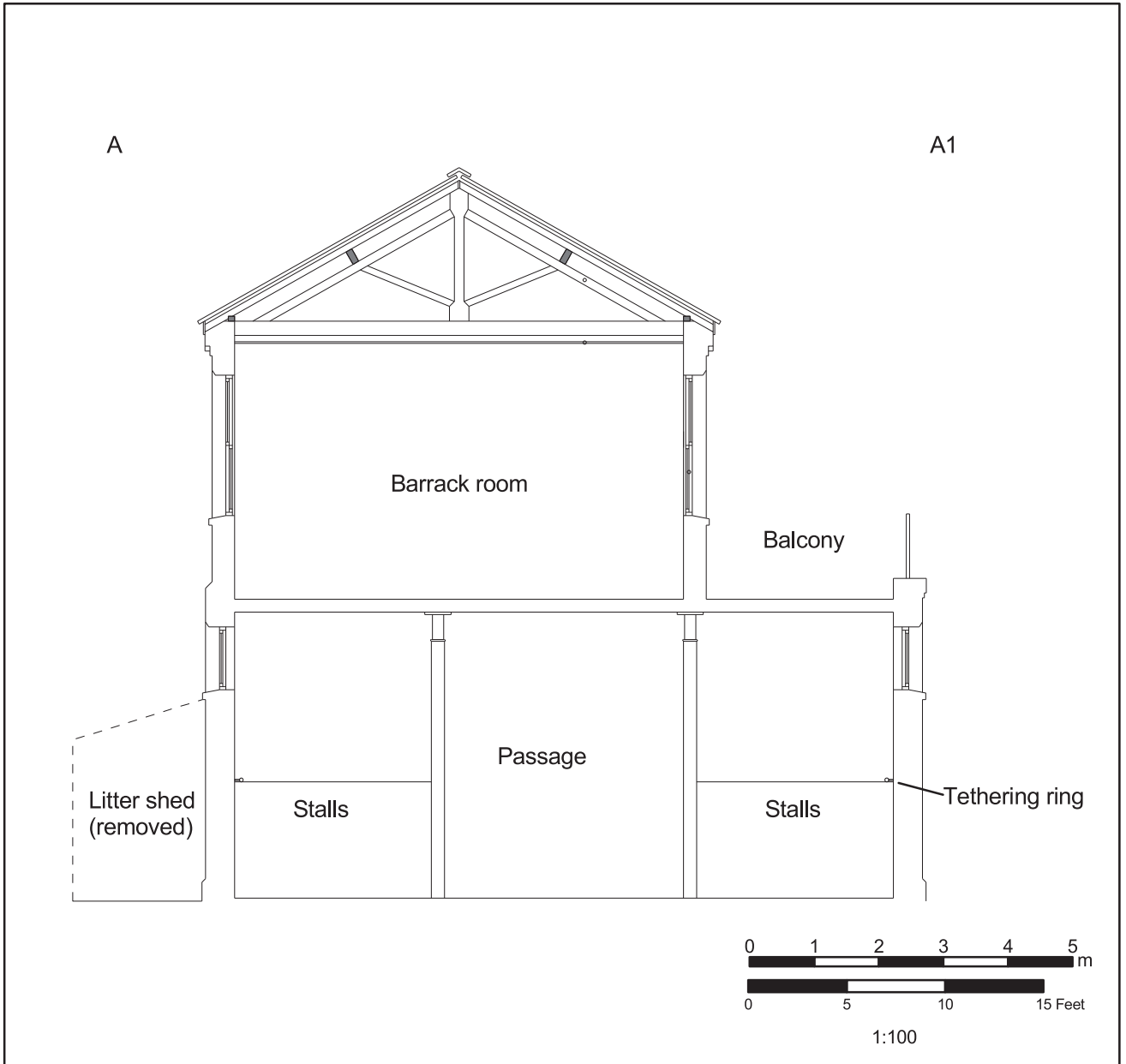


Fig.6. Section A-A1 through stable block A

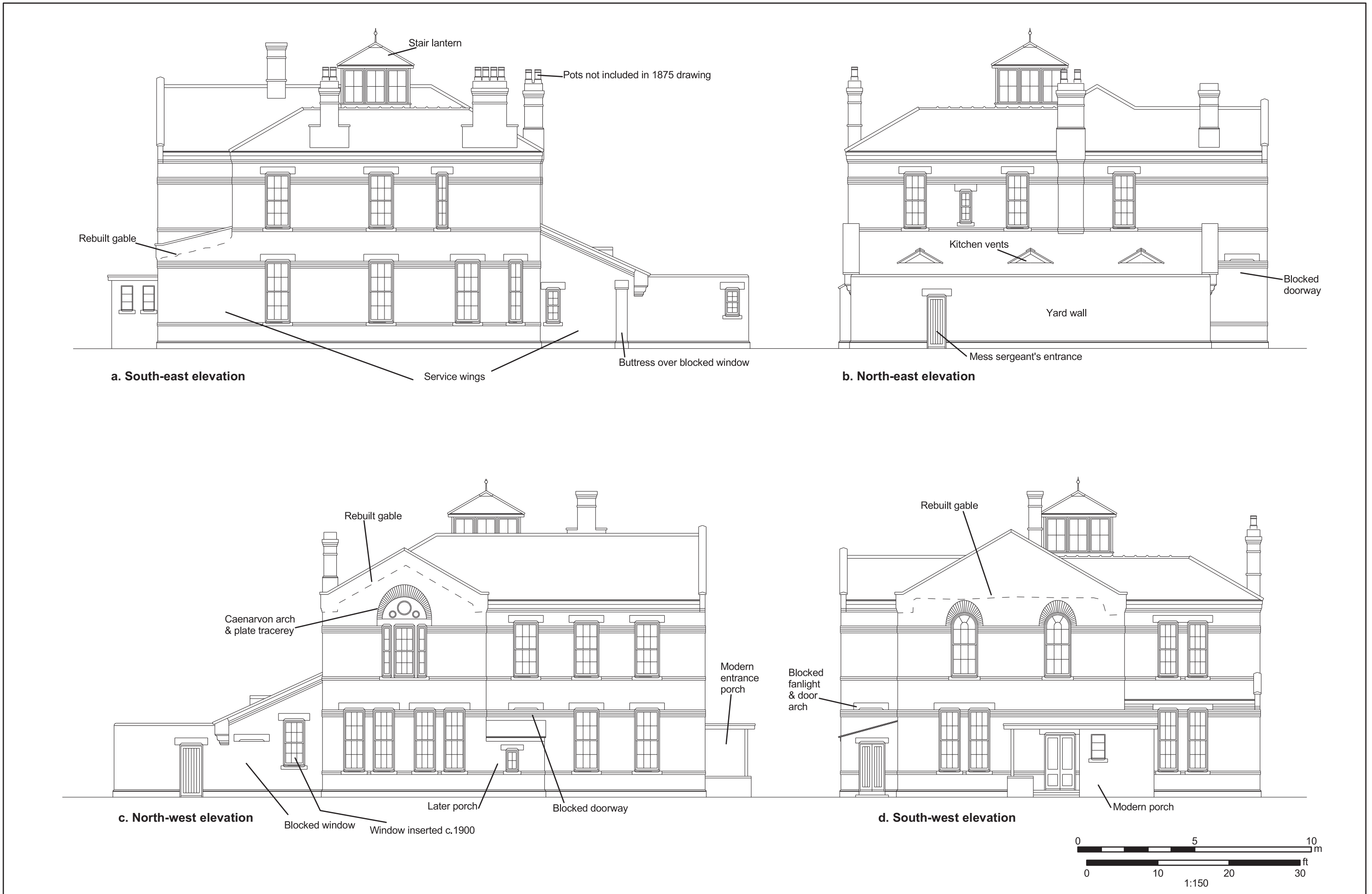


Fig.7. Existing elevations of canteen and sergeants mess

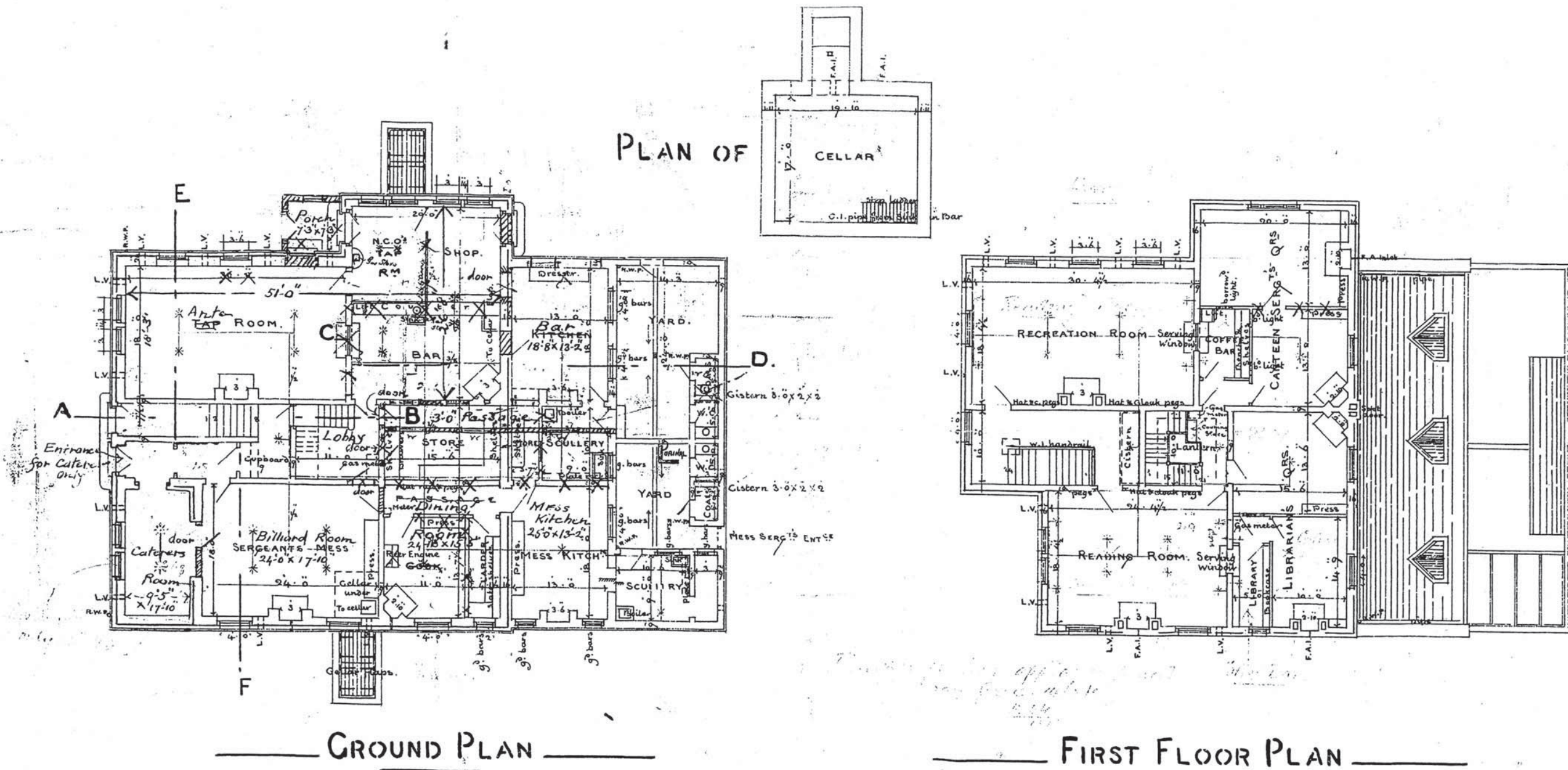
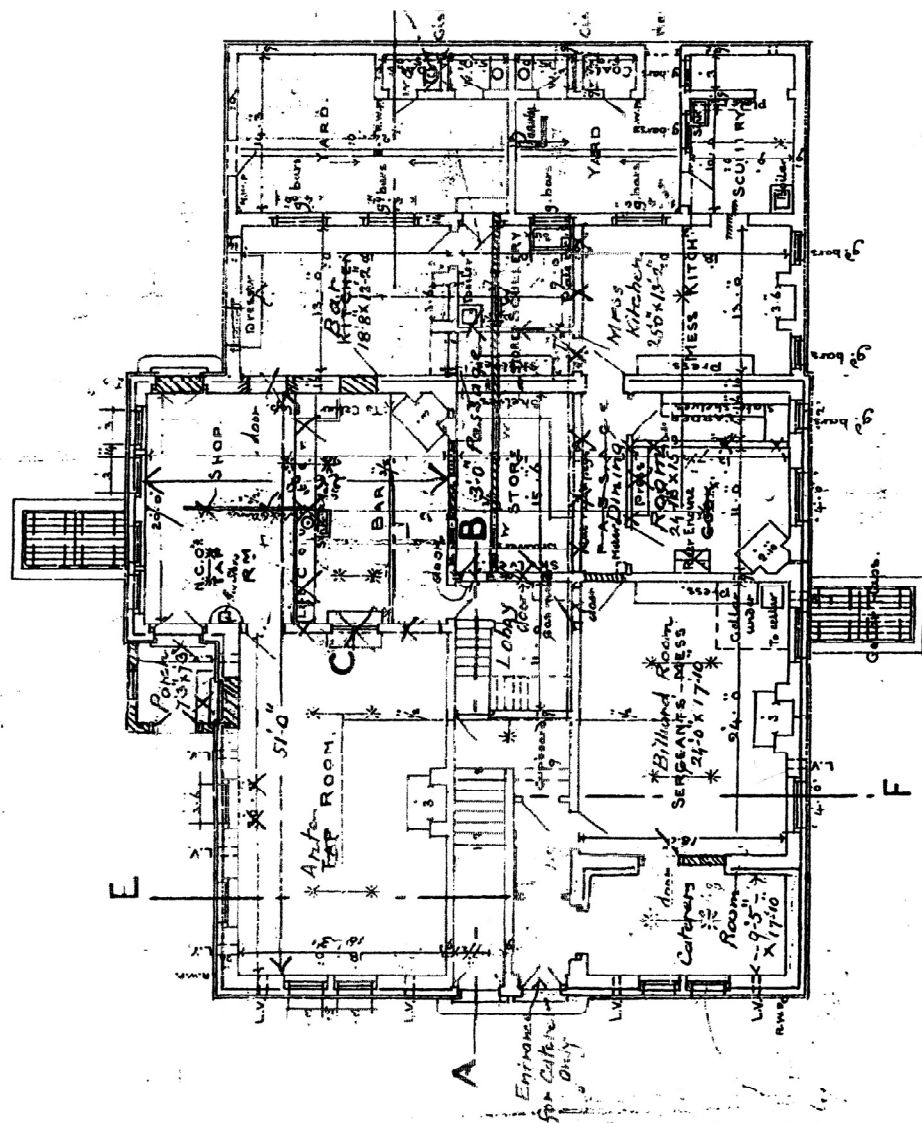


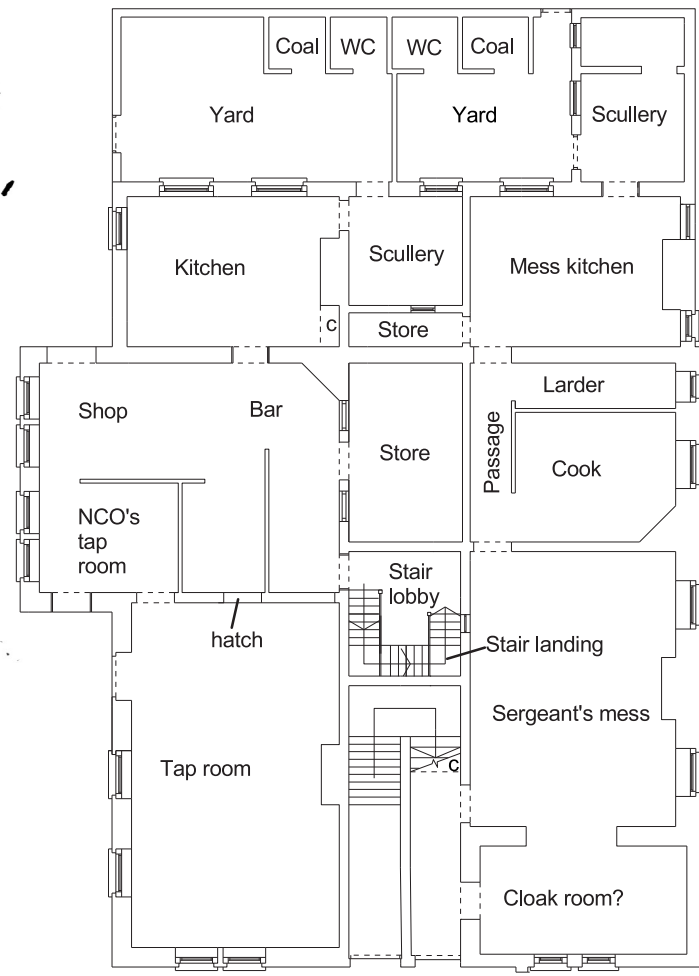
Fig.8a. Historic floor plans of Canteen and Sergeants mess (NMR MD 95/1442)



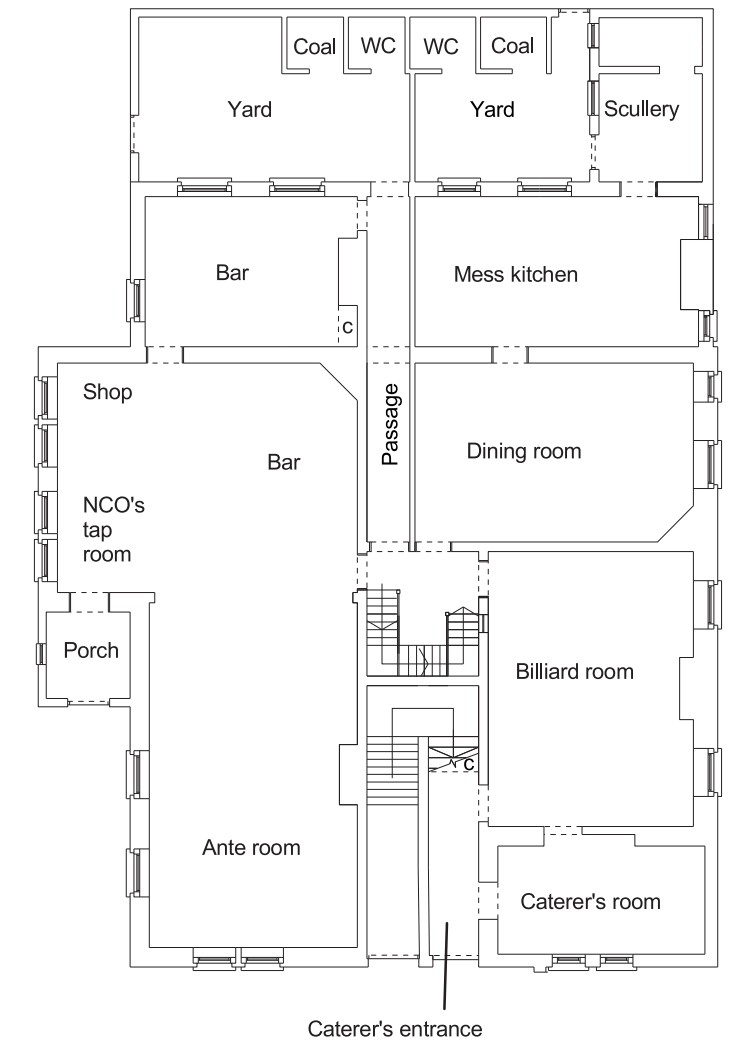
Historic floor plan (see Fig.8a)



1875 Ground Plan



c.1900 Ground Plan



Key
Blocked
c Cupboard

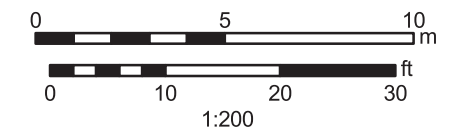


Fig.8b. Interpretative plans of ground floor of Canteen and Sergeants Mess

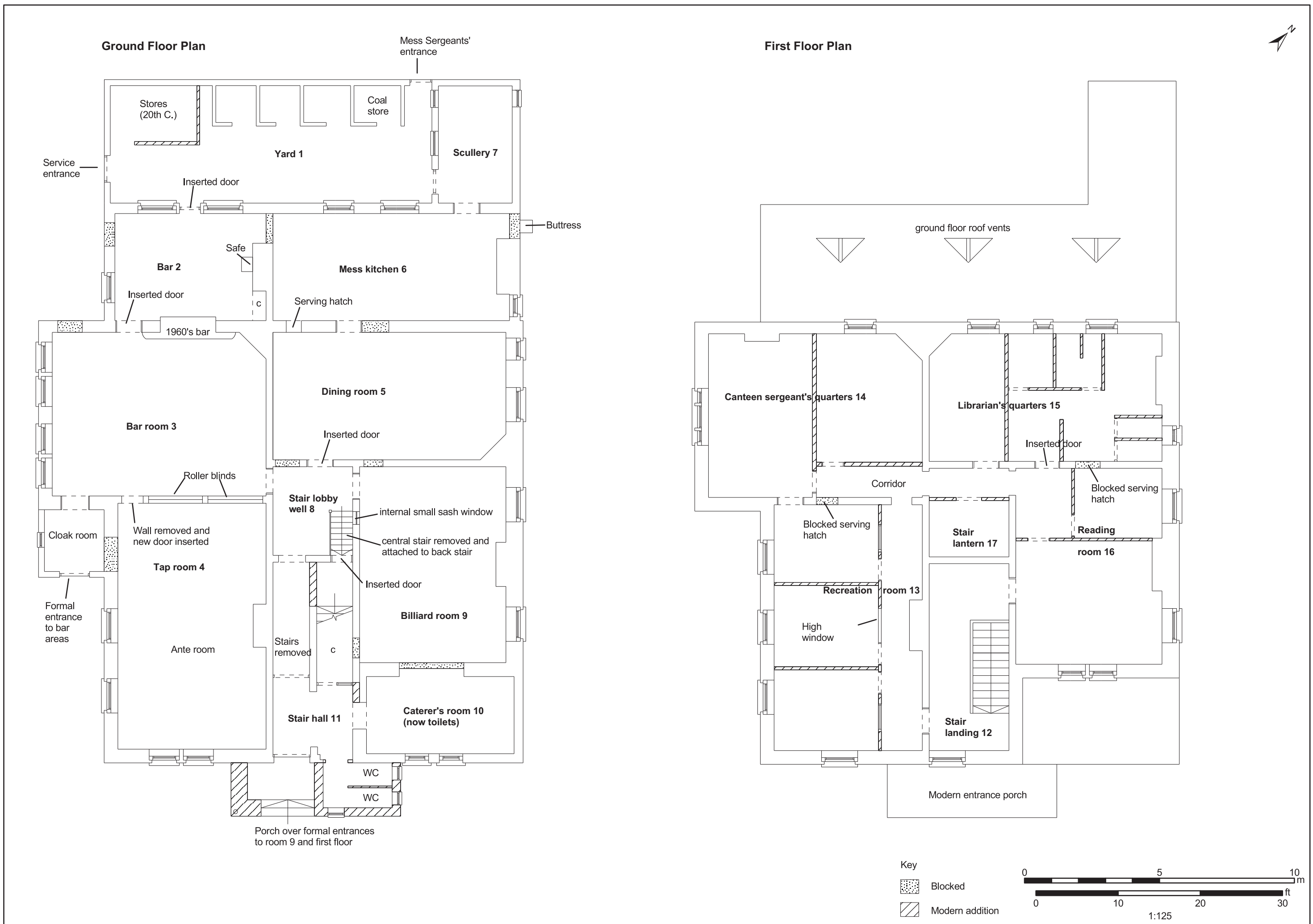
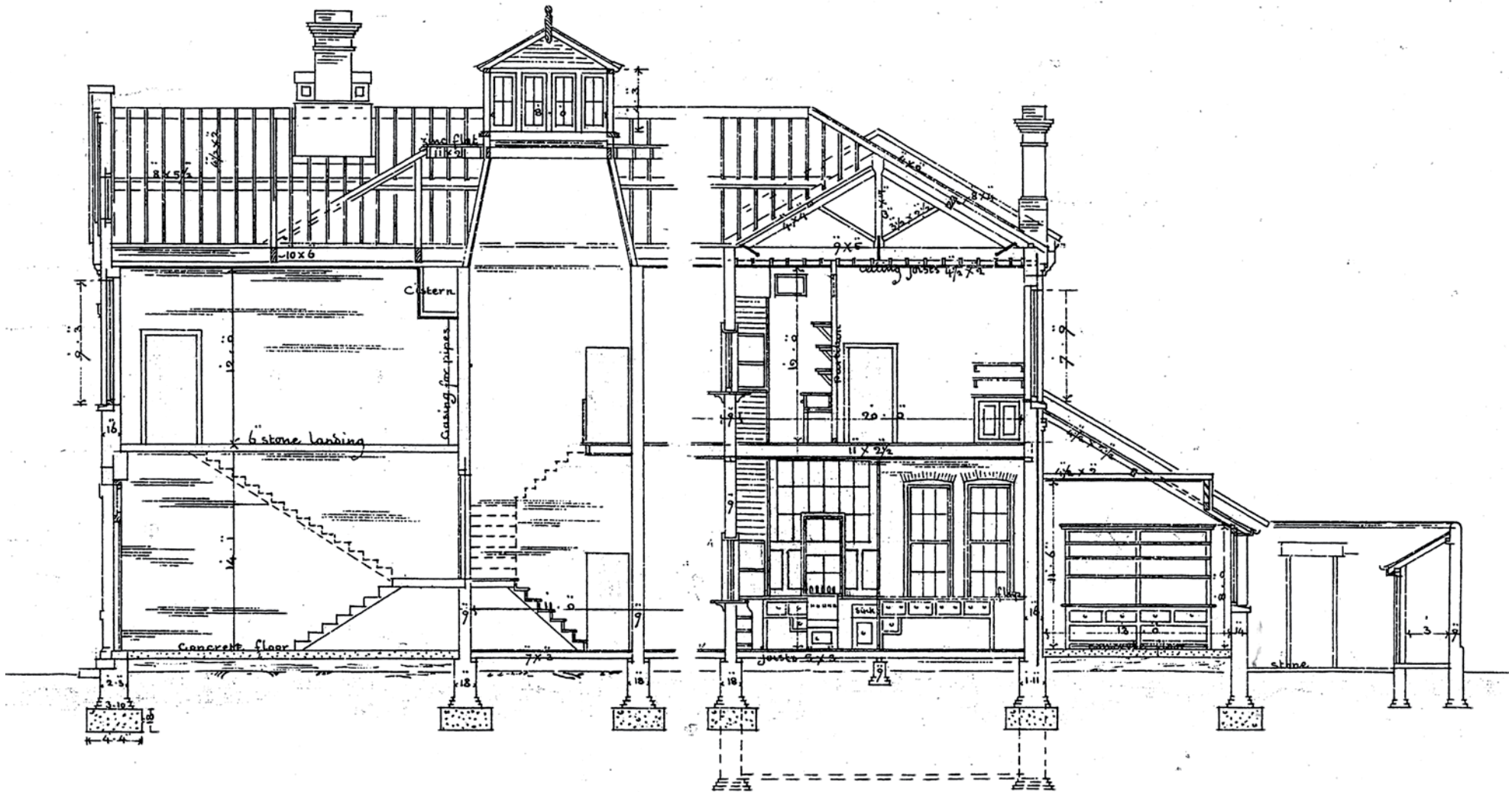


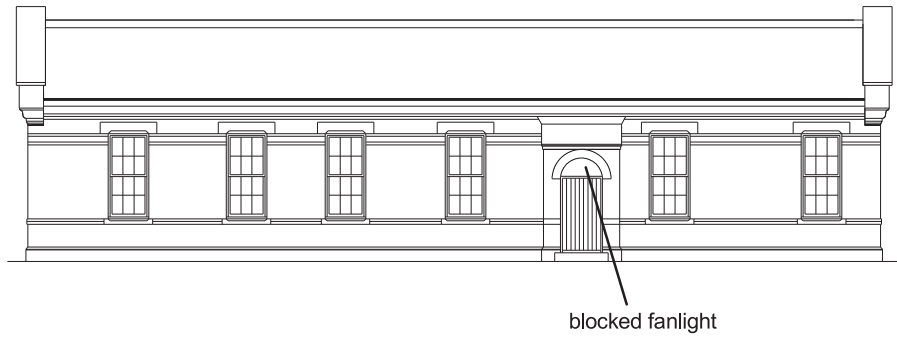
Fig.9. Existing ground and first floor plans of canteen and sergeants mess



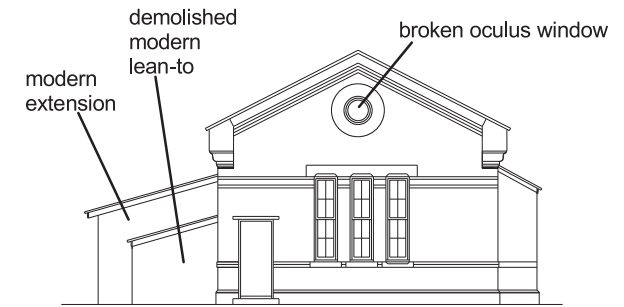
SECTION ON LINE A-B.

SECTION ON LINE C-D.

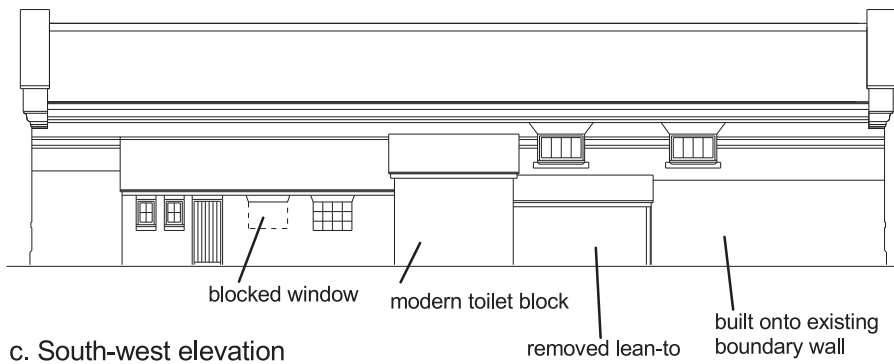
Fig.10. Historic sections through Canteen and Sergeants mess, 1875 (NMR MD 95/1442)



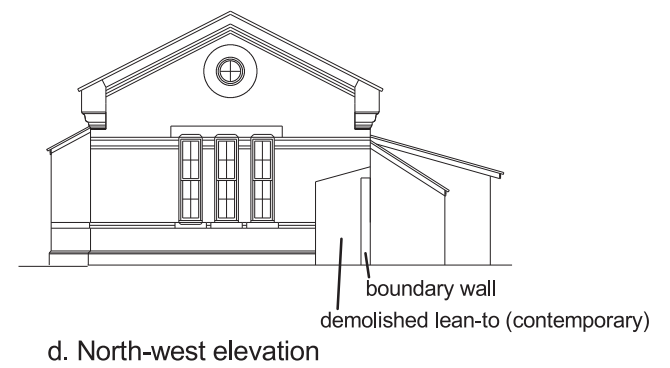
a. North-east elevation



b. South-west elevation



c. South-west elevation



d. North-west elevation

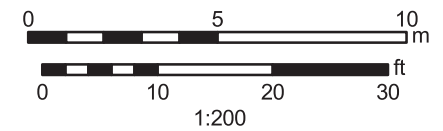


Fig.11. Existing elevations of adult school

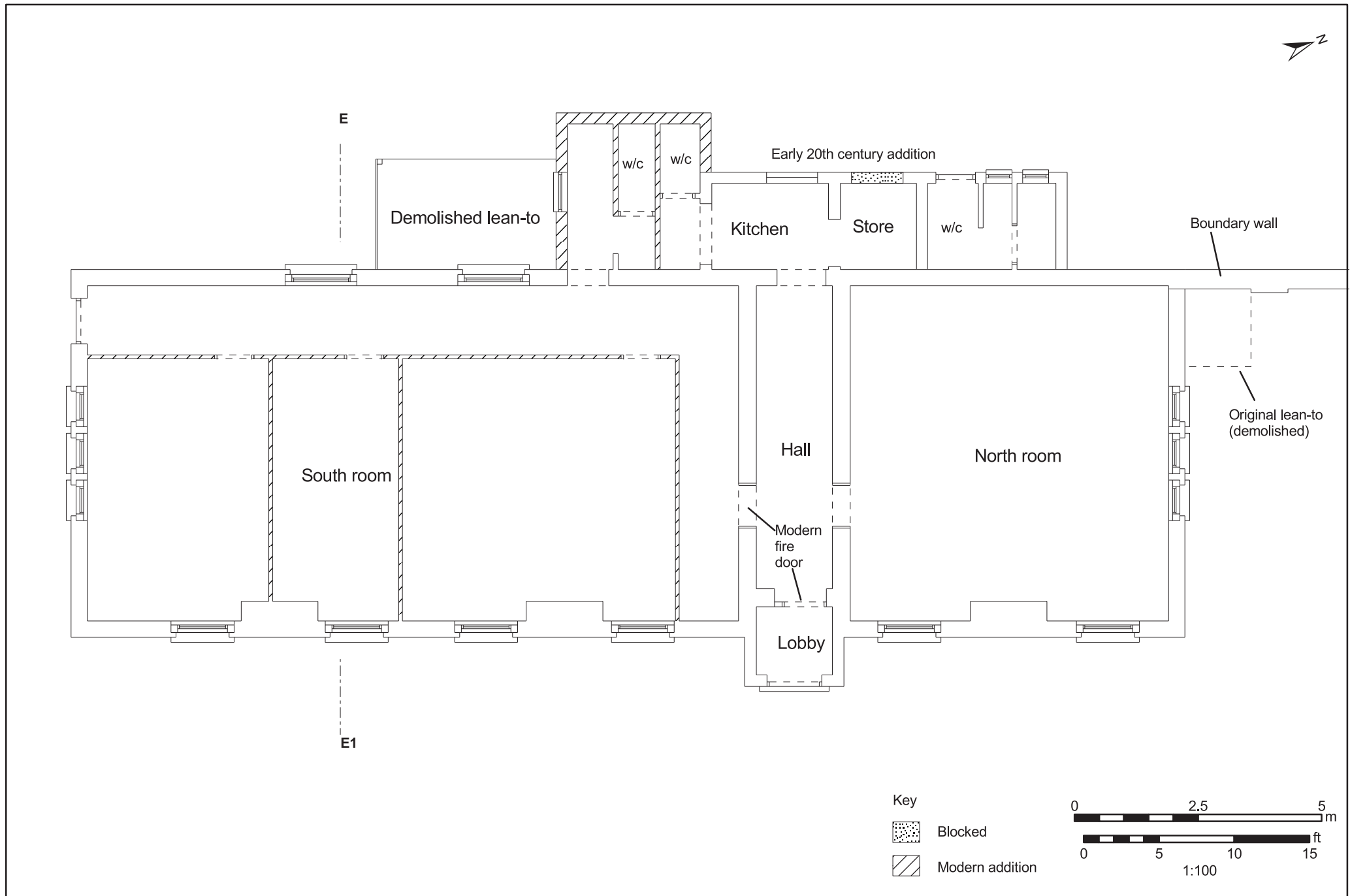


Fig.12. Floor plan of adult school

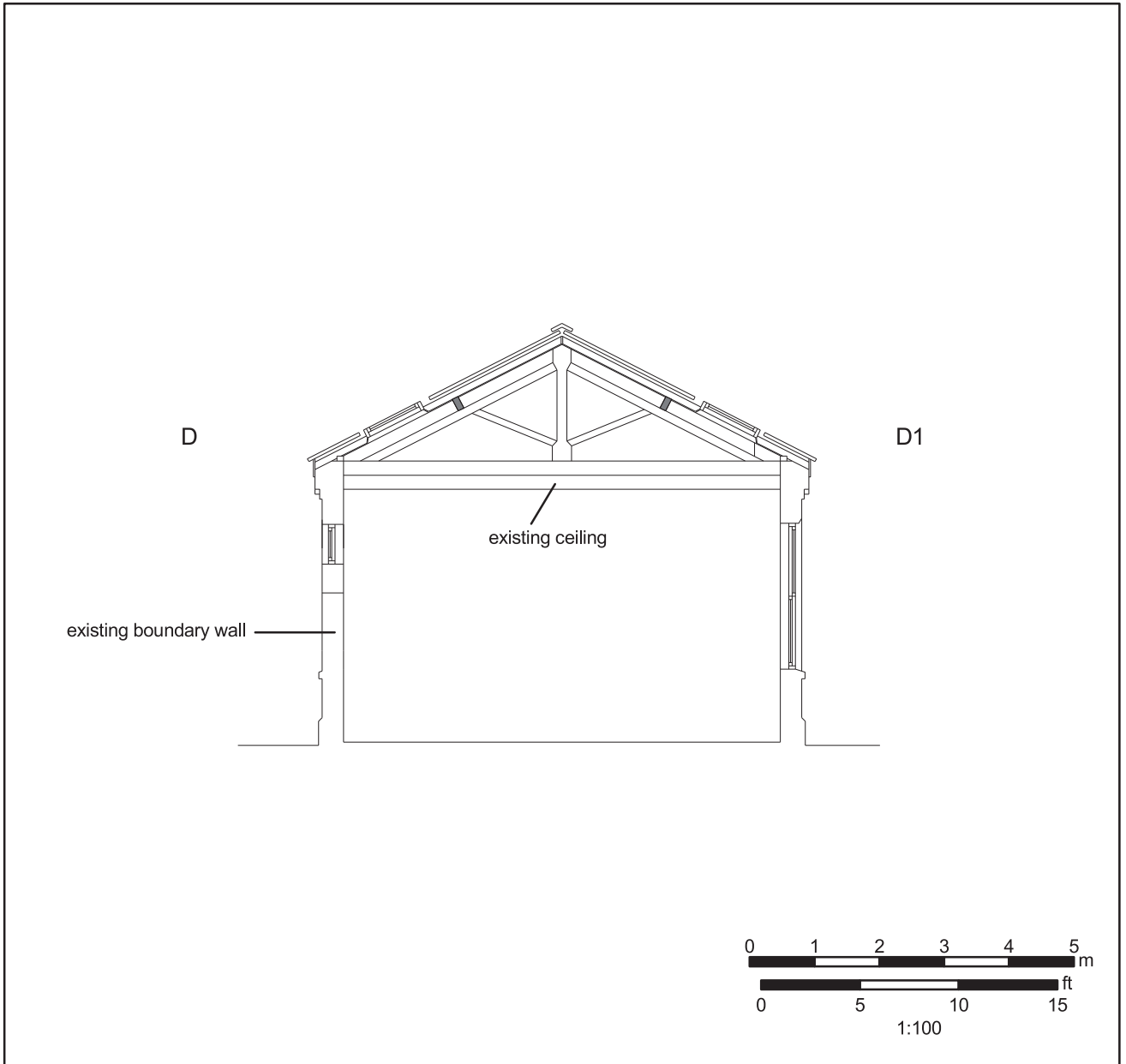


Fig.13. Section D-D1 through adult school

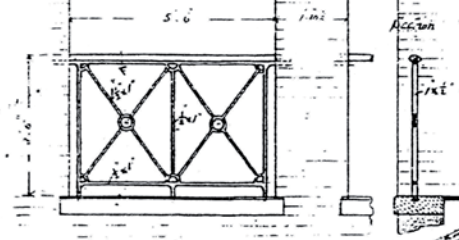
COLCHESTER BARRACKS

CAVALRY RIDING SCHOOL

B

View of the Compartment of Gallery front.

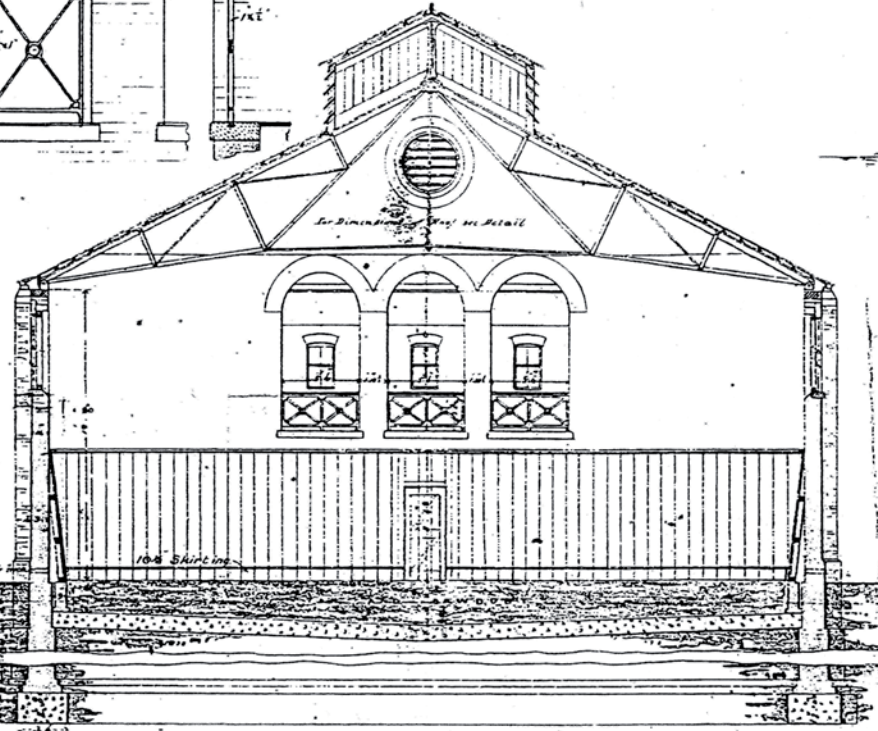
Showing cast-iron panels to French seats.



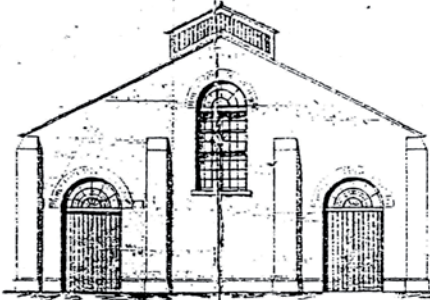
END ELEVATION



Section of Hand-rail at A. full size



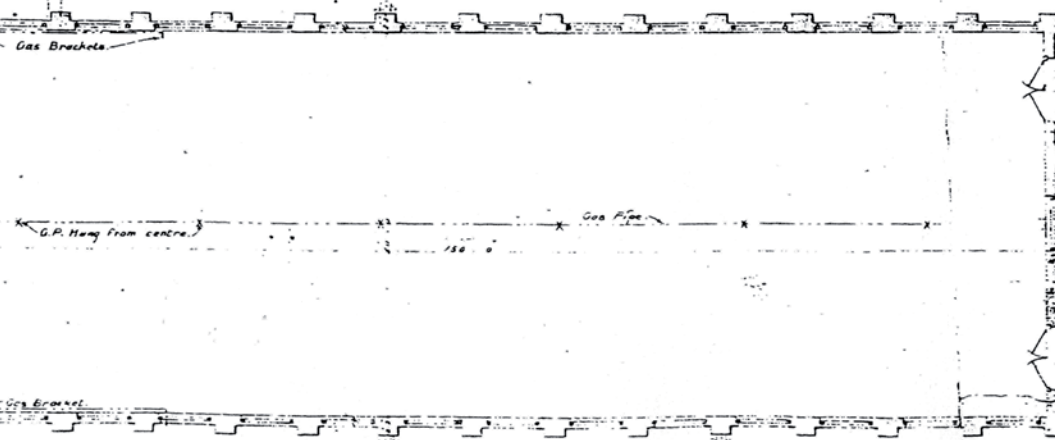
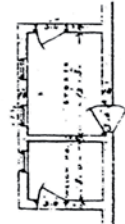
TRANSVERSE SECTION



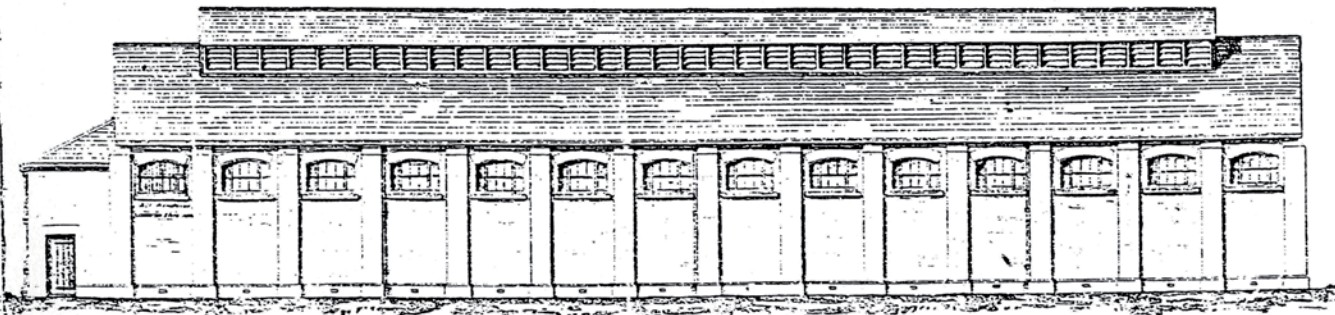
END ELEVATION



LONGITUDINAL SECTION



PLAN



FRONT ELEVATION

Fig.14. Historic elevations, plan & section through riding school, c.1864 (NMR MD 95/1502)

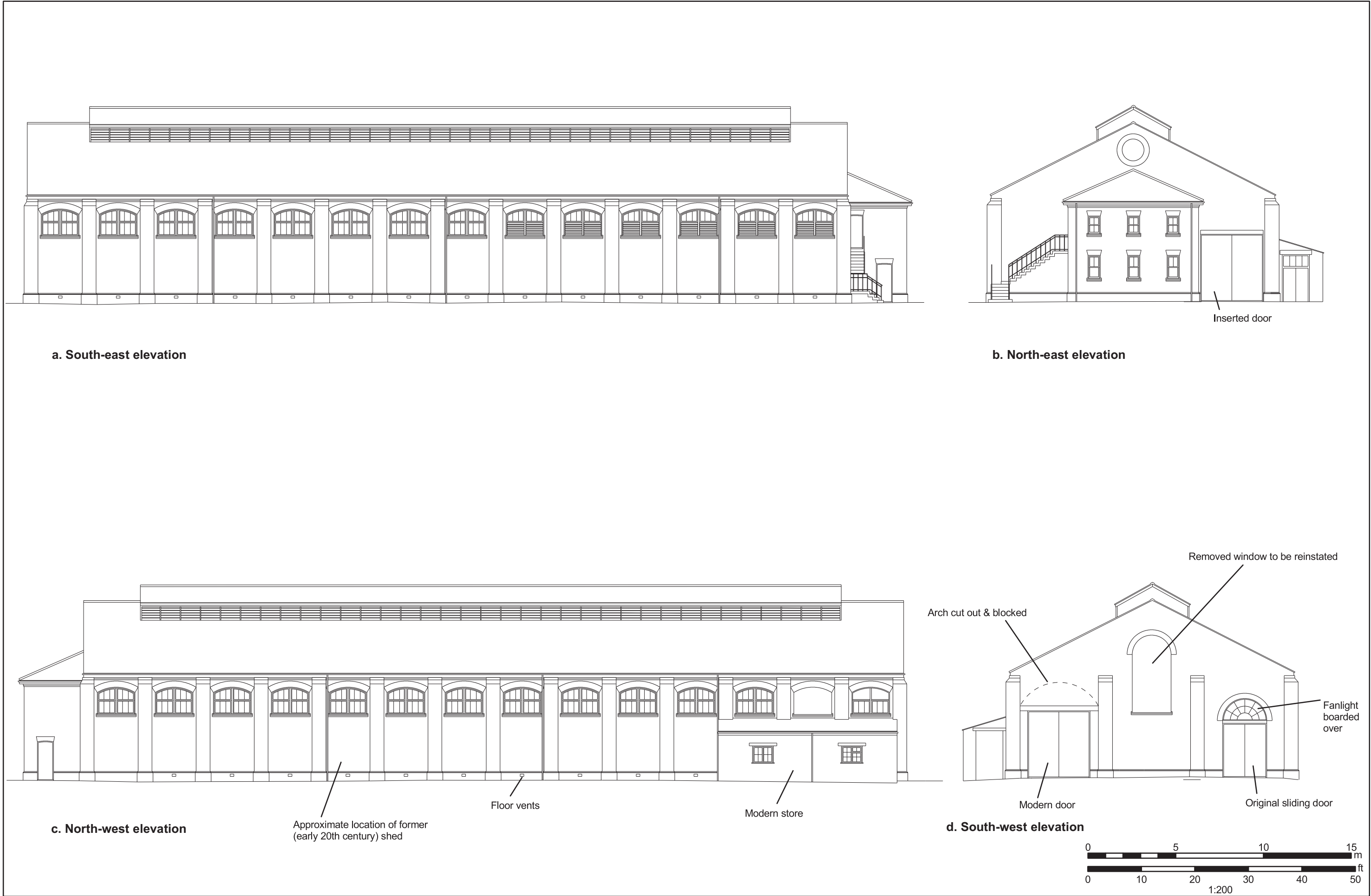


Fig.15. Existing elevations of riding school

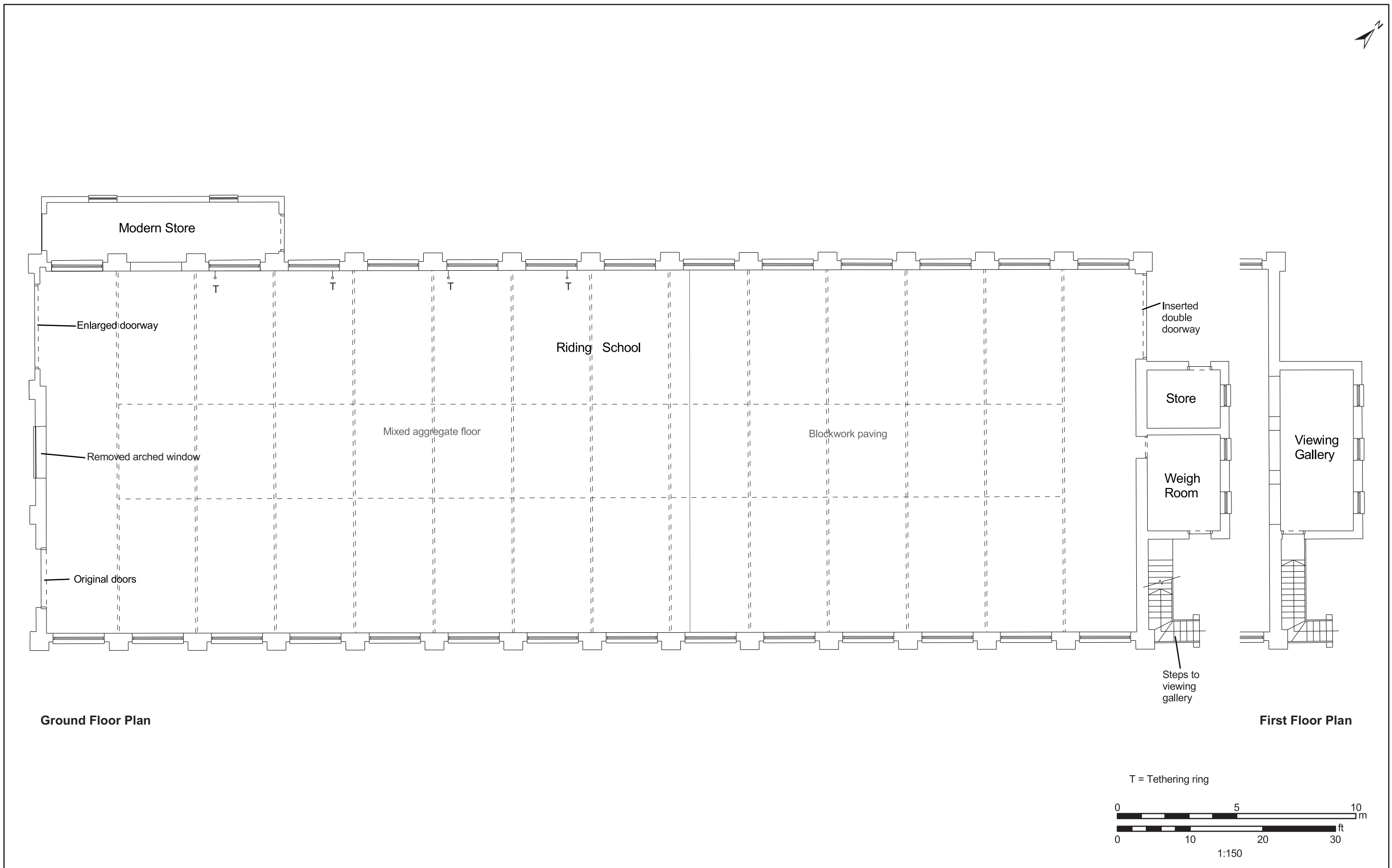


Fig.16. Existing floor plan of riding school



Plate 1 Main (north-east) façade to stable block A



Plate 2 Stable blocks A & B viewed to north before conversion works started



Plate 3 Stable block viewed to west



Plate 4 Balcony of stable block



Plate 5 North-west and north-east elevations of stable block



Plate 6 North-west elevation of stable block



Plate 7 Central passage and stalls viewed to north-east end



Plate 8 Central passage and stalls viewed to south-west end



Plate 9 Detail of stall construction



Plate 10 Stall flooring (for two horses)



Plate 11 Iron trough bracket



Plate 12 North-east stable door and drainage gully



Plate 13 Stairs to barrack rooms



Plate 14 Stairs and barrack room landing



Plate 15 Interior of former harness room 1



Plate 16 Interior of former forge



Plate 17 Interior of officers stables



Plate 18 Interior of fire-damaged barrack room



Plate 19 Canteen and sergeants mess viewed from west



Plate 20 Canteen and sergeants mess viewed from north



Plate 21 Main (south-east) façade to sergeants mess



Plate 22 Roof vent above kitchen in sergeants mess



Plate 23 Rear (north-west) elevation of sergeants mess



Plate 24 Sergeants mess & adult school viewed from south



Plate 25 Yard to sergeants mess with scullery in background



Plate 26 Bar room 3 viewed to tap room 4



Plate 27 Tap room 4 partially stripped



Plate 28 Mess kitchen 6



Plate 29 Billiard room 9 viewed to blocked former arch



Plate 30 Blocked arch inside caterers room 10



Plate 31 Balustrade on top landing



Plate 32 Inserted wall to training quarters in former recreation room



Plate 33 Interior of north-west training quarters in former recreation room

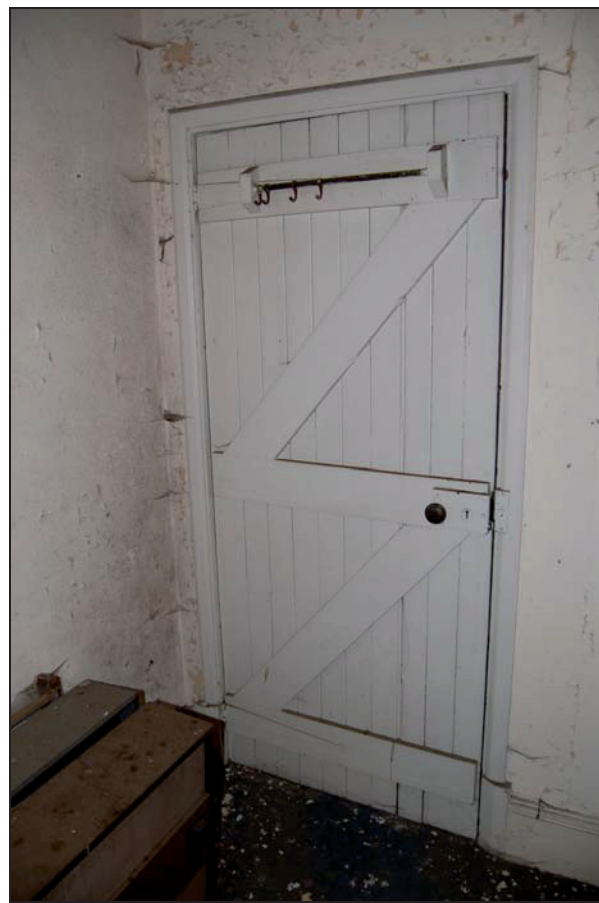


Plate 34 Contemporary door in inserted doorway between training quarters



Plate 35 Moulded plaster ceiling in former reading room



Plate 36 West elevation of adult school



Plate 37 Adult school viewed to south



Plate 38 Interior of north classroom



Plate 39 Main (south-east) elevation of riding school



Plate 40 Riding school viewed to east

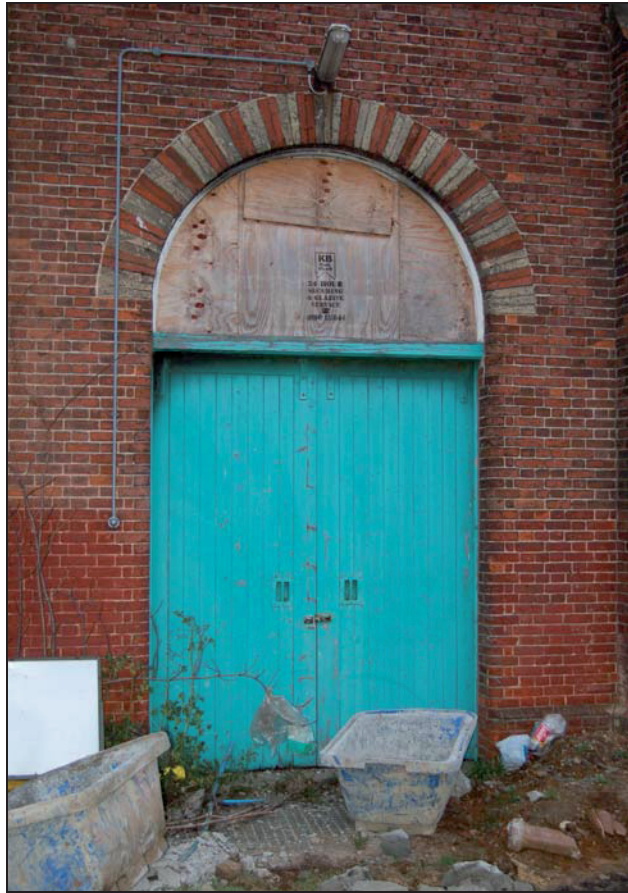


Plate 41 Original sliding doors to riding school



Plate 42 Interior of riding school viewed to gallery at north-east end



Plate 43 Interior of riding school viewed to south-west end



Plate 44 Viewing gallery photographed through modern mesh screen

Appendix 1: Archive index

Site name: Le Cateau & Cavalry Barracks, Colchester Garrison

Project no. 1858

Index to the Archive

Document wallet containing:

1. Introduction

- 1.1 FAU written scheme of investigation (for project 1750)
- 1.2 Client/archive report
- 1.3 CD containing copy of report, pdf-formatted & digital images

2. Site Archive

- 2.1 Photographic record (digital prints & monochrome 35mm prints)
- 2.2 Site notes & annotated survey drawings
- 2.3 Architects drawings
- 2.4 Copy of original 1875 plan of stable blocks & sergeants mess

Appendix 2: EHER Summary sheet

Site Name/Address: Le Cateau & Cavalry Barracks, Colchester Garrison	
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester
NGR: TL 9929 2451	Site Code: N/A
Type of Work: Historic building recording	Site Director/Group: A. Letch, ECC FAU
Date of Work: December 2007	OASIS No.: essexcou1-39335
Location of Archive: Colchester Museum	Funding Source: Lexden Restoration & Development
Further Work Anticipated? No	Listed Building No.: 46940, 42-43 & 45
Periods Represented: Mid Victorian	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p><i>Historic building recording was carried out on four grade II-listed army buildings before conversion works took place: stable block A, the canteen/sergeant's mess, adult school and riding school. The survey followed on from a similar survey of stable block B (Letch 2007) and a site assessment carried out by Ingram Consultancy (2000).</i></p>	
<p><i>All except for the riding school are remains of the Le Cateau Barracks, originally the Royal Artillery Barracks, built 1874-75. The officer's mess is also listed but is yet to be converted. The riding school was part of the Cavalry Barracks, the first permanent barrack built in Colchester, built 1862-64. This was the only element recorded from this group.</i></p>	
<p><i>Le Cateau Barracks housed the Royal Horse Artillery, an elite force, and this is reflected in the quality of the architecture, which is the best of any of the Colchester barracks. Gothic and Classical themes are used within the Victorian context on well-built brick and slate structures with yellow brick dressings. All are relatively intact externally, although some gables are rebuilt. Inside much internal fabric was removed when the barracks became an army training centre c.1960s. One exception is stable block B, which contains much of the original stall layout, flooring and fixtures (trough brackets, tethering rings). The stable design included projecting wings, a high jack-arched fire-proof ceiling and advanced ventilation system including wall grills and flues exiting through the roof through pipes and wooden louvres. Original architects drawings obtained from the NMR were used to establish original layout and functional areas.</i></p>	
<p><i>Original architect's drawings were also invaluable in understanding the development of the canteen/sergeant's mess, whose internal layout was changed extensively c.1900 to enlarge the recreational facilities on offer. Additional change occurred c.1960s with the conversion to training rooms and accommodation, leading to low survival of original fixtures, fittings and internal layout (especially downstairs). Apart from its architectural and group value, as an army building, it is of interest in having an unusually irregular plan form (Ingram 2000).</i></p>	
<p><i>The adult school was built later, c.1884, but in the same style as the original structures. It is also the most intact externally. It is important as a rare survival during a time when standards of education of army personnel was a concern. The interiors were adapted to office use c.1960s.</i></p>	
<p><i>The riding school is the only surviving example of its kind in England (Listed Buildings Online) and retains much of its character internally and externally, despite the removal of important features. It incorporates architectural themes common to the other buildings of the Cavalry Barracks.</i></p>	
<p><i>Le Cateau and the Cavalry Barracks are the last survivors in England of the less-hierarchical</i></p>	

training camp form of cavalry barracks pioneered at Aldershot in the 1850s. They are therefore of national importance.

Previous Summaries/Reports: *Stable Block B, Le Cateau Barrack, Colchester Garrison: Historic Building Record. Letch 2006; Colchester Garrison: Historic Building Assessment, Ingram Consultancy 2000*

Author of Summary: A. Letch (ECC FAU)

Date of Summary: 17th March 2008