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Archaeological Standing Building Recording

On behalf of

My Construction Ltd

Concerning

**43-45 High Street
Leominster
Herefordshire
HR6 8LZ**

September 2018

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Cover: View looking northeast showing Nos. 43 and 45 High Street at the junction with High Street and Corn Street

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1 Non-Technical Summary

Border Archaeology (BA) has been instructed by Susan Caspi (My Construction Ltd) to carry out a programme of Archaeological Standing Building Recording (ASBR) to Historic England Level 2 of Nos. 43-45 High Street, Leominster, Herefordshire.

Four main phases of building activity were identified, which can be briefly summarised as follows:

1/ The earliest phase of construction, which can probably be ascribed a late 16th-early 17th century date, is represented by the construction of the two houses at Nos. 43-45 High Street; No. 43, the smaller of the two, being a rectangular single-cell building while No. 45 was a larger L-plan house. Documentary evidence suggests that, at one point, Nos. 43 and 45 may have formed a single tenement, which had been subdivided by no later than c.1600. It would appear from the existing layout of the houses, as built in the late 16th-early 17th century, that they were considered as two separate properties, with no internal connection on the first or second floors; this division is also evidenced by the thick scantled, square timber panels in the N-wall of No. 45 at first-floor level.

2/ A secondary phase of construction appears to be represented by the eastward jettied extension added to the northeast corner of No. 45, which may be dated to the early to mid-17th century. At first-floor level, within the northeast room of No. 45, remains of painted plaster decoration (with a repetitive black droplet pattern) were noted in the wall of the easternmost bay, which can probably be dated to c.1600-30 on stylistic grounds. The presence of painted decoration in this room, together with evidence for a fireplace (since removed), suggests that it was considered to be of some importance, probably the main bedchamber or parlour.

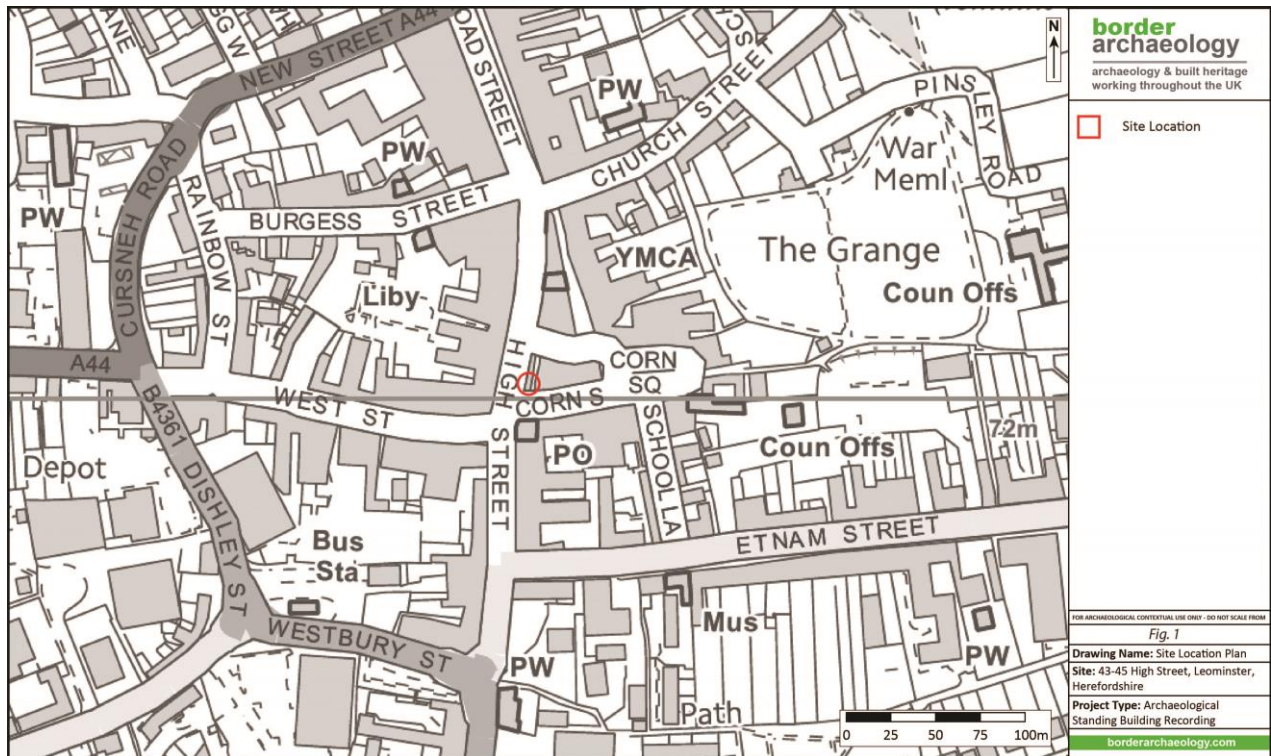
3/ A tertiary phase of activity, which can be dated to the late 17th or early 18th century, is represented by the addition of the jettied rear extension at the southeastern corner of No. 45 housing the ground-floor staircase and landing with a room above. Other features assigned to this phase of activity in No. 45 are the 6/6 sash window with thick moulded glazing bars and the 6-pane casement window located in the northeast rooms at first- and second-floor level. The street frontage of No. 43 also appears to have been rebuilt in the late 17th or early 18th century with the addition of two jettied bays with mullioned and transomed windows flanking a central casement.

4/ A later phase of construction, dated to the late 18th-early 19th century, is represented in No. 45 by the construction of the present staircase at ground-floor level (as evidenced by the plain moulded handrail, square newel post and stick balusters) and probably also the stairs leading up to the second floor. The sash windows inserted in the south- and west-facing elevations of No. 45 at first- and second-floor level also appear to be of late 18th or early 19th century date.

Conclusion: *In spite of later alterations, Nos. 43 and 45 High Street retain a significant quantity of early fabric dating to the late 16th-early 17th century and much of the original internal layout has survived. Of particular interest is the survival of painted wall decoration in No. 45, concealed by later lath-and-plaster work, which can probably be assigned an early 17th century date and represents an important survival. It is recommended that appropriate measures should be taken to stabilise and conserve the wall paintings prior to conversion of the buildings.*

2 Introduction

Border Archaeology (BA) was instructed by Susan Caspi of My Construction Ltd to carry out a programme of Archaeological Standing Building Recording (ASBR) to Historic England/RCHME Level 2 of Nos. 43-45 High Street Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 8LZ in connection with the proposed conversion of the upper floors to form two self-contained flats (*fig. 1*). The planning application reference for this project is P174737/L.



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3 Site Description, Soils and Geology

Nos. 43 & 45 High Street consist of two attached three-storey houses, both of which are Grade II listed buildings, situated on the E side of the High Street, within the centre of the historic town of Leominster, which is designated as a Conservation Area by Herefordshire Council. The site is bounded to the W by the High Street, to the S by Corn Street, to the rear (E) by Butchers Row and to the N by No. 41 High Street. The grid reference for the site is NGR SO 49632 59001.

3.1 Soils and Geology

The predominant soil type in the immediate vicinity of the site consists of typical argillic brown earths of the ESCRICK 1 (571p) series, comprising deep well drained reddish coarse loamy soils with the underlying geology consisting of reddish till (SSEW 1983).



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4 Archaeological & Historical Background

Nos. 43 and 45 are located on the E side of the High Street, one of Leominster's most prominent thoroughfares running N/S through the centre of the town. Together with Drapers Lane and Corn Street, it formed a triangular marketplace at the historic core of the medieval urban settlement of Leominster and was gradually infilled by the end of the 15th century (Buteux 1995, 18). There appears to have been a gradual rebuilding of properties within the historic core of the town during the late 16th-early 17th century; Nos. 43 and 45 represent two of several well-preserved houses of this period along the E side of the High Street (Brooks & Pevsner 2012, 453).

Documentary records for the two houses at Nos. 43 and 45 High Street are somewhat patchy; however, based on the available documentary and architectural evidence, it appears that the two houses may originally have formed part of a single tenement, which had been subdivided into two separate, unequal sized properties at some point during the late 16th-early 17th century (No. 45 being the larger of the two, occupying the NE, SE and SW portions of the tenement) and the unusual internal arrangements at upper-storey level reflect this historic subdivision. Documentary evidence confirms that Nos. 43 and 45 High Street remained as two distinct properties under separate ownership from the late 16th/early 17th century through to the 20th century; both appear to have housed commercial premises on the ground floor with dwellings above.

No. 43 High Street (which is by far the best documented of the two houses) may be identified with one of two tenements situated on the E side of the High Street (the other being No. 15 High Street) which were granted by William Price, a merchant taylor of London, together with various other landholdings in Leominster, Mansell Lacy and Clodock by his will dated 3 Nov 1602 for the foundation of an almshouse in Hereford, which was subsequently

established as Price's Hospital in Whitecross Street in 1636 (Price, 1795, 238-43). The deed of foundation for the hospital refers to 'one third part of a tenement in High Street in Leominster aforesaid', which can probably be identified with No. 43 High Street (Price 1795, 242).



Fig. 3: Extract from William Gallier's Map of Leominster dated 1832 (with site marked in red)
(Reproduced by courtesy of Herefordshire Archives and Record Centre)

Architectural evidence indicates that the present house at No. 43 High Street probably dates to the late 16th or early 17th century, which suggests that it may have been built either by Price or the trustees under his will. It remained in the ownership of Price's Hospital from the early 17th century through to the mid-20th century, being leased as a messuage and dwelling house to a succession of tenants, the earliest recorded (in 1784) being Samuel Hull of Stoke Prior (HARC Ref. BH59/157). Subsequent tenants identified from deeds and census returns include a grocer, James Maund (in 1806), and a hosier named Joseph Smith and his wife Mary (c.1861-81). The premises appear to have changed hands rapidly during the late-19th and early-20th centuries, being listed in 1895 as a hairdresser's shop and in 1900 as a boot and shoemaker's premises. In 1911, the shop and messuage at No 43 was leased by the Hospital to 'Johnson Brothers Ltd., Dyers', who occupied the premises until the mid-20th century (HARC Ref. BH59/166).

The history of No. 45 High Street is less well-documented, although on architectural grounds it must also be of late 16th or early 17th century date; unfortunately, no deeds have been found which document the origins and ownership of the property. A lease of No. 43 High Street dated 1784 refers to 'a messuage or tenement in the possession of John Morgan watchmaker to the south and east', which must almost certainly refer to No. 45. From c.1840 through to the late 20th century, trade directories and census returns show that the premises were occupied by a succession of butchers, the earliest recorded being Samuel Preece (in 1841). From 1851 to 1871, the house was occupied by William Lewis and his family, followed by Thomas Radnor (from 1885 to 1895). From c.1895 to 1930, No. 45 High Street was occupied as commercial premises by Eastmans Ltd, a firm of butchers, followed by J.H. Dewhurst Ltd, which remained there until the late 20th century.

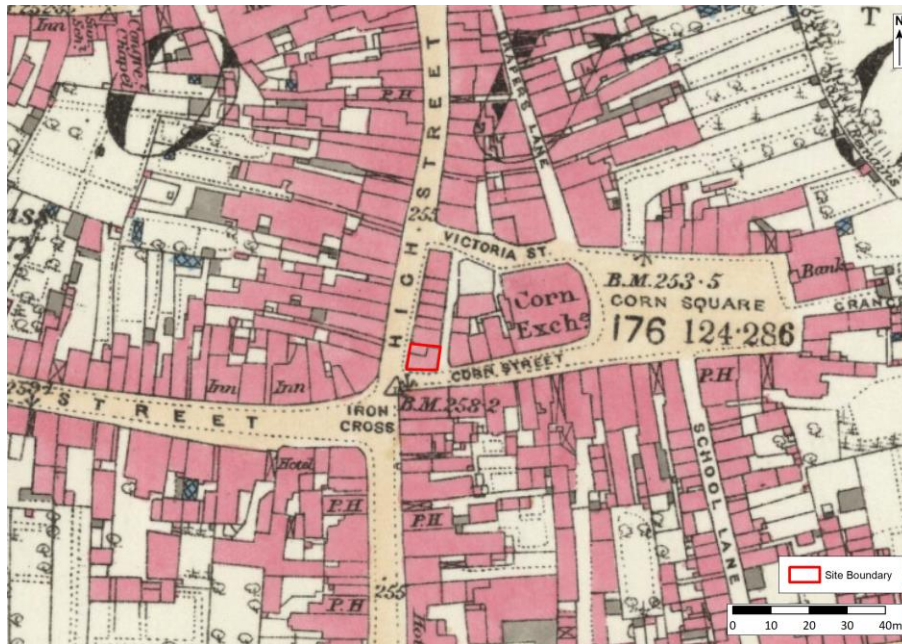


Fig. 4: Extract from the OS 1st edition map of 1887 (with site marked in red)
(Reproduced by courtesy of Herefordshire Archives and Record Centre)

Historic mapping shows that the form of Nos. 43 and 45 High Street has remained essentially unchanged since the early 19th century. Gallier's Map of 1832 (fig. 3) shows Nos. 43 and 45 in somewhat schematic form, without indicating the sub-division between the two properties, however the OS 1st edition 25-inch map of 1887 (fig. 4) and subsequent Ordnance Survey maps clearly show the subdivision between the two houses, with No. 43 in the NW corner fronting onto the High Street. Old photographs of Nos. 43-45 High Street show that both houses were stuccoed, with little visible timber-framing apart from the carved brackets supporting the jetties (fig. 5).



Fig. 5: Photograph dated c.1935 showing Nos. 43 and 45 High Street to right of picture at the corner with Corn Street
(Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)

5 Methodology

This Archaeological Standing Building Recording (ASBR) was undertaken by Border Archaeology on 29th August 2018. The specific recording methodology is based on a Historic England/RCHME Level 2 record as detailed in *Understanding Historic Buildings – A guide to good recording practice* (Lane 2016), which sets out guidance on the recording of historic buildings for the purposes of historical understanding and is a revised and expanded version of *Recording Historic Buildings: A Descriptive Specification* (RCHME 1996).

Level 2 is defined as follows:

*Level 2 is a **descriptive record**, made in similar circumstances to Level 1 but when more information is needed. It may be made of a building which is judged not to require a more detailed record, or it may serve to gather data for a wider project. Both the exterior and interior of the building will be seen, described and photographed. The examination of the building will produce an analysis of its development and use and the record will include the conclusions reached, but it will not discuss in detail the evidence on which this analysis is based. A plan and sometimes other drawings may be made but the drawn record will normally not be comprehensive and may be tailored to the scope of a wider project* (Lane 2016).

This Level 2 record consists of the following specifics:

5.1 Drawn record

This comprises the following:

- Plans of the buildings, with photo locations clearly marked, and a location plan related to the national grid
- Annotated elevation drawings
- Appropriate additional illustrations that help support findings and the interpretation of the buildings
- Additional illustrations of dateable fixtures and fittings (mouldings, catches, hinges, latches etc.)
- A summary description of the buildings in their current form in the format of a typical listed building description.

5.2 Photographic record

The photographic survey consists of the following:

1. High-resolution colour digital photographs, with suitable scales, of the following:

- All external elevations
- All internal room spaces (where accessible)

- Details of any architectural or functional fixtures, fittings and features relating to either the function or development of the building
- General photographs illustrating the buildings relationship to the surrounding buildings and setting.

5.3 Written account

This comprises the following:

- A summary statement describing the building's significance and purpose, historically and at present, its materials and possible date(s) so far as these are apparent from a superficial inspection.

5.4 Recording methodology

Records were made in accordance with BA's *Archaeological Field Recording Manual* (2017) and Historic England conventions as detailed in *Understanding Historic Buildings – A guide to good recording practice* (Lane 2016).

The photographic record was made using a Sony RX100 Mk. II digital camera at a 20mpx resolution. Photographs were taken of all the external elevations where possible with an appropriate scale.

Additional photographs of relevant architectural details were also taken. All internal room spaces were photographed as obliques, with additional photographs of fixtures and fittings as appropriate. Each interior photograph contains an appropriate scale and all photographic images have been indexed and cross-referenced to a written photographic register. Details concerning subject and direction of view were maintained in a photographic register, indexed by frame number.

6 Results

6.1 Detailed Building Description

For reasons of clarity, the building description distinguishes clearly between Nos. 43 and 45 High Street, reflecting the historic division between the two properties. It should be noted that, with the exception of the staircase to the rear of No. 45 High Street (which will be replaced) the ground floors of both houses (which are currently occupied by shop premises) will not be affected by the proposed works. The description proceeds in sequence from ground floor to second floor, beginning with the ground floor landing to the rear of No. 45.

6.2 Exterior

6.2.1 No. 45 High Street

No. 45 High Street (LB Ref. 1225447) is a three-storey timber-framed building with cellarge, L-shaped in plan with a slate roof, occupying a corner plot at the junction of High Street and Corn Street. The W-facing elevation, fronting onto the High Street, is two bays wide and comprises an early 20th century shopfront at ground-floor level, with a half-glazed panelled door to the left and panelled stall boards with a canted return to the right (*Plate 1*). The first floor above the shopfrontage has exposed thick-scantled timber-framed panels with plaster infill, flanking an 8/8 box-framed sash window of 18th century date, the lower part of which is obscured by the early 20th century fascia board. Above this is a jettied second-storey with exposed soffits and an enriched dragon brace at the corner; again there is exposed timber-framing with thin-scantling in the centre (together with a 4/8 sash window) flanked by thick-scantled side panels with concave-sided lozenges.

The S elevation of the building is five bays long and rendered on the ground floor (now decorated with a recently painted mural) with a jettied first floor with exposed soffits on enriched scrolled brackets and twin gables with spurred quarter-bracing (*Plate 2*). The rear elevation (facing onto Butchers Row) has a slate lean-to roof and comprises two distinct components: the SE portion has exposed thin-scantled timber-framing with a shallow jetty to second floor with exposed soffit corbels. At ground floor, there is a panelled doorway with overlight leading to a stairway with a large blocked-up flat arched window (the proportions suggesting a shop window) to the right of it (*Plate 3*). The NE portion is also two storeys high with a shallow-jettied second floor, with a 6/6 sash window concealed by plasterwork at first-floor level and an intact 6-pane casement window above on the second floor. A vertical construction break between the NE and SE portions of the rear elevation was noted, evidenced by the slight difference in height between the jettied upper storeys.

6.2.2 No. 43 High Street

43 High Street (LB Ref. 1255476) bordered by No. 45 to the S and E, consists of a timber-framed building, three storeys high, with cellar below and a steeply pitched slate roof (*Plate 4*). The principal W-facing elevation of the building fronting onto the High Street has a late 19th century plate-glass shopfront at ground-floor level, while both the first and second floor frontages are clad in stucco and have deep jetties; the existing stucco appears to be of

recent date (replacing modern external weatherboarding), although early 20th century photographs of No. 43 show it was certainly stuccoed at that date. The fenestration at first- and second-floor level consists of mullioned and transomed windows with a central casement (with thick glazing bars) of late 17th or early 18th century date.

6.3 Interior

6.3.1 No. 45 High Street – First Floor

Access to the upper storeys of the two houses was obtained via the doorway to the rear of No. 45 (from Butchers Row), which enters onto a narrow hallway containing an oak closed-string winder staircase (*Plate 5*) with a square, chamfered newel post with plain oak handrail and stick balusters (*Plates 6 & 7*). The form of the staircase (in particular the use of stick, rather than turned, balusters) suggests a late 18th or early 19th century date for its construction, suggesting that, in its present form, it may well postdate the addition of the SE extension. Evidence of what was apparently interpreted by the RCHME as the former E wall of the house, predating the eastward extension, is represented by the exposed square, thick-scantled timber-framing with lath-and-plaster infill, coated in whitewash, which is visible to the left of the staircase (*Plates 7-9*).

The staircase leads up to a narrow first-floor landing (*Plate 10*), to the left of which is an opening leading onto the first floor, the layout of which consists of two unequal sized rooms on the S side of the building, each two bays wide and separated by a slightly staggered lath-and-plaster partition wall (*Plate 11*), with a separate room leading off to the NE. The room to the NE is separated by a lath-and-plaster partition wall; evidence for a probable construction break is indicated by the point where the square-framed, thick-scantled partition to the left terminates abruptly, to the right of which is a plain lath-and-plaster partition with chamfered doorway (*Plate 12*).

The room immediately W of the landing is lit by a single 3/6 box-framed sash window (*Plate 13*), to the left of which is a narrow winder staircase with a plain moulded handrail (the lower treads of which have a closed string) leading up to the second floor (*Plate 14*). The floor is partially planked (several of the floorboards having been removed) while the ceiling is plastered with exposed deep chamfered beams running N-S and E-W.

Beneath the staircase is a section of oak panelling of probable 17th century date, originally forming part of a door surround (as indicated by the hooks for hinges), which is evidently no longer *in situ* (*Plate 15*). The door surround comprises three recessed, elongated side panels and three broader rectangular recessed panels over the door opening surmounted by a moulded cornice; the right-hand panels appear to be missing. The original position of this panelled door surround is unclear: it may have stood over one of the doorways leading to the rooms to the N or W; the proportions appear to be too wide to be associated with the doorway leading to the landing and staircase to ground-floor level. The RCHME Survey (carried out in 1930) refers to a panelled door with arcaded panel in No. 45 but no visible evidence for this was noted during the present survey (RCHME 1934, 122).

Located to the NE of this room and separated from it by a lath-and-plaster partition wall is another rectangular room, three bays long (E-W) and a single bay wide (N-S). Access to the NE room is through a flat-arched doorway (the door itself having evidently been removed, although the wooden door frame is partially intact), immediately to the left of which is a chamfered vertical post carrying a substantial square beam extending across the full width

of the room, with infilled slots for horizontal rails (*Plate 16*). This vertical post and beam appear to mark the original line of the E wall, indicating that the easternmost bay was probably added at a slightly later date (*Plate 17*).

Inserted in the E wall is a box-framed 6/6 sash window with thick moulded glazing bars (*Plate 18*), which has been blocked-up externally. The thickness of the glazing bars suggests a late 17th or early 18th century date for this window.

Remains of decorative painted plasterwork, bearing a repeated black droplet motif on a reddish-gold background, were noted in the wall immediately beneath and to the right of the sash window, partially truncated by the sash window frame and concealed by later lath-and-plaster work. Only a fragment of the painted decoration was revealed; however, the simple repetitive pattern is strongly suggestive of a date in the first half of the 17th century (Baird 2003; Kirkham 2010) and suggests that this room was of relatively high-status.

Within the W wall of this room, evidence of close-studded timber-framing (with lath-and-plaster infill) was noted, above which was a horizontal beam carried on a substantial joist at its N end, which terminates abruptly about halfway along the wall (*Plate 19*). This may indicate the position of a former fireplace in the NW corner of this room, a hypothesis corroborated by the position of an extant brick chimneystack immediately on the other side of the wall (in No. 43) extending up to first- and second-floor level.

The SW compartment of No. 45 (overlooking the High Street) is accessed from the room off the landing via a flat-headed doorway with wooden frame, the door having been removed previously. This room has planked floorboards (partially replaced with modern plasterboard) while the ceiling (which is plastered) has two exposed deep chamfered transverse beams and a diagonal beam (commonly known as a 'dragon beam'), which would have provided support to the jetty above (*Plate 21*).

The room is lit by an 8/8 box-framed sash window with thin glazing bars (probably of late 18th century date) inserted into the W wall, which consists of square-framed, thick-scantled panels with lath-and-plaster infill (*Plate 20*). The lower part of the window is partially obscured by the fascia board of the early 20th century shopfront. The framing of the S wall has been exposed and appears to have been partially reconstructed at a later date, as evidenced by the insertion of thin-scantled timber framing in the centre of the elevation, flanked by thick-scantled square-framed panels characteristic of the earlier work (*Plate 21*). A series of square-framed panels with thick scantling are exposed along the S wall of the room, clearly indicating the division between No. 45 and No. 43 immediately to the N (*Plate 22*).

6.3.2 No. 45 High Street – Second Floor

The second-floor rooms at No. 45 are accessed from the winder staircase leading up from the room immediately off the first-floor landing. The arrangement of rooms is similar to that on the first floor, consisting of two unequal sized rooms on the S side of the house, with a three-bay room to the NE and a narrow rectangular room above the staircase leading to ground-floor level. The room directly accessed by the staircase has planked floors and a plain plaster ceiling with hatch leading to the roof-space; the plaster infill within the square, thick-scantled framing of the S wall has been removed to expose the lathwork, covered by plastic sheeting (*Plate 23*). The partition wall

separating this room from the SW compartment is distinguished by its exposed slender scantling with lath-and-plaster infill (*Plate 24*).

The lath-and-plaster partition wall demarcating the room to N the has exposed close studding with thin scantling, which is suggestive of a later repair, possibly 19th or early 20th century in date; inserted in the wall is a flat-headed doorway with an intact plank-and-batten door; the door fittings are suggestive of a late 17th or 18th century date (*Plate 25*).

The E wall of this room consists of substantial square-framed, thick-scantled panels with lath-and-plaster infill; at the W end of this wall is a flat-headed doorway leading to the room above the landing and staircase below (*Plate 26*). This doorway is clearly a later insertion, as indicated by the fact that, at the far (left-hand) end of this partition wall is a substantial jowelled and chamfered vertical post with slots (since infilled), which would have originally carried the horizontal rails. The doorway leads to a rectangular compartment immediately above the landing and stairs to ground-floor level (*Plate 27*); the room has close-studded, thin-scantled walls with lath-and-plaster infill; there is no obvious indication that it ever had a plaster ceiling. Some of the floorboards within this compartment had been removed, so it was not possible to undertake a more detailed inspection.

A rectangular hatchway located to the right of the stairs leading down to the first floor provides access to the roof-space. Health and safety considerations precluded full access to the roof-space; however, a cursory inspection suggested an open-truss construction with a pair of trenched purlins (which have evidently been renewed in places) and angled struts connecting the tie-beam to the principal rafters (*Plate 28*).

The NE room at second-floor level, like its counterpart on the first floor, is rectangular in plan, three bays long (E-W) and a single bay in width (N-S). It is lit by a small 6-pane casement window set in the E wall within a narrow rectangular wooden frame (*Plate 29*). Both the S and W walls are of studded construction with lath-and-plaster infill; much of the thin-scantled studding is exposed (*Plates 30 & 31*). No visible evidence for a fireplace was noted in the NW corner of this room.

As was the case with the corresponding room below, there is evidence to suggest that the eastern bay was added subsequently, indicated by a substantial transverse beam supported at either end by jowelled and chamfered vertical posts with infilled slots for horizontal rails which probably represents the original line of the E wall prior to it being extended (*Plates 32 & 33*).

The room at the SW end of No. 45 is accessed via a flat-headed doorway with wooden frame and lintel above, the door itself having been removed (*Plate 34*). The room is lit by a box-framed 4/8 sash window with thin moulded glazing bars, which appears to be a later insertion of 18th century date (*Plate 35*). The W and S walls have exposed thick-scantled square-framed panels with lath-and-plaster infill (*Plate 36*), while the N wall of the compartment consists of regular thin-scantled studding with lath-and-plaster infill that appears to be later in date (*Plate 37*).

Attached to the middle of the W wall at ceiling level is a double ogee moulded wall bracket carrying one of the ceiling joists; traces of painted decoration (in what appears to be red ochre) are visible on the bracket (*Plate 38*). The form of the moulding suggests a 17th or early 18th century date, although it is difficult to be more precise.

6.3.3 No. 43 High Street – First Floor

The first floor of No. 43 comprises a single rectangular chamber, three bays long (E-W) and a single bay wide (N-S) overlooking the High Street; it has evidently been subject to a recent phase of refurbishment, as indicated by the fact that the walls and ceilings are clad with plasterboard, although there are a number of exposed ceiling beams and posts. The room is lit by a mullioned and transomed window in the W wall flanking a central casement; the form of the window suggests a late 17th or early 18th century date, although it has evidently been renewed in places (*Plate 39*). The westernmost bay of this room appears to be a later extension, contemporary with the mullioned and transomed window, and is thus likely to be of the same date.

The original position of the W wall is indicated by the substantial transverse chamfered beam carried on jewelled vertical posts, coated in black paint, with infilled slots for horizontal rails (*Plate 40*) and enriched scrolled brackets similar in design to those exposed brackets supporting the jetty for No. 45, which would appear to be datable to the late 16th or early 17th century (*Plate 41*). There is no access from this room to the ground floor of No. 43, although it appears that there was originally a flight of stairs to ground-floor level located within the deep recessed cupboard beneath the existing stairs to the second floor (*Plate 42*).

Towards the E end of the room is an exposed angled brick chimneybreast in the NE corner with unfrosted red bricks partially concealed by plasterwork (*Plate 43*), which has been converted to use as a recessed wall cupboard; the extant cupboard fixtures and fittings are suggestive of a late 19th century date, possibly contemporary with when No. 43 was converted wholly to commercial premises and was no longer used as a dwelling. Located in the SE corner of the room is two-panelled door providing access to a wooden dogleg staircase leading up to the second floor (*Plate 44*); the lower treads have an open string, while the uppermost section of the staircase has a closed string (*Plate 45*). The staircase in its current form appears to be of late 18th or 19th century in date.

6.3.4 No. 43 High Street – Second Floor

The second floor of No. 43 is of identical layout to its first-floor counterpart, consisting of a single chamber three bays long and a single bay wide. It has also been subject to modern refurbishment and has been clad entirely in plasterboard, apart from a number of exposed posts and ceiling beams. The compartment is lit by a mullioned and transomed window with central casement and thick glazing bars, identical in form to the first-floor window and probably of late 17th or early 18th century date (*Plate 46*).

This window appears to have been inserted when the western end of the compartment was extended (in identical manner to its first-floor counterpart), as indicated by the presence of a transverse, chamfered beam attached to a substantial jewelled and chamfered vertical post with infilled slots for horizontal rails (*Plate 48*). The room appears to have been converted to use as a bathroom in recent years, as evidenced by the modern toilet and cistern at the far E end (*Plate 47*), and few fixtures or fittings of interest were noted, except for the brick chimneybreast in the NE corner of the room and the narrow flight of stairs leading up to the roof-space above (*Plate 49*).

Due to health and safety concerns, it was not possible to gain full access to the roof-space; however, it appeared to be of open-truss construction with angled struts and trenched purlins similar in design to No. 45 (*Plate 50*).

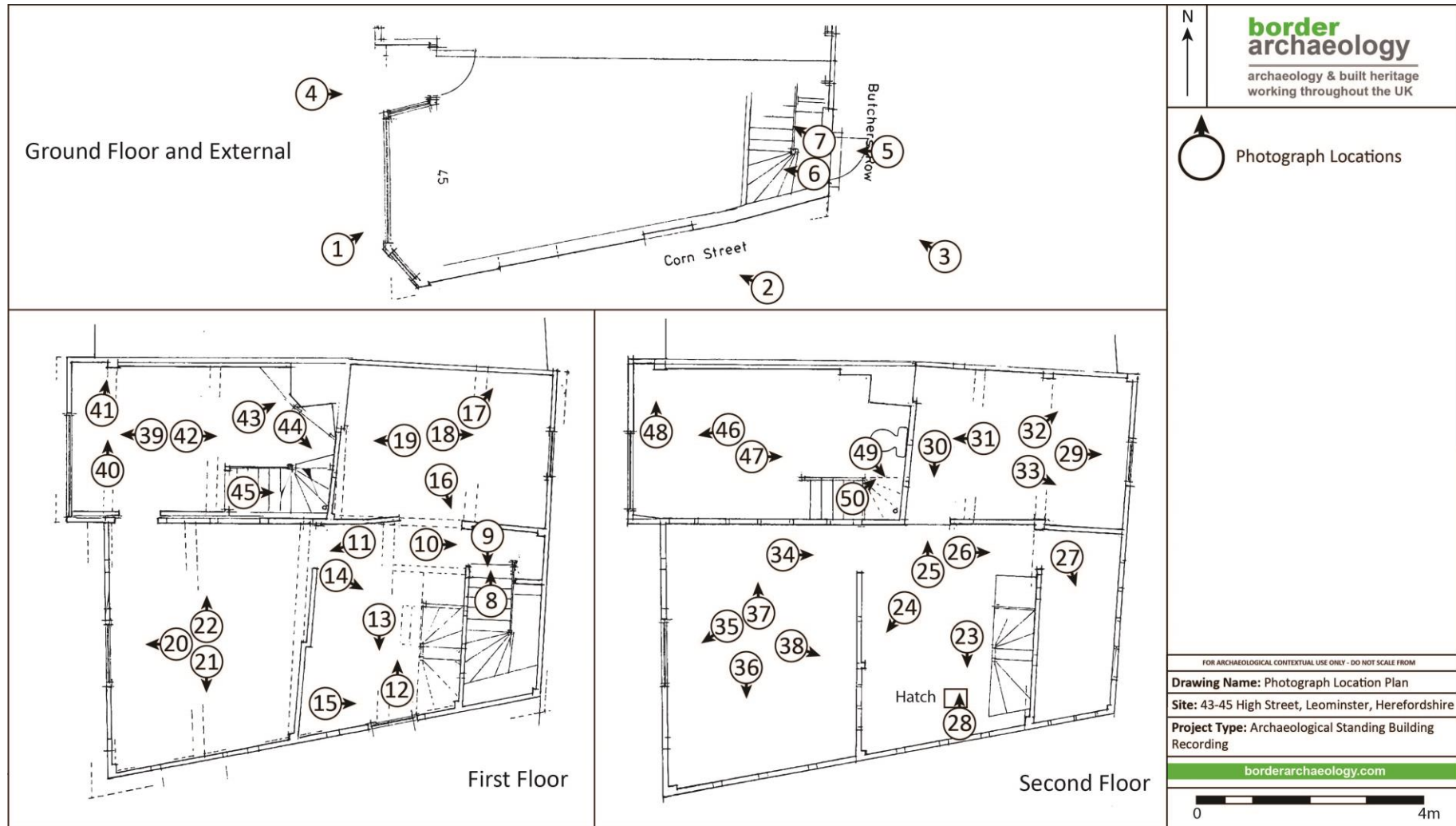


Fig. 6: Plan showing location of photographs referred to in text (with direction of view indicated)

7 Conclusions

Three broad phases of building activity were identified during this programme of Level 2 building recording at Nos. 43 and 45 High Street, which can be summarised as follows:

1/ The earliest phase of construction, which can probably be ascribed a late 16th-early 17th century date, is represented by the construction of the two houses at Nos. 43-45 High Street; No. 43, the smaller of the two, being a rectangular single-cell building while No. 45 was a larger L-plan house. Documentary evidence suggests that, at one point, Nos. 43 and 45 may have formed a single tenement.

However, it would appear from the existing layout of the houses, as built in the late 16th-early 17th century, that they were considered as two structurally distinct properties with no internal connection on the first or second floors; this division is particularly evidenced by the thick-scantled, square-framed timber panels in the N-wall of No. 45 at first-floor level. It is also worth noting that both No. 43 and 45 have very similar enriched scrolled brackets at first-floor level, suggesting that, while they evidently remained as separate dwellings, they were probably built at about the same time. Both houses appear to have shared a chimneybreast located centrally against the N wall of the building and it would seem that only the NE room at first-floor level in No. 45 (which may have been the principal bedchamber or parlour) was heated.

Documentary records appear to confirm that the two houses had distinctly separate histories of ownership and usage from the late 16th/ early 17th century onwards, with No. 43 documented as being the possession of William Price, a London merchant in the late 16th century and thereafter forming part of the endowment of Price's Hospital in Hereford from the early 17th century through to the 1950s, being leased out as a shop and dwelling house. The dwelling house and shop at No. 45 is first recorded as a watchmaker's shop in 1784 and was subsequently used as a butcher's premises from the early 19th century through to the mid-20th century.

2/ A secondary phase of construction appears to be represented by the eastward jettied extension added to the NE corner of No. 45; which may be tentatively assigned an early to mid-17th century date. Externally, there is evidence for a distinct break in construction between this portion of the building and the adjoining extension to the SE with its thin-scantled timber framing which appears to be later in date, probably late 17th or early 18th century.

Within the NE room at first-floor level, evidence of painted plaster decoration (with a repetitive black droplet pattern) was noted in the wall of the easternmost bay, concealed by later lath-and-plaster work and seemingly truncated by the insertion of the 6/6 sash window, which itself appears to be of late 17th or early 18th century date.

Based on comparison with other recorded secular wall paintings in urban and rural dwellings in the Welsh Marches, the majority of which have been dated by recent research to the late 16th-early 17th century, the decorative scheme with its repetitive motif (suggestive of imitation textile work) can probably be dated to the first half of the 17th century, probably not much later than c.1630 when such designs fell rapidly out of fashion (Baird 2003; Davies 2008). Similar droplet motifs have been noted in secular wall paintings in Suffolk townhouses, which have been

assigned an early 17th century date (Kirkham 2010). The presence of painted decoration in this room suggests that it was considered to be of some importance; its position suggests that it may have been the main bedchamber or parlour.

3/ A tertiary phase of activity, which can be dated to the late 17th or early 18th century, is represented by the addition of the jettied SE extension housing the ground-floor staircase and landing with a room at second-floor level. This dating is based on the evidence of the slender-scantled timber framing of the exterior, as well as internal features, such as the insertion of doorways in the former E wall of the house (its probable early date attested by its square-framed panels with thick scantling) at first- and second-floor level, which necessitated the removal of several of the horizontal rails.

Other features assigned to this phase of activity in No. 45 are the 6/6 sash window with thick moulded glazing bars and the 6-pane casement window located in the NE rooms at first- and second-floor level, respectively. The street frontage of No. 43 also appears to have been rebuilt in the late 17th or early 18th century with the addition of the westernmost bay (jettied at first and second-floor level) with its distinctive mullioned windows flanking a central casement.

4/ A later phase of construction, which can be assigned a late 18th or early 19th century date, is represented in No. 45 by the construction of the present staircase at ground-floor level (as evidenced by the plain moulded handrail, square newel post and stick balusters) and probably also the stairs leading up to the second floor. The sash windows inserted in the S and W-facing elevations of No. 45 at first- and second-floor level also appear to be of late 18th or early 19th century date.

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10 Cartography

(All historic mapping was obtained from the Herefordshire Archives and Record Centre unless otherwise stated)

William Gallier's Map of Leominster – 1832

Leominster tithe map - 1840

OS 1st edition 25- inch map – 1867

OS 2nd edition 25-inch map – 1897

OS 3rd edition 25-inch map – 1909

OS 4th edition 25-inch map – 1932

OS 1:2500 map – 1968

OS 1:2500 map- 1983

Historic photographs of Leominster dating back to c.1930 were consulted using records held at the National Archives (Dixon Scott Collection) and the Herefordshire Archives and Record Centre)

11 Appendix 1: Photographic Record



Plate 1: External view looking ENE showing W-facing elevation of Nos. 43 & 45 High Street
Plate 2: External view looking NW showing S-facing frontage of No. 45 High Street fronting onto Corn Street



Plate 3: View looking NW showing rear elevation of No. 45 High Street with exposed thin-scantled timber framing
Plate 4: View looking E showing W-facing frontage of No. 43 High Street with jettied storeys above 19th century shop front

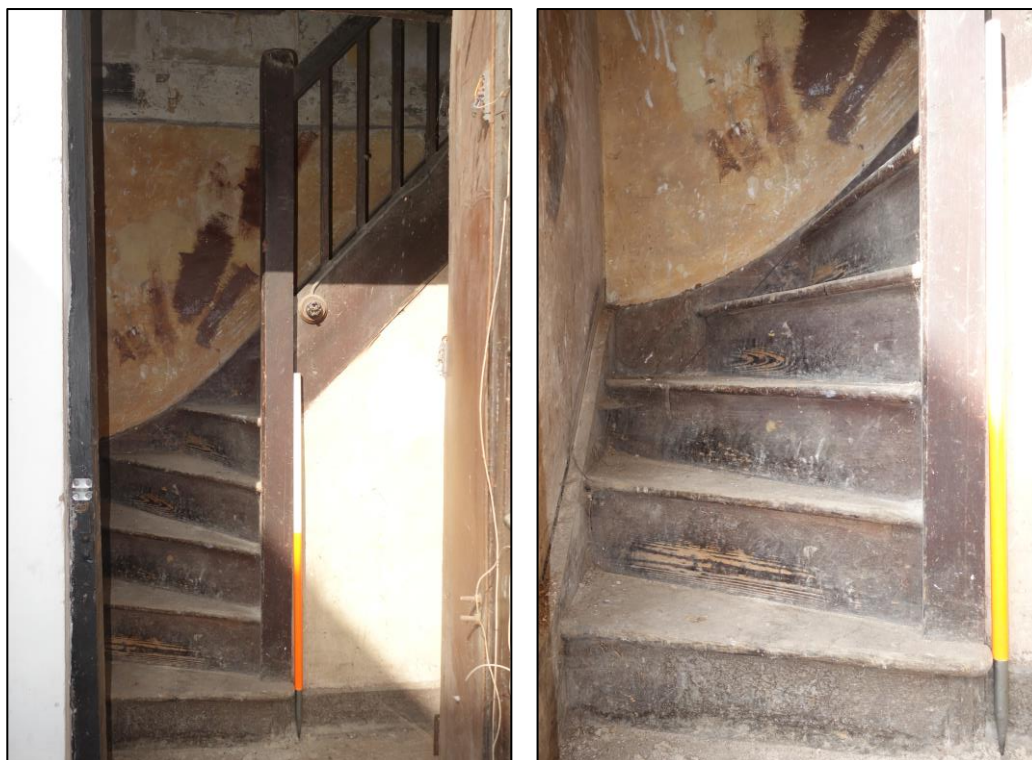


Plate 5: View looking W showing ground floor landing and oak winder staircase to rear of No. 45
Plate 6: View looking W showing detail of lower part of ground floor staircase with closed string



Plate 7: Internal view looking NW showing detail of ground floor staircase with newel post and stick balusters with evidence of square framed panels with thick scantling in background
Plate 8: Internal view looking N showing upper part of staircase leading to first floor landing



*Plate 9: Internal view S across from first floor landing (No. 45) with thick-scantled square framed panels to right of picture
Plate 10: Internal view E showing doorway inserted in timber framed wall leading from landing to first floor room (No. 45)*



*Plate 11: Internal view SW showing staggered partition wall between SE and SW compartments on first floor (No. 45)
Plate 12: Internal view showing partition wall between SE and NE rooms on first floor (No. 45) showing square framed panels to left of picture and exposed ceiling beams*



Plate 13: Internal view looking S showing SE compartment at first floor within No. 45, lit by sash window with section of oak panelling to left of picture



*Plate 14: Internal view SE showing oak staircase leading up to second floor (No. 45) with oak panelling to right
Plate 15: Internal view E showing section of oak panelling in SE room (No. 45) to right of staircase*



Plate 16: Internal view looking S showing doorway to NE room (with first floor landing in background) showing chamfered vertical post adjoining doorway, carrying ceiling beam



Plate 17: Internal view looking N showing vertical post and ceiling beam marking vertical construction break for easternmost bay (with 6/6 sash window to right of picture)



Plate 18: Internal view looking E showing 6/6 sash window in NE room on first floor (No. 45) with evidence of earlier painted wall decoration visible to right of window frame, concealed by later lath-and-plaster work



Plate 19: Internal view looking W in NE room on first floor (No. 45) showing close studded partition wall at W end of room and possible location of former fireplace in NW corner



Plate 20: Internal view looking W showing 8/8 sash window in SW room on first floor (No. 45) flanked by thick-scantled square panels with lath-and-plaster infill



Plate 21: Internal view looking S within SW room on first floor (No. 45) showing exposed lath-and-plaster work in S wall and diagonal dragon beam in ceiling



Plate 22: Internal view looking N within SW room at first floor level (No. 45) showing N wall with thick-scantled, square framed panels with lath-and-plaster infill clearly marking the division between No. 45 and No. 43 (to the N)



Plate 23: Internal view looking S showing SE room at second floor level (No. 45) with exposed square-framed, thick-scantled panels in the S wall and a hatchway in the ceiling leading to the roofspace



Plate 24: Internal view looking SW showing detail of close-studded wall with lath-and-plaster infill marking the division between the SE and SW rooms at second floor level (No. 45)



Plate 25: View looking N showing detail of N wall in SE room at second floor level (No. 45), with plank and batten doorway and close studding with lath-and-plaster infill, with jowelled vertical post at far right of picture



Plate 26: Internal view looking E showing detail of E wall of SE room at second floor level (No. 45), with later flat headed doorway leading to E extension, inserted within a section of thick-scantled square framed panels with jowelled chamfered post with infilled slots for horizontal rails to left of doorway



Plate 27: Internal view looking S showing detail of room in eastern extension at second floor level (No. 45) with thin-scantled timber-framing

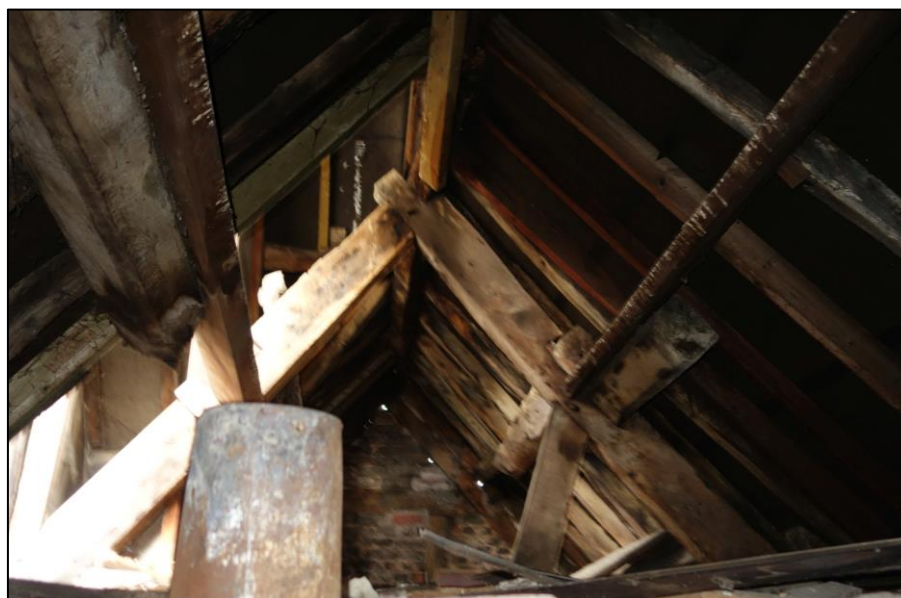


Plate 28: Internal view looking N showing roofspace of No. 45, of open truss construction with angled struts and trenched purlins



Plate 29: Internal view looking E showing 6-pane casement window in E wall of NE room at second floor level (No. 45) with exposed studding and lath-and-plaster work below



Plate 30: Internal view looking S showing S wall of NE room at second floor level (No.45) with plank and batten door and exposed lath-and-plaster work to left of picture



Plate 31: Internal view W showing close-studded framing in W wall of NE room at second floor level (No. 45)



Plate 32: Internal view looking NE showing jowelled vertical post in N wall with infilled slots supporting transverse beam in easternmost bay of NE room at second floor level (No. 45)

Plate 33: Internal view looking SE showing vertical post in S wall with infilled slots for horizontal rails in easternmost bay of NE room at second floor level (No. 45)



Plate 34: Internal view E showing flat headed doorway in NE corner of E wall of SW room at second floor level (No. 45) with carved wall bracket to right of picture



Plate 35: Internal view looking SW showing W wall of SW room at second floor level (No. 45) with later 4/8 sash window inserted, with a section of thin-scantled studding flanked by thick-scantled square panels



Plate 36: Internal view looking S showing square-panelled timber framing with thick scantling in S wall of SW room at second floor level (No. 45)



Plate 37: Internal view looking N showing N wall of SW room at second floor level (No. 45) showing close studded framing with thin scantling



Plate 38: Internal view looking SE showing double ogee moulded bracket with traces of painted decoration on E partition wall of SW room at second floor level (No. 45)



Plate 39: Internal view looking W showing westernmost bay of first floor room (No. 43) with mullioned and transomed window and exposed transverse beam carried on a jowelled vertical post (to right of picture)



Plate 40: View looking N showing vertical jowelled post in westernmost bay of first floor room (No. 43) with enriched scrolled bracket and slots for horizontal rails, formerly denoting the W end of the house



Plate 41: View showing detail of enriched scrolled bracket at top of vertical post in N wall of western bay of first floor room (No. 43)



Plate 42: Internal view looking E showing E end of first floor room (No. 43) with brick chimneybreast and cupboard to left of picture and doorway formerly leading to a stairway to ground floor level (now blocked up)



Plate 43: Internal view E showing detail of chimneybreast and recessed cupboard in NE corner of first floor room (No. 43)
Plate 44: Internal view looking SE showing panelled door leading to staircase from first to second floor (No. 43)

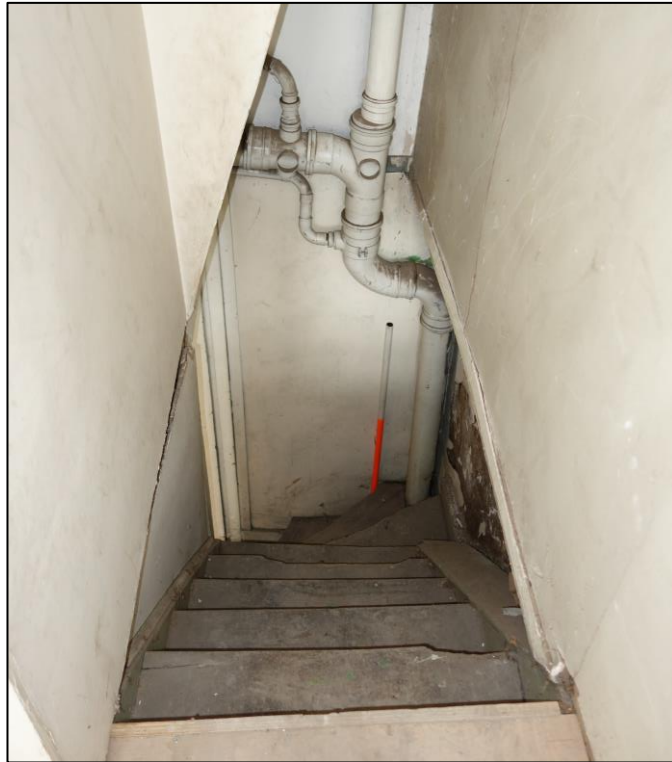


Plate 45: Internal view looking E showing detail of staircase leading from first to second floor (No. 43)



Plate 46: Internal view looking W showing westernmost bay of second floor room (No. 43) together with mullioned and transomed window with central casement



Plate 47: Internal view looking E showing eastern end of second floor room (No. 43) with chimneybreast to left of picture



Plate 48: Internal view N showing jowelled vertical post with infilled slots within western bay of second floor room (No. 43)
Plate 49: Internal view looking SE (No. 43) showing stairs leading from second floor room to roofspace



Plate 50: Internal view looking NE from hatchway showing detail of roof trusses within roofspace of No. 43

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3	View looking NW showing rear elevation of No. 45 High Street with exposed thin-scantled timber framing
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5	View looking W showing ground floor landing and oak winder staircase to rear of No. 45
6	View looking W showing detail of lower part of ground floor staircase with closed string
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8	Internal view looking N showing upper part of staircase leading to first floor landing
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11	Internal view SW showing staggered partition wall between SE and SW compartments on first floor (No. 45)
12	Internal view showing partition wall between SE and NE rooms on first floor (No. 45) showing square framed panels to left of picture and exposed ceiling beams
13	Internal view looking S showing SE compartment at first floor within No. 45, lit by sash window with section of oak panelling to left of picture
14	Internal view SE showing oak staircase leading up to second floor (No. 45) with oak panelling to right
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16	Internal view looking S showing doorway to NE room (with first floor landing in background) showing chamfered vertical post adjoining doorway, carrying ceiling beam
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18	Internal view looking E showing 6/6 sash window in NE room on first floor (No. 45) with evidence of earlier painted wall decoration visible to right of window frame, concealed by later lath-and-plaster work
19	Internal view looking W in NE room on first floor (No. 45) showing close studded partition wall at W end of room and possible location of former fireplace in NW corner
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21	Internal view looking S within SW room on first floor (No. 45) showing exposed lath-and-plaster work in S wall and diagonal dragon beam in ceiling
22	Internal view looking N within SW room at first floor level (No. 45) showing N wall with thick-scantled, square framed panels with-lath-and-plaster infill clearly marking the division between No. 45 and No. 43 (to the N)
23	Internal view looking S showing SE room at second floor level (No. 45) with exposed square-framed, thick-scantled panels in the S wall and a hatchway in the ceiling leading to the roofspace
24	Internal view looking SW showing detail of close-studded wall with lath-and-plaster infill marking the division between the SE and SW rooms at second floor level (No. 45)
25	Internal view looking E showing detail of E wall of SE room at second floor level (No. 45) with later flat headed doorway leading to E extension, inserted within a section of thick-scantled square framed panels with jowelled chamfered post with infilled slots for horizontal rails to left of doorway
26	Internal view looking E showing detail of E wall of SE room at second floor level (No. 45) with later flat headed doorway leading to E extension, inserted within a section of thick-scantled square framed panels with jowelled chamfered post with infilled slots for horizontal rails to left of doorway
27	Internal view looking N showing roofspace of No. 45, of open truss construction with angled struts and trenched purlins
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32	Internal view looking NE showing jowelled vertical post in N wall with infilled slots supporting transverse beam in easternmost bay of NE room at second floor level (No. 45)
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37	Internal view looking N showing N wall of SW room at second floor level (No. 45) showing close studded framing with thin scantling
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43	Internal view E showing detail of chimneybreast and recessed cupboard in NE corner of first floor room (No. 43)
44	Internal view looking SE showing panelled door leading to staircase from first to second floor (No. 43)
45	Internal view looking E showing detail of staircase leading from first to second floor (No. 43)
46	Internal view looking W showing westernmost bay of second floor room (No. 43) together with mullioned and transomed window with central casement
47	Internal view looking E showing eastern end of second floor room (No. 43) with chimneybreast to left of picture
48	Internal view N showing jowelled vertical post with infilled slots within western bay of second floor room (No. 43)
49	Internal view looking SE (No. 43) showing stairs leading from second floor room to roofspace
50	Internal view looking NE from hatchway showing detail of roof trusses within roofspace of No. 43

Table 1: List of Plates

Document Title		Document Reference	
Archaeological Standing Building Recording: 43-45 High Street, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 8LZ		BA1868HSL	
Compilation	Stephen Priestley MA MCI ^f A & Owain Connors MA PhD		
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Artwork approved	Holly Litherland BA		
Issue No.	Status	Date	Approved for issue
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