

THE OLD MANOR, ASKETT

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SUMMARY

The house, known as the Old Manor, or Bell's Farm, was a timber-framed structure of considerable importance and sophistication. The original building was erected during the first half of the 14th century. The house was then an H-shaped structure, with a single-storey hall, set between two gabled cross-wings. Three major alterations were effected between the second half of the 15th century and the early part of the 17th century. The hall and the service wing were replaced. Only the solar wing of the original building survived until the date of demolition. It had a crown-post roof.

In the late 15th century, the hall and screens passage were rebuilt between the original cross-wings. The new hall had a hammer-beam roof, showing a late development of this construction. In the middle of the following century, fire-places were built in the solar and parlour. The close-studding in the north-west wall of the solar was, probably, inserted at this time.

In the early 17th century, the service wing was demolished and rebuilt against the north-east wall of the hall. At the same time, the hall was chambered over and a fire-place was put in at the lower end, against the screen. The screens passage was then used as a small chamber and the principal entrance to the house was made in the south-west wall of the hall.

The house was eventually divided into three cottages. In the year 1969, the building was demolished, as it was then in a derelict and unsafe condition. The 15th century hall-unit has been re-erected in another hamlet in the same parish. Excavation revealed the position of the 14th century hall and service wing. The excavation finds included two Flemish Maiolica altar vases and a 15th-century Rondel dagger.

INTRODUCTION

The Old Manor of Askett was situate in the County of Buckingham, in close No. 264 on the 25 in. Ordnance Survey map (Nat. grid SU 814053). The position is shown in Fig. 1 and has been recorded in the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments of Buckinghamshire.¹ Askett, Cadsden, Meadle and Owlswick are four hamlets in the parish of Monks Risborough. This parish is bounded on the north by Dinton, on the east by Great Kimble and Great Hampden, on the south by Hughenden and on the west side by Princes Risborough. It lies on the north-west slope of the Chilterns. It varies in height from 813 ft. at Green Hailey Firs to under 300 ft. in the north-west, near Askett. The soil is loam and clay, over-

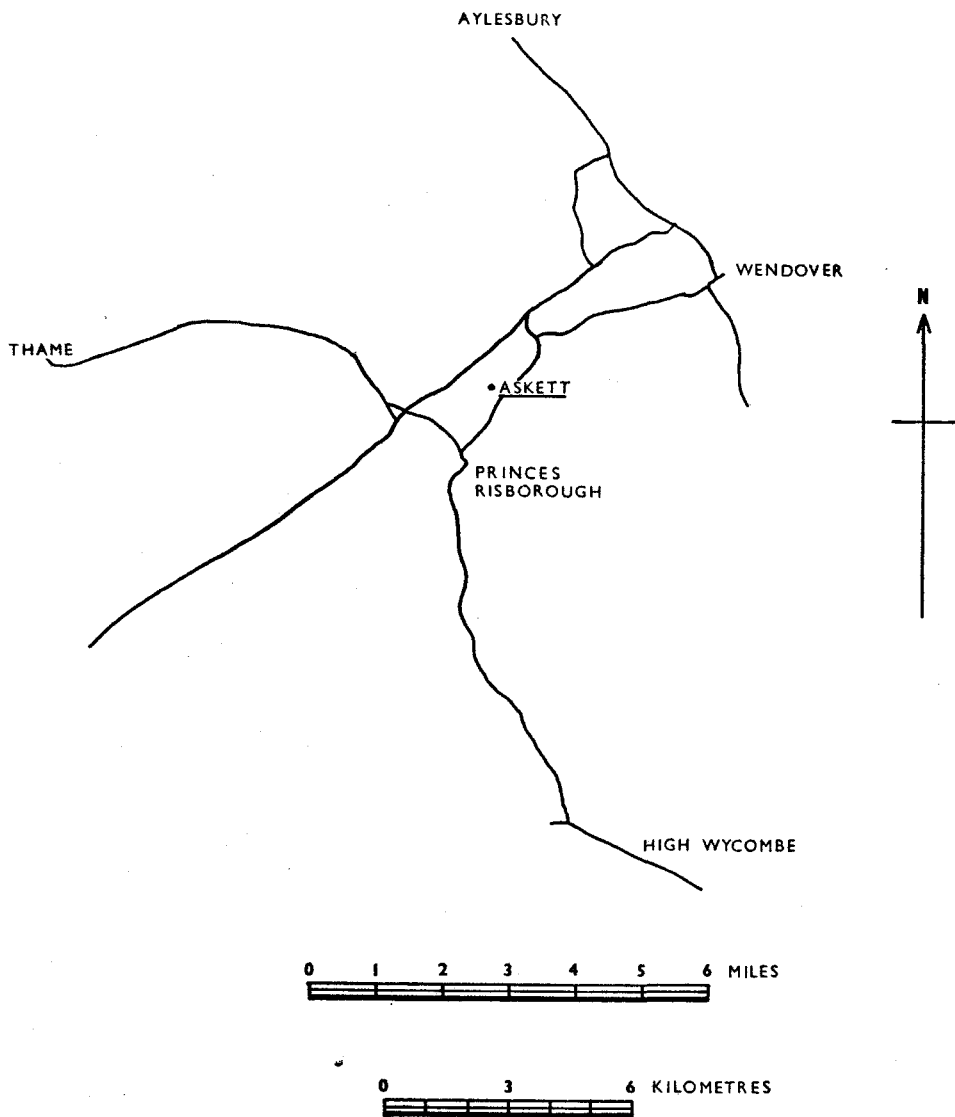


Fig. 1. Plan showing the location of the Old Manor.

lying the Upper Greensand and gault, and, on the hills, chalk. The land must always have provided good open pasture.

The whole of Monks Risborough is returned in the Domesday Survey as being held in chief by Archbishop Lanfranc.² When the franchise of the monks of Christ Church was separated from the barony of the archbishop, it appears that the manor went to the monks, while the hamlets remained to the archbishop and were subinfeudated by him on military tenancies.³

In 1242-3 Baldwin de Wolneswyk and Bartholomew de la Ponde held three-

quarters of a fee there of the archbishop.⁴ Baldwin was the grandson of Ulf, the earliest recorded holder of Owlswick.⁵ Bartholomew's fee may well have included and been based on Askett.

Most of the timber-framed houses in the hamlet are attributable to the 16th and 17th centuries, with the exception of Horse Shoe Cottage (SU 815054), a cruck structure, probably built in the early part of the 15th century. The Old Manor was, undoubtedly, the most important house in the hamlet, until it was divided into three cottages in the 18th century. It was finally deserted in or about the year 1950. After that date, the house was extensively damaged by vandals. It was finally demolished in the summer of 1969 (Plate I(a)). The site is scheduled for re-development. The hall unit has been re-erected in the neighbouring hamlet of Meadle. The excavation finds have been presented to the County Museum in Aylesbury.

PLAN

14TH CENTURY—PHASE 1. The Old Manor was built on a north-west, south-east axis. It is an example of a hall house,⁶ with a single storey hall, set between two gabled cross-wings of two storeys. The wings were not jettied and were structurally independent units. The plan of the first structural phase is shown in Fig. 2.

The solar wing was the only part of the first structural phase to survive until the date of demolition. It was 27 ft. long and 15 ft. wide. A deep trough, cut along the whole length of a transverse joist, into which a screen had, apparently, been fitted, suggests that the room on the ground floor had been divided. A space for a stair, of ladder form, was found in the south-east corner, giving access to the solar.⁷ This room, also, was divided, but it was not possible to determine with which structural phase the screen was associated.

The hall and service wing were demolished and rebuilt, respectively, in the second and fourth structural phases. The position and size of the hall and service wing of the first phase were ascertained by excavation. The sill of the south-west wall of the hall was found to be in alignment with the end walls of the solar and service wings. No remains of the opposing wall were found. The length of the hall, including the screens passage, was 26 ft. 9 ins.

The service wing, which was revealed by excavation, was 22 ft. long and 14 ft. wide. It contained the buttery and pantry. The proximity of apple trees and the great thickness of the top soil made excavation of the whole wing impracticable. Trial trenches were cut to determine the size of the building. A garde-robe pit was found in the southerly corner of the wing. The kitchen would, probably, have been a detached building, connected with the service wing by a covered passage.

There was no evidence to suggest that the hall and the service wing were of an earlier date than the solar wing.

15TH CENTURY—PHASE 2. The original hall unit was replaced by one of considerable sophistication (Fig. 3) in the second half of the 15th century. The two cross-wings, being structurally independent units, remained unaltered. The new hall was not built on the earlier foundations. The north-west wall was set back

18 ins. from the north-west ends of the solar and service wings and its north-east wall was built in alignment with the end wall of the service wing. The two-bay hall, 21 ft. long and 20 ft. wide, was separated from the screens passage by a spere-truss, the plan being similar to that usually found in sophisticated hall-houses. Examples of the use of the spere-truss are to be found in the hall at Sutton Courtenay, Berkshire,⁹ and in Leadenporch House, near Banbury.¹⁰ The distribution of the spere-truss has been discussed by Mr. J. T. Smith.¹¹

The hall was heated by a central open hearth. The roof timbers were encrusted

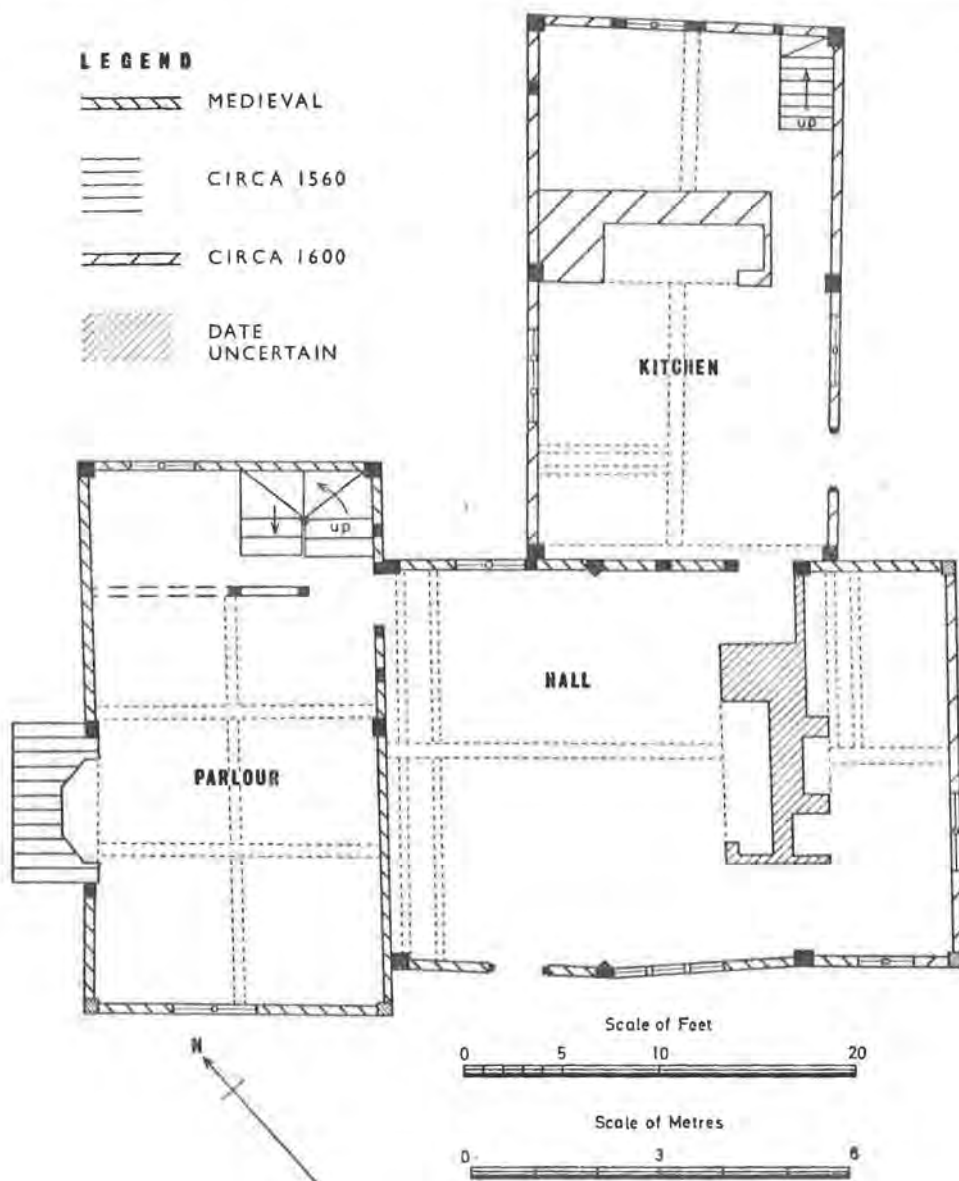


Fig. 4. Phases 3 and 4.

with soot, which precludes there having been a chimney hood. The smoke must have escaped through louvres in the roof, although no trace of these was found in the roof timbers, which were complete. The hall was lit by two windows at the upper end, which gave light to the dais.

MID. 16TH CENTURY—PHASE 3. About the middle of the 16th century, the parlour was converted into a room of sophistication and comfort. (Fig. 4 & Plate III). It was enlarged by moving the partition, previously mentioned, 12 ft. in a north-easterly direction. Joists, with well moulded soffits, were fitted into the ceiling, purely for decorative purposes. They had no structural significance. Stone fire-places were put in the parlour and the solar. The ladder was replaced by a newel stair.

CIRCA 1600—PHASE 4. In the late 16th, or early 17th century, the service wing was demolished and replaced by a new wing 27 ft. long and 14 ft. 3 ins. wide, built out from the north-east wall of the hall. (Fig. 4) It consisted of two rooms on the ground floor, divided by a fire-place and oven, and two chambers on the first floor.

The outer doors of the screens passage were replaced by windows, and moulded joists were inserted in the ceiling. The room so formed was probably used as a small parlour. A fire-place was put in, but this was replaced in the 18th century.

The hall was chambered over and a fire-place was built against the spere-truss. Unfortunately, the fire-place was replaced by another in the 18th century. The principal entrance to the house was made in the upper end of the north-west wall of the hall.

18TH CENTURY—PHASE 5. The House was divided into three cottages.

STRUCTURAL DETAILS

The exploded isogonic drawings of the principal joints in the hall and solar wing, showing them as they existed immediately before demolition, are correct so far as could be ascertained by careful external examination. The timber used was oak.

To make the text more clear, all measurements of the timbers used are set out in Appendix II. The construction of the building, as it probably appeared in Phase 2, is shown in a perspective drawing (Fig. 5).

SOLAR ROOF. The solar roof, which was divided by a tie-beam and crown-post, was assembled without the use of a principal rafter or main truss. The common rafters, set 13 ins. apart, were tongued together at their apices and joined by collars. Their lower ends were let into, and dowelled to, the top-plates. The crown-post and collar-purlin, provided to give longitudinal stability, were developed in the second half of the 13th century,¹² the roof of the chapel of the Prebendal, Thame, being an early example.¹³ The crown-post was 3 ft. 9 ins. high and was mortised to a cambered tie-beam. (Fig. 7 & Plate Ib). It was octagonal and had roll mouldings on the base and capital. Four straight braces

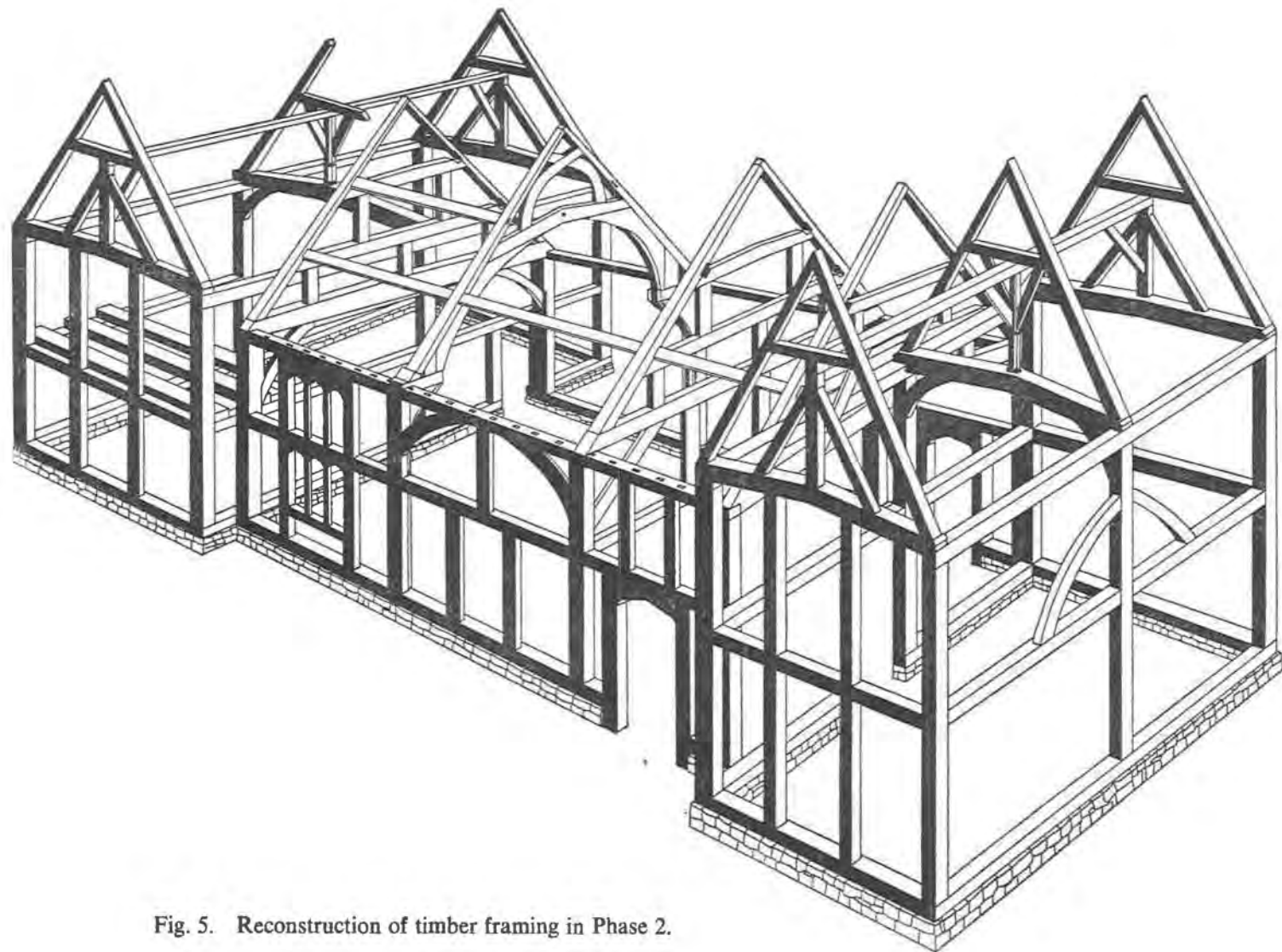


Fig. 5. Reconstruction of timber framing in Phase 2.

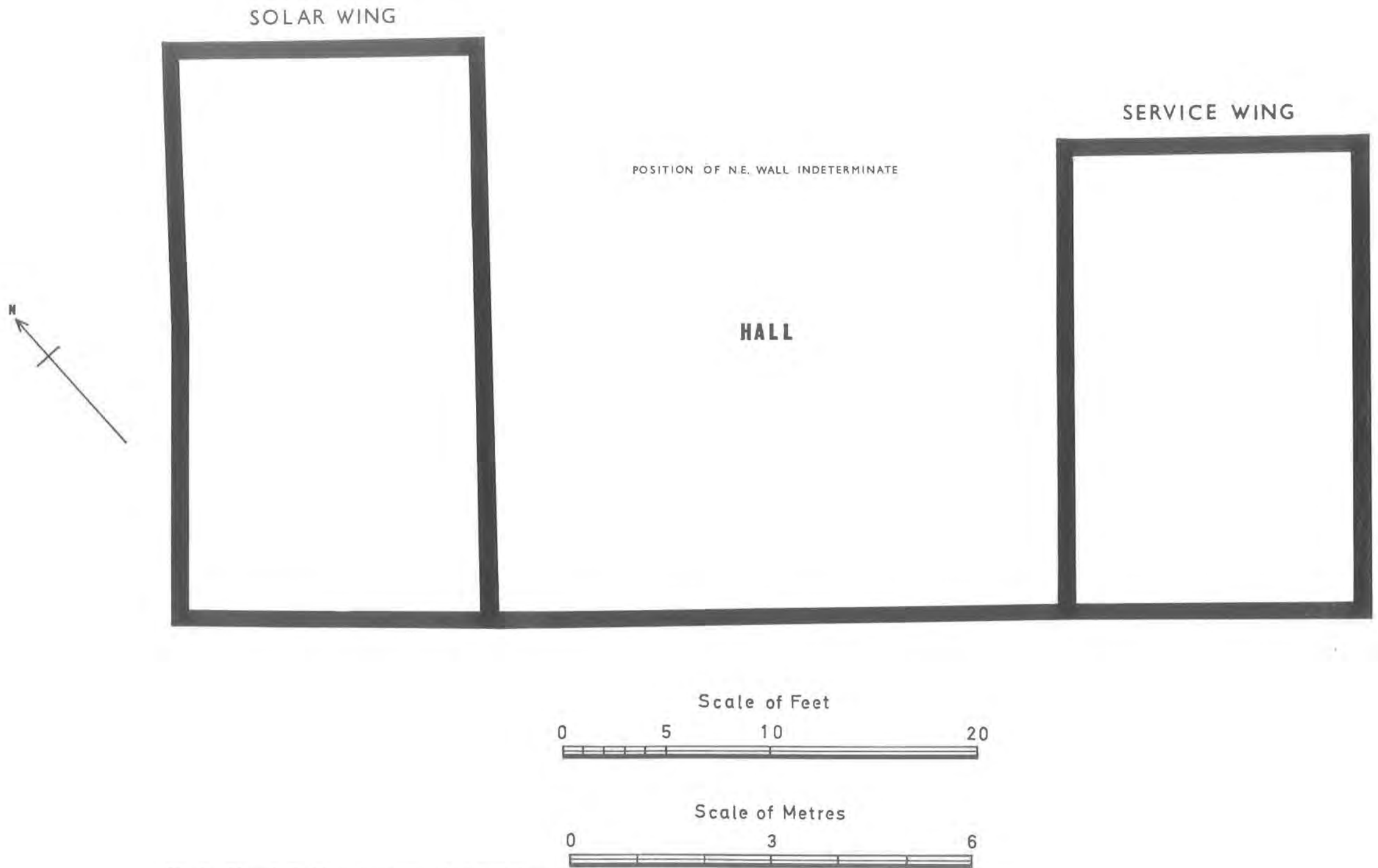


Fig. 2. Phase 1. Position of north-east hall wall, doors and windows indeterminate.

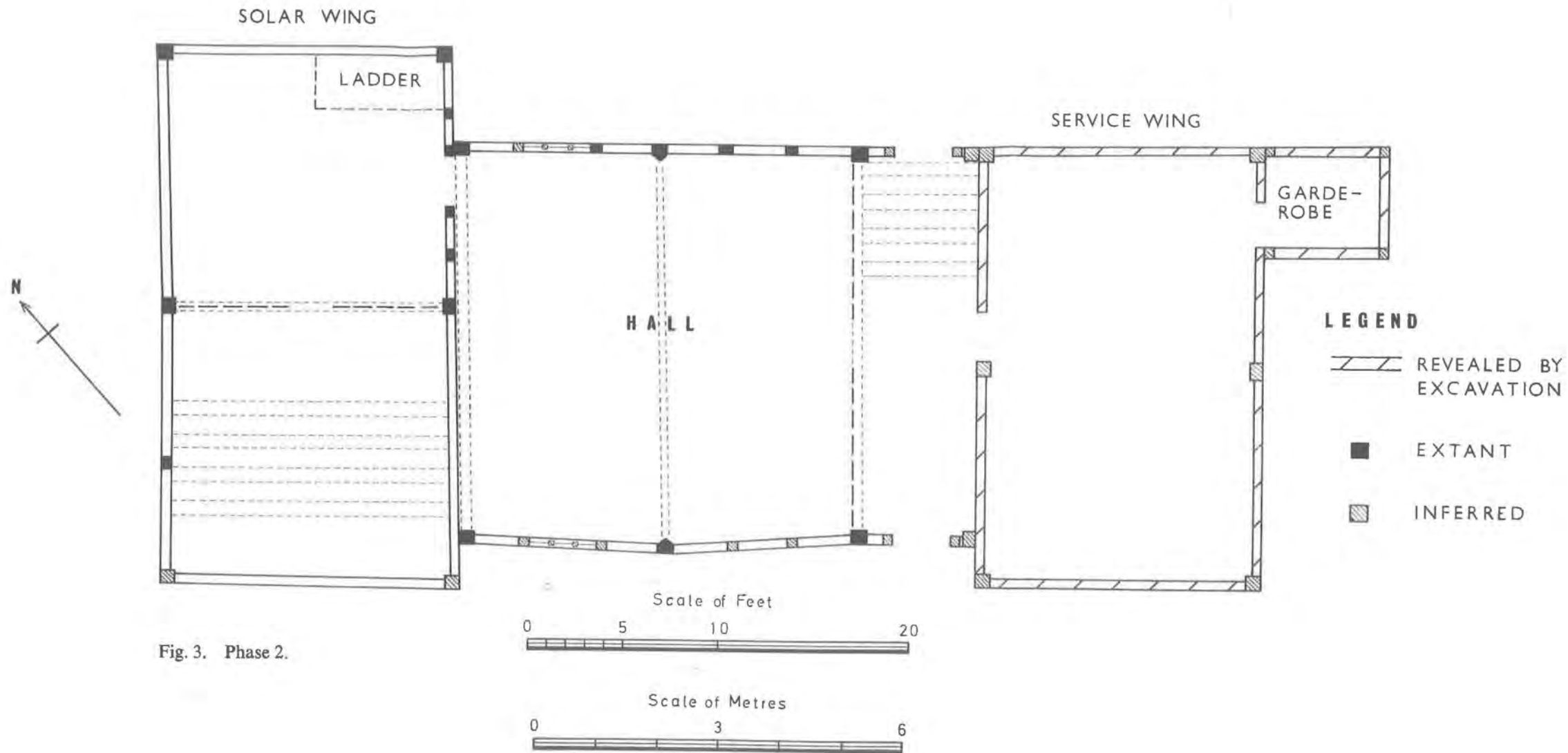


Fig. 3. Phase 2.

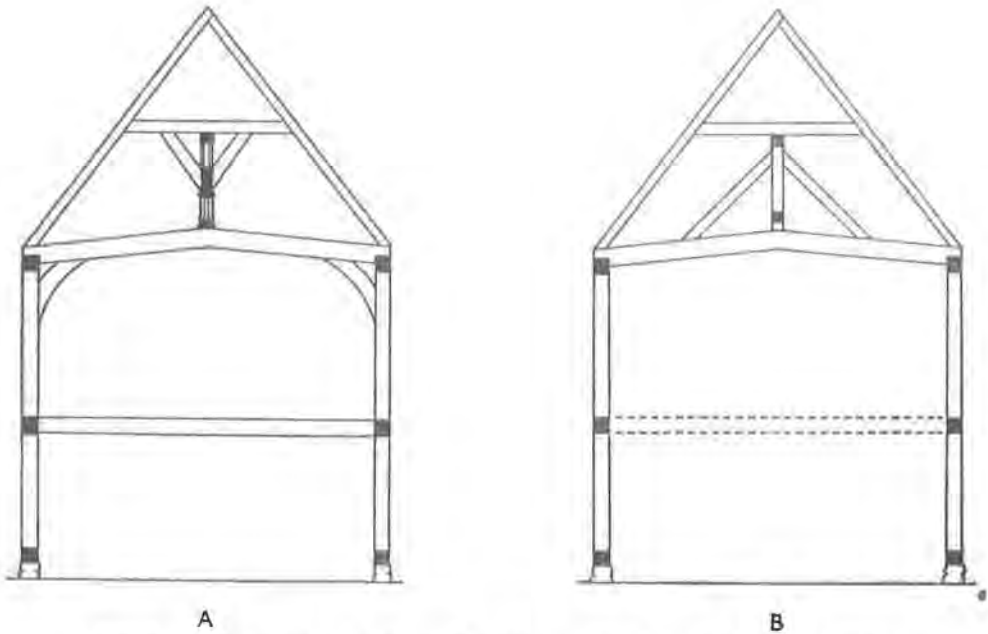


Fig. 6. Sections of solar wing. A central truss. B north-east gable-end.

sprang from a point approximately one third of the way up the post, two supporting the collar and the other two the collar-purlin. The crown-post was comparable to those of the early 14th century.¹⁴ The undecorated crown-post at the gable end of the roof was braced down on to the tie-beam and one upward brace supported the solar purlin. There was neither a ridge-piece nor a wind-brace (Fig. 6).

The principal and corner posts had no jowls. The top-plates were mortised and tenoned on to the top of these posts. The tie-beams were secured to the top-plates with a true lap-dove-tail joint. (Fig. 8) Approximately 3 ins. from the principal posts, the top-plates were joined by 'Trait-de-Jupiter' joints (Splay-and-tabled scarf-joints) (Fig. 9). This was a usual method of extending horizontal timbers in the 13th and early 14th centuries. The development and distribution of the crown-post roof has been fully discussed by Dr. Fletcher and Mr. Spokes.¹⁵ HALL ROOF. HAMMER-BEAM TRUSS. The Pilgrims Hall in Winchester,¹⁶ circa 1325-6, and Tiptofts Hall in Essex,¹⁷ built during the early part of the 14th century, are the earliest true hammer-beam roofs surviving in this country. The cumbersome appearance of timber aisled-halls led the master carpenters of the 14th century to construct a truss to span buildings of more than 30 ft. in width, without the aid of aisle-posts. The hammer post of a true hammer-beam roof has the same structural significance as an aisle post of an aisled-hall, but instead of the post extending from the roof to the floor, the base of the post rests on a braced hammer-beam, protruding from the wall-plate. The purlin, hammer-post and collar have the same structural significance as the arcade-plate, aisle-post and tie-beam of the aisled-hall.

Askett was an example of a late development of the hammer-beam roof. It had not a true hammer-beam construction, as the hammer-post did not support a purlin or plate. The decorative appearance was similar, but the structural significance was entirely different. The hammer-beam was adopted as an elaborate alternative to the arch-brace. Examples of this construction are, some-

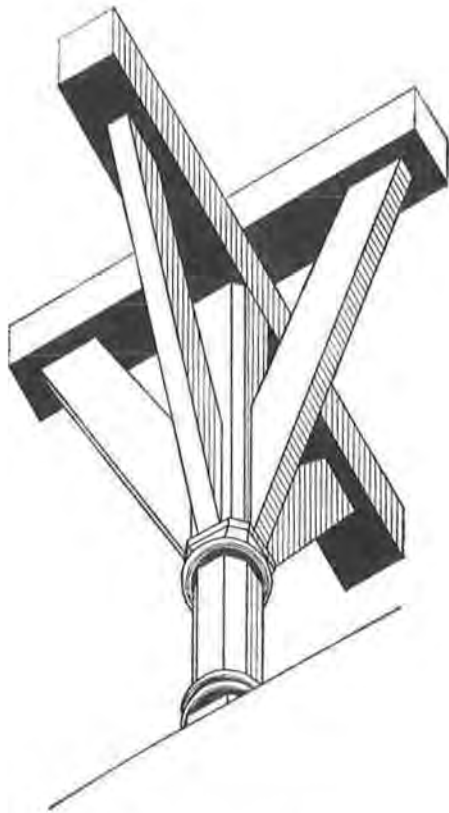


Fig. 7. Crown-post.

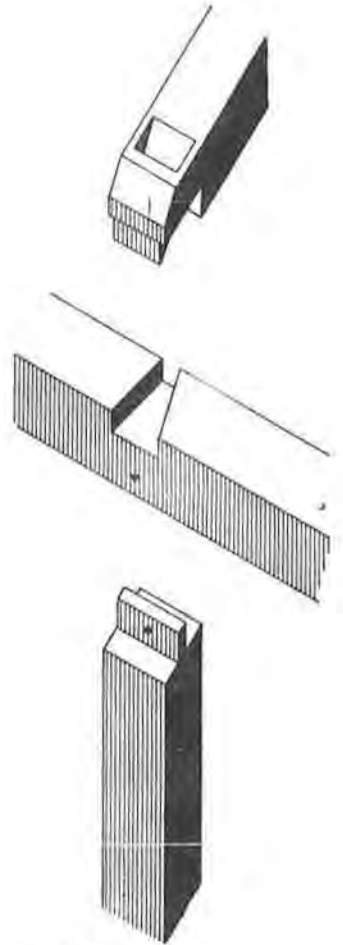


Fig. 8. Joint of principal-post, top-plate and tie-beam in solar.



Fig. 9. Splayed and tabled scarf-joint (trait-de-Jupiter).

times, found in the narrower halls of the second half of the 15th century. Perhaps the most ornate example of this development is that in the hall at Weare Gifford in Devon.¹⁸ There, the hall is only 19 ft. wide, but the roof is unequalled in ornamentation.

The degree of sophistication, standard of workmanship and the heaviness of the timbers used in the construction of the hall at Askett, were such that parallels can only be found in ecclesiastical buildings and the more important hall-houses.

The section of the hammer-beam truss and the assembly of the hammer-beam joint are shown in Figs. 10 & 11, Plate II. The hammer-beam (B)

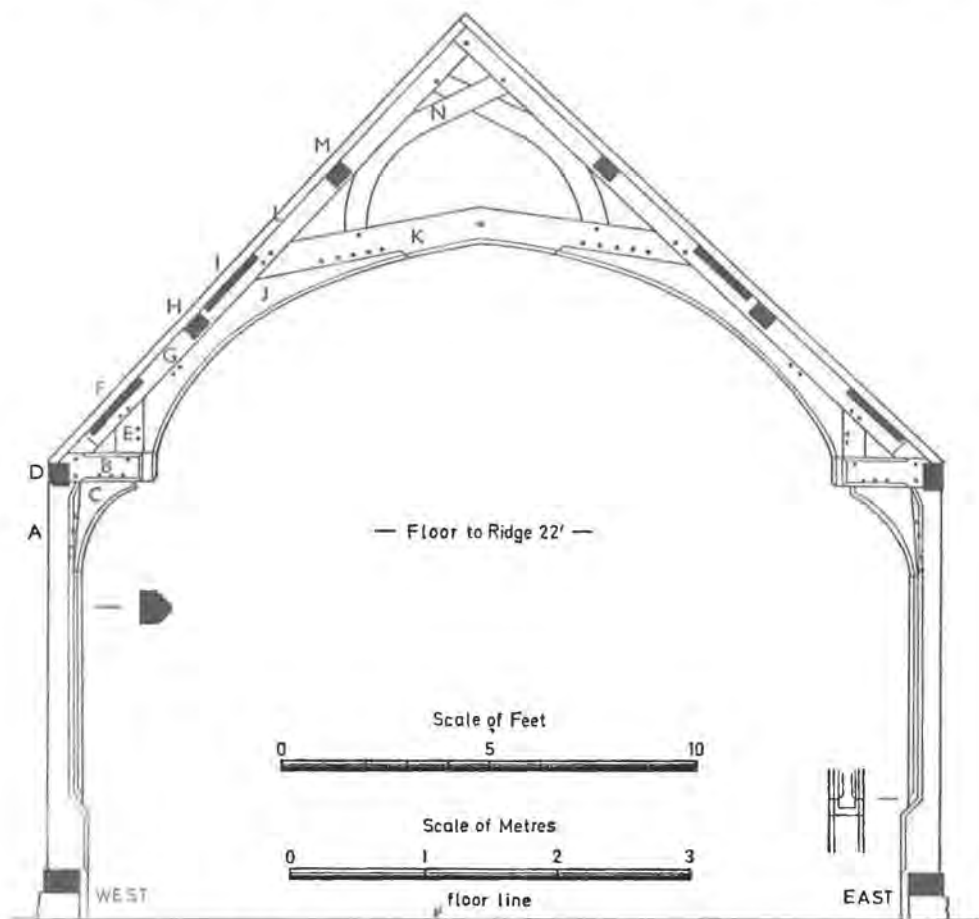


Fig. 10. Hammer beam truss in hall (phase 2).

was rebated on to, and mortised and tenoned into, the side of the top-plate (D). The top-plate (D) and the hammer-beam (B) were mortised and tenoned on to a jowled principal post (A). A principal rafter was not used in the construction of this truss. Principal rafters were used in the trusses at the upper and lower ends of the hall. If a principal rafter had been used in the construction of the truss described, it would have been necessary for it to have been mortised

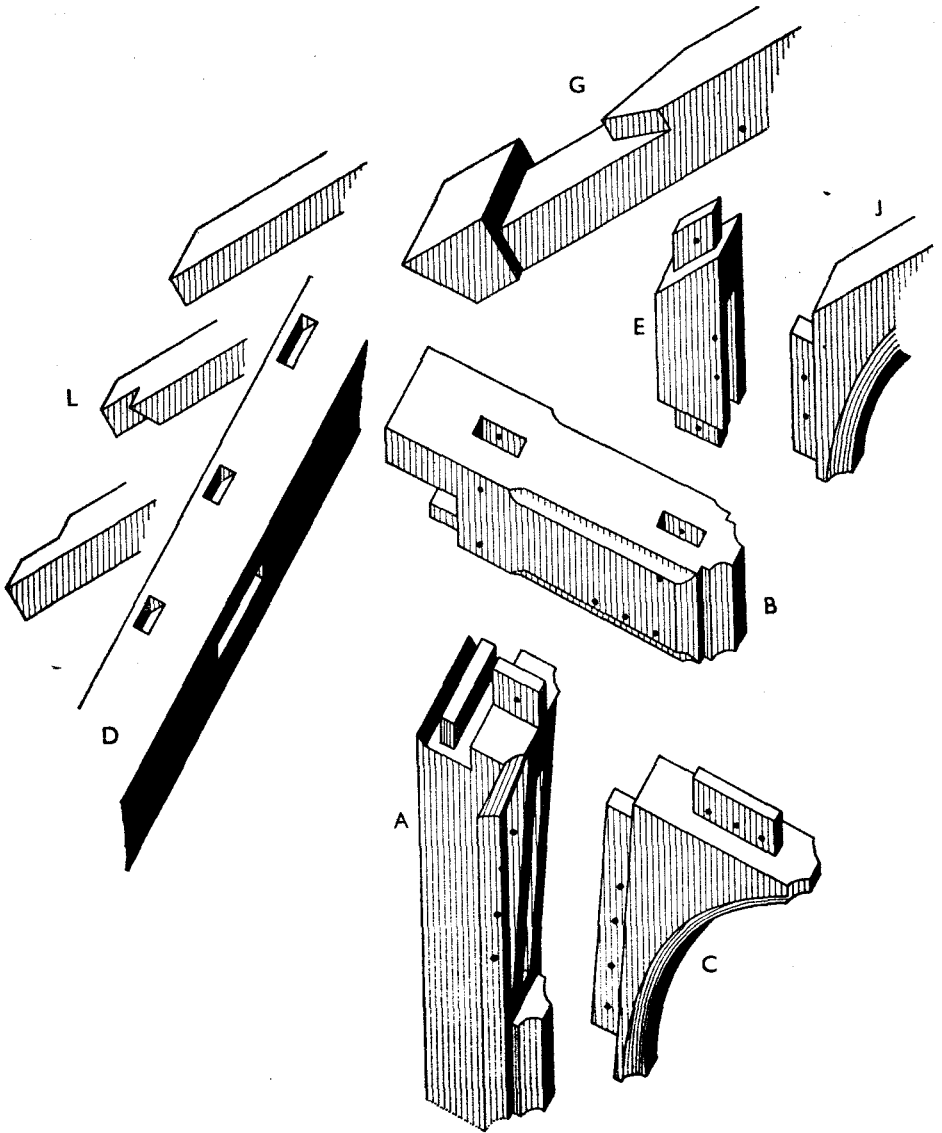


Fig. 11. Exploded drawing of hammer-beam joint. A principal post, B hammer-beam, C hammer-beam brace, D top-plate, E hammer-post, F Lower wind-brace, G truss-blade, H lower purlin, I upper wind-brace, J Collar Brace, K collar, L rafter, M upper purlin, N crossed brace.

into the hammer-beam at a point at which it was halved over the top-plate, thus making a weak joint. The use of a common rafter and a truss-blade enabled the base of the latter to be mortised into the full thickness of the hammer-beam. The collar was secured to the truss-blade with a sleeping mortise-and-tenon joint. The cross-bracing above the collar had little structural significance and was so placed to relieve the plain appearance above the tie-beam. (Plate IVa.)

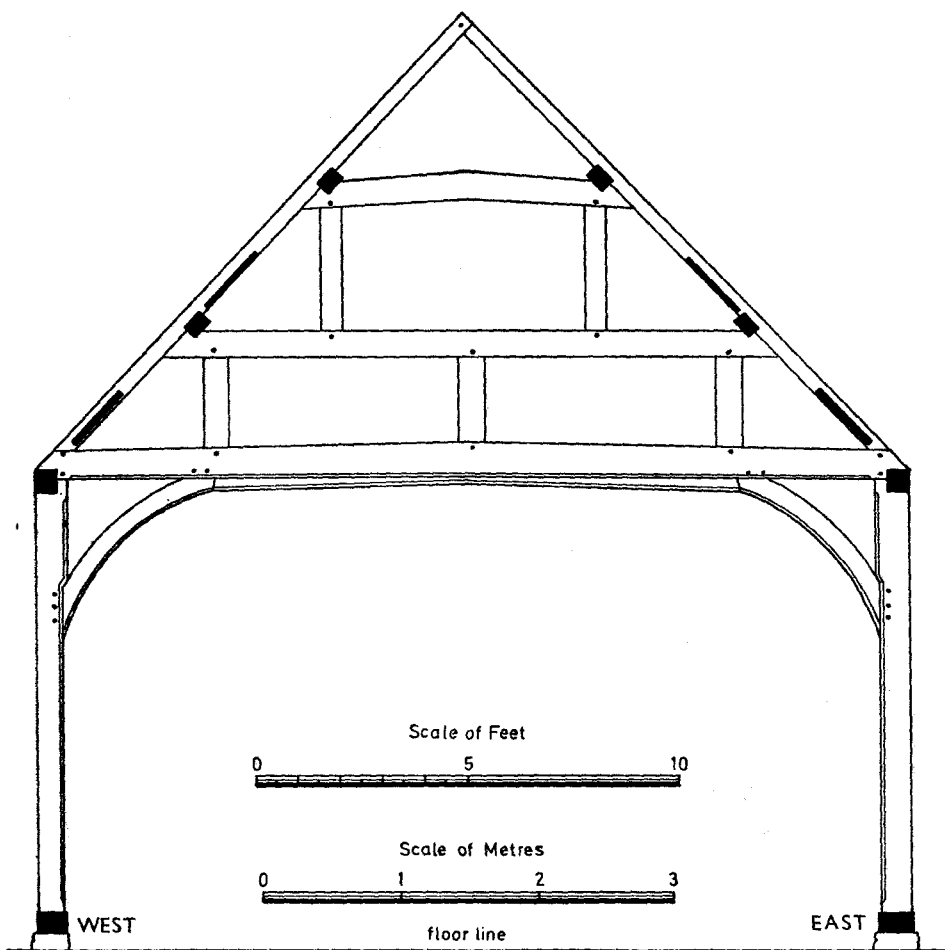


Fig. 12. Truss at north end of hall.

TRUSS AT THE UPPER END OF THE HALL. The truss was situated behind the dais. There was no framing behind the tie-beam, as the wall of the hall was formed by the side of the solar wing. The slightly cambered tie-beam, with a moulded soffit, was braced. The truss and the assembly of the jowled angle-post, top-plate, tie-beam and principal rafter are shown in Figs. 12 & 13. The construction of this truss can be compared with that of many to be seen in Berkshire, where the use of two collars was common. The truss closely resembles one in the thatched out-house at Middle Farm, Harwell,¹⁹ and it is similar to one in Mapledurham House.²⁰ On this truss, as on the spere-truss, a principal rafter was used, instead of a truss-blade and common rafter. The housing of the ends of the purlins between the collars and the principal rafters may have given greater stability than would have been obtained if the purlins had been mortised and tenoned into a truss-blade.

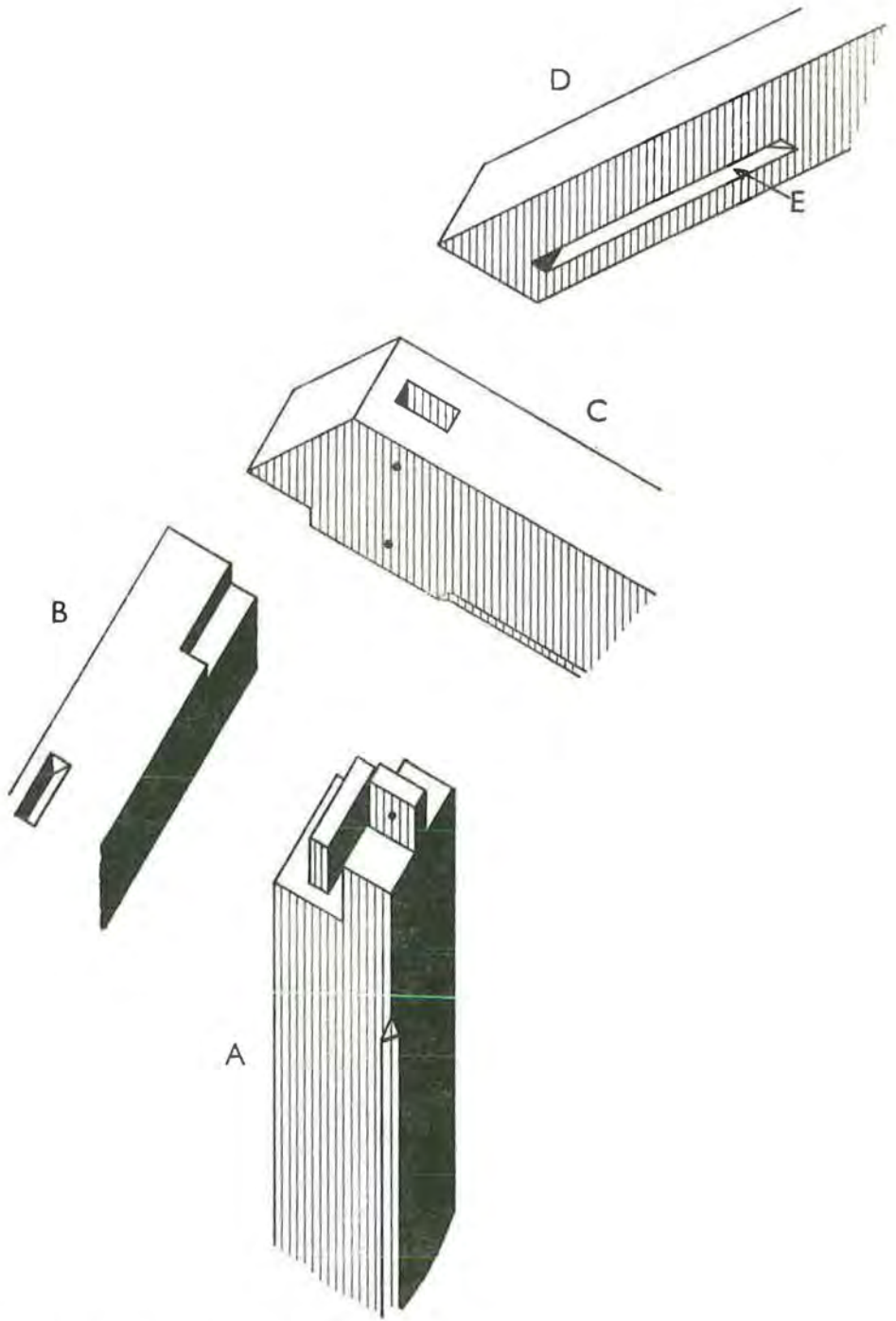


Fig. 13. Wind-brace mortise E. Truss north-west end of hall, phase 2. Joint of principal-post A, tie-beam C, top-plate B, principal rafter D.

SPERE-TRUSS. The spere-truss (Fig. 14) differs slightly from the truss at the upper end of the hall. There was no jowl and a braced beam was inserted to carry the floor of the chamber above the screens passage and to accommodate the posts of the screen.

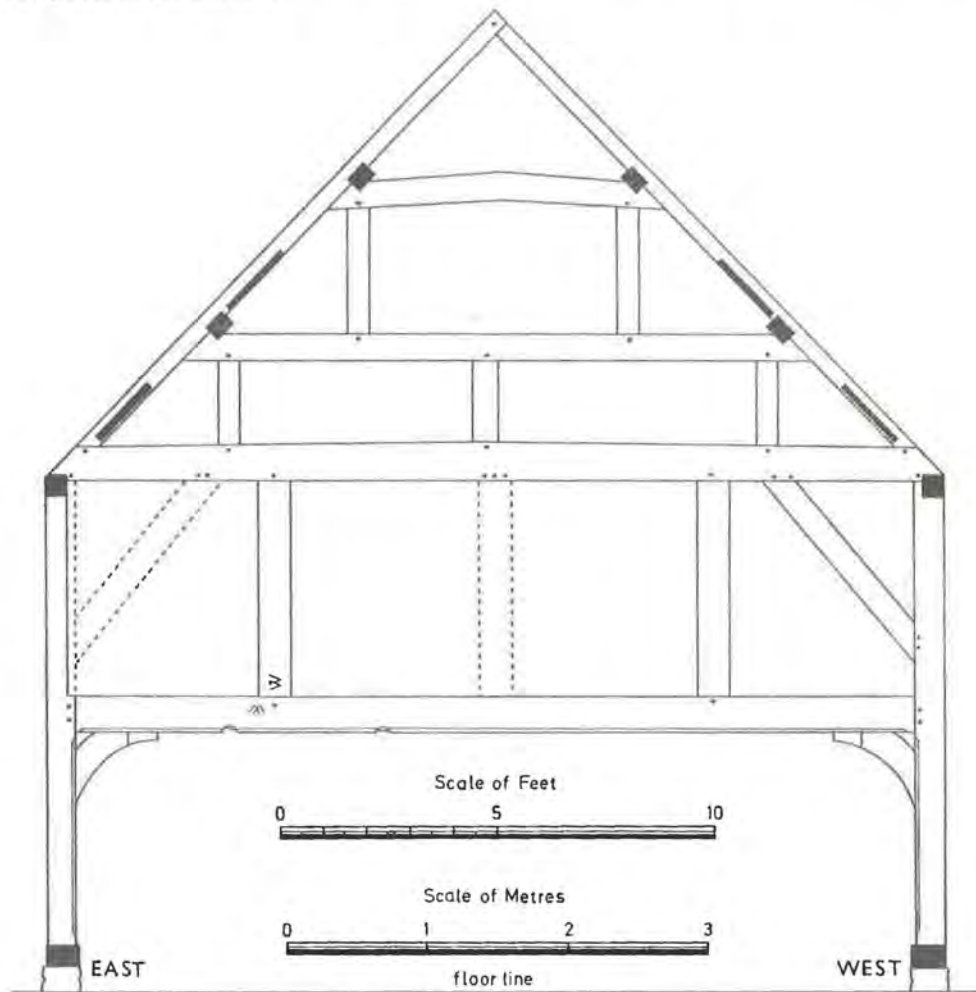


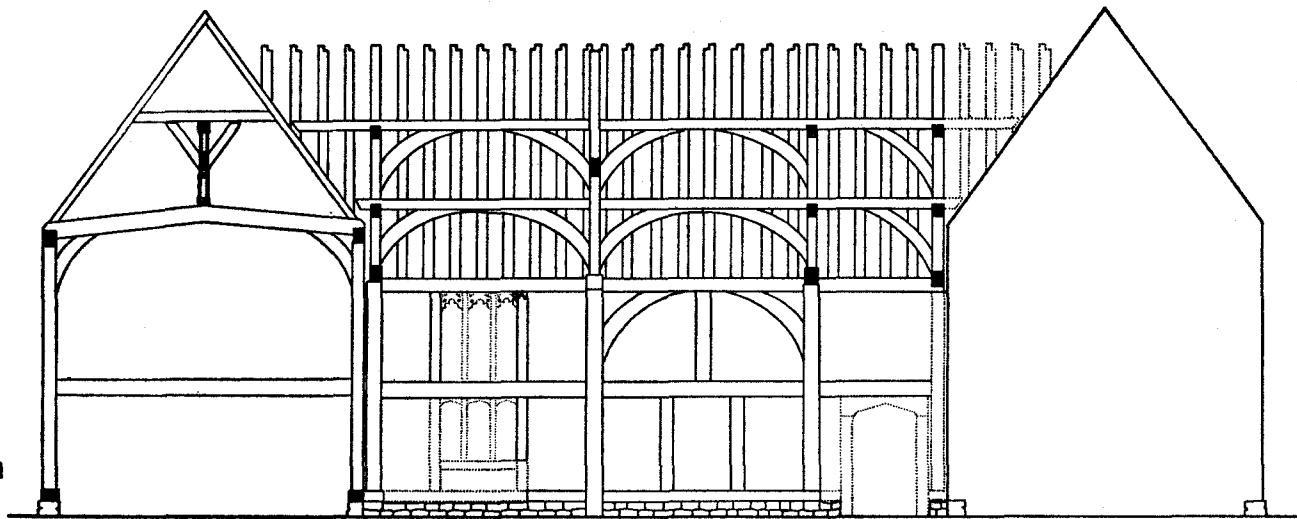
Fig. 14. Spere-truss.

PURLINS, WIND-BRACES AND RAFTERS OF THE HALL. The difference between the central truss and the end trusses of the hall resulted in a complex fitting of the purlins and wind-braces. (Fig. 5) The purlins, at the ends of the hall, were housed between the collars and the principal rafters, but were mortised and tenoned into the truss-blades of the hammer-beam truss. The lower purlins were held by a twin mortice-and-tenon joint. The flat chamfers on the purlins ended in step-stops.

Two tiers of wind-braces were provided (Fig. 5.) On the hammer-beam truss, the lower ends of the wind-braces were housed into the back of the truss-blades, while, at the ends of the hall, they were mortised and tenoned into the principal

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NORTH



SOUTH

Scale of Feet



Scale of Metres

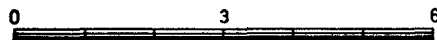


Fig. 15. Section through house (phase 2). Dotted lines denote reconstruction.



PLATE I (a). The Old Manor photographed from the south-west shortly before demolition.



(b) Crown-post in 14th century wing.



PLATE II. Hammer-beam joint (phase 2).



PLATE III. Parlour ceiling.



PLATE IV (a). Bracing above the collar on the hammer-beam truss.



PLATE IV (b). Parlour fire-place.

rafters. The tops of the lower braces were mortised and tenoned to the lower side of the bottom purlins, and those of the upper tier were housed in the outside face of the upper purlins.

The rafters were set 13 ins. apart. In the absence of a ridge-piece, they were joined at their apices, with cross-half joints. Their lower ends were let into, and dowelled to, the top-plates. The eaves were carried on sprockets.

WALLS. Many of the walls had been replaced or extensively altered, but enough survived to permit of a detailed reconstruction. The sills, on which the sill-beams were laid, were of chalk, set in dry mortar, and were 18 ins. high by 15 ins. wide. The sills were built on the ground surface.

The hall and the solar wing were both two-bay units, having principal posts at bay intervals. The sill-beams and the bottoms of the principal posts were in an advanced state of decay. It was not, therefore, possible to determine how they were joined together. The middle-rails and top-plates were mortised and tenoned to the principal posts. The studs were mortised and tenoned into these horizontal members, forming rectangular panels, which were filled with wattle and daub. The daub consisted of clay and chopped straw. This was faced with a thin skim of plaster. Some of the original smoke-stained wattle and daub had survived in the hall. Close studding had been crudely inserted in the north-west wall of the solar, probably when the fire-place and chimney were added. The studs were set 8 ins. apart. Close studding was common in the district in the last quarter of the 15th century and the first half of the 16th century.²¹

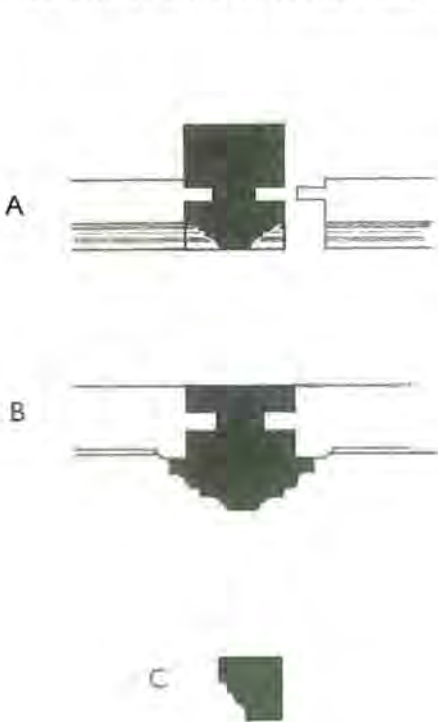


Fig. 16. Sections of moulded joists.

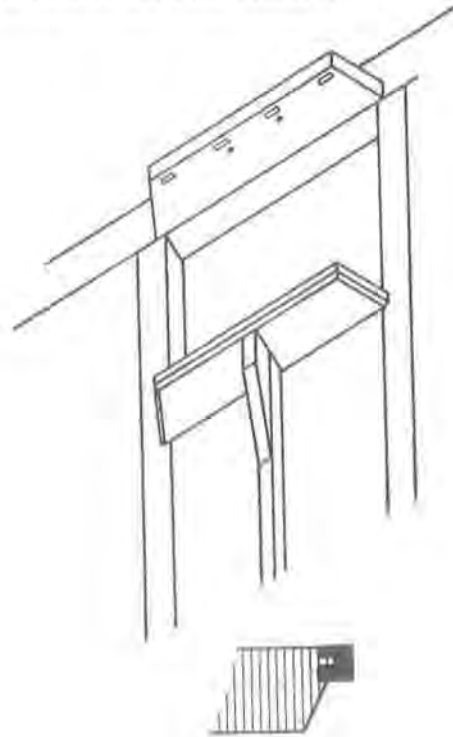


Fig. 17. Oriel window.

In the solar wing, the principal posts were braced down to the middle-rails, as well as being braced to the tie-beams. There were no braces on the corner posts. In the hall unit, the principal posts and corner posts were braced up to the tie-beams and top-plates. The position of the windows precluded the bracing of the posts at the upper end of the hall.

DOORS. None of the medieval doors had survived. The lintel of a door inserted in the south-east wall of the hall, at its upper end, during the 4th structural phase, remained in position until demolition. (Fig. 16 C.)

WINDOWS. An oriel window in the solar (Fig. 17), 44 ins. high and 37 ins. wide, has been blocked, but the sill and head survived. The mullions, four in number, had been destroyed. Their positions could, however, be determined by the mortices in the head and sill. The date of the window is uncertain. It was probably inserted with the close studding, during the third structural phase.

The medieval windows, at the upper end of the hall, would have been removed when it was chambered over. Their positions and size were determined by the studs, edged with a concave chamfer, by which the windows were surrounded. At the top of the studs, and on the soffits of the top-plates, there were apertures into which the window heads had fitted. It was not possible to determine the character of these heads, which may have been cusped, similar to those in the oriel windows of the Bird Cage Inn, Thame,²³ or four-centred like those in Tudor House, 1, Market Hill, Buckingham²³ (now demolished).

FIRE-PLACES. During the third structural phase, in the mid 16th century, stone fire-places were built in the parlour and solar (Plate IVb). They had stop-moulded jambs and moulded four-centred heads. The heads had friezes, carved in low relief, with arabesque patterns, commonly found in houses of the 16th and 17th centuries.

JOISTS AND FLOORS. The removal of some floor boards and plaster exposed the original joists which supported the first floor of the solar wing. They were 9 ins. wide and 4 ins. deep, set 12 ins. apart. The ends of the joists rested on top of the middle-rails. This jointless system became progressively obsolete,²⁴ except in jettied buildings, as, in the 14th century, joists began to be housed into the principal framework of the structure by tenons. An example of the old practice is to be found in the solar at Bisham Abbey, Berkshire, circa 1280,²⁵ and in the service wing of the 13th-century Little Chesterton Manor House, Essex.²⁶

In the third structural phase, the parlour was subjected to extensive alterations to make the room more sophisticated. (Plate III) A ceiling was constructed to conceal the 14th-century joists. Two well moulded heavy transverse joists were inserted between, but slightly lower than the existing joists. Another joist, with the same moulding, was mortised transversely into them. The mortice and tenon joint showed the elaborate profiles, meeting at right angles. It was not, however, an efficient one—the tenon had little support on which to rest. The joint became weak and was supported by a central prop. (Fig. 16a) These moulded joists had no structural significance. They were crudely let into the middle-rails and had bearings of little more than an inch. They were inserted purely for decoration.

GARDE-ROBE. Excavation revealed a garde-robe pit at the southerly corner of the medieval service wing. The pit, lined with chalk rubble, was 5 ft. deep, 5 ft. long and 3 ft. wide. It was not possible to ascertain much about the structure erected above it. From the displacement of stones, it was inferred that the garde-robe was entered from the interior of the house. A small wall was recorded, running south-eastwards from the pit, but it was not excavated. Finds from the pit included: an altar vase and a jug of glazed South Netherland maiolica ware, a Cistercian-type green cup, two paving tiles, a quantity of 15th-century sherds, a few fragments of oxidized glass, a 15th-century rondel dagger, a colander, a garden fork, rabbit and chicken bones, egg shells and oyster shells. A description of some of the finds will be found at the end of this paper.

DISCUSSION

In the absence of documentary evidence, the dating of each structural phase has had to be assessed by architectural detail, and, to a lesser extent, by excavation finds. In certain districts, building traditions have persisted long after they have been forgotten in others. Considerable caution must, therefore, be exercised. The structural phases cannot be dated merely by individual features. Resort must be had to the totality of the evidence.

PHASE 1. The first structural phase is ascribed to the first half of the 14th century. The crown-post (Plate Ib & Fig. 7) suggested an early date. The post was short and the braces sprang from a point approximately one third of the way up. It was octagonal and there were roll mouldings at the base and capital. It was comparable with the crown-posts at Tiptofts Hall, Essex, early 14th century,²⁷ Merton College, Oxford, circa 1290,²⁸ Lady Chapel, Blewbury Church, Berkshire, circa 1330,²⁹ the Old Parsonage, Marlowe, circa 1340,³⁰ and those set out in phase 3 of Dr. Fletcher's and Mr. Spokes's classification of crown-post roofs, circa 1310-1360.³¹ The crown-post at the north-east gable-end of the roof was comparable to that at the north end of the hall at Middle Farm, Harwell, circa 1365.³²

The top-plates were joined with a splay-and-tabled (*Trait-de-Jupiter*) scarf joint, a feature usually associated with the 13th and 14th centuries.³³ Examples are to be found in Montagu's Great Chamber, Bisham Abbey, mid. 14th century,³⁴ Pilgrims Hall, Winchester, circa 1325,³⁵ and Abingdon Abbey Barn, circa 1275.³⁶

A single-storeyed hall, set between two gabled cross-wings, without jetties, is consistent with a plan of the 14th century,³⁷ and it can be compared with that at Amberley Court, Marden, Herefordshire, built during the first half of the 14th century.³⁸ Jettying was not common until the 15th century, when most important houses had jettied cross-wings. Jetties were not unknown, however, in the 14th century, especially in the towns. There is a jettied house in Newgate, York, as early as circa 1340.³⁹

The assembly of the jowless principal post and tie-beam would seem to be more consistent with the 14th than the 15th century.

It could be argued that the solar wing may have been built in the early part of

the 15th century, but the timbers of the solar wing were considerably more weathered than those of the hall of the second structural phase. This suggests that a long period had elapsed between the two structural phases—considerably more than half a century. The house may have been built by Elias de Ascote, who resided in the parish of Monks Risborough in the year 1332.⁴⁰

PHASE 2. The late design of the hammer-beam truss precludes the possibility of the hall unit having been built before the second half of the 15th century; c.f. Weare Gifford Hall.⁴²

The close proximity of the tie-beam to the two collars, above the same, on the trusses at the upper and lower ends of the hall, is a feature found in North Berkshire and is indicative of the second half of the 15th century. The trusses were comparable to those at the Thatched Out-House, Middle Farm, Harwell⁴²—middle to late 15th century—and to those at Mapledurham House—late 15th century. The moulding on the principal posts of the hammer-beam truss was comparable to a moulding at the Schools Building, Cambridge, circa 1466, and other moulding in University buildings of the late 15th century.⁴³

PHASE 3. The position of the fire-places in the side wall of the solar wing, is indicative of their having been built before the end of the third quarter of the 16th century—this was the practice in this district. After that date, the tendency was to construct them in a gable or transverse partition wall. The moulded joists, inserted in the parlour, were comparable to those recorded in The Bell, High Street, Ingatestone, Essex, circa 1556.⁴⁴

PHASE 4. The date when the 14th-century service-wing was demolished was determined by excavation. A base of an early 17th-century bellamine jug was found on the floor of the service-room and sherds of the late 16th century and early 17th century were found under fallen daub from the walls. It would seem probable that the early 17th-century wing was built at the time of the demolition of the former wing.

It was not possible to ascribe a precise date to the chambering over of the hall, but it would seem probable that this was effected when the new service-wing was built. The moulded door-lintel in the north-west wall of the hall tends to confirm this date (Fig. 16c).

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APPENDIX I

South Netherlands Majolica

J. G. Hurst

Fig. 18, Flower vase, tin-glazed buff fabric with decoration in dark-blue (solid black) and orange (stippled). Cylindrical neck with plain rim, pear-shaped body with two loop-handles on the shoulder, one of which is broken off; footed base. In the centre of each side the sacred monogram IHS in a plain medallion bounded by vertical bands and containing decoration of foliage and dots.

Fig. 19, Globular jug, tin-glazed buff fabric with decoration in dark-blue only (solid black). Slightly splayed neck. The front has been broken off but the rim is starting to turn upwards and inwards at the break showing that there was a trefoil spout. Globular body with kicked-up strap handle opposite the spout with spur-like projection at the base; footed base. In the centre of the front of the jug the sacred monogram IHS in a medallion with rays radiating out from this to an outer medallion with a ladder pattern.

South Netherlands Maiolica¹ flower vases are now known from thirty five different sites in England and there are over one hundred different vessels represented.² Half of these are single finds, often quite small sherds, but there are over 50 from London and about 20 from Southampton.³ Complete examples are, however rare, only six other examples being known. Most of these were stray finds and the only comparable stratified find is from the Gateway house pit in London.⁴ The date range is from 1475 to 1540 and these vessels may be regarded as type fossils for any site of this period.

The two-handled form is the most common and identifiable jugs are rare.⁵ On the other hand it is possible that some small sherds, which have been interpreted as vases, may in fact be from jugs. In many cases, however, it can be demonstrated that vases were the form as the medallions on the jugs are much larger, there only being one on the front, rather than one on each side. The IHS monogram is a common feature but there are many other patterns of foliage and birds.⁶ The IHS monogram with the rays was the symbol used by St. Bernardino in the 15th century⁷ after which it was widely used. Rackham called these altar vases but in view of the many secular patterns I would suggest they were simply flower vases. These can hardly have been confined to altars because they have been found in a large number of places in which it is unlikely that there were private chapels.

The source of these vessels is not known but it is assumed they were made in the vicinity of Bruges or Antwerp. There are not so many examples in the Low Countries⁸ as in England but this is simply because more excavations have taken place over here. The earliest dating is given by the illustration of flower vases in a manuscript of about 1485-90.⁹ Other examples have been found in contexts of up to 1532¹⁰ and it is likely that they went out at the reformation when they were replaced by globular jugs with foliage decoration, the shape being based on Cologne jugs.¹¹

The shapes and decoration of South Netherlands Maiolica are most interesting. The industry was set up by potters coming from Faenza in Italy and the

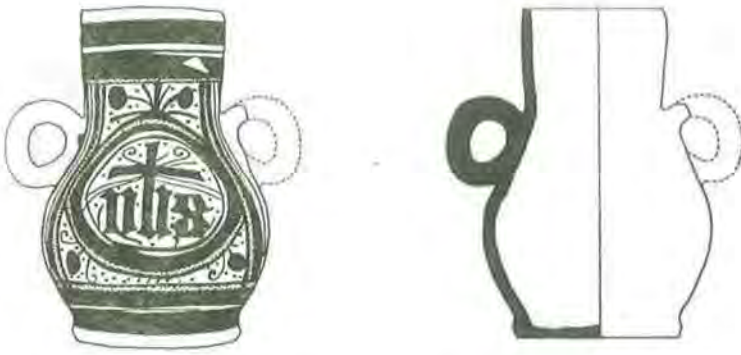


Fig. 18. Majolica altar vase.



Fig. 19. Majolica altar jug.

jug with its trefoil mouth, kick-up handle and the typical Faenza decoration of the period, i.e. IHS monogram etc. in a medallion, is just what one would expect them to make.¹² The two-handled flower vase on the other hand, although it has the Faenza type decoration, is quite unparalleled in shape at Faenza or elsewhere in Italy. This shape is in fact Spanish¹³ and goes back to Islamic prototypes. The Herckenrode tiles of the same period, also have Spanish motifs, and these links are of the greatest interest.¹⁴ There are many examples of Spanish imports found in the Low Countries¹⁵ as well as illustrations in paintings.¹⁶ The Douce MS most significantly shows examples of South Netherlands Maiolica displayed on shelves together with Hispano-Moresque lustre wares.¹⁷

¹ First defined by B. Rackham, *Early Netherlands Maiolica*, (London, 1926), 96-106 & pls. 24 & 26. See also B. Rackham, "A Netherlands Maiolica Vase from the Tower of London", *Antiq. J.*, XIX (1939), 285-90.

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⁴ Unpublished, in the Guildhall Museum.

⁵ There are six examples from London but otherwise only examples from Southampton, and Weoley Castle, Warwickshire. There are four examples in Holland and two in Denmark.

⁶ F. H. Garner, "English Delftware" (London, 1948), Pl, 2a.

⁷ I. Origo, *The World of San Bernardino*, (London, 1963), 3, 117-8 & 278 & Pls. I. III. XVII & XVIII.

⁸ From eight sites in Holland.

⁹ Bodleian Library Oxford, Douce MS. 219, fol. 145^v—146^r. For illustration see Rackham, 1939, *op. cit.* in note 1, pl. LVIII. For dating see O. Pächt, *The Master of Mary of Burgundy*, (Faber, 1948), 67.

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¹³ J. Ainaud de Lasarte, *Cerámica y Vidrio*, *Ars Hispaniae*, X (Madrid, 1952), Fig. 71 for a late example. There are prototypes very similar to the flower vases at the Alcazaba in Malaga.

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49-55.

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APPENDIX II

Principal Finds from Garde-Robe Pit (1475-1515)

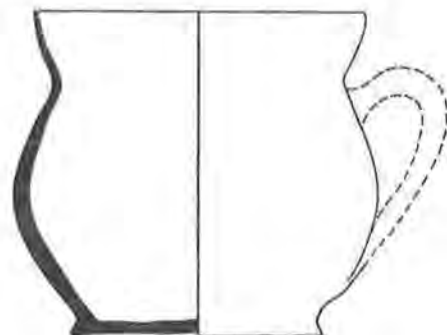


Fig. 20. Cistercian type cup.

CISTERCIAN TYPE CUP (Fig. 20)

The cup has a green glaze and is of the Cistercian type. It is $3\frac{1}{2}$ ins. high and a little over $3\frac{1}{2}$ ins. wide. The handle, broken a little above its base, and approximately one third of the side are missing. The cup has a globular body, with a splayed rim, and a plain-footed base. The well-fired mica-free fabric is grey, with a red core.

MEDIEVAL PAVING TILES

Two glazed decorated paving tiles were found. One is $4\frac{1}{2}$ ins. square and has an heraldic design, depicted in yellow and brown glazes. These contained a small fleur-de-lis in a lozenge, formed by four quadrants, cusped, with dots in the cusps, and inclosing trefoil ornamentation. Similar tiles have been found at Berton, Bledlow, Missenden Abbey, Monks Risborough and Stone in Buckinghamshire, and at Thame in Oxfordshire.⁴⁵ The second tile is $4\frac{3}{4}$ ins. square and is glazed in yellow. The design is a gyrony of 16, the gyrons being slightly raised to form a pattern. It is not a good specimen, as only half of the tile had been stamped. A tile of this design was found at Monks Risborough. That tile differs from the Askett tile, in that the design was depicted by glazes of different colours.⁴⁶

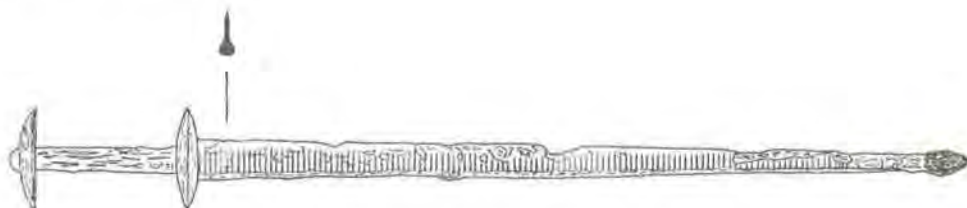


Fig. 21. Rondel dagger.

RONDEL DAGGER (Fig. 21)

The rondel dagger was first developed in the second quarter of the 14th century. It remained in use until the early 16th century.⁴⁷ This type of dagger is recognised by the guard, which is formed by a solid disk, through the centre of which the tang of the blade passes. On this particular dagger, as in many others, the pommel is formed by a similar disk. It was essentially a "knightly" weapon. The blade has a single edge and is hollow ground, with a ridged back. The length of the blade is $17\frac{1}{2}$ ins. The overall length of the dagger is $21\frac{1}{2}$ ins.

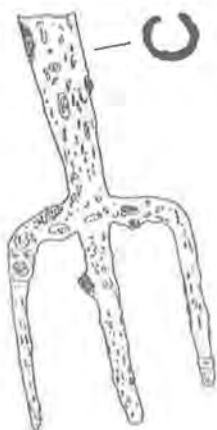


Fig. 22. Garden fork.

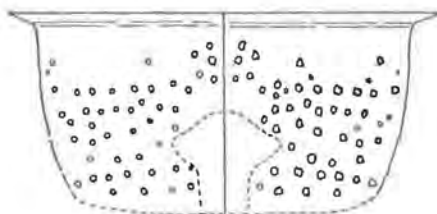


Fig. 23. Colander.

GARDEN FORK (Fig. 22)

The fork has three prongs, rectangular in section. The prongs are $6\frac{1}{2}$ ins. long and are set 2 ins. apart.

COLANDER (Fig. 23)

Fragments of a copper colander were found. It was 8 ins. wide and $3\frac{3}{4}$ ins. deep. The holes had been crudely perforated from the inner side. The rim was a little wider at one place. At this point, a small piece of copper had been riveted to the inner side of the colander, just below the rim. This suggests that there had been a handle.

Specification of Timbers Used

SOLAR ROOF

Tie-beam 8" × 7"
Principal posts 9" × 9"
Rafters 6" × 3", set 13" apart
Collar purlin $4\frac{1}{2}$ " × $4\frac{1}{2}$ "
Collar 5" × $3\frac{1}{2}$ "
Top-plate 7" × 6"

SOLAR WALLS

Side girth 7" × 5"
Studs 6" × $4\frac{1}{2}$ "
Floor joists 9" × 4", set 12" apart

HAMMER-BEAM TRUSS

Principal-post 10" × 9"
Hammer-post 6" × 6"
Hammer-beam 8" × 7"
Truss-blade 7" × 6"
Collar $9\frac{1}{2}$ " × 5"
Top-plate $6\frac{1}{2}$ " × 6"
Rafters 5" × $2\frac{1}{2}$ ", set 10" apart

Lower purlin $6\frac{1}{2}$ " × 5"

Upper purlin 6" × $4\frac{1}{2}$ "

Wind-braces 2" × 9"

SPERE-TRUSS

Principal-post 9" × 9"
Braced rail $9\frac{1}{2}$ " × 5"
Tie-beam 10" × 5"
Lower collar $7\frac{1}{2}$ " × 4"
Studs $8\frac{1}{2}$ " × 5"
Queen-posts $5\frac{1}{2}$ " × $3\frac{1}{2}$ "

TRUSS AT THE UPPER END OF THE HALL

As spere-truss, except that the tie-beam was 12" max. × $7\frac{1}{2}$ "

HALL WALLS

Studs $8\frac{1}{2}$ " × $3\frac{1}{2}$ "
Side girth 8" × $3\frac{1}{2}$ "
Wind-braces 8" × 2"