

# Winchester and Late Medieval Urban Development: From Palace to Pentice

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*THE PENTICE*, a medieval, colonnaded walkway centrally placed on the south side of the High Street in Winchester, Hampshire, occupies part of the site of the former Norman palace. Other medieval colonnaded walkways exist, notably at Chester and Totnes, but it is not entirely clear when these latter walkways were created, nor whether they resulted from piecemeal development over time, or from a single, concerted campaign of building. These questions are explored with regard to The Pentice in Winchester between c. 1250 and c. 1550 in this interdisciplinary study, which includes evidence from archaeology, dendrochronology, documents and standing remains. Key new evidence has come recently from dendrochronology, allowing a re-evaluation of documentary evidence and of dates at present ascribed to standing remains on typological grounds. This study presents fresh evidence for the structure of The Pentice in the 14th century and examines the case for development of the present form of the buildings in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. Finally, it is noted that this new evidence encourages a re-examination of the argument that structural alignments and split-level retailing were indicators of pre-plague pressure on street frontage which eased after the Black Death.

The Pentice today consists of a row of buildings all with upper storeys that oversail a colonnaded walkway and thus encroach on the High Street. Several of these are gabled, typologically late-medieval structures, and in some cases where gables have not survived there is substantial evidence that they once existed.

The present study has involved a measured survey of The Pentice, together with two adjacent buildings (numbers 42 and 43 High Street) that also oversail walkways. Where substantial timber-framing survives, both plans and sections have been drawn. In parallel with this work, all the timber structures in The Pentice have been examined for their suitability for tree-ring dating and, where appropriate, samples have been taken for analysis.

The Pentice row is some 75.85 m in length and the upper storey oversails the walkway by some 3.8 m. Current numbering in the High Street identifies the properties in question from east to west as 30 to 41 High Street (Fig. 1). Of these buildings, numbers 32 and 36–40 have been completely rebuilt in modern times, but the remaining structures (30, 31, 33, 34, 35, and 41 High Street) contain significant, late-medieval features (Fig. 2). Number 41 marks the western perimeter of The Pentice where the open colonnade now ends, respecting the position of the

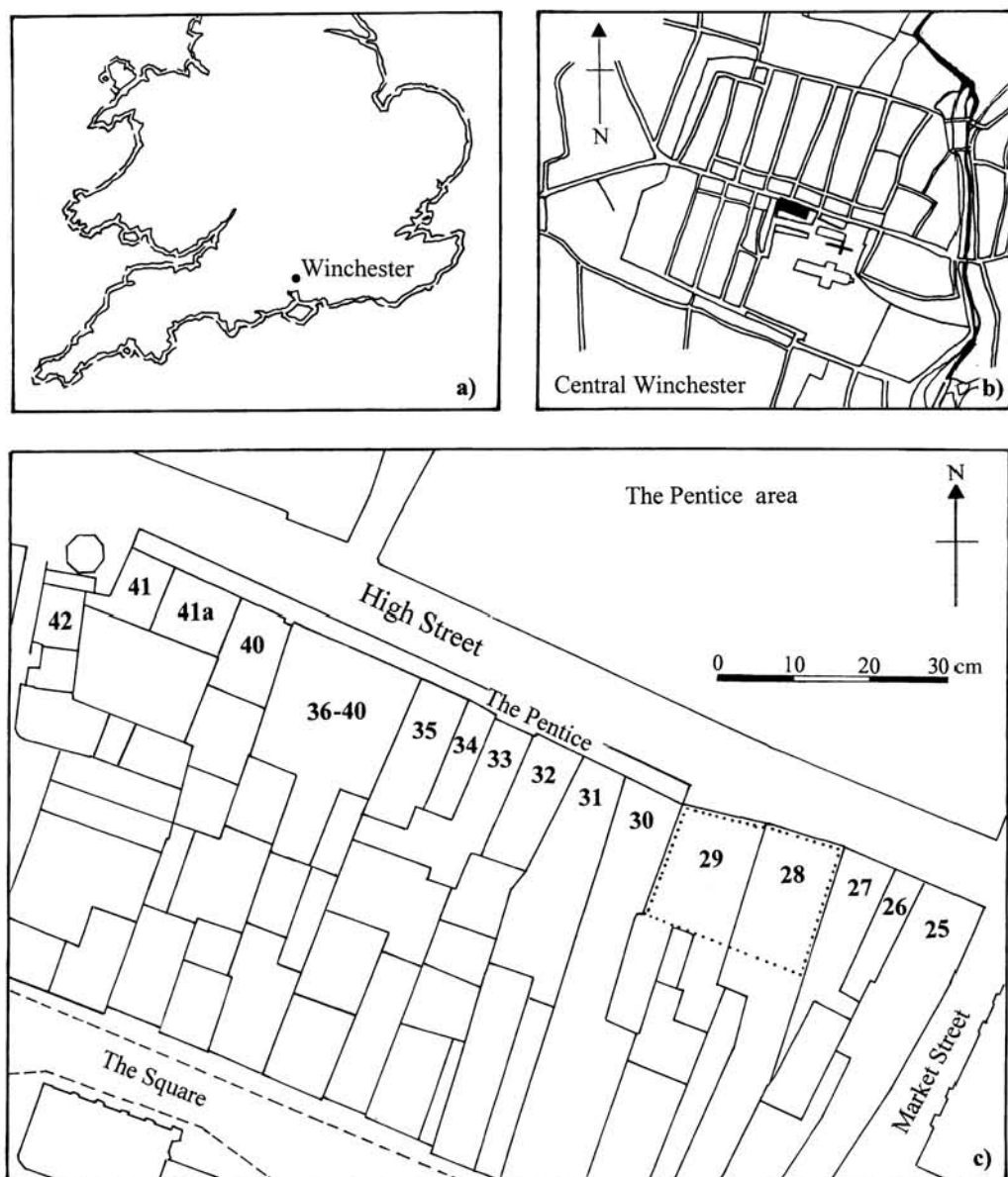


FIG. 1

Location plan for Winchester (a). Location plan for The Pentice, in black (b), in the centre of the city. The site of New Minster, demolished after 1110, is marked by a cross, north of the cathedral and south of The Pentice. Plan of The Pentice (c) based on 1869/73 OS. Also shown are modern numberings, the outline of the Butter Cross in front of 42 High Street, and suggested sites of the Norman palace kitchen and The Woolseld at 28 and 29 High Street. *Drawn by Philip Marter.*

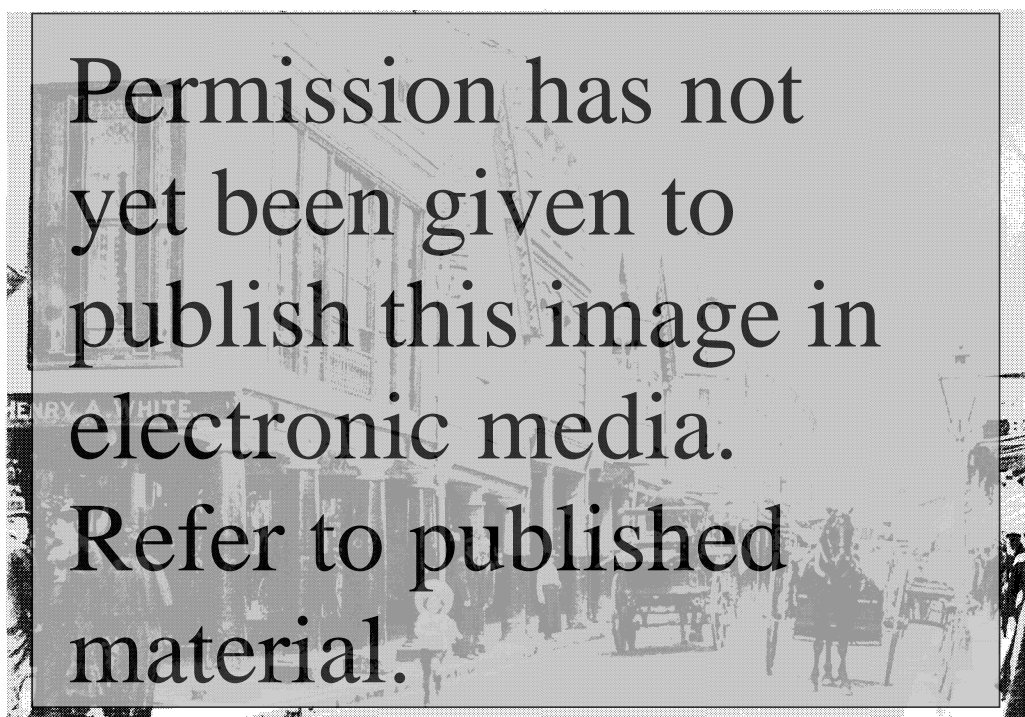


FIG. 2

The Pentice from the east c. 1900. Gables on numbers 31, 33, 34 and 35 are clearly seen. *Reproduced by kind permission of Winchester City Museum PWCM 10177.*

medieval Butter Cross.<sup>1</sup> Structural evidence in 41 High Street and the abutting St Lawrence's Church suggests that the open colonnade formerly turned south for a few metres, providing covered access to a door in the north wall of the church. This southern return was enclosed, probably in the 18th century. Adjacent to this western margin of The Pentice, and also respecting the Butter Cross, is 42 High Street, which, although never considered part of The Pentice, also jetties, in this case over a short, colonnaded walkway (Fig. 3). Both 42 High Street and its neighbour, number 43, are substantial timber-framed structures, and have recently been dated by dendrochronology. Number 43 is well documented and contributes to an understanding of the development of The Pentice (Fig. 3).

Other, well-known colonnaded walkways survive in England, notably The Rows at Chester, where the colonnades are at first-floor level. However, ground-floor colonnaded walkways are found elsewhere in Chester and also at The Butterwalk in Totnes (Devon) and in Ludlow (Shropshire). There has been much

<sup>1</sup> Today the property numbered 41 and 41a High Street is in joint ownership, but is clearly of one build, has shared cellars and matching above ground features including framing. In modern times it has been divided between different tenants and the easterly portion is currently known as 41a. The term 41 is used in this article to refer both to 41 and 41a High Street.



FIG. 3

The Butter Cross area c. 1850. Note the enclosed western return of the colonnaded Pentice at 41 High Street, 42 with its penticed walkway, and, to the right, the jetties of 43 High Street. *T.B. James collection.*

debate as to the origins of these walkways.<sup>2</sup> When were they built? Do they represent a single planned building campaign or piecemeal development? And can their construction be linked with significant socio-economic events?

These same questions have been addressed in the case of Winchester. The monumental plot-by-plot *Survey of Medieval Winchester* (1985) includes detailed historical evidence for The Pentice and neighbouring buildings. It is suggested that this evidence points to the building of a pentice structure in one campaign in the early 13th century. On this view, the present pentice represents a piecemeal replacement of an original colonnaded structure.<sup>3</sup> In 1994, the development of The Pentice was discussed as part of a wider study of English and Continental town houses, in which it was argued that The Pentice was not constructed in one campaign but was, from the beginning, a piecemeal development that evolved during the late Middle Ages.<sup>4</sup>

The present study re-examines these debates on dates, forms and origins in the light of recent dendrochronological sampling and surveys of standing fabric. In some cases felling dates, or date ranges, have been ascribed (at numbers 33, 34, the

<sup>2</sup> P. Beacham, *Devon Building* (Devon County Council, 1990), 113–15; P. H. Lawson and J. T. Smith, 'The Rows of Chester: two interpretations', *Chester Archaeol. Soc. J.*, XLV (1958), 1–42; Andrew Brown et al., *The Rows of Chester: The Chester Rows Research Project* (English Heritage Archaeological Research Report, 16, London, 1999), 55–62, provides an up-to-date review of current thinking on the origins of The Rows.

<sup>3</sup> D. J. Keene, *Survey of Medieval Winchester* (Oxford, 1985) ii, 555–69.

<sup>4</sup> R. B. Harris, 'The origins and development of English town houses operating commercially on two storeys' (unpubl. D.Phil thesis, 1994, University of Oxford).

rear of 35 and at 42 and 43 High Street),<sup>5</sup> in others samples failed to date by dendrochronology (30, 31, the front of 35, and 41) but date ranges can be suggested on typological grounds. Typological dating can be employed in Hampshire with more confidence after a recent and intensive programme of dendrochronology in the county. Since 1994, over 80 building-phases in over 70 separate structures have been dated in the county, allowing the construction of a more precise regional chronology of building-types than has been available hitherto.<sup>6</sup>

### TOPOGRAPHY FROM THE 10TH TO THE 13TH CENTURY

Winchester is well known as a Roman *civitas*, a Saxon *burh* and capital of Wessex, and as an early Norman royal centre.<sup>7</sup> The *Survey of Medieval Winchester* argues that the New Minster precinct wall of c. 963–1066 ran immediately to the south of the later Pentice area and suggests sites of two pre-Conquest gates that gave access from the High Street in to the New Minster grounds (Fig. 4). The position of these gates is significant in the study of The Pentice and its adjacent structures. To the east, in the Saxon period, a gate to New Minster appears to have been on the site of 28–9 High Street, which lies immediately east of The Pentice today.<sup>8</sup> A westerly gate existed between 42 and 43 High Street, where a passage still leads to The Square, formerly part of the New Minster precinct (Fig. 1). This passage abuts the western end of St Lawrence's Church, whose north wall, it can be argued (see below), is on the line of the late-Saxon precinct wall of the New Minster. It may be significant that the present north wall of St Lawrence's Church, which follows the line of the precinct wall as documented in the *Survey*, at c. 1.25 m, is much thicker than the south wall of the church which is no more than 0.8 m thick. Further to the east, a substantial 'medieval' foundation 1.22 m thick was found on the site of 37–8 High Street during building works there in 1905 and it is possible that this is another fragment of the precinct wall.<sup>9</sup> The curiously obtuse angle of the west wall of St Lawrence's Church (Fig. 4) suggests that it respected some earlier structure, perhaps a gate.<sup>10</sup>

After 1066 William I took into his hands 'the western part of the New Minster precinct and some houses on the High Street' on which area he created his new palace.<sup>11</sup> The Saxon road, which had emerged at a gate perhaps on the site of 28–9 High Street, was then realigned further east. This road is now Market Street, and a new gate known as Thomasesgate, now lost, was built there with an open area

<sup>5</sup> I. Tyers, *ARCUS Report 523* (Sheffield, forthcoming); D. H. Miles and D. Haddon-Reece, 'Hampshire Dendrochronology Project — phase two', *Vernacular Archit.*, 27 (1996), 97–102, at p. 99.

<sup>6</sup> D. H. Miles and D. Haddon-Reece, 'Tree-ring dates: list 56', *Vernacular Archit.*, 25 (1994), 28–30; D. H. Miles and D. Haddon-Reece, 'Tree-ring dates: list 64', *Vernacular Archit.*, 26 (1995), 63–6; Miles and Haddon-Reece, *op. cit.* in note 5; D. H. Miles and M. J. Worthington, 'Hampshire Dendrochronology Project — phase three', *Vernacular Archit.*, 28 (1997), 175–81; D. H. Miles and M. J. Worthington, 'Hampshire Dendrochronology Project — phase four' *Vernacular Archit.*, 29 (1998), 117–21.

<sup>7</sup> T. B. James, *Winchester* (London, 1997).

<sup>8</sup> Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 574, fig. 65.

<sup>9</sup> Winchester City Council SMR 455. No alignment was noted for this feature.

<sup>10</sup> Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 574, fig. 65 suggests a gate west of St Lawrence's Church, where the passage is found today, but shows a Saxon street emerging on to High Street to the east of that structure.

<sup>11</sup> Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 573.

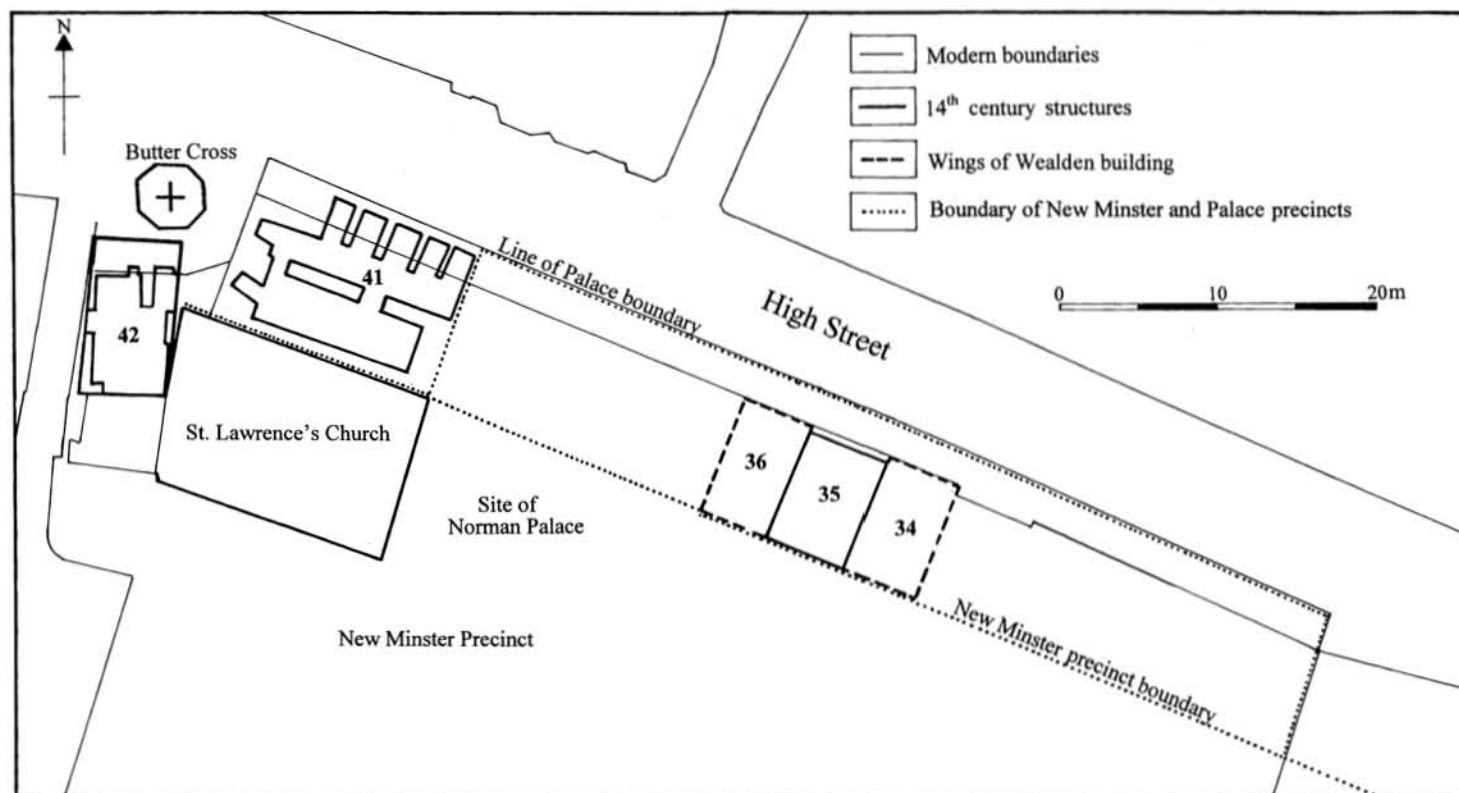


FIG. 4

The Pentice area in the 14th century. The suggested lines of the New Minster precinct wall (pre-1066) and the palace precinct wall (post-1066) are marked in dots. The cellar beneath 41 was in existence in the 14th century, as was both the cellar beneath 42 and the standing structure above. There was also the two-bay hall of a Wealden house at 35 High Street and the probability is that its flanking floored bays occupied the sites of numbers 34 and 36. Note that The Pentice colonnaded walkway erected c. 1450–1550 is set forward of the Wealden house. *Drawn by Philip Marter.*

extending both east and west on the High Street side (Fig. 1). It has been argued that the structure which caused the realignment of the street was the palace kitchen, which may have occupied the site of what is now 28-9 High Street, with other palace buildings stretching westwards along the south side of High Street.<sup>12</sup>

By 1100, the *Survey* suggests, the palace boundary ran from the royal kitchen, along the northern extremity of the sites now probably occupied by 28-40 High Street. This frontage was later to include The Pentice. The palace boundary then returned southwards, to the west of 40 High Street, to rejoin the pre-Conquest line now apparently found at the north wall of St Lawrence's Church.<sup>13</sup> If these interpretations are correct then the area of The Pentice and plots immediately adjacent to it lie between the pre-Conquest wall of the New Minster precinct and the post-Conquest boundary that was extended to enclose the late 11th-century palace (Fig. 4). Thus c. 1100, the existence of the palace kitchen, itself an encroachment on to High Street, encouraged the assumption in the *Survey* that even in the 11th and 12th centuries The Pentice area encroached on High Street as it still does today, but was not at that date colonnaded.<sup>14</sup>

Archaeological evidence for the Norman Palace is sparse and its structures have not been precisely placed. However, the approximate site of its kitchen is known, and the sealing of a diploma '*apud Wintoniam in palatio regio*' in 1080 are examples of evidence for the palace. Such material remains as do survive on the suggested palace site may have originated elsewhere, and have been part of other structures. A small section of walling, on an E.-W. alignment, found incorporated into the east wall of St Lawrence's Church in 1980 may have been part of the palace, or of one of the mint buildings which succeeded it.<sup>15</sup> Some Romanesque carving and ashlar is visible today built into the wall of 43 High Street, and is similar to material reused in 42 High Street. In addition, at the south-west corner of 42 High Street a column of stonework appears to predate the main structure there, which dates to 1316-52 (see below). A carved 12th-century capital on the site of 37-8 High Street, a chance find in 1905, may have come from the palace.<sup>16</sup> A final possible survival from the palace is a blocked doorway, with Romanesque arches dated to the 12th century, which pierces the north wall of St Lawrence's Church.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 574, fig. 65.

<sup>13</sup> Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 573-5 and fig. 65.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 574, 579.

<sup>15</sup> F. Barlow, M. Biddle, O. von Felitzen and D. J. Keene, *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages* (Winchester Studies, 1, Oxford, 1976), 295; Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 566.

<sup>16</sup> WCC SMR 1800, 148. This carved Romanesque material and reused ashlar is associated with 16th-century structures or features. Such stonework in the eastern wall of 43 High Street (dated to 1507-8), if re-used in that building's construction, may be from the Norman palace. However, a late-15th- or 16th-century fireplace in 42 High Street has re-used stonework in the chimney. As these fireplaces and chimneys are additions they are, if post-Reformation, likely to incorporate stone from monastic buildings. Dendrochronology shows a major rebuilding in the 1660s at 42 High Street, when the attic was inserted. The chimney structure at 43, and the attic, may be of similar date. If so, the fireplaces may have come from monastic buildings in the nearby Close, where demolition for recycling of building materials followed the parliamentary survey of 1649, and where sites were cleared and new properties created following 1660 with the return of the canons (J. Crook (ed.), *The Wainscot Book* (Hampshire Records Series, vi, Winchester, 1984), xv). Alternatively, as the *Survey* suggests (Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 595) the re-used stonework in the chimney of 43 may have come from Hyde Abbey, where one piece has been matched.

<sup>17</sup> WCC SMR 484. Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 566 gives a 12th-century date.



After the destruction of the palace, part of the vacant site was occupied by the Winchester Mint. Documentary evidence suggests that structures which had encroached on the High Street in the 11th and early 12th century, which had survived the destruction of the palace, or which had encroached since 1141, were probably damaged or destroyed in the fire of 1180–1 when the Mint and many neighbouring properties burned down.<sup>18</sup>

When minting ceased at Winchester, probably in 1217–18, the area became known as 'The Drapery', or 'Drapery Row' (*Rengia Draperie*). By 1285–6, The Drapery was bounded on one side by The Woolseid (29 High Street) and on the other by Helle (41 High Street).<sup>19</sup> The area called The Drapery later became known as The Pentice but it does not appear, as shown below, that Helle was considered to be part of The Pentice until the early 15th century.

Public regulation of The Drapery in the early 13th century suggests that it functioned as a covered market rather than as a row of private shops where the drapers sold their cloth. This has led to the suggestion that the row of structures subsequently called The Pentice may have assumed its colonnaded form at this date.<sup>20</sup> On that view, the present buildings in The Pentice are replacements echoing the basic structure erected in the early 13th century.

Documentary sources provide further evidence for the plan and form of The Pentice area in the 13th century. A lane along the north wall of St Lawrence's Church was closed in 1248,<sup>21</sup> and this would seem to indicate that there was no structure covering the site of 41 at that date. Closure of the path may perhaps have cleared the way for the creation of the cellar that now lies beneath number 41 High Street.

The evidence for the structural and standing remains in The Pentice area in the period before 1300 is slight and is summarised here. The north wall of St Lawrence's Church probably follows the line of a pre-Conquest New Minster boundary. Apart from this, only fragments of walling and possibly *ex situ* carved stonework survive from the palace. This is not as surprising as it may appear for the shortage of building stone in the Winchester area has resulted in the extensive robbing of structures such as Old Minster, New Minster and Hyde Abbey. In addition Giraldus Cambrensis records that following the siege of 1141 the palace was demolished and the materials reused at Wolvesey. There is no material evidence of any kind to suggest that there was a colonnaded projection on to the High Street where today's Pentice is found.

Documentary evidence records changes of site-use from palace to Mint, and then to Drapery. The only documentary clue as to the form of these structures is the suggestion that the drapery was originally a market hall, perhaps with a colonnade that may have established a pattern for later replacement structures. This suggestion will be considered below.

<sup>18</sup> Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 577–9. The site of the Royal Mint is marked on the OS map of 1869/73 at 39–40 High Street.

<sup>19</sup> Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 554–5.

<sup>20</sup> Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 579.

<sup>21</sup> Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 577.



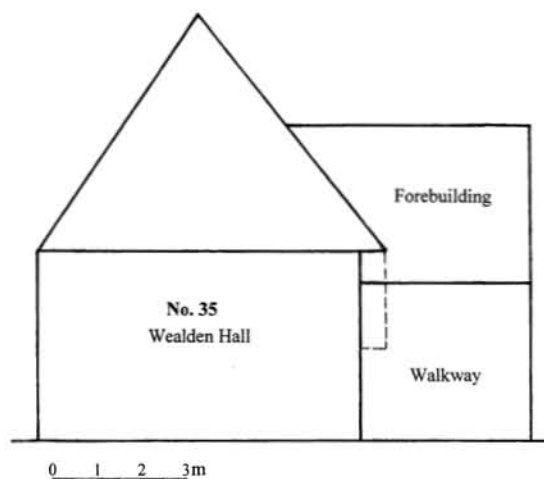


FIG. 5

The Wealden hall and forebuilding. Section to show the alignment and relationship and relative heights of the 14th-century Wealden and 15th-century forebuilding. Drawn by Philip Marter.

### THE 14TH CENTURY

By the mid-14th century nomenclature was changing from 'The Drapery' to 'The Pentice', with the properties being described as '*sub penticio, subtus le Pentis*' etc. From this evidence, it has been inferred that these 14th-century tenements were colonnaded walkways, structurally similar to the properties in The Pentice today.<sup>22</sup> A recent dendrochronological survey has shown that, in at least one instance, this cannot have been so. Number 35 High Street contains a two-bay hall of a Wealden house whose ridge is parallel to the street and whose north wall at ground floor level is some 3.8 m back from the present street frontage of The Pentice (Fig. 5). The building is undoubtedly of Wealden form, having an inner and outer, or flying, wall-plate, and thus would have been built with a jettied bay on at least one side and probably on both.<sup>23</sup> It has been dated by dendrochronology to 1340.<sup>24</sup> It is now fronted by a forebuilding whose gabled end oversails The Pentice walkway. It is argued below that this forebuilding was not built before the 15th century.

It is important to note that the Wealden form is not consistent with the coeval construction of an upper-storey forebuilding. Wealden halls, common throughout the south-east of England in the 15th century with scattered examples as far north as York, are characterised by a recessed hall flanked by storeyed bays. The whole is covered by a single roof structure, necessitating the use of a flying wall-plate across the central bay, creating an impressive frontage which was doubtless meant to be seen and admired. Its impressive frontage would have been quite pointless if originally planned as an internal partition within a two-storey building that extended to the present Pentice frontage (Fig. 5). Thus, a Pentice in the form in which it exists today could not have stood in front of number 35 in 1340. Indeed, given the strong probability that a Wealden would have jettied bays on either side

<sup>22</sup> Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 578.

<sup>23</sup> E. Lewis, E. Roberts and K. Roberts, *Medieval Hall Houses of the Winchester Area* (Winchester, 1988), 62-5.

<sup>24</sup> Miles and Haddon-Reece, *op. cit.* in note 5, 99. Number 35 High Street is thus earlier than any Wealden building currently known (David Martin, *pers. comm.*).

of the hall, it is most unlikely that, in 1340, there could have been two-storeyed forebuildings at number 34, where one is found today, or at 36.

It might, however, be possible to erect single-storey stalls in front of a Wealden without entirely obscuring the essential projection and recession of its façade. If these stalls were lean-to structures, they would more closely reflect the core meaning of the term 'pentice' than does the present Pentice. The term 'pentice' or 'pentis' was already applied to this area of Winchester by the 14th century although it is by no means certain that, at that time, it implied a colonnaded walkway beneath a first floor. It is at least as likely that medieval usage implied ground-floor lean-to walkways or covered stalls. Indeed, it has been claimed that the rare survivals of medieval pentices exhibit just this single-storey, lean-to form.<sup>25</sup>

The only 14th-century building in Winchester that has a colonnaded form is 42 High Street which, somewhat ironically, has always been considered to be outside The Pentice. It is a great three-storeyed tenement, that has also recently been sampled by dendrochronology and ascribed a felling date-range of 1316–52. This is considerably earlier than had previously been suggested. A change in the description in deeds suggestive of new building at 42 High Street between c. 1347 and c. 1380 is noted in the *Survey*. Taken together with the evidence of dendrochronology (1316–52), this documentary evidence may narrow the building date band to 1347–52.<sup>26</sup> In 1380, the building was called '*le Taverne de Paradys* together with shops and chambers built over it'. This suggests that the tavern was in the cellar or undercroft beneath. The cellar has two parts, both apparently medieval.<sup>27</sup>

The first floor of 42 High Street oversails a covered walkway that is approximately 2.2 m wide and is supported on what appear to be modern posts. None the less, on structural grounds, it would seem as if similar posts to support the upper storeys would have been required from the start, and a reference to posts in 1417 suggests that a walkway already existed in something like its present form.<sup>28</sup> Thus the discovery of one example of a 14th-century building with a colonnaded walkway in Winchester might seem to add weight to the thesis that The Pentice may have partly assumed its present colonnaded form by that time. However, 42

<sup>25</sup> Keene, op. cit. in note 3, 578; M. Barley, *Houses and History* (London, 1986), 82; S. Dixon-Smith, 'The image and reality of alms-giving in the great halls of Henry III', *J. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, CLII (1999), 79–96 at p. 86 and n. 99, where a 13th-century pentice at Winchester castle is proposed as a lean-to structure on the basis of the definition of the term 'pentice' in J. Fleming, H. Honour and N. Pevsner, *Penguin Dictionary of Architecture* (4th ed., London, 1991), 329. At King's Lynn, 14th-century structures of two storeys with an attic had ground floor shops 'with a pentice in front protecting an open front': J. Grenville, *Medieval Housing* (London, 1997), 179, quoting R. Taylor and H. Richmond, '28–32 King Street, King's Lynn', *Norfolk Archaeol.*, 40 (1988), 260–85, at p. 263.

<sup>26</sup> Tyers, op. cit. in note 5.

<sup>27</sup> Keene, op. cit. in note 3, 567–8.

<sup>28</sup> Keene, op. cit. in note 3, 568: 'In 1417 John Weele held the tenement with a stall and three posts called *Hevene* from John Balaham, junior' (Tarrage 1417 (18d)). A substantial E.-W. beam, of similar proportions to those successfully dated in the upper storey to 1316–52, surviving in the cellar was sampled for dendrochronology, but did not yield a date (Tyers, op. cit. in note 5). A recent survey of the cellars under 42 High Street established that they lie directly beneath the current 1316–52 structure, and appear therefore to be structures coeval with one another and with the first phase of the construction of that building. The front cellar of 42 High Street, presumably 'Paradys', is likely to have been created at the same time to underlie the 14th-century structure now on the site. Unfortunately this complex area is not well served by Ordnance Survey maps, which are inaccurate in their published drawings of St Lawrence's Church and of 42 High Street.

High Street was neither in that century, nor later, referred to as '*sub penticio*', nor is it even aligned with The Pentic row (Fig. 4).

The area known to have been called The Pentic in the 14th century, 30–40 High Street, does not appear to have had any cellars. Medieval cellars believed to be 14th-century are, however, found at 41 and at 42 High Street. At 41, the southerly and larger of the cellars, away from the High Street frontage and parallel to the north wall of St Lawrence's Church, is barrel-vaulted. To the north there is a series of five small cellars with a common entrance passage to the south of them.<sup>29</sup> Both cellars were accessed from pavement level probably beneath a west-facing pentic overhang at what is now the western end of The Pentic, at 41 High Street; and beneath the jettied projection of 42 High Street (Fig. 4).

In summary the 14th-century standing remains above ground in The Pentic area are restricted to the Wealden structure of 1340 at 35 High Street, set back under the forebuilding oversailing The Pentic today, and number 42, with its post-supported jetty. Number 35 apparently lies north of the site of the New Minster precinct wall (see above) which its southern wall may shadow. Both 42 and 35 High Street, the sole surviving timber-framed structures of the 14th century in The Pentic area, are on a larger scale than surviving 15th- or 16th-century buildings in The Pentic. Number 42 has a cellar with three storeys above and the hall of the Wealden at number 35 is some 7.8 m wide and 9.5 m high.<sup>30</sup>

At the other end of The Pentic, to the east in the 14th century, a 'great tenement', probably a stone house of the 12th or 13th century (apparently on the site of the former Saxon street, blocked by the erection of the palace kitchen after 1066) affected the appearance of the area. This property, known in 1338 as The Woolseid, was entered by a gate from High Street in the 14th century. The Woolseid plot, as the palace kitchen before it may have done, would appear to have projected in to High Street in the 14th century, and the line of that projection is ghosted by the buildings on that site (28–9 High Street) today. The Woolseid was ruinous in 1359 and was replaced c. 1370. The *Survey* proposes that at this rebuilding the High Street projection of these structures east of The Pentic turned southwards to give access to a pentic.<sup>31</sup> It may have done, and thus The Pentic

<sup>29</sup> Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 564, 568; Harris, *op. cit.* in note 4.

<sup>30</sup> Cf., for example, with the trusses at Bishop Wykeham's hall at East Meon of c. 1390, which measure 9.75 m (32 ft.): E. Roberts, 'William of Wykeham's house at East Meon, Hants', *Archaeol. J.*, 150 (1993), 456–81.

<sup>31</sup> Documentary evidence from the 14th century relates to the site of 29 High Street, adjacent to The Pentic to the east, and makes reference to a 'great house' on the site in the 13th century. This may have been a corner property, which made it conspicuous, given the proposed topography of Thomasgate, and may have incorporated remains of the palace kitchen within its structure. In 1338 this is referred to as The Woolseid. A dispute over eavesdrip in 1300 between the owners of the Woolseid and the adjacent property, the most easterly of the Pentic, suggests that the buildings were close together (Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 555). Perhaps, given the nature of the dispute their gables at least in part, ran at right angles to the street. Access from High Street to The Woolseid was gained in 1338 by a gate (Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 555) (Fig. 4). By 1359 the Woolseid was ruinous and the site had become a vacant plot c. 1370, after which a property was rebuilt there. The *Survey* suggests that the modern alignment of the High Street frontage, which now turns away south at that point (i.e. back from the line of the royal kitchen northern perimeter), allowing access to the covered walk of the Pentic, may date from this period of reconstruction (*ibid.*). Taken together with the evidence of the kitchen to the east, and the suggestion in the *Survey* that 26–9 High Street were all part of the site which contained The Woolseid, it seems more likely that in the 14th century 25–9 High Street projected into the street; 30–9 may have followed the line of the front of the Wealden at 35.

would have projected beyond the frontages of properties both to the east and the west, at pavement level, as it does today.

The sum of the evidence, including the line of the Wealden and the lack of access to any cellars from beneath a projection into the High Street at 41 High Street, suggests that any 14th-century pentice was partly or wholly a lean-to, in the traditional usage of the term 'pentice'. If there was a colonnaded pentice, later replaced, it cannot have existed at 35, nor — in all probability — at 34 or 36. East of The Pentice, as it is today, was a cluster of structures round the Butter Cross, where 14th-century cellars from both 41 and 42 High Street emerged. A penticed jetty survives today at 42 High Street, which would have provided shelter from the weather for an entrance to the cellar below. Cellars under 41 would have been entered from the west down steps now contained within the bounds of a 15th-/16th-century pentice between the High Street and the north door of St Lawrence's Church (see below). If these earlier cellar entrances provided direct access from the street and were protected from weather, then a 14th-century pentice of some form, perhaps mirrored in the surviving later structure, would have existed over them. The existence of such a 14th-century pentice seems plausible in view of the existence of the northern door of St Lawrence's Church, which would also have been protected by such a structure.

#### THE 15TH CENTURY (Fig. 6)

Documentary evidence, in the form of the Tarrage assessment of 1417, includes 41 High Street in The Pentice for the first time. Thus if there was a 14th-century pentice along the west side of 41 High Street, then this documentary evidence suggests that by 1417 a pentice structure now shadowed in the three bays which comprise the north front on to High Street of number 41, was also penticed as the use of the term suggests.<sup>32</sup> Thus by 1417 all the structures which form the modern Pentice are termed a pentice. As shown above 41 High Street differs from the rest of The Pentice in that it has cellars.

Two buildings in The Pentice have been ascribed precise 15th-century felling dates by dendrochronology. These are 33 and 34 High Street, whose timbers were felled in 1459–63.<sup>33</sup> These structures were previously believed to be later 16th century when 33–5 High Street was leased as a single tenement.<sup>34</sup> They are adjacent ranges built at right angles to the High Street so that their gabled fronts oversail the colonnaded walkway beneath. While the right-angled alignment suggests pressure on street frontage and thus, perhaps, prosperity, these are only two-storeyed buildings with no cellars beneath. They are thus relatively modest structures when compared with the great 14th-century tenement at 42 High Street and the large Wealden hall at number 35.

Typologically, 33 and 34 High Street can be related to other buildings in Hampshire dated by dendrochronology to the mid-15th century. They have

<sup>32</sup> Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 578.

<sup>33</sup> Miles and Haddon-Reece, *op. cit.* in note 5, 99.

<sup>34</sup> Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 561.

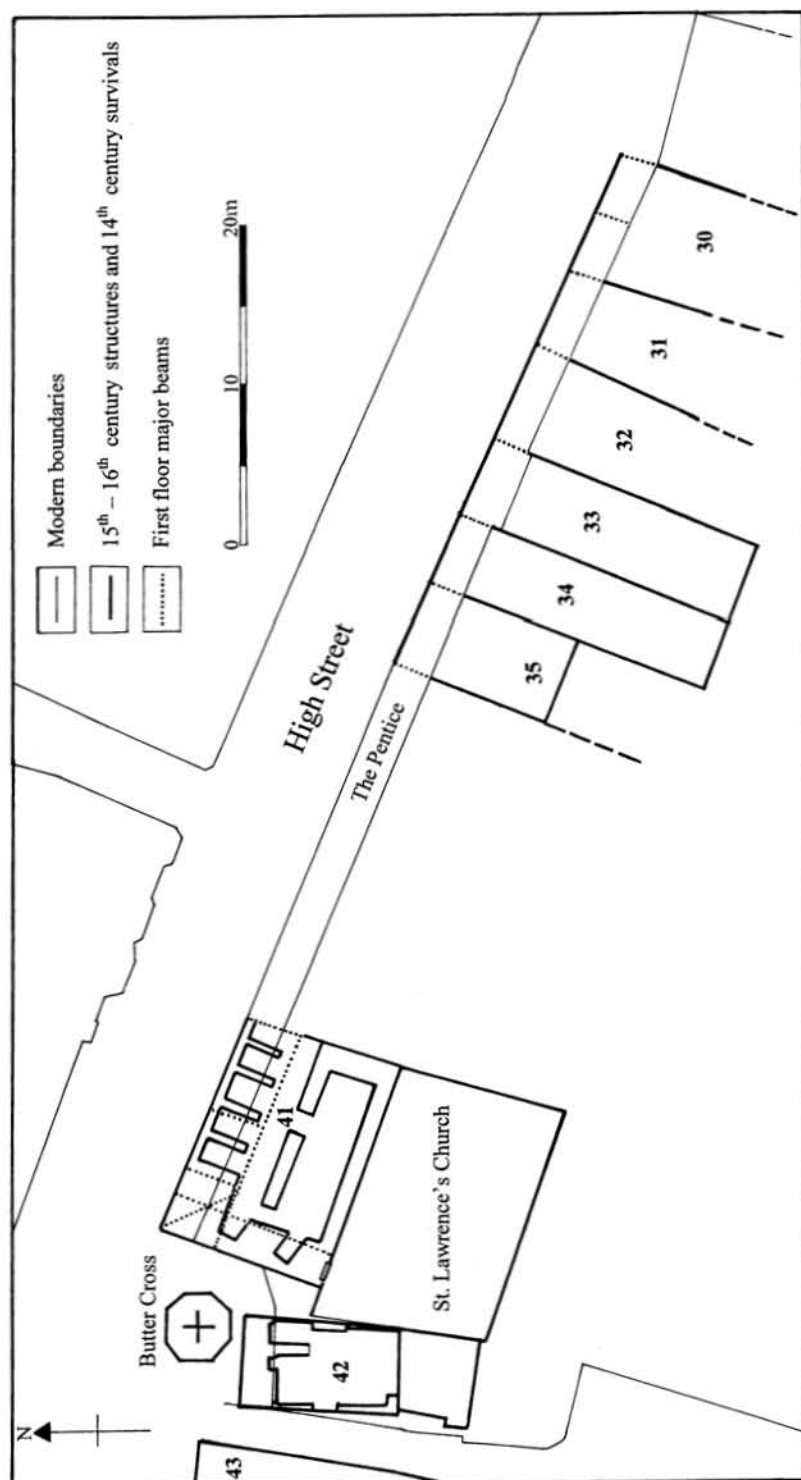


FIG. 6

The Pentice area c. 1450-1550. Known structures of that period and surviving earlier buildings are shown. Jetty joists of c. 1450-1550 type oversail the pavement at 30, 33, 34, 35 and at 41. Numbers 33 and 34 have been dated to 1459-63. Surviving mouldings at 41 are c. 1540; the frame of 43 is of 1507-8. *Drawn by Philip Marten.*

clapsed-purlin roofs with large, curved wind-braces and their jetty joists are plain-chamfered with a width significantly greater than their height (approximately 165 mm by 125 mm). The street front has curved tension, or foot-, braces which, in Hampshire, tend to be pre-1500 features.

West of this group is 35 High Street where there was already the Wealden built in 1340. Today a forebuilding attached to that Wealden takes the form of a gable that bears some resemblance to those of numbers 33-4. It has a clasped-purlin roof of a kind not found in Hampshire before 1400 and the same configuration of curved tension braces that suggest a mid-15th-century date. The Wealden behind, to which it is attached, and discrete side walls indicate that the forebuilding at 35 High Street is structurally separate from its neighbour 34, and its survival suggests that it was structurally separate from the medieval building, now replaced at 36 High Street. Thus, although it would seem, on typological grounds, to date to approximately the same period as 33 and 34, it may well not belong to the same building campaign.<sup>35</sup>

East of 33 and 34 High Street, is number 32, rebuilt in c. 1871. The architect who was reluctantly obliged to oversee the demolition of the earlier building on the site wrote that 'The old house pulled down corresponded with the gabled houses on either side of it'.<sup>36</sup> Numbers 31 and 30 have elements suggestive of 15th-century construction dates for the jettied buildings found there today. The street front of 31 High Street closely resembles numbers 33 and 34 (dated by dendrochronology to 1459-63). It has both a similar gable and closely similar, but not identical, bargeboards in the form of continuous trefoil heads in the Perpendicular Style. Number 31 retains, at first-floor level, a front chamber that oversails the street. It has clasped-purlin trusses and large, curved wind-braces strongly suggestive of a mid-15th-century date.

At 30 High Street, original jetty joists survive in an otherwise rebuilt structure. These joists, like those in the dated buildings at 33 and 34, are plain chamfered with run-out chamfer stops, and are of a width that is typical of the 15th century (approximately 160 mm), although too much weight cannot be placed on this sole piece of evidence. Finally, number 30 extends to two, structurally integral bays, suggesting a double gable on to the High Street.

<sup>35</sup> Although the forebuilding was reconstructed in c. 1967, the gable end on the High Street at 35 is plainly visible in photographs prior to that reconstruction. Further evidence of the process of reconstruction is helpfully provided on a plaque erected in the building at the time of reconstruction. This states 'The elevation to High Street was dismantled and restored to the pattern of its original design incorporating the original four large knees, the columns and their beam'. The structure today consists of a clasped-purlin roof with tension braces (the ?knee-pieces) in the High Street elevation. From 1458-9, John Coteler, tailor held two tenements in The Pentice, of which one was probably 34 High Street (Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 558). The other might have been 33 High Street, the mirror-image structure of 34. Lease evidence shows that at 33-5 High Street certain elements were combined in 1459 when 34 High Street was combined with 33 and 35 High Street. Thereafter, it appears that contrary to what might be predicted from the standing remains, 34 went with 35 (i.e. the two westerly tenements), and 33 was let separately: this perhaps indicates a connection which arose because the site of 34 was where the eastern wing of the Wealden formerly stood. Thus by 1481-2, when William Scherde, a successor to Coteler, held two adjacent tenements under the Pentice, they were probably 34 and 35 High Street. By the mid-16th century a situation was established whereby Robert Hodson could lease 34 and 35 on long leases, for example, a lease of 50 years being granted in 1546 (Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 559), an ownership pattern which lasted into the 20th century.

<sup>36</sup> W. Stopher, 'A History of Winchester's Streets' (unpubl. MS at Winchester City Museum).



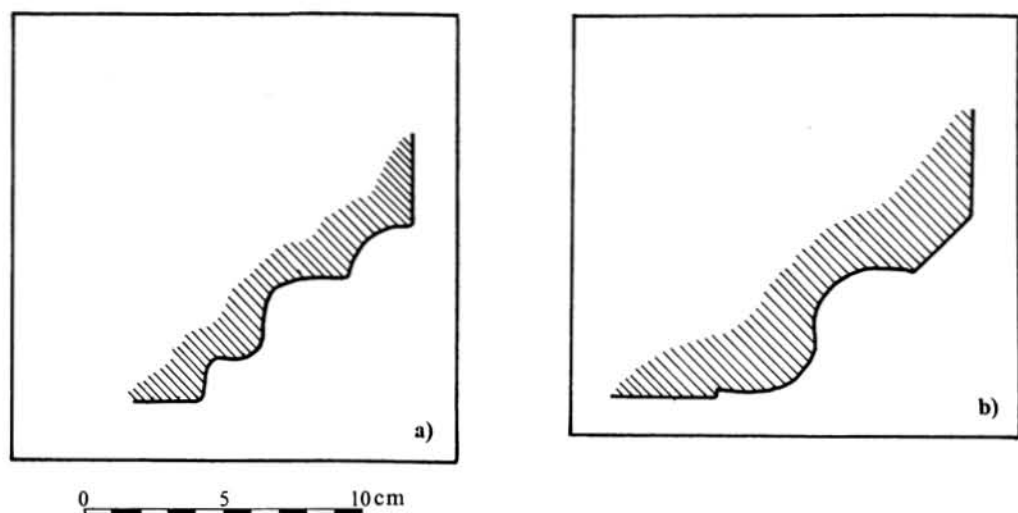


FIG. 7

Mouldings on the principal beams at 41 High Street. A date of 25 years on either side of 1540 is suggested on typological grounds for such shallow cavetto and cyma mouldings (David Martin, pers. comm.). *Drawn by Philip Marter.*

With the exception of 32, which has been rebuilt, 30–4 High Street all date stylistically to the 15th century. Most, if not all, of them were two-storey buildings gabled on to the street, the gable ends oversailing the walkway beneath. As such, they clearly form a distinct group. It is possible that they were all constructed within a limited period, and what evidence survives suggests that may well have been the mid-15th century.

East of 35, numbers 36–40 High Street have been rebuilt in modern times which leaves 41 High Street, at the western margin of The Pentice to be discussed. Today this building includes the westerly elements of the Pentice colonnaded walkway. Over substantial cellars the above-ground structures consist of three bays facing north, on the High Street, and two bays facing west towards the Butter Cross. The whole block at 41 High Street is structurally integrated, that is to say it is typologically coherent and, more importantly, is not separately framed. It has been rebuilt at first-floor level and above but the joists and bressummers provide important evidence for typological dating. The joists are narrower in width than in height (approximately 125 mm x 150). The bressummers and dragon beam have late-gothic moulding (Fig. 7). Typologically these features would suggest a date of 25 years on either side of the year 1540.<sup>37</sup>

In summary, by 1417 The Pentice included number 41. This is a structure with cellars, an element not found elsewhere in the row; whereas the cellars appear to date to the 14th century, the ground floor timbers suggest a date of 25 years either side of 1540. By c. 1550 The Pentice had largely, if not completely, assumed

<sup>37</sup> David Martin, pers. comm.

its present colonnaded form. Where evidence survives, it is clear that two-storeyed, gabled structures oversailed the walkway beneath.

Two gable-ended structures are dated to 1459–63, and others are typologically of 15th- or early 16th-century date. In the case of the forebuilding at number 35, there is a clear case of the creation of a colonnade during this period. Elsewhere, it remains uncertain whether the colonnaded form was a creation of the period or a replacement of earlier colonnaded structures which cannot, however, have been a complete colonnade before the addition of the forebuilding at 35 High Street in the mid-15th century. It is clear, however, that groups of buildings were erected in piecemeal fashion, although possibly within a limited period.

### CONCLUSIONS

The form of The Pentice area before 1300 is unknown. From the sites of 30–40 High Street, the earliest known extent of The Pentice, an area which encompassed part of the site of the royal palace, subsequently the Mint and The Drapery, we have one chance find, a 12th-century carved capital. Nearby are found the north wall of St Lawrence's Church with its pre-1200 doorway, and in adjacent buildings at 42 and 43 High Street, fragments of carved masonry of Romanesque type with ashlar, which are, however, most likely to come from demolished monastic buildings.<sup>38</sup> The argument that The Pentice had assumed its present colonnaded form by the early 13th century is based partly on the use of the term 'pentice' in the early 14th century, projected back into the late 13th century when the area was known as The Drapery.<sup>39</sup> It is also, in part, based on the thesis that the Drapery may have taken the form of a market hall. The weaknesses of both arguments have been noted above.

The 14th-century Wealden at 35 High Street demonstrates that a pentice in front of that property could not at first have been more than single-storey lean-to shops on the High Street frontage. Taking into account the essential structure of a Wealden house, it is highly likely that the same position obtained at numbers 34 and 36. There is no structural evidence for a colonnaded walkway in The Pentice at this date and, if one existed within structures now all entirely lost, it was certainly incomplete.

Although the evidence from numbers 32 and 36–40 has been destroyed, the remaining surviving structures date from the 15th and 16th centuries with the weight of evidence suggesting a mid-15th- to early 16th-century date. There are no grounds for believing that the arrangement of Wealden hall and 15th-century gabled forebuilding (Fig. 5) 'represents the structural layout of most of the properties in The Pentice in the later Middle Ages'.<sup>40</sup> The typological differences, while not great, do imply a piecemeal development during this period but complete construction during a short period cannot be ruled out, if the developers were different concerns using a mixture of more and less up-to-date styles.

<sup>38</sup> See note 16 for discussion.

<sup>39</sup> Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 578.

<sup>40</sup> Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 561.

Thus it is demonstrated that The Pentice assumed much of its present appearance in the second half of the 15th or the first quarter of the 16th century, although we do not know whether its colonnaded form is largely a replacement or a creation of that period. To what extent the 15th-century encroachments at The Pentice shadow encroachments of the 11th and 12th centuries, if such there were, cannot be established from standing remains above ground.

In a much wider study in 1994 it was argued that cellars beneath ground-floor shops (or split-level town properties) are indicators of pre-plague pressure of population and wealth. Number 42 bears out this thesis of pre-plague pressure not only in possessing a cellar, but also in having three further floors and its gable end to the street. But evidence from the standing remains at The Pentice proper is more equivocal. On the one hand the post-plague structures are only two storeys high, and, apart from 41 High Street, they all lack cellars. On the other hand surviving post-plague structures built c. 1450–1550 are built at right angles to the street. Moreover, the only surviving pre-plague structure, the Wealden at number 35, is built parallel to the street (Fig. 8), hardly suggestive of a pressure for street frontage in the period immediately preceding the Black Death.<sup>41</sup>

In spite of this equivocal evidence, population pressure is patently not a feature of Winchester's demography post-plague: the population fell from perhaps 11,625 in 1300, probably by 50% immediately after the plague of 1348–50, and had recovered only to fewer than 8,000 in 1417. According to the city government many streets in the city were deserted in c. 1450 (see below).<sup>42</sup> It is noteworthy that the two surviving 14th-century great houses at 35 and at 42 High Street both apparently immediately precede the Black Death of 1348–50. As no other such buildings are known, plague may therefore have interrupted a grand, if piecemeal, timber building programme in the centre of the city, as it appears to have done only 300 m away at the west end of the cathedral. Work on the cathedral was interrupted for a generation: on current evidence, building in the city centre was perhaps interrupted for three generations, and, as at the cathedral was taken up in a considerably less complex and expensive style.<sup>43</sup>

This paper has exemplified the potential of dendrochronology, at its current stage of development, for phasing a complex of timber-framed structures. However, despite success in dating 33, 34 and 35 High Street, results at 30, 31, 35 (forebuilding), and 41, from which a total of nine cores were taken produced no unequivocal match with known data. Thus all the suitable historic timbers at The Pentice have now been sampled, and with present techniques and knowledge it is doubtful that further dating evidence will be forthcoming in the near future.<sup>44</sup> However, it has proved possible to date a proportion of the historic structures.

This study contributes to the development of a regional chronology of building-types and to a national chronology. For example, the Wealden house in

<sup>41</sup> Harris, *op. cit.* in note 4. For the seminal articulation of the arguments about gable alignments to the street see W. A. Pantin, 'Some English medieval town houses', in E. M. Jope (ed.), *Studies in Building History* (London, 1961), 458; W. A. Pantin, 'Medieval English town-house plans', *Medieval Archaeol.*, 6–7 (1962–3), 202–39, at p. 202.

<sup>42</sup> For population figures see T. B. James, 'The population size of Winchester over 2,000 years: a survey', *Hampshire Field Club Archaeol. Soc. Sectional Newsletters*, (New Ser. 9, Spring 1988), 1–3; James, *op. cit.* in note 7, 122.

<sup>43</sup> T. B. James (ed.), *The Black Death in Wessex* (Salisbury, 1999), esp. 32–49.

<sup>44</sup> Tyers, *op. cit.* in note 5.

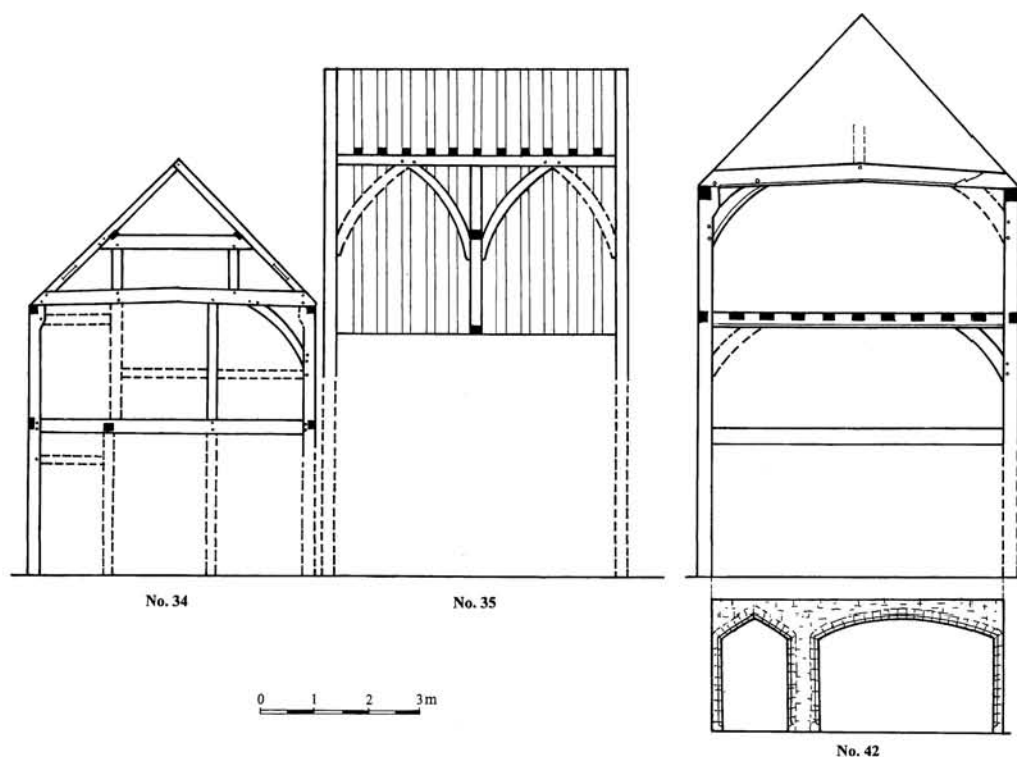


FIG. 8

Comparative scale of 14th- and 15th-century structures. From left to right (felling dates/date-ranges in brackets): number 34 (1459–63), 35 (1340), and 42 (1316–52). The sectional drawings indicate the greater scale of the 14th-century buildings. Number 35 was built parallel to the street. The roof of number 42 was completely rebuilt after 1660; the roofline is therefore merely indicative. *Drawn by Philip Marter.*

the Pentice dated to 1340 is earlier than similar structures in The Weald, from which this building type takes its name. The Pentice is clearly more recent than The Rows in Chester, currently dated to the 13th and 14th centuries. However, the standing structures in The Pentice are mostly older than was predicted by typological and documentary study in the 1980s. For example, 42 High Street dated to 1316–52 by dendrochronology is significantly earlier than implied by the dates of ‘before 1500 and possibly before 1400’ predicted in the *Survey*. On the other hand, at 43 High Street recent dendrochronological sampling provided a date for the building of 1507–8. This result concurs exactly with documentary evidence for the site which refers to ‘*le Newhouse*’ built between 1507 and 1511.<sup>45</sup> Rebuilding of 43 High Street is further evidence of the redevelopment of The Pentice area in the half-century following the work completed at 33 and 34 High Street in 1459–63. The survival of these structures today also provides powerful evidence of fossilisation on these prime sites in the centre of the city at post-1550, as Winchester sank into comparative obscurity.

<sup>45</sup> Brown et al., *op. cit.* in note 2, 1999, 55; Keene, *op. cit.* in note 3, 568, 595.

The city of Winchester's apparently depressed state was set down in c. 1450 in the petition to the government which refers to some ten streets almost depopulated, to almost a thousand empty houses, and to seventeen churches without incumbents.<sup>46</sup> However, development of these prime sites after 1450 might reflect some response to this cry for help or, perhaps more plausibly, a distinction between outer zones of the city and the centre, where in The Pentice area merchants used diminished resources post-plague to create a combination of retailing space below and storage above more cheaply than the expensive creation of cellars, pre-plague. To find such a large-scale development as that in the Winchester Pentice area occurring in the half-century or so following 1450, encourages further attempts to date buildings in key urban developments. By applying a variety of approaches, archaeology, dendrochronology and typology, and by examining socio-economic forces, it is possible to test documentary evidence set down by contemporary municipal authorities and in leases, and to shed light on the wider 'crisis in towns' debate.<sup>47</sup>

Thus it is seen that in Winchester, as in Chester, it was not a single factor, but a combination of local, national and even international factors which contributed to the development of timber-framed complexes. Factors included local topography and history: the New Minster, Palace, and Mint — nationally significant structures in Winchester, which gave way to the local Drapery, and to The Pentice a structure created for commercial reasons by local merchants. International influences are more difficult to argue for convincingly, but there is a ring of plausibility about the comparatively chaotic imitation in Chester of classical arcading in Constantinople.<sup>48</sup> Before Inigo Jones much English architecture contained half-understood elements of international architectural styles. At Winchester the change in style from grand timber houses and impressive stone architecture pre-1350, to less imposing and cheaper alternatives and alterations at both cathedral and commercial centre, may perhaps have been connected with an international disaster, the Black Death. The city was not to regain its pre-plague population figure until after 1840.

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<sup>46</sup> James, *op. cit.* in note 7, 78.

<sup>47</sup> For surveys of that debate see A. Dyer, *Decline and Growth in English Towns 1400–1640* (London, 1991); J. Barry, *The Tudor and Stuart Town 1530–1688* (Harlow, 1990), 5–7; R. Holt and G. Rosser, *The Medieval Town 1200–1540* (Harlow, 1990), 265–86.

<sup>48</sup> Brown et al., *op. cit.* in note 2, 61.

Street (Holland and Barrett) at 34 High Street (Tie Rack) at 35-9 High Street, Boots the Chemist plc; at 41a and 41 High Street Prudential Portfolio Managers (tenants Reeve the Baker and The Art Factory); at 42 High Street StevGro Inns (Granny Pasties); at 43 High Street The Church Commissioners (tenants McQueen Clothing). Dendrochronological sampling was done by Ian Tyers of Sheffield University Dendrochronological Laboratory, and by Daniel Miles of the Oxford Dendrochronological Laboratory. At Winchester City Council (Archaeology Office) Simon Thorpe provided and discussed data from the city's SMR; in the Planning Office Maureen Wilborne assisted with planning aspects. Philip Marter drew the figures, joined in fieldwork, discussed and contributed insights from his own experience. Karen Parker drew attention to two 16th-century probate inventories of properties in The Pentice. Jane Grenville and Dr Derek Keene kindly read drafts of the text and offered helpful comments from their own areas of expertise. The authors wish to express their thanks to Dr N. W. Alcock who helped to get the project off the ground and David Martin and Sarah Pearson who answered questions on mouldings and on Wealden houses.