

NHBG Newsletter



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Norfolk Historic Buildings Group



*Visit to The Pleasaunce, Overstrand in April with Veronica Sekules
(photo: M Brown)*

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CHAIR

A warm welcome to the sixth newsletter of the Norfolk Historic Buildings Group! It is a pleasure to share with members a number of pieces of good news. Firstly, the NHBG's bid to the Scole Committee for Archaeology in East Anglia for an equipment grant has been approved. This means that nearly £400 can now be invested in some high quality surveying equipment to assist the crucial work of our teams of building recorders. I am sure you will want to join me in thanking the Scole Committee for its generosity. The equipment will certainly be put to good use! Secondly, our bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a £5,000 dendrochronology grant (see page 13) has been submitted and we await the outcome. Many thanks to everyone who helped pull the bid together. As I write this, the Journal for the 2002 Conference has arrived on my desk ready for distribution.

I am delighted to report also that our Events Secretary, Rosemary Forrest, recently received an award from Dame Mary Peters for her work in helping to establish the NHBG as a new learning community. I am sure all NHBG members will want to join me in congratulating Rosemary and thanking her for her efforts on behalf of the Group. Your Chairman has also been elected as President of the Norfolk Archaeological & Historical Research Group (NAHRG) for 2003/4. If nothing else this should eliminate any uncertainty over who should give the vote of thanks at the next joint NAHRG/NHBG New Year 'bash'!

Those members who were unable to engage with the NHBG programme of events this summer will, I am sure, read the accounts of the various field trips and practical workshops with great interest. It has been a splendid summer in every sense! We also have another super winter programme of lectures to look forward to (see page 20) on subjects as diverse as dendrochronology, the architecture of Thomas Ivory and the development and conservation of Trinity College Cambridge! I look forward to meeting all of you over a glass of wine at one of the winter meetings. Best wishes.



Rosemary receiving her award (a piece of Langham glass) from Mary Peters and the Sponsor, the Learning & Skills Council

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Visit to Sedgeford —17th May 2003 by Robert Limmer

Fourteen members met Rik Hoggett on a blustery, showery day to see the changing face of Sedgeford during 1250 years. The parish lies in the Heacham River valley near the prehistoric Icknield Way and the Roman Peddars Way, and not far from the site of the Snettisham Treasure hoard, 'Sea Henge' and the landing place of King Edmund in AD 854.

The settlement seems to have begun on the south bank of the river in about 650 AD and some 200 burials have been discovered. However no church has, as yet, been found there. The river was subsequently dammed, probably for water mills (there were three) and it was later heightened and a causeway built over it, sometime after 1205.

This first, early, settlement moved up and down the south side of the river but finally moved across it to where the moated old West Hall and the present church stand on the north bank. The lat-



The tower and the west end of the church showing different stages of rebuilding

ter was described by Rik Hoggett in his lecture to the NHBG in October 2002 (*See the March Newsletter*). A stone-by-stone study of the building is taking place as well as documentary research, and it seems that the original small, round-towered church was largely rebuilt in the thirteenth century and enlarged in the fifteenth when, unusually, the aisles were extended to the west to encase the lower half of the tower.

East of the churchyard is an extensive range of farm buildings, originally part of the West Hall farm and now converted to living accommodation. North of these is an ex-public house, quite large and much modified, which SHARP hopes to examine more closely in the near future.

Our thanks to our guide, Rik Hoggett who is co-director of SHARP (the Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research project).

A Day in Poppyland

Arts & Crafts Architecture on The Norfolk Coast

24 April 2003 by Nicola Robinson

My idea of heaven! Well nearly. A day spent exploring arts and crafts buildings in Poppyland, which was the name coined by Clement Scott for the area around Cromer on the Norfolk coast. It was popularised by the coming of the railway in 1877, and its discovery by such prestigious families as the Locker Lampsons and Lord Battersea. It was at Lord Battersea's house, The Pleasaunce in Overstrand, that we met our guide for the day Veronica Sekules, and Mr Payne who was to show us around the building. Cyril Flower (later Lord Battersea) bought two small villas in 1888, and extended them over the next few years with the help of the young Edwin Lutyens. Architect and client had a stormy relationship, with Lutyens forced to work around the existing villas, and to appease the strong views of his clients. We were told the story of Lady Battersea throwing bricks from the balcony wall outside her bedroom until she considered it the correct height! The resulting building however is a pleasingly eclectic mix of arts & crafts vernacular reminiscent of Webb, with details which show us the genius of the young Lutyens. The main building is of red brick, with tile hanging, and a mixture of hipped roofs and gables giving a complex roofline. The fenestration is very varied including mullions, cross-casements, sashes and oriels in a typically arts & crafts manner. The influence of Voysey can be seen in the stable yard with its white painted clock tower and circular bakehouse with a conical roof. The main entrance to the house is off this yard and is framed by classical columns surmounted by a large coat of arms, and flanked by twin circular windows set into the brickwork. This is topped by a hipped roof, and set off by the geometric lines of bricks set into the stone step. It's the detail I love about Lutyen's work. We were privileged to see the interior of the house too. Here we admired the oak panelling in the dining room, the Moorish tiles leading to the kitchens, the classically inspired plaster ceilings, the stained glass above the staircase, and two beautiful De Morgan tiled fireplaces. The hard landscaping survives in the gardens. Here Lutyens built a magnificent covered walkway. The row of heavy buttresses surround circular arches and support a peg-tiled roof. The ends of the walk form into an open octagonal garden house

echoing the loggia attached to the corner of the main house itself. From the end of the walkway brick and stone is woven into circular designs and leads us down to the semi-circular steps of the sunken garden, where the geometrically designed paving survives.

Our next stop was the Methodist Chapel, again in Overstrand and built in 1898. Here Lutyens utilises simple



Fig 1 Methodist Chapel, Overstrand
(photo: Nicola Robinson)

functionality in the rectangular brick structure, with a recessed clerestory supported by brick piers and lead covered timbers to form buttresses. The clerestory has simple lunette windows and a pebble dashed exterior. The entrance to the chapel is an attractive stepped brick archway. Mr Hollows gave us a very interesting run down of the history of the chapel, but we didn't stay long. Our next stop was Overstrand Hall. This was built for Lord Hillingdon in 1899-1901, again by Lutyens, and exhibits the architect's mature style. The house is set around a central courtyard, it has a complex plan with the service wing set off to one side. The entrance front is very understated with a simple arched doorway beneath a long strip of windows, flanked on the right by a gable running into tall chimneystacks. Through the entrance passage, which is brick and timber in



Fig 2 Overstrand Hall, Overstrand
(photo: Nicola Robinson)

the vernacular style, we emerged in the Italianate courtyard. Here a three bay arcade on slender columns frames the main entrance, which is reached on either side by curved steps around the central fountain. The south front is more symmetrical with canted bays on either side, a half timbered first floor, and a central open loggia beneath. The garden front again has a pair of canted bays, with twin arches framing the open loggia, and mullioned windows above. Lutyens has mixed local vernacular materials such as flint, and timber framing, with brick and stone detailing to give a pleasing contrast of forms.

Our first stop of the afternoon was Kelling Hall, built for Sir Henri Deterding in 1912-13 and designed by Edward Maufe. The house is a late example of the Butterfly plan devised to maximise



Fig 3 Kelling Hall, Kelling
(Photo: Michael Brown)

the light, and heat, of the sun, and in this case the view! The house is built in the true arts and crafts manner with local knapped flint and plaintile roofs, the bricks were imported from Holland however. The arched brick entrance is topped by three gables, with the wings going off at 45 degree angles. Around the side are open loggias with tile piers, and the garden front is dominated by two central canted bay windows. We were shown around by Nicholas Deterding the owner's son, it was a privilege to see behind the closed doors of a house which is still cared for by the descendants of its builder. The interior is simple with classical detailing, and the double height oak panelled library has lovely views over the terraced gardens.

Our last stop was Voewood, probably better known as Home Place to many of you. Built in 1903-5 by E S Prior for

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the Rev Percy R Lloyd, the materials to build the house were excavated from the grounds. The house is constructed of concrete faced with flint and with carstone and tile detailing. The entrance is set in a full height canted bay, and flanked by tall spiral decorated chimneys. The ground floor windows are framed by bands of carstone, and topped by crosses of the same material. This theme is continued



Fig 4 Tea on the terrace at Voewood (formerly Home Place)
(Photo: Nicola Robinson)

on the garden front where carstone columns support the open loggias. The complex roofline of the garden front is highlighted by the gable ends of the wings, and the gables framing the central loggia. The formal sunken garden was designed by the architect. We were shown around by Alison Harvey who gave us all an insight into the complexities of restoring the house. It was a pleasure to see the building receiving the care and attention it deserves. The house is entered up some steps through an arched passage where you can see the shuttering marks on the concrete of the ceiling. It leads to the great hall, which is double height and dominated by a massive fireplace set with Delft tiles. The walls and floors are all of concrete and because of this the corners are all rounded. The interior is simple, with plain walls and ceilings and oak fittings.

Thanks to Veronica Sekules and all the owners.

More pictures of my day in Poppyland can be seen on the NHBG web site:

www.nhbg.fsnet.co.uk

A Day in Wymondham—14 June 2003



A Group outside the Wymondham Heritage Museum, formerly the Bridewell

Museum and Town by Peter Barber

Twenty four members of the NHBG met at the Wymondham Heritage Museum for coffee and registration. We then divided into two groups, one to go round the Museum building and town while the other was to be guided round the Abbey.

The tour round the Museum was led by Adrian Hoare, Chairman of the Museum Trust who outlined the history of the site, which started in the medieval period as a hall house and by 1619 a Bridewell (or House of Correction) had been established there. This had become very run down by 1782 when it attracted the attention of John Howard the prison reformer. As a result, the Bridewell was rebuilt in 1785 by Sir Thomas Beevor, to the latest standards. With subsequent additions this represents the building seen today which, redundant ten years ago, now houses the Museum, together with a series of community uses which thus ensure its survival. The exhibits in the Museum celebrate many aspects the history of Wymondham and the building.

We were then conducted in two smaller groups, led by John Wilson and Judy Hawkins, through some of the streets of the town, disrupting the Saturday shoppers, to look at many of the most interesting buildings. Judy Hawkins has



The suicide door (Photo: Peter Barber) been involved with much local research,

particularly on the seventeenth century, so she was able to point out many unusual details including a local feature, the aptly named “suicide door”. The significance of the Great Fire in 1615 was underlined and the estimated extent of its ravages were physically traced in buildings pre-dating that year and those built after it. We looked at well-known properties like the Market Cross and the Green Dragon in Church Street as well as more humble dwellings such as those along Damgate. References to the Kett family and their associations with individual sites and buildings were made throughout.

Back at the Bridewell we had our AGM followed by lunch in the Museum Café. We then changed guides for the other tour.

Our thanks to the Museum staff for making us so welcome and to all our guides.



Curiosity got the better of one member but why was she not looking at the moulded door frame?

Wymondham Abbey by Sue and Tony Wright

Our group strode purposefully through the town with Alayne Fenner to visit the Abbey. Alayne gave us a very interesting and informative talk about the history and architecture starting with a look at the outside of the building.

The Benedictine Priory was founded in 1107 by William D’Albini and was a daughter cell of St Alban’s Abbey until it became an independent Abbey in 1448. It occupied some 30 acres stretching down to the River Tiffey. The nave became the parish church for the town and

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recent archeological excavations have confirmed Blomefield's belief that the earlier Saxo-Norman church lay to the south of the Priory Church and was presumably demolished as the new buildings were erected.

The relationship between the monks and the parishioners was sometimes stormy and at one point the Pope intervened to allocate parts of the church to the parish, namely the Nave, north aisle and northwest tower. In the 14th Century the Norman central tower became unsafe and was replaced by a new tower erected,



The Norman nave with encased pier shafts



Alayne indicating the Wodewose, lions, angels and Evangelists' symbols on the 15th C font

Eventually the parish-ioners forced an entry into the tower and hung their own bells. In 1448 the parish built their new west tower which was considerably higher so that all the people in the town could hear the bells.

At the dissolution John Flowerdew was in charge of the demolition of the Abbey buildings and his high handed behaviour upset many parishioners including the Kett family. This played a part in the subsequent rebellion of 1549.

The Norman nave, 15th Century north aisle and central and west towers remain to this day but little of the Abbey buildings can be seen apart from a few fragments of masonry and the east window arch of the chapter house. The South aisle was rebuilt after the dissolution.

We admired the exterior of the Fifteenth Century north porch and then paused inside to see the beautifully carved bosses. Inside, the nave has a magnificent hammer beam roof with

carved angels holding shields. Most of the Norman piers have been encased so that the shafts are no longer visible. The arches have very varied ornamentation. A member thought that the stringcourse above the South triforium arches was at a higher level than the one on the left.

There is such a wealth of architectural features to examine but with limited time Alayne gave special attention to the Fifteenth Century terracotta sedilia, which allegedly incorporates a monument to the last Abbot. We gazed at the reredos designed by Sir Ninian Comper after the Great War. Some members greatly admired it but others thought it out of place with the Norman architecture. Moving on to the north aisle we saw the tryptich in the Lady Chapel, installed in 1992, and the graceful Georgian candelabrum. Finally Alayne described the beautiful 15th Century font.

It was a most enjoyable tour and we could have spent much longer at the Abbey.

3 bays to the west of the crossing, thus depriving the parish of part of the nave. The Prior further angered the parish by hanging the bells from the demolished central tower in the northwest tower. When they rehung their bells in the new tower they walled up the northwest tower.



Detail of boss on south side of the north aisle

Courses

Architectural History from
the Renaissance to the Present
Level 1

Course Director:
Vic Nierop-Reading

For more information contact
Centre of Continuing Education
UEA:
Tel: 01603 593226

e.mail: cont/ed@uea.ac.uk

WEA Day Schools at Wensum Loge, Norwich

(Contact: D E Mochnaty, Fruit Farm, Foxhole, Saxlingham Thorpe, NR15 1UG)
Sat 4 October 2003 A Gothic Century: English Churches c 1270-c1370—Gerald Randall
Sat 8 November 2003 Second City: Norwich in the Eighteenth Century—Charles Lewis

Visit to Cressing Temple—11 July 2003

by Janet Johnston



Fifteen members met at the Cressing Temple Preceptory site in Essex on one of the hottest days of the year. In the Visitor centre we were welcomed by Adrian Gibson, our guide for the visit. He arrived heavily laden with curious artefacts, to be explained and demonstrated later.

The outstanding features of the site are the two enormous barns, identical in shape. Their tiled roofs dominate the landscape and are the only remaining evidence of the Knights Templars' manor. As we walked across to the Barley Barn, Adrian pointed out in the grass the shadow/outline of the Templars' church and other buildings.

The Barley Barn inside was a temple indeed, we were overcome by its size and the beauty of its timbers. Adrian explained how the structure was formed, how it is thought that trees were grown specially for it and how the length of the sides is conditioned by the size of the timber available. We were able to look at the structure quite closely as the owners, Essex County Council, have built a viewing platform at one end, and from it we could see the numbers on the main beams and examine the joints in detail. Carbon dating, courtesy of some generous Americans, has proved the barn to date to around 1200 and the Wheat Barn to a little later, 1260.

Adrian explained the use of the two tools which formed part of his artifact collection, a flail and a side-axe. He explained the use of the side-axe and pointed out the particular marks made by the axe on one of the standing timbers. The second tool was a flail, the use of which he demonstrated in the midstay (threshing floor). He explained that the two entrances to the barn have small lower doors and larger ones above and when flailing the corn the lower doors would be closed to control the draught which separated the chaff from the grain.

In the equally magnificent Wheat Barn we had the system of laying out the position of the main structure explained

to us. It was mathematical, and relied on intersecting circles, a system known to have been used in building churches but not in barns. While the inner walls now have an infill of wattle and daub, there is evidence of a lining of wood. The tiled roofs of both barns had to be repaired after the gales of 1987 and it was during this that a number of early original tiles were found, complete with integral nibs.

A grand house built around 1600 had also existed on the site. Only its walled garden remains, the main buildings having been taken down in the early eighteenth century. Now it is laid out as a very attractive period garden. A brief visit was also made to the Granary, built around 1623, with a medieval tiled hearth of an earlier building within it.

I think that we all felt quite overawed at the end by the scale of the whole complex and the beauty and skill of the carpenters' work. I am conscious of not giving a true picture of it at all, it really has to be seen. Throughout our visit the barley Barn was being got ready for a wedding the following day; what would the Knights Templars have thought of that...

After the barns and in perfect picnic weather, we took our meal on the tables outside the bookshop-cum-restaurant



Adrian Gibson threatening to use a side-axe if we did not remember the differences between notched lapped joints and secret lapped joints

and then moved on to the joint meeting of the Essex and Norfolk groups held in the Granary. Sue and Michael brought us all up to date on our major project at New Buckenham, and Anne Padfield took us through the development of some Essex buildings with a superb set of slides.

At the end we thanked our host for a very enjoyable and informative day, vowed that we must do it again soon and hit the road for home.

One or two members were wondering about the particular use of Reigate Stone in the well at the Templars Site. Adrian Gibson kindly responded to this query as follows:

“Reigate Stone—

It was used for very detailed and refined carving in medieval times, particularly for internal work as it is soft. Examples in the showcases at the Chapter House at Westminster Abbey have been recovered from excavations.

The stone is not chalky at all although it occurs under chalk at Reigate but consists of masses of tiny spherules of silica with lots of voids inbetween them.

Normally when making a well lined with stone/brick blocks, the joints between the blocks allows the water to pass through into the shaft.

It has been noted by an American specialist that the blocks of stone at Cressing are remarkably closely fitted—allowing no free passage of water through. However, the stone itself—a mass of little round balls with space between them—is a wonderful natural filter and no gaps are necessary between the blocks.

The Templars were, of course, incredibly rich as an organisation and could afford the transport cost of shifting blocks all the way from Reigate—a couple of years ago I visited, with a party of geologists, the mines that still exist under the M.25...”

Visit to East Barsham Manor and The Old Rectory, Great Snoring

4th June 2003 by Sue Hedge



Fig 1 East Barsham Gatehouse (Photo: Ian Hinton)

This was a rare opportunity for twenty NHBG members to view these two examples of early Tudor brickwork, guided by Adam Longcroft. We began at East Barsham Manor, where Sir John Guinness gave us an introductory talk outlining the history of the house and its colourful occupants. It was built c.1520 for Sir Henry Fermor, with the gatehouse probably following on a few years later. By all accounts, the Fermors were a ruthless and unpleasant lot, riding roughshod over local tenurial rights with their vast flock of 16,000 sheep. Not even an appearance before Star Chamber seems to have halted their aggressive aggrandisement. In the seventeenth century, the Manor was bought by the Calthorpe family. Its decline began when it became part of the Astley family's estates the following century. Preferring to live at Melton Constable Hall, the Astleys let East Barsham as a farm. By the time John Sell Cotman came to paint the house, the part to the west of the porch was in ruins; only the façade and the chimney wall of the Great Hall were still standing. In 1915, D.J. Coleman bought the Manor and began its restoration. Further work was carried out between 1935 and 1938 by the 'Count Hapsburg Lothringen' – locally known as the 'Perhapsburg' – before his bankruptcy! Subsequent occupants have included a Canadian who owned mon-keys and a music mogul whose clients included the Bee Gees. With such a chequered history we are fortunate that East Barsham has survived and is so well cared for.

We divided into two groups, which alternately toured the interior with Sir John and looked at the exterior with Adam. Inside, we were shown round the remodelled range to the west of the

porch and then we tried to interpret the eastern range, with its complex history of changes. There were many discussions in our group about beams and mouldings – and a "diminished haunch socket" was greeted with glee. (I hope I've got the terminology right, being an ignorant newcomer to such matters!) A particular enigma is a fourteenth- or fifteenth-century window in what is now an internal

wall, which raises the question of whether this was a survival from an earlier courtyard layout of buildings. The tour of the exterior posed further questions. The doorway of the porch appears earlier than the c.1520 date assigned to the Manor, yet the porch presumably post-dates the range behind as a blocked window runs behind its projecting wall. Was the doorway a re-used fragment of an earlier building here, or brought from elsewhere? The differences in brickwork between the east and west building ranges suggest they may belong to different building phases. We puzzled over these enigmas whilst enjoying the fairy-tale chimneys (original) and finials (mostly re-built) and the frieze of terracotta panels with its repeated motifs of a male and female head, a lion rampant, a Tudor rose and armorial shields.

After an excellent lunch at the conveniently neighbouring pub we drove on to Great Snoring. By this time it was pouring with rain but, luckily, the wonderfully hospitable Old Rectory, run as a country house hotel, provided a copious supply of umbrellas to shelter us whilst we looked around the outside. Adam put forward his case for the house belonging to the closing years of the fifteenth century rather than to the 1520s, where it has usually been placed. His argument that it was more likely to have been built by Sir Ralph Shelton than by his son John is persuasive. If this is the case, it would mean that the moulded terracotta panels,

which have parallels with those at East Barsham – although stylistically different – and with the terracotta tomb chests of East Anglia, all from the 1520s-30s, must have been added later. Only part of the original building remains but the most remarkable feature of the original plan was its polygonal form. The foundations of earlier wings now lie under the garden. Whilst in the garden, a visit to the barn provided welcome shelter from the rain as well as a lively discussion about its double queen post roof (or should I call it a raised aisle hall?) Its apparent date of c.1500 would tie in with Adam's dating of the house.

Finally, we retreated into the house for a very welcome cup of tea.

Very many thanks to all involved in organising such an enjoyable and fascinating day, to Adam whose expert guidance helped to make the day so interesting – and whose hand-outs made the job of writing this so much easier, and to Sir John and Lady Val Guinness and Rosamund and William Scoles for welcoming us into their homes. Members of NHBG have been invited to research and record both houses, which is a wonderful opportunity to study these buildings.



Fig 2 George Fenner, rain, and a straight joint at Great Snoring (Photo: Ian Hinton)

Visit to the Great Hospital—28 June 2003

by Mary Ash

We met Carole Rawcliffe, who is a specialist in medieval hospitals, in the forecourt of the Great Hospital and she began with a brief potted history of this extraordinary place, which is unique in England for the preservation of both its buildings and its archive.

Bishop Walter Suffield began building opposite the cathedral in the 1240s. The precinct stretched over ten acres to Cow Tower and the river, for a hospital, like a monastery needed land. It was a self-sufficient community of the order of St. Augustine, with its own farm, brewhouse, slaughterhouse, orchards and gardens. Only the sick male poor were eligible for admittance. Richer travellers could stay at the hospital, giving alms to the poor as a way of shortening their stay in Purgatory.

By the later medieval period, the great bell tower of 1390 (later called a Horn of Christ by the Lollards) stood to the west of an aisled infirmary hall. This contained thirty beds, two patients to a bed, and there were four nurses, all widows over fifty. (This sinless environment allowed no thoughts of sex.) The parish church of St. Helen, which stood across the road in the cathedral close, was demolished in the 1270s and incorporated into the new building, with an aisled nave and chancel to the east of the infirmary hall. Two or three masses were said every day as well as the observation of the seven canonical hours. The roodscreen and a grille separated the patients from the ritual, but the constant presence of the clergy ensured that their souls were cured, and the healthy diet of bread, pottage, cheese, eggs and herrings helped cure their bodies.

The fifteenth-century chantry chapel has a magnificent lierne vault with coloured bosses like those in the cathedral, and there are lovely carved bench ends – one of St. Margaret with the initials HEC, for John Hecker, Master from 1519-32. There are also some fine box pews, including the family pew of William Ivory, inscribed with his name and that of his wife and dated 1780.

To the north of the infirmary are charming small-scale cloisters. These were reconstructed by Bishop Lyhart in the 1450s, and are simple and intimate compared with those of the cathedral across the way. Off the west range is the refectory, with its beautiful dragon span-



Images of details in the Great Hospital: 16th Century door frame, St Margaret pew end, a Hapsburg black eagle, face in first floor ward, east window, Dragon spandrel in the Refectory (Photos: Anna Kettle, Rosemary and Robin Forrest)

drels in the arch braces, and its minstrels' gallery, indicating the comfortable lives enjoyed by the order as they grew laxer. To the north was the chaplains' dormitory, and the entrance to the chapter house, the management centre, was in the east walk.

The warrior-bishop Henry Despenser was responsible for the fourteenth-century rebuild; he had very grand ideas about his hospital, and an enormous new chancel was constructed with great perpendicular stained glass windows. The new building work was sponsored by Richard II and his wife Anne of Bohemia after a visit to Norwich. Probably in consequence of this, her arms, the Hapsburg black eagle, decorate each of the 252 ceiling panels of the chancel. The panels were stencilled while on the ground and each one had a Roman numeral on the back to aid assembly in the roof.

A new gilded roodscreen was provided by the citizens of Norwich, together with a swan pit, which was dug near the river for fattening swans for the table. The accounts and the archive for all this were stored in a room over the porch and thus saved from the destruction following the Reformation.

Many books and manuscripts were destroyed in those great religious upheavals, as well as the stained glass windows. Fire later swept through the south aisle in 1549 as Kett's men attacked Norwich. The Great Hospital became a poorhouse, divided into separate premises for men and women. The church was cut off by two walls, with women housed in the chancel and men in the west end of the old infirmary. Mullioned windows were inserted in the west end, and a chimney built inside the great chancel east window, an act of vandalism still clearly visible. The hospital became part of the Norwich community, with the Master a socialite host, holding grand feasts to entertain the great and the good.

In the nineteenth century, wooden partitions were erected in the first floor wards so the inmates had some privacy. The charming museum shows the women's rooms as they were in the 1930s with tables laid for tea, and an individual food safe for each resident.

The residents of the Great Hospital no longer occupy these ancient wards; elderly people are now housed in later buildings on the site. The church, however is still very active, and other parts of the buildings are used for various purposes from examination rooms to reception halls.

Visit to Thetford —3 July 2003

Ancient House Museum by Ann Taylor



The Ancient House, Thetford

Stephen Heywood, our leader, introduced us to the curator, Oliver Bone, who explained that the earliest part of this impressive early sixteenth-century building was the street frontage block so, umbrellas aloft, we crossed to the opposite pavement of the remarkably quiet street. The façade was closely studded with a deep jetty and carved bressumer. The front door had its original large and unusual canopy and to the left of it a smaller, arched, blocked doorway once led into the (work)shop. The building once continued to the south as the museum cellar runs under the Victorian house next door. The ground plan of the house was the traditional Hall and cross passage with in this case one Buttery/Pantry behind the shop, with the kitchen probably at the back in the yard. We entered the cross passage into the Hall which had elaborately moulded beams and was lofty enough for our tallest member to stand upright with room to spare. The lintel of the large fireplace was mostly renewed, but a piece of its rich original carving was preserved in the centre. Above this were two recessed brick panels with many suggestions as to their original purpose, possibly pargeting? Stephen pointed out the original arrangement of the large window lighting the high table, which could be reconstructed from the position of slots in the studwork. Upstairs was more ornate timberwork, and high ceilings; the whole building indicated the great wealth of the owner.

Many thanks to Oliver for his help both before and during the day. We hope that his Lottery Application is a winner.

The Grammar School by Ann Taylor

This was an ancient site, originally the Saxo-Norman cathedral for fifteen years before the seat of the diocese transferred to Norwich in 1094. The Black Friars arrived in the thirteenth century and took over the site – ruined walls of their church survive in the garden, and a great crossing arch in the school library. The exterior of the library looked early nineteenth century, but it took our eyes some time to pick out the brick jambs of Tudor windows alongside the later, inserted, frames. In two of the gables were bas-relief plaques edged with interlace. Saxon or thirteenth-



century? Our thanks to Phil McGann the Bursar for showing us round.

Bell Hotel by Ann Taylor

A piquant aperitif before lunch: Alan Judd the manager led us upstairs to see some unusual Tudor floral wall paintings in some of the bedrooms. The hotel is basically timber framed (with many additions) and has an extensive range of cellars where there was much discussion about the origin of the re-used beams, the fireplace and the different floor levels.



Abbey Farm Barns and Thetford Cluniac Priory by Sue and Tony Wright

The Barns

After lunch at the Bell Hotel we walked with Stephen Heywood to Abbey Farm Barns with light rain continuing to fall. The owner unlocked the entrance and we entered a large overgrown courtyard

which was used as a farmyard after the Dissolution and more recently as an industrial depot.

We visited two barns on the south side of the yard and started in the western one. In order to see the roof and general construction of the building we climbed a ladder in semi-darkness to the precarious floor above. The building is of eight bays, the four eastern ones being an addition to original structure using recycled timbers.



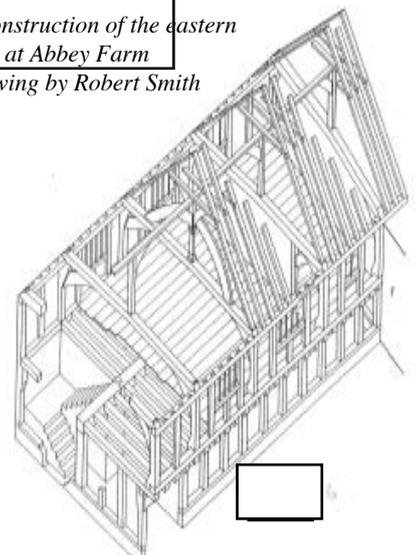
The eastern barn is the one without stacks. See diagram below

The western part was probably constructed between 1415 and 1439 and had a status far from its later use as a store and workshop. Much of the structure still survives although somewhat obscured by later masonry. There is clear evidence of the missing structures and the principal rooms are at first floor level. The building was originally jettied at first floor level, facing south to the Priory. There are four bays with the one at the west being narrow and probably containing the staircase. The eastern end was built askew, perhaps to accommodate an existing building or roadway.

The main feature of the hall is the splendid crown post with a carved capital and base, and a square section post. This has 4-way bracing to the timbers above

Continued on page 10

*Reconstruction of the eastern barn at Abbey Farm
Drawing by Robert Smith*



Continued from page 9

and two large arched braces springing from the tie beam. Lighting came from mullioned windows with shutters. The shutter rebates and parts of the battens survive. The walls were of wattle and daub but the studs on the north side are hollowed out to take brick noggin, suggesting that the north side had become the principal façade of the building, probably towards the end of the 16th Century.

Stephen thinks that this building could have been used as a manorial court but Pevsner mentions that it might have been a Consistory Court.

The east barn had been converted to a farmhouse but was built between 1405 and 1430 as an aisled barn. Again we had to climb a ladder, from the first floor of the house into the roof space with only four people at a time being able to use the safe floor area. Stephen

pointed out the queen post construction and the unusual paired wall or arcade plates. There are arched braces from queen posts to collars and purlins and some horizontal ones from tie beams to the plates. Stephen noted that part



of the ridge piece, triangular in cross-section, was probably original. Not only are the barns a splendid survival from the monastic era but they have been more or less constantly in use for nearly 600 years

We much appreciated the present owners' co-operation in allowing us to scramble over their property.

(Ref. S.Heywood/R Smith, NARG Annual 1992)

The Priory Ruins

Stephen then led us into the grounds of the Victorian Abbey House from where we were able to see the 14th Century Gatehouse. He was dismissive of the Gatehouse as it had been heavily restored. Built in the 14th Century, it is three storeys high with octagonal turrets. The ground floor has a single segmental arch, with ovolo mouldings, in the north and south walls.

Roger Bigod founded the Priory in 1104 and the Cluniac monks first occupied the site of the former cathedral on the south side of the Little Ouse, while construction of the new Priory began. The monks moved across the river to their

new site in 1114. Although the remains are extensive there is little more than low mounds of flint rubble apart from the tall southeast pier of the former chancel apse. A few remaining pieces of limestone ashlar can be seen.

We started in the nave of the church, which is very ruinous. Looking at the fragments of the bases of the piers. Each pair of piers had a different pattern. The Norman Quire was of four bays, ending in an apse, as did each of the side aisles. Further apses were constructed on the eastern walls of the transepts creating an aisle echelon formation. The plan is that of the 10th Century Abbey of the Order at Cluny in France.

Early in the 13th Century the apse on the north quire aisle was demolished and a rectangular Lady Chapel built. The Presbytery was extended to a square east end matching the Lady Chapel. The south aisle apse was also replaced with a square end at the same time. All the apses would originally have had stone semidomes.

The Sacristy was originally apsed and later extended. The Chapter House apse was also replaced. Stephen mentioned a Slype or passage at the side of the Sacristy but in the plan of the Priory the Slype is south of the Chapter House and leads to the Infirmary.

The Cloisters were built in the usual position to the south of the Nave. The walls of the Garth survive on three sides but are a 15th Century reconstruction. We looked briefly at the east range, south of the Chapter House, that would have contained the monks' Dormitory above with the Reredorter at the far end beside the stream. We also looked at the Frater or Refectory, its walls still standing. This occupied the south range and Stephen pointed out the reader's Pulpit, as well as the low platform around the walls on which the tables would have stood. The west range consisted of the kitchen, buttery, cellar and other services.

The Prior's lodging to the west of the nave is now an isolated building which has had various additions over the centuries and was probably used as a farmhouse after the Dissolution.

This ended a most enjoyable afternoon



and Stephen hurried off to fulfil family commitments while we returned through 20th Century Thetford to our cars.

Stephen Heywood's guidance was much appreciated by all.

St. George's Nunnery by Alayne Fenner

Idyllically situated in gardens by the river, the remains of the nunnery are elegantly encased by the modern HQ of the British Trust for Ornithology. The great church, 140 feet long, was built and rebuilt between the late twelfth and fifteenth centuries. Now a shell, it houses the Library, with an office in the south transept behind a spectacular Norman pier. An arch of the chapter house survives, filled in with clunch, in another office beside the rebuilt little 'cloister' garden. According to Blomefield, "...at the Dissolution this monastery did not suffer so much as the Generality often did. The church was a large one and ... (was) turned into Lodgings and other convenient rooms. The Long Gallery was a fine Room of a great Length extending thro' the whole Building, ... the west window surveyed the fields and the East their pleasant Grove, Fishponds and River. It had 2 or 3 Chimneys on the South side, ... but this was spoiled by the small Lodging Rooms that were made the whole length of it..."

Part of the south range contains a house apparently built in 1740, but it contains seventeenth-century panelling and has a charming doorcase of c.1600. In the garden is a large roofless fourteenth/fifteenth-century infirmary, again containing much clunch.

We saw a lot of this material during the day, surprisingly in outside walls. It is soft chalk (a fingernail shifts it) and is used for delicate lacy carving (Ely Lady Chapel) Does anyone have special knowledge of this interesting material? An aperitif perhaps?

Our grateful thanks to our guide Derek Toomer.

The Chapter House at St George's Nunnery now (photo: R Forrest) and when it was used as a brewhouse (Rev Wilkinson 1822)



A Mayoral Residence of the mid-Eighteenth Century by Rosemary Forrest

This residence is a mid-eighteenth century three storey, red-brick building in one of the northern suburbs of the city of Norwich. The house is now three dwellings and it is the central portion to which this report relates. Research work by a previous owner indicated that the house was built and owned by Robert Rogers, a textile/wool merchant who became a Freeman of Norwich, then Sheriff in 1743, and Mayor in 1758(1). It is thought to have been at this latter time that the building was begun. The mid-eighteenth century, particularly the period 1743 to 1763, was regarded as the golden age of Norwich textile manufacture and this building must represent a display of that wealth(2).

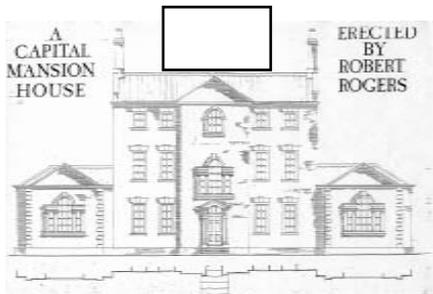


Fig 1 Sketch of the west or garden elevation c.1758 by John M Scott

The property has a central block of five bays with, originally, two single storey pavilions, now much altered (Fig. 1). It is double pile with shaped gables. The brickwork is of a high quality Flemish bond, lime mortar with penny pointing. The east and west elevations have central, pedimented doors, but it is the fenestration which gives rise to questioning: the west is eight-light Gothic-style with a Venetian staircase window (Pl. 1); the east, twelve-pane sashes with wide glazing bar (Pl.2). Were these windows of



Plate 1 Venetian/Gothic garden window

Plate 2 Twelve pane sash front window

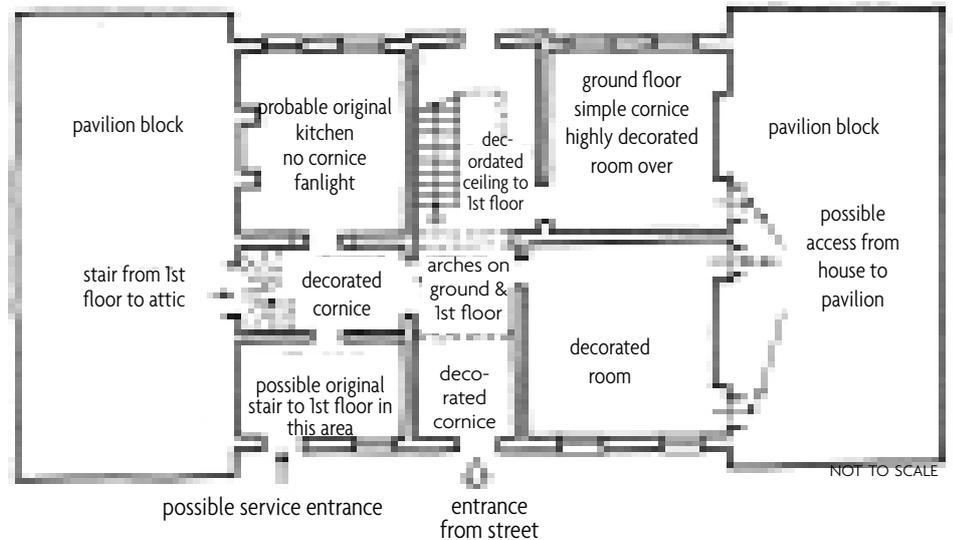


Fig 2 Sketch plan by Vic Nierop-Reading

the same build? Could this have been the face of sobriety to the public world and a more flamboyant one to the private, as in the use of Venetian windows on the garden elevation of No 28 St Giles Street, Norwich.

The floor plan (Fig. 2) indicates four principal rooms on each floor, open-well staircase with half landing, and pavilions (now separate dwellings). The pavilions were probably used for assemblies and domestic services. To maintain Palladian proportions, service rooms were

one room has a plain ceiling, but rich cornice, moulded panels, and overmantel (Pl. 5). A deep concave moulding with a central foliate arabesque motif, flanked by a diaper pattern of 4-petalled flowers and a plain moulding immediately above and a narrower band with a foliate motif



Plate 3 Ramped staircase, with twisted balusters and landing below Venetian window

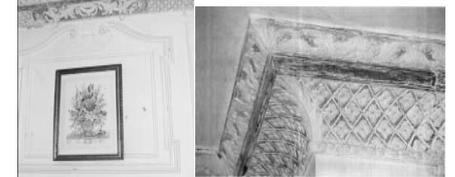


Plate 4 Staircase ceiling

Plate 5 Minor upstairs cornice

Plate 6 Upstairs room with rich cornice, moulded panels, and overmantel (Photo: Andrea Kirkham)

Plate 7 Same room, deep concave moulding with a central foliate arabesque motif, flanked by a diaper pattern of 4-petalled flowers (Photo: Andrea Kirkham)

contrived behind a classically designed facade. Once inside the building its true glories are revealed.

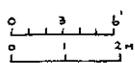
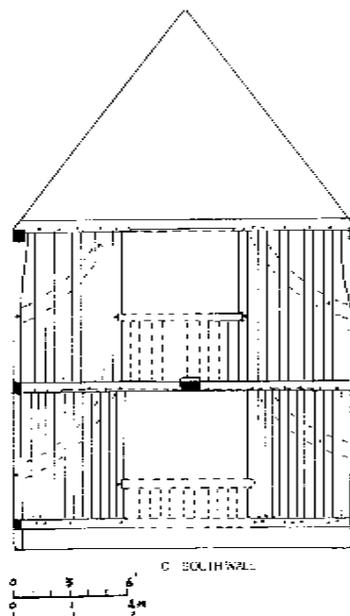
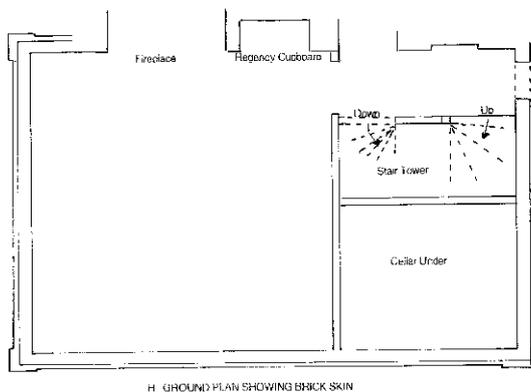
Of the original internal features still extant it is the principal staircase (Pl. 3) and plasterwork which catch the eye (Pl. 4). The staircase ceiling is high quality Rococo-style work consisting of elaborate groups of foliate and floral motifs linked by a continuous narrow moulding, and with a similar central foliate motif. The cornice is equally ornate. Upstairs

at the top (Pl.7). At the bottom edge is a gilded 'running' leaf moulding. Green paint forms the background colour to the motifs and on the plain mouldings (Pl 7). These were expensive materials(3). This extravagant work was completed by an

Continued on page 15

A South Norfolk Farmhouse

An NHBG Group measuring project
 All figures relate to the parlour crosswing
 All elevations are internal



SCALE: 1/48 (5/16" = 1'-0")
 ALL DRAWINGS FORWARDED BY SUSAN J. BROWN
 FROM SECTION SURVEY BY THE
 SURVEY JANUARY 2005

Description:

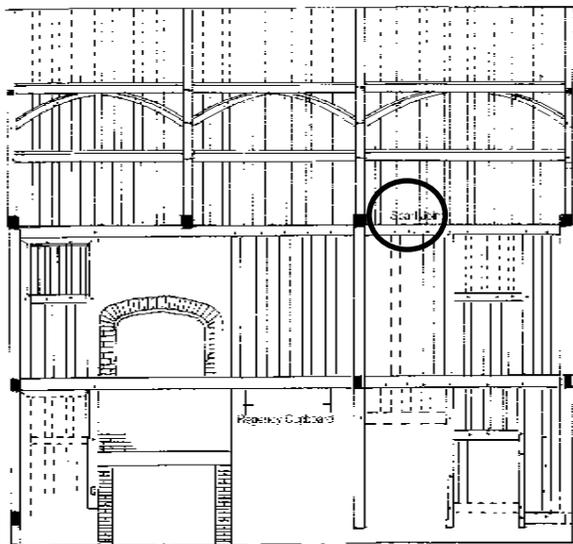
This south facing farmhouse is clad in brick and has large round-headed sash windows. Inside it retains the plan of a tripartite hall house but only the east cross-wing is timber-framed. The chimney in the hall position seems to relate to an earlier building than the present one (Fig H).

This cross-wing has very close studding (Figs B & C);

evidence of external trenched bracing (from the position of the pegs this is most probably inverted arch (swag) bracing). The girts are chamfered with stops about the principal joist as well as the ends. There is a mixture of glazed and unglazed windows, some with ovolo and chamfer mouldings. These windows have shutter grooves or shutter rebates or neither. Some of the windows are partly framed with lintels below the wallplate or girt, others have the mullions into the principal frame (Fig D). The chimney is built outside the frame, but is separate from the chimney that remains in the former hall and adjoins the cross-wing (Fig H). To the north of the chimney is a Regency cupboard. The original and present doorway from the hall is to the north of this cupboard. Next to the doorway is an opening that has a lintel (lower than a doorhead) and a sill (higher than the ground floor sill) and has a deep chamfer on what was probably the outside of the building. It does not conform to any of the other windows in the building and there may have been a window above it. Is this a serving hatch from the kitchen (services) end so that food for the parlour was not carried through the hall (Fig D)?

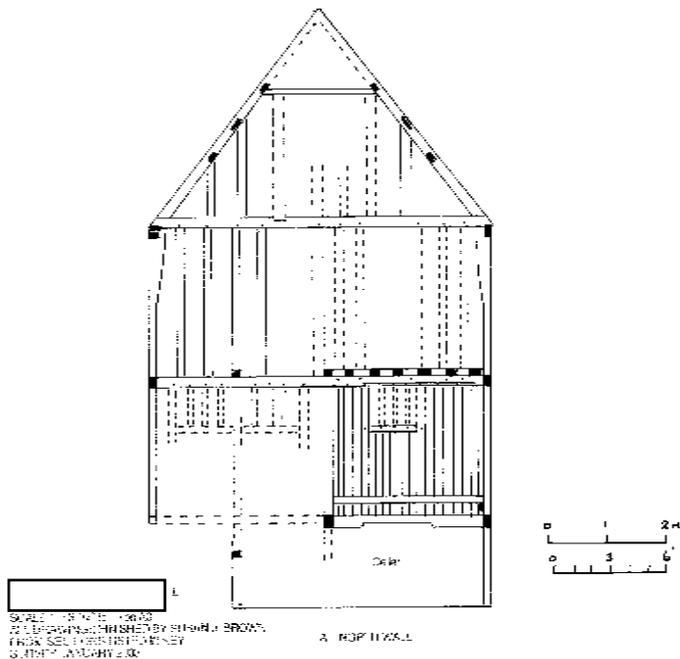
There is a housed mortice with an angled peg in the post next to the large ground floor east window (Fig B). It has been suggested that this may be for attaching a loom. Next to the fireplace there is a similar mortice with a straight peg which may have been for a settle or screen. One of the surviving fireplace jambs in the hall has a rebate and mortice for the end of a settle.

The cross-wing is three storeys high as it includes a fully useable attic floor, all floors being served by an original stair



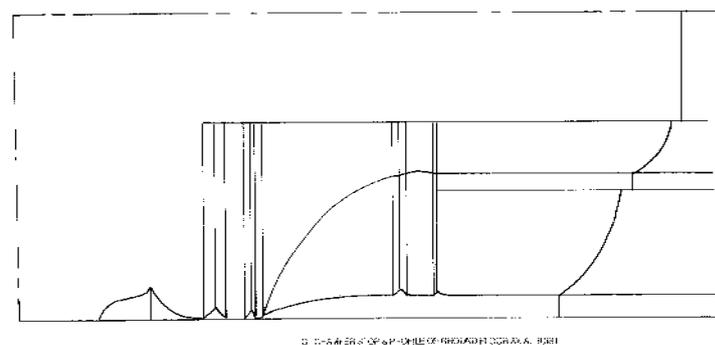
SCALE: 1/48 (5/16" = 1'-0")
 ALL DRAWINGS FORWARDED BY SUSAN J. BROWN
 FROM SECTION SURVEY BY THE
 SURVEY JANUARY 2005

Continued on page 13



visible to this joist. The small room behind only has common joists. The studs of this room continue below floor level to meet the common ground or sill, which is deeper in the cellar. There is evidence of a comparatively shallow range of windows to light the stair (Fig A).

At first floor level there is an intermediate tie-beam not connected to any post (Figs B & D). The principal tiebeam



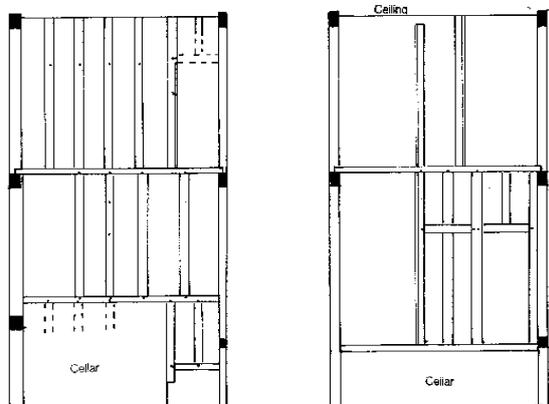
(Figs A, E & F). The internal form of the cross-wing is affected by the insertion of the stair tower within the plan. (See Cecil A. Hewett 'English Historic Carpentry' p 221-223, figs. 201-202, Doe's Farmhouse, Toothill, Essex, for a similar tower but outside the plan.) The positioning of the start of the stair means that the ground floor room can only be accessed after some height has been gained. This forms a void below the room and the stair which is now a cellar. This brick cellar seems to be an original feature. This stair tower arrangement is an example of problems faced by builders of vernacular houses attempting to incorporate novel features.

In the ground floor we can see an elaborate axial principal joist that finished at the partition (Fig G). No common joists are

(with post) is above the partition which, like the ground floor, divides the floor space into two-thirds room and one-third stair tower and small room. The door openings in all the partitions are probably in their original positions.

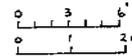
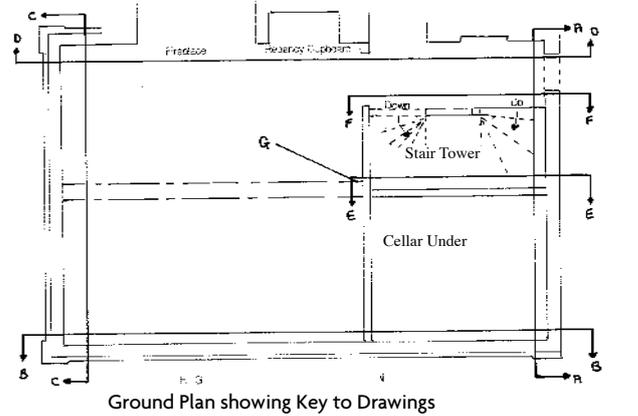
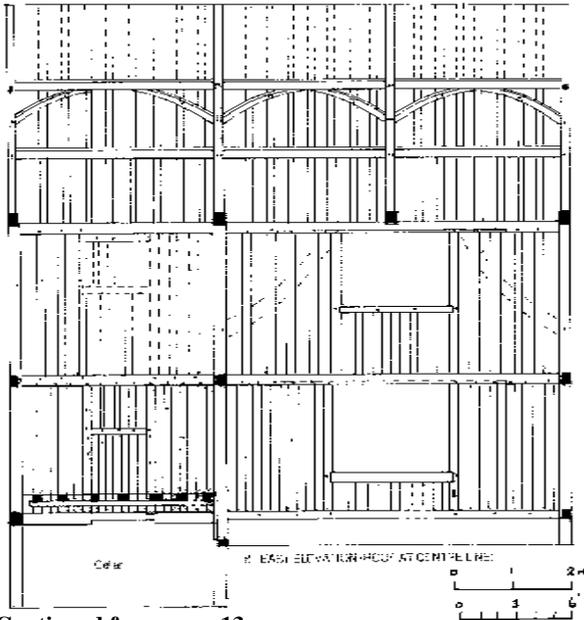
There is a face-halved scarf joint in the wall plate of the west elevation above the present opening to the first floor range over the hall (Fig D). There was originally a stud in this position indicating that when the parlour end was rebuilt the hall was still a single storey. No provision was made for access between the two buildings at this level

The roof has tenoned butt-purlins in two tiers with arched wind-braces in the lower tier (Fig B). The principal rafters (set over the tie-beams) have carpenter's marks for numbering.



SCALE 1:48 1/4" to 1" on A3
ALL DRAWINGS FINISHED BY SUSAN J. BROWN
FROM SECTIONS LISTED IN KEY
SURVEY JANUARY 2003

Continued on page 14



TABLES FOR THE BUILDING
 DRAWN BY
 SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"
 ALL DRAWINGS FINISHED BY SUSAN J. BROWN
 FROM SECTION FIGURES BY KEY
 SURVEY SURVEY 2001

Continued from page 13

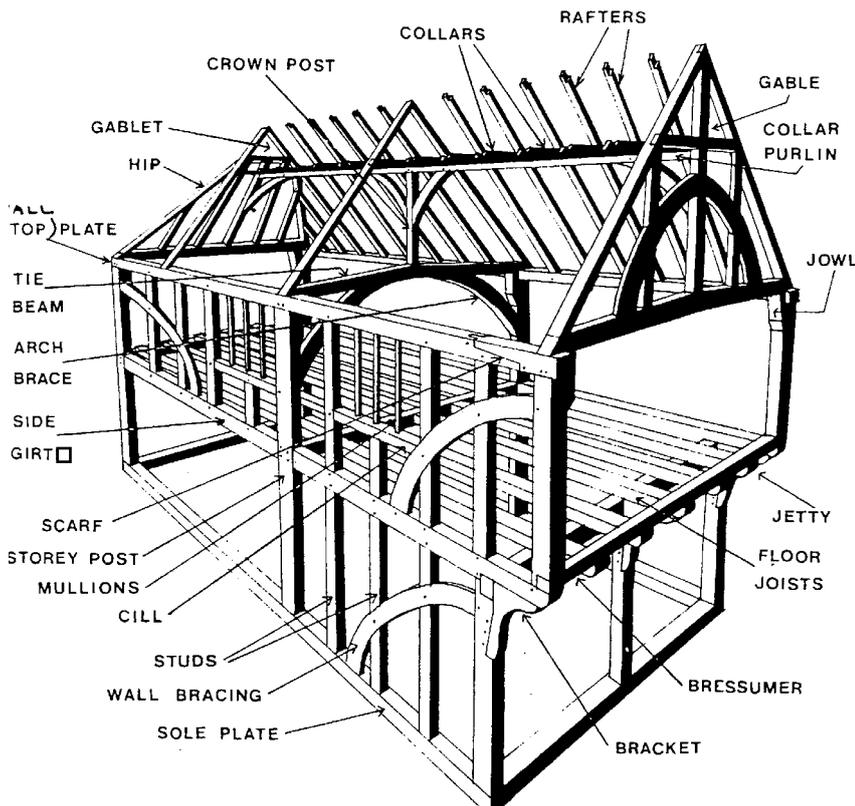
Interpretation

The building examined here seems to be a rebuilding of the Parlour end of a hall house in which the hall remained open to the roof (no first floor access). The incorporation of a stair into the building rather than an external stair tower has been combined with the provision of a cellar, either deliberately by ingenious planning or simply because this was the only way in which access to the lower rear room could be arranged. The combined presence in the building of a number of features (butt-purlin roof, glazed windows with ovolo and chamfer mouldings, elaborate chamfer stops with notches, face-halved scarf joint, attic storey) suggests a date in the first quarter of the seventeenth century.

Susan & Michael Brown
 01362 688362

Recorders' Key

A North Wall:	Gable	– Diana Maywhort
	First Floor	– Sue Brown & Michael Brown
	Ground Floor West	– Sue Brown & Michael Brown
	Ground Floor East	– Judy Hawkins
B East Elevation:	Roof	– Mary Ash
	First Floor North	– Sue Brown & Michael Brown
	First Floor South	– Sue Shand
	Ground Floor North	– Mary Brake
	Ground Floor South	– Alice Leftley
C South Wall:	First Floor	– Gwyn Thomas
	Ground Floor	– Ruth Thomas
D West Elevation:	Roof	– Karen Mackie
	First Floor	– Sue Brown & Michael Brown
	Ground Floor South	– Sue Brown & Michael Brown
Ground Floor North		– Sue Brown & Michael Brown, Carol Nutt & Howard Tame
G Axial Joist :		– Sue Brown & Michael Brown
H Ground Plan :		– Carol Nutt & Howard Tame
All drawings finished by Susan J. Brown		



Basic Timber-Frame Terminology

(M C Wadhams, *Wherein I Dwell*, Earls Colnes WEA Branch, 1983)

To help you with naming and mentally placing the timbers of a timber-framed building. Keep this beside your bed for those sleepless nights...

While we all join our Chairman in congratulating Rosemary on her award (page 2), you may well be as astonished as I was to learn that the NHBG is a new 'learning community'. Please note too, a familiar publication and leaflets under Dame Mary's arm, our trophy winner has never been one to miss an opportunity.

Thank you for your letters and comments, do keep them coming in. A reminder to those of us who are mad about buildings but less adept at measuring and drawing up, the brand new Norfolk Record Office is opening at County Hall in October so we can get in there to excavate that all important documentary background. See you there.

Alayne Fenner
Newsletter Editor
 13 Heigham Grove, NR2 3DQ
 01603 620290

Continued from page 11

unknown craftsperson. Is it possible to find a name? Similar plasterwork at the Assembly Rooms (1754), Churchman House (1751), and the Octagon Chapel (1755) was by William Wilkins(4).

I would be interested to know of any original plaster work from this period of which members may be aware, particularly if they know the architect and/or craftsmen involved.

The architect of the residence, too, is not known and although Stanley Wearing has written about the main Norwich architects of the period and Jane Harding has examined the social background of house design at this time, no mention is made of this sumptuous residence(5),(6).

My thanks to Vic Nierop-Reading and the property owner.

1. C. Champion, unpub. research
2. Ursula Priestley, *The Fabric of Stuffs*, the Norwich Textile Industry from 1565, Centre of East Anglian Studies, UEA, 1990, p 33
3. Andrea Kirkham, private report, 2002
4. R. W. Liscombe, *William Wilkins 1778-1839*, Cambridge University Press, 1980, p 13
5. Stanley J. Wearing, *Georgian Norwich: Its Builders*, Jarrold,
6. J. Harding, *Rout & Riot: Polite Architecture and the Urban Elite of Georgian Norwich*, CEAS, unpublished MA dissertation in Local & Regional History, Sept 1990

AGM

Chairman's Report—Adam thanked the Committee for their hard work, all speakers and leaders of summer events, and house owners for letting us in to record their houses. Winter events were well attended and summer events were so over-subscribed that we must repeat some next year. He also urged members to become more directly involved in our central purpose, the study, recording and interpretation of buildings.

Since June 2001 we have written reports on 69 houses, produced full or partial surveys of 20 and have trained 12 assistant recorders to work with Sue and Michael Brown. We are seeking a Lottery grant for dendro surveying in New Buckenham and a small grant from the Scole Committee for recording equipment. The Churches sub-committee were working at Loddon Church.

Treasurer's Report – cash at year end £2,321.29. The accounts were with the accountant.

The Committee is listed on this page.

Concern was expressed about the non-appearance of the Journal in September 2002 as had been originally planned. Adam explained the problems that had arisen and hoped it would appear this summer.

Membership Notes

Membership has risen to 200 again after renewal reminders were sent out in May.

A few people who did not rejoin were kind enough to send us their reasons, as requested. These mainly involved the needs of work, and in a couple of cases, involved perceived duplication of the programmes of other local societies. We try to have as wide a programme as possible and balance the number of activities between weekend and weekday. In some cases, it is only possible to use certain people/venues during the week.

The committee are trying to encourage members to pay by standing order, as it saves a considerable amount of the time both of our volunteers and a chunk of our valuable resources in postage, paper and envelopes.

Next March, at subscription renewal time, a reminder will be sent to all non standing-order payers, and the first 2004 Newsletter and programme will be sent on receipt of membership fees. Standing order payers will receive theirs as soon as they are available – around the end of March.
Ian Hinton, 01502 476287, ian.hinton@runnymede.co.uk

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Members of the Group have continued to offer their houses for inspection and each one presents its own interpretational challenge. Two houses which we have seen recently turned out not to be houses after all, though exactly what they were originally is still under investigation.

The first is at South Repps where we were invited to look at a member's neat brick and flint cottage, described in Pevsner as having 'two old seventeenth century openings'. These blocked-up doorways are close to each other at one end of the building and seemed inappropriate for a semi-detached arrangement. It soon became clear that the first floor, now divided into bedrooms, was originally open through-out, so one of the doorways was for a stair with direct access from the outside to the first floor room. The ground floor and the attic were both originally for domestic occupation, so what was it? A schoolroom with accommodation for the master or a church room or perhaps a court room with rooms for a caretaker would fit, but we now wait for documentary research to give a further indication. Since it is a seventeenth century building we can hope that something turns up. (The date also eliminates the possibility of a Guildhall.)

Another visit was to a house in Swaffham situated in that part of the town which, in the eighteenth century, had the Crown Inn, a cockpit, a billiard room, a bowling green and a theatre. The remarkable building in high quality brickwork, consists of a semi-subterranean basement, a 'piano nobile', and an attic arranged symmetrically in two wings about a central pavilion approached by a stately double stairway with distinguished ironwork. Local legend has it that Lady Hamilton stayed here in 1806 and it was clearly set up at some expense as a resort for entertainments, away from the gaze of the populace. It seems to be a remarkably complete and unusual survival of a type of building that was always rare. Again it is the documentary research that will tell us more, since records for buildings in the eighteenth century are rather more profuse than for the medieval ones which so often puzzle us.

Susan and Michael Brown
01362 688362

John Wilson tells us that he has heard from the OED. You will remember that he sent examples of 'anker' from the Wymondham Town Book.

"The examples you have found of the use of 'anchor' in the specific sense equivalent to a wall-tie are of great interest to us, and suggest that we should consider whether to add this as an extra sense to the entry for 'anchor,' noun, rather than subsuming it in the general extended sense numbered 3a in the OED.

It is especially good that the examples are so early, which also gives us another good reason for adding it as a separate sense. Some brief preliminary searching of sources here suggests that more examples should be forthcoming, and I am optimistic that we shall be able to go ahead, based on what you have sent us.

We are most grateful to you for bringing this usage to our attention, and for sending such useful examples.

Yours sincerely

Juliet E.A. Field
(Senior Assistant Editor, Oxford English Dictionary)"

Pat Reynolds writes :- I think I've discovered a sub-species of short wall anchor use (if that isn't using a Darwinian metaphor inappropriately) - when a single storey building is raised to a storey and a half, or more, the solid framing of a truss with walls or wallposts is lost; short wall anchors are used with the transverse beams which replace the now-raised truss. I assume that anchors were not used with the original truss, but only with the adaptation.

Sue and Michael have heard from Brenda and Elphin Watkin (long established members of the Essex Buildings Group):-

"If I might make a comment on the text of the Old Rectory, Long Stratton: you say that the rafters in the central bay are of large section 7" x 3" and the principal rafters seem to be the same size. This almost implies that they should be of a different size, but you are describing a crown post roof where there should be no principals only coupled paired rafters of a common or similar size. The interesting point is that, unlike some Essex houses where the rafters are a more consistent 6" x 4" and are converted from one complete tree or coppice pole, the 7" x

New Buckenham Dendrochronology Project; an Explanatory Note

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman, prepared an application for £5,000 to fund the Dendro on selected buildings at New Buckenham. This is the letter which accompanied the application.

"New Buckenham is one of the finest and best-preserved examples of a Norman planned market town anywhere in England. Established by William d'Albini in the 1140s, it consists of a grid-pattern of streets laid out to the east of the great d'Albini castle - also unique in the design of its circular keep (the earliest of its type in England). The vernacular buildings of the town are mostly timber-framed and many date back to the 14th and 15th centuries. However, most were encased in layers of brick in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Thus disguised, the true age and importance of the surviving buildings in the town has only recently become evident. Working in partnership with the residents of the town, property owners and the New Buckenham Society, the NHBG New Buckenham Project aims to record archaeologically those buildings which survive, so that they can be properly interpreted and thus better understood. Crucially, the NHBG Project aims to marry the archaeological evidence of the surviving buildings with a scientific Dendrochronological Survey (the subject of this bid) and the extensive published research on the documentary records which has already been conducted by one of the residents (Paul Rutledge). This bringing together of the three strands of evidence promises to provide an unprecedentedly detailed picture of the medieval and post-medieval town."

If the bid is successful, the funds provided will be used to kick-start the first phase of the Dendrochronology Survey project. On completion and publication of the first phase, the NHBG may develop a second bid to fund a second (and probably final) phase of the Project.

3" makes it more likely that the conversion is from a larger tree that is then sawn and made into two rafters. I wonder if, having sawn them they kept the two rafters as a pair?"

Dear Editor,

From the drawing of Tibenham Farm in the latest NHBG Newsletter, the later extension looks like an attached kitchen. I cannot be certain as a plan was not published, but I would expect to find a cooking (or hall) sized fireplace. I have found a number of Suffolk houses with in-line attached kitchens, the plan consisting, from the high end, of parlour, stack, hall with crosspassage or crossentry, service room or rooms, kitchen, plus in some cases an additional unheated service room beyond the kitchen. The kitchen usually has a separate external entrance and sometimes another door in the rear wall, though I am not sure if I have seen a Suffolk example of an attached kitchen with a crossentry.

None of the Essex Historic Buildings Group members can think of similar buildings in Essex, other than possibly White House, Mundon, but this a very unusually long jettied building of the first half of the 16th century with end chimney stacks, a central entrance between the hall and parlour and a central unheated room, which has a contemporary unjettied lower in-line attached kitchen beyond the hall.

David Martin has found a similar plan-form in East Sussex.

John Walker

*Mark's Cottage, Stoke Road,
Lower Layham, Hadleigh IP7 5RB*

Ian Hinton comments:

Unfortunately the stack was altered at ground floor level as part of building work during the tenure of the previous owners, so it is not known whether this room could have taken over the cooking function from the hall fire, or whether it was a 'fashionable' dining parlour.

Are there any other examples of this plan-form known to members?

Ian Hinton

01502 475287

ian.hinton@runnymede.co.uk

End Stack Houses: A Reply to John Walker's Letter of March 2003, Adam Longcroft

John's letter in Newsletter 5 draws attention to a theme which emerged at last year's NHBG Conference: namely the importance of recognising and researching regional variations in vernacular building. The late Peter Eden noted that end-chimney houses, like the ones John refers to, made an early appearance in Norfolk in an essay he published in 1968(1). He referred to it as a 'Type T' plan according to an alphabetic classification of plan types he had proposed earlier. Indeed, he cited an example of a small cottage with this type of plan at Crabgate Farm, Field Dalling which, on stylistic grounds, appeared to be early seventeenth century. It is now apparent, however, that gentry prototypes of this innovative plan, possibly influenced by much earlier buildings such as the Priest's House at Muchelney in Somerset (dated 1308)(2), appeared in Norfolk in the early sixteenth century(3). As with lobby-entry plans, several generations passed before the possibilities of the Type T plan were widely recognised. By the early 1600s, fully developed examples of the plan were few and far between and were being built exclusively by owners of high social status. These early seventeenth-century houses, such as Gunton House, Reymersstone (See Fig.1 D), and Harbour House, Stiffkey were usually large structures (See Fig.1 E). Some houses, like Hall Farm Cottages, Ketteringham (See Fig.1 B), were adapted to conform to the new Type T arrangement (4).

Peter Smith has suggested that the appearance of the Type T plan was 'the most important contribution the seventeenth century had to make to the development of architecture'(5). Given the large number of farmhouses which were built with this plan in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (and across virtually the whole of England and Wales), this statement would seem to be justified. Yet new thinking with regard to centralised plan arrangements was already in place before the Type T plan appeared. One manifestation of this was the positioning of newel staircases in front of chimney stacks in lobby entry houses, an innovation which can be seen at Fir Grove, Morley and 37-43 Hall Lane, Hingham. It seems likely that developments like this paved the way for centrally planned Type T houses. As Peter Smith has suggested, the achievement of centralised circulation should be seen as 'the end product

of a series of progressive improvements which can be traced back to the beginning of the seventeenth century'(6). Certainly, this type of plan appears to be a later development within the vernacular tradition and is heavily influenced by the design of gentry houses. Crabgate Farm, Wood Dalling, Valley Farm, Drayton and Church Farmhouse, Bawburgh, all appear to constitute early attempts at achieving the design, though they have idiosyncracies which suggest that the merits of the Type T plan had not been fully realised (7). As at Crabgate Farm, in most early examples of the Type T plan in Norfolk, a staircase is located next to an end stack. At Dairy Farm, Tacolneston, (See Fig.1 A & Photo 1) which was built around 1640, there are two staircases, one at each end of the house, allowing independent access to suites of room inhabited by the owner and his servants (8). Part of the unheated central bay is devoted to a small lobby leading off from the front entrance. Behind this is the buttery. As in many Type T houses, the need for extra space for additional service rooms was solved by adding a lean-to extension at the rear (9). Soon after, however, houses like Quaker Farm, Wrampingham (c.1640-60), (See Fig.1 C) and Crossways Farm, Chedgrave, dated 1669 (10), began to be built with a grand staircase leading off from the entrance vestibule which allowed independent access to all rooms and created an efficient, fully centralised plan. Most Type T houses built after c.1680 in Norfolk conform to this arrangement.

Houses which conform to the Type T plan are most numerous in areas of the country which had a stone-building tradition. Examples of the plan, exhibiting minor variations, have been identified by Barley in Dorset, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Rutland, and Gloucestershire (11), by Eden in Cambridgeshire (12), by Quiney in Wiltshire (13), by Pearson in Lancashire (14), by Machin in Dorset (15), and by Smith in Wales (16). Most appear to be of late seventeenth or eighteenth century date, though the type appears as early as 1600 in Dorset (17). In Norfolk, also, end-chimney houses make their appearance early, 'not only at manor-house level but also for a humbler clientele whose social composition awaits research.' (18) The distribution of these early examples is far from uniform. Despite the fact that the Type T plan is not particularly well-suited to timber-

Continued from page 17

framing, it is in the timber-framed areas of Norfolk, rather than in those characterised by brick or flint construction, that the plan established a foothold in the county in the early 1600s. Thereafter, it can be found, in miniaturised form, and at a lower social level, in most parts of the county, particularly in central and north Norfolk. Early Type T houses were usually large, with two or even two-and-a-half storeys. By the middle of the seventeenth century, the plan was in use in comparatively small buildings of one-and-a-half storeys. (19) The Type T plan appears to have been a major influence on the later development of rural and urban house plans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as can be seen in the design of a house in Vicar Street, Wymondham and at Hill House, Hill Lane, Wacton. (See Photos 2 & 3)



Photo.1 Dairy Farm, Tacolneston, Norfolk (c.1640)

Photo. 3 Hill House, Hill Lane, Wacton, Norfolk (Early 19th century)

Photo.2 House in Vicar Street, Wymondham, Norfolk (Late 18th century)

NOTES

1. P. Eden, 'Smaller post-medieval houses in Eastern England', in L. M. Munby (ed.), *East Anglian Studies* (Cambridge: 1968).
2. A. Quiney, *The Traditional Buildings of England* (London: 1990), 113-114.
3. Thorpland Hall, Norfolk, was built c.1500. Alan Carter, 'Variations in small house plans in Norfolk', paper given at the VAG Winter Conference (December: 1979).
4. Unpublished report by Alan Carter.
5. P. Smith, 'Some reflections on the development of the centrally-planned house', in A. Detsicas (ed.), *Collectanea Historica. Essays in Memory of Stuart Rigold* (Maidstone: 1981), 197.
6. P. Smith, 'The centrally planned house', 194
7. Unpublished reports by Alan Carter.
8. C. Carson, 'Segregation in vernacular buildings', *Vernacular Architecture*, 7 (1976), 24-9.
9. M.W. Barley (ed.), *The Buildings of the Countryside 1500-1750* (Cambridge: 1990), 153.
10. Mercer, *English Vernacular Houses* (London: 1975), 101.
11. Barley, *Buildings of the Countryside*, 150.
12. Eden, 'Smaller post-medieval houses', 73.
13. Quiney, *Traditional Buildings*, 114.
14. In Lancashire, the end-stack plans of the seventeenth century were often far more primitive than those identified in southern England, in that the centrally placed front entrance often led directly into one of the two heated ground-floor rooms, usually the hall or 'housebody', as at Ball House, Foulbridge (c.1627), rather than into a central lobby. Later examples of the end-stack plan often incorporated a central passage which led to rear lean-tos or a rear range, as at Breeze House, Foulbridge (c.1700). See S. Pearson, *Rural Houses of the Lancashire Pennines 1560-1760* (London: 1985), 146.
15. R. Machin, *The Houses of Yetminster* (Bristol: 1978), 68-91.
16. P. Smith, *Houses of the Welsh Countryside* (London: 1975), 252.
17. Written communication from Bob Machin.
18. Eden, 'Smaller post-medieval houses', 89.
19. House at Uffington, Berkshire, illustrated in Barley, *Buildings of the Countryside*, 150.

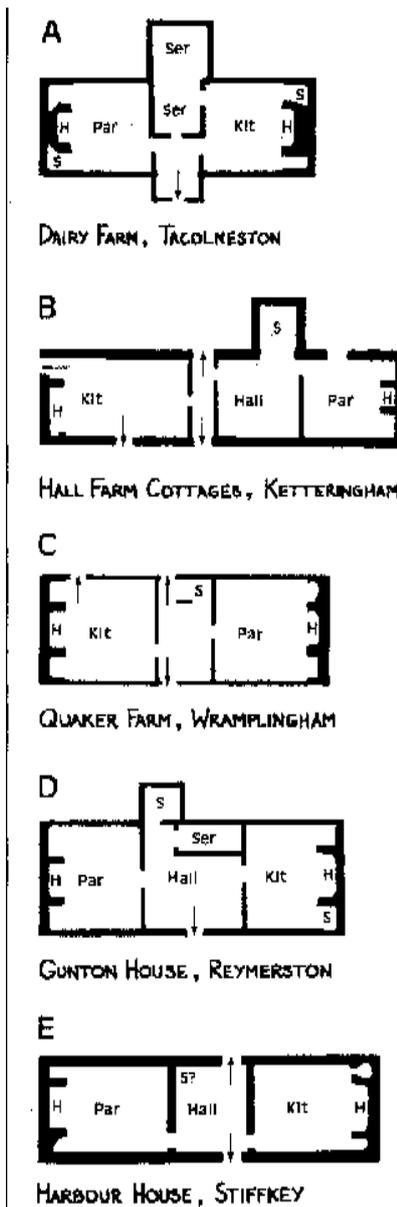


Fig 1 Typical Floor plans of Type T buildings (see over for a Simplified Version of Peter Eden's classification sheet)

TYPE T PLANS

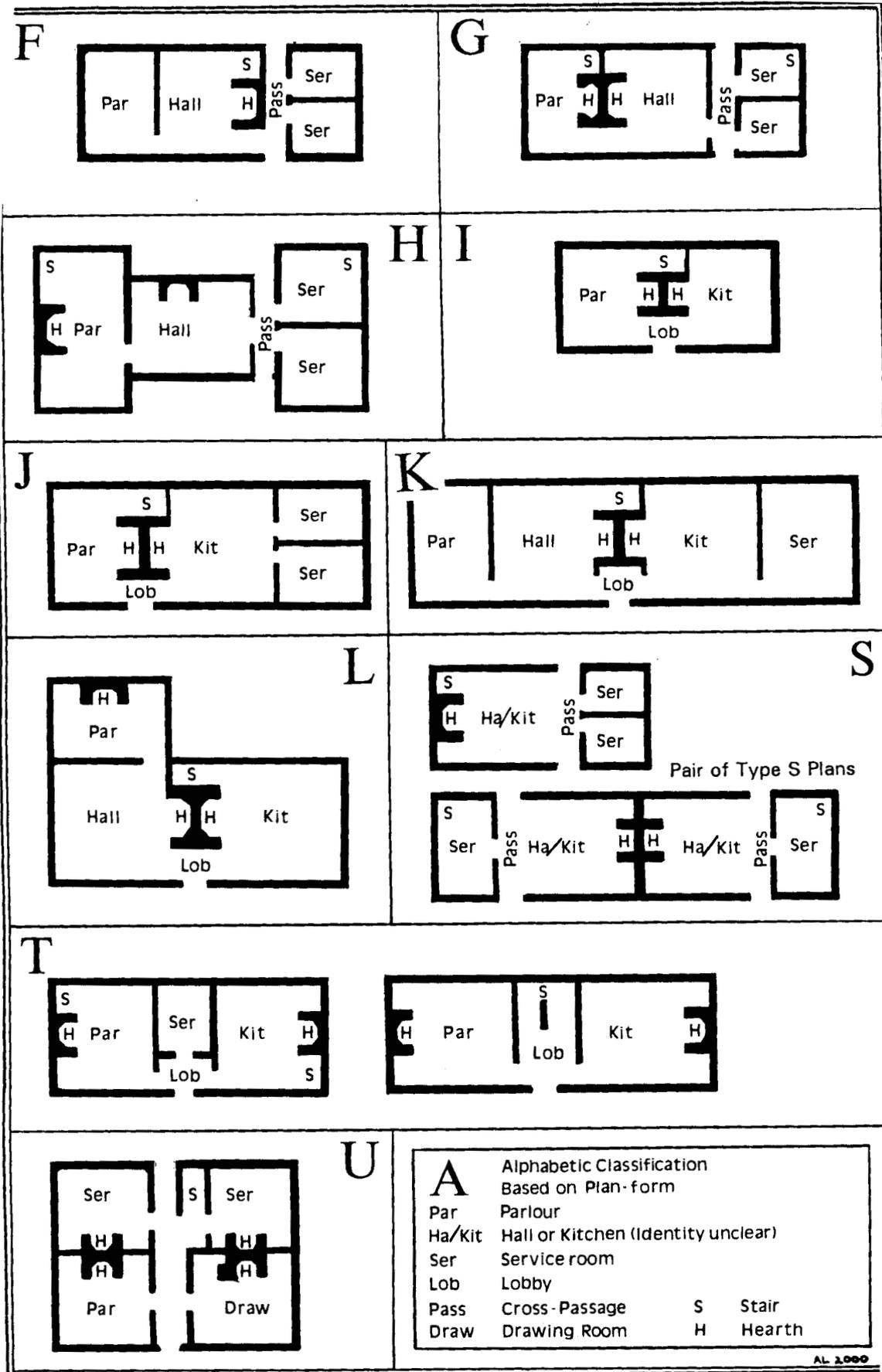
Key

- S Stairs to first floor
- S? Likely position of stairs to first floor
- H Hearth
- Hall Hall (Occasionally functions as a simple entry vestibule)
- Kit Kitchen
- Par Parlour
- Ser Service room

Scale

0 ————— 10
Metres

0 ————— 40
Feet



Adam Longcroft's simplified version of Eden's classification of post-medieval house plans

Winter Events 2003/2004

Welcome back to the Winter Series of Talks. Most of these will take place at the University of East Anglia, which is situated off Earlham Road, Norwich (B.1108). Note there are three exceptions. Please let me know if anyone would like transport to any event. **Meetings start at 7.00 pm with refreshments, followed by the Aperitif speaker at 7.30 pm for ten minutes before the main speaker.** It is not necessary to purchase tickets in advance, except for the Norfolk Record Office visit when I would like to have a rough idea of numbers. Lectures are free to members but guests are asked to contribute £2.00.

Do remember that I am here to receive your queries, comments and suggestions. My thanks to Mary Ash for her help.

Rosemary Forrest, tel 01603 742315 e.mail: roakief@yahoo.co.uk

Dendrochronology ...Ian Tyers

Date: Saturday, 18 October 2003
Time: 7.00 for 7.30 pm
Place: New Buckenham Village Hall,
Moat Lane, New Buckenham

We are lucky to welcome Ian Tyers to Norfolk; he is an expert in the science of dating timbers by the study of tree rings. The meeting is being held in New Buckenham because the Group has applied for a Lottery Grant for dendrochronology to be undertaken in some of the houses so far surveyed in this medieval planned town. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet Ian and to find out more about this science which has become a vital collaborative form of evidence in the dating of historic buildings.

Member's Aperitif

Grange Farm and LeGrys Farm, Wacton: a Comparison ...Adam Longcroft

A challenge for Adam; a comparative thesis in ten minutes. Wacton has a typical South Norfolk common-edge village settlement.

A Visit to the new Norfolk Record Office

...Frank Meeres

Date: Tuesday, 28 October, 2003
Time: 7.00 pm– 9.00 pm
Place: Main Entrance to the New Norfolk Record Office, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich. Parking should be available in County Hall Car Park.

This is a wonderful opportunity to explore this fantastic new facility under the guidance of a senior archivist. **Just so that we have an idea of how many of you would like to go, please ring Rosemary and let her know of your interest**

(01603 742315/roakief@yahoo.co.uk)

Ritual Marks on Historic Timbers

...Timothy Easton

Date: Thursday, 13 November 2003
Place: UEA, Elizabeth Fry Building
Room 01.02, Norwich

Timothy Easton is a resident of Suffolk who is an acknowledged authority on ritual, or apotropaic, marks found on timbers and used to evoke Christ or Mary or to protect the building's occupants from witchcraft and evil.

Member's Aperitif

Mathematical Tiles ...George Fenner

George has requested time to draw our attention to the existence of this form of building material, principally to be found in Kent and Sussex, in the City of Norwich.

Thomas Ivory: Architect of Genius?

...Vic Nierop-Reading

Date: Tuesday, 9 December, 2003
Place: UEA, Elizabeth Fry Building
Room 01.02, Norwich

This is a re-arranged lecture from last year. Vic will have had a further year to contemplate Thomas Ivory and this should have allowed him time to have furthered his arguments on the merits of this Norfolk-born architect.

Member's Aperitif

2 Willow Road, Hampstead ...Penny Clarke

Penny was a National Trust guide for some years at this former home of Ernö Goldfinger. Designed and built by him in 1939, this central house of a terrace of three is one of Britain's most important examples of Modernist architecture.

Members' Evening

Date: Thursday, 22 January 2004
Place: UEA, Elizabeth Fry Building
Room 01.02, Norwich

Godwick: House, Barn or Stable—A New Approach
...Ian Hinton and George Fenner

A Norwich Undercroft ...Bill Wilcox
New Buckenham ...Susan & Michael Brown

The Construction/Development of Norfolk Castles
...by Rob Liddiard

Advance Warning for the Party

Sat 7 February 2004

at

George & Alayne Fenner's
in Norwich

Details in the January letter

Date: Wednesday, 11 February 2004
Place: UEA, Elizabeth Fry Building
Room 01.02, Norwich

Rob is a lecturer at UEA who has a wide knowledge of, and intriguing ideas about, Norfolk's many ruined castles and their sites.

Member's Aperitif

A Snapshot of 16th/17th Century Domestic Wall Paintings
...Andrea Kirkham

The question of domestic wall paintings in Norfolk remains very much of a mystery but Andrea is planning to unravel it during her current studies. In this Aperitif she will talk about Suffolk examples.

Joint Meeting with West Norfolk & King's Lynn Archaeological Society

The Evolution, Care, and Repair of Trinity College, Cambridge

...Mark Wilkinson

Date: Tuesday, 23 March, 2004
Place: Knight's Hill Hotel, Knight's Hill Roundabout (A148/A149/A1076) King's Lynn

Trinity College was originally a medieval building and has a long history of change of use and remodelling. For more than twenty years, Mark has been in charge of these changes.