

NHBG Newsletter



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Norfolk Historic Buildings Group



(photo: A R Forrest)

Members listening to Mike Knights talking at the AGM at Oulton Chapel, near Aylsham, about the chapel itself and Norfolk Historic Buildings Trust (see p.9).

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CHR

Here we are with the Autumn edition of the Newsletter and plenty to report and comment on. The summer programme of events and visits has gone forward very successfully with members visiting the historic towns of Diss and Little Walsingham and exploring some fascinating individual buildings which are not accessible to the public. I particularly recall two equally balmy evenings at Ketteringham and East Tuddenham, filled with exploration and lively debate, and not just from the 'experts'. The Group owes a vote of thanks to Rosemary and her team for the smooth running of these adventures and of course to the owners of the houses, whose amazing generosity in letting us invade their privacy makes everything possible. Without their cooperation effectively our subject would not exist.

As Adam Longcroft announced in the last Newsletter, he stood down as Chairman at the AGM and I was elected in his place: not an easy one to fill. Adam's expertise and hard work have given the Group a terrific start and we are in a position to make a real contribution to the study of the buildings around us. Any serious organisation such as ours must pay attention to the twin commitments of teaching and research. The former is contained in the rich and varied winter programme published in this Newsletter and the latter is well under way with the work of the Churches study group and the approaching culmination of the New Buckenham Project (see page 19).

The results of the dendro survey will be announced at the meeting in New Buckenham on the 24th September so do try to be there to celebrate or commiserate, depending on the outcome. The New Buckenham Project is the subject of the next edition of the Journal, to appear in Spring 2005. Most of the material for this has now been organised and the publication should give us a solid stepping-off point for the next phase of research, the wider picture of Norfolk buildings. Much of the research for this second phase is already in hand, so there is plenty of material waiting to be interpreted, and perhaps a further grant to finance more dendro.

Of course, all this depends on the people who come forward to make it happen, and the expansion of the events organising teams has already paid off by reducing the pressure on individuals. The scheme for training building recorders has produced 'The Tacolneston Four', who are now ready to tackle almost anything and have already contributed to the surveys needed for the New Buckenham dendro project. The next programme of training starts at Tibenham Farm, Long Row, Tibenham on Tuesday 14th September, so if you missed the preliminary meeting at the Fenner's, phone Sue Brown on 01362 688362 and book your place.

The range of human, historical and aesthetic interest to be found in Norfolk's historic buildings continues to amaze me afresh and there is a lot of relatively unexplored territory to be looked at. It is a thrilling prospect.

Michael Brown
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Brick in Eastern England

George Fenner and Rosemary Forrest were well rewarded for their excursion into Essex for a day school which was run by Essex County Council and Essex Historic Buildings Group at Cressing Temple. It brought together seven speakers who approached the topic from aspects of distribution, development, manufacture, and craftsmanship.

Speakers consistently warned about dating a building by brick size. It became clear that this is not an exact science. It was agreed that the Romans were the initiators of brick and that the Saxons and Normans reused many of their bricks. On the Continent brick use continued and was reintroduced here by Flemish brickmakers in the thirteenth century; they again bolstered production and skills in the late fifteenth/ early sixteenth Renaissance period. It was not until the seventeenth century that bricks became more freely available. Then transport—first by waterways, turnpikes, canals, and then railways—and mechanisation made bricks available to all. One interesting research topic was suggested regarding the proximity of brickworks to turnpikes, canals and roads. The first users of brick were the wealthy church establishments and royal personages who passed the fashionable look of brick down to their wealthy court hangers-on, before its use reached humbler levels by the late

eighteenth century.

There was a wealth of information about brick manufacture from the clays, additions for colour and texture, firing methods to an impressive demonstration of brick handling. The first bricks were large "two-handed" jobs but by the early fourteenth century early ergonomic brickies had honed their skills and developed a "single-handed" brick.

Whilst there were photographs of wonderful brick buildings, attention was also drawn to alternative sources of evidence for the use and producers of brick: early building accounts, glebe terriers, estate accounts, wills, inventories, poll books.

An excellent bibliography of some 50 references was provided. If anyone would like a copy, then do please contact George (01603 620690) or Rosemary (01603 742315).

This conference provided a wide overview of brick history in the Eastern Counties. Just as importantly it created an opportunity to meet like-minded people and to share knowledge. Could the Group persuade Norfolk County Council to consider running similarly targeted gatherings with the emphasis on buildings rather than conservation?

Looking up at Diss

(O.E. 'Ditch' modified by the Normans to Diss)
Bill English

David Summers, the architect, met us at the Saracen's Head, Mount Street (16th Century or earlier to Victorian, and may have housed the Wool Guild), in the centre of what was probably Diss's medieval wool trade district. The large Perpendicular parish church next door may owe its size to the wealth generated by this industry. The significance of Diss is evident because it had more medieval guilds than comparable Norfolk towns. Mr Summers urged us to spend our day in Diss looking up at the higher parts of buildings fully to appreciate the enormous variety of detail in and around windows, doors and gables.



Manor House, Mount Street

At the same time he encouraged us to look at the whole streetscape, how buildings fit in and complement each other or, sadly, in some cases don't. Where there are gaps (demolition, bad planning) he hopes to find visual links in the modern replacements so that a "missing tooth" effect is ameliorated. He argues that a beautiful and large residential building like The Georgian Manor House (Flemish bond) should keep its large garden, not fall prey to in-filling or other development. Houses like these need space round them, even if it's not for public access. He's talking about spirit of place. This great respect for the ordinary vision and craftsmanship of our ancestors clearly means a lot to David Summers.

Where he sees good modern design which is sympathetic to older buildings in the same street, he stops and comments, explaining how good modern architecture can span the centuries and achieve this unity; for example, new sheltered housing next to The Saracen's Head.

In Mount Street, the pedestrianised Mere Street and Denmark Street, members spotted and discussed exterior details of buildings and theorised as to function and developmental sequence. As a new member I was impressed by the spirit of detached enquiry and fascinating conclusions reached by members, particularly inside The Saracen's Head, at Fayre View the tea shop and restaurant on Fair Green and also at a more modest house at the top of Mount Street. A vocabulary wholly new to me emerged, eg., rat trap bonding, a mansard roof, lamb's tongue ogee, apotropaic marks, gambrel roofs, bressumer, and a butterfly roof.

Mr Summers' love for and appreciation of elegant and honest

buildings shone through at every turn in Diss. Sometimes he would gently challenge us, 'What do you think of that building at the end of the street?' Does he approve or disapprove? you hurriedly think, mild panic in danger of skewing your judgement. I managed to pass each test, I hope more by judgement than luck. Two examples: the Corn Hall, (massive Victorian scale, commanding pillars), bad; and the modern building appearing to block off the end of Mere Street, good.

Finally, any visitor cannot miss the extraordinary lake, The Mere, in the centre of Diss (said to be the second deepest lake in England and soon to be the subject of a university geological study). On a sunny day the mixture of old and new buildings round much of The Mere gives Diss an almost Riviera atmosphere. 2004 is the 500th anniversary of the arrival of John Skelton in Diss. He was court poet to Henry VII, satirist and tutor to Prince Henry (later VIII). The town is part way through a year long Skelton Festival which is commendably wide and varied in its scope. Diss is a lively and interesting ancient town battling to reconcile its narrow streets and ancient buildings with the 21st Century, and on balance succeeding.



Mitred corner joint probably from the late fifteenth century (cf C Hewitt, English Historic Carpentry, Phillimore, 1980, p 277)



Carved corner posts; one in juxtaposition with the nineteenth century door case



The Saracen's Head PH, Mount Street: early 17th century roll moulding/Dragon beam, banisters which have dried out, like bow legs, showing they were made 'in the green'. The newel post has a chamfer and nick

Can anyone tell us why this humble range of buildings merits six conspicuous brick stacks?



NHBG Visit Ketteringham on Friday 30th April 2004

Robert Limmer



Ketteringham Hall Farm House Stair tower. Photo: Robert Limmer)

The visit started with a detailed study of the southern end of Hall Farm House by kind permission of Jill Golzen, who is a member of the group. This is a building of impressive size and is now two houses. It boasts an impressive stair tower on the east side.

The ownership of this property has been researched by Charlotte Barringer but the actual date of construction of the present building has not been found in the records. The house belonged to the inappropriate rectory that had been in the possession of the Prior of Pentney before the dissolution. The fact that the rectory was in the village along with the vicarage made this parish somewhat unusual. A study of the building shows that the walls are entirely of brick and not a wood frame bricked over. The bricks had been dated by Alan Carter as between 1570 and 1600. This dating appears to be confirmed by the change of ownership in 1607 at which time the house was described as “the capital message of brick”. An earlier building, old enough to require replacement, is unlikely to have been built of brick.

The roof construction, no longer visible, is a common rafter type. This type of construction, if original, would be significantly earlier than the brick dating. However, it is reported that the carpenter’s marks in the roof do not match, indicating that the roof timbers were reused from an earlier building. One notable feature of the building is the virtual absence of carving on the woodwork that would be expected in a building of this size and date. It does not appear to have been a high status dwelling in

spite of its impressive size and the fact that in 1607 there were 107 acres of land that went with it.

Another feature of the building that was the subject of much discussion was the first floor passageway on the east side. This appeared to negate the large east window and did appear to be an insertion rather than a part of the original construction. The original door opening in this wall, now blocked, looked to be a similar date to the likely date of the building itself. It must have been inserted very soon after the house was built. The purchaser of the property in 1607 was Sir John Heveningham Knt. bringing the property into the Ketteringham Hall estate. This could account for a significant change of status comparatively early in the history of the building.

We then visited the church, noting the vicarage adjoining the north side of the church yard.

The building is comparatively plain with an unbuttressed square tower rebuilt in 1609, and a single roof, the nave and the chancel being the same width. Inside it is more interesting for



*Norman masonry and blocked windows.
(photo: Karen Mackie)*

its memorials, for which Alayne presented a short history. These memorials told a lot about the richer inhabitants. There was the Rector who was at war with the Squire at the hall and a curious connection with the French Revolution, an attempt to save the life of Marie Antoinette. Probably the highlight - we lead sad lives - was the opening of the Mausoleum to look at the only two coffins ever placed in the building. Most of the family preferred to be buried just outside.

The visit was rounded off by returning to Hall Farm for some welcome drinks and nibbles and a lively discussion of our observations.

New Buckenham Dendrochronological Survey

[Sponsored by a grant from Awards for All (Lottery Grants for Local Groups)]

Public Lecture on Friday 24 September 2004

Results of Survey

Ian Tyers, Sheffield University

New Buckenham Village Hall, Moat Lane, New Buckenham

7.00 for 7.30 pm FREE ADMISSION

(For further information contact: Susan Brown 01362 688362)

Little Walsingham

Les Scott

My first visit with NHBG, sitting in the Sue Ryder tea shop trying to remember introductions to more experienced members. I am quickly spotted as a green recruit and before I can say 'Pevsner' I have been asked to write an account of the visit.

Scilla Landale starts the day off with a general introduction to the town. The original Saxon village grew as a direct result of the building of a chapel by Richeldis of Fervaques, in the 11th Century, modelled on the house in Nazareth where the Annunciation took place. Since when, pilgrims have provided a good living for hostleries and shops.

Our group then formed an orderly crocodile to wind its way through the narrow passages of the pilgrim accommodation above the tea shop. Little snatches of timber framing in each tiny room were pieced together to give an overall picture.

A short walk along the main narrow road into Walsingham and we gathered among the flint ruins of the Friary. The ruins were impressive but the most frequently overheard questions concerned the curiously varying levels and lack of archaeological digging on the site.

An excellent buffet lunch followed at the Black Lion, one of the oldest houses in Walsingham, then a quick visit to other medieval properties in the High Street. Richeldis House stands at the end; originally built with open shop windows with accommodation above, it has been renovated to provide modern pilgrims with accommodation. Once again two orderly crocodiles wound their way round narrow passages. A magnificent dragon beam caused a buzz and Napoleonic wall paintings in one room raised more questions than answers.

Pausing only to look at the conduit with a brazier on top, lit for special events, the group packed into the old Shirehall/Courthouse. Converted from the fifteenth century Priory's Pilgrim hostel in 1778, it established Walsingham as an administrative centre. As soon as members of the group had found their natural places, either in the judges' seats or accused, Scilla led forth with some extracts of original cases.

The last visit of the day, and for me the highlight, we found ourselves back where we started forming an orderly queue to visit tiny cells and narrow passageways but this time the doors all had locks on the outside and weren't for pilgrims. The House of Correction, built in 1787 on a John Howard model design, is a gem, preserved in its original state.

- (a) No 20 High Street: Crown Post roof to a medieval hall house which has a late Georgian facade
- (b) Early stone corbel on a timber framed house in the High Street
- (c) Medieval doorway tucked away in a back yard
- (d) High Street looking towards Common Place: fifteenth to eighteenth century facades
- (e) Methodist Chapel: late eighteenth century
- (f) Franciscan Friary founded in 1347: viewed from fifteenth century cloister
- (g) Dragon beam in Richeldis House: early sixteenth century (cf Visit to Diss for a moulded Dragon Beam)
- (h) Richeldis House: medieval shop front with jetty. The Dragon beam (g) is in the first floor room.

(photos: AR and RA Forrest)



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)



(e)



(f)



(g)



(h)

Ruminations at Godwick

Anthony Rossi

(These notes are the result of a cursory study of the interesting barn at Godwick Hall as part of an evening visit. They are strictly E and OE, and the building would repay proper recording. The hall itself - and indeed the village - are no more but the barn is intact, albeit with alterations.)

The barn stood at right angles to the north front of the hall, which was in existence before 1596, and is probably of similar date. It has a polite false front to the hall and a working back, somewhat after the manner of the much larger barn at Waxham and the east wing at Blickling. Its roof has 10 bays with alternating tie beam and hammerbeam queen post trusses similar to those at Waxham of c1570 and Paston of 1581.

The west, polite, elevation was almost symmetrical, originally with a row of five brick three-light mullion and transome windows at the upper level and four at the lower, all once stuccoed, with quoins, and the lower openings at least with pediments. The southern pair of windows has been bricked over but fragments are visible, and the other openings are blocked with brick. At the north end is a domestic scale doorway, also pedimented and blocked, with the plinth stopped on each side of it; there seems never to have been a repeat of this at the south end since the plinth runs through. There is an additional mullioned and transome pedimented window at the upper level on the north end elevation; below it modern sliding doors have been inserted and the gable above is a later re-building including some tumbled brickwork, so earlier structural evidence has been obliterated.

There is an inserted wide doorway, with segmental arch, on the west side, opposite an original large opening, with chamfered surround and stopped plinth, in the centre of the east wall, occupying two roof bays. There is no trace of a window pediment above the inserted arch and it seems possible that the opening replaced a domestic scale doorway with a lower pediment like that at the north end. This would have echoed the arrangement at Paston where small doorways survive opposite the threshing doors, while the alteration echoes that at Waxham, with the higher original threshing doors accommodating a loaded cart which could then exit through the lower opening on the far side.

Apart from the threshing doors the east side and south end appear to have had ventilation loops only. These are mildly cruciform and now mostly blocked. There were at least three in the south end, and one to each bay on the east, excepting the two threshing door bays and two more at the north end which were blank. Here there is evidence of an inserted doorway and a low roofed later outbuilding, now replaced by a much larger modern annexe encapsulating most of the east side.

There are clearly defined changes in brickwork colour, particularly on the west, but these appear generally to be indications of seasonal working and differential firing rather than structural alteration.

The roof has eleven trusses, and three purlins in each slope. Each bay has six common rafters, tenoned above and below the larger centre purlin and passing over the smaller intermediate ones. There are small wind braces at high level, somewhat randomly spaced. A closer inspection would reveal whether the arrangement is deliberate or, as seems more likely, the

accidental result of deterioration. The beam braces, which sit against wall posts supported by built in timber corbels, are also relatively small and the hammerbeams rather short, resulting in comparatively small widely spaced queen posts. The trusses also have collars at high level. There is no differentiation of truss design or spacing (as at Paston and Waxham respectively) on account of the threshing doors. The pitch of the roof suggests that it was originally thatched. The west slope is now shingled, with altered eaves - does this alteration conceal cut back first floor pediments, as at Thorpe Hall near Norwich and matching that in the north gable?

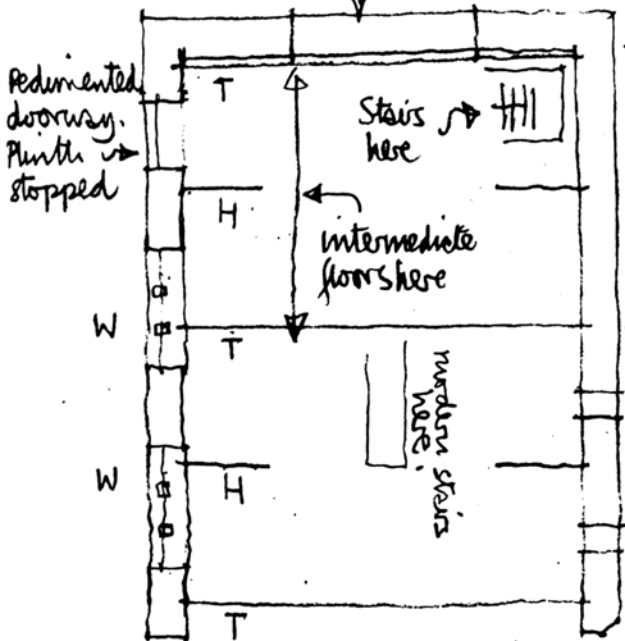
Internally the two north bays have first and second floor structures, timber framed partitioning, and a dog-leg stair in the north-east corner. There is similar partitioning within the fifth truss from the north. The latter along with its lath and plaster is almost certainly an insertion and its purpose is unclear. Some at least of the subsidiary structures at the north end however appear original and quite likely to have formed domestic accommodation with access through the blocked north-west doorway (which is opposite the staircase, whose lowest flight has steps formed from solid baulks of timber), and natural lighting from subsequently blocked windows. The extent to which window blockings generally are original is not at present clear; the lack of glazing grooves in the brick mullions is not conclusive as grooves could have been formed in the stucco. It is also unclear whether the stucco was moulded, the structure beneath being of unmoulded brick capped with tile (cf Thorpe Hall where this technique is found alongside moulded brick).

A further alteration is an inserted first floor at the south end of the barn; this has since been removed but cut off joist ends on built in softwood plates survive along with one end of a central spine beam.

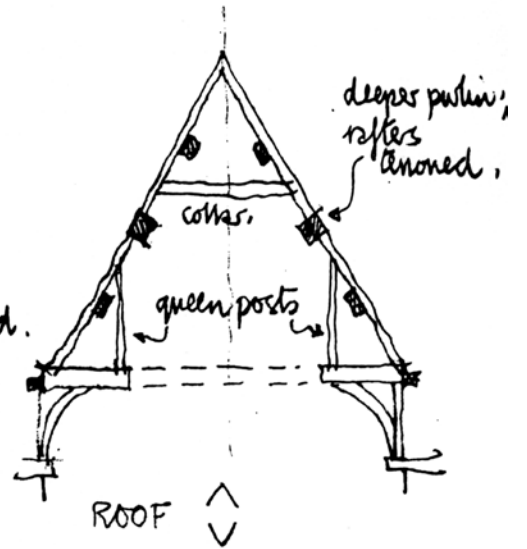


WEST FACADE.

modern sliding doors here - original M & T window above, with pediment; Gable re-build

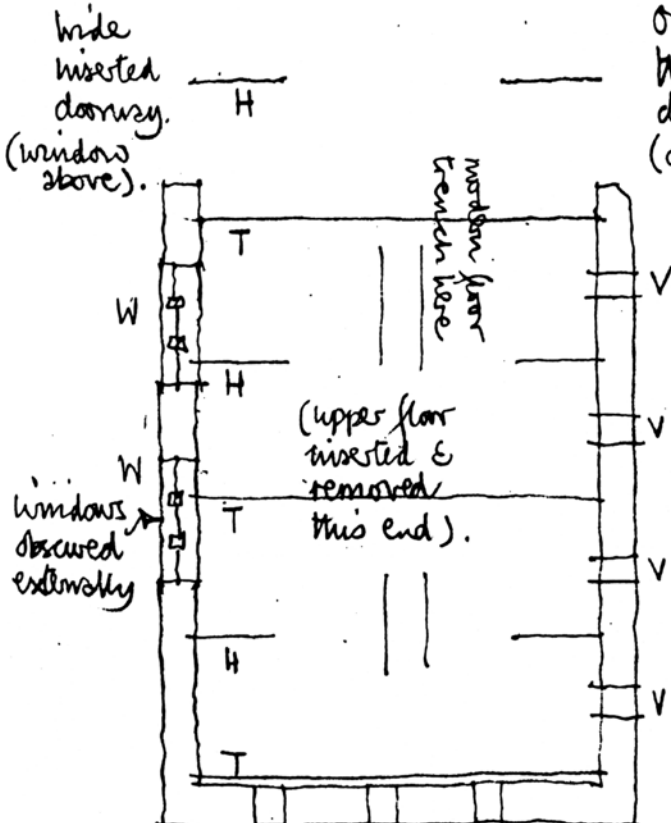
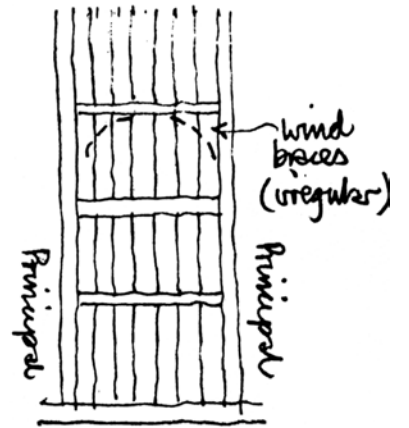


No ventilation loops here. Low outbuilding added & removed. Blocked inserted doorway.



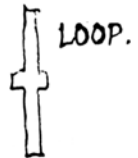
< PLAN

(walls brick; English bond)



Original threshing doorway, (chamfered surround & stopped plinth)

T - tie beam truss.
H - hammerbeam truss.
V - ventilation loop.
W - window.



↑ approx N.

BARN AT GODWICK.

APR. June '04.

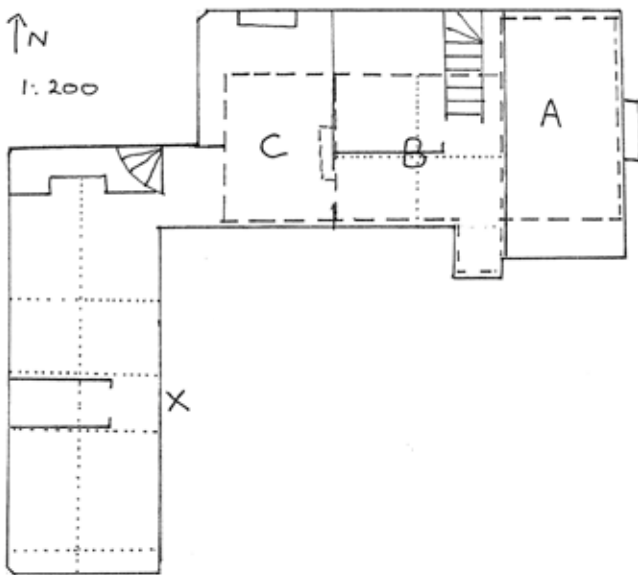
SKETCHES. Nancy S. F.S.D.E.

The Old Hall, East Tuddenham

Lynn Biggs

We gathered, a group of thirty on a balmy evening in the workshop where Grahame Clarke displays his delightful range of blue and white porcelain, in an outbuilding of the former farm of Old Hall, East Tuddenham, which Grahame and his wife Christine had kindly invited us to look around. I have been studying and researching the house for my UEA Landscape Archaeology Diploma and had reached a point where the fresh sets of eyes and opinions of the keen members of the group might hopefully give me some pointers towards solving the enigma of the development of this charming but baffling house.

At first sight the building is Tudor brick-built in an offset



L shape, strongly hinting that two buildings have been joined. Approaching from the north the current façade is an imposing but not visually satisfying row of three crow stepped gables with a variety of non-symmetrical windows. Only on viewing from the south the imposing porch and decorative brick door and window mouldings do we realise that the house was designed to front onto what was Tuddenham's Great Common.

The oldest features we found inside were impressive roll-moulded joists in the core (B) of the mainly Victorian interior of the north wing and dating from the early sixteenth century. The early yellow gault bricks on the south wall of this wing are probably of the original build (and may well have come from the pond in the garden) and interestingly continue westwards along bay C which, judging by the roof structure, is later (seventeenth century). Also seventeenth century is the extension northwards of bays B and C along with the crow-stepped north façade.

There was much debate as to whether bay A is also a later addition or was part of the original build as a crosswing. Internal joists have been boxed in but are visible outside on the east wall, which is of the same yellow gault as the south side of B and C. The south façade of A is later brick, but Michael Brown pointed out that the gable form is very sixteenth century. Up in the roof (where the group seemed much more at home among the timbers), the puzzle began to clear. The timbers of roof A are cut by those of B, indicating an earlier or contemporary build. The roof of C is a continuation of B, but Vic Nierop-Reading pointed out that certain timbers of B contain peg

holes which do not appear in the equivalent in C, indicating a different build date.

From this evidence, a possible development could be as follows. The original L-shaped build in early sixteenth century (C + B + A) with a porch on the outside and stack between C and B. In early seventeenth century bay C was rebuilt, B and C extended north to line of A, north façade built, stack removed at ground level and new one built at north end of C and south façade of A added. The interior was 'improved' to seventeenth century fashion to give separate reception hall and dining room as well as parlour and kitchen. There are rumours that an impressive seventeenth century staircase was subsequently removed to Elveden Hall.

The West wing is another enigma, as externally its decoration shows a high status house, while its interior is practically unimproved since the seventeenth century. A blocked original door at X may have been a screens passage entrance and there is evidence of a former stack at the south end. Some plaster covered brick mullioned windows remain at first floor level and in the lobby joining the two wings. In the butt-clasped purlin roof the arrangement of purlins indicates a possible former dormer window above the old entrance. We were told of former dove-cote holes in



the brick south end of the roof. The ground floor external SW corner of the building is chamfered, perhaps to allow easy access for farm vehicles round a tight corner. The floor of the south bay is sloped and drained for dairy use, and extra joists at odd angles indicate strengthening of the upper floor perhaps for grain storage.

A possible scenario is that it was built in mid sixteenth century as a separate high-status house, perhaps a dower house. When the north wing house was extended and gentrified in the seventeenth century, this house was joined to it and its rooms relegated to service and farm use. In 1913 sales particulars they are described as such. The 1839 tithe map shows the southernmost bay (dairy) as being in agricultural rather than domestic use.

The group, though perhaps initially uncomfortable to be presented with a brick-built rather than the usual timber framed building, found plenty of interest in this house, with its variety of internal and external decoration, and the unspoiled west wing. The key to the house's history lies, I think, in a combination of evidence from the roof timbers and from the brickwork. (Any brick experts out there?) My thanks to all for their advice and opinions, you will be acknowledged in my dissertation! A big thank you to Grahame and Christine Clarke for their hospitality and for their sensitive custodianship of this fascinating house.

Wattle and Daub/ Clay Lump Day

Roger Crouch

On one of the sunniest days of an otherwise inclement summer ten members joined Richard Hyde and Dirk Bouwens in a field at Redhill. During the morning session Richard took half the group through the technicalities of wattle and daub and Dirk urged the other half of the group to rebuild the wall of his shed using his speciality, clay lump.

Using his mobile 'timber frame', Richard demonstrated two types of panelling, the longer, thinner panels of East Anglia using only vertical wattles tied to horizontal ledges and the more commonly used 'square' panels used by furriners in other parts – where vertical wattles are interwoven with horizontal laths.

After enthusing about the chalky boulder clay of the region being ideal for daub, we were given insights into the art of daub including a menu for the daub mix, a drop test for daub consistency, a thumb test for daub hardness prior to rendering and many other tips. For the fastidious the hand application of daub containing bovine slurry may not seem an ideal recreational pastime.

The afternoon saw the two groups change tasks, and Dirk imparted his knowledge of the superior art of clay lump to former daubers (it should be noted that there was never any danger of our two mentors agreeing on the methods used - reinforcing my impression that not only do materials and methods change from area to area but also change from person to person).

To prepare a clay lump mix was almost identical to daub –the mix was then packed into a wetted wooden mould and after extrusion and drying this would become one of the modular '8 brick' clay lumps weighing 25 Kg. when dry. Using previously prepared lumps a 5ft section of shed wall was replaced up to the wall plate utilising the same lump mix for the mortar.

In both methods daubing or lumping the final stage is the application of the render, using the same daub mix minus the bovine slurry. This final render can be enhanced by clay pargetting to improve the status of the building.

On behalf of all participants I thank Richard and Dirk not only for an informative but also for an enjoyable and entertaining day.



Timber frame showing the square panels used commonly in UK on the left. The thinner panels used in East Anglia on the right. Applying render to wattle and daub panel; clay pargetting attempts, after final render Richard Hyde admiring wattle and daub panel. NB only vertical wattle used, tied to horizontal ledges—East Anglian method



Karen Mackie showing Dirk Bouwens how to 'butter' clay lump; Dirk turned up to lay final clay lump after students had rebuilt wall; Dirk applying render to clay lump. Note how skilfully repaired wall is contoured for authenticity; Master builders and Dirk posing in front of their handiwork. (Photos: Roger Crouch)



Oulton Chapel Mike Knights June 5 2004

Our AGM was held on a sunny June afternoon in idyllic surroundings at Oulton Chapel. Tucked away several turnings beyond Blickling, this perfect little brick building, built between 1728-31, double-pile, with four curly Dutch gables, glowed in the sun. Dissenters' chapels were often built in remote parts of the parish away from the parish church. It stands in what was once a sandpit, at the top of a grassy slope, backed by a bank of trees, with its associated manse- a simple three-bay cottage of 1784 – down by the lane in front.

Inside was all cool pale green elegance, with panelling, gallery, benches and a high pulpit. At the back was another meeting room, a very well-equipped kitchen and loos.

There was a very good turn-out of members and we piled in to hear Mike Knights tell us about the work of the Norfolk Historic Buildings Trust which had brought this gem back to life in 1991. Eighteen other projects have been completed by the trust since 1977 and its involvement with many other neglected buildings has also stimulated owners to repair properties or sell them to new owners.

After the AGM we partook of a splendid tea (meringues and scones!) on the lawn all of which rounded off a memorable afternoon.

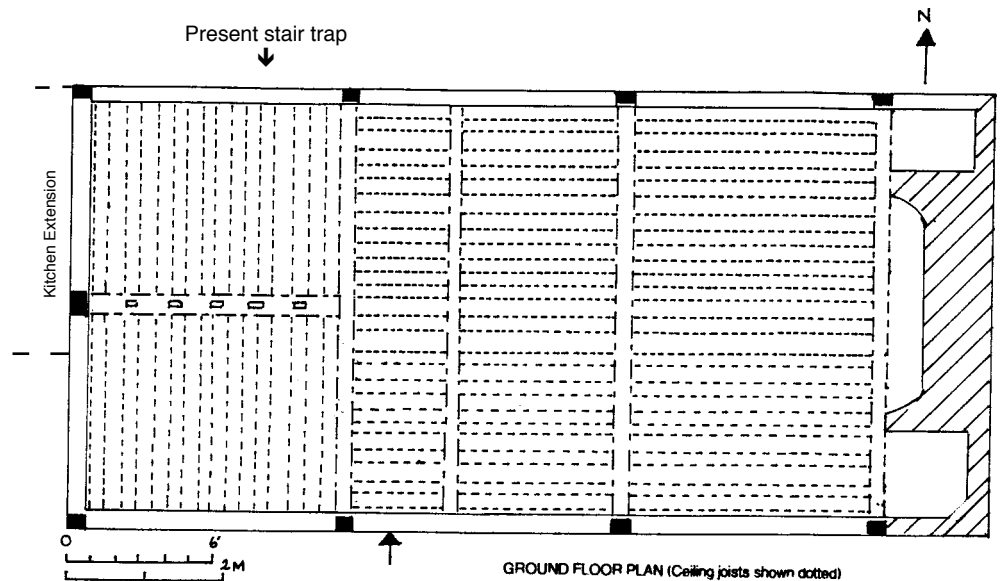
(AGM Report on page 17)

The Dower House, 62 Norwich Road, Tacolneston, Norfolk (TM 143945)

This is the report and drawings of a member's house which has been the subject of the latest training exercise (advanced) of the Group and will be the subject of one of the talks at the members' evening in October. You should note that the aim has been to produce a serious piece of research as well as refining the recorders' skills. This will not be the last you hear of this house and its Tacolneston neighbours! MB

This house is rendered under a pantiled roof with a 'wrap-around' chimney stack (recently re-pointed) to the east end (Fig. 1). There are three storeys and three windows can be seen in the chimney end. There are two attic gable windows and one mid-storey stair window all with chamfered brick surrounds (see Wilderness Farm Wacton). It is situated to the east of the Norwich Road in a small close. The track was formerly an access road to the common land to the south of the house.

The present front door is in the south elevation (Figs. 2 & 3) and this opens into a cross-passage; the north door is infilled. The cross-passage has two service doorways to the west and a close studded, fully framed, screen to the east dividing the passage from the Hall (Fig 4A). There is a large section central post between the service doors and parts of the sill are still evident. At ceiling level the common joists are laid flat and are pegged through the chamfered edge of the transverse principal joist. The screen is built of small section timber with small fixing pegs (Fig. 4B). The lintel above the off-set doorway and the six inch central rail are both decorated on the hall side with a



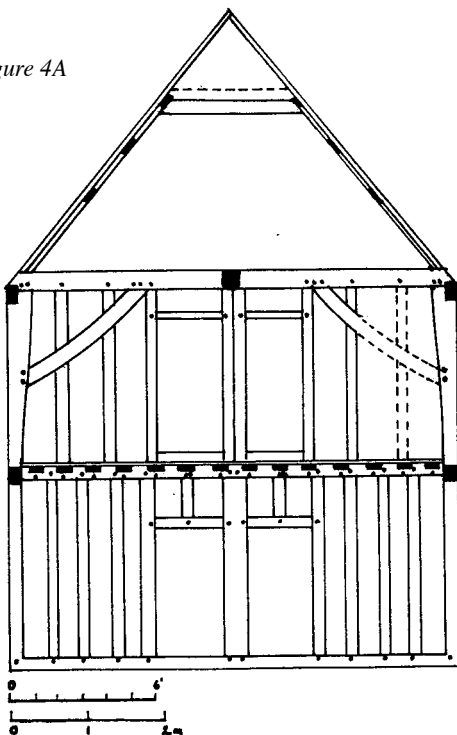
cross passage

one inch flat, a 3/8 inch concave, a shallow one inch roll, then the concave and flat. There are plaster fillets closing the gaps between the screen studs to the soffit of the ceiling. Number 8 stud from the south in the screen has peg holes and a mortice, purpose unknown.

The service rooms have an axial joist, with mortices in the soffit for studs, tenoned to the large storey posts (Fig. 1). The post to the west has roughly cut square indentations for the wattle fixings of the partition. The common joists have centre tenons and are laid flat. The west wall has a series of chiselled carpenter's assembly marks; the top of the girt to the studs above seem to be numbered from the south and the studs on the ground floor are numbered to the sill (Fig 5). The studs on the north side of the west wall are very weathered which probably reflects the use of the room as a dairy or brewhouse or similar use involving water or steam. There are very large peg holes on this wall, probably for shelving. One stud with its large peg holes also has a trench for a brace; it is also slightly narrower than the other studs: is this a reused timber? (Fig. 5) To the north of this stud is an opening that was the doorway into the kitchen extension. There was a frieze window in the north wall; there are small peg holes for the mullions which are probably hollow chamfered and glazed as in the Hall. The south window, now

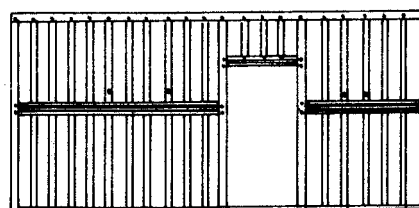
a smaller modern window, was originally a large oriel window. The oriel windows have no pegs for any mullions. The scribed carpenter's assembly marks on the south wall studs are a continuation of the sequence seen in the Hall. There is a stairtrap to the north with the trimmer pegged to the ceiling joists. The present stair rises to the partition

Figure 4A



CROSS-PASSAGE SERVICE PARTITION

Figure 4B



CROSS-PASSAGE & HALL SCREEN

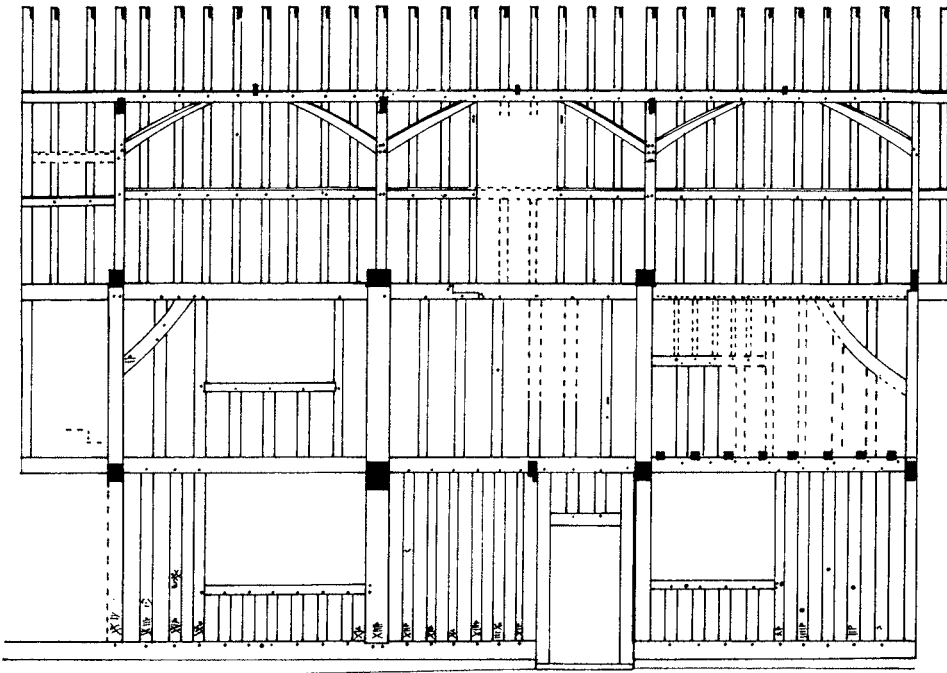


Figure 2
South Hall Long Section
(Roof taken through apex)

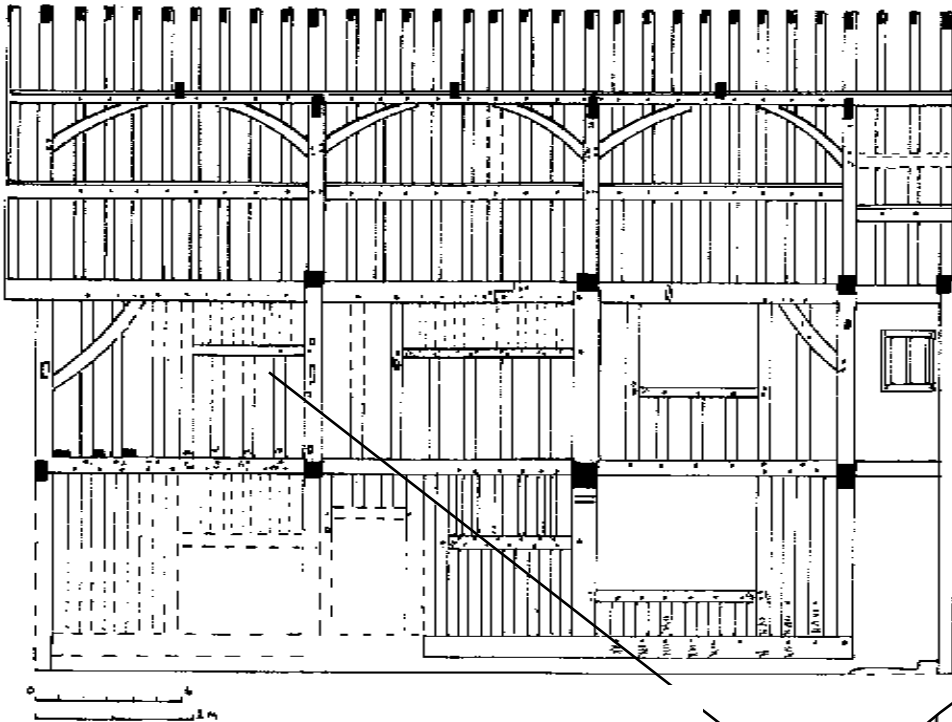
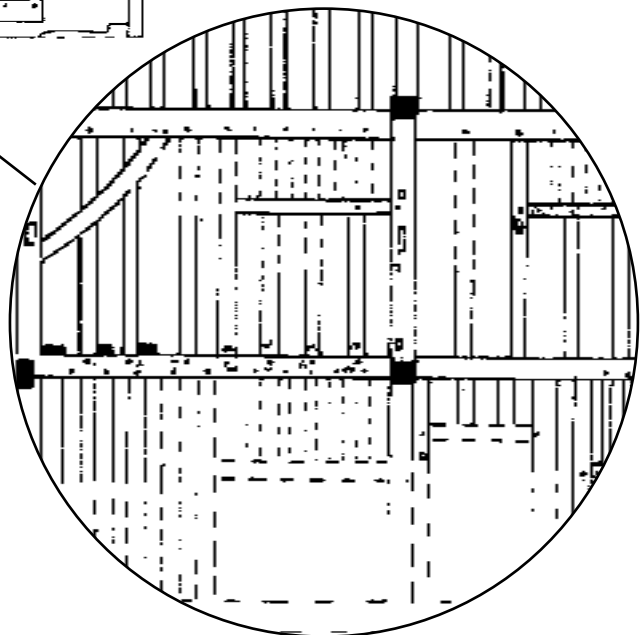


Figure 3
North Wall Long Section
(Roof taken through apex)



Dower House (Photo M Brown)

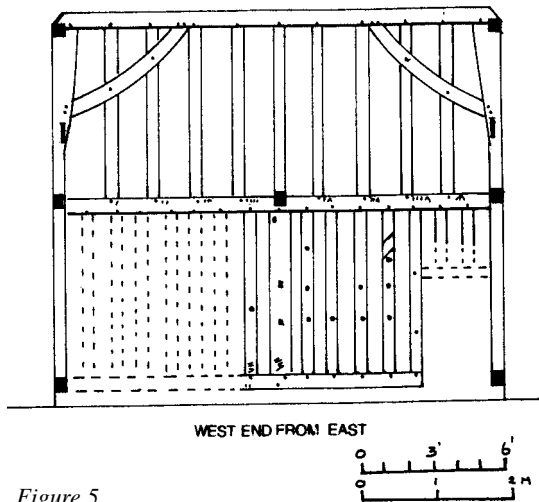


Figure 5

wall, which cannot be its original position as it cuts through a brace (Fig 6C). It is likely that the service chamber access was in this area but its exact position cannot be determined.

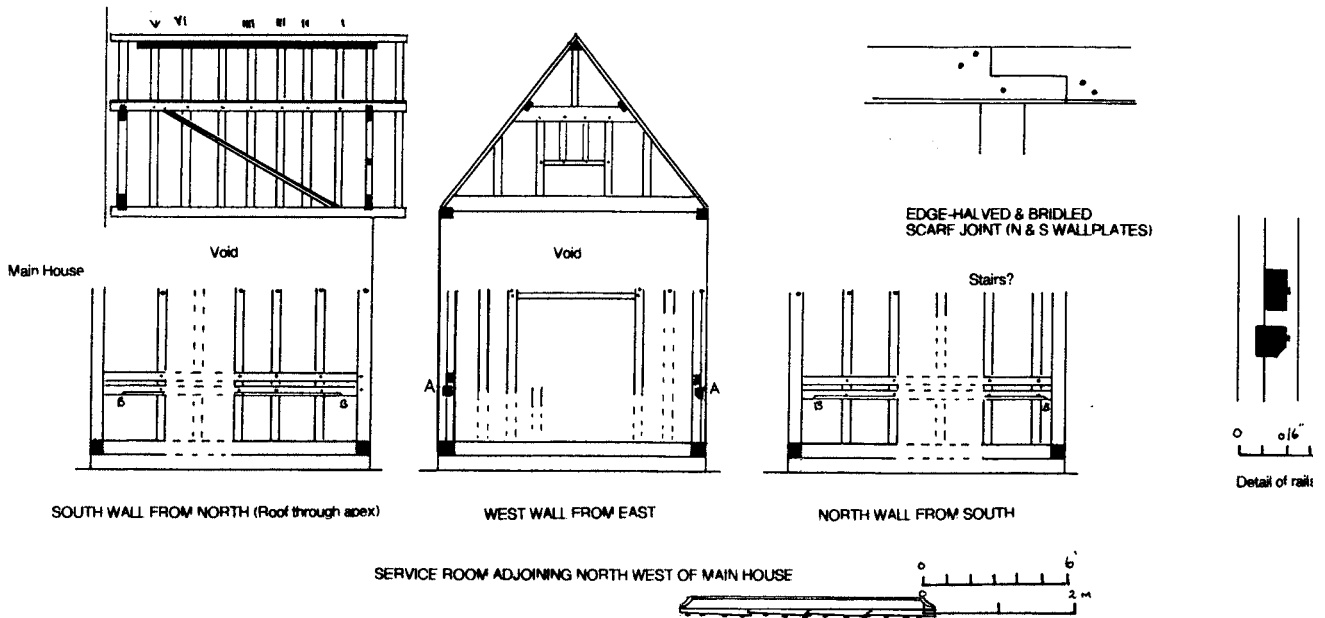
There are two service chambers (Figs. 2 & 3). The first floor partition is less closely studded than the ground floor partition and has the addition of trenched inverted arch braces to the sto-

the structure (Fig 6D). The lower rail is finished with a slight chamfer and a lamb's tongue stop (Fig. 6C). This seems to indicate a different carpenter and perhaps a later date than the main house.

The roof chamber of the western extension is seen from the north service chamber. This has an ovolo mullion window in the west gable. There are side purlins clasped by the collars, west end in situ, east end replaced by elbow pieces to a higher collar to give access from the service chamber. There is a triangular ridge-piece and the roof is not tied to the main building (Fig 6B).

This extension was originally one and a half storeys with a large pegged ceiling clamp (peg holes seen just below present ceiling)(Figs 6A & B). There is now a void below the floor of the roof chamber. It is likely that the original chamber was accessed from the extension and there may be evidence of the stairs in the north wall from missing clamp peg holes in the eastern studs.

In the Hall there is a transverse principal joist with a deep chamfer and step shield stops (Figs 8D). This rests on decorative ledges formed on the storey posts by two tiered chamfers.



rey posts. The straight lintels over the doorways have scribed carpenter's marks IO & IIO. The two original doors, which each consist of four reed-edged boards, are hung on pintles (Fig. 7). The jowls on the posts are long and straight and the tie-beam has chamfers with step shield stops. The chambers have frieze windows, north wall and south wall, with small peg holes for the mullions, probably hollow chamfered. The south window has a shutter groove. Each corner post has inverted arch braces to both elevations. The upper north studs and girt have a series of carpenter's assembly marks I to VII starting on the first stud to the west.

The western extension, originally accessed from the north service room through the apparently later doorway, is a small timber-framed building of approximately the same date as the main house, now used as the kitchen (Fig 6C). At ground-floor level it has a window to the west and running around the wall at waist height is a sturdy double rail, one rail trenched and both rails pegged to the studs and evidently an integral part of

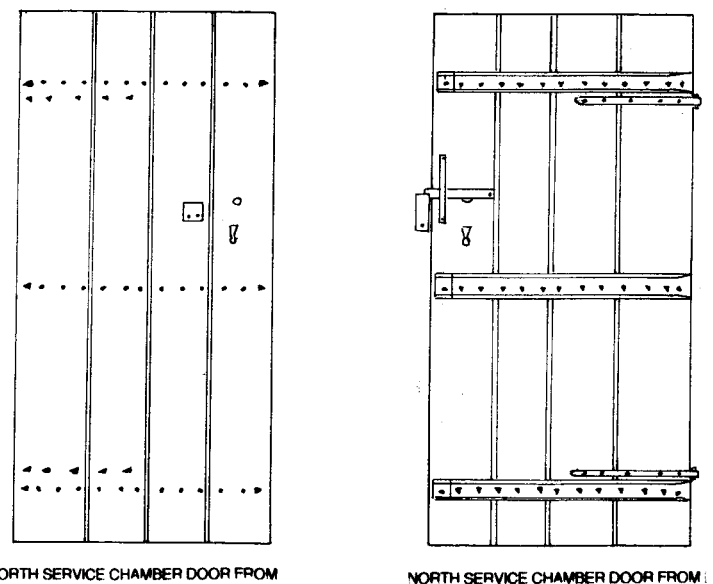


Figure 7 Original door

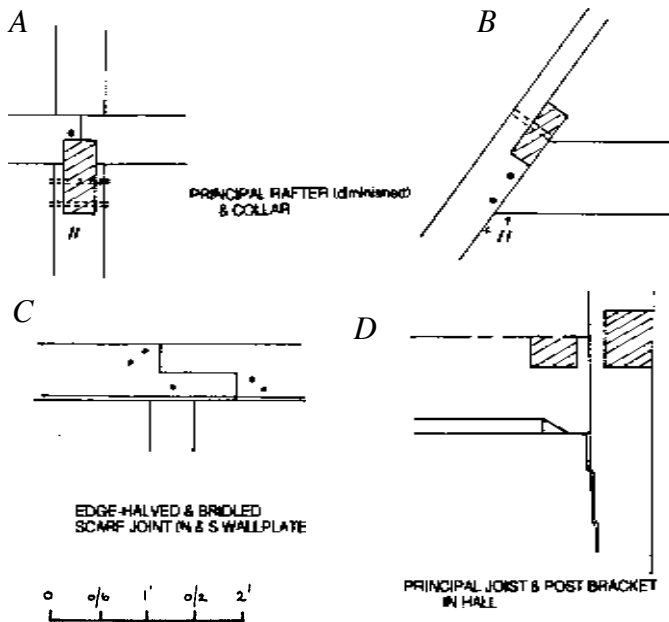


Figure 8 A—D Details

The large section common joists are plain and laid flat with diminished haunch soffit tenons. In the north wall to the west of the principal joist there is a complete hollow chamfered ovolo mullion frieze window. There is a carpenter's mark II at the west end of the sill. To the east of the principal joist there is evidence for large oriel windows in both the north and south walls measuring five feet one inch from the soffit of the girt to the soffit of the sill. The north window has a carpenter's mark III at the east end of the sill and on the stud. There is a series of scratch/scribed carpenter's assembly marks in the base of the studs to the sole plate on both walls. The north wall marks run from west to east; I to VII in the service room chamber (with closer studding below) & XX to the east of the principal post to XXVIII on the last stud to the east (Fig 3). On the south wall they have a C tag with I to V in the service room and XXII on

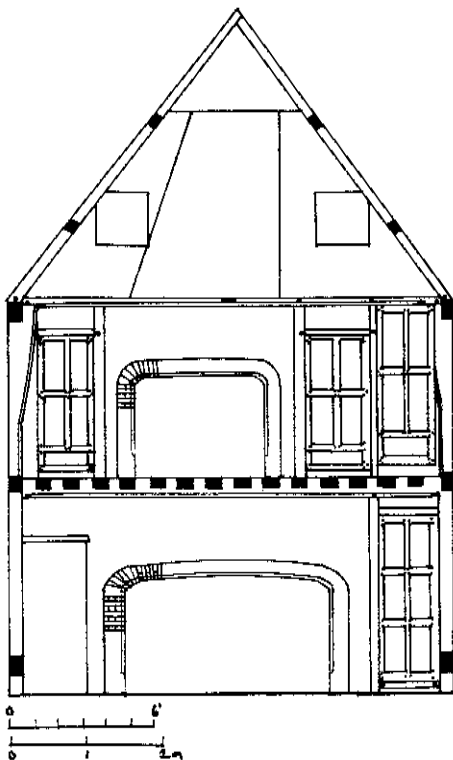


Figure 9 Cross Section showing fireplaces

the first stud next the the Hall screen XXVIII on the last stud to the east (Fig 2). The two XXs and the V overlap each other and the cross-passage is not numbered.

The fire-place to the east has a wide very shallow four-centred brick arch, with chamfered edges from one foot above floor level and no metal bar (Fig 9). There is some evidence of ruddle on some of the bricks and some original pointing, though more recent re-pointing and repair has to an extent covered this. The brickwork of the side supporting walls is of alternate rows of stretchers and headers (three in a row, two on the arch). The corner sections are interesting, apparently moulded in one curved piece with mock 'pointing' scratched and painted into them.

There is a doorhead to the north of the stack leading to an alcove. There is a six-panelled door to the south of the stack opening onto the stair. The stair has thick oak treads and a full height stair mast.

The fireplace on the first floor has a similar but narrower brick arch (Fig 9). The chimney tie-beam and supporting storey posts are

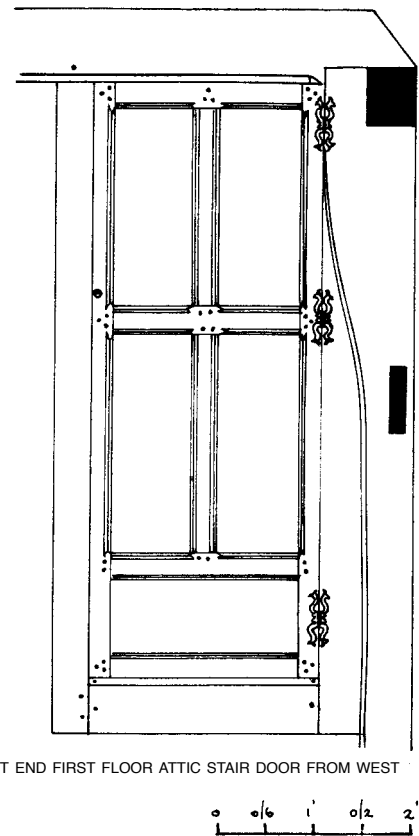


Figure 10

both chamfered. There is a five-panelled door with cockspur hinges to the north of the stack (see alcove above) leading to a small chamber with a north window and an inside doorhandle; this may be for a garderobe or a close-stool chamber (Fig 10). To the south of the stack are two five-panelled doors giving access to the upper and lower stairs.

The hall chamber now has a partition under the tie-beam but was originally a single room. In both the north and the south wallplates there is an edge-halved and bridled scarf joint nine inches long (Fig 8C). In the north wall there is a sill for a frieze window (now blocked) with its peg hole evidence for the mullions. There is a carpenter's mark III at the west end of the sill. To the east of the tie-beam in both elevations are

large oriel windows above the hall oriel windows below. The north oriel window has a carpenter's mark II on the west end of the sill and the west stud (Fig 3). The doorpost to the south of the chimney has three circles inscribed on it which may be apotropaic marks.

The attic is reached from the Hall chamber doorway. The roof has in-line butt purlins in two tiers with collars clasped by the upper tier (Figs 2, 3 & 6B). The rafters are halved at the ridge and they are pegged to the upper and lower purlins. The principal rafters are diminished above the upper purlin and there is a simple scarf joint behind the south principal rafter (number II) (Fig 8A & B). There are double pegged arched wind braces to each side of the principal rafters except at the chimney end (Figs 2 & 3). Here the lower purlin is not in line but below the main purlin level and there is a single pegged purlin in the wind-brace position (Fig 2). The principal rafter and the soffit of the collar are chisel numbered with I at the east end (Fig 3). There are intermediate collars (which may be original) birdsmouthed onto the upper purlin. The present dormer window has large mortices for an earlier dormer roof in the rafters either side. There is evidence for an original dormer 'cut-out' in the lower purlin (as seen in Burrage House & The Old Post-Office, New Buckenham). At the west end the last rafter and the wallplate extend outside the gable wall to take the roof (Figs 2 & 3).

Interpretation

'The Dower House' seems to be almost complete as it was built. Of high quality timber throughout (with the exception of the one re-used stud in the kitchen), it has a uniformity of design which suggests that it was built as a single concept. The design features discussed above suggest a late sixteenth century date and its accommodation, with a hall-cum-parlour, may lend some credibility to its name.

The Dower House must be compared with the Manor House which stands within a hundred yards. The two houses share every detail of their carpentry from the design and execution of such large features as roof, floors and windows down to the style of carpenter's marks, the mouldings on the doors and the profile of the storey post brackets. They differ significantly however in that the Manor House has two identical 'wrap around' brick

gable ends as against the one of the Dower House, and it retains an unheated central Hall (with an unheated chamber off the original corridor above) with the opposed entries of a cross-passage in both the Hall and the eastern room either side of a partition. The kitchen extension to the Manor House, though not of the same design, has a similar relationship to the main house, though the brick gable evidently precluded placing it at the end, so it is to the side. In both cases the upper floor access is through a later, improvised entrance as if the same mistake about access from below had been made in both cases, a further argument that the houses were both built at the same time. Both houses combine archaic features such as the cross-passage, flat laid common joists and plain shield chamfer stops with the latest in glazed windows, winder stairs, panelled doors and two-tier butt purlin roofs with evidence of original dormer windows. Given that they were clearly built at the same time, and evidently by the same carpenter, the difference in their plans must imply different purposes, so the condensed plan of the Dower House could be evidence of that very function, giving surprising appropriateness to the modern name.

*Susan & Michael Brown with contributions from
Mary Ash, Diana Maywhort, Jill Napier & Sue Shand.
Woodlands, Bylaugh Park, Norfolk NR20 4RL
01362 688362*

Recorders' Key

Surveyed by: M. Ash, S. & M. Brown, D. Maywhort, J. Napier & S. Shand

Drawn By:

Figure 1	Ground Floor Plan	Jill Napier	Scale 1/4" to 1" on A3
Figure 2	South Wall Long Section	Sue Shand	Scale 1/4" to 1" on A3
Figure 3	North Wall Long Section	Diana Maywhort	Scale 1/4" to 1" on A3
Figure 4	Cross Passage	Mary Ash	Scale 1/4" to 1" on A3
Figure 5	West End from East	Susan Brown	Scale 1/4" to 1" on A3
Figure 6	Service Room	Susan Brown	Scale 1/4" to 1" on A3
Figure 7	North Service Chamber Door	Susan Brown	Scale 1" to 1" on A3
Figure 8	Details	Susan Brown	Scale 1" to 1" on A3
Figure 9	Section: Fireplaces	Mary Ash	Scale 1/4" to 1" on A3
Figure 10	Attic Stair Door	Susan Brown	Scale 1" to 1" on A3

Glossary

Frieze window: Small, high, untransomed window (M Wood, *The English Medieval House* (1990), p 358)

Oriel window: projecting and resting on brackets (CBA *Practical Handbook in Archaeology No 5*, (1996))

Ruddle: red ochre (Chambers English Dictionary)

Gambrel Roof: has a small change of pitch in the middle of the roof slope, usually constructed with a shaped principal

Mansard Roof: is similar in form though differently constructed. It generally has hipped ends and a larger change of pitch; the term (named after François Mansard) is usually restricted to polite architecture (*Vernacular Architecture 22* (1991), 24)

Dragon Beam: beam running diagonally across the ceiling of a room to support jetties on two adjacent sides of an upper floor, or, in the upper floor of a building with a hipped roof, to carry the foot of a hip rafter (CBA *Practical Handbook in Archaeology No 5*, (1996))



Michael Brown insisted that we include this picture of the Tacolneston group hard at work to redress the balance of the bibulous scene in the last Newsletter

Wallpaper at Narborough Hall

Sue Brown

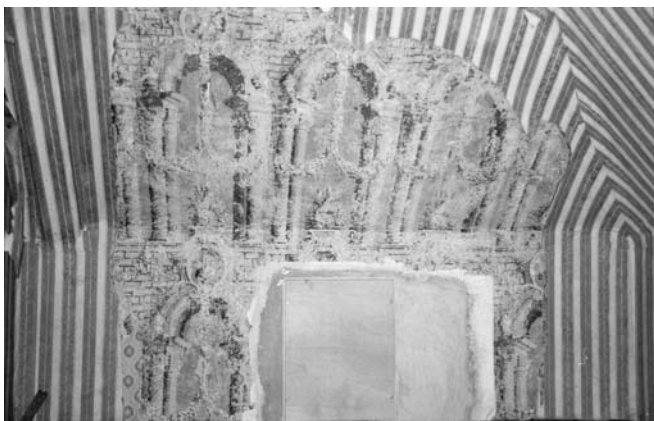
Occasionally Michael and I are asked to look at houses that cannot be considered vernacular but have elements of timber-faming (usually the roof) that owners want explained. This was the case when we were invited to go to Narborough Hall. The original brick house was built by the Spelman family in the sixteenth century and this was enlarged by two wings in the eighteenth century. Most of the roof structure is of butt purlins with shaved tenons. This form seems to begin at the turn of the sixteenth/seventeenth century and continues for a long period. Above the early south front the roof survives in its original form of high arch braces to an upper collar (not visible) and large section windbraces to butt purlins. The principal rafters have scribed carpenter's assembly marks (numbered from the west)



High arch braces to an upper collar and large section windbraces to butt purlins. (photo: Michael Brown)

and some of the braces have large angled peg holes, probably for raising the trusses into position. This gives us the order of assembly of the roof.

In carrying out some plastering in the attics the tradesman had exposed several fragments of wallpaper. There were some small pieces of Gothic, Pugin-style, papers and a larger fragment of what I thought might be 'pillar & arch' of about 1760, block printed in black, white and brown on a grey ground. This is a very rare survival and I found illustrations of it in 'The Papered Wall', Ed. Lesley Hoskins, Thames & Hudson, 1994, p 115; Timothy Johnson's House, North Andover, Massachusetts, and Shire Album 276 'Wallpaper' by Clare Taylor, page 8; Ancient High House, Stafford. Consequently I sent the photograph to



Christine Woods, curator of wallpaper, at the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester. She confirmed my thoughts and sent several other references and photocopies which I was able to pass on to the owners. Obviously conservation is a specialist field and whether more less damaged pieces survive is unknown. What this paper does give us is a confirmation of the date of the re-building as this paper was probably purchased to adorn their new rooms and the 'left-overs' used at a later date in the attics.

Book Recommendations

Dennis Hardy & Colin Ward, *Arcadia for All: The Legacy of a Makeshift Landscape* (Five Leaves, 2004)

John McCann, *Clay & Cob Buildings* (Revised edn., Shire, 2004)

Anthony Quiney, *Town Houses of Medieval Britain* (Yale University Press, 2003)

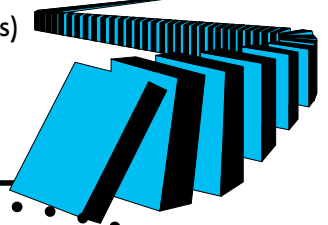
Christopher Powell, *Discovering Cottage Architecture* (Revised edn. Shire, 2003)

Anna Hallett, *Almshouses* (Shire, 2004)

Peter Guillery, *The Small House in Eighteenth-Century London* (Yale University Press, 2004)

John & Pamela McCann, *The Dovecotes of Historical Somerset* (Somerset Vernacular Buildings Research Group, 2003)

N A Brown, *Doocots (Dovecots) of Scotland: Moray* (Scottish Vernacular Buildings Working Group, 2004)



HELP RE-
QUIRED...

Is there a member who would like
to become involved with publicity for the
Group?

If you could help, please contact:
Rosemary Forrest
01603 7423145

News and Views

The most popular leisure pursuit in Britain (so we are told) is the guided tour - visiting stately homes. This is certainly borne out by the summer programmes of several local societies, ourselves included, and although admittedly not all the homes could be said to be stately, they are usually beautiful and always of great interest.

However a recent evening meeting brought home to me the unique quality of a NHBG visit: the analytical approach to the building, and the general participation by our experts and greenhorns alike in wrestling with the many problems of the construction that it might present.

Of course there was also the very agreeable social side as well, the drinks and nibbles and chat, but the building was the centrepiece.

The object of the exercise was to train our eyes - to look closely at things. The recording teams are trained this way, to record every feature they see down to the tiniest mark, the slightest change of colour. This is intended to assist in the drawing up process when things are more likely to make sense when they are all put together, and (it is hoped) daylight will dawn.

On this occasion we were let loose inside without being told what was known about the house, so we had no pre-conceived ideas. We trooped up and down and sideways; there were many rooms, it was very complicated (especially the roof) so it took a long time.

Finally we assembled on the lawn at the back and in the ensuing very lively discussion many suggestions were made and many opinions aired about the relationship of the interior of the house to the exterior before us, and the possible phases of the building. There were arguments, even between the experts. No definite solution was actually offered, but it was all extremely stimulating and hugely enjoyable. A member was heard to observe as, still arguing, we started for home - 'it's so much better than just being led around...'

It has been a good summer.

*Alayne Fenner, Newsletter Editor
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✠✠✠✠ Church Sub Group ✠✠✠✠

The committee is currently discussing a project for the recording of aspects of Norfolk church architecture and investigating whether particular work or styles can be linked to individual masons. The size and complexity of what we undertake will depend on how many members are interested in getting involved. If you are interested in discussing details or finding out more about the project, contact

Ian Hinton on
01502 475287 or at ian.hinton@tesco.net.

If enough members are interested, a get-together will be arranged to refine and explain the project.

Membership

Membership levels remain buoyant, close to last year's maximum figure of around 220.

Standing Order levels are slightly up, and the Committee would like to thank those who have converted to paying this way as it reduces the administrative effort considerably.

Ian Hinton
01502 475287
e.mail: ian.hinton@tesco.net

The New Buckenham Project



We have now looked at all the historic houses in New Buckenham to which access is possible and our reports have been put into a form ready to go into the next Journal, due out in Spring 2005. Paul Rutledge has contributed digests of his exhaustive documentary information and Adam Longcroft is waiting, with word-processor poised, to pull it all together when the final piece of the jigsaw arrives from Ian Tyers, the dendrochronologist.

Ian spent four days in the village in May, loyally assisted by us, taking cores from the timbers of several houses which he judged to have a chance of yielding useful information (*see photo above: M. Brown*). The problem in New Buckenham is that most of the houses seem to date from the sixteenth century, and it seems that at that time the building timber in New Buckenham was fast-grown and used young, so having relatively few growth rings to provide the statistical comparison necessary for dating. The fifteenth century and the seventeenth century buildings seemed more promising and the Old Vicarage seemed most promising of all. Ian will be announcing his results at the meeting in New Buckenham on 24th September, so be there if you possibly can (*see page 4*).

Whatever the outcome of the dendro, even if it is negative, we can make use of the information it provides about the buildings and their relation to the social and economic conditions experienced by those who built and lived in them. This will be the subject of the 2005 Journal and it should constitute a useful contribution to Norfolk studies as well as providing the basis for the further study of the range of Norfolk buildings in general. Firm information about New Buckenham buildings will enable us to evaluate other buildings in South Norfolk and relate them meaningfully to the relatively well-studied buildings of North Suffolk. Then the rest of Norfolk awaits!

Susan & Michael Brown 01362 688362



Chairman's Report

Adam, who is stepping down as Chairman, reported on a year of significant achievements: membership has stabilised at around 200, our finances are healthy and will allow an ambitious programme of events.

The first NHBG Journal appeared in March and was very well received, the winter lectures were well attended and the summer events over-subscribed.

We have received the Lottery grant of £5,000 which has allowed for dendro. tests on 8-10 houses in New Buckenham to take place, and a £375 grant from the Scole Committee to buy building recording equipment for the recording team. Adam thanked the committee for all their hard work and wished the new chairman every success.

Treasurer's Report

Sue Shand reported that the financial state of the group remained strong. Surplus for the year was almost £1,200. Bank account balance was £3,267.27 at 31 March, plus the Lottery Grant of £5,000. The accounts were with the Accountant.

Amendments to the Constitution

The offices of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer and Membership Secretary to be held for four years and then to be available for election, in turn, annually. Not more than 10 ordinary Committee members to be elected annually. Committee members not attending 50% of Committee meetings may not be eligible for re-election.

Election of Officers

Michael Brown was nominated as Chairman by the Committee and elected by the meeting. He expressed his enthusiasm for the work of the Group which has enormous potential to contribute to the understanding of the historic buildings of the county.

The new committee is listed on page 19.

One of the favourite debating topics of enthusiasts for historic buildings is the question of what is meant by 'vernacular' in this context and it is one that is never fully resolved, given the variables of region, historic periods and socio-economic conditions involved. Fortunately we in the NHBG don't need to solve the puzzle since we are not a purely vernacular buildings group, but are prepared to investigate any building in its historic aspect. In practice though we do spend much of our time in the everyday buildings of ordinary people, this being the field which seems to have had least systematic attention in the past. We have this focus in common with a number of other local historic buildings groups throughout the country and the national forum for the subject is provided by the V.A.G. It was formed in 1952, when the focus of most architectural history was still very much on polite architecture as opposed to vernacular. The N.H.B.G. and our sister groups in Essex and Suffolk are continuing the tradition. The V.A.G. encourages communication between its members by arranging conferences in the spring and winter and publishes its annual journal. This incorporates all the dendro dates which have been published each year, an invaluable resource for us, and includes articles which often set the agenda for the next stage of the subject. Anyone who is interested in vernacular architecture may join the V.A.G. and the N.H.B.G. is an affiliated society. (Two members from the N.H.B.G. may apply for places at the conferences but individual members take priority if they are over-booked). The annual subscription is £20 per annum for individuals and members of the same household may pay £30 for a joint subscription, and this includes the annual Journal. See the bookstall at our meetings for a membership application form if you are interested.

Michael Brown

Letters

There has been a gratifying response to Sue Brown's request for information about skirting boards made from tiles. Richard Berry reports a strange 21-inch section of concrete-like skirting between two perfectly conventional sections of wooden skirting in the side hall of his 1840s house, possibly a repair of some sort post WWII, when it was not possible to get matching wooden skirting.

Tom Coke, Pat Reynolds, and Brenda Watkin have also sent most interesting pieces on the subject (see page 18)

In Amsterdam recently I was climbing the steep winding stair to the attic of Rembrandt's house, and as the floor reached eye level I noted that the landing had blue-and-white Delft tiles as skirting. *Alayne Fenner, Editor*

Great Hospital Visit from Susan Stanley, Norwich

Dear Rosemary

Just a note to say thank you very much for organising Saturday's tour of the Great Hospital with Carole Rawcliffe. It was a thoroughly enjoyable - and informative - visit, and I have rarely known two hours to pass so quickly. Carole really brought the buildings and times to life, and I know I was not the only person who would have been happy to spend even longer there.

(See Newsletter No 6 for first visit by Group. AF)

From Elphin Watkin, Essex

In response to the article by Ian Hinton on Godwick Barn: the conclusion states that the building was apparently not built as a threshing barn as originally there was only one large door (at the back). There really only needs to be one large door to bring in the sheaves if the entry, and exit, can be gained through the same door. In this case, with the prestigious west elevation, one

can only assume that egress toward the Hall was not welcome. So, if threshing was to be carried out on the midstrey area, a cross draught could be provided from a small door. There are numerous examples that prove this point. The Vernacular Architecture Group's Spring Conference 2004 took us to the York Moors and Wolds where there were many examples of barns with small doors, and we must remember that the large farm wagon is a comparatively late form of transport. So why was it not possible that the opposing door to the large door on the eastern side was in fact similar to that surviving on the left hand side as shown in the photograph? The pedimented head to the door, being lower than those of the windows, would then have been completely lost in the later alterations.

Ian Hinton replies (to Elphin Watkins comments):

Elphin's point was brought home to those of us who visited Godwick barn in June (*see page 6*). The wind, although fairly light, whistled through the opening across the threshing floor and would probably have been able to winnow gold!

White Tile Skirting from Brenda Watkin, Essex

In the course of my research into the Victorian architect William White (1825–1900), I have consulted many of his specifications for parsonages and private houses. Unfortunately, Sue does not say in which room the white tile skirting was found but there are various examples of white wall tiles and matching skirtings being used in the service areas of the house and in particular the kitchen and scullery. Unfortunately I have not been able to find a reference to white tiles in any of the W. White specifications, but here is an extract from his specification for Holy Trinity Parsonage, Halstead, Essex (*see below*). The date on the drawings for the parsonage is July 6th, 1853 with the specification dated the following day, and this without the use of CD systems or word processors!

On the ground floor the study, guest room and dining room were to be floored with old ship oak sleepers 4 1/2" x 3", fir joists 4" x 2 1/4", yellow deal batten floor boards ploughed and tongued with splayed headings and mitred at angles. This would then have left the hall, passages, kitchen, scullery, pantry and other small service rooms to be filed to the enclosed specification.

In the new parsonage house at Milcombe, Oxon., February 28th, 1861, the instruction is that "...all floors intended to be paved to be properly prepared, levelled and well rammed a two inch bed of concrete floated and brought to a perfectly even

surface, to receive the tiles bedded in mortar not jointed but swum in with neat cement of a fluid consistency, the excess being immediately cleaned off and the tiles rubbed dry. The Porch and Hall to be paved with Maws red, black and buff 6" square seconds tiles 1/2" thick according to the detail drawing. All plastered walls upon paved floors to have 6" x 3" Maws plain 1/2" red flooring tiles as skirting set upright flush in cement." Further on in the specification when describing red deal batten floors he makes mention that all of the tile skirting have 1 1/4" x 3/4" chamfered fillet to cover joint of plaster. Previously at Heydour in Lincolnshire, 1856–7, the skirting tiles were to be Minton 6" x 3" border tiles, plain red and flush with the plaster. I do not think that the tiles that Sue found had anything to do with preventing ingress of damp but were tiled skirting to go with previously tiled walls. The use of tiles on the floors also merits a tiled skirting rather than the chamfered or moulded timber specified with timber floors.

Skirting Tiles Tom Coke, Holkham

...I have exactly the same tiles in my farmhouse, Waterden Farm, which is a typical redbrick Georgian farmhouse on the Holkham Estate (close to South Creake), which Pevsner dated to round 1800, but I believe that part of the house dates from the eighteenth century. Although I cannot recall seeing them in any other Holkham Estate farmhouses, I know that we do have a small supply of them in our stores.

With regard to the questions that you pose, I'm afraid that I am none the wiser as to what their original use was; all I know is that they are extremely robust when having to deal with my children's toys! I have not measured them but I would imagine that they are the same size as the ones you described, i.e. eleven inches by eight inches. I hope this is of some help to you, and maybe one day I will get to meet you on one of your tours, although I have to say with a young family and living at one end of Norfolk, I don't often get to go on them.

Tile Skirting Boards from Pat Reynolds, Ash Vale

Dear Sue
In the seventeenth century Delft tiles were used as skirting boards to prevent the distempered walls from being wetted by the wet-mopping of floors—I wonder whether your pub floor-board tiles had a similar function?

*Tile Paving. saving ...
Mack Rubbick and 3 inches of fine Coal
ashes bedded in fine Mortar and pointed
in Cement*

*Skirting Tiles. The Tile floors to be skirting with plain Skirting
Tiles*

William White specification for Holy Trinity Parsonage, Halstead (1853) referred to by Brenda Watkin

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Courses & Conferences

UEA organised:

Certificate in Continuing Education

1. Architectural History from Pre-history to the Gothic

Course Director: Vic Nierop-Reading

2. Medieval Art and Architecture

Course Director: Margaret Forrester

details: (Tel 01603 592261;
e.mail: a.longcroft@uea.ac.uk)

Other Courses

1. History and Architecture of the English Parish Church

2. Gothic Architecture

Tutor: Gerald Randall

Venues: Cromer and Fakenham

details: (Tel: 01263 822170 e.mail: sheringham.adult.edu@norfolk.gov.uk)

details: (Tel: 01328 851223, e.mail: fakenham.adult.edu@norfolk.gov.uk).

Contemporary Architecture

Tutor: Vic Nierop-Reading

Venue: Fakenham

details: (Tel: 01328 851223; e.mail: fakenham.adult.edu@norfolk.gov.uk).

Vernacular Architecture of East Anglia

Venue: Reepham

Tutor: Vic Nierop-Reading

details: (Tel: 01603 870483;
e.mail: kate@stjohnsalley.fsnet.co.uk)

England's Seaside Architecture: Foundation for Future Prosperity

A three-day Conference
29-31 October, 2004
Cromer, Norfolk

Organised by the Centre for Regional Studies, Anglia Polytechnic University and Cromer Preservation Society in Conjunction with North Norfolk DC
12 speakers, including Dr Mark Girouard, from English Heritage, academia, Pier Society, 20th C Society; Guided walk; discussions cover past and future.

Details: Tony Kirby: 01223 363271 Ex 2030
e.mail: T.Kirby@apu.ac.uk

Special price for NHBG members: £25.00

NHBG Winter 2004/05

It is hard to believe that another Winter Programme is upon us. Please do look carefully at the dates and locations. Many of our speakers will be coming from out of the County and we have, therefore, tried to accommodate them. For this reason, there will be no Aperitifs. The joint meeting this season will be with the newly formed Breckland Society when Tom Williamson will be addressing us. I do hope you will support this meeting; the Society are interested in recording buildings and NHBG have offered their expertise. The Group is anxiously awaiting the New Buckenham Dendro results so again we hope many of you will visit this fascinating planned town on Friday 24 September. Our members' evening will be well worth attending. **Remember: admission is free to members but non-members are most welcome for a £2.00 fee.**

If any member has difficulty getting to meetings, please let me know.

Many thanks to Mary Ash who has done the hard work of organising the lectures. I would also like to thank Adam Longcroft who, in the last three years, has frequently been at the end of hysterical e-mails to which he always responded with precision and alacrity...

If you have any ideas for speakers in the future, or any other comments, do please let me know.

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

New Buckenham Dendrochronology Results

...Ian Tyers

Date: Friday, 24 September 2004
Time: 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm
Place: New Buckenham Village Hall, Moat Lane, New Buckenham

This will be Ian's second lecture in New Buckenham. Core samples have been taken from buildings and it is hoped that these will provide definite dating evidence. This evidence will be used in conjunction with documentary work by Paul Rutledge and building surveys by the Group to establish a base for future work in Norfolk.

Members' Evening

Date: Wednesday 20 October 2004
Time: 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm
Place: Elizabeth Fry Building, University of East Anglia, off B1108 Watton Road, Norwich

Dower House, Tacolneston

...Tacolneston Recording Team

You will have read the report of this team in this Newsletter. The team will be talking of their findings and experiences, as recorders and owner, in uncovering the structure of this classic timber-framed building.

Chestnut Cottage, Forncett End

...Karen Mackie

From Vinyl Wallpaper to Medieval Hovel

...Anna Kettle

Recording Update

...The Browns

Medieval Gildhalls

...Leigh Alston

Date: Monday, 29 November 2004
Time: 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm
Place: Elizabeth Fry Building, University of East Anglia, off B1108 Watton Road, Norwich

Leigh Alston is a well-known figure in the world of Vernacular Architecture. He is an architectural historian of some years' standing whose base is in Suffolk. He has also lectured on UEA courses and works for English Heritage. Gildhalls were a feature of medieval life and early documents make many references to them. They can also be the grandest of buildings or the simplest depending upon the wealth of the gild. Leigh would be interested to hear of Norfolk examples.

Lime

...Michael Wingate

Date: Wednesday, 15 December 2004
Time: 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm
Place: Elizabeth Fry Building, University of East Anglia, off B1108 Watton Road, Norwich

Michael Wingate is a member of English Heritage for the Eastern Region. He has a wide knowledge of lime and its uses and is the author of books and pamphlets on the subject..

Medieval Shops

...David Clark

Date: Friday 28 January 2005
Time: 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm
Place: Elizabeth Fry Building, University of East Anglia, off B1108 Watton Road, Norwich

David is a Course Director for Oxford University Cert in Vernacular Architecture and a leading member of VAG. He has made the study of Medieval shops his speciality.

Party at George and Alayne Fenner's house in Norwich on 5 February 2005

Details in the January letter

Joint meeting with The Breckland Society

Great Estates of Nineteenth Century Breckland

...Tom Williamson

Date: Saturday 19 February 2005
Time: 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm
Place: The Houghton Centre, South Pickenham, nr Watton

Directions: (1) Signposted off the B1077 Swaffham-Ashill Road.
(2) A47 from east, take the turning to N. Pickenham and then S. Pickenham. Signs on this road but not the A.47.

Tom Williamson will need little introduction to Norfolk landscape historians. The subject will provide a broad base highlighting the change in land use, economy, and buildings in this little appreciated area of the County.

From East Anglia to New England

...Lawrence Butler

Date: Saturday 19 March 2005
Time: 2.00 pm for 2.30 pm
Place: Thoresby College, South Quay, King's Lynn

Directions: Once in King's Lynn follow signs to the Youth Hostel

Parking: Parking at the south end of South Quay or usually available along the quayside itself

It is hoped that this topic will widen our horizons. This contribution comes from an experienced buildings' inspector.