

ANOTHER THIRTEENTH-CENTURY HOUSE FOR BUCKINGHAMSHIRE?

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Pendyce House, Ivinghoe, is shown to have been an aisled hall with a roof containing crown posts and passing braces. The two-bay hall originally had in-line solar and service bays. There was a pre-crown-post phase in which the aisled hall had a coupled-rafter roof with passing braces, and what remains of this phase probably adds one more to Buckinghamshire's scanty tally of thirteenth-century houses. Later, crown posts and a collar purlin were inserted, and later still a base cruck. It is argued that the house was built by, or for, the tenant of the rectorial glebe.

Pendyce House, Ivinghoe (SP 945163), lies in Station Road, about 100m NW of the parish church. It has its long axis parallel to the road, which runs SE–NW; for the sake of simplicity its north-western end will be referred to as its western end, and its north-eastern side as its northern side, and so on round the compass.

A transverse wing of late seventeenth-century date has been extended so that it projects to the N; to judge from the brickwork this was done in the present century. The projection is joined by a lean-to 'infill' to an earlier northward projection on its E (Fig 2 and Plate 1). There is another transverse wing at the E end; this is now a separate property, and was not investigated. It will be seen that Pendyce House at one time extended into the area occupied by this property. Next on the E, and contiguous with it, are two cruck trusses, probably part of a barn, but now framing the entry into a yard. In this direction, towards the church, the road is now continuously built up. Towards the W no more old houses are encountered for another 250 m. when a small group is found at 943164.

Externally the house has the appearance of a superior yeoman or gentry house of c. 1700, and though there is a large fireplace of c. 1600 in one ground floor room, nothing prepares visitors for what they see on the first floor: the upper halves of two arcade posts of an aisled hall (Fig 6). A third is to be seen

inside a cupboard on the other (S) side of the room. The two on the N, which are only 7 ft 3 ins apart (2.17 m) are markedly out of the vertical; the arcade plate between them has been sawn through, with near catastrophic results. Failed scarf joints can be seen in both arcade plates. That to the S is a trait-de-Jupiter (Fig 7).

Equally striking is what is to be found in the roof space: two crown posts, no more than 7 ft (2.15 m) apart (Fig 6). That to the E is short, octagonal and elaborately moulded (Truss C, Fig 5), the other longer and plain, with chamfered corners (Truss B, Fig 4). Each is reinforced with passing braces, though only one survives for B (the westernmost). Just over 7 ft to the W (2.1 m) is a further truss (Truss A, Fig 3), and this has two passing braces on each side.

The following paragraphs constitute a commentary on the drawings, beginning at the W.

Truss A, Fig 3 and Plate 2

The double bracing is original. The braces are roughly shaped, and are not parallel to the rafters, though a now-redundant halving in the collar suggests that they may have been once. The surviving (N) arcade post has two diagonal trenches. The lower brace terminated here with a notched lap joint with refined entry, for which the matrix can be seen; the upper one continued down to a postulated aisle post. The collar, however, has six halvings, clear

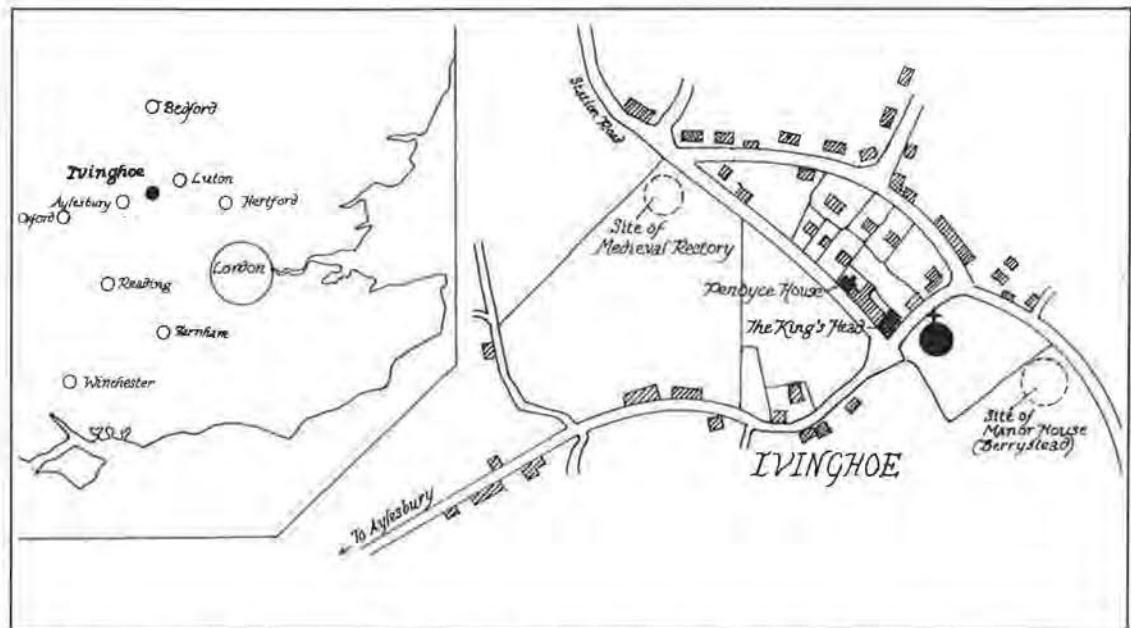


Fig. 1. Sketch plans showing locations of Ivinghoe (inset) and of Pandyce House, Ivinghoe.

evidence for reconstruction. Only one of the braces has a peg hole. The collar shows no evidence for lateral bracing from a crown post, but that there was a crown post at one time is suggested by a mortice in the middle of the tiebeam. The outer (upper) pair of braces are not in the trenches prepared for them, but have been cut off level with the top of the tie and rest on its upper surface. The soffit of the tie is plastered.

Truss B, Fig 4.

The crown post at B is sooted on the E side but only blackened on the W. Only the N passing brace survives; the other has been removed to admit the chimney. The surviving passing brace is halved (but not pegged) where it crosses the crown-post brace, but neither halved nor pegged where it crosses the collar. This brace is not parallel to the rafters and, to judge from the angle of the trench in the N arcade post, never was. Above the collar purlin it has been cut short to accommodate the stack. The crown-post brace is sawn off outside the passing brace; there is no sign that it was ever pegged to the outer end of the collar. The passing brace passes the tie in a shallow trench, and has been sawn off immediately below it. Part of the diagonal trench where the brace passed the S arcade post is visible. It tapers in a way that suggests a notch but, if there is one, it is too far towards

the outside of the post for the brace to have terminated there.

Truss C, Fig 5 and Plate 3

Where the passing braces pass the crown post braces and the collar they are halved and pegged. The upper side, from which the pegs are driven, is to the E. The tie has a marked double crank, and a flat area at the apex for the crown post to stand on. Long mortices for an arch brace can be felt in its soffit. Under its N end there is not an arcade post but one blade of a base cruck; its foot has been sawn off 6 ft 3 ins (1.87 m) from the ground, but its elbow can be seen in the ground floor room. The tenon at the head of the blade has been formed at an angle, in the plane of the roof, perhaps to facilitate assembly. The lower ends of the passing braces can be seen from below, in trenches in the E face of the tie, but they have been sawn off below it, and evidence for their lower ends has vanished with the arcade post.

The long section, Fig 6

In the soffit of the arcade plate, E of the base cruck, there are three mortices: a, 2 ft (610 mm) from the blade, is 10 ins long (250 mm) and has vertical ends; b, 3 ft 11 ins (1.17 m) from the blade, has the end nearest the blade cut at an angle of 45°, and the

other vertical; the N side is sloping; c, 14 ins (350 mm) further on, is the mirror image of *b*. The inside of *a* is sooted. To the W of the cruck blade one further mortice was observed in the arcade plate, but neither its form nor its exact position could be determined. An injudicious saw cut west of truss A has led to both cut ends pivoting downwards about the heads of the posts. It was not possible to see at what point, or how, the plate regained the horizontal.

At its W end the collar purlin ends in air, in what may have been a scarf. At its E end it is supported by a modern post. Three mortices in its soffit, near this end, with corresponding breaks in the chamfer, show the position of a further crown post and its axial braces. No collar survives at this point. One of them, E of the post, shows that there had been a further in-line bay beyond this end of the hall. Sooting of the collar purlin ceases at this point. The point at which the foot of this vanished crown post would have been is about 12 ins (300 mm) beyond the present E wall of the house, hidden by the slope of the roof of the adjoining property. The purlin has a halving 1.5m from the E end.

The arcade plate can be seen to have extended beyond the W end of the hall, indicating that here too there had been another in-line bay, at what was presumably the service end.

Ground Plan, Fig 2)

The hall is 14 ft 3 ins (4.07 m) between arcade posts, and that part of the N aisle that survives is 5 ft wide, giving a total original width of 24 ft 3 ins (7.03 m). It is now 27 ft 6 ins long (8.14 m) long, but may have been 1 ft longer originally. The ratio of length to width between the posts was thus exactly 2:1.

Discussion

The marked difference in the quality of the timbers of truss A and those of Truss C, – the former roughly, the latter carefully shaped – is reminiscent of Limetree House, Harwell, where there were two phases of construction, the first associated with rough carpentry (Currie 1987). If this analogy holds, it puts the earliest phase of Pendyce House well back in the thirteenth century. There are a number of pointers to the fact that the analogy does hold.

Only three other aisled hall are known in Buckinghamshire. One, Sycamore Farm, Long Crendon, is the oldest house in the county, dated by dendrochronology to 1205 (VA 25, 1992, 58). For Denham Court there is good documentary evidence for building in 1297 (WAM 3434). The Savoy, likewise in Denham, has not been studied since the RCHM reported on it in 1911 (RCHM 1912).

Smith (1971, 259) assigned passing braces to the thirteenth century. Fletcher (1979, 176) thought that passing braces with halved joints and notched laps indicated a date before 1250.

Some suggestions may be made about the form of this early house. It evidently had four in-line bays, with a two-bay hall which had its lower bay subdivided by an intermediate truss. Double bracing may have been confined to the end trusses of the hall. The form of the W truss shows that there was no collar purlin in the first phase, and hence no crown posts

Truss C was evidently completely rebuilt when the present crown post was put in. This seems to follow from the superiority of its carpentry compared with the others: the timbers are neatly squared, and carefully halved and pegged wherever they cross; the braces are exactly parallel to the rafters. Moreover the tiebeam is cranked in a way that shows it was intended for a crown post *over an archbrace*. The other crown post, by contrast, seems to have been inserted without modifying the existing timbers.

The form of the ties in the first phase is probably seen in Truss A, where the tie is straight.

In Truss B the slight crank suits the the longer crown post, but that is anomalously close to the eastern crown post, and moreover is typologically earlier than the latter (Fletcher & Spokes 1964, 169). It is also to be noted that the trench in the arcade post does not line up with the trench in the tie.

It is suggested that these anomalies can be resolved if it is supposed that there are three phases of building represented here, not two: that a common rafter roof with passing braces (Phase I) was given longitudinal stiffening by means of a collar purlin and crown posts (Phase II); and that the central truss was subsequently modernised by inserting a base cruck (Phase III). *The crown post from the old central*

truss was then re-used in Truss B, perhaps together with the tiebeam. The present collar purlin would on this hypothesis have been put in at the same time as the crown post at C; it was morticed and chamfered to fit both the new crown post and the old one in its new position.

The intermediate truss in the lower bay is no doubt a spere truss, in spite of the crown post on top, which, if the suggestion above is accepted, is only there because a re-usable one was available. That there was a truss in this position before the crown post is shown by the trenches in the arcade posts. It must be noted, however, that this implies an unusually wide cross passage. This is discussed below.

The dates of these phases can only be determined with certainty by dendro-chronology, but the first may have been before 1250, the second c. 1300, and the third perhaps no more than a generation later.

The fact that the present E end of the hall is 300 mm W of the E crown post may be due to there having once been an internal jetty at the high end. On this hypothesis the house was then divided on the line of the jetty bressumer, new framing being inserted under the bressumer. An internal jetty implies joists parallel to the axis of the hall, a necessary consequence of having a transverse wing.

It has been noted that the space below Truss B is unusually wide for a cross passage. A good parallel is at Building No 10 at Great Linford, Bucks (Mynard & Zeepvat 1992, 67), where the cross passage was 2.4 m (8 ft) wide, 'a width normally associated with longhouses' as J.T. Smith commented (Smith 1992, 126). There is no inherent objection to the idea that Pendyce House may have started life as a longhouse, housing beasts and family under one roof. Building No 10 was not the only house excavated at Great Linford that had been a longhouse. They even included the Manor House (Smith, 1992, 121–128).

These interpretations may of course be overthrown if satisfactory explanations can be found for the difference in sooting on the two sides of Crown Post B, and for the halving in the collar purlin. As for the former, the writer is not aware of any published studies of the behaviour of smoke, and it may be that a louvre at the high end would have drawn smoke away from the low end.

Later developments

The big axial stack, partly of stone, was probably inserted in the late sixteenth century, the hall being chambered over at the same time. There is no evidence as to how the first floor was reached at this time. If the S aisle had not already disappeared it did so at this stage: the spine beam supporting the first floor E of the stack is centred on the surviving span of the house, not on the original aisled hall.

When the hall was chambered over, the arcade plate was cleaned and a geometrical pattern painted on it in black (Fig 8).

Later, perhaps around 1700, a short wing was added on the N side, level with the stack. This contains a stair now, and probably always did. In order to win headroom for a doorway at the head of the stair the N arcade plate was sawn through, and this evidently led to a near-catastrophic collapse. The plate pivoted about the heads of the posts on either side of the cut, turning downwards to the W so that the scarves parted. The arcade posts at A and B (N side) sagged away to the E; the spine beam supporting the first floor sank at its W end, where it is now some 160 mm out of the horizontal. This must have caused severe dislocation of the roof truss at A, and was no doubt the occasion of its reconstruction. It may be conjectured that what prevented complete collapse was that the new W wing was partly built, and the rising walls made it possible to support the failed timbers, though they were not restored to their original positions. The wing is wholly of brick, without timber framing; it has string courses and blue-fired headers. A date around 1700 seems acceptable. Later still the wing was extended northwards, to bring its N end into line with the staircase wing.

Whose house was it?

Who was there in Ivinghoe for whom this house was suitable, and who could have afforded to build and maintain it *over the centuries*?

Its outstanding feature is its size. It is actually wider than the average for manor or clergy houses with base crucks, which was 23 ft 6 ins (6.9 m), though below the median for such houses (Alcock and Barley, 1972). A very rough idea of what it may have cost to build can be had from three building contracts printed by Salzman (Salzman 1967),

which are reasonably close in date and not altogether dissimilar in scale.

One, of 1308, is for a hall, chamber, solars, stable, kitchen and other offices built for a London furrier. It was to cost £9. 5s 4d, plus 50 marten skins and fur for a woman's hood (*op cit.* 417). The second, of 1310, is for a range of three shops, each to have a first floor with two halls, buttery, pantry and kitchen, and a second floor with two large chambers. The price was to be 33 marks. 11 marks per shop works out at £7. 6. 8d each (*op cit.* 418). A contract of uncertain date, but evidently early, was for a room (*camera*) 40 ft × 24½ ft, plus a garderobe 20 ft × 14 ft. For this the price was to be 6 marks (£4) (*op cit.* 417).

We are fortunate in having, for Ivinghoe, a complete list of all the holdings owing service to the lord of the manor in the thirteenth century. This is in a customal prepared for the Bishops of Winchester, Ivinghoe being one of their far-flung manors. The customal (BL Eg MS 2418) was compiled at various dates in the thirteenth century; the Ivinghoe section states in its colophon that it was produced '*tempore N. Epi(scopi) Wintoniae*'. This must be Nicholas of Ely, Bishop of Winchester from 1268 to 1279; but there are grave difficulties in accepting this date. Heading the list of tenants is William *de Castri Rad(ulph)i*, who is said to hold five hides, and has a court to which the other tenants owe suit, and who must therefore be tenant not just of the demesne but of the whole manor. *Castrum Radulphi* is not an English Ralph's Castle, but Chateau Roux in France (Indre). Its Lord was William de Chauvigny, who was married to Agatha, sister of Henry III of England. Henry had granted his brother-in-law 200 marks a year in 1241, until such time as he should grant him land of equivalent value (*Cal. Pat. Hen III*, 4, 283); and it so happened that the see of Winchester was vacant at the time. Keeping sees vacant for as long as possible was a favourite financial expedient of medieval kings, who could then lay their hands on the revenues, and Winchester remained vacant until 1252, when the King's half brother, Aymer de Valence, was 'elected'. When, on his accession to the see, Bishop Nicholas wished to see what services were owed to him, his clerks simply produced the latest available customal, which happened to be at least sixteen years out of date.

The fact that the customal is earlier than it claims to be does not reduce its value as evidence of what holdings existed in the mid thirteenth century. William of Chauvigny does not concern us: if he had ever wanted accommodation in Ivinghoe (which he probably never did) he had the Bishop's manor house, immediately SE of the church (BRO, I 19/2; BRO MaR/52 R). The next name on the list is that of Adam Aignel, 'Dominus' in the customal. The application of the honorific was wide: it is used of knights, but also of holders of secular canonries and prebends, and it is probably to the latter class that Adam Aignel belonged. In 1269 he was granted exemption for life from being put on assizes or juries, and from being made sheriff against his will (*Cal. Pat. Hen III*, 6, 315); this suggests that he was in the royal service. He was tenant of 'a piece of land' which, since he paid 9s a year for it, must have been extensive; Pandyce House was certainly suitable for him, and within his means; but he was not the tenant. His land was at 'Berleya', and almost certainly the house at Barley End, a very old settlement, was his home when he was in Bucks.

After Adam Aignel come 19 names of men who paid either a money rent alone, or a money rent plus light services – in most cases finding a man for a day's boon work in the autumn *ad cibum domini* (the lord providing his food). These are free tenants, and they are followed by a further 19, probably also free but, with one exception, having holdings too small to be serious contenders.

Heading this list is 'Magister' Richard, son of Richard de Molendinis. Masters of Arts were called *magister*, and many clerics in the royal service were so entitled. If, as seems certain, he was the Richard de Molyns of Ivinghoe who was granted the same immunities as Adam Aignel in the same year (*Ibid.*, 322) he too must have been in the royal service. In the customal he is recorded as holding a messuage, a mill, a pasture and half a virgate. There were three mills in Ivinghoe, one being at Seabrook, a mile or so W of the village (BRO, I/3), and this was the one held by Magister Richard; he was doubtless the Ricardus Clericus who appears as a juror in the customal, and is there described as 'of Seybrook'. He was not, therefore, the tenant of Pandyce House.

Much the commonest size of holding in Ivinghoe was a virgate, and few of them were free, but because it is a mistake to underestimate the purchas-

ing power of the medieval peasant, holders of virgates now fall to be considered.

Christopher Dyer has calculated the income of a typical villein yardlander (holder of a virgate) in 1299 (Dyer 1989, 115) and suggests that it would have yielded a surplus after rent and tithes and other compulsory dues, of £2 11s. This was in the West Midlands, and an Ivinghoe man would have been considerably better off, with a much lower rent (5s plus 1 ½ quarters of oats, worth say 4s, against 22s); but to offset this his virgate was smaller in extent: in this part of Bucks the customary acre was only about ⅔ to ¾ of a statute acre. He may have had a surplus of £3 13s; but out of this he had to fund his entry fine; when he died his heir had to find a heriot (usually an ox) and a mortuary for the parson (another ox); he had to provide against a merchet for his daughter's marriage, and replacements for worn-out oxen. He had to pay for repairs to carts and ploughs and buildings, and buy essentials like tools and salt and clothes, tar for his sheep and fish to supplement his diet. To build even a modest house suitable for his station he would have had to get into debt.

There were men with more than one virgate. Two, John of Dudesdene and John de Donna each had two, one bond and one free, and one, Jacob de Wyteways, had one and a half free virgates and one bond. The holder of a free virgate had light labour services, and did not have to pay heriot or merchet (though he paid a relief on a change of tenant, it was fixed at a year's rent, and not arbitrary). He did not pay part of his rent in kind, but his money rent was only a shilling less than the villein's, and his other outgoings were the same in proportion to the size of his holding. To raise the money needed to build Pendyce House he would still have had to borrow heavily, an imprudence acceptable in his betters but not in an Ivinghoe peasant.

A manorial function for this house must also be ruled out. It would have led to the house being within the manorial precinct, like the bailiff's room (*camera*) (Eccl. 2 159319, 159328) and the servants' hall (*aula que est domus famulorum*) half built in 1262 (Eccl. 2 159294).

Since we are driven to rule out all the larger holdings owing service to the lord, it is necessary to consider whether there was a large holding that did not owe service. Was there anyone who was in but not of the manor? The answer is that there was: the parson.

The living of Ivinghoe was a rich one, worth £36 13s 4d in 1291 (VCH iii, 386); so there were ample funds. It was a rectory until 1413, when the then Bishop of Winchester gave it to the College of Bonhommes at Ashridge. It was a condition of the grant that the College was adequately to endow a perpetual vicarage.

As a consequence of this grant the rectorial glebe and its appurtenances (chiefly the great tithes) became the property of Ashridge; and in due course became a reputed 'manor', the Manor of the Rectory of Ivinghoe. This is first mentioned in 1535 (VCH iii, 383). If Pendyce House had, as surmised, been built by the parson, it should therefore be found among the property of the Rectory Manor; and in due course it is. The Enclosure Award and Map show that in 1820 the house was part of a parcel of property (196 on the schedule) that included the King's Head Inn (on the corner opposite the church) (BRO, IR/92/BQ, f31; IR/92/AQ). Conveyances of the Rectory Manor regularly describe just such a parcel: a messuage or tenement, sometimes described as a farmhouse, with a malthouse, kilns, barns, stables and granaries, 'also all that messuage or tenement called the King's Head, with yards etc'... 'also the site of a certain barn, heretofore containing three bays, in Ivinghoe Street, commonly called the King's Head barn, lately pulled down' (BRO, I/18/1,2 & 5).

The same conveyances make it clear that the capital messuage of the manor, alternatively called the Parsonage House, had been 'in great part pulled down' by the early nineteenth century. It was no doubt the complex of buildings shown on the Enclosure Map by broken lines and light shading, further NW along the Winslow road from Pendyce House, and on the opposite side. It is shown standing in a 20-acre close (187 on the schedule) called the Park (BRO, IR/92//BQ) or the Lawn (BRO, I/18/5) which it shares with The Old Vicarage House. (Pendyce House was therefore not the old rectory house owned by Ashridge.)

Some houses of regular canons were in the habit of providing one of their own number to appropriated churches. This was certainly done at Long Crendon, where the Abbot of Notley is explicitly named as vicar in 1522 (Chibnall, 1973, 141), and there was no endowment at all for a vicarage (Donald, 1977, viii). It may have happened at Great

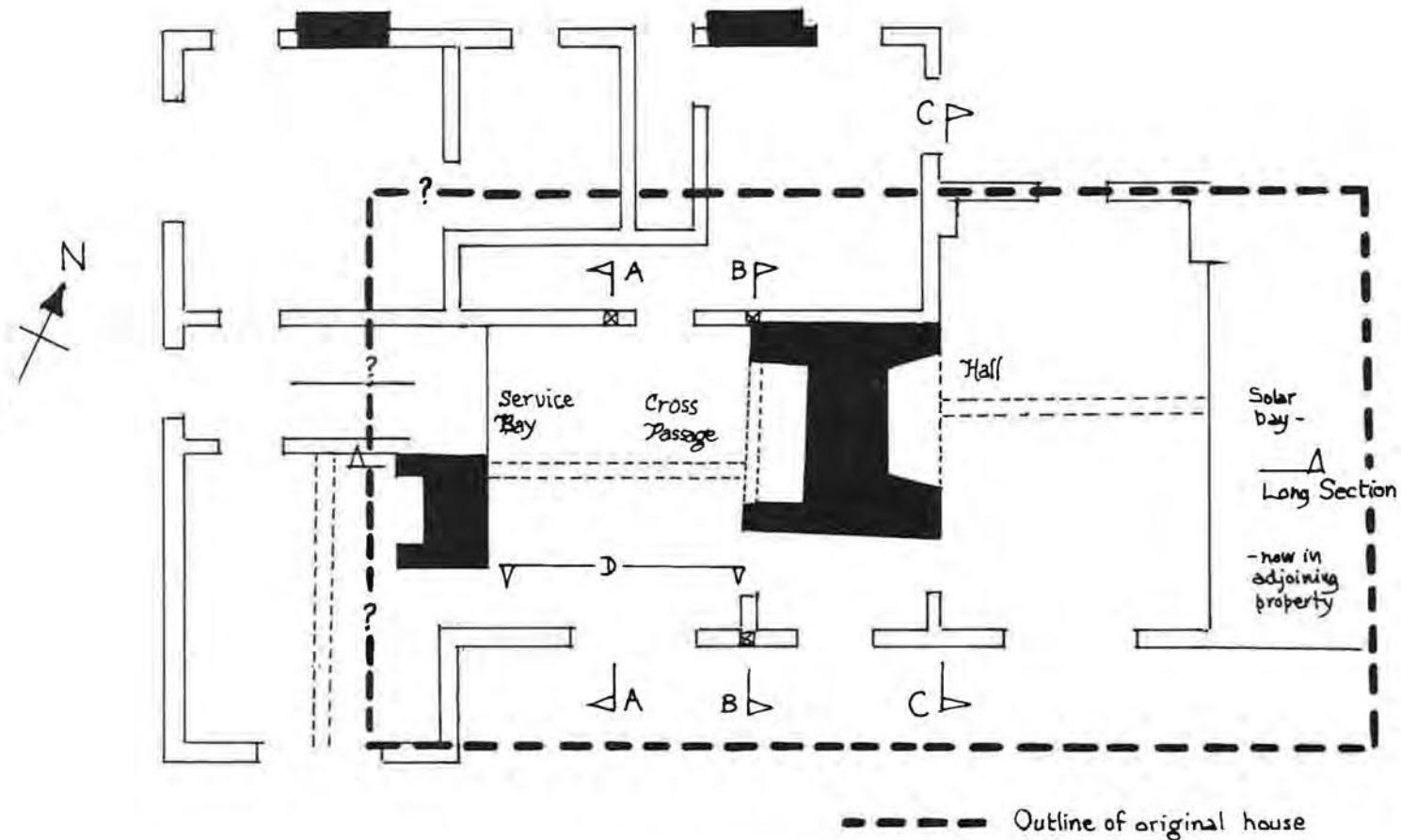


Fig 2. Section-location diagram, Pendyce House. (Not to scale.)

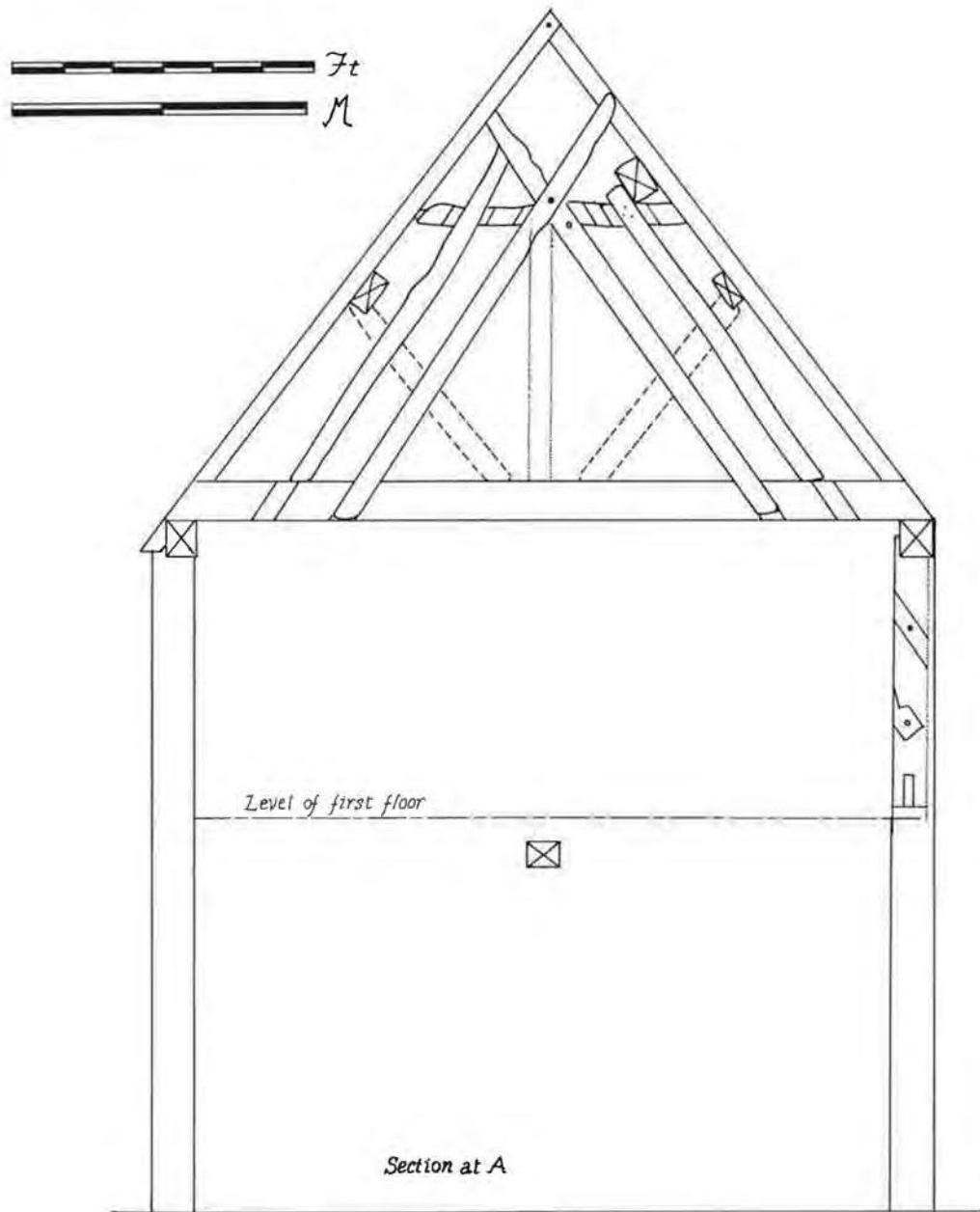


Fig 3. Section at A, looking W.

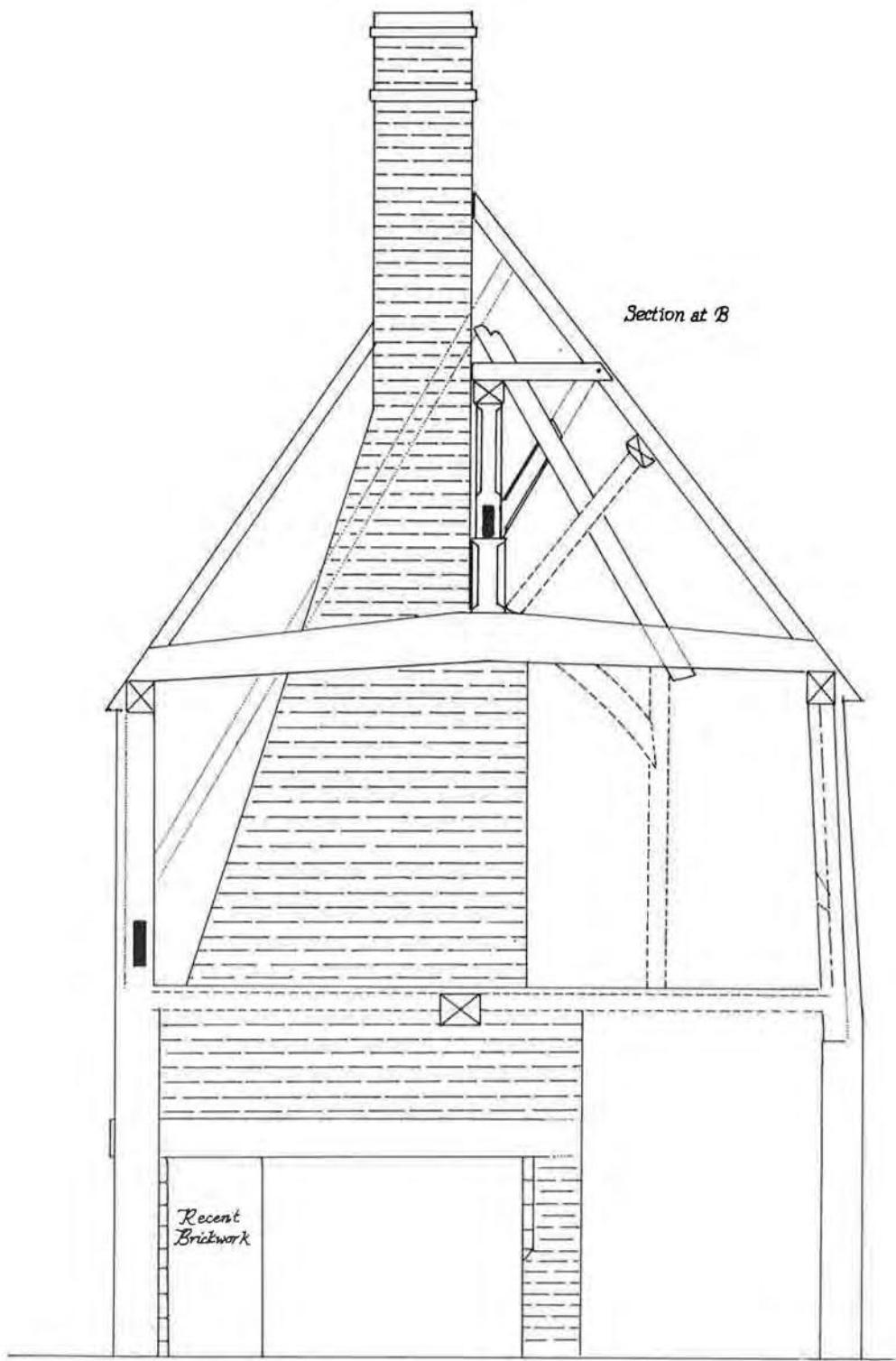


Fig 4. Section at B, looking W.

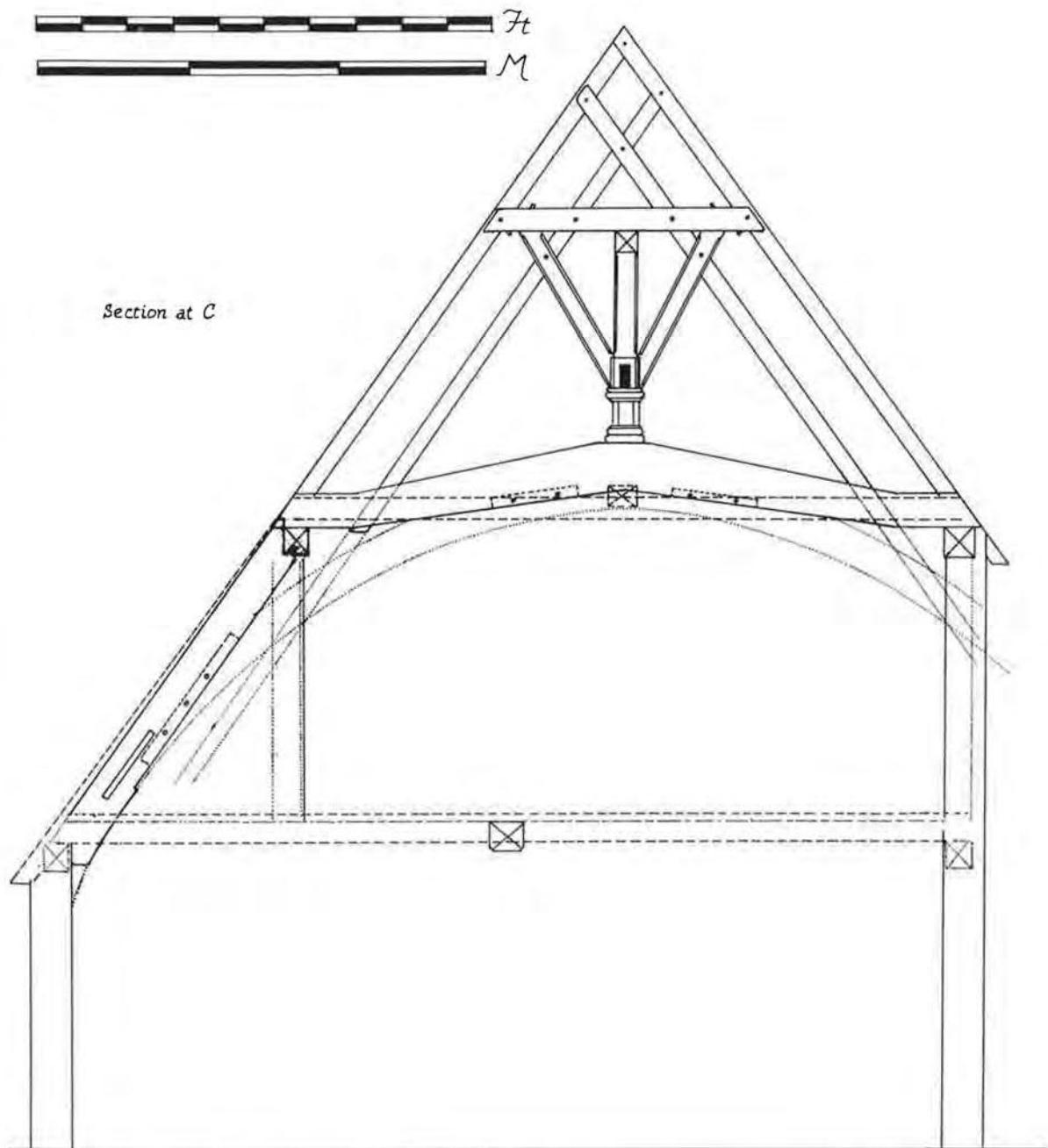


Fig 5. Section at C, looking E.

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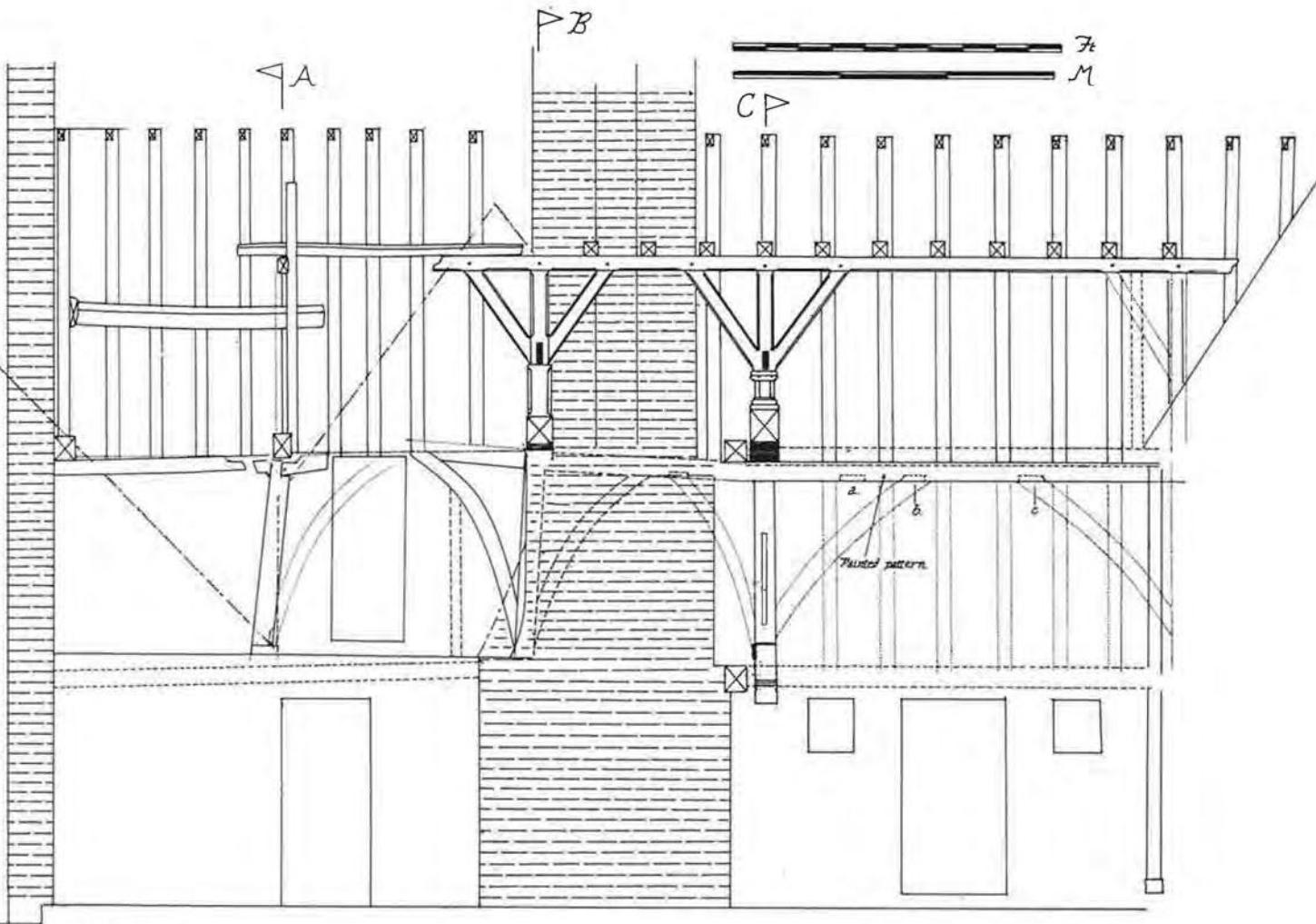


Fig 6. Long Section, looking N.



Plate 1. Pendyce House, Ivinghoe, today. The left-hand wing is modern beyond the porch.

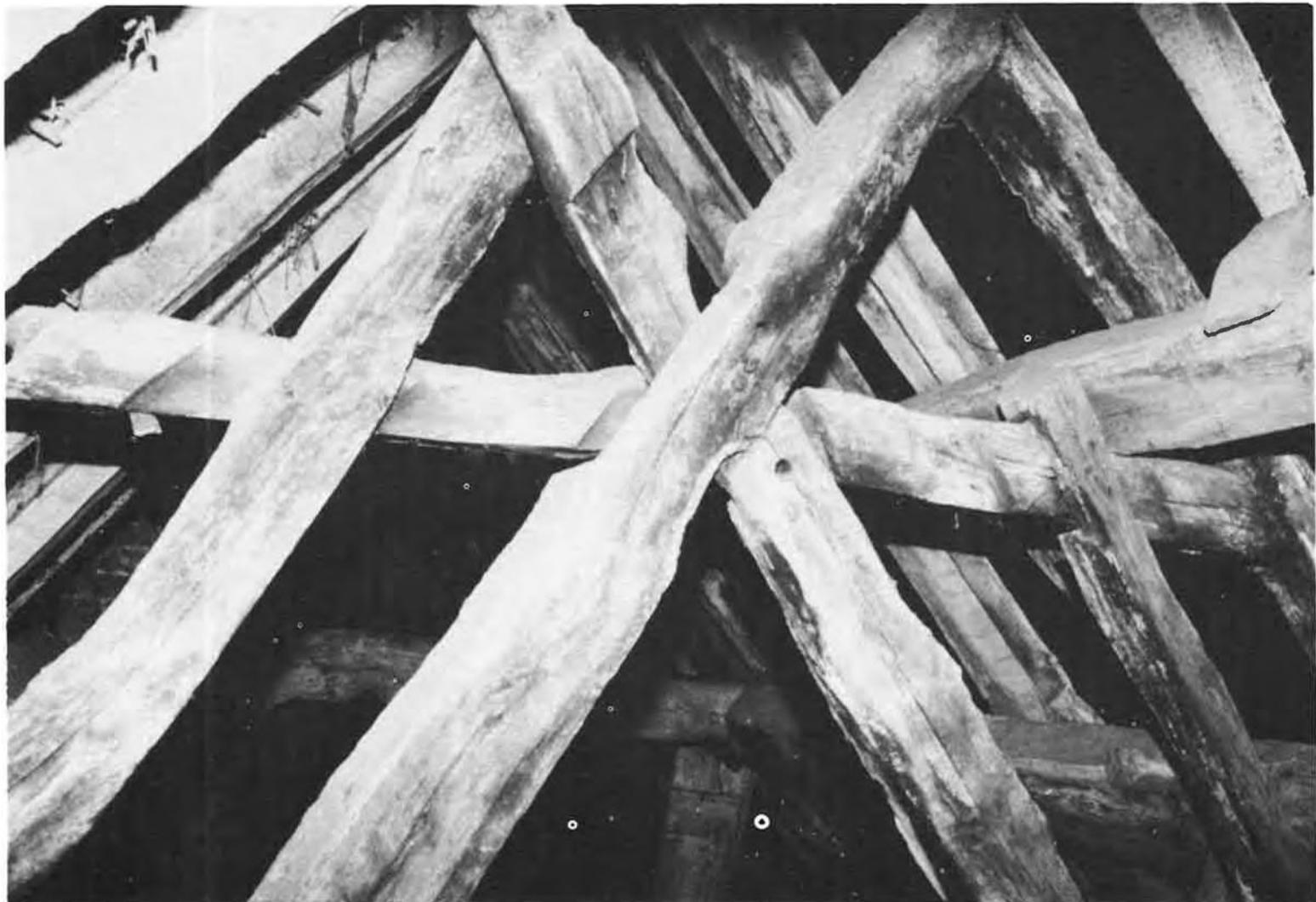


Plate 2. Pendyce House, Ivinghoe. Apex of E-most surviving truss, showing double passing braces

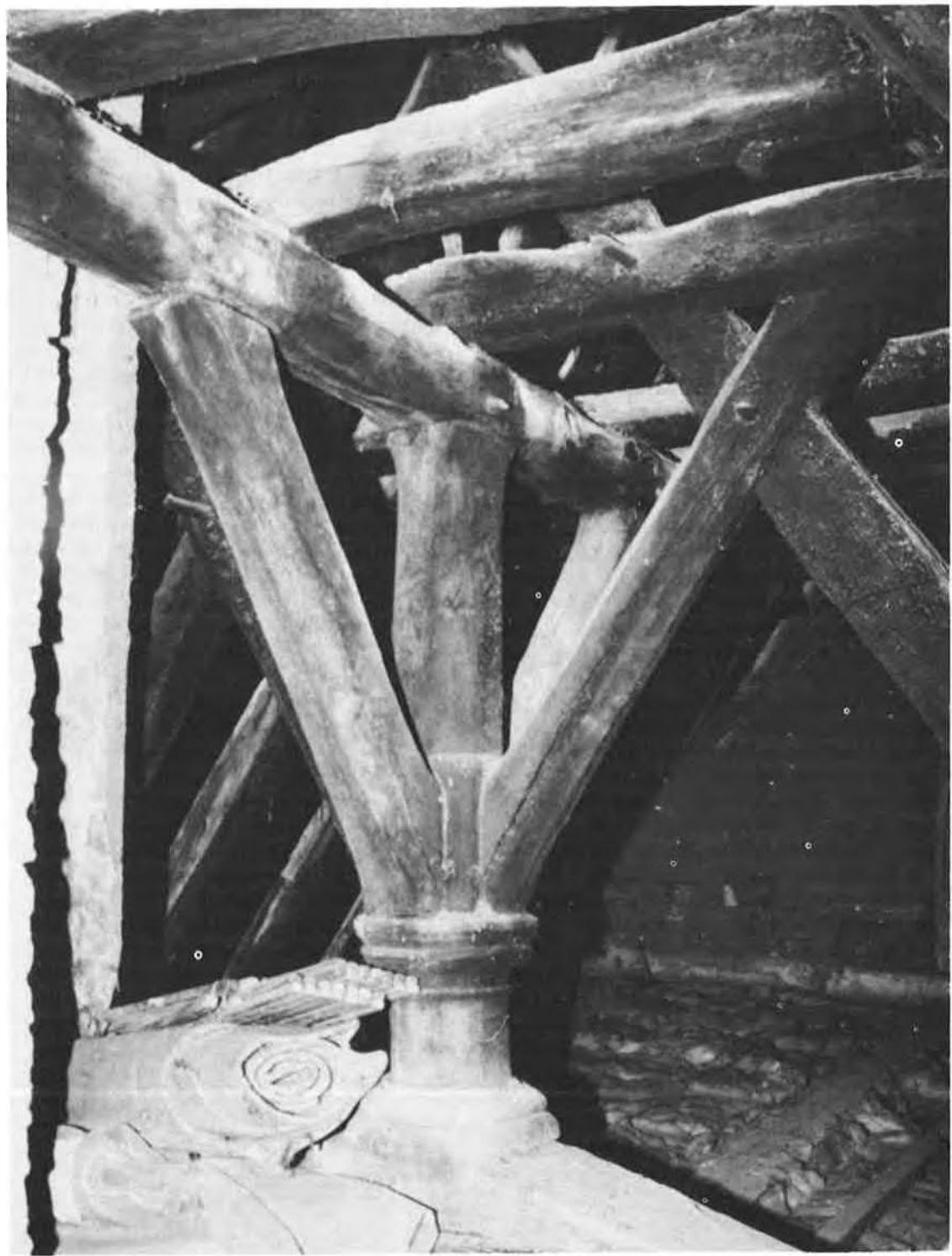


Plate 3. Pendyce House, Ivinghoe. The crown post over the base cruck, showing sharply cranked tiebeam and passing braces

Missenden, where no vicar is named, though the Abbot of Missenden is 'parson'. At Ivinghoe the vicar in 1522 was Thomas Woodmancey, who may have been a local man: his surname was borne by an Ivinghoe taxpayer (Chibnall *op cit*, 157). Nothing is known of earlier vicars except their names.

The rents of the Rectory Manor were worth £29 9s 10d in 1535 (*Valor Eccl. iv*, 226), and some of the land from which this arose was customary: that is to say, by the sixteenth century, copyhold (PRO, SC6/Hen VIII/238/19d). If the usual pattern was followed here, there will have been a glebe (the equivalent of a demesne) and some tenant land. There was one large holding of 140 acres, (BRO, I 18/1) and it is a reasonable inference that this was the glebe. There was also 62 acres of copyhold tenant land (BRO, I 26/2). The 140-acre holding is explicitly stated to be 'belonging to the said farmhouse' – the farmhouse, that is, associated with the King's Head.

From all this it is a safe inference that Pendyce House was built for the tenant of the Ivinghoe glebe. A house for the tenant must have been a requirement from the earliest times. The rectory was often held by absentee pluralists, like Peter Chaseporc (1241 - 1254) (Hagerty 1991). For the glebe to be in the hands of a tenant must have been the normal state of affairs. In the absence of a dendro-date for the first phase of the house, it is fruitless to speculate about which medieval rector may have been responsible for the building.

The descent of the manor is recited in VCH, not quite correctly after 1700. In 1710 Francis Neale (see VCH) left it to his grandson, William Hayton (BRO, I/18/1), from whom it descended to his son, William Hayton junior. On the death of William junior, in 1812, his niece Harriett Gordon succeeded to the property (BRO, I/18); she was the wife of James Gordon of Much Hadham, Herts, gentleman. (Her aunt, Lucy Hayton, was married to Samuel Whitbread.) James Gordon also owned Stocks, Aldbury, and sugar plantations in Barbados (Davis, 1987, 128). He sold the manor to the Earl of Bridgewater in 1819 (BRO, I/18/5), and died in that or the following year. In 1704 the farm of the tithes was acquired by Jeremiah Knight (BRO, I/26/2), and a marriage settlement of 1706 makes it clear that he held several of the copyholds of the manor, and was living in what was to become Pendyce House (BRO, I/26/2). At the time of Knight's death in 1721, Timothy Smith was living in the house, and when Knight's son, also Jeremiah, was adjudged bankrupt in 1751, it was described as 'late in the occupation of Thomas Goodman' (*ibid*); the Knights were living in a 'new erected freehold messuage'. Interestingly, there was a Timothy Smith, gentleman, living in Ivinghoe in 1798 (Beckett 1985), though if there was a connection with the Timothy Smith of 1721, it cannot be demonstrated. But it is tempting to connect with Jeremiah Knight the building campaign that nearly resulted in the collapse of the house.

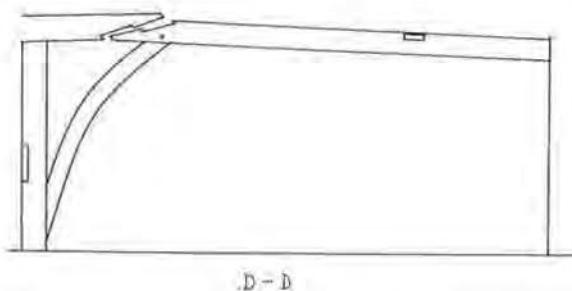


Fig 7. Sketch of internal elevation, D - D.

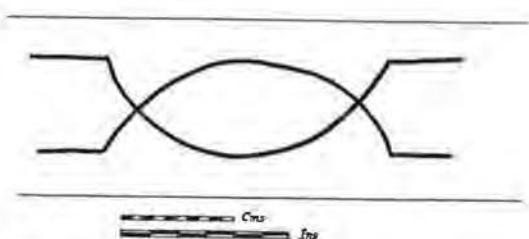


Fig 8. Painted pattern on arcade plate, chamber over hall.

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