

# THE TITHE BARN, ARRETON, ISLE OF WIGHT.

By J. E. C. Peters

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THE purpose of this paper is to comment on the roof structure of the tithe barn at Arreton, which is of a number of periods, the earliest appearing to show evidences of the Highland cruck technique, although, according to Professor R. A. Cordingley's map the Isle of Wight is just inside the border of the Lowland box-frame zone.<sup>1</sup> The barn was examined and drawings made in 1960, certain details being checked the following year.

Arreton is situated in the valley of the Eastern Yar, on the borders of the Fertile Plain. The land here is some of the best in the Isle of Wight, producing forty bushels to the acre.<sup>2</sup> The village is long and straggly, the church and tithe barn being found at the western end.

Before 1086 William Fitz Osborne granted the church and its tithes at Arreton, with five others in the Island, to the Abbey of Lira in Normandy.<sup>3</sup> When, in 1131, Baldwin de Redvers founded the Cistercian monastery at Quarr he gave to it, among others, the manor of Arreton, which his father had been given by the Crown.<sup>4</sup> In 1150 the Abbey of Lira ceded the tithes to Quarr for a pension of forty shillings, but the Advowson did not follow until 1405<sup>5</sup> (P. G. Stone states, however, that Quarr received the rectorial tithes only in 1405<sup>6</sup>). Until 1525 the manor was farmed by the abbot's steward, but was then leased out (Quarr is only four miles N.E. of Arreton). At the Dissolution

<sup>1</sup> R. A. Cordingley, "British Historical Roof Types and their Members", *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society*, N.S. IX, p. 75.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by M. Hutchings, "Isle of Wight", 1953, p. 168.

<sup>3</sup> Victoria County History, "Hampshire and the Isle of Wight", vol. V, 1912, p. 148.

<sup>4</sup> Victoria County History, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

<sup>5</sup> Victoria County History, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

<sup>6</sup> P. G. Stone, "The Architectural Antiquities of the Isle of Wight", vol. I, 1891, p. 7.

the tithes, rectory and manor were all appropriated to the Crown,<sup>7</sup> as Quarr was one of the lesser houses this took place in 1537.<sup>8</sup> The Advowson and tithes were sold off in 1549,<sup>9</sup> but the manor was leased out until 1628, when that was sold to Sir Levinus Bennett, who built the manor house<sup>10</sup> and probably also the dovecote.

There seems to have been an early timber-framed building tradition in the Island which had given place by the late sixteenth century to a stone one. A timber-framed house dated 1499 has recently been uncovered and restored at Brading, but this is the only surviving house in this tradition to the author's knowledge (all the houses P. G. Stone mentions are of stone and generally dated from the Great Rebuilding).<sup>11</sup> The surviving timber-framed buildings are nearly all farm buildings. The Island continued to be well wooded until comparatively late times, the main trees being chestnut and oak, although there was a considerable drain to Portsmouth and Southampton.<sup>12</sup>

The barn is generally known as a tithe barn, although the V.C.H. and P. G. Stone both call it only a "barn"; it may be that it gained its ecclesiastical title from its size, although as the Abbey farmed the manor itself its presence in the manor farmyard should present no difficulty to it having been a tithe barn.

The farmyard is on a south facing slope with the barn on its southern side, a lower fold-yard lying beyond and a pond to the east. The main approach is from the north, where there are two entrances, the elder being an aisled porch with the sole southern entry opposite, 2 feet up from the yard, to provide a winnowing draught. The barn is built from the local chalky stone, is of six bays, thatched throughout with partly hipped ends; the valleys are tiled. It has been variously dated to seventeenth century<sup>13</sup> but is much older. The oldest trusses are of the base-cruck form, with a ridge purlin, the latest aisled in the box-frame tradition

<sup>7</sup> Victoria County History, op. cit., pp. 141, 150.

<sup>8</sup> Victoria County History, op. cit., p. 152.

<sup>9</sup> Victoria County History, op. cit., p. 150.

<sup>10</sup> Victoria County History, op. cit., p. 141.

<sup>11</sup> P. G. Stone, op. cit.

<sup>12</sup> Victoria County History, op. cit., J. Nisbet and The Hon. G. W. Lascelles, vol. II, 1903.

<sup>13</sup> Victoria County History, op. cit., vol. V, p. 141; P. G. Stone, op. cit., p. 50.

without a ridge purlin. The trusses, which have been numbered from east to west for easier reference only, are said to be of chestnut,<sup>14</sup> are very worm eaten and in some cases decayed.

It would perhaps be advisable to begin with the oldest part of the building, the two trusses flanking the threshing floor, onto which the porch aisle-purlins appear to have run. They are curtailed—or base-cruck trusses, in a poor state of preservation, in 2 the northern cruck has completely gone, in 3 nearly so, the remains being supported by rather rough timber, approximating it to an aisled truss. Sufficient remains for the original form to be established, however.

The span was about 34 feet at the base: it is impossible exactly to determine this as the northern crucks are missing, and any traces they might have left on the floor were obliterated when this was resurfaced with a bituminous compound in about 1950; the approximate position of the foot was obtained by relating the south cruck to the remains of the north.

The crucks are square in section and each appears to have been taken from a different tree. This cannot be proved by reference to the northern crucks, which the remaining ones should than have matched, but it is apparent in the heavy lateral beading, most visible in truss 3. Webster, in describing a cottage in Church Street, Rothley,<sup>15</sup> gives two alternative reasons for this, either that more suitable timber was not available or that money was short. Whilst this appears to conflict with Nisbet and Lascelles' statement quoted above<sup>16</sup> that timber remained plentiful, it should be remembered that the proximity of Southampton and Portsmouth would have removed much of the best timber, and large trees would be needed for so bold a span. The fact that Quarr was one of the lesser houses is also relevant.

The crucks begin at 2 and 5 feet above the floor, the former on a heavy stone base, and embedded on three sides in the wall, the latter (Truss 2) on a timber plate, and exposed on two sides, but very thin in depth, owing to rotting? This foot was shored up at the same time as the plate was inserted. In Truss 3, the best

<sup>14</sup> Victoria County History, op. cit., p. 141; M. Hutchings, op. cit., p. 169.

<sup>15</sup> V. R. Webster, "Cruck-framed buildings of Leicestershire", *Trans. Leicestershire Arch. Soc.*, vol. XXX, 1954, p. 43.

<sup>16</sup> Victoria County History, op. cit., vol. II.

preserved, the blade is 13 inches on the face, and has a vertical mortice in the side just appearing above the stonework of the wall. Does this indicate that the barn was originally timber-framed and that the cruck doubled as a wall-post? or was it merely a slot cut to take a temporary support whilst the truss was reared? If the former there should be a housing for the wall-plate—but as only 1 inch of the vertical back of the cruck is visible (Truss 3) it may be hidden by the stonework, the removal of which would reveal any other joints, there might be. In a cruck barn at Ty Mawr, Dingestow,<sup>17</sup> the vertical cruck fort has a clasping pier outside it, but the size of the crucks at Arreton should have rendered this unnecessary.

However, there is a cruck trussed barn at Church Farm, Kings Bromley, Staffordshire, the fifteenth- or sixteenth-century trusses surviving inside a 1736 rebuilding. They are all very similar but in one gable elbow-crucks (14 inches by 11 inches) are used, the back below the elbow on one side is nearly vertical, with a tapering wall post dowelled to it to carry the wall-plate, although the elbow occurs at this level, and the two touch for their whole length. It was not possible to examine the other cruck below the wall-plate, but as the wall-post and cruck are here touching it is probably similar. Could the same have then happened at Arreton? The fact that the inside of the foot is vertical need not preclude this.

The tie now rests on top of, rather than beneath, the wallplate, and as it is applied to the side of the cruck and not housed to it, seems later, and lends support to the timber-framed explanation. The rebuilding may have been partly necessitated by the rotting of the base of the structure—the feet of the surviving crucks have already been noted as being at different heights. As the rebuilding in brick or stone of timber-framed barns, at least in Staffordshire, was often done by the new material exactly replacing the old on one side, but being outside the timber-framing on the other, the probable location of the foot of the north cruck inside the later stone walls may be adduced as further evidence that the first barn was timber-framed. The fact that the present south

<sup>17</sup> Sir C. Fox and Lord Raglan, "Monmouthshire Houses", 1951, vol. I, p. 67.

walls seem to be vertically of one piece, need not be evidence against this theory. The original plinth may have been demolished as too weak or narrow to carry a stone wall, or may be hidden within the present wall, on its inside. If the top were level with the original floor it would have been two feet high externally, owing to the sloping site, and would now be completely hidden.

The cruck curves outwards from the top of the wall about five feet to carry the single, cambered collar-beam, to the underside of which it is tenoned and pegged. As it is thinner here than at the base it is evidently the same way up as it grew. An arch-brace is used to reinforce this weak joint, reinforced by a dovetail-housed strut between it and the collar. Above the collar it is a rafter roof, the purlin being supported by a plank queen-strut housed but not pegged to the collar; the ridge-purlin is supported by a collar between the rafters at the bay division.

The upper and collar- or aisle-purlins on the south side are both original. The aisle-purlin rests on top of the collar and is not trapped between it and the cruck, suggesting more Highland influence? It was additionally supported by arch-braces from the crucks, the joints for which remain, being simplified by the canting of the purlin to the angle of the roof, running now from trusses 2 to 4, the ridge purlin being from 1 to 4. As truss 2 was always an internal one this suggests a 3 bay barn originally. The purlins on the north and the lowest on the south are all later replacements.

The rafters are in two parts, from a bird's beak joint at the wall-plate to the aisle-purlin, where they are pegged, and thence to the ridge. This is basically the case for the whole barn, and reduces the lengths of timber needed, a system also be seen in other wide-span barns.

There is a modified cruck at Chetnole, Dorset, combined with a collar beam, but the form of modification and the span are not noted.<sup>18</sup>

At Chale Farm, in the Island, there is a cruck barn variously dated fourteenth to sixteenth centuries.<sup>19</sup> It is a fine buttressed stone barn with an internal span of twenty-eight feet, with a raised open cruck-truss springing from six feet up, the timber being

<sup>18</sup> R.C.H.M., "Dorsetshire West", 1952.

<sup>19</sup> Victoria County History, op. cit., vol. V; P. G. Stone, op. cit., vol. II, p. 106.

continuous from the plinth to the ridge, an overall length following the blade of twenty-eight feet. As there appear to have been eight of these trusses there must have been a reasonable quantity of suitable timber in the southern part of the Island when this was built. It should be noticed that this is the part farthest from the mainland ports, with an inhospitable coast and a hilly land journey, so suitable timber may have lasted longer here. Professor R. A. Cordingley<sup>20</sup> has shown that the roof of the Great Hall at Stokesay Castle (1291) was a raised cruck-truss without a ridge-purlin, with a span of 31 feet 3½ inches between the walls. Taking into consideration all these things Chale barn appears to be fourteenth century. Typologically and on the size of the timber it seems likely that Chale is older than Arreton.

The span at Arreton (about 34 feet) is considerably larger than the largest recorded in Leicestershire and Monmouthshire, the former 20 feet 6 inches at Thurcaston,<sup>21</sup> the latter 25 feet 3 inches in a barn at Cwrt y Brychan, Llansoy.<sup>22</sup> Was it then the bold span that dictated the form of construction? But Stokesay spans 31 feet, and Chale 26, both being full crucks, and the Guesten Hall at Worcester<sup>23</sup> 34 feet 11 inches with an arch-braced collar truss, the principal being in one piece. So this can only be the reason granted the rider that more suitable timber was not available, owing to one or both of Webster's reasons. The possibility of using an aisled form was either unknown or unacceptable, although it was adopted in the later stages of the building.

The trusses in Frocester and Stanway barns are both very similar to Arreton, and span about 30 feet.<sup>24</sup> From the drawings it appears that up to the collar the only difference between Frocester and Arreton lies in the use of more ties between the arch-brace and the collar, perhaps providing the additional strength lacking at Arreton, or did the supports become necessary

<sup>20</sup> R. A. Cordingley, "Stokesay Castle, Shropshire", *The Art Bulletin*, vol. XLV, 1963, p. 99.

<sup>21</sup> V. R. Webster, *op. cit.*, Appendix.

<sup>22</sup> Fox and Raglan, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

<sup>23</sup> Sir B. Fletcher, "A History of Architecture", 1956, p. 432.

<sup>24</sup> R. A. Cordingley, *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society*, *op. cit.*, pp. 124, 125.



FIG. 1. Barn from north-west.

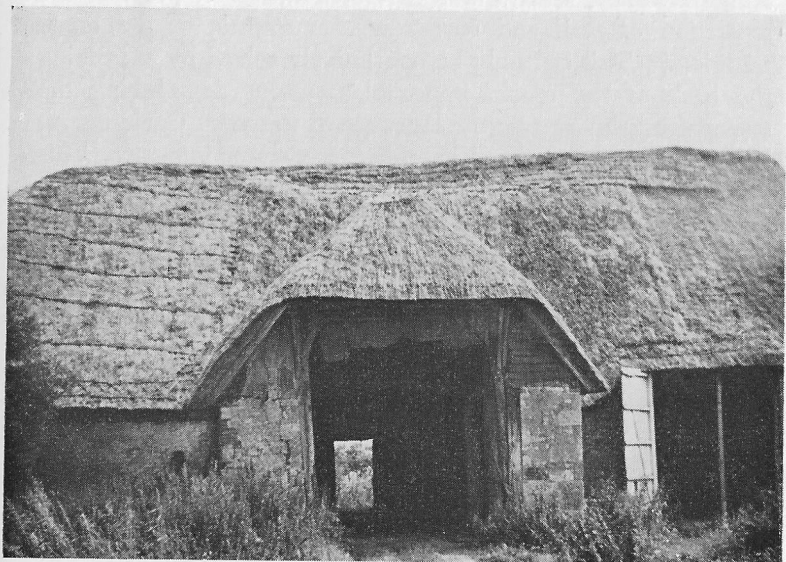


FIG. 2. Entrance porch.

because the northern crucks gave way through lack of support after the porch was built? There is a separate collar-roof-truss above the collar at Frocester, with a ridge-purlin, whereas Stanway has trapped collar-purlins and no ridge-purlin, and appears to be a century later than Frocester (fifteenth century against fourteenth),<sup>25</sup> thus accounting for the greater S.E. flavour. The later collar-purlin is vertical, suggesting that the angled one is an earlier type, as it is seen at Frocester.

To which of the two main forms of carpentry practice can this base-cruck be assigned? The roof seems to be a hybrid, with a double rafter-roof above the collar, suggesting the box-frame tradition,<sup>26</sup> but the aisle-purlins are through purlins, resting on and not trapped by the collar, suggesting the cruck tradition, as seen at Frocester, Stanway having a trapped purlin.<sup>27</sup> Assuming that the barn was timber-framed there are two possibilities. Firstly, the base-cruck doubled as a wall-post, as from its shape it could have done, and so became a cranked wall-post; this combination of wall and roof is characteristic of the box-frame, rather than the cruck, tradition. Secondly the cruck may have been like that at Kings Bromley, with a wall-post behind, which provides the separation of wall and roof-truss characteristic of the cruck tradition.<sup>28</sup> This can only be conclusively solved by examining the back of the cruck, impossible without demolishing the stonework. Of the two the latter seems to match Chale better, but the later work in the barn shows box-frame influence. This mixture of traditions, already apparent in Trusses 2 and 3 whichever solution be adopted, and the full crucks at Chale, suggest that the Isle of Wight began in the cruck tradition, but changed at an early stage to the box-frame, this barn occurring during the changeover. Significantly very few of the pre-late nineteenth-century farm buildings seen by the author in the Island have ridge members and where it occurs it is slight, although only some have butt-purlins. As all the Gloucestershire cruck-trussed tithe-barns have been dated, with the possible exception of Postlip, to no

<sup>25</sup> K. C. Day, "Gloucestershire Tithe-Barns", unpublished essay, 1963.

<sup>26</sup> R. A. Cordingley, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

<sup>27</sup> R. A. Cordingley, *op. cit.*, pp. 124, 125.

<sup>28</sup> See also I. C. Peate, *Welsh House*, 1944, p. 164, at Lloran-Sanol, Llansilin, Denbighshire.



later than fifteenth century,<sup>29</sup> and noting that Chale is probably fourteenth century, it seems reasonable to date this section of Arreton to the fifteenth century, probably fairly soon after obtaining the rectory in 1405. This is suggested by the bold span, apparently straining the resources of the monastery, and the fact that from the mid-fourteenth century the numbers and fervour of the monks declined.<sup>30</sup>

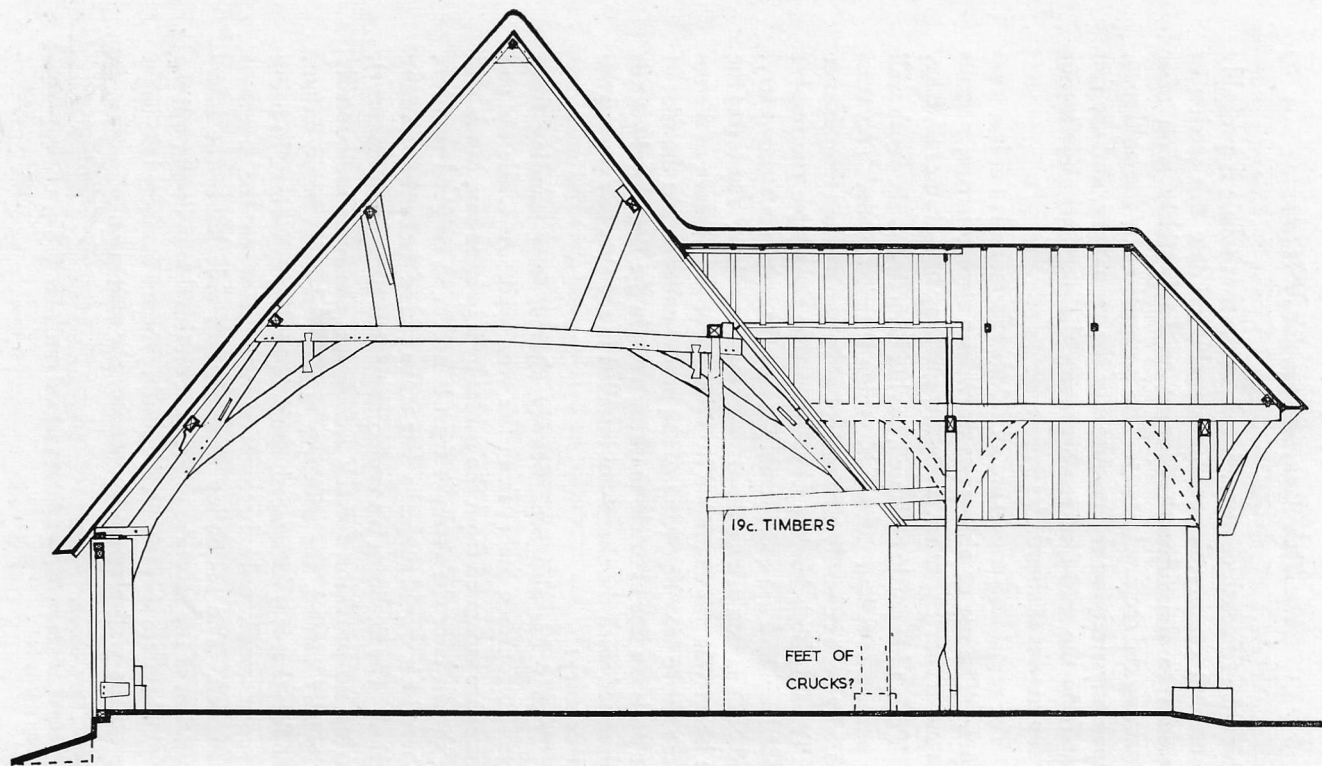
The remaining trusses are all aisled in form, and of at least two types. The use of aisle-posts provides a stronger truss, permits the use of shorter timber, and show growing box-frame influence.

Truss 1 has partly collapsed, having been tied to the south wall to prevent it falling outwards, which it failed to do. This truss has only been cursorily examined, but bears a marked resemblance to Truss 6, both having stone bases that rise above the present floor level and are considerably larger than the posts they carry, and both having principal posts without a shoulder. The top of the tie beam was not examined in Truss 1 but the absence of a truss there above may be owing to the partial collapse. At the foot of the posts is a line of bricks marking a rise in the floor level—is this connected with the sheep-dip installed in the first bay during the last century?

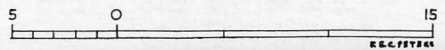
Truss 6 has also been heavily altered, now standing from seven to fourteen inches from the west wall. At Chale the end trusses are separated from the gables by a quarter bay, but as will be shown later the Arreton truss is not in its original position, otherwise it would suggest a date at the end of the timber-framing period. The tie-beam is a replacement (late nineteenth century?), having no provision for the arch-braces the posts undoubtedly originally carried, the mortices and dowel-holes being extant. The fact that it is underneath the aisle-purlin, in view of its being a replacement, only becomes significant when the porch is examined. The re-roofing of the north aisle leaves the interpretation of the mortices in the post on this side in doubt, but the original system survives on the south, where a cambered tie-beam sits on the wall-plate and penetrates the aisle-post.

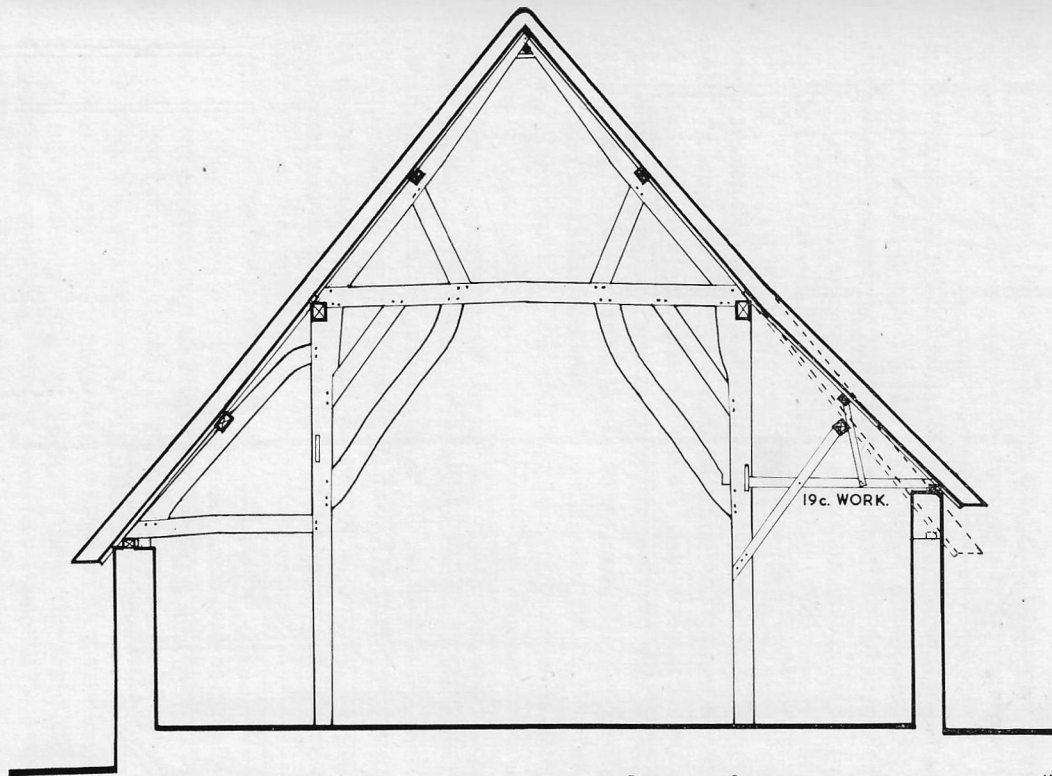
<sup>29</sup> K. C. Day, *op. cit.*

<sup>30</sup> A Monk of Quarr, "Quarr Abbey: old and new", Isle of Wight County Press Aug. 15, 1964.

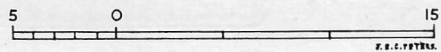


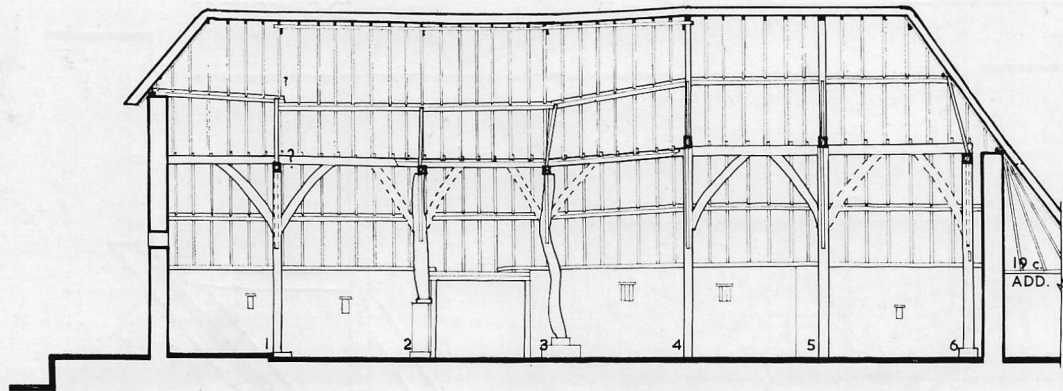
SECTION B-B.





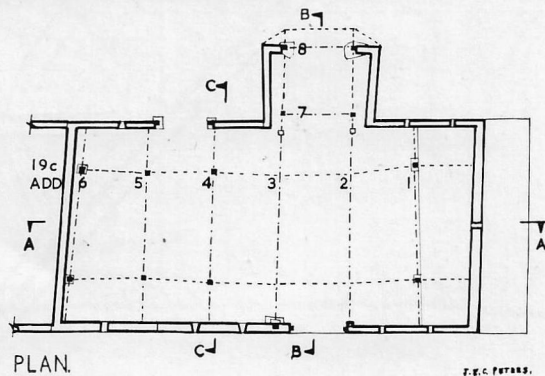
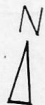
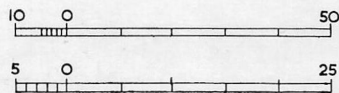
SECTION C-C.





SECTION A-A.

THE TITHE-BARN,  
ARRETON,  
ISLE OF WIGHT, I.



F. G. PETRUS.

The aisled porch was probably added after the cruck barn had been rebuilt and enlarged. Its trusses bear a close resemblance to what is left of Truss 6, allowing for the difference in span. The aisle-plate rests on top of the tie-beam, so no shoulder is needed to the principal post. This seems to indicate surviving cruck influence. Arch-braces rise to both but are so arranged that they enter the aisle-post at different levels, and so not weakening it. Both the purlins and the ridge piece run from the main roof to Truss 7 where they stop with two angle-struts; reinforcing to the roof beyond is provided by two rafter-collars. (The ridge-purlin beyond Truss 7 is a later insertion). The aisle-purlin seems to have begun against the crucks, and projects beyond the doors to form a hood, which has a floor of  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch boarding on light poles. As the aisle-purlin is higher than the walls a triangle was left which was filled with vertical boarding, but this only survives on the eastern side. The original doors were probably harr-hung, the present ones still pivot in a hole in the stone plinth. The hip is larger than that at the east end, suggesting that it may be later, taking into account the same sized and later one at the west end.

Trusses 4 and 5 represent the last major alteration, and are in good condition. The bases to the principal posts do not project above the modern bituminous floor. Their timber has been inverted from its original growth, so that a shoulder is provided to provide an adequate surface for the joints with the trapped aisle-plate and tie beam. C. A. Hewitt<sup>31</sup> has shown that this is a later method than that seen in Trusses 6, 7 and 8.

It seems that it was originally intended to follow the method used in these Trusses in 4 and 5, for in the lower, and so thinner end, of the northern part of Truss 5 are mortices cut for the arch-braces, but before the thick end was reduced a change in policy took place and this was used to provide a shoulder, and fresh mortices were cut. As the post was now too short for the increased height involved in putting the tie-beam above the aisle-plate a foot had to be spliced on. (Was it put on one side until the other members were ready and then used because more suitable timber was not available, or was it used for economy?) That it was not a

<sup>31</sup> C. A. Hewitt, "Timber Building in Essex", *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society*, N.S., vol. IX, p. 41.

post from a now-destroyed truss like 6 may be shown by there being timber available for a shoulder. It may have been that an old carpenter, brought up in the old tradition represented by Trusses 6, 7 and 8, was employed at first but died before the work had progressed very far, being replaced by a younger one who had absorbed some of the new ideas.

The aisle-purlin related to these trusses is vertical, and heavier than the cruck one to which it is jointed by a scarf joint. It thus functions as an intermediate wall-plate and shows increased box-frame influence; owing to the form of the joint the tie-beam had to be put on after the aisle-purlin, so that the truss would have to be reared in unstabled sections, and not, as was the case with a cruck, all at once. The arch-braces supporting the collar are paired, the curves being mirrored, the relative smallness of the timber involved permitted this apparent advance on the crucks. Each of the larger northern braces has unaccountably had a piece cut from it.

Trusses 4 and 5 were not designed to have a ridge purlin, but there is a collar on the principal rafters on Truss 4 to receive that from the cruck bays. The purlins are housed into the principal rafters but not pegged; in one case a block has had to be used as the housing was made too deep. The angle struts are morticed and pegged at each end, representing a considerable advance on the crucks, but they are still plank-like; those in the similar truss in the dovecote are squarer, and so probably later (the dovecote is seventeenth century).

The original method of spanning the north aisle is unknown, no joints being left on the aisle-posts when it was destroyed in the nineteenth-century alterations. The cambered tie-beam spanning the south aisle, like that over the nave, rests on top of the wall-plate.

Having described the building it is time to examine the stages of its development, which are not very straightforward.

The oldest parts of the building are the two cruck trusses, probably dating from fifteenth century, and part of a timber-framed building. The gable crucks of the three-bay cruck barn postulated earlier would have been removed, probably as decayed,

decay having affected the feet of the surviving crucks, and the back of one.

That the barn was originally of five cruck bays seems unlikely; it would have to be timber-framed as no evidence has been left in the walls of the existence of other crucks. But both the surviving crucks are internal ones, and so one at least, if not both would be flanking the threshing bay, so receiving far more wear than the end internal trusses and so the least likely of the internal to survive. That they are in their original position is proved by the roof, which does not appear to have been moved during rebuilding.

But could not the barn originally have been of five bays, using crucks in the centre and aisled trusses at the ends, thus providing a wide centre space? (Truss 1 and Truss 6 in its original position.) M. W. Barley notes a house at Clifton, Nottinghamshire, where this was done.<sup>32</sup> This is most unlikely for a number of reasons. Firstly, the purlins are higher on all the main aisled trusses than on the crucks, and these have not fallen inwards, also the ridge-purlin runs only from Trusses 1 to 4, covering the three-bay barn postulated, whereas if it had been of five bays it would have continued through to the eastern hip. Secondly, as the aisled trusses represent an advance on the crucks their positions relative to the entrance would have been reversed, for the previous style survives, if it does, where it is less visible.<sup>33</sup> Thirdly, if the barn is to be divided into three sections the division invariably occurs on either side of the threshing floor and not further back.<sup>34</sup>

The next stage probably took place during the early sixteenth century, either after the leasing off of the manor in 1525 or after the dissolution, in either case by the tenant. It is most unlikely that Quarr undertook the rebuilding which is suggested, presuming a date about 1500, as the leasing off in 1525 was as a result of declining numbers and possibly revenue, a process unlikely to encourage capital investment on so large a scale. Quarr has been noted as being one of the lesser houses, it had in

<sup>32</sup> M. W. Barley, "The English Farmhouse and Cottage", 1961, p. 25.

<sup>33</sup> See Sir C. Fox and Lord Raglan, *op. cit.*

<sup>34</sup> Author's researches.

fact only ten monks in 1536, as against 150 when at its largest in the mid-thirteenth century.<sup>35</sup>

The second stage involved the enlarging of the three-bay barn to five, and rebuilding it in stone, using aisled trusses, Truss 1 is still *in situ*, but the other one on the site of 4 seems to have been moved to 6 at a later stage, as will be shown. The evidence of the purlins has already been cited. The tall east wall left only a small hip, the position of the matching west wall is marked by a vertical joint in the south wall opposite the second north doorway, which is the same distance west of Truss 4 as the east wall is east of Truss 1. Was it originally intended to have a five-bay barn with a quarter-bay at each end as at Chale? Beyond the east wall two low walls project sufficiently far to provide this, being bonded to the others and of the same width; they stop at the pond. That there is only a projecting plinth to the east wall does not mean it is a different date to the side, the same thing occurs at the Wyke Barn, Castleton, Dorset, which is of one date.<sup>36</sup> This was probably done as this end faced the church, and was visible therefrom. The varying widths of the barn on either side of the porch may not be used as evidence as the difference is not great, and there are no right-angles in the plan. One problem does remain, why is the south wall to the west of the south door considerably thicker than the other side walls? It appears, from the window shape, to be of a different date; and continues this thickness beyond the joint already noticed to the west end.

Was the porch added at the same time? A comparison of the trusses is not very helpful owing to the condition of Trusses 1 and 6, but on the evidence of the size of the hips it is unlikely. The hip to the porch begins at the aisle-plate level, as does the seventeenth-century west one, whereas the eastern one begins at the upper purlin level. The northern crucks were then retained, either on a plinth as at Chale or with a full wall backing making the porch a separate room, but the latter is unlikely. If the northern crucks had been removed the whole truss would have been demolished and a fresh beginning made, rather than intro-

<sup>35</sup> A monk of Quarr, *op. cit.*

<sup>36</sup> R.C.H.M., *op. cit.*



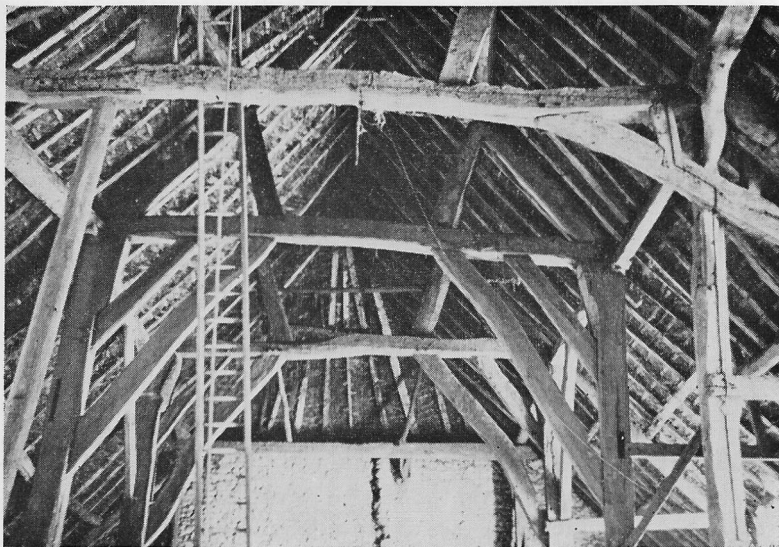


FIG. 3. Interior looking west, trusses 4, 5 and 6.



FIG. 4. Interior, truss 3, junction of porch and barn.

ducing the present rough effect, which seems to be nineteenth century in date.

The final stage is probably seventeenth century, a further enlarging of the barn encouraged by the rising corn prices. Was it by the tenant of the crown, about 1600 or slightly later, or by Sir Levinius Bennett who purchased the manor in 1628? If the latter it was after he had finished his house, which was done sufficiently soon for the porch dated 1639 to be an addition.<sup>37</sup> In any case it seems to have been done before the dovecote. How the evidence of the change of design affects the dating it is difficult to say; the longevity of a midland carpenter seems to have had some significance around Penkridge.<sup>38</sup>

Two bays were added, the old west gable demolished, and two new trusses reared, one on the site of an earlier one. From the mortice cut for the arch-brace to the aisle-purlin between Trusses 4 and 3 it would appear that it was originally intended to replace the cruck trusses, but this idea was abandoned before the dowel-holes were bored. The original roof over the cruck bays and between Trusses 3 and 4 was left untouched, the square aisle-purlin beginning only at Truss 4. This may have been because the timbers were found to be still in sufficiently good condition for their replacement to be an unnecessary expense.

The demolished Truss 4 was rebuilt just under the gable as 6. Was the building to have been a full bay longer, as the aisle-purlins stop at the truss and do not reach the gable wall, or did the joiner or the mason get their dimensions muddled? The small extension which at first sight seems to be this bay is in fact a late addition. The difference in size between the hips is thus accounted for by a difference in date.

During the nineteenth century a few alterations were made. The northern crucks were removed and replaced by rough bolted timberwork (pegs were still used in a barn at Gatehouse, Ashe, dated 1801). A new north doorway was cut, to provide easier access to the long west wing. As the side walls were only eight feet high from the wall-plate, and with it the wall were raised, leading to the removal of the timbers spanning the north

<sup>37</sup> P. G. Stone, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

<sup>38</sup> Author's researches.

aisle and their replacement with bolted ones supporting new purlins. A lean-to was later added at the west, with a roof of fir poles, probably at the same date as Truss 6 was partly replaced and a fir-pole truss added to it.

The main barn at Arreton is thus a very interesting building which has survived a series of partial rebuilding owing to the then soundness of the earlier work. The author is indebted to Mr. Yates for permission to examine it.

WINCHESTER EXCAVATIONS 1961-1963  
AREA NORTH OF THE CATHEDRAL

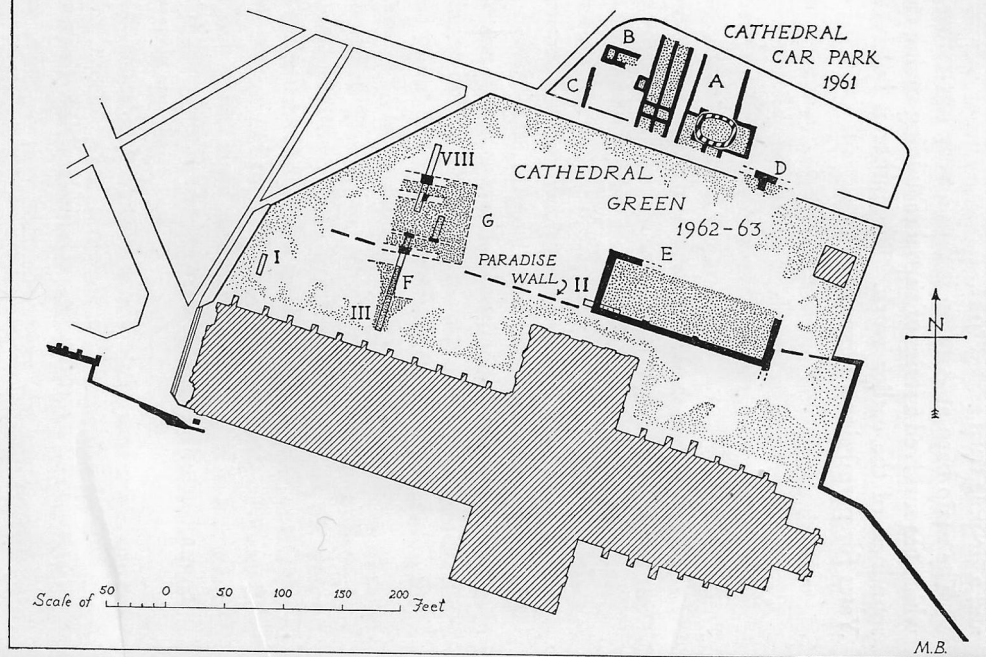


FIG. 1. Plan of Excavations North of the Cathedral