

SOME TWO-UNIT HOUSES IN SOMERSET

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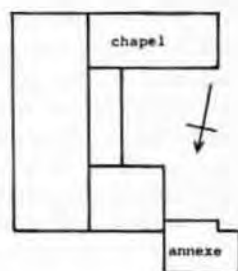
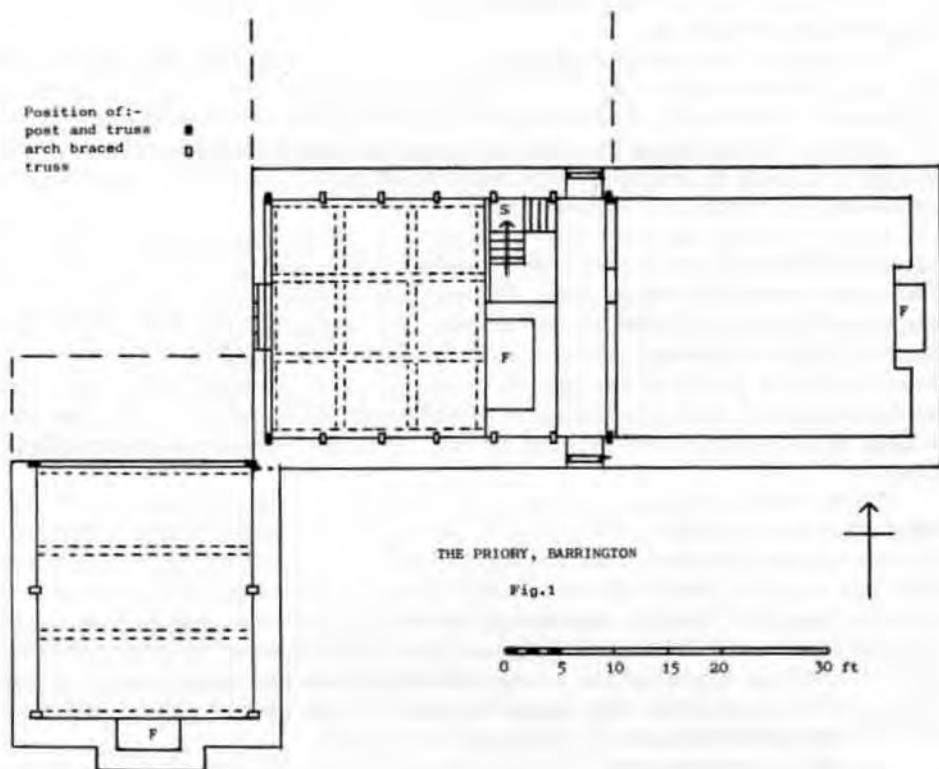
Of the several hundred early houses so far examined in Somerset, few are entirely of one building period: the majority have later subsidiary structures, may-be kitchens, dairies or extra living or storage space, added to houses formerly existing. Whatever the form of these additions, an axial extension or a wing, they are usually fully integrated with the original building. Occasionally however the ultimate plan comprises a building of two distinct units: such an arrangement is of special interest in that it suggests some fundamentally different purpose for the second unit. In three of the houses to be described, *The Priory*, Barrington, *Leigh Barton*, Old Cleeve and *Poundisford Farmhouse*, Pitminster, the second unit was built adjoining the original but with no inter-communication internally; in two others, *Yatford Farmhouse*, Broadway and *Blackmoor Farmhouse*, Cannington the two units are coeval and contained within one building, but were nevertheless functionally separate.

M. W. Barley, in the *English Farmhouse and Cottage* pp. 4, 12 and 46 (1961), comments on the extent to which the evolution of house plans has been affected by the need to accommodate joint families of two or three generations and to provide shelter for retainers and servants. Sir Cyril Fox and Lord Raglan, discussing houses built on the unit system in *Monmouthshire Houses* vol. 2, p. 75 (1952), and J. T. Smith, discussing certain Lancashire and Cheshire houses in the *Archaeological Journal* vol. 127, pp. 156-81 (1970), consider the plan was evolved to house an independent but related household, either the younger married or the older retired generation. An alternative use, as will be seen, is that the lesser unit may have accommodated the family priest. That it might have been the manorial courtroom is yet another possibility of which an example has not yet been definitely identified, but there is documentary evidence of such having existed in High Ham parish at Low Ham manor. In 1595 a lease¹ was granted to Johan, wife of Richard Hayward, and to their children Elizabeth and Jane, of the tenement in Netherham commonly called the New House; in 1662 John Hayward had the lease² of a tenement called New House where the court was to be kept in the Hall House of the said tenement, and in c. 1680 Benjamin Barnard held the lease of the Court House, a tenement called New House, in which the court was to be held in the Hall of the said house. The New House was almost certainly that known today as *Dairy House Farm* (ST 433294), at the rear of which is a very large wing now used as an agricultural store, which shows traces of a different earlier function.

THE PRIORY, BARRINGTON (ST 387183)³

EXTERIOR (Fig. 1). The *main range* runs E-W parallel to and set back from the village street; at the W end a substantial *wing* projects S to the road and is seen from the rear to be almost detached from the house, although this is now masked by later work. The whole of the front (S) walling of the main range, including a porch, the transomed windows on both floors (the upper in dormers) and the tall octagonal and circular chimneys appear to be 19C Gothick. The W wall contains a four light window with hollow chamfered mullions under a hood mould, which might be 16C but has a resemblance to the dated 17C windows in the Court House, Long Sutton, and in the Old Grammar School, Martock. The rear wall is concealed by later work and the E gable is featureless.

INTERIOR. The *main range* comprises a *hall*, 25' long by 22' wide, to the W of a cross passage onto which backs a large fireplace: the wooden lintel of the latter has a wide plain chamfer which curves to meet similar chamfers on the stone jambs terminating at 7" above the hearth. The ceiling is divided into nine large panels by massive, deeply chamfered beams cambered towards the centre. The staircase, rebuilt in the 19C, occupies the normal position in the corner beside the hall entrance. In the SW corner a narrow passage within the later building now connects with the wing. Details of the *service and kitchen area*, 28' long, to the



Key Plan Fig.2a

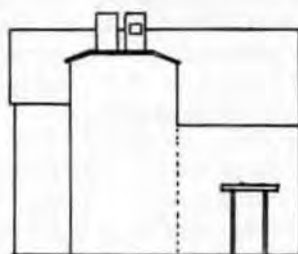


Fig.2b

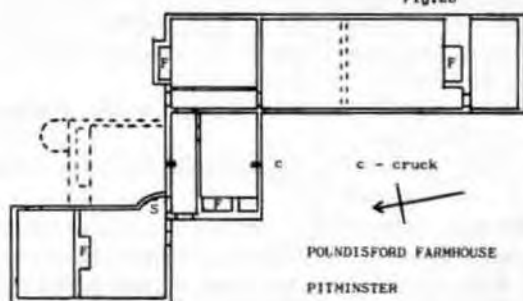
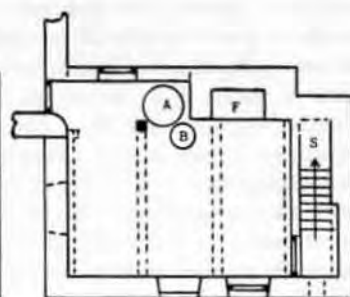


Fig.3

Sketch Plan - not to scale

E of the cross passage are indeterminable owing to extensive 19C alterations when a new kitchen was added at the rear.

The *wing*, of one-room plan, approximately 23' long by 20' wide (but originally wider) has a stone fireplace at the S gable with double ogee moulding to the lintel and jambs, but it is uncertain if it is of early post-medieval date or a 19C replacement coeval with the heraldic device on the chimney breast. Four ceiling beams have hollow/step/ogee moulding, but the stops are lost owing to rebuilding of the walls. In addition to the modern windows there are two blocked doorways and a window opening.

Roof. In the *main range* the W gable is of framed post-and-truss construction, originally infilled with wattle and daub, embedded in later walling; the tops of the posts are jowled and tenoned into the tie beam. Although some timbers are missing in the area of the fireplace and passage it is possible to reconstruct the roof over the *hall*: at 5½' intervals three trusses of lighter scantlings alternate with two main trusses, and a final post-and-truss structure at the E side of the passage may be assumed on the basis of a symmetrical pattern, and by comparison with other instances of hall roofs which include a later cross passage (notably at nearby Court House, Long Sutton, where also there are major and subsidiary trusses).

All the trusses, other than those at the end walls, are open archbraced with slightly hollow chamfers and straight collars (Fig. 4). The archbraces extend down to the level of the first floor on the subsidiary trusses, and slightly below that level in the case of the main ones which rest on stone corbels (the overall effect being similar to that of jointed crucks with very short uprights). Detailed examination having been made after stripping for repairs to the badly deteriorated timbers and to replace some inferior masonry, it is now doubtful just where the roof was supported; the corbels presumably carried the main trusses, but the area of the base of the subsidiary ones appears too small to have taken any appreciable load and the feet of the rafters were possibly supported on the walls.

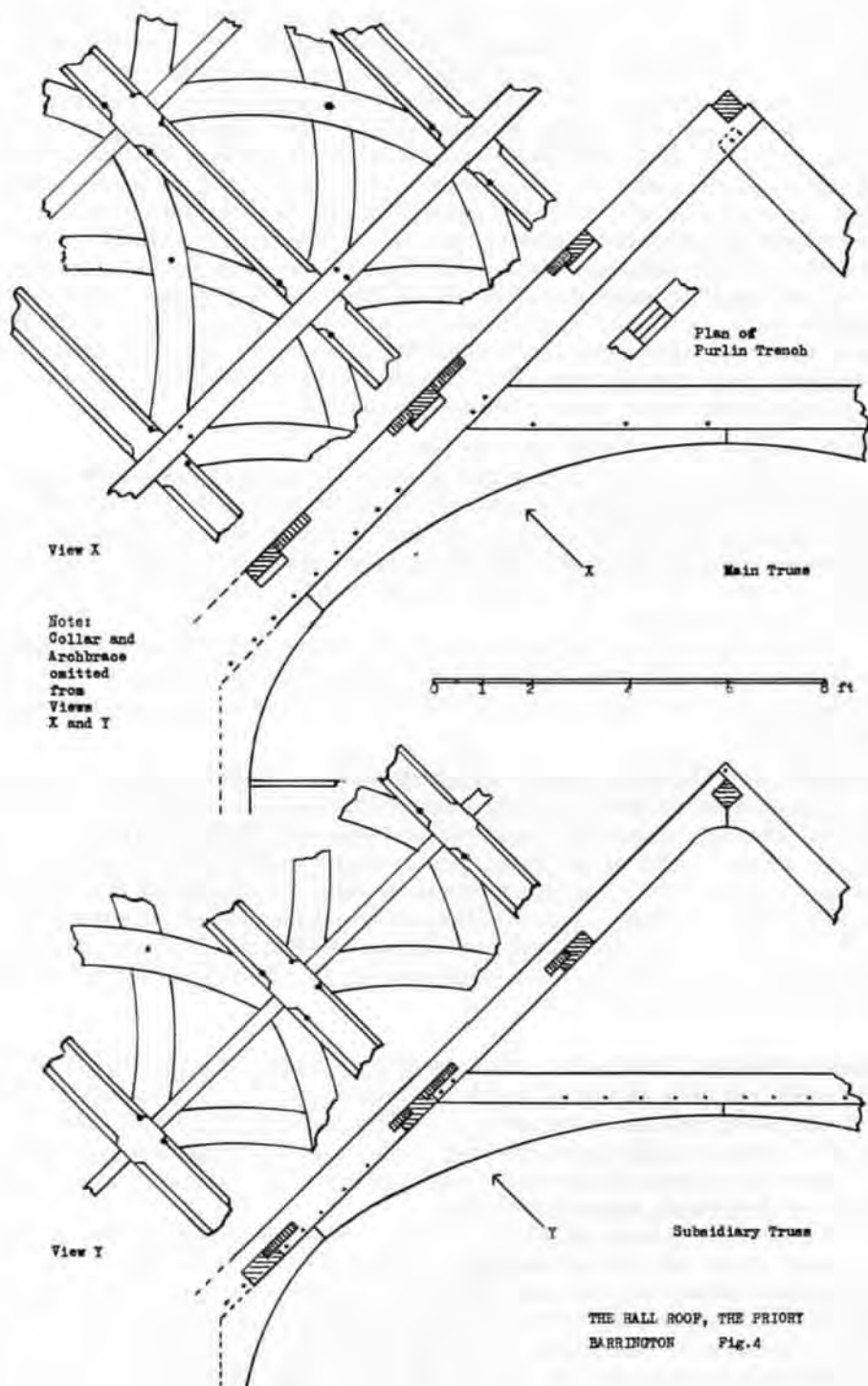
The 6¼" square diagonally set ridge is trapped within the joints of the apices of the subsidiary trusses: the principals meet on a vertical line below the ridge where their width swells to give a cusped effect, and above the ridge is a small pegged mortice and tenon joint, an arrangement occasionally met with elsewhere. In the main trusses the ridge is set in an open V notch. The three lines of purlins are set in trenches in the main trusses and are located longitudinally by a raised step in the latter engaging a slot in the former. In the subsidiary trusses they are pegged into slots in the under side of the principals, their lower sides being flush with those of the latter; the mid and lower purlins are trapped above the archbraces, as in the porches at Douling Abbey Barn, and are thus effectively supported by the trusses; but the latter are in fact supported by the upper purlins. The purlins, with small chamfers stopped at each of the trusses, were originally of the full length of the roof, over 30' long.

Scissor windbracing (Fig. 4). There are considerable remains of two sets of curved cross braces in each bay between the purlins; they have small chamfers and the ends are all tenoned and pegged into the purlins except for the lower ends of those against the main trusses into which they are pegged. This type of bracing is very rare in Somerset, the only other known example being Candle Cottage, Crewkerne.

All original timbers are markedly smoke blackened, thus establishing a medieval origin and proving that the first floor and fireplace are insertions.

Over the *service area* to the E of the passage the roof has been rebuilt; the collar beam trusses are unblackened and the purlins are tenoned in a late style.

In the *wing* it is quite clear from the roof structure that this is a separate building, almost touching but not part of the main range. The N end is of post and truss construction differing from the main range in that the tie beam is 18" higher and there are two collars. At mid length and at the S gable are two jointed crucks, neither of which are archbraced. The ridge rests diagonally in slots. The three rows of purlins have normal windbraces between the middle and bottom rows. All timbers are smoke blackened.



INTERPRETATION AND DATING. The main building is of high quality with superior carpentry and although the wing is more conventional it is also of good quality: there cannot be many years between the two constructions, and that of the hall has been tentatively assigned to the late 14C by Sir Robert Hall on analogy with Long Sutton Court House. The ceiling and fireplace were inserted in the 16/17C. There is no apparent reason for the wing being set at right angles to the main building: this and the lack of communication seem to rule out its use as a parlour. It seems more likely that the lesser adjacent wing was built to house an independent related household. The alternative possibility, that it was built as a manorial courtroom, is ruled out since it is known that in the early 16C the courts of the manor were held in South Petherton, and in view of the common ownership since the early middle ages this is likely to have been the practice earlier.⁴ It was however so used in the 19C when the lord of the manor no longer owned Barrington Court and had to turn to the next most impressive house. Occupancy of the house has been traced by the Editor of the Victoria County History of Somerset with some confidence back to 1544, when it probably belonged to the Spekes who certainly owned it in the 17C.⁵ It has no ecclesiastical associations, its present name having been acquired comparatively recently.

LEIGH BARTON, OLD CLEEVE (ST 024359)

The house is in a remote setting high on the N slopes of the Brendon Hills. Adjacent to the NW is an extensive complex of farm buildings enclosing a yard. Of these buildings two are of vernacular interest: attached to the barn is one of the best examples known in Somerset of a *roundhouse* which sheltered the horse engine used for threshing, and in the hay loft over the *stables* (?18C) is a fine king post roof, a type rarely found in the county and then mostly late in date.

It is not intended to describe the house itself which has undergone extensive rebuilding and additions in the 18/19C, but to the N of the courtyard at the rear and abutting onto the NW kitchen wing is a two-storey *annexe* which originally had no internal communication with it (Fig. 2a).

EXTERIOR. The S wall of the *annexe*, facing the courtyard, is dominated by an impressively large chimney stack in which is set a datestone of 1627 with the initials 'G.P., A.P. and T.P.' (Fig. 2b). The wall between the stack and the house is a rebuild and contains a modern doorway. In the E gable on the ground floor is a large blocked window and on the upper floor some ancient glazing is set in a replacement frame. The only openings to the N are on the ground floor, a modern window (possibly in an original opening) and a modern door to the W side of which is a small blocked stair window. The W gable is blank and appears coeval with the other walls, although internal features raise the possibility that the building has been shortened and the gable rebuilt.

INTERIOR (Fig. 2c). The W gable is seen to be barely 2' thick, compared with the 2'6" of the other walls, and for a part of its length it is reduced to 15" by a recess under a wooden lintel. The stairs, built against the gable, are divided from the ground floor room by a 10" wall above which is a light plaster partition; in it is set an ovolo moulded wooden doorframe at the foot of the stairs and immediately over it (now blocked) is another similar doorframe, the present stairs having replaced spiral ones.

The four ceiling beams of the ground floor room, with scroll stops to plain chamfers, are equally spaced, with the end ones against the walls. That at the E end stops short of the inserted doorway into the house where it is propped on a wooden wall bracket; the adjacent beam finishes about 3½' short of the S wall between the fireplace and the house, its end on a timber prop. This section of the wall, only about 15" thick, is unbonded at both ends and thus a replacement of the original whose inner face would have been flush with the front of the fireplace (cf. the SW corner of the building). This alteration was made to provide later direct access to the house on both floors. It is reasonable to assume that the

late door in the rebuilt wall replaced earlier access to the courtyard. The beams and the stair doorway are all typically 17C and thus confirm that the 10" wall is original, the whole being coeval with the 1627 stack and fireplace.

The upper room, heated by its own fireplace, has a plaster frieze (partly missing) round the walls. From what could be seen through a hole in the ceiling at collar-beam level the roof is supported on two collar-beam trusses.

The frieze, the fact that both rooms were heated, the large window openings and the well executed doorframes and ceiling beams all indicate a superior function for the building; it was also designed to give the occupants privacy from the main house whilst having direct access to the courtyard and to the *chapel* on its S side. At some later date its status was reduced to that of a bakehouse and brewhouse when access to the house was provided, as indicated by the installation of a large copper vat set in a stone surround over a stokehole at 'A' (Fig. 2c) and a small copper at 'B'; whether the oven, now of brick with an iron door, replaces an earlier one cannot be stated.

The *chapel*, entered from the courtyard, is situated in the rear wing to the SW of the house; it now has an inserted upper floor and is stripped bare. Still extant are the predella (a raised platform) for the altar and behind it a small sacristy. From time to time memorial services are held there to Philip Powel, the priest who served the chapel for many years before the Civil War.

HISTORICAL COMMENT. Dom Bede Camm, in his account of the life of Philip Powel,⁶ states that he had been the family priest to the Riscons of Bableigh near Bideford in Devon from 1623, and that he transferred to Leighland Barton (as it was then known) when a Risdon daughter, whom he does not name, married Giles Poyntz, the 17C owner of Leigh Barton. He continued to serve there until the Civil War when he was martyred at Tyburn in 1646.

Giles Poyntz (d.1666), the son of Robert of Leigh (d.1611) and the grandson of Edward Poyntz of Arlington, Devon, was a member of a strongly Catholic family and in his will left money 'to all my Catholic servants who shall serve me at my death'. His first wife, Agnes (d.1653), would appear to be the Risdon daughter referred to by Camm. His widow by his second marriage, Prudence (d.1691), is said to have provided the family chaplain with diet, a horse and £7 a year;⁷ this would have been after the Restoration when Richard King and George Millington served the chapel at Leigh Barton.⁸ By 1776 Leigh was visited once a month by the Catholic priest of Cannington.⁹

CONCLUSION. In addition to Giles and Agnes, the only other known relatives whose initials would fit those of the datestone are an aunt Ann and a widowed aunt by marriage, Temperance.⁷ Whether the annexe was built to house Philip Powel or to accommodate the two aunts, who may have been religious recluses, must remain an open question.

POUNDISFORD FARMHOUSE, PITMINSTER (ST 224209)

Sir Robert Hall recalled visiting a house in this area some 15 years ago and noting it to be apparently of two-unit plan which he considered to be to accommodate two generations of a family. In the course of trying to rediscover this house, which turned out to be derelict, the unusual plan of Poundisford Farmhouse, which stands a short distance to the S on the opposite side of the road, was noted. Full details remain to be recorded, but sufficient was seen during a short visit to establish that it is a two-unit house.

The *main house* (Fig. 3) appears to be of two periods, the *earlier part* (or remains thereof) comprises a room with a W gable fireplace to one side of which was probably a spiral stair originally and to the other is the entrance; the latter, the present front door, now enters a passage partitioned out of the room in which are modern stairs. At midlength a cruck truss is partly visible from 5' above ground level, but plaster conceals whether jointed or true. At the rear (E) is the *later part* of two rooms (originally three) running N-S; an axial ceiling beam in the long S room has deeply stepped run-out stops which show evidence of removal of a central partition. Beside its S gable fireplace was probably another stair, now a

passage into a late addition beyond the gable. What could be seen of the roof showed the whole of this E range to be of one build and of non-cruck construction; but the possibility of a later re-roofing must be considered, in the absence of adequate visible details.

A separate block of two storeys adjoins the earlier room at its NW corner but without any original inter-communication; this feature is partly masked by a late bakehouse added in the angle at the rear. It has its own entrance on the S close to the other front door. It is now divided on the line of a central fireplace and stack into a living room (S) and a store (N), the latter with separate entrance at the rear; but this may not always have been so.

In the SW corner near the junction of the two buildings was a spiral stair; in the space from which this has been removed doors have been inserted between the buildings on both floors. In the S upper room is visible (plastered over) the foot of a truss with a slight curve at the wall top (possibly a cruck), but in the N half where the roof is fully visible it can be seen to be of late inferior construction with side-lapped collars.

INTERPRETATION. A building sequence as follows is envisaged:—

- i. a cruck house lying E–W, of which one room remains.
- ii. an early 17C extension at the rear lying N–S, which replaced, or involved partial rebuilding of, the E end of the earlier house.
- iii. the building of a separate block for occupation by an independent but related household. Its relative date has not been ascertained.

YATFORD FARMHOUSE, BROADWAY (ST 322155)³

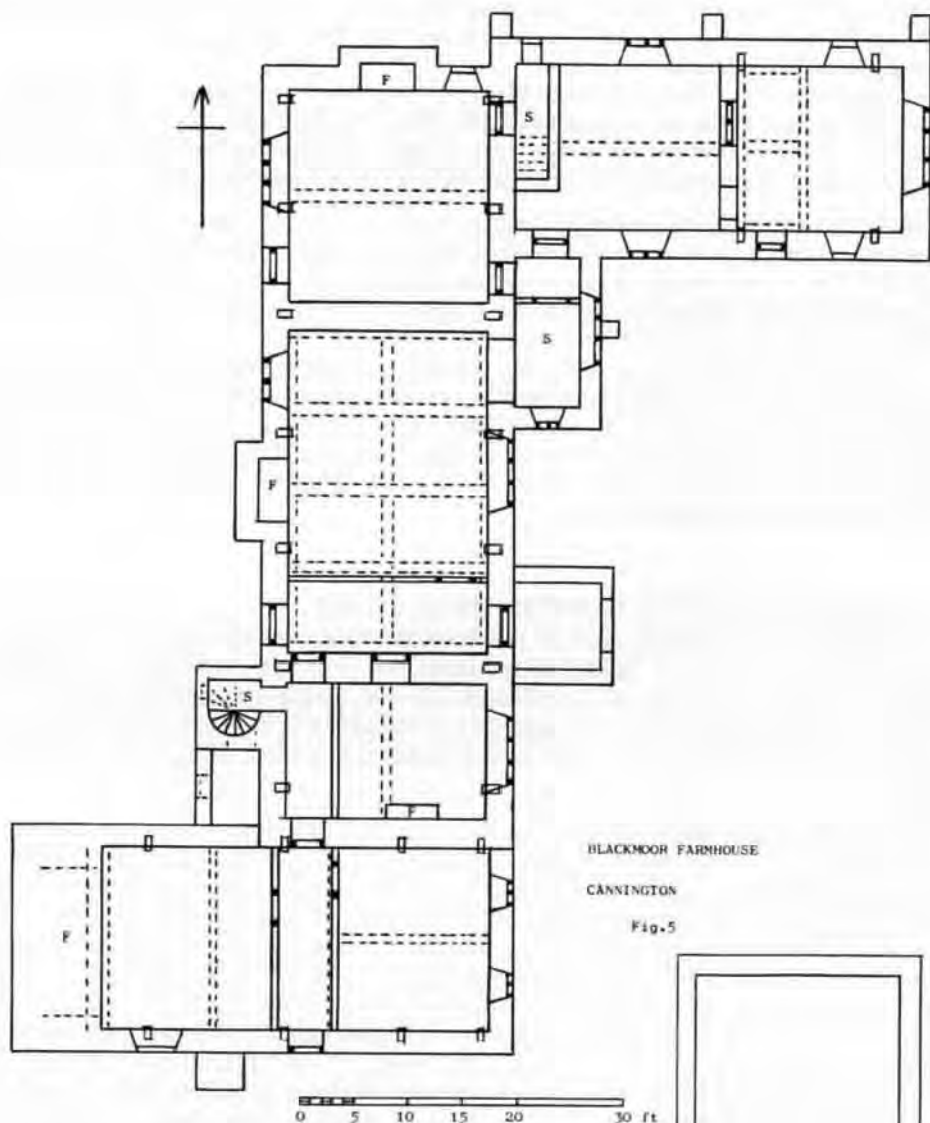
The interest of this house could well escape attention since at first sight it looks like a relatively early pair of semi-detached houses with a uniform brick frontage.

EXTERIOR. There are fairly recent wooden casement windows and two unremarkable front doors. The gables and the rear wall are of rubble, the roof thatched and the upper windows in low dormers. It is exceptionally long, 90': the larger of the two dwellings, at the E end, is about 50' in length and is now occupied by the farmer's family, the smaller dwelling being occupied by the dairyman and his family. There is a later dairy wing at the NE.

INTERIOR (Fig. 6). From E–W is first the *kitchen* with a gable end fireplace, whose wooden lintel has a plain chamfer as have the jambs of large stones whose chamfers are stopped a foot from the floor. To the right (S) of the fireplace was a curing chamber and on the left (possibly) a newel stair. The original front wall (S) was removed after the brick front was built, as happened all along the front; the width at 19' is thus 2' greater than initially. The N wall of the kitchen was replaced by a timber-framed partition when the dairy was added. One ceiling beam has a keeled stop. The room is only 10' long to a timber-framed wattle and daub partition separating it from a 5' wide *cross passage*.

To the W of the cross passage is the *hall*, 10'8" long, with a high quality ceiling and fireplace; the latter, backing on the passage, has stone jambs with hollow/step/ogee moulding and a massive hollow chamfered wooden lintel. The ceiling is framed in eight panels by beams with hollow/acutely pointed step/toll/ogee moulding. Beyond an 11" partition is an *inner room*, 11' long, with a modern fireplace and probably originally unheated. Along the N side of this room would seem to have been a passage, at the far W end of which a doorway (blocked) led into a *second hall*, originally c.12' square, with a passage on its N side. The square area to the S has a framed ceiling of four panels. The axial beam at the S side is a half beam, and that on the N a whole beam with three mortice slots and holes for wattle and daub rods. The transverse beam on the W is a whole beam extending the width of the house and serving the hall and a room beyond. The fireplace at the E end of this hall is modern but presumably replaces an earlier one.

The remainder of the house, nearly 24' long, has been too modified to be clearly understood, but close to the partition between the second hall and the room beyond is the second front door. It appears likely that this entrance was never separated from the room by



Positions of jointed crucks

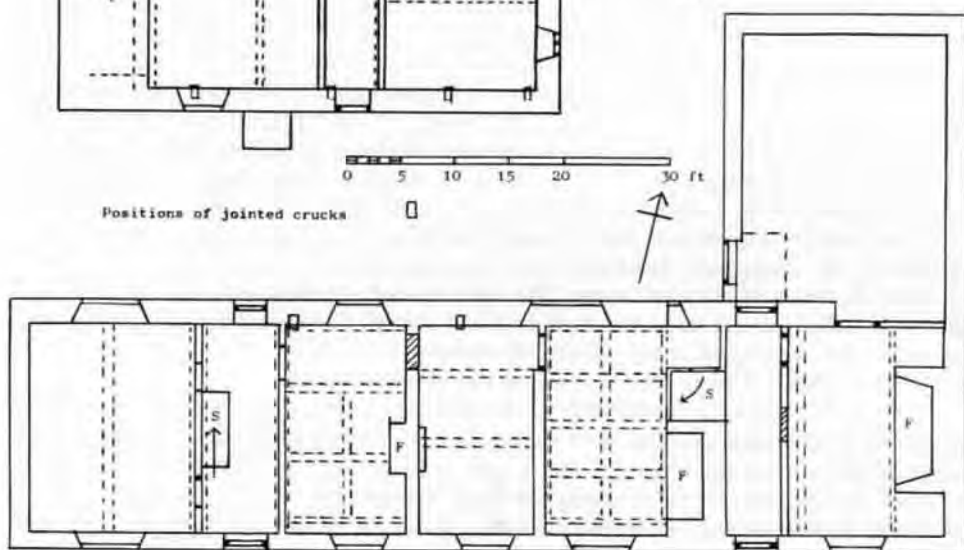


Fig. 6

after C. Austin

a structural partition, but possibly a free standing one or one fixed at the base only; other instances of such an arrangement are known and Dr. N. W. Alcock states that it is not uncommon in Devon houses.

On the *first floor* the only feature of any age is a massive wooden doorway over the W end of the passage within the second hall. Immediately on the E side of the door is a jointed cruck, and two rows of trenched purlins can be seen. At 15'10" to the E (about two-thirds of the way along the inner room W of the first hall) is another jointed cruck.

INTERPRETATION. There is nothing to suggest that both ends of the house are not coeval; indeed, the position of the visible jointed crucks, one in each part, proves the whole was constructed as a two family house. The length of the W end is such that it possibly accommodated farm servants as well as the younger married, or older retired, generation of farmers. It is considered to be of late 16C or early 17C date.

The author considers it possible that the layout of the W half of the house may have been the reverse of that envisaged by Sir Robert Hall: i.e. the 12' square room with the four panelled framed ceiling being the parlour, and the larger room extending to the W gable being the hall, of the lesser unit. In favour of this suggestion are the relative sizes of the two rooms, the fact that an entry into the hall is more usual and the apparent lack of a large cooking fireplace in the smaller room.

BLACKMOOR FARMHOUSE, CANNINGTON (ST 245387)

The high quality and the scale of this house with its impressive chapel wing places it almost within the zone of 'polite' architecture, but it is not irrelevant to a study of vernacular architecture in that the features of advanced design typical of the greater houses of the late medieval period which it displays are illustrative of those to be adopted by the 16/17C builders of lesser houses. Further it provides yet another variation of the two-unit layout.

EXTERIOR. The *main range*, over 70' long N-S, is partly obscured on the front (E) by the *chapel wing* at the N end; in the angle between the two is a large rectangular stair turret. At the S the frontage has been extended by some 20' when a *cross wing* was added against the gable. Midway between the latter and the stair turret is a double storey porch (Fig. 5).

The S wing extends about 22' (W) beyond the rear wall of the main range and in the angle between the two is a smaller second stair turret; initially this served the lower end of the house but it has been extended to join up with the wing. Some 12' to the N is the external stack of the hall fireplace, and on the N gable another external stack serves the fireplaces in both the ground and first floor rooms at the upper end of the hall. The buttressed N wall of the chapel wing, aligned 3' beyond the house gable, extends 41' to the E.

All the *window frames* are of stone. Those of the main range have ogee headed lights without transoms, in the chapel the E window is of three lights trefoil headed, and adjacent in both side walls is a single-light trefoil headed window; otherwise all original windows are ogee headed and transomed, including a tall three light one in the rear wall of the ground floor room at the N of the main range. The ogee headed windows with transoms in the S wing appear to be later copies to match those of the chapel. The inner (W) part of the chapel wing, which has undergone later internal alterations, has square headed windows on the ground floor similar to that in the extension of the rear stair turret.

Doorframes. The inner doorframe of the porch is of stone, ogee headed with double ogee moulding; the outer opening has a depressed four-centred head suggesting the porch is an addition coeval with the S wing in the S wall of which is also a four-centred doorframe. Two doors in the rear of the building are both modern but replace(?) originals; one is opposite the front door and the other enters the room to the N of the hall. An external door in the chapel towards the E end of its S wall is ogee headed with ogee/step/hollow moulding.

INTERIOR. The *main range* is of two storeys with generous headroom on both floors and has always been so, the roof being unblackened. The large lateral fireplace in the *hall* is thus original like the ceiling of eight panels framed by deeply moulded beams. The latter is now dissected by the partition of the cross passage which is thus an insertion of later date; originally there would have been a 'cross entry' with no structural screens. The hall is divided from the lower and upper end bays by 28" walls, an unusual feature presumably to give support to the long and lofty side walls. To the S of the hall was/were the *service room(s)*, probably two but now modified into one with a passage leading to the S wing; they were probably entered from the cross passage by two ogee headed doorframes now (reset?) at either end of the axial passage, from which the rear stair turret opens. Before considering the N end of the hall it will be convenient at this point to mention the *S wing*: this provided additional domestic accommodation on two floors and a new kitchen, and can be dated to the 16C by the stepped run-out stops to the ceiling beams and the very deep fireplace extending the full width of the wing (possibly a stone smoke bay originally). The roof is carried on three jointed cruck trusses.

At the upper end of the hall the 28" wall is unpierced for access to the N room. In the NE corner a 6' wide deeply four-centred headed archway with double ogee moulding opens into the stair turret; at the head of the (rebuilt) stairs two smaller similar arched openings enter the chamber over the hall and the first floor N room, the latter heated by a gable fireplace. A plain chamfered four-centred headed door leads to the chapel wing. On the ground floor, awkwardly sited beneath the stairs, two similar doors enter the wing and the N room of the house. The latter thus 'belongs' to the wing rather than the house, whereas the first floor room was clearly the solar.

The *roof* of the main range is of typical medieval design carried on seven pairs of arch-braced jointed crucks of the fully developed type at 10'10" spacing. There are three rows of trenced purlins each side between which and the diagonally set ridge are three sets of curved windbraces. The purlins and the windbraces have plain chamfers; the archbraces, with hollow/step/ogee moulding, rise from halfway up the first floor walls. The two jointed cruck trusses over the thick transverse walls were infilled to the apex by plaster on riven laths set in timber framing, the archbraces being halved and incorporated at either side, thus being decorative rather than functional; this superior finish to the S side of the S cruck truss implies a second chamber at the lower end. The truss against the gable at the upper end is a feature found in similar positions in other superior houses, as at the Old Parsonage, Milverton and at East Lambrook Manor House. The 3' space between the truss and the gable at the lower end cannot be explained.

The *chapel wing* has walls of 30" thickness, similar to those of the house with which they appear coeval. The 3' offset of the N wall seems intended to allow space for the multiplicity of doors in the stair turret whilst still giving a reasonable width (15½') for the wing. On the ground floor is an 18' inner room divided by an 18" wall from the 15½' square chapel. The first floor room over the former, entered from the turret, has a fireplace on the N and a framed ceiling of six panels with ogee/step/hollow moulding; from it there was access (now blocked) to a 6' wide gallery across the chapel. The underside of the latter is a framed ceiling of two panels with the same moulding, and mortices in the soffit of the outer beam indicate the onetime existence of a screen. The chapel, open to the roof, has two jointed cruck trusses set high in the walls.

The chapel is now disproportionately small for its height and the fine quality of its windows and door. The probability is therefore that it originally occupied the whole wing with a gallery at its W end entered direct from the stairs; later it was reduced (in post Reformation times?) by the building of the 18" wall and at the same time the inner part was ceiled, a new gallery built further E and the late square-headed windows inserted in the inner room. The inner room is featureless except for a slightly hollow chamfered, unglazed, two light wooden window frame with iron bars in the 18" wall. A flight of stairs is partitioned

out of it which appears to be inserted in view of its awkward siting and the depressed four-centred headed door opening into the N ground floor room of the house. This N room, heated by a well proportioned stone fireplace at the gable, is lit by a single-light ogee headed window in addition to the large three-light one already mentioned. Its association with the wing rather than the house, suggested above, is thus further substantiated and it would seem to have provided accommodation for the priest.

HISTORICAL NOTE. In his will of 1498 Thomas Tremayll settled the house and the manor of Blakmor on his son John¹⁰; it is not clear from whom or when he acquired it. Thomas was the son of John Tremayll of Sidbury, Devon: the date of his coming to Somerset is not known, but he first appears in the Bridgwater archives in 1481. A knight and a prominent lawyer, he was serjeant at law 1468-89 and justice of the King's Bench in 1489 till his death in 1508. In 1454-5 there is a reference to John Kenne, formerly of Blakemore, and Margaret his wife,¹¹ and in 1417 a John Kenne had licence to have a chapel at his house in Cannington parish¹². This chapel is perhaps too early, but once a licence was given rebuilding could take place without formality.

The best candidate for the builder of the present house and chapel would seem to be Thomas Tremayll, which could certainly account for both its high quality and advanced design. His son John died in 1534 and his daughter and heir, Margaret, married Nicholas Halswell¹³. At his death in 1562 the manor passed to his son Robert,¹⁴ who in 1570 left plate, a 'great chain of gold' and a coffer of evidences in the parlour at Blackamore to his son Nicholas.¹⁵

The Vicar of Cannington was a namesake of Thomas Tremayll and is mentioned as an executor of his will: did he possibly serve the chapel? There is no trace of late Catholicism in the Halswell family so far as is known, so that any post-Reformation use of the chapel would have been for Protestant worship.

REFERENCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1. Somerset Record Office, DD/MI box 5.
2. S.R.O., DD/MKG box 4.
3. Full accounts of these houses are filed in the Somerset Record Office; that of Yatford Farmhouse was compiled by Sir Robert Hall and Mrs. C. Austin, with whom the author collaborated in recording the Priory, Barrington. The latter has now undergone considerable changes in the course of repairs.
4. P.R.O., E 314/22-3 Eliz. 1/Mich. 11.
5. *Som. Rec. Soc.*, xl, 27.
6. Dom Bede Camm, *Nine Martyr Monks* (1931).
7. The author is indebted to Dr. R. W. Dunning, Editor of the V. C. H. (Somerset) for information concerning the Poyntz family, and also for drawing attention to other documentary sources.
8. *The Catholic Religion in the West* (1826).
9. S.R.O., D/D/V, Diocese Book 1776.
10. *Som. Rec. Soc.*, xix, 116-19, and P.R.O., C142/22/45.
11. *Som. Rec. Soc.*, xxii, 119.
12. *Som. Rec. Soc.*, xxix, 290.
13. P.R.O., C/142/57/82.
14. *Somerset Wills*, ed. Brown, vi, 94.
15. P.R.O., C142/154/86, and *Somerset Wills*, vi, 94.

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