



PL. VII External view from South-East.



A CRUCK-ROOFED BUILDING
IN NORTH CADBURY.

PL. VIII Blocked doorway.



PL. IX External view from North-East.



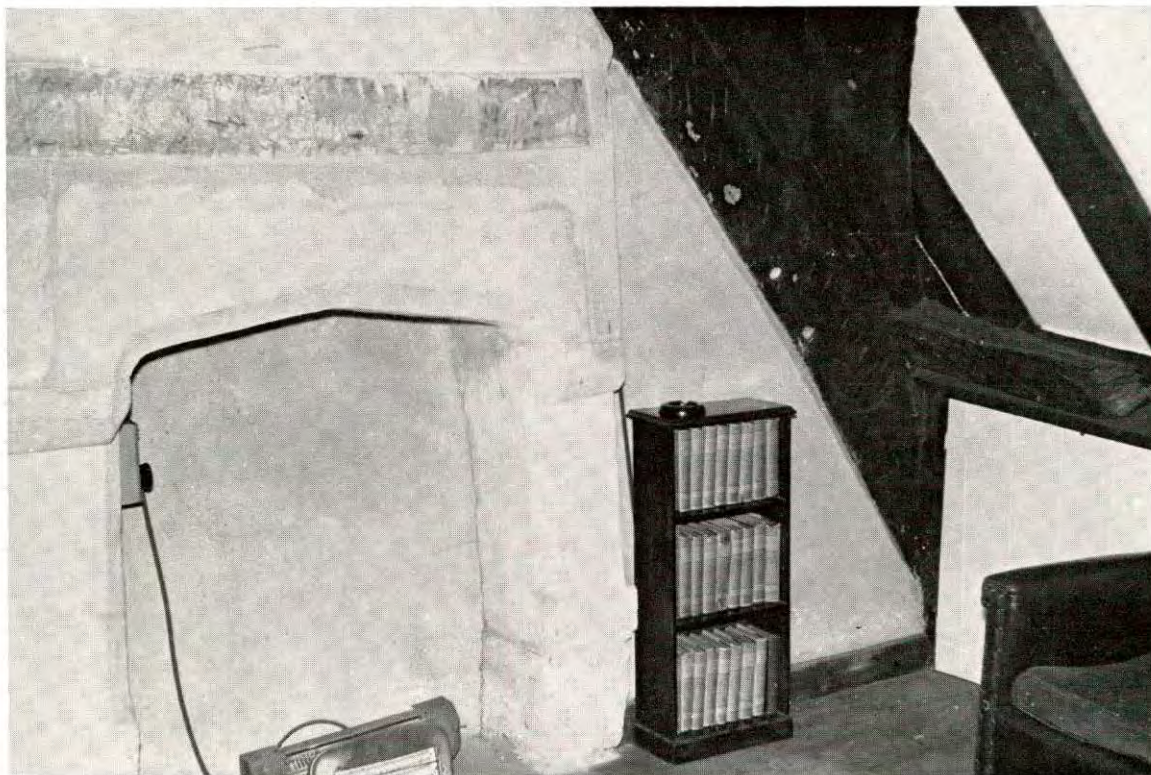
PL. X Cruck blade with later doorway.



A CRUCK-ROOFED BUILDING IN NORTH CADBURY.

PL. XI Cruck blade, showing positioning of purlins and relation to later stairway.

PL. XII Eastern jointed cruck blade, detail.



A CRUCK-ROOFED BUILDING IN NORTH CADBURY.

PL. XIII Inserted fireplace. On cruck blade, marks of peg-holes are of lower collar and arch-brace.

A PRELIMINARY CATALOGUE OF CRUCK-ROOFED BUILDINGS IN SOMERSET

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Instances of cruck construction were first presented to the general reader by S. O. Addy in 1898, in his book *The Evolution of the English House*. Since then, the concept has become increasingly familiar, and regional and local examination had, by 1958, produced over 400 examples. These were plotted by J. T. Smith in two distribution maps which accompanied his article 'Medieval Roofs: a classification' (Smith 1958). Both maps related to England and Wales; one was general, the other covered specialised forms which he had termed "two tier" and "base cruck" roofs. This publication and his succeeding one, 'Cruck Construction: a survey of the problems' (Smith 1964), led to intensified discovery and discussion. The discussion was followed by an assessment by F. W. B. Charles (Charles 1967), while the discovery gave the impetus to the compilation of a general catalogue by N. W. Alcock and M. W. Barley under the auspices of the Vernacular Architecture Group. This catalogue was based on an interim revision by R. F. Taylor, formerly an Assistant Keeper of the Somerset County Museum, and additions by county correspondents will certainly contribute to doubling the number of instances known a dozen years ago.

In 1958, the relevant records for Somerset were very few — there were only three markings on the general distribution map — though it was known that L. F. J. Walrond had done a good deal of exploration a few years previously. R. F. Taylor assembled a county list, beginning in 1967, using both published and verbal information, and raised the total to a score, of which a quarter were his own discoveries. From 1969, the present writer began to explore both buildings and sources of information, including L. F. J. Walrond's important addition of another score (some of which had meanwhile been rediscovered independently). By mid-1970, the total number of instances in standing and demolished buildings has reached 81 in 79 buildings; two of these buildings contain two cruck types. The large majority of examples recorded so far lies in central, south and west Somerset, and the distribution map (Fig. 1) shows a marked degree of evenness, after taking into consideration the high ground and the Levels.

The density is comparable with that in Dorset after recent supplements to J. T. Smith's information; and a verbal communication from N. W. Alcock suggests that the pattern may be similar in the neighbouring parts of Devonshire, as far west as Dartmoor. For north Somerset, there are two instances to prove that the form existed, but how far rarity of construction and how far sparsity of information account for the fewness of records remains to be seen. The Mendip Hills provide an obvious potential boundary, but at this stage one can but note that field work in south Gloucestershire has only produced one cruck building near the Somerset border, at Marshfield (MS, L. Gore), and that, apart from the great barn at Bradford-on-Avon, there is a substantial gap to the east before Wiltshire examples are reached, in the north-west of the county, roughly on a line running south from Chippenham.¹

Both reading and discussion make it apparent that on the national level collection of material has outpaced classification and definition, and indeed some terms in use do not

¹ See Addendum.

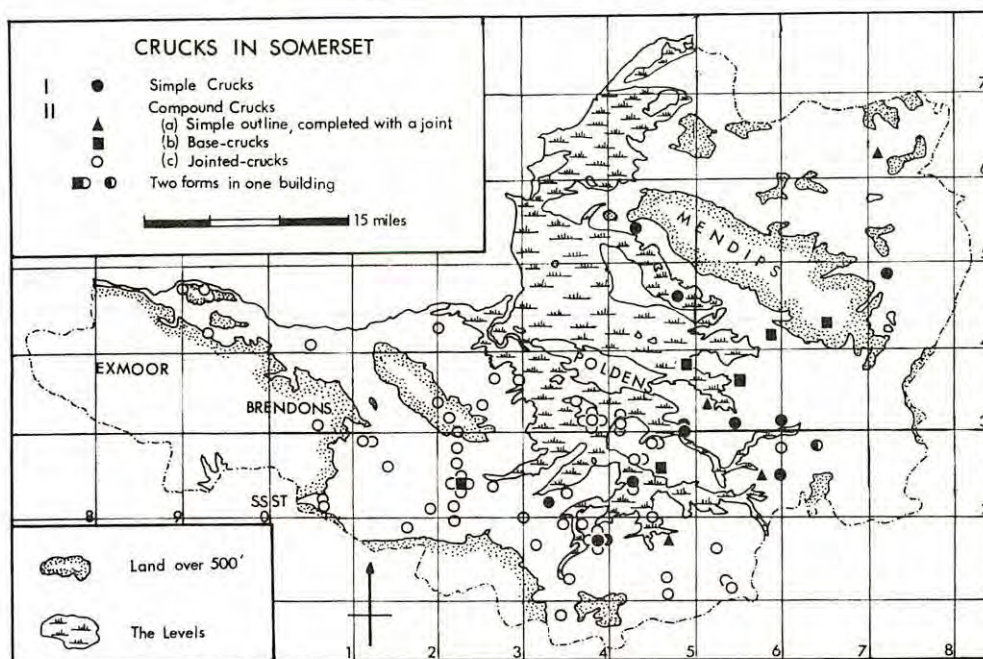


FIG. 1

always mean the same thing in different contexts. Observation has been dominated by the prevalence, both in numbers and in distribution, of the type of cruck construction in good timber country, where curved blades rise from ground to apex. In Somerset and its neighbours to the south and west, the characteristic construction is the cruck made in two parts, upright and rafter, scarfed together, and now known generally as the jointed cruck; and there is not a satisfactory definition which embraces the two forms. When Sir Cyril Fox was President of this Society in 1950, he introduced the Somerset type to his audience as comparable with 'queer false-crucked roof trusses' in Wales.² Writers do not now refer to false crucks, but those without a joint are still called 'true'.

No attempt is made to define in what follows. The term 'cruck' covers that which is generally recognised as such in Somerset — and, in passing, the word 'crutch' has been found still in use by an old village builder. Broad categories have been used, for the sake of a minimum of subdivision, but they are intended as descriptive and not typological, and a number of the main types have been illustrated, with an emphasis on roofs which no longer exist. Even in description, it is difficult to avoid the use of words which have been given specialised meanings. In particular, in a context where walling is most often of stone or cob, 'raised' means any construction the base of which is clearly above the ground or plinth; and 'upper' includes any construction which rests on the top of a wall, whether the result is merely additional roof-space or an actual room, timber-framed.

² See no. 80 and note thereon, below.

Some preliminary points of detail are that since all Somerset, except the extreme west, lies in OS grid square ST, these letters are omitted in the catalogue; SS appears where necessary. In a few cases, buildings are known of but have not been followed up, and in consequence the permission of the owner to include them specifically in the list has not been obtained; and in a few more, owners have asked for omission of positive identification. In such cases, grid references are to the centre of a village or hamlet. Abbreviations have been kept to a minimum:

- D. Demolished — all too frequent, and applying in all save one case, Butleigh Court, to losses since 1952 (though some buildings were then already derelict). They are included since full or partial records have been made of some, while in other cases they are of significance in the distribution.
- MTD. *Monuments Threatened and Destroyed*, compiled by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England), and published in 1963, contains notes on some buildings now lost. Fuller records are in the National Monuments Record.
- NT. National Trust property, to which access is available on the conditions particular to the building.

Finally, before the catalogue is set out, it remains to thank the numerous householders who have so readily given access to the houses, and the informants, too many to name, who have helped to swell the list, either by positive material or by clues. I would also like to thank P. A. Langmaid of the Somerset County Museum for help with the illustrations of this paper.

I. SIMPLE CRUCKS

Curved timbers rise, without joints, from the base to, or near, the apex of the roof.

(a) Base at ground or plinth level.

Parish	OS Grid Ref.	Name or Location
1. North Cadbury	635273	No. 21 Woolston Road/Village Club
2. Stocklinch St. Magdalen	383173	Manning Farmhouse
3. Stocklinch St. Magdalen	384174	Johnsons Acre

(b) Base raised, the blades being wholly or mainly in slots in the wall.³

4. Compton Dundon	486330	Castlebrook Farm Barn
5. Compton Dundon	487331	A house
6. Curry Mallet	327218	Manor House
7. Lovington	597310	Manor House MTD. D.
8. Muchelney	429250	Priests' House NT.
9. Queen Camel	595244	Rectory Farm Barn
10. Wookey	478463	Marcheys Farmhouse Derelict.

No. 1. *North Cadbury*. This building, which also contains no. 51, is fully described in a succeeding article (pp. 63-68).

No. 2. *Stocklinch St. Magdalen*. Probable, and confirmation is hoped for when restoration is done in the near future. One upright, tapering to the base, is to be seen from the ground-floor ceiling level to slightly above the ground, where it rests on a stone.

No. 3. *Stocklinch St. Magdalen*. Three trusses, in a house modernised in the sixteenth century.

No. 4. *Compton Dundon*, and no. 9, *Queen Camel*, have similar features of cruck trusses each side of the wagon entrance and of remnants of arch-braced collar-beam trusses in an adjacent part of the barn. No. 4 has features in the masonry suggesting an

³ See also Addendum.

earlier ecclesiastical ownership, but this has not been established. No. 9 belonged originally to Cleeve Abbey.

No. 7. *Lovington*, is described in MTD as having upper crucks, but the alteration has been agreed with the author, R. W. McDowall.

No. 8. *Muchelney*, is described, with plans, in Pantin, 1957. A late fifteenth century date is proposed for the roof, which he does not specifically mention as being of cruck construction. Ceilings were inserted in the middle of the sixteenth century.

No. 10. *Wookey*. Three trusses, set high, with tenoned purlins. Originally an open hall, modernised by insertion of ceilings and fireplaces in the late sixteenth century.

II. COMPOUND CRUCKS

(a) *Roofs where the profile is that of a single cruck, but the principals, not being long enough, have been extended. All instances are raised.*

(i) Extension to reach the apex.

11. Butleigh	520340	Butleigh Court (Fig. 2) D.
12. Englishcombe	716628	Tithe Barn
13. West Camel	578246	Tithe Barn

No. 11. *Butleigh*. A truss was drawn by J. C. Buckler about 1837, a survivor of the building which was burnt during that decade and replaced by a quasi-Tudor mansion in 1845. The principals were extended by lapping just above the collar. The drawing is in the British Museum, Add. MS 36436, f. 394, and has been used for the figure by permission of the Trustees. (Fig. 2).

No. 12. *Englishcombe*. This was a tithe barn of Bath Abbey. The building is dark, and the first impression of the four trusses which it contains is of the general similarity of outline. There are, however, marked differences in the ways of combining varying lengths of timber. These range from something similar to the Butleigh truss to constructions closely akin to the base-crucks listed in the succeeding subsection. Throughout, there are upper collars and (apart from later loss) arch-braces to the ties.

No. 13. *West Camel*. This, also a true tithe barn, is in the grounds of the rectory. It has five trusses. It has much in common with the end trusses at Englishcombe, save that the upper collars cap the blades, and above them short rafters complete the construction.

(ii) Extension to the base.

14. Stoke-sub-Hamdon	473173	The 'Priory' NT.
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This building is described, with plans, by W. A. Pantin in his article 'Chantry Priests' Houses and other medieval lodgings' (Pantin 1959). Since this was written, a major restoration has been done, and more is known about the roof of the range which includes the hall. The three trusses over the hall were restored earlier, and do not show the cruck form. The fourth, then partly embedded in a partition, was opened up by the architects, Burrough and Hannam. On the south side, where the cruck form survives, no work was done save treatment for beetle. At the elbow, there is a scarfed joint. This is dissimilar from the common jointed cruck, but it may be of typological importance since, from the similarity of beetle damage in both parts of the blade, the scarfing appears to be

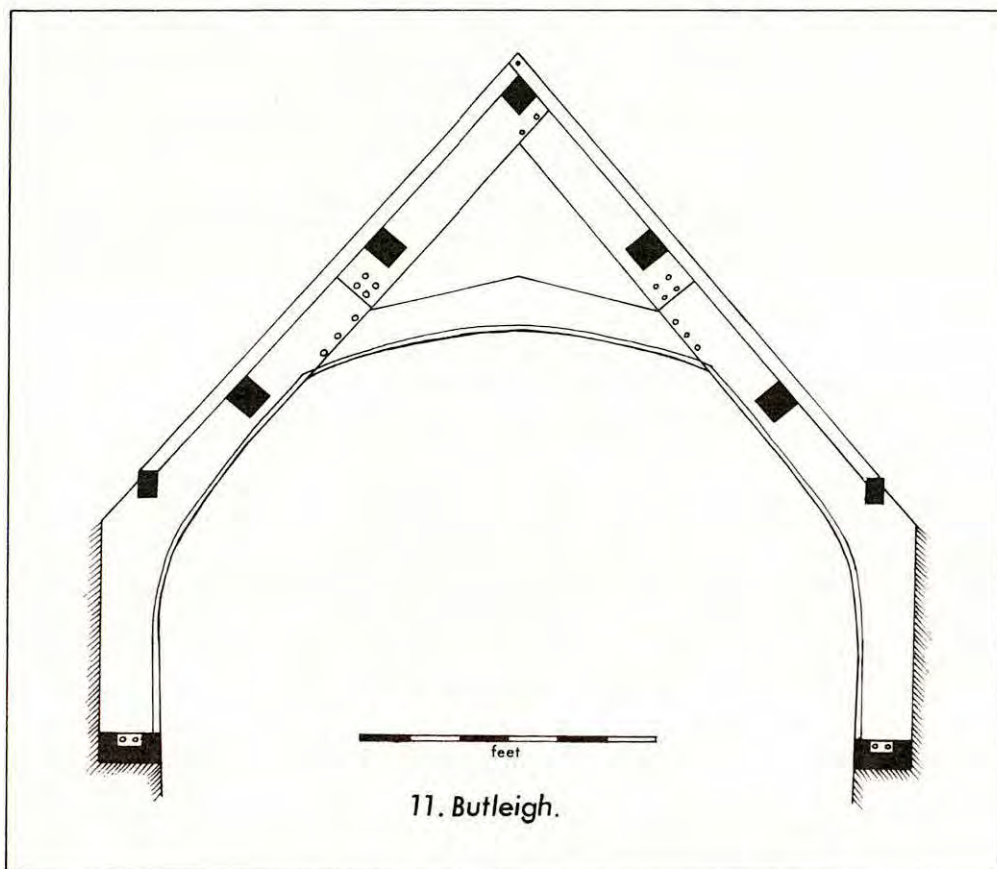


FIG. 2

original. Another instance of downward scarfing is known, just over the Dorset border in Corscombe Court barn, but here the form is very obviously that of the jointed cruck. At the 'Priory', there are traces of another cruck truss beyond that mentioned, over the solar, the roof of which was replaced by raising in the seventeenth century. On one side of the room is a slot, now filled with stone, and on the other a piece of timber embedded in the wall. I am indebted to Burrough and Hannam for bringing these features to notice.

(b) *The base-cruck, in the most conservative sense of the term, where curved members are capped by a heavy collar, to span a wide space, and bear a super-structure. Typically, there are, or were, collar-plates set on the ends of the collar. Again, all instances are raised.*

(i) The superstructure ranges from one with pronounced curves, in fact a cruck, as at Glastonbury, to what in effect are heavy rafters, the bases of which are diminished to leave room for the collar-plates. (Fig. 3).

15. Doulting	648431	Abbey Farm Barn
16. Glastonbury	493383	Abbot's Barn (Fig. 3).
17. West Bradley	547370	West Pennard Court Barn NT.

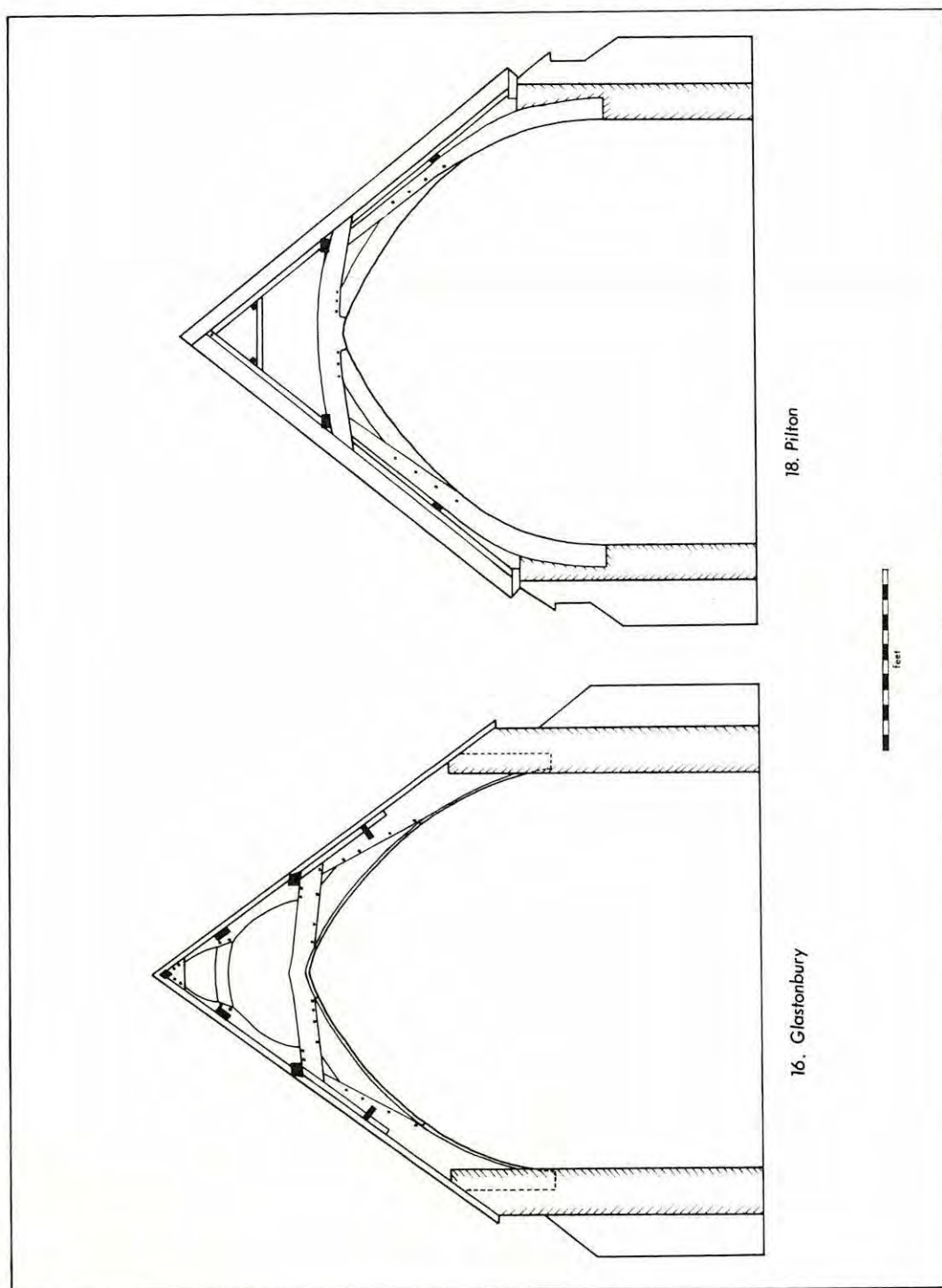


FIG. 3

(ii) The superstructure had straight rafters, of markedly lesser scantling than that of the lower curved members.

18. Pilton

588416

Manor Farm Barn (Fig. 3) D.

All four were the property of Glastonbury Abbey. Those at Doultling and Pilton were built with eight and nine bays respectively; that at Glastonbury has seven and that at West Bradley five. Features of construction common to all were that the bases of the timbers were relatively high in the wall and that in each case the end trusses were close to the stone gables. This is the case also at *Preston Plucknett*, no. 80, and at Corscombe Court barn in Dorset, where it can be seen clearly that the gables were built up after the roof had been erected. Each truss was accompanied externally by a buttress. At *Pilton*,

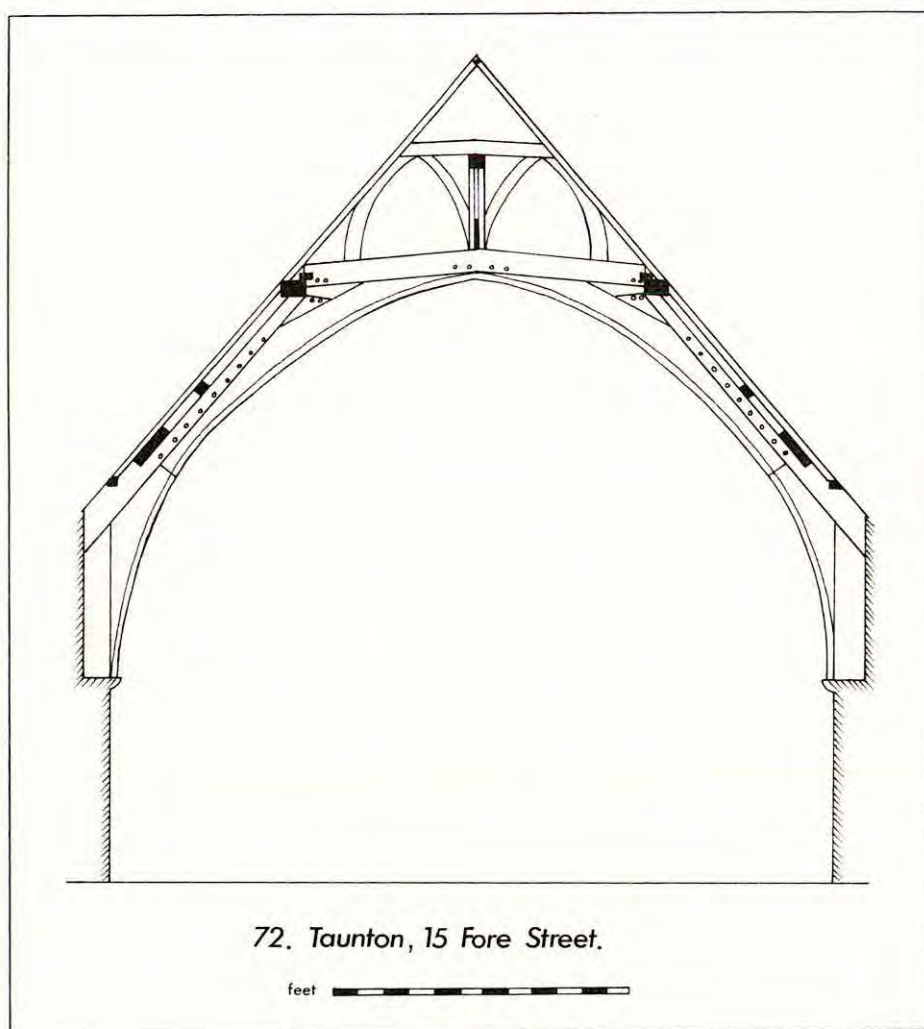


FIG. 4

alternate trusses had shorter members. Various dates have been proposed for the barns, but none are substantiated by documents. For no. 16, *Glastonbury*, Dr. C. A. R. Radford (MS communication) prefers a fourteenth century origin to a later period (fifteenth century) proposed by the geologist James Parker from the nature of the masonry. Measured drawings by students of the Manchester University School of Architecture, in 1960, led to a fourteenth century dating also. Copies of these are in the National Monuments Record and the figure is based on one of them. In the case of *Pilton*, the roof was burnt in 1963, but fortunately there were photographs, not of the first quality, from which S. E. Rigold was able to reconstruct sections of the roof, and his drawing has provided the material for the figure.

(iii) The superstructure is of crown posts, supplemented by curved braces. (Fig. 4).

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|-----------------|--------|--|
| 19. Long Sutton | 465260 | Court House |
| 20. Taunton | 227244 | 15 Fore Street, Tudor Tavern (Fig. 4). |

No. 19. *Long Sutton*, is briefly described and illustrated in an article by B. Little in *Country Life*, 17 October, 1968. For the suggested ownership by Athelney Abbey must be substituted a lay origin, since research by Dr. R. W. Dunning has established that the property belonged to Bourne's Manor in 1528, with a further slightly tenuous connection for the previous century when the building may have been erected. There are five closely placed trusses, two main, with lateral as well as longitudinal braces, and three subsidiary, with longitudinal ones only. A careful restoration was done in 1931.

No. 20. *Taunton*, is in a hall open to the roof in a restaurant, where two trusses were first observed by R. F. Taylor. The figure is derived from his drawing. A fifteenth century dating has been proposed and there is a weak attribution to Walter Portman, a Burgess of Taunton, who married an heiress, Christina Orchard, shortly before 1450. The same building contains no. 72, in a wing.

(c) *The jointed cruck, as described in the introduction.*

Almost all instances are, or were, of the form first described and drawn in detail by L. F. J. Walrond in his article 'Beecham's Cottage, Pitney' (Walrond 1952). A few exceptions to the manner of construction are mentioned in notes on the list which follows. No attempt has been made to categorise examples by reference to the height at which the truss begins since, first, the growth of the list has outpaced the ability of the author and others to study all the buildings and, second, the effects of time and restoration have sometimes left doubt about what originally existed.

<i>Parish</i>	<i>OS Grid Ref.</i>	<i>Name or Location</i>
21. Aisholt	201350	Lower Aisholt Farmhouse. D.
22. Barrington	389183	Allenby Cottage
23. Bossington	SS899479	A house, repaired but cruck D.
24. Bridgwater	300365	Blake House, Blake Street
25. Broadway	321155	Tudor Cottage
26. Broomfield	212316	Raswell House
27. Clatworthy	052308	Touts Cottage
28. Durlough	265363	West Bower dovecote
29. East Coker	542124	Orchard Cottage
30. East Coker	543123	Slades Farmhouse
31. Fitzhead	114286	Chicks Cottages D.

<i>Parish</i>	<i>OS Grid Ref.</i>	<i>Name or Location</i>
32. Fitzhead	123285	Rosebank, site of D.
33. Fivehead	352233	Ganges Partly D.
34. Goathurst	254337	Halswell House
35. Haselbury Plucknett	472109	The Oak House
36. Hatch Beauchamp	300202	A house
37. High Ham	426310	Hillbourne
38. High Ham	427322	Windsor Farm, Henley
39. High Ham	430295	The Cottage, Low Ham
40. Huish Episcopi	427264	Pound Farmhouse
41. Huish Episcopi	438263	A farmhouse, Pibsbury D.
42. Ilminster	347129	Sea
43. Isle Abbotts	356190	Ashford Old Farmhouse
44. Isle Brewers	366186	A cottage, South Bradon D. (p 68)
45. Kingston St. Mary	218284	The Old Malthouse, Nailsbourne D.
46. Kingston St. Mary	220296	Quantock Cottages
47. Martock	453204	Baker's Farm, Coat MTD. D.
48. Middlezoy	377327	Perhams
49. Milverton	136263	The Chantry, Preston Bowyer
50. Muchelney	429245	Tudor House
51. North Cadbury	635273	No. 21 Woolston Road/Village Club (p. 63)
52. Othery	383314	Keens Farm
53. Othery	383315	Gunters D.
54. Othery	383315	Westlakes D.
55. Othery	384317	Little England
56. Othery	385316	Little England Farmhouse
57. Pitminster	213194	Goose Hill, Sellicks Green
58. Pitney	446285	Court House
59. Pitney	452283	Beecham's Cottage D.
60. Puckington	377183	Farndon Thatch
61. Ruishon	264250	Acklands, Bushy Cross Lane
62. Selworthy	SS920468	Zeals
63. Selworthy	SS927462	East Lynch Farmhouse
64. Sparkford	603262	Oak Cottage
65. Staplegrove	211276	Smokey
66. Stawley	072213	Appley Court Farmhouse
67. Stawley	072214	Another house
68. Stocklinch St. Magdalen	384175	The Chantry
69. Stogursey	203429	Cross Cottages
70. Tatworth	327058	Dairs Barton
71. Taunton	226223	51/2 (Three Mariners), High Street MTD. D
72. Taunton	227224	15 Fore Street, Tudor Tavern
73. Taunton	227224	16 Fore Street
74. Taunton	227224	17 Fore Street
75. Trull	188205	Stear Barn, Cutsey D.
76. Trull	213222	King's Gatchell
77. Washford	046407	Cleeve Abbey, dorter
78. West Buckland	162193	Gerbestone Manor Barn
79. West Chinnock	473133	Virgin's Living, Middle Chinnock
80. Wootton Courtney	SS938421	Lower Burrow, now outbuilding
81. Yeovil	535163	Abbey Farm Barn, Preston Plucknett

Comments on this last, and more numerous, list of buildings are made in a different form since, as stated above, little is yet known about a number of them and some have been demolished without a systematic record having been made. In order to give a general picture, a chronological presentation has

been attempted on the basis of investigation so far. It is provisional, and attribution to others is only made where there is evidence from publications, plans or written statements.

MEDIEVAL. This is defined as up to about 1530, and the basis is mainly evidence of halls having been open, of the presence of a substantial amount of timber-framing other than cruck trusses, and, with caution, of the springing of uprights from ground or plinth level.

Nos. 22, 24-26, 29-32, 36-39, 43-46, 49, 51, 56, 58-61, 64, 65, 68, 80, 81.

No. 22. *Barrington*. End and internal timber-framing and inserted ceilings. One cruck truss is at the service end, and one upright rises from near ground level, till recently resting on a stone. The truss over the hall was at first concealed but is now known to be a cruck, with arch braces.

No. 24. *Bridgwater*. Examined by L. F. J. Walrond, whose note, at the Blake Library, Bridgwater, records that there are three trusses, chamfered, with intermediate framed trusses.

No. 25. *Broadway*. Internal timber-framing. Inserted ceilings and fireplaces, one of the latter with timber-framed chimney.

No. 26. *Broomfield*. Assessment by R. C. Edmunds.

No. 29. *East Coker*. Two trusses, inserted ceiling, shouldered-headed door frame at the end of house.

No. 30. *East Coker*. Two trusses, inserted ceiling. A warning that survivals may be very numerous, since to outward appearance the house is of the eighteenth century, in local stone with Ham stone door and window frames.

No. 31. *Fitzhead*. See Appendix I, a record by R. F. Taylor of a building with exceptional features in relation to jointed-cruck trusses, in the form of arch-braces and tenoned purlins. The early use of elm is paralleled at no. 37 and in a non-cruck house, The Orchards, West Lambrook (p. 62-3).

No. 32. *Fitzhead*. Briefly recorded by L. F. J. Walrond as, originally, a two-bay dwelling.

No. 36. *Hatch Beauchamp*. An external chimneystack, in cob, appears to be an addition which may be associated with Elizabethan ceilings and other internal woodwork.

No. 37. *High Ham*. Three trusses and one framed partition completed with straight rafters. Inserted Tudor ceiling. The owner says that the uprights were seen extending to plinth level before being plastered up. He asserts, and the eye confirms, that the roof timbers are of elm (see no. 31). A photograph by Commander E. R. D. Williams, O.B.E. — a very active explorer in this and other parts of Somerset — shows that the curved part of an upright was cut out from a plank, not based on a natural curve.

Nos. 38, 39. *High Ham*. Inserted Tudor ceilings.

No. 43. *Isle Abbots*. Cruck truss in association with a timber-framed end and, over the hall, later ceiled, a medieval collar-beam truss. The former has trenched, the latter tenoned, purlins. There are parts of a jointed-cruck truss in a seventeenth century addition, and these may have been re-used, but further examination is needed.

No. 44. *Isle Brewers*. Assessment by L. F. J. Walrond (p. 68-73).

No. 45. *Kingston St. Mary*. Assessment by L. F. J. Walrond, who noted that the uprights rose from the ground and that there was a seventeenth century addition, with ovolo mouldings to the window frames.

No. 46. *Kingston St. Mary*. R. F. Taylor (Taylor 1966b), to which he adds (MS) '1500 or a little later'.

No. 49. *Milverton*. Assessment by R. C. Edmunds.

No. 51. *North Cadbury*. In the same building as, and considered contemporaneous with, no. 1 (p. 63-68).

No. 56. *Othery*. Reported by H. D. G. Humphreys, who has found six examples in all (two demolished) in Sowey, one of the former islands on the edge of King's Sedgemoor, the possibility being raised that the 'frontier' of jointed crucks may be as far north as the Mendip Hills. The description and records of this house show it to be of exceptional interest. Of trusses numbered II to V, II is close up against an end fireplace, showing that there was demolition when the fireplace was put in, presumed to be at the same time as the insertion of ceilings. The uprights, Humphreys says, extended well down the wall, set in cob, but both cob and timber suffered from the house being encased in brick and have had to be removed.

No. 58. *Pitney*. Inserted ceilings and fireplaces. Caution is needed in detailed interpretation, since there was extensive rebuilding about 1935.

No. 59. *Pitney*. Recorded by L. F. J. Walrond, *loc. cit.*

No. 60. *Puckington*. Much modernised, but as well as a truss there remains a timber frame at one end of the house and a main door frame with shouldered head, as at nos. 29 and 80.

No. 61. *Ruishton*. In a three-unit house, one visible truss, one presumed concealed by plaster. Inserted ceiling.

No. 64. *Sparkford*. One truss remains in a much modernised house and used to be visible to near ground level. The angle of the roof is unusually steep. The timber has a heavy incrustation, not smoke-blackening, to be seen also at nos. 1/51, and still under investigation. Inserted ceiling.

No. 65. *Staplegrave*. Assessment by R. C. Edmunds.

No. 68. *Stocklinch St. Magdalen*. Timber-framed end to house. Inserted ceilings and fireplaces, one with a timber-framed chimney.

No. 80. *Wootton Courtney*. (Fox 1950). A ceiling beam may be original and is associated with a shouldered internal doorway, similar to those at nos. 29 and 60. High in the cob walls are two wooden windows, the heads made of single blocks carved to suggest a trefoil design; these suggest a date for construction earlier than the early sixteenth century, proposed by Sir Cyril Fox.

No. 81. *Yeovil*. In spite of the name, Abbey Farm was always lay, the name not being given till the nineteenth century. The history of the manor suggests a date of construction in the first half of the fifteenth century. Dr. M. E. Wood, in *The English House*, has, in respect of the adjacent house, 1425-30 for a doorway and 'before 1438' for the solar fireplace. The barn, 103 feet long externally excluding buttresses, is longer than any of the Glastonbury Abbey barns, nos. 15-18, but just falls short of that at Gerbestone Manor, no. 78. There are ten bays, five to the west and four to the east of the wagon entrance, the trusses being high in the stone walls. There are eleven trusses, i.e., one at each end near the gable wall, similar to the disposition in the Glastonbury Abbey barns.

SIXTEENTH CENTURY. Attributions are provisional.

No. 60. *Stawley*. In an open building, possibly always of agricultural use, the uprights rise from a step in a cob wall, and this may well enclose or replace their bases.

No. 61. *Stogursey*. Assessment by A. D. Hallam as unlikely to be later than the sixteenth century, on the basis of association with a newel staircase.

No. 78 *West Buckland*. As it stands, the barn at Gerbestone Manor is the longest in Somerset with a cruck roof, rather over 100 feet. There are wholly or in part eleven trusses; the surrounding walls have been rebuilt. Five trusses at the south end spring from close to ground level, but the uprights of the remainder were removed when an intermediate floor was inserted. Collars, now present in only a few trusses, are slightly cranked. The attribution to the sixteenth century is a guess, based on the general appearance of the timber, and the barn may be older. The house itself was built before 1450 and was modernised and extended in Elizabethan times.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. The use of jointed crucks continued well beyond the time when unjointed ones had ceased to be made.

No. 26. *Durleigh*. R. F. Taylor (Taylor 1968) places the timberwork in the seventeenth century. The building collapsed before the note was published, so that further study became impossible. The roof might be described as transitional, since the rafter elements were extended to rest on outer wall-plates, while the short curved uprights rested on inner ones.

No. 34. *Goathurst*. There are two Jacobean wings (to one of which access could not be secured) at the rear of the late Stuart Halswell House. The spandrels of a doorway bear the initials N.H.; and the tomb of Nicholas Halswell in Goathurst church is dated 1633. Preliminary information and drawings from R. D. Ansdell are of a range of trusses, mostly showing cruck characteristics though not uniform in design. Detailed study is reported as very difficult on account of paint and plaster.

Nos. 72-74. *Taunton*. All discovered, in rear wings of adjoining houses, by R. F. Taylor. Nos. 73 (Taylor, 1966a) and 74 each have two trusses. No. 72, like the other on an upper floor, is part of the largest building of the group, in which remains an open hall with base-cruck roof, no. 20. In no. 72 there are five trusses, and R. F. Taylor (MS) proposes a date of late sixteenth or early seventeenth century.

No. 76. *Trull* and no. 79. *West Chinnock*. Both buildings have raised crucks, central in and rising from the ceiling beam of a superior ground floor room. The walls of no. 76 are of cob. The uprights in both buildings partly project from the walls; though in no. 76 the uprights cannot be seen because of plaster, the shape is characteristic. The collar beam is markedly cranked, evidently so constructed in order to accommodate a barrel ceiling, which is plastered and in association with a plaster overmantel. This mantel is in the style of the early seventeenth century, and in particular, as a patriotic tribute, bears a shield for arms, now invisible, but supported by lion and unicorn and, outside the supporters, the letters I R. The house is described and illustrated in *The History of Trull*. In no. 79, there is a similar juxtaposition to an early seventeenth century fireplace, and the ceiling beam has a section appropriate to the period, with abrupt stops drawn off in a curve to a point — the 'Wern-hir' stop of Sir Cyril Fox and Lord Raglan's *Monmouthshire Houses*.

LATE SEVENTEENTH OR EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

No. 44. *Martock*. In MTD, the date of building is given at about 1500, with extensive rebuilding in the late seventeenth century. The building, which has now disappeared completely, had an upper-cruck roof different from the usual Somerset cruck. Two trusses stood on an inner wall-plate over cob walls, in one of which was a cambered doorway. The writer re-examined the building while it still existed, and formed the opinion that the truss might have been as late as about 1700, since the use of cob persisted well into the century and a dated cambered doorhead of 1702 is known, at Alvington, Brympton. No comparable earlier truss has come to light in Somerset, while one with similarities has been seen in a Dorset building, now destroyed, which had eighteenth century features.

No. 75. *Trull*. L. F. J. Walrond, *op. cit.*, in a footnote assigned Steart Barn to the early eighteenth century, and Sir Cyril Fox agreed. It was a most unusual building, fortunately fully recorded by L. F. J. Walrond several years before it fell down. The central part was carried on jointed crucks which extended to ground level and rested on stones. It was completely surrounded by outshuts, save for the entrances, and the whole construction was of timber, thatched. There is a brief illustrated account in *The History of Trull* (see above, no. 76).

No. 77. *Washford*. Cleeve Abbey dorter roof is placed here because of a statement in the official Guide 'the dorter range was abandoned and became a roofless ruin . . . it was provided with a new roof and converted into farm buildings in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.' The roof is in two parts, of which the roof trusses are similar to a point below the joint. The southern end, open now from the floor on account of the collapse of the vaulting—thus the Guide—or its removal to allow the area to be used as a barn, has six trusses, of which the uprights are short posts embedded in the wall. The northern end has seven trusses and the uprights are short stubs, resting on a rail or wall-plate, as illustrated in the Guide. A re-assessment may be needed, particularly as more re-roofing took place in the middle of the nineteenth century and again at the end; and although earlier timbers may have been re-used, the south end appears to be of oak and the north of elm. Matters for particular consideration may be whether sufficient of a pre-Dissolution roof did not remain to enable a major repair, rather than complete re-roofing, in the eighteenth century; and whether, in a later reconstruction, the height of the original walls may not have been diminished, so that in rebuilding there was insufficient space above the windows of the north end to permit a roof of uniform construction.

The rate at which material has become available, once an active search began, has made orderly assembly difficult. A result, unexpected at the start, has been to establish the survival of many unknown medieval buildings, later adapted to modern uses. It has become evident that there is scope for an entirely fresh appraisal of vernacular architecture in the southern part of Somerset, which the present writer and others have hitherto considered largely in terms of complete replacement in the period from the end of the sixteenth century till well on into the eighteenth century. This indeed characterises the areas within range of good building stone, both the oolite of Ham Hill and its neighbourhood and the lias over a larger extent. Within the narrower context of timber-

framing, a significant number of mixed frames have come to light, as also of mixed types of purlins. And as a by-product, visits to houses have increased knowledge about mouldings and stops, as well as bringing some timber-framed chimneys into view. To carry out further research, the increasing number of active students will welcome more material, and the writer will be glad to accept all information about cruck buildings. Even as this article was being completed, fresh information was received, to add to a number of items waiting to be explored.

ADDENDUM

Of another 17 relevant buildings which have come to light within a short period of this article going to press, three are of particular importance, for both distribution and type, and have been added to the map. These are:

10a. Axbridge	431545	Old Warrens (Spinning Wheel Cafe, Moorland Street)
10b. Keinton Mandeville	540306	Manor House Farm Barn
10c. Mells	728493	Tithe Barn

These buildings have been communicated by F. Jarman and the notes below are based on his.

No. 10a. *Axbridge*. One truss in the middle of a house, the base being 7 feet above floor level and set in rubble walls. Post-medieval ceilings.

No. 10b. *Keinton Mandeville*. Three trusses, nearly complete, set in stone walls.

No. 10c. *Mells*. A modern inserted ceiling, with no access above it, prevents examination of what is possibly a base cruck.

He adds that most houses which he has seen in the Mendip area are late 17th century rebuilds, or were altered in that period, the roofs being completely reconstructed. This observation is similar in principle to others made by people with experience of the area.

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APPENDIX I.

CHICKS COTTAGES, FITZHEAD, near MILVERTON

BY R. F. TAYLOR

Chicks Cottages, when visited in 1966, consisted of a ruinous group of farm buildings and cottages around a rectangular yard. The cob and stone buildings on the east and

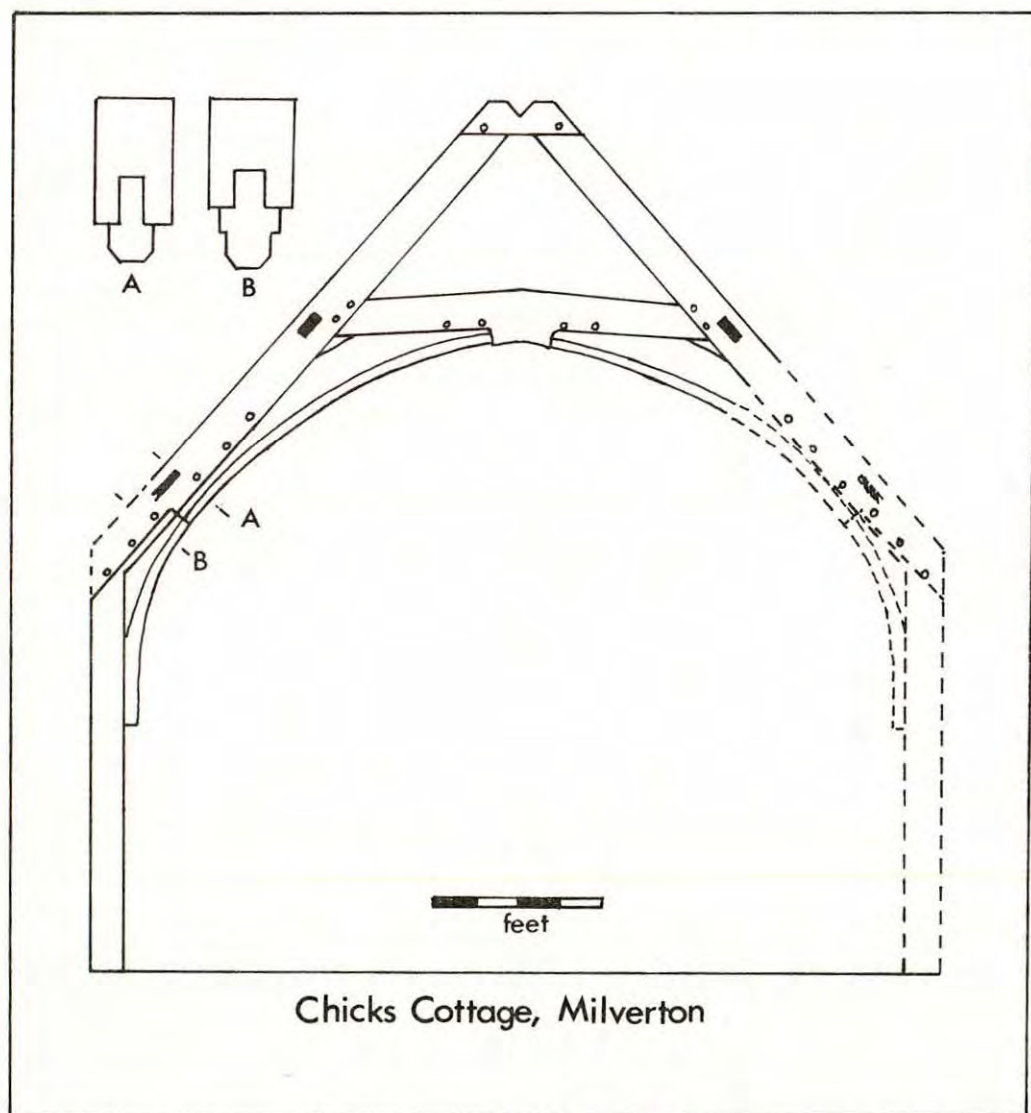


FIG. 5

west sides of the yard dated from the late 18th and 19th centuries, but the cottages on the south incorporated fragments of an earlier house.

The eastern section of the cottages had been an open hall 20 feet wide and about 36 feet long, spanned by two jointed cruck trusses, parts of which lay in the debris. In the east wall was a wide blocked fireplace of uncertain, possibly 17th century, date; the timber-framed west wall had collapsed so that no features apart from its general construction could be distinguished. Beyond to the west was a room about 20 feet square, formerly two storeys, with 17th century fireplaces in the west wall, the upper one having a contemporary plaster vine-scroll frieze above it.

The jointed cruck trusses were apparently of elm, and of a very high standard of construction, with cambered arch-braced collars, wind-braced butt-purlins, and a yoke at the apex to carry a canted ridge-piece. From the collapsed timbers it could be calculated that the walls of the building stood 10 feet high, and the total height to the ridge was 21 feet. Clearly this had been a building of some social importance, probably dating from the later 15th century.

A CRUCK-ROOFED HOUSE IN NORTH CADBURY, SOMERSET

BY CLARE AUSTIN AND SIR ROBERT DE Z. HALL, K.C.M.G., F.S.A.

The report which follows is the outcome of our first collaboration. We addressed ourselves to the particular building, No. 21 Woolston Road, North Cadbury, near Wincanton (ST635273), and the adjoining Club Room, for the purpose of placing on record the only instance then known in Somerset of a simple cruck truss, where the blade sprang from plinth level.¹ The house proved to be complex, and during its examination and the discussion which followed we established not only more about its development, but the range of our joint interest in vernacular architecture. This, in effect, is that expressed by M. W. Barley in his *The English Farmhouse and Cottage*, as one of the specialised fields for the local historian. This is not the ideal report, where a documentary approach can be used to give life to an archaeological study, but even on the more limited scale we hope that there will be interest for others as well as ourselves in the elucidation of plan, extension and modernisation, largely in the context of the post-medieval period.

The building is picturesque rather than exciting. It is T-shaped, facing on to the road which forms the southern boundary of the village (Plate VII). The church and North Cadbury Court lie a few hundred yards to the south. In the provisional list of buildings of architectural and historical interest it was assigned to Grade II, the main visible evidence being a blocked four-centred stone door frame, considered to be of the sixteenth century (Plate VIII). The presence of internal features of interest was brought to the notice of one of us and of E. T. Long in 1960 by the late Lady Langman. In summary, these were parts of the cruck blades, a jointed cruck truss, and insertions consisting of internal stone doorways, ceiling, stone newel staircases and a chimney stack. It was then

¹ After this article had been prepared, we found two buildings in Stocklinch St. Magdalen, near Ilminster, one of which contains three simple cruck trusses rising from near ground level, and another where the bottom six feet of a timber construction are visible, of which the form makes the presence of a cruck blade probable in the latter case, the base rests on a stone.