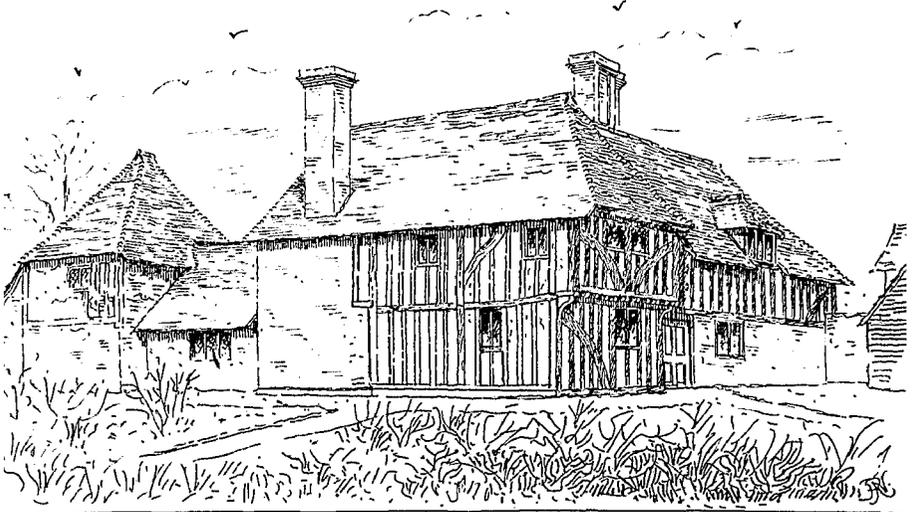


FILBOROUGH FARMHOUSE, EAST CHALK,
GRAVESEND.

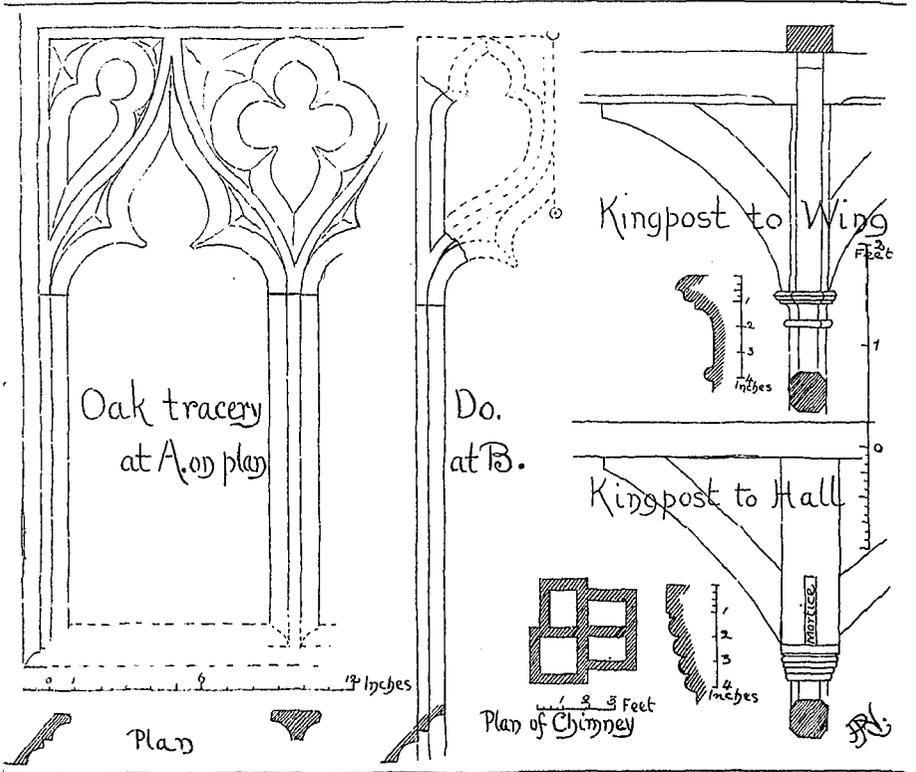
BY GEORGE M. ARNOLD, F.S.A.

WHY and how the parish of "Chalk" came by its name, since it is not more "chalky" than many neighbouring parishes of the same geological formation both in Kent and Essex, I cannot say. Hasted states that it is derived from its chalky and flinty soil, and that in Anglo-Saxon, *ceale* is indicative of a chalk stone, but this does not elucidate the problem, since nodules of silica are quite as prevalent to the west of Gravesend as to the east (which is the situation of Chalk parish); and adverting for a moment to the interesting chapter of antiquity opened up by the study of palæolithic and næolithic remains, our parish is not so celebrated in that connection as the parish of Swanscomb, a mile or two to the west (the region of Milton Street there being remarkably prolific). I have, however, a flint "scraper" from the gravel beds in Chalk parish which Mr. Harrison, of Ightham, has pronounced to be genuine, but it is perhaps a coincidence to be mentioned that Chalk did become in the last century and earlier (ages too late of course for any derivative connection with its name) celebrated in connection with flints, for here was notably carried on the industry of "knapping" the flints excavated at Gravesend and Northfleet into square pieces suitable for firearms, when the gunpowder was ignited by a spark struck from the flint by the fall of the spring hammer.* The parish anyhow possesses a respectable antiquity, and Mr. Thomas Kerslake has shewn its close relationship to

* In this village are several flint knappers, who manufacture the best gun flints in England, or probably in Europe, great numbers of them being exported to foreign parts (Hasted, folio ed., vol. i., p. 518).



FILBOROUGH, KENT

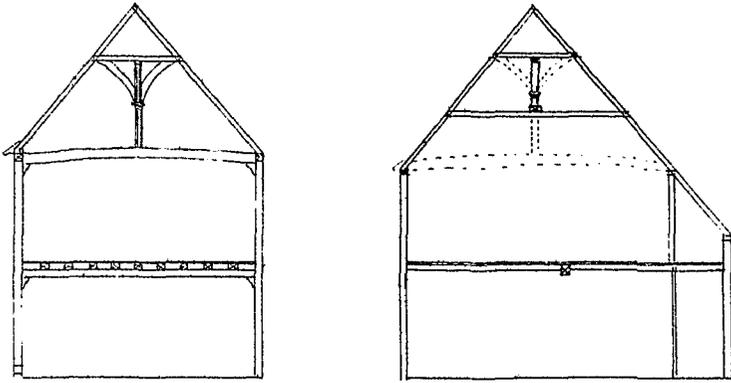


Cliff parish lying yet further to the east in all that concerns the series of Anglo-Saxon councils and synods, expressing the opinion that "Ceale hythe" in that connection was a point of contact with the River Thames, just as Greenhithe is to this day within the neighbouring parish of Swanscomb; indeed, according to Domesday, the parish of Chalk, like Woolwich and Higham, extended into the opposite county across the Thames. If, however, the enquiry as to the origin (as a term of parochial designation) of the name of Chalk remains inscrutable, the like obscurity obtains with regard to the name of the particular house within East Chalk which forms the subject of this paper.

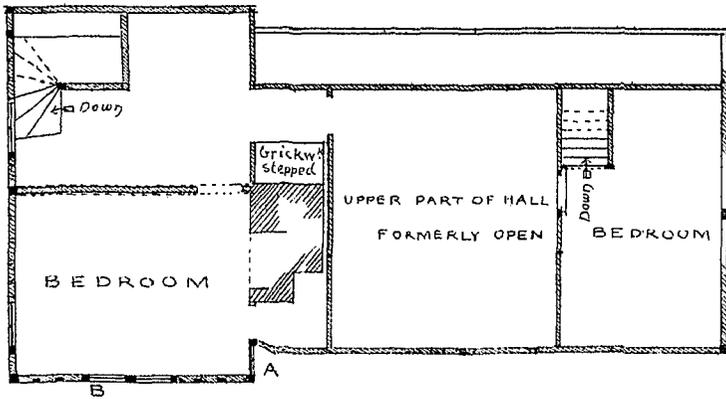
To be imaginative, a "filled" barrow might be regarded as a mystic horn of plenty, a sort of baser "cornucopia," if the land were teeming and prolific of produce; or if distinctly the reverse (so that none could live by its means), it might be a fully occupied burial-spot, or one which would be quickly so filled if its on-dwellers remained, or it might only imply a "filled-up" burial-place; but leaving the enquiry for others, let me proceed to write what I have to say regarding the house itself.

In the year 1892 I purchased the farm of some 300 acres, comprising this house, sub-let by the non-resident lessee (in two tenements) to his waggoners. Upon examination it was found to be one of our old timber-framed country-side houses which are fast becoming extinct in Kent. Upon picking off the increment of lath and plaster in some places, and weather-boarding in others, I was enabled to repair the timber quartering and to fill the interstices with brick in cement, with an exterior coat of rough cast in lieu of the remnant of old "wattle and dab," which was in an impoverished state between the timbers and beneath the modern lath and plaster. Upon reaching the roof and removing the tiles we found that the central division of the house facing north had originally formed one room from ground floor to tiles, and that the inner sides of its two flank (east and west) plastered walls were grimed and blackened with an ancient accumulation of soot, while on their reverse sides such walls (then forming part of the sleeping

FILBOROUGH, KENT

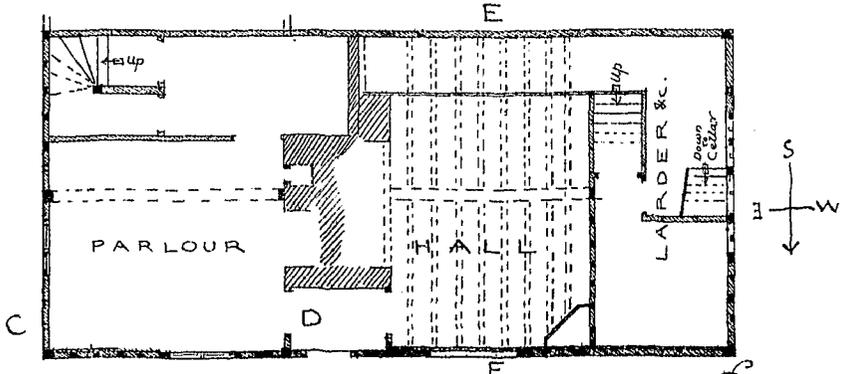


SECTIONS
THRO' WING CD THRO' HALLEF



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

Scale ¹⁰ 0 10 20 30 Feet



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

apartments) were of the normal colour of the plaster. The examination of the roof timbers shewed two king posts *in situ*, but these, with other oak work, were mutilated and cut through; it then appeared clearly that these timbers had been thus cut in order to allow of the insertion of a first floor, and the erection of a substantial Jacobean chimney stack (pierced for fire-places on the ground and first floors), introduced from below and carried up through the roof. Under these circumstances I requested Mr. Ralph Nevill, F.S.A., an architect whose book on country-side houses in Surrey had attracted my attention, to make the accompanying plans and details of the house and a sketch shewing (as nearly as now can be shewn) the lines and character of this interesting but unpretending farmhouse.

I should mention also the discovery of a small oaken pierced panel *in situ* (denoted by the letter A on the plan) upon the western return of the north gabled front, which had been saved by being covered up with plaster, and farther on (in the middle of the gable) I noticed on a post a hollowed and chamfered moulding, with the springing of some tracery in its mortised hole, evidencing, as I considered, the situation of a similar but larger open and cusped panel (denoted on the plan by the letter B). The house generally much resembles the old Northfleet Rectory, described by Mr. Herbert Baker and myself in Volume XX., p. 71, except that the woodwork here seems somewhat less heavy, and more finished and ornate. I noticed that the vertical external quartering terminated like the edge of a screw-driver, and was received by the wall plate in a v-shaped groove correspondingly cut to the same angle.

Upon turning to early records to elucidate the history of the house, I found the tenement had been referred to by name over four centuries ago; and in endeavouring to examine the statements in Hasted's *History of Kent* respecting it, I availed myself of the assistance of Mr. W. Boyd of the Record Office, who came to the conclusion that our admirable Kentish topographer and county historian had gone somewhat astray in reference to Filborough, for upon the most careful search no trace of the survey in Kirkby's Quest,

temp. Edward I., which he cited, could be found ; and as to the fine, 36 Edward III., it had also to be dismissed as not possessing any necessary connection with Filborough.

The concise, but I think reliable, history of the house is, that it came to the Crown (by way of exchange for Boxley Abbey, etc.) from Sir Thomas Wyatt, and was frequently dealt with by the King (Henry VIII.) and his successors till it was finally alienated by King Charles I.—the evidences of which I will subjoin.

How the property came to Wyatt is at present unknown, for though any quantity of his deeds are enrolled, we find none upon examination, and certainly none by Brent (as alleged), conveying this property to him, as mentioned by Hasted.

It is easier to express these doubts when we find that Hasted's allegation of a sale to the City of London is clearly inaccurate. In the cases of the grants to Harbert and others of that period, the resale of their acquired properties was almost immediate, and the statement that James Crispe bought Filborough from the City falls to the ground.

In the course of our researches it was indeed abundantly clear that the trustees or feoffees of the City did receive a grant from the Crown of various lands in the vicinity of Filborough, and further that they did convey them to James Crispe, but such possessions appear to have no connection with the subject of this paper, since I have had both deeds carefully sought out and inspected, and no inclusion of Filborough appears in either.

Having cleared this difficulty from our path, and thus put aside illusory records, I will proceed affirmatively by submitting the particulars which we have been successful in tracing.

The earliest mention of Filborough of which I am aware occurs in the Court Rolls of the adjoining Manor of West Chalk, a property which passed by sale from John son of Hugh de Nevill (circa 1220) to John son of Henry de Cobham. A Court was held in Michaelmas Term, 5 Henry VII. (it was the occasion of the first Court held by Thomas Lyndsley, Doctor of Theology), on the 11th November

A.D. 1489, and upon this occasion John Martyn, of "Fylbarowth," not only appeared and did fealty for a messuage and four acres of land bought by him and another of William Pokyll, but he is also entered as one of the Grand Jury then assembled, where he is described as "of Fylbarow." The family were probably of some little importance at Chalk, since it is recorded by Thorpe that there was in the parish church a brass to the memory of William Martyn (and Isabella his wife), recording his death on the 16th May A.D. 1416.

In the succeeding reign there is in the Augmentation Office the enrolled deed by Sir Thomas Wyatt, of Alyngton, in the county of Kent, knight, dated the 14th of June, in the 32nd year of Henry VIII., A.D. 1540, whereby he conveyed to that King (by way of exchange for the Abbey of Boxley, Kent, and other property) all his lordships and manors of Shales Courte, Olsington, Rundall, Tymberwood, Raynshurst, Milton, and Pole, in the county of Kent, and all other his manors, granges, messuages in the towns and parishes of Shorne, Higham, Chalke, Milton, Sowthflete, Denton, Stone, Darrant, and Swaynescombe in Kent.

The King having in fact become possessed of Filborough under this conveyance, proceeded to let it, within five years, to James Reynolde, of London, joyner, and by lease dated the 25th March (36 Henry VIII.) A.D. 1545, for a term of twenty-one years from the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel next, at a yearly rent of £16; in such lease the property is described as "One tenement with the appurtenances called Fylborowe in Estchalke, in the county of Kent, now in the tenure or occupation of David Roger," together with all barns, etc.; and then are enumerated the fields and enclosures which constituted its demesne, to a total extent of 233 acres—and the somewhat lengthy description concludes with the statement, "which said premises are situate, lie, and be in Estchalke and other places there adjacent, or in one or some of them, and which amongst other things the said Lord the King lately had and purchased to himself, his heirs and successors, of Thomas Wyatt, knight," the lessee James Reynolde was to repair generally, but the King covenanted that he would cause

“all houses and buildings of the premises well and sufficiently to be repaired, sustained, and maintained in timber only during the time aforesaid;” the lessee moreover was to have “competent and sufficient hedgebote, fyerbote, ploughbote, and cartebote there, and not elsewhere, annually to be expended and employed during the term aforesaid.”

In the Augmentation Office there is also recorded a survey, signed Rychard Ryche, of the period of Henry the Eighth's reign, and which relates to the lands the subject of the above exchange. In this survey, opposite the Manor of Raynhurst, is noted that “David Rôger occupyeth by lease for terme of years a tenement with sufficient outhousynge sufficientlye repeyred,” etc.; and it describes several of the closes by the identical names which are employed in the lease to James Reynolde, who it would seem had now probably assigned them to David Roger, the occupying tenant.

We find no reference to Filborough in the reigns of Edward VI. or of Queen Mary, but in her sister's reign, under date 9 May A.D. 1566, occurs in the Patent Roll for Kent the following: “The Queens Majestys pleasure signified by M^r Secretary is that Clement Norrys, Hippolit Lynnet, and Nicholas Haynes, III of Her Majestys harbingers, shall have a lease in reversion.” This minute succeeds the following entry: “Kent—farm of one tenement with the appurtenances called Filborow in Estchalke, in the county aforesaid, now in the tenure or occupation of David Roger,” etc.

Accordingly on the Patent Roll of 8 Elizabeth appears the enrolment of such lease, dated the 5th July 1566 (8th Elizabeth), for a term of thirty-one years from the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel, 1566, at a rental of £16 as regarded “Fylborowe and the lands to the same belonging,” the lessees are styled, “Our very dear servants and grooms of our harbingers.” The consideration is stated to be “their good and true services upon us heretofore done and bestowed.”

Filborough again appears in the State Archives in the reign of the Queen's successor, James I. In the records of the particulars of leases there is the following note of an

order by Thomas, Earl Dorset, Lord High Treasurer, and Henry, Earl of Northampton, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, which runs as follows :

County of Kent. "Parcel of the lands and possession late of Thomas Wyatt, knight, now in the King's hands by reason of exchange. Farm of all that tenement called 'Filborowe,' with the appurtenances in Eastchalke, etc.

"xv May 1607.

"Make a lease of the premisses to Robert Dod, gent., the tennante, upon surrender for the terme of fortie yeres, yielding to the Kings Mat^{ie} the abovesaid yerelie rent fyne and increase of rent."

In accordance with this minute the King, by letters patent of 5th June 1607, reciting the receipt of a money fine of £160, demised "all that our tenement called Filborowe in East Chalke to our very dear subject, Robert Dod, gentleman," at the yearly rental of £16.

Amongst the surveys still extant in the Land Revenue Record Office is one made in the year subsequent to the grant of the last-mentioned lease, that is to say, in the 6th James I., A.D. 1608, wherein the house itself is mentioned. The survey in question is one held by Sir Wm. Page, knight, and John Hercy, Esq., under a commission empowering them to administer oaths. A part of the survey relevant to our present object appears entered as follows :

24th Aug. 1608. The verdict of the jury for the survey of Tymberwood and Raynehurst and other messuages of the Kings Majesties.

To the sixth (article) we answer :

"One messuage called 'Filburrowe' leased to Sir Wm. Sedley, knight, in the occupation of John English. Tymber trees xxv by estimation, vi tonn* pollard which beareth hedgebote and fyrebote by estimation, bodyes and all, fyve load. Chalke *Raynhurst* Wm. Sedley, knight, claims to hold by letters patent dated the 5th day of June, in the 5th year of the reign of the now King James, made to a certain Robert Dod, gentleman, one tenement with the appurte-

* *Sic* in original.

nances called 'Filborowe' in Estchalke, an orchard and a garden, and certain lands there."

From the above it would seem that Sir William had speedily obtained to himself an assignment of the King's grant, and later on we find a further reference to or rather a description of the house, of which the following is a translation from the Latin :

"The mansion-house of three rooms, the kitchen of one room, and another building of two rooms, a barn of five rooms, and another barn of two rooms, a stable of one room, an orchard, a garden, and a curtilage, now in the occupation of John Inglishe, by estimation two acres;" and other enclosures are enumerated to an extent of 104 acres; all being stated to be "in the occupation of the said John Inglishe by the year at £32." I have here translated the Latin word "spatium" by the English word "room;" probably in the case of barns and stables it would be better rendered by bays or stalls.

This is followed by the enumeration of other fields, such as Salt Marsh land in Higham Medowe, by estimation seven acres, in the occupation of Thomas Mann, by the year 35s., or seven lambs. The other fields and closes constitute a further area of 92 acres, and the survey concludes, "To have to the same Robert Dod from the date of the aforesaid letters patent for the term of 40 years, paying £16 by the year, and for the price of three sheep 48s.

"Annual value for letting £80."

There is yet another public document in which the property forming the subject of this paper is mentioned, and it is the enrolment on the Patent Roll of the next King, the unfortunate Charles I. This monarch executed many grants to Charles Harbird, William Scriven, and Philip Eden, and on Christmas Eve 1631 at Westminster is dated a grant to them of his manors of Tymberwood and Raynehurst in his county of Kent, "and all that our tenement called 'Filborowe,' with the appurtenances in East Chalke in the said county of Kent," being the same property as comprised in the grant of Lady-day in the 36th year of Henry VIII. In the present grant reference is made to a previous demise

to Matthew White (which I have not been able to trace) and to the already-mentioned grant to "Ipolitus" Lynnett and Nicholas Haynes, and afterwards to Robert Dodd, and mentioned to be parcel of the Manor of Raynehurst in the said county of Kent, and reference is also made to the annual rent reserved, as to Filborowe, of £16. This was not a royal lease like the preceding documents, but a grant of the freehold reversion, with the usual exception of knights' fees, wards, marriages, royal mines of gold, and silver. The lands, etc., were conveyed in fee farm, and the two manors were to be held of the King of his Manor of East Greenwich by fealty only, in free and common socage, and not in chief or by knight service, at a yearly rent for the Manors, etc., of £72 15s. 3½d.

The orthography of Filborough has constantly varied, and a very common local form is Philborough at this day.

Thus at the expense, I fear, of my reader's patience I have endeavoured to redeem from obscurity another of our old timber-framed dwellings which are fast disappearing. I am informed two such houses were removed last year at Betsome, in the neighbouring parish of Southfleet. Such removals admit of no restitution, and the best we can do is to provide such accessible record, pictorial or literary, as we can lay hold upon.

NOTES ON FILBOROUGH FARMHOUSE BY MR. RALPH
NEVILL, F.S.A., F.R.I.B.A.

This is a very interesting example of the small house midway between a manor-house and a cottage, and it is most desirable, in order that we may thoroughly understand the life of our ancestors, that plans of such houses should be put on record while they still exist.

Unfortunately examples have been generally so added to and altered that it is impossible to trace the original arrangements as we can in this case. Many such an example may also exist unrecorded for want of the observation exercised by Mr. Arnold.

Had not the smoke-begrimed condition of the walls in the roof been noticed by him, one would not have suspected that the fabric of so ancient a hall still remained under the additions of a period also respectable from its antiquity.

Probably a diligent search for similar evidence would lead to our assigning a much earlier date to many of these buildings than I confess I had myself given to them.

This building in the early half of the sixteenth century consisted of a hall open to the roof, without any *louvre* turret in the roof such as was used for more important buildings. At one end was a slip cut off for a buttery and larder, and with a low ceiling and a room over where servants probably slept. This would be approached by one of the straight, narrow, and steep stairs, cut out of a *balk* of solid timber such as are still sometimes found; the present stairs are of much later date. At the other end was the parlour, with a bedroom over for the family. The stairs to this would be of the newel kind, and probably opened out of the hall. The partitions of the parlour and that of the hall are of later date.

There is, however, certainly a difference in the date of the hall and that of the parlour wing; the hall had a king-post roof, as indicated by the dotted lines on the section; this, as Mr. Arnold has pointed out, was altered at the time the floor was put in to form a bedroom over the hall.

This latter is an alteration which was generally made from about the end of Henry VIII.'s reign, when so much property changed from the ownership of large proprietors who did not reside, to that of smaller men who used the houses to live in.

The wing is clearly of late fifteenth or early sixteenth century date, as is evidenced by the mouldings of the king-post.

The remains of tracery visible in the window of the face of this wing are also clearly of this date, and although at first sight they seem to resemble the complete panel at the side, a closer inspection shews that they vary both in the lines of the cusping and the section of moulding. This front window would probably be completed, as indicated by the dotted lines, in a pattern common to Perpendicular date.

The other tracery is a puzzle; it is of the Decorated period, and of very good execution, and it has not been subsequently inserted, but was framed in at the erection of the building. The most probable explanation seems to be, that the panel is part of an older building, and was fitted in to the new work, the corner post

being worked to receive it. Doubtless the tracery formed a window, and was closed by a shutter, as was usual in domestic work, where glass was too great a luxury. The discovery of such an interesting piece of fourteenth-century woodwork was a happy one.

This panel and the fabric of the hall may date from the time of the occupancy of the Martyns in the early part of the fifteenth century; the wing may date from the ownership of the Wyatts, terminating in 1540; the chimney and the floor over hall were evidently added after the property came into the hands of the Crown.

The sketch shews at the end of the range a two-storey building that is doubtless the "building of two rooms" mentioned in the Survey of 1608, and the low building next to it appears to have been the kitchen there mentioned. Kitchens at early dates were always in buildings separate from the house.

The brick building joining this to the house has been put up since the 25-inch Ordnance Map was made in 1862, as that shews the mansion-house detached from the other buildings. A range of barns has been pulled down, but there seems to be some error in the way the outbuildings are drawn on that Map. The upper floor of the two-storey building was no doubt a dormitory for the farm-servants.

It will be noticed from the sketch that the wing of the house terminated at this end in an overhanging timber front similar to that at the other end. That over larder is similar, but the curved braces start from the sides to the centre.

I have marked in black on the plan such of the timbers as are certainly old. The chimney is not earlier than the end of the sixteenth century, but I have given the plan of the stack above the roof, as the manner in which the flues of such chimneys are arranged to give as many angles as possible is most worthy of study, and very different from the bald way in which such features are treated now.