

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

A TIMBER HALL-HOUSE AT HALFWAY STREET, SIDCUP

The alarming rate at which much of our unrecorded vernacular architecture is being swept away prompts me to set down some notes regarding an early sixteenth-century house which has so far managed to survive amid the urban development of Sidcup. It is now divided into two dwellings, numbered 33 and 35 Halfway Street, the National Grid reference being TQ 46057292. Although much of the early structure is concealed behind modern brickwork and the interior has undergone considerable adaptation, it is still possible to make out the form of the primary building and reconstruct its internal arrangements with reasonable certainty. In presenting this account I have omitted from the plan and description many later features, the inclusion of which would involve tedious explanation without adding to an understanding of the house in its original form. Similarly, I have not indicated doors and windows at present in use as they are all of post-sixteenth-century character and there is no certainty that any of them occupy the positions of original openings.

The old house consisted of four bays of unequal length, each truss being framed in oak and comprising wall-posts, tie-beam, queen-posts and collar. Whether the ground-cills rest on stone footings cannot be ascertained owing to a slight rise in level inside and outside the house. Both the inner bays were once open to the roof, the soot from the fire which burned on a central hearth still adhering to the roof-timbers over this part of the building. The main central truss spanning the hall<sup>1</sup> is of the same general form as the others. Its wall-posts are about 12 ft. high with thickened heads supporting a tie-beam. Curved braces occupied the angles formed by the under side of the tie-beam and the inner faces of the wall-posts, one being still in position and the other attested by mortices remaining. Upon the tie-beam stand two plain queen-posts, 5 ft. 4 in. high and 4 ft. 2 in. apart, which in turn support the horizontal collar. This projects slightly at both ends beyond the points of junction with the vertical members, the lower edges of the purlins resting in notches cut for their reception in the upper face of the ends of the collar. Wind-braces strengthen the angles between the under sides of the purlins and the rafters which are pitched at an angle of approximately 45 degrees. There is no ridge-piece and the roof is hipped at each end. It is now covered by tiles and probably

<sup>1</sup> The line of this truss passes through the last letter of the word HALL on the accompanying plan.

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was so at first, though the use of thatch is not impossible. Due to the projecting upper floor, or jetty, at the N.E. end, the eaves-plate was carried forward on this line along the N.W. front of the house, being supported by the projecting end of the tie-beam of the central truss and braced to the corner stud of the jetty. The brace itself has vanished but the mortices for it remain in the adjoining timbers. As there was no corresponding jetty at the other end, it is assumed that the eaves-plate was carried there on a bracket.

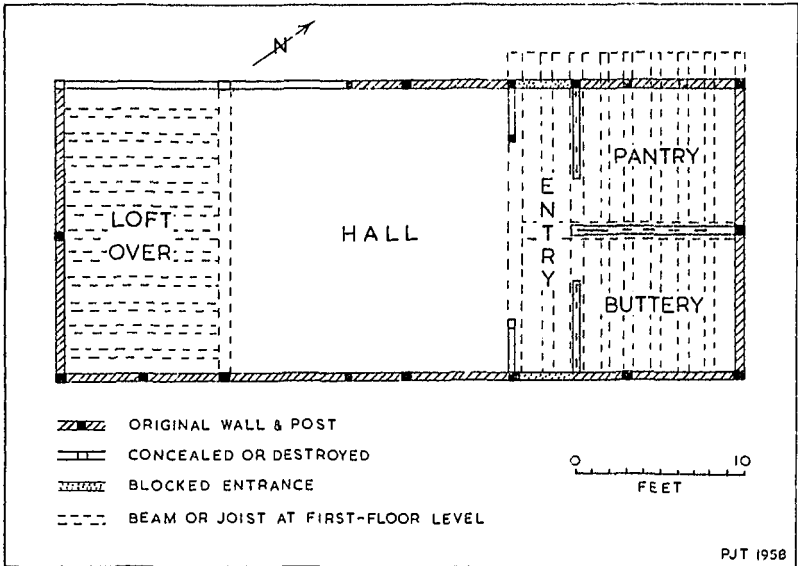


FIG. 1. Sketch-plan to illustrate the original layout of a timber hall-house at Halfway Street, Sidcup. All later features omitted.

Each of the end bays was occupied by a loft, or upper chamber, which was supported at its inner limits by a beam spanning the width of the building at about half the height of the side walls. The beams also carried partitions shutting in the lofts from the smoky hall, the soot from the open fire being still plainly visible on the upper parts of both these partitions which face towards the centre of the house, proving that they formed features of the original arrangement before the height of the hall was divided by the insertion of the present floor.

The floor joists of the loft at the N.E. end are carried forward about 1½ ft. to form a jetty on the N.W. side, the area below the loft itself having been occupied by the entry passage and the usual domestic offices. The partitions forming these have been removed but a line of mortices in the under side of the beam running centrally N.E. to S.W.

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under the loft shows unmistakably the position of the stud-wall separating pantry and buttery, while a similar line of holes in two aligned joists running in the opposite direction indicates the partition forming the N.E. side of the entry passage. There is evidence of two gaps at the centre which are to be interpreted as doorways giving access to the pantry and buttery. The positions of these mortices are shown on the accompanying sketch-plan together with a reconstruction of the vanished partitions.

Having established the lay-out of the lower end of the house, the situation of the customary opposite entrances can be located with confidence as shown on the plan. Substantiating evidence is forthcoming on the S.E. side where a roughly cut rebate for the door can be seen in the bressumer. One post of the speer shielding the N.W. entrance is visible set in later brickwork and it is fair to assume a companion feature on the opposite side.<sup>1</sup> Whether the space between was left open, as shown, or partly closed to form a double entrance into the hall, cannot be determined as this area is now occupied by later fireplaces and a chimney.

At first, the space under the loft at the S.W. end of the house may have been open to the hall. Later, it formed part of a large parlour which was created by partitioning-off a section of the hall, at the same time flooring over the two central bays on a level with the lofts at each end. A brick chimney was also constructed at the N.E. end of the shortened hall. A most likely period for this conversion would be the late-sixteenth century as similar development occurred in very many houses of this type about that time.

A complete lack of mouldings or carved decoration on the timbers makes it difficult to date the house closely. The design of the trusses is similar to those in the old Rectory at Northfleet, illustrated by Sir Herbert Baker in *Arch. Cant.*, XX, and a date c. 1510 is there suggested.

In conclusion I would express my thanks to the present owners of the property, Mr. O. W. Newport and Mr. G. M. Tucker, for kindly inviting me to inspect the house and report upon it.

P. J. TESTER.

THOMAS ANDREW OF DOVER, MAYOR AND M.P.

The Parish Registers and Bishop's Transcripts of the two parishes in Dover, his native town, where at St. Mary's he was buried 8th October 1597, and those of Hougham, where at Maxton he latterly resided,

<sup>1</sup> It may be as well to point out that the presence of a speer, or draught-screen, does not necessarily involve the use of the constructional feature known as a *speer-truss*. That misapprehension exists in some quarters on this point is evident from correspondence I have received since the publication of the Joyden's Wood hall in *Arch. Cant.*, LXXXII.

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are in parts defective or faded. The following notes have been assembled from other sources about him, his family and some of his connections.

His father, John Andrew, in his 1555-6 will proved in the Consistory Court of Canterbury, asked to be buried in St. Mary's Dover, and mentions lands in Dover and Charlton, children under 18 of Nicholas Justice, his sister Johan Beatie and her son Valentine Beatie and her daughter Justyne Beatie (under 18), the sum due to Agnes Halliday of the gift and legacy of her father John Halliday, his own wife Alice, and made his sons, John and Thomas Andrew, his executors, to latter of whom he left his mill and dwelling house.

John Halyday in his 1522 C.C. will as of Dover, also asked to be buried in St. Mary's Dover beside his (former) wife, and names his three sons, John, Robert and Harry Halyday, and (present) wife Alice (who married subsequently the above John Andrew).

In 1545-49 C.C. will of his son, John Halyday, "maser" of Dover, directed his burial to be at St. Mary's Dover near his father, and mentions, as relatives, his daughter Agnes Halyday (under 24), his brother Robert Halyday and his wife Cecily, and their children, an aunt Clarkeson of London, his father-in-law (=stepfather) John Andrew, his brothers-in-law (=half-brothers) John and Thomas Andrew, and sister-in-law Elizabeth Andrew, his sons-in-law (=stepsons) John and William Almonson, and daughters-in-law Katherine Almonson and Alys Ryall, and children (presumably the last four named) of his wife who was thus widow of one Almonsen when he married her.

The 1558 C.C. will of William Allmonson of Dover, merchant, directs his burial to be in St. Mary's Dover, and mentions, among others, Isabell and Agnes, his wife's daughters (£5 each, legacy of their own father), two cosens Alice Croften and John Bell, and Thomas Andrew (to whom he left his sword), and made his brother John Almonson of Dover, executor.

Reverting to Thomas Andrew who, according to J. Bavington's "Annals of Dover" was removed in 1583 from the mayoralty because of his hostility to Romney Marsh men who were being employed by the Royal Commissioners who were superintending the construction of the Great Pent, his will, as of Maxton in Hougham, gentleman, is dated 12 August 1597 and was proved at Canterbury in the Arch-deaconry Court 2 November 1597 by Henry Philpot, jurat of Folkestone, during the minority of his son Thomas Andrew. He asked to be buried in St. Mary's Dover near his first wife, mentions lands in Hougham, Charlton, and St. Margaret's, his cousin Justyne Bewtye of Mungam and her children, and names as his only children, his son Thomas Andrew (executor) and daughter Martha Andrew (under 17), and gave a bequest to Dover almshouses from his tenement in Biggin

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street, Dover, where mayor George Bing dwelt, and bequests to six couples that shall marry and dwell in Dover, and to his poor kinsfolk. and appointed as overseers, Thomas Elwoold, John Bachelor, jurat of Dover, and the aforementioned Henry Philpot. His son was to go to Oxford or Cambridge till 21.

The 1616-17 C.C. will of John Bachelor of Dover, jurat, names as an overseer his friend, Thomas Andrew, Esq., and left six silver spoons to Martha Upton, wife of Walter Upton, gent., and one silver spoon to his godson Thomas Andrew. The first two were the children named in the 1597 will of the Mayor and M.P., Thomas Andrew, and were by his second wife, and the godson was presumably a grandson.

The name of the first wife of the M.P. and Mayor or her burial has not been found. His second wife, whom he married at Faversham 12 September 1575 was Martha née Finch, widow and second wife of William Chambers, drawer, citizen and haberdasher of London (P.C.C. admon. 2 June 1575 to relict, and grant 23 August 1594 to son John Chambers of goods unadministrated by relict), whom she married at Faversham 9 November 1573 by Faculty licence. William Chambers was buried 15 May 1575 at St. Mary Aldermary, London, where his first wife Catherine was buried 6 April 1573 and their children baptized. It should be mentioned that there was another Thomas Androwe who married 1573 also at Faversham ; he was a collar maker, buried there 1577, and, according to his A.C. 1577 will, son of Edward Andrew.

Martha Andrew formerly Chambers and née Finch (who is not mentioned in her second husband's 1597 will and presumably died before him), was a daughter of John Finch of Sandhurst and Faversham who was a son of Herbert Finch, buried 1553 Sandhurst, and married Elizabeth Whitfield, daughter of Richard Whitfield, yeoman of Eastry (C.C. 1545 will), by Joan Parker daughter of Thomas Parker of Ham near Eastry, and niece of Christian (sister of said Joan) Parker who married before 1540 Oliver Goddard, yeoman of Eastry (C.C. 1545-6 will).

The C.C. 1572-5 will of Christian Goddard, widow, of Eastry mentions among others her "cosen" John Finch of Faversham, gentleman, his wife Elizabeth, and their children, Mary Fynch, Frances Fynch, Martha Fynch, Anthony Fynch, and William Fynch, and a god-daughter, Ann Fynch, widow of the late Thomas Manwood. The C.C. sentence dated 5 November 1577 to this will records a dispute between John Fynch of Faversham, gentleman, her "cousin" and John Denne of Tilmanstone (her two executors), on the one hand, and Elizabeth Fynch of Faversham, Ann Fynch of the same, Frances Grenstret of Ospringe, and Martha Andrewes of Chartham, next of kin in particular, and all others in general, having an interest in the will.

Though Frances Fynch is given her maiden name in this will, she

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had married at Sheldwich 14 July 1571 Peter Greenstreet (a witness to the will) who died in March 1584(-5) and was buried at Ospringe where she married in February 1585(-6), as his second wife, John Langworth, D.D. (see also *Visitation of Kent 1663-68* or *Misc. Gen. et Her. iv. 204*) whom Sir John Hales reported to Sir Francis Walsingham, Secretary of State, as a notable hypocrite and gave him a very bad character (see "Lives of the Deans of Canterbury" by J. M. Cowper, page 47). She was buried 22 February 1633(-4) at Maidstone, and her C.C. 1631-33 will mentions her sister Mary Saxbie.

Ann Fynch named in the above will and sentence became at St. Mary, Sandwich, 16 February 1568(-9) the third wife of Thomas Manwood, Mayor of Sandwich (P.C.C. 1570 will), and was not the wife of his son Thomas Manwood (baptized 1546 St. Peter, Sandwich) as shown by William Boys in his *History of Sandwich*.

Of the two sons of John Fynch of Faversham, William Finch, who went to Coldred, Kent ("Saldred" in the 1619 Kent Visitation) where he was buried 30 December 1615 (A.C. 1615-16 will) married at St. Magnus, London, 10 February 1585(-6) Bennet Honywood, daughter of Christopher Honywood of Hythe, by whom he had issue.

His elder brother, Anthony Finch (admitted Inner Temple 1583 as of Lewes, Sussex), later of Petworth, Sussex (where buried 31 August 1621), married at St. Nicholas, Deptford 6 February 1585 Susanna Bullyn (buried 1604 Petworth), and secondly at St. Saviour, Southwark, 16 July 1607 Mary Callowaye, widow of Charles Kellawaye (P.C.C. 1605 will), whom she married there as Mary Lull 22 November 1599. She was buried 1648 Petworth and her will was proved at Chichester. Anthony Finch had issue by both wives.

Martha Andrew (buried 24 March 1642 Folkestone), the daughter of the Mayor and M.P., also married twice. Firstly at Hougham 31 January 1609 to Walter Upton (1584 Faversham-1629 Folkestone), a son of Nicholas Upton (A.C. 1596-7 will), jurat of Faversham and secondly at Folkestone 10 December 1629 Thomas Inmith (1591-1658 Folkestone), yeoman and in 1642 Mayor of Folkestone, as his second wife, his first wife (M. Lic. 1621) being Joan Kennet (1594-1626 Folkestone), daughter of John Kennett (A.C. 1609 will), jurat of Folkestone.

Her brother, Thomas Andrew, who may be the child whose baptism 17 May 1582 is registered without parentage at St. Mary's, Dover, was also buried at Folkestone, 5 August 1640, administration being granted in the C.C. of Canterbury 19 October 1640, as of Deal, gentleman, to Thomas Inmith, jurat of Folkestone and guardian of his son Richard Andrew, age 13 whose mother was probably Katherine, wife of Thomas Andrew gentleman, buried in January 1637(-8) at Deal.

W. H. CHALLEN.

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ROCHESTER CONSISTORY ACT BOOKS

This series of volumes has always been recorded as beginning in 1436. In fact this is a scribal error and the date should read 1437.

The first court is recorded as being held on : " die Lune . . . videlicet viij<sup>o</sup> die Mensis Aprilis Anno domini millesimo CCCC<sup>mo</sup> xxxvij<sup>to</sup> ". This is impossible since 8th April 1436 fell on Easter Sunday and not on Monday as it did in 1437. A further indication of error is the date of the second recorded court on " penultimo die Mensis Aprilis Anno domini millesimo CCCC<sup>mo</sup> xxxvij<sup>mo</sup> ". Nothing in the make up of the volume would account for this apparent gap of a year and that fact together with the improbability of court being held on Easter Sunday makes it certain that 1437 was intended as the year of the first entry.

FELIX HULL.

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