

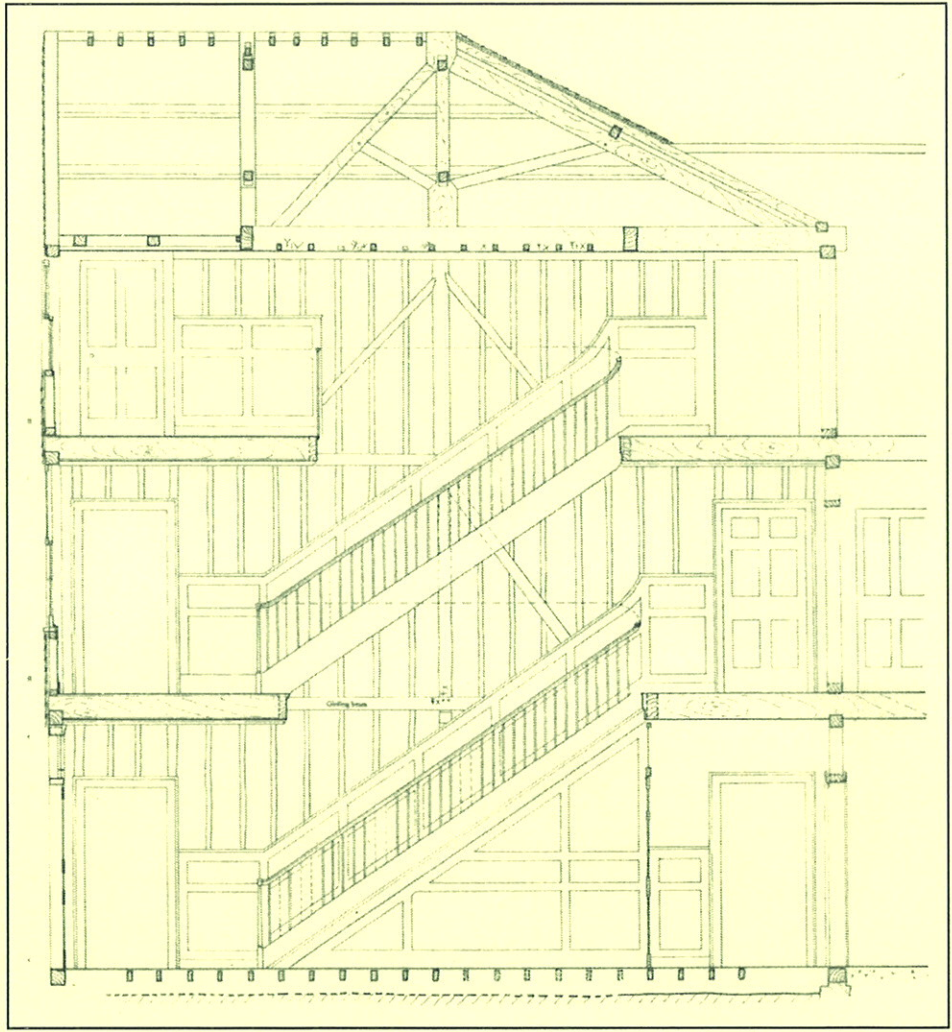
MAIDSTONE (KE)  
BUILD 00/13

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Chapman Warren

# THE WHITE HOUSE MAIDSTONE KENT

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING  
AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

September 2000

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# THE WHITE HOUSE, MAIDSTONE, KENT

## BUILDING RECORDING AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The former officers quarters of a cavalry station at the Royal West Kent Barracks in Maidstone is known locally as the White House and is currently being converted into a restaurant and hotel. It is listed Grade II\* and is therefore officially recognised as being within the most important 4% of all listed buildings within Britain. It was constructed in 1797 in the early stages of the Napoleonic Wars and its principal feature of interest is that it is almost entirely timber framed. Many temporary timber-framed barracks were constructed in this period as an emergency short term solution to the urgent shortage of accommodation at the outbreak of the war but the building at Maidstone was one of only six which were constructed as permanent structures. The White House is the only one these six to survive today.

It was constructed using a pine platform frame system in which the basic structural principal is that each storey is an independent structural unit placed on the one beneath. This contrasts to traditional timber-framed buildings which are divided into vertical bays with timber frames rising from the ground through the full height of the building to the roof. The building is weatherboarded and has a slate roof on king-post trusses.

The building is two storeys tall with a three-storied, pedimented central third. The original plan of the building was an E-shape and this has been accentuated by the addition of 19<sup>th</sup>-century brick extensions to each eastern projection and further small extensions to the south and west. The original layout of the building consisted almost entirely of small, square-plan rooms for the officers with a built-in cupboard in one corner and a fireplace in another sharing with three other rooms a chimney stack which was orientated 45° to the spine of the building. The layout was also divided by three straight staircases across the building. At first and second floor levels the building almost entirely retains this original layout while at ground floor it has been partially lost with two larger rooms created by combining of four of the small original rooms. The angled hearth foundations and joist trimmers do however survive within these larger rooms to provide evidence of the former layout. The building also appears to retain a substantial quantity of its original and historic joinery with doors, glazing bars, architraves and skirting all surviving. Plaster cornices also survive with a number of different profiles ranging from the small simple profiles in individual rooms to the larger cornices in halls.

The building is currently being converted by Bass Taverns into a restaurant and hotel which has allowed this programme of archaeological building recording to be undertaken by the Oxford Archaeological Unit. The work also included an archaeological watching brief undertaken during ground works but this revealed no archaeological features which pre-dated the white house.

## THE WHITE HOUSE, MAIDSTONE BUILDING RECORDING AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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### *Summary*

*The Grade II\* Listed former officers quarters at the Royal West Kent Barracks in Maidstone, known as The White House, is currently being converted to a restaurant and hotel. This allowed its archaeological building recording prior to the work being undertaken. The building, which was constructed in 1797, is almost entirely timber-framed and although many temporary timber-framed barracks were constructed in this period this one is of particular interest due to it being the only surviving example of six timber-framed barracks which were intended to be permanent. It was constructed using a platform frame system in which each storey is an independent structural unit placed on top of the one beneath. Although several small extensions have been built adjoining it the building has not been substantially altered since its original construction and its primary timber frame almost entirely remains together with much original joinery. An archaeological watching brief was also undertaken during intrusive ground works in areas surrounding the building, particularly the formation of service trenches. This revealed no significant archaeological features.*

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

- 1.1.1 The Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) was commissioned by Chapman Warren to undertake a programme of historic building recording and investigation at the site of the former Officers quarters at the Royal West Kent Barracks, Sandling Road, Maidstone (centred at NGR: TQ7580 5640). The building is known as the White House and is located in a prominent position facing onto the main route into Maidstone from the north.
- 1.1.2 The building is being converted to a hotel and restaurant by Bass Taverns, who have recently purchased the site from Kent County Council. Due to the architectural and historic interest of the building (Listed Grade II\*) planning permission was granted with the condition that the conversion was preceded by a programme of building recording as part of a wider programme of archaeological recording also including an archaeological watching brief during ground works. The results of this watching brief are included at the rear of this report as Appendix 1.
- 1.1.3 An assessment of the historic fabric of the building was previously undertaken in September 1999 by the Oxford Archaeological Unit which confirmed the good survival of the primary fabric and of much internal joinery. The substantive findings of this earlier assessment have been included here.

## **1.2 Aims and objectives**

- 1.2.1 The overall aim of the project was to preserve by a visual record evidence of the building's structure, construction, development and use. The recording particularly concentrated on evidence which will be lost within the development but also covered features to be retained, in order to gain an overall understanding of the building and to provide a context for those features to be lost.
- 1.2.2 The timber-framed construction of the building is its most interesting and important feature and gaining an understanding of this was a principal objective of the project. The building is not being demolished however and the relatively small scale nature of the drawn survey (1:50) reflected this, being designed to gain a clear overall understanding of the timber frame rather than a detailed record of every timber member.

## **1.3 Methodology**

- 1.3.1 The recording was primarily of a drawn nature. Floor plans based on a previous survey of the building were produced at scale 1:50 showing the structural members of the timber frame. Sections were also produced at scale 1:50 detailing each of the cross-frames other than that at the southern end of the building where the upper floor was unsafe. One more detailed cross section was produced at 1:20. Longitudinal sectional elevations were also produced at 1:50 showing the internal face of the two main elevations. A further drawn record detailing the central staircase between ground and first floor was also produced. Some of the survey drawings have been reproduced within this report while the others are included within the site archive
- 1.3.2 A photographic survey of the building was also undertaken using black and white print and colour slide film. The main recording of the building was undertaken between 23 February 2000 and 8 March 2000 and a further visit to record features of the building exposed by works was made on 4 May.
- 1.3.3 The recording and analysis of the structural frame was possible before the start of site works due to the fact that the plaster originally covering the timber frame had been previously removed from almost all the surfaces within the building. Many surfaces remained partially obscured by laths attached to studs and to the undersides of joists but even here it was possible to determine the nature of the frame. The building has suffered from neglect and vandalism in recent years and although in general it is stable and its condition is not too precarious there are some parts of the building which could not be safely surveyed. This was particularly true of the south end of the first and second floors which were inaccessible. The roof space was also largely inaccessible so although some measurements could be taken accurately others included in the 1:50 survey were assumed. Due to the principal aim of gaining an overall understanding of the structure and construction of the building without producing a detailed survey of every timber member some non-visible details

have been assumed and the survey has not shown areas of deterioration in the structure.

- 1.3.4 Historical research has not been formally undertaken as part of this project although an outline of the building's history is known from work undertaken as part of a recent English Heritage thematic study on Barracks (*British Barracks 1600-1914, Their Architecture and Role in Society* J Douet 1998).
- 1.3.5 The archive for the building recording project, consisting of the site drawings, photographic negatives, slides and all other notes, will be deposited with the Centre for Kentish Studies in Maidstone.

#### **1.4 Details of development**

- 1.4.1 The building is to be converted to a restaurant at ground floor and a hotel on the two floors above. Due to the significance of the building an attempt has been made to minimise the impact on the historic fabric although to achieve a practical solution a number of significant changes will be made to the structure. The most significant of these changes are on the ground floor where the plan will be partially opened-up to allow a restaurant. No primary partitions will be fully removed but several doors will be lost and the openings enlarged. The central staircase will be dismantled between ground and first floor and the pieces stored (possibly in the roof space of the building) to allow its re-erection in the future. The first and second floors will be much less altered and the existing frame partitions will largely remain.
- 1.4.2 The east elevation will be substantially altered with the demolition of the small secondary brick projection at the north-east corner of the building and the construction of a new kitchen towards the south end, partly within the existing building. Due to the threat of theft many fireplace surrounds have been removed in recent years by Kent County Council and placed in their storage depot in Aylesford. It is anticipated that they will be returned to the building and refitted in the current development but they have not been included within this report.

#### **1.5 Historical background**

- 1.5.1 From the Restoration period Maidstone had been an important army centre, particularly in war-time when large numbers of troops would be billeted in local inns and this importance developed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century with the establishment of the West Kent Militia in the town. The military presence was then further strengthened in the early stages of the war with France (1792-1815) by the construction in 1797 of The White House as the officers quarters of a cavalry station within the larger barracks site.
- 1.5.2 The new building was timber framed, which was not in itself particularly unusual as many timber-framed barracks were constructed in this period as fast, short-term measures but the building at Maidstone was one of six timber-



framed structures built by the Barracks Department intended to be permanent. The others were at Chelmsford, Colchester, Sunderland, Romford and Croydon but the White House is the only one to survive. Officers had small plain rooms with a fireplace in one corner and a built-in cupboard in the other. They are reported to have been issued with bedding, a table, bellows, fire irons and a chamber pot (Douet, 1998).

- 1.5.3 The site was an important cavalry station between Chatham and Brighton and also between London and the Kent coast and the larger barracks site was well used by other regiments en route to the colonies. From around 1819 the site also began to be used as the cavalry depot for inducting new recruits.
- 1.5.4 The building remained in use by the military until the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when it was replaced by the Invicta Barracks in Maidstone, sometime after 1963 when the services accommodation was reorganised under the Ministry for Public Buildings.

## 2 DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 General description

- 2.1.1 The White House consists of a primary timber-framed building clad with weatherboarding to which several small extensions have been added largely in brick. The secondary brickwork is a yellow stock brick which contrasts with the apparently primary red brick found in fireplaces and original chimneys. The building has an E-shaped plan, (although the central projection appears to be secondary) and the spine of the building is orientated north-south (Figs 1-2). The main body of the building is nine bays long and two bays deep while the primary service wing projections are two bays deep. The primary building is two-storied other than the central third of the main body of the building which has a second floor. There are three small basements beneath each of the service wings. The slate-covered roof is hipped to each of the primary eastern projections and to the rear (east) face of the raised central third. The front of the central third projects slightly and is pedimented.

### 2.2 Exterior

- 2.2.1 The *west elevation* (front, Plate 1) divides into three 3-bay sections each one of which has a central doorway. That at the centre of the elevation has a doorcase with cornice on brackets, semi-circular fan light with glazing bars and flush panelled door. The doorcase and porch has been lost from the northern doorway but the door is beneath a rectangular fan light. The southern door has a plain doorcase with rectangular fan light. One apparently primary 12-light sash window survives to the ground floor of the elevation and three apparently secondary (19<sup>th</sup> century) large-paned 4-light sashes. The original form of the third bay from the north has been lost by the construction of a projecting bay (19<sup>th</sup> century). Three 12-light sashes and two 4-light sashes survive at first floor with some glazing bars lost or replaced. There are three 6-light sashes at second floor.

2.2.2 The *east elevation* (Plate 2) has been substantially altered since original construction with the addition of several extensions but three 12-light sashes survive (some bars and panes lost) at ground floor and four 12-light sashes survive at first floor. Two 6-light sashes survive at second floor. The *north elevation* has three 4-light sashes at ground floor and four 4-light sashes at first floor. The *south elevation* has been much altered at ground level with the addition of a large projecting bay. There is a 12-light and an 8-light sash at ground level and four 12-light sashes at first floor. The *interior* of the building is divided into a series of small regularly-sized rooms created by three staircases traversing the main body of the building and timber-framed partitions radiating from diagonally-set shared chimney stacks.

### 2.3 Structural frame

- 2.3.1 The structural frame of the building is constructed almost entirely in pine using a platform frame system in which each storey is an independent timber-framed unit placed on top of the one beneath (Fig 6-7). With this form of construction the traditional techniques of timber framing in which the building is divided vertically into a series of bays with structural cross-frames rising from the ground floor to the roof is abandoned. Thus in the White House although the roof trusses are evenly spaced (Fig 8) it is not necessary for the 'cross-frames' dividing the plan of the building to be directly beneath them. This allowed greater freedom in arranging the internal layout of the building although in practice the layout is relatively regular and most of the cross-frames are almost beneath a roof truss. The platform frame system is thought to be a more rigid modification of the balloon frame in which instead of a small number of heavy cross-frames a large number of light-weight vertical posts rise from the foundations to the eaves with the joists of each storey nailed to the vertical posts (McAlester 1991).
- 2.3.2 The ground and first floors of the White House are each divided by ten east-west cross-frames (including those at each end of the building) which largely act as partitions but which also have a wider structural function as exhibited by the braces within them. The central four cross-frames are directly beneath similar frames creating the second floor. There are three longitudinal north-south wall-frames: two forming the main external elevations and an internal one along the spine of the building. Each wall-frame bay is also strengthened with diagonal braces which rise to posts either side of each window in the external frames and either side of each chimney in the spine frame.
- 2.3.3 There are essentially two types of cross-frame: those which coincide with a chimney stack (Frames 2, 4, 7, 9) and those which do not (Frames 3, 5, 6, 8). Those not in line with a chimney have a large central post (14 cm x 14 cm) which supports the abutting partition along the spine of the building and a diagonal brace to each side which strengthens the cross-frame. Those which are in line with the chimney stacks also have two diagonal braces but due to the stack they are spaced further apart. The braces are spaced apart within Frame 2 which confirms other evidence (see below) suggesting that there was formerly an diagonally-set chimney within this frame.

- 2.3.4 At ground floor level the sole plates within each of the cross-frames are tenoned into the sole plates of the longitudinal wall-frames and are located immediately beneath the level of the floor boards. Common joists are tenoned into the sole plates of the cross-frames and run north-south. They half lap over, and are supported by, a single intermediate joist at the mid-point between cross-frames. The sole plates support posts of various sizes: those which form the projecting central third to the west elevation are 24 x 14 cm; those at each of the other intersections between frames are 14 x 14 cm; those at either side windows, doors and chimneys are 10 x 14 cm. There are additionally common studs (7 x 14 cm) between each post thus forming the walls. The posts support E-W girding beams (18 x 18 cm) within each cross-frame which half lap over, and are supported by, first floor head-plates (18 x 18 cm) within each wall-frame.
- 2.3.5 The first floor common joists (26 x 7 cm) run east-west across the building half lapped over the north-south first floor head-plate in each wall-frame. Within each wall-frame there is a smaller first floor sill (7 x 10 cm) which lies directly on top of the common joists above the first floor head-plate. This sole plate supports the base of the studs forming the walls at first floor level. The structural arrangement at second floor level is similar to that at first floor consisting of N-S second floor head-plates which support E-W girding beams and common joists which themselves support the second floor sills and studs.
- 2.3.6 The sole plates of the cross-frames and wall-frames as well as the intermediate supporting joists, rest on stepped brick foundations. It appears that there may originally have been a slate damp proof course constructed between the brick and the sole plates but only a few small sections of this survive. The two areas in which this is most obviously apparent are within the north wall of G11 and the east wall of G10. Within each of these areas there are about five or six courses of slate laid directly on top of one another beneath the sole plate and above the brick foundation (Plate 32). The slates were only exposed by the development works and although when the site was visited these were the only two areas where the feature was obviously apparent it was also encountered elsewhere during the works. It may be an original feature although it alternatively have been a secondary insertion in areas where damp became a particular problem. This is suggested by the fact that the sole plate were particularly rotten in the areas with the slate damp proof course and they had been partially replaced in some areas with concrete poured in-situ.
- 2.3.7 Another feature of interest revealed by the works is that the foundation of each of the four walls of G14 at the north end of the building are extended into the room by a shelf of dark green/blue bottles laid horizontally so that only the base is visible within the room and set within a white mortar (Plate 31). The bottles are set against the internal wall of the foundation and they extend between 20-30 cm into the room. Their depth varies between 15-30 cm above the ground surface.

## 2.4 Roof

- 2.4.1 The primary roof divides into three sections: that above the 2-storied, L-shaped section at the northern end of the building, the very similar structure above the southern end of the building and that above the three-storied central section of the building (Fig 8).
- 2.4.2 The two L-shaped sections of roof are each supported by four king-post trusses orientated east-west and a single similar king-post truss orientated north-south within the eastern projection. A ridge piece spans between the head of the northernmost E-W truss and the head of the N-S truss. The trusses are typical late 18<sup>th</sup>-century king-post trusses with shoulders cut towards the base of the king-post supporting shallow-pitch struts. Shoulders are also cut within the head of the king-post supporting long principal rafters which support a single notched purlin. Common rafters overlie the purlin, their heads secured to a ridge piece and their bases resting on a small horizontal timber plate above the larger structural wall plate at the head of the first floor frame and supporting each roof truss. The base of the king-post is pegged to the tie beam without the additional strengthening of an iron strap as found on many 19<sup>th</sup>-century king-post trusses.
- 2.4.3 The roof above the taller central third of the building is hipped to the rear and gabled to the front. It is supported by two king-post trusses, one orientated north-south and inset c.2 m from the front (west) of the building and the other orientated east-west and spanning from the N-S truss to the east wall (Fig 7). The eastern principal rafter of this truss has a shallow pitch and supports the rear slope while that to the west does not directly support a roof slope and has a steeper pitch. The E-W truss not only supports the rear slope of the roof but also the rear sections of the two side slopes with struts and principal rafters attached to the side faces of the king-post (shown in outline on Fig 8).

## 2.5 Plan

- 2.5.1 The plan of the primary building is divided into four sections by three straight staircases set within halls which traverse the body of the building (Figs 2-3). Two of the staircases are located towards the ends of the building and therefore rise a single storey while the other is at the centre of the building and is therefore two-storied. Each floor of the main north-south body of the building appears to have originally been comprised of a series of small, square-plan rooms sharing a diagonally-set chimney stack at the corner of the room. This layout remains almost entirely intact at first floor and partially intact at ground floor.
- 2.5.2 One of the most important aspects of the building is the large quantity of surviving primary or early period detailing. Each room had a small in-built cupboard, the majority of which were in a corner of the room and reflecting the angle of the room's fireplace. One of these survives at both ground and first floor but all four second floor rooms retain theirs. The skirting boards and architraves around both doors and windows are particularly consistent throughout the building and they would appear to be largely primary. Dado

rails which are either primary or sufficiently old to be of interest also survive within many rooms and in some only the horizontal bearer survives. There are also picture rails within many rooms also these largely appear to be secondary.

- 2.5.3 Six distinct plaster cornices have been identified within the building and survive to a greater or lesser extent. The largest of these is 14 cm wide by 8.5 cm deep and is found in F9, F18, F19 and F20. The other five cornice types are all smaller and their profiles are included as Fig.10. The plaster was formed with hair and the cornices appeared to be probably primary. Three distinct secondary softwood cornices have also been identified.
- 2.5.4 The two-storied central staircase is primary and has very slender newel posts at ground and first floor which taper slightly and the ground floor one of which is button-headed. The handrail is also slender and is supported by plain, square-section balusters although many of these have been lost. The staircase is flanked by plain panelling. The single-storey northern staircase has a similarly slender newel post and handrail, although the button-head has been lost together with many of the square-section balusters. The panelling flanking the stairs has been covered by secondary (early C20th?) ridged boards. The southern staircase has a heavier handrail and thicker-section newel post although the panelling is the same as that flanking the central staircase. The newel and hand rail strongly appear to be of a later date than the other slender detailing to the other staircases and it appears likely that they were added to an existing, primary staircases.

## 2.6 Ground floor (Figure 2)

- 2.6.1 The only one of the four divisions at ground floor which appears to retain its original layout is the one immediately to the north of the central staircase. There is a square plan, diagonally-set brick chimney stack at the centre of the area with timber-framed partitions radiating out from it and forming small rooms. The area to the south of the central staircase originally shared the same plan but the two rooms to the west have been combined by the removal of the partition and half the chimney stack. An iron joist supported by an iron post at its west end has been inserted spanning the new opening. The two fireplaces, which would have projected into this room, have been replaced by a single fireplace along the same line as the partition but when the survey was undertaken much of the ground floor within G5 had been removed to reveal the foundations for the hearths of the former angled fireplaces. The removal of the floor also revealed three east-west brick footings. The central one would have been beneath the partition dividing the two rooms and the other two would have supported the ground floor common joists at the mid-point of each room. The ground floor had also been largely removed within G6 and G7 to confirm that each foundation extended across the building and a similar brick feature was visible within G11 beneath the largely collapsed floor.
- 2.6.2 As referred to above it appears that the northernmost division (G14) of the ground floor was originally divided into two rooms. The two larger-section posts set apart within the cross-frame strongly suggest that there was formerly a chimney stack within this wall and the first floor construction, visible from

within G14 and consisting of angled principal joists confirms that there would have been a triangular-plan chimney at first floor serving two rooms. During the course of works a triangular hearth has been revealed at ground floor beneath the current floor boards confirming the former existence of a diagonally-set chimney stack and two fireplaces at ground floor. At some time, almost certainly in the nineteenth century, it was decided to alter the layout this area of the building by uniting the two rooms and relocating the chimney to the outer face of the building.

- 2.6.3 The semi-hexagonal projecting bay at the south end of the building is secondary and it is likely that the original layout within this area would have been similar to that surviving at first floor consisting of two rooms. The area, including the bay, is now a single large space (other than some largely-removed mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century stud partitions) with an east-west fireplace utilising the chimney. An iron joist has been inserted spanning the opening created in the south end wall of the primary building. The projecting bay is not in keeping with the design of the rest of the building and there is conclusive evidence that it is secondary in that the laths and plaster to the inner face of the primary wall continue beneath the adjoining structure at the south-west corner of the building. The projection has a timber-framed construction but has suffered severely from vandalism and the walls have been strengthened with a very lumpy concrete poured into the voids between studs.
- 2.6.4 The primary eastern projections appear to have been single bay service wings. A very tall chimney, with a pronounced hump immediately above eaves level, serves the large fireplace within the room (G15) at the north-east corner of the building. The area was probably a kitchen and it is likely that the hump was a device to increase the draw within the chimney. The tall chimney is constructed with a yellow stock brick which is used elsewhere in secondary elements of the building and which contrasts with the red brick found in what are believed to be primary features. The primary projection at the south end of the building was originally a self contained unit with no direct access between it and the main building. The existing link (G27) was originally an external space shown by weatherboarding to the west and east faces and stone steps leading to G28.

## 2.7 First floor (Fig 3)

- 2.7.1 The first floor largely retains its original layout with each of the two sections either side of the central staircase divided into four square rooms utilising a shared, diagonally-set brick chimney stack. The area to the southern end of the building is divided into two rooms by a partition along the spine of the building with diagonally-set fireplaces. The northern end of the building would originally have been similarly divided into two rooms and there is evidence of a former diagonally-set chimney at the southern end of this room, similar to that at the opposite end of the building, which was replaced by the existing chimney breast serving the larger unified room (F21). Some evidence of this has been referred to above in the section on the ground floor but there is further evidence visible within F21 such as the fact that the uppermost horizontal within Cross-Frame 2 does not span the building. The beam is only

present to the outer two-thirds of the building probably due to the former chimney to the central third. There is also further trimming in the first floor structure and general trimming in the roof to suggest a projecting chimney.

- 2.7.2 One feature of some archaeological interest within the first floor is the fact that the window within F18 appears to have been moved slightly to the south. Unlike all the other windows to this elevation it is not above that at ground floor level and it cuts through the diagonal brace within the wall-frame (Fig 8). This is explained by the small secondary toilet block (F24 a + b) constructed at this point which would have overlapped the window. Due to the timber-framed construction of the building it would have been relatively easy to cut out the window, form a new opening in the frame and reinsert it.

## 2.8 Second floor (Figure 4)

- 2.8.1 There is a second floor within the central third of the main body of the building and the central eastern projection. It consists of four regular bedrooms each one the same size as those on the floors below, a central hall housing the staircase, and three rooms (S6, S7, S8) within the projection.
- 2.8.2 Each of the four bedrooms retain many of their original features form with each of the two pairs of room either side of the hall sharing a triangular plan chimney stack at the outer (north and south) faces of the storey. Each of the chimneys appears to have been rebuilt or extended just above eaves level with a yellow brick above the primary red brick. Each room also retains an angled corner cupboard similar to those partially surviving on the floors below.
- 2.8.3 The central projection (S6, S7) at second floor level is constructed in a very similarly fashion to the known primary building and is either primary itself or was an early addition. Some phasing is visible however in that half of the ceiling joists are clearly secondary. There is a N-S tie-beam on the central line of the projection and the ceiling joists to the east have scratched carpenters marks apparently identical to those used in the primary building while the joists to the west have chiselled carpenters marks.

## 2.9 Secondary extensions

- 2.9.1 There appear to have been three extensions constructed to the east of the primary building, all of which were probably added before 1850. The two outer extensions are brick and are clearly secondary but the central one is timber framed and weatherboard-clad and is less conclusively secondary.
- 2.9.2 **Central extension:** There are two sections to the central projection: the three storey projection immediately adjacent to the primary building (G23-25, F25-26, S6-7) and a further single storey extension (G33). From the evidence available it appears likely that the full height central projection is an early addition rather than being part of the primary structure. It shares much of the same detailing as the rest of the building but in the overall design of the building it is awkward and lacks the unity that the other two larger projections share with the main building. Perhaps more significantly the timber studs of

the projection are built against the main building rather than the two structures sharing a larger section stud as found in cross-frames and partitions elsewhere in the primary building. Also possibly of significance is that although the ground floor throughout the primary building is suspended within the projection it is solid. Unfortunately it was not possible to internally inspect the single storey projection because when the survey was undertaken the floor in this room (G33) was dangerous and the room was locked.

2.9.3 *Southern extension:* The eastern secondary extension (G29, G32, F1-3) to the southernmost primary projection is two storeys tall, constructed in a yellow/brown stock brick contrasting with the red brick used in the primary building and has a slate-covered hipped roof. Each of the windows is beneath a gauged brick head. Internally the staircase has a button-headed newel post and swan necked handrail suggesting an early 19<sup>th</sup> century date (Plate 21).

2.9.4 *Northern extension:* This extension (G20-22) which is being demolished in the current development is constructed of yellow/brown stock brick and is shown to be secondary by the fact that it abuts the weatherboarding of the formerly-external face of the primary building. The brickwork is constructed with thin bonding between courses and with penny-roll pointing. There are two 12-light sash windows to the east face beneath gauged brick heads. The internal walls are roughly plastered and the architraves around doors are plain.

## 2.10 Use of the building

2.10.1 The building formed the officers quarters of a cavalry station and therefore housed men of a relatively high status. Unlike at the contemporary, permanent timber-framed barracks at Sunderland which housed 1528 men (Douet, 1998) the officers did not sleep in large dormitories but had their own rooms. From the number of rooms it appears that it would have housed about 30 men. The high status of the men is also apparent in the architectural conventions used such as the pediment and the fan lights over doors.

2.10.2 In understanding the building it is also important to appreciate that the building was not the isolated island it is today but formed part of a larger barracks site from which it has been now been truncated by the construction of the main road into Maidstone. There would have been many activities undertaken by the officers within separate buildings on the site and it appears that the White House initially functioned as little more than the officers sleeping quarters. This is suggested by how little communal space there would have been within the primary plan. Other than the service wings to the east side the plan of the building would have been almost entirely divided into small bedrooms for officers and most of their entertainment and meals would have been undertaken elsewhere on the site. Some small scale cooking would have been undertaken within the building both within men's rooms using the toasting fork issued to each officer and possibly on the larger fireplace at the north-east corner of the building.



### 3 CONCLUSION

- 3.1.1 The White House is Grade II\* Listed and is of substantial interest for a number of reasons.
- 3.1.2 Its timber-framed construction is inherently of interest as although in the medieval and early post-medieval periods many buildings were timber framed by the late 18<sup>th</sup> century the vast majority of permanent structures, particularly high status buildings such as the White House, were of masonry. The platform frame system used is also of interest in differing fundamentally from the earlier systems based on full-height cross-frames dividing the building into vertical bays. The horizontal system used at the White House would have been unknown in medieval times and was probably developed in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century although it spread widely in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
- 3.1.3 It is also of great interest in the study of barracks and army buildings generally. It formed part of a substantial barracks-building programme in the early stages of the Napoleonic Wars the vast majority of the buildings of which were either temporary structures or permanent ones which have not survived. It is particularly of interest as the only survivor of six timber-framed barracks built in this period which were intended to be permanent. Its construction may therefore provide an indication of the form some or all of these other buildings may have taken.
- 3.1.4 Although in parts the building is in a poor condition the overall survival of the primary structure is good and has benefited from the small amount of renovation and modernisation undertaken since its original construction. Almost all of the original timbers survive and the only substantial extensions to the building are the brick structures to the east which were relatively early additions and of some interest in themselves, and the semi-hexagonal bay at the south end of the building. The extensive survival of primary or early period joinery also adds to the building's interest. These include skirtings, dado rails, doors, windows, architraves and corner cupboards. Plaster moulded cornices also partially survive within the building. As many of these features are to be retained in the redevelopment of the building and where fragments of largely lost features survive replicas will be made.
- 3.1.5 The original layout of the building, consisting of small regular-sized rooms, largely survives, particularly at first and second floors and this will be partially retained within the development.

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September 2000

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## **APPENDIX 1: Results of archaeological watching brief**

### **Introduction**

An intermittent archaeological watching brief was undertaken during May 2000 during intrusive ground works around the White House. The works principally consisted of the formation of service trenches.

### **Methodology**

Intrusive ground works were observed by an archaeologist for any features of interest. Such features were recorded by descriptive notes, drawings and photographs (black and white prints and colour slides).

### **Results**

No archaeological features were revealed during the watching brief which pre-dated the existing building. The only features identified related to the existing building and principally consisted of what appeared to be 19<sup>th</sup>-century drainage features.

Perhaps the most interesting feature revealed during the works was a substantial, circular-section, brick-lined service/sewer tunnel. The structure had an approximately N-S alignment and ran for at least 5 m south from the eastern edge of the secondary southernmost projection. The diameter of the tunnel was 1.65 m and its upper half had been bricked up. A cast iron pipe ran through the lower half. It appears from the brick type, the depth of the basement in this area and the alignment of the structure that the tunnel was contemporary with the basement (B3) and that it was probably originally linked to the basement.

### **Conclusions**

The platform on which the White House stands is c.3 m below the level of the adjacent Roman road (Sandling Road) and it is apparent that a substantial cutting was made when the building was constructed to allow a relatively level surface across the barracks site. This cutting would have removed any potential archaeological deposits pre-dating the house.

## APPENDIX 2: Room by Room Audit

This Appendix aims to note the principal surviving features of each room and to highlight those of particular interest.

### GROUND FLOOR

- G1** Divided from G2 and G3 by modern stud partitions. Previously a single large room with semi-octagonal secondary projection. Three tri-partite windows survive two of which within projection. Fourth window lost. Each has 4-pane timber-framed sash windows to central section and flanking timber pilasters. Windows to S and W non-glazed to sides panels. Tall skirting survives. Softwood cornice largely survives (see Fig 10). Parts of south-east wall fire damaged and lumpy concrete apparently poured and set between damaged posts.
- G2** See G1 above.
- G3** See G1 above.
- G4** Entrance hall to southernmost unit. Button-headed newel post of relatively broad girth and prominent moulding. Chunky hand rail also in-situ and in relatively good condition. Lower half of square-section balusters in-situ. Simple softwood panelling to mid-height on each wall including alongside staircase. Floorboards in-situ. Iron-framed fan light above front door in-situ. Panelling to lower half of door lost.
- G5** Softwood joists almost entirely removed, brick supporting piers beneath exposed. Decorative moulded cornice and picture rail intact. Tall skirting board partially survives. Two 4-light sashes with primary glazing bars and simple panelling beneath window. Iron security bars (early-mid C20th) attached to internal frame. Primary door frames in-situ. Softwood cornice (see Fig 10).
- G6** Window formerly 12-light sash, now with 6 vertical lights. Sash chains in-situ. Half of floor joists removed. Cupboard with same detailing as primary doors, possibly only surviving example of cupboard which is known to have originally been within each officer's room. Primary door to S in-situ – 6 panels, one face with decorative beading.
- G7** Primary studwork to each internal wall. Floor removed. 12-light sash window all glazing bars apparently primary and panelling beneath. Both doors apparently primary. Small, simple plaster cornice in-situ (see Fig 10).
- G8** Entrance hall to central unit. Front door intact but with some fire damage. Semi-circular-headed frame around fan-light. Fan light of different design to those in side units. Mid-height primary panelling to walls, simple and with some limited fire damage. Very slender newel post (button-headed) and handrail. Square-section balusters (approximately two thirds in-situ). Primary glazed screen above door to rear of hall. All primary door surrounds in situ. Small moulded cornice (see Fig 10)
- G9** 12-light window, primary bars in-situ. Tall skirting, floor boards in-situ. Small section of former picture rail survives. Small moulded cornice (see Fig 10)
- G10** Tall skirting, primary floor boards and low dado rail all survive. Timber framed casement window secondary but C19th. Possibly in former door opening. Probably primary door in-situ. Small moulded plaster cornice (see Fig 10)
- G11** Tall skirting in-situ. Primary joists largely removed. Secondary (mid-C19th) bay window with large panes.
- G12** Tall skirting in-situ, probably primary. Probably primary floor boards. Probably primary door but with secondary boards covering each face. Window formerly 12-light primary but lower half secondary with 3 vertical lights. Small moulded plaster cornice (see Fig 10)
- G13** Northernmost entrance hall. Door with secondary boards covering probable panelling. Square-headed frame around fan-light. Slender newel post in-situ but

- button head lost. Slender hand rail intact but most of square section balusters lost. Walls panelled to mid-height dado rail. Apparently primary panelling beneath mid-C20th rippled covering chipboard. 2 doors to SE and E in-situ probably primary but with secondary boarding over panels. Apparently primary low skirting in-situ.
- G14** Skirting boards all in-situ, 22 cm tall. Early C20th tiled fire surround not in-situ but within room. 3 windows, each 4-lights large panes. Probably primary floorboards in-situ. Doors not in-situ but in room, probably primary but with secondary boards over panelling. Probably primary moulded architrave around both doors. 8 cm tall softwood dado found widely throughout building. Plaster cornice survives to part of secondary chimney, section of softwood cornice survives adjacent to chimney. Softwood cornice
- G15** Simple horizontal boarding to walls up to mid-height. 4-light sash window to W, to E secondary casement at high level. Primary floor boards, skirting. Door to G18 probably primary but with covering boards. Cast iron fireplace surround within room on floor. Too small for fireplace in G15. Large corner fireplace possibly secondary. Softwood dado, no cornice, 22 cm tall skirting same as that found widely throughout building. Plain architrave around door and windows.
- G16** Primary floor boards, large sash with secondary frosted glazing.
- G17** WC late C19th?. T+G boarding to walls.
- G18** Small hall off G16.
- G19** Roofed external staircase to basement.
- G20** Within secondary projection. Stone flagged floor. 12-light sash, primary bars. Primary external door in-situ.
- G21** Within secondary projection. 12-light sash same as those in primary building. Vertical iron security bars to external face. Solid floor, cement skirting. Door frames survive but no primary doors.
- G22** Lean-to, same brick, gauged over door opening as G21, G20.
- G23** 12-light sash with secondary frosted glass. See also G25.
- G24** See also G25.
- G25** Large sash window for formerly larger room with G23 and G24. Window originally-12 light, only 2 lights with original glazing bars. Solid floor.
- G26** Solid floor covered with quarry tiles. 2 sash windows to S. 12-light sash with chamfered (possibly replacement) glazing bars, 8-light sash with slender ovolo bars. Plain panelled door to rear without beading to either face.
- G27** Small room formerly external passage shown by overlapping weatherboarding to E and W faces. Floor solid. 2 stone steps to E allow access to raised floor height above basemented area.
- G28** Ground floor removed.
- G29** Asbestos – not accessible.
- G30** 12 light sash, primary bars. Walls covered with simple boarding to full height.
- G31** No ground floor survived at time of survey. Open to basement.
- G32** Central stairwell within secondary brick projection. Button-headed newell post of moderately slender girth.

## FIRST FLOOR

- F1** In secondary brick projection. 12-light sash with slender ovolo bars.
- F2** In secondary brick projection. 12-light sash with slender ovolo bars. Button-headed newell post, sharp swan-necked hand rail suggestive of early C19th. Primary doors intact.
- F3** In secondary brick projection. 12-light sash with slender ovolo bars.
- F4** Not accessible
- F5** Not accessible
- F6** Not accessible.

- F7** Two windows, 12-light sashes, primary slender ovolo glazing bars in-situ. Simple plaster cornice partially survives (see Fig 10). Skirting intact, dado largely survives
- F8** 12-light sash, lower sash not in-situ but in room. Slender ovolo bars. Picture rail and cornice largely intact (see Fig 10).
- F9** Window to S removed, surround intact. 12-light sash to W largely intact except for lowest horizontal of upper sash. Panelling intact beneath both windows. Tiled fireplace intact but mantel removed. Skirting intact, door frames intact but only door to SE in situ. Large plaster cornice (see Fig 10)
- F10** Hand rail survives. Solid late C19th newel post at W end. Primary panelling in-situ. Simple plaster cornice largely intact (see Fig 10). First floor square section balusters all intact. Primary doors all in-situ except to SW. 12-light sash three-quarters intact, slender ovolo bars.
- F11** Picture rail, dado, skirting all largely intact. Fragments of cornice survives (see Fig 10). 12-light sash – little primary survives, 3 large secondary vertical lights to top half and only one primary glazing bar to bottom.
- F12** 12-light sash with thin ovolo bars intact. Picture rail, dado and skirting all largely intact.
- F13** 12-light sash, chunky ovolo bars with thin inner face. Small plaster cornice partially intact. High skirting intact, dado rail largely intact, picture rail intact. N door and door to centre intact but boarded.
- F14** 12-light sash, slender ovolo bars. Dado and skirting intact. Picture rail and simple cornice partially intact. Doors intact but boarded.
- F15** Hall/stairwell. Primary panelling matching that on ground floor in-situ. Primary handrail intact, balusters one-third intact. Primary slender newel post at W end intact. Small simple cornice largely intact (see Fig 10). Primary doors all in-situ. 12-light sash window, thin ovolo bars intact, panelling beneath window removed.
- F16** High skirting with beading in-situ. Picture rail  $\frac{3}{4}$  intact. Simple moulded plaster cornice  $\frac{1}{2}$  intact (see Fig 10). 12-light sash window, upper and lower halves of different phases but both C19th. Chunky ovolo bars to upper, thin ovolo bars to lower. Sash chains intact. Panelling beneath window intact. Both primary doors intact. Very simple secondary cement/concrete fire surround and mantelpiece of limited interest intact.
- F17** High skirting almost entirely intact. Simple moulded plaster cornice half intact (see Fig 10). 12-light sash window, primary glazing bars intact and chains partially intact. Panelling beneath window intact. Door in-situ probably primary but with secondary boards covering face.
- F18** 12-light sash all bars (slender ovolo) intact and sash chains. Panelling beneath intact. Primary panelled door. Large decorative plaster cornice almost entirely intact (see Fig 10). Tall skirting intact with simple beading to top.
- F19** 4-light sash, glazing bars to lower half lost. Panelling beneath intact. Tall skirting intact with simple beading. Large plaster cornice (see Fig 10)
- F20** Lower half of walls and continuing up the stairs covered with crinkled C20th boarding. Previous (probably primary) panelling in-situ beneath. Handrail of stairs intact. Square section balusters almost all intact. Low primary skirting intact. Large moulded plaster cornice intact to rear half of room (see Fig 10). Door frames all intact, all 5 doors in-situ but with C20th boards covering faces. 4-light sash window with chunky ovolo bars, lower half lost (not replaced).
- F21** 3 windows. Each 4-light, large-paned with panelling beneath. Glazing bars slender, moulded. Tall skirting, no cornice, picture rail and dado/projecting ledge at 1.4 m.
- F22** 2 windows, both 4-light sashes with original moulded ovolo bars intact. High skirting but apparently secondary. Sections of apparently primary skirting survive in cupboard. Door probably primary but with secondary covering boards over each face.
- F23** Window was 12-light sash but lower half secondary with 3 vertical lights.

- F24** Window was 12-light sash but lower half secondary with 3 vertical lights. Door boarded, probably primary. Small surviving section of skirting. 2 small secondary rooms to S (24 a + b). Early C20th windows, plasterboarded walls, no evidence of laths on studs.
- F25** Former window to S weatherboarded, sill and simple frame visible. Window to N secondary (late C19th/early C20th) casement, both casements removed, one in room. Window surround plain.
- F26** Two 12-light windows to N and S with slender ovolo bars. Large windows in very small rooms due to secondary partitioning but still windows curiously unbalanced within projection. Some bars to S window replaced by non-moulded chamfered bars. Doors plain, no beading.

## SECOND FLOOR

- S1** Primary door in-situ, panelled but plainer than those downstairs, 4 panels no beading. Picture frame in-situ. Secondary door to W. Built-in cupboard in NE corner, probably primary.
- S2** Probably primary corner cupboard in-situ.
- S3** Floor too dangerous to walk over. Picture rail partially in-situ. Probably primary corner cupboard in-situ.
- S4** Floor too dangerous to walk over. Picture rail partially in-situ. Cast iron fireplace surround on floor. Early C20th (?). Corner cupboard.
- S5** Primary hand rail intact, balusters largely intact. Panelling to walls intact, 1 stud exposed beneath and no evidence of laths showing walls never plastered. Simple low skirting in-situ. Simpler door surrounds.
- S6** 6-light sashes to N and S. Chunky ceiling joists.

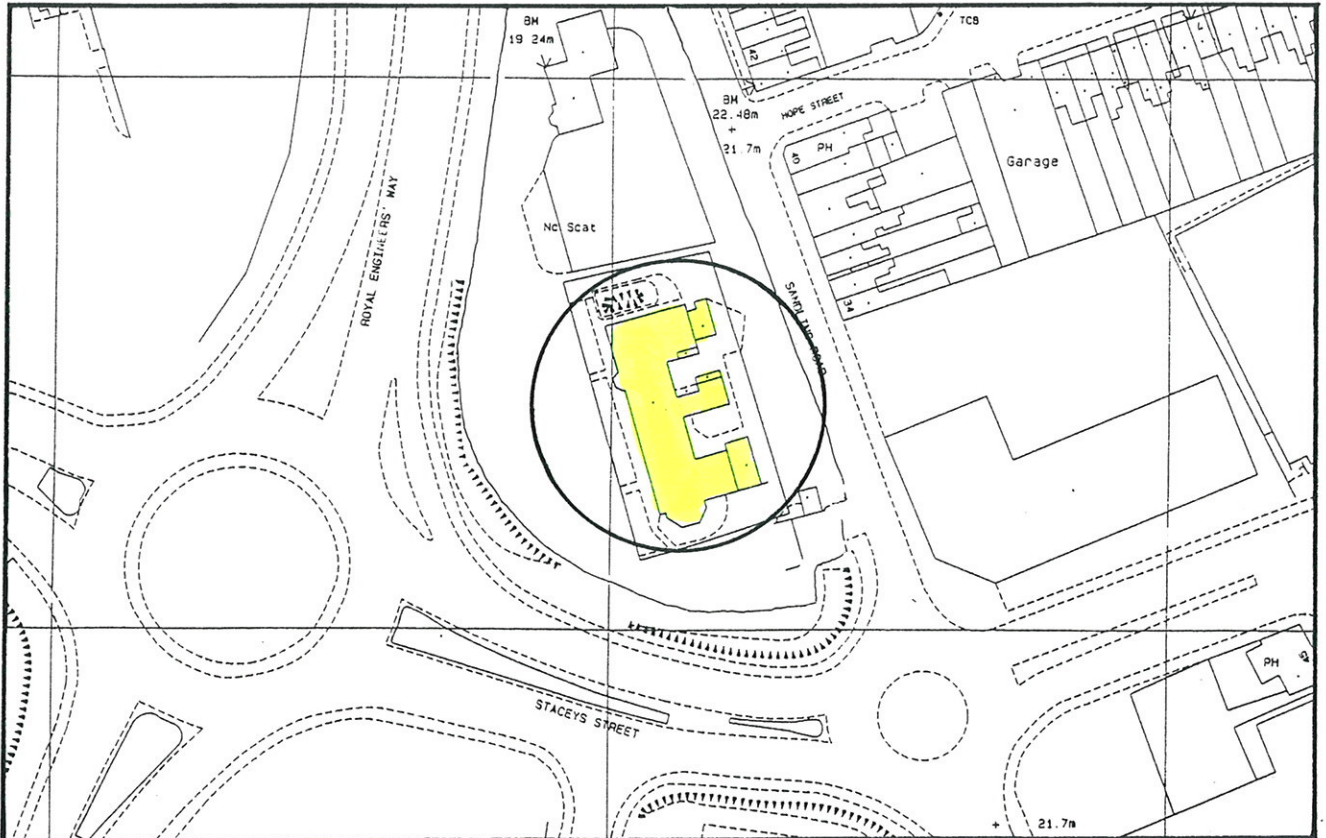
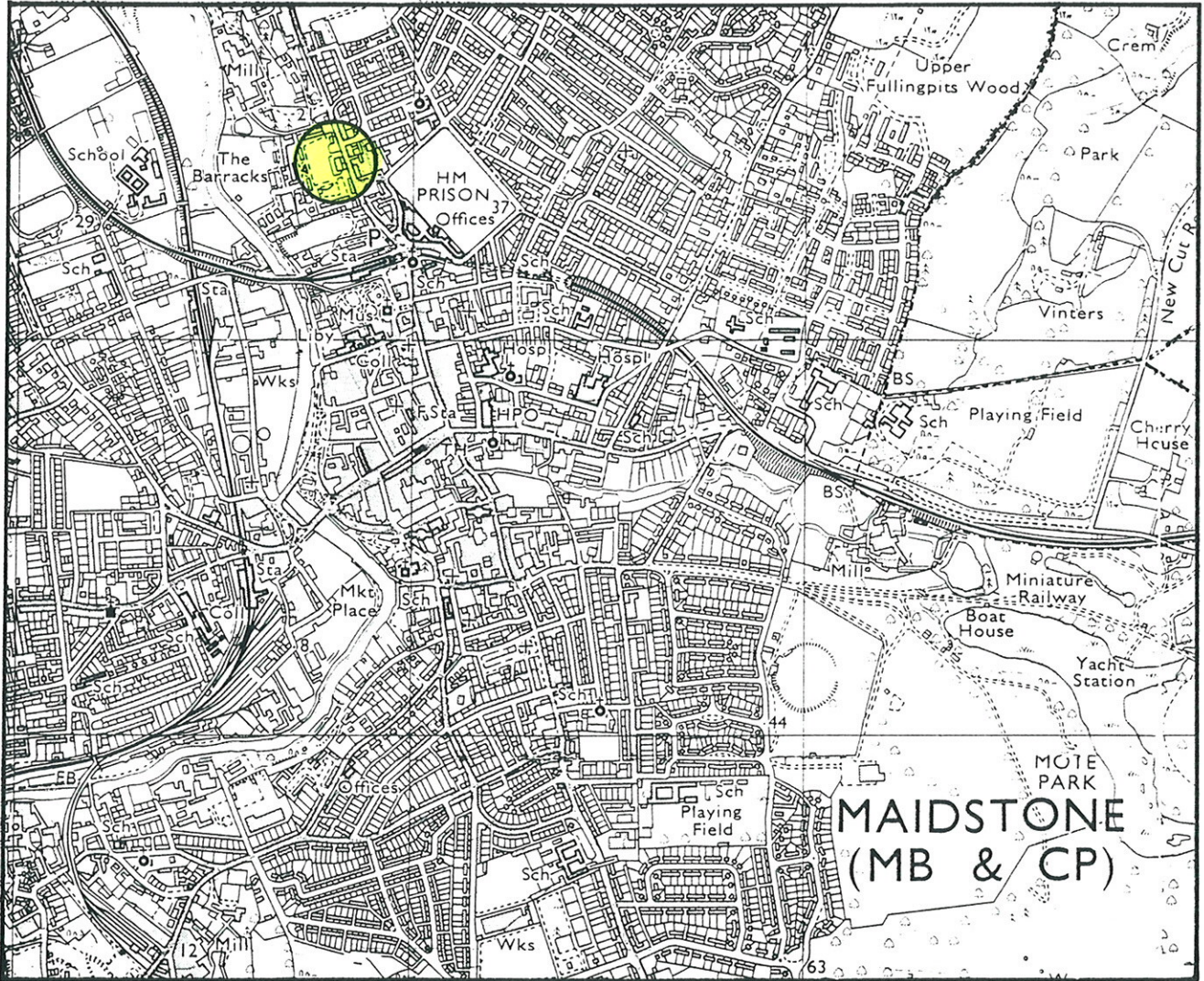


Figure 1 Site location



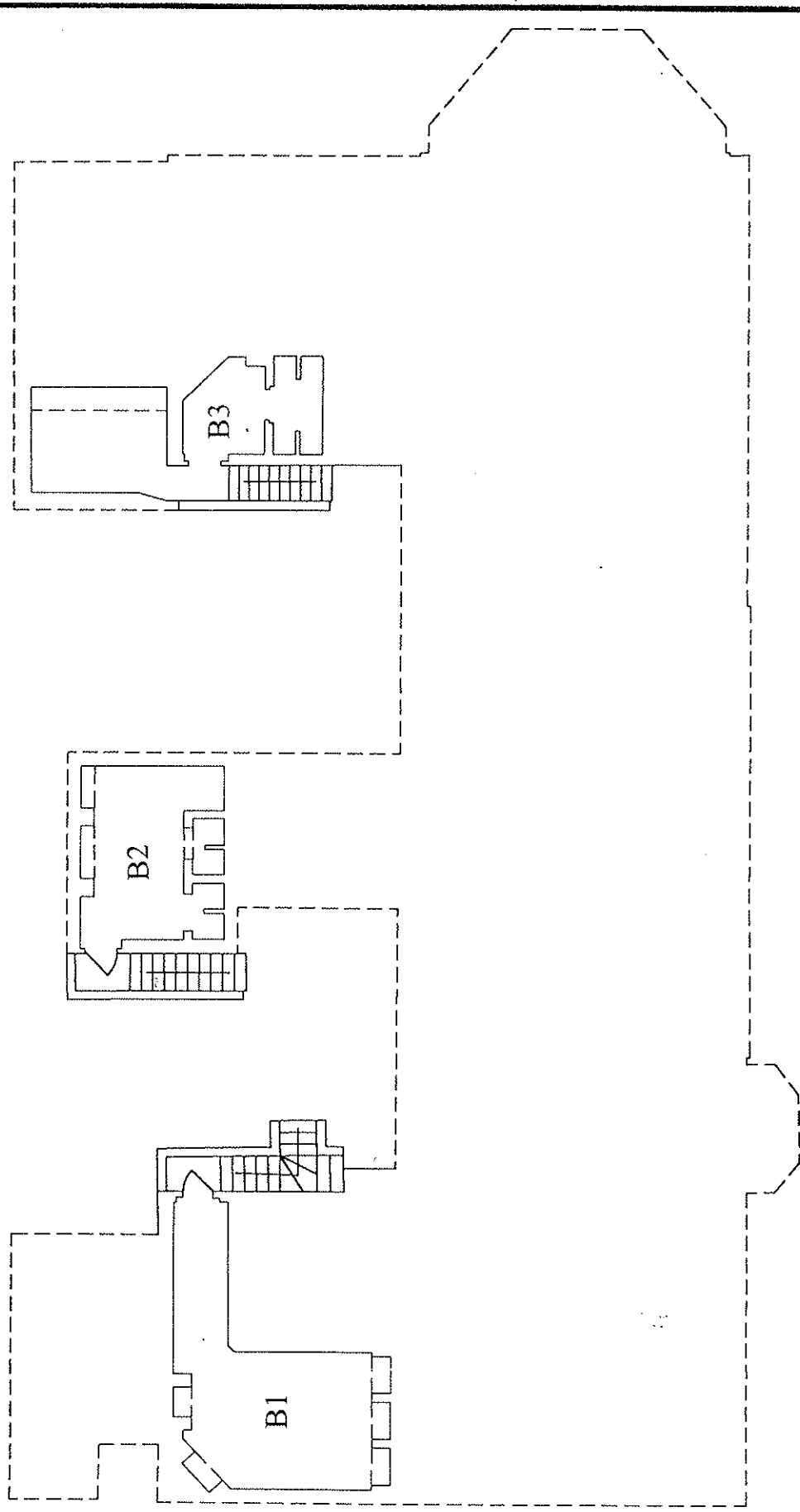
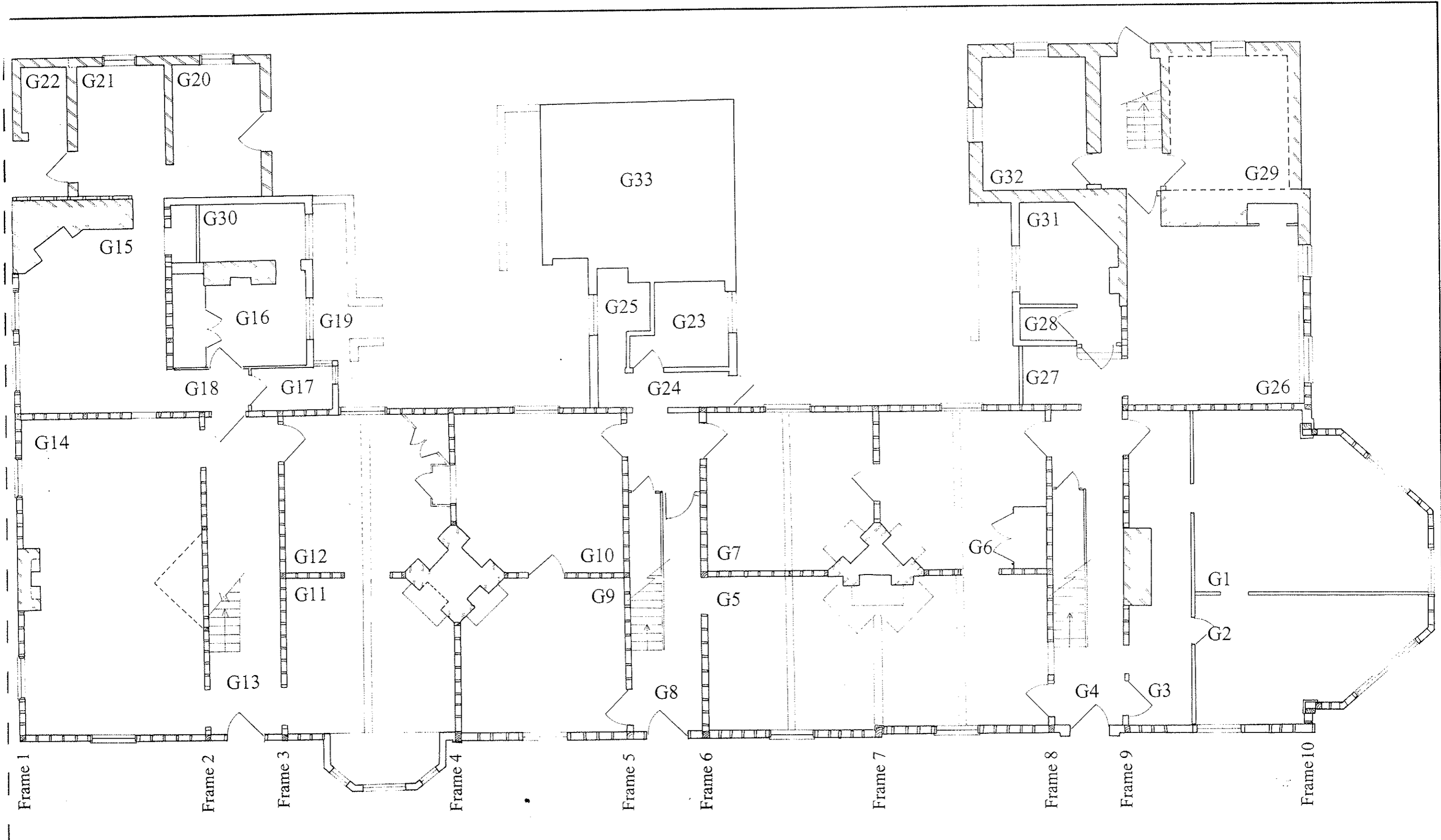
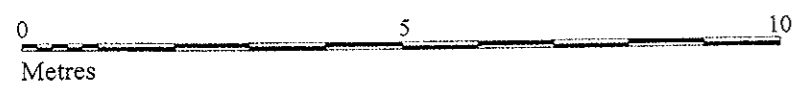


FIGURE 2 Basement plan

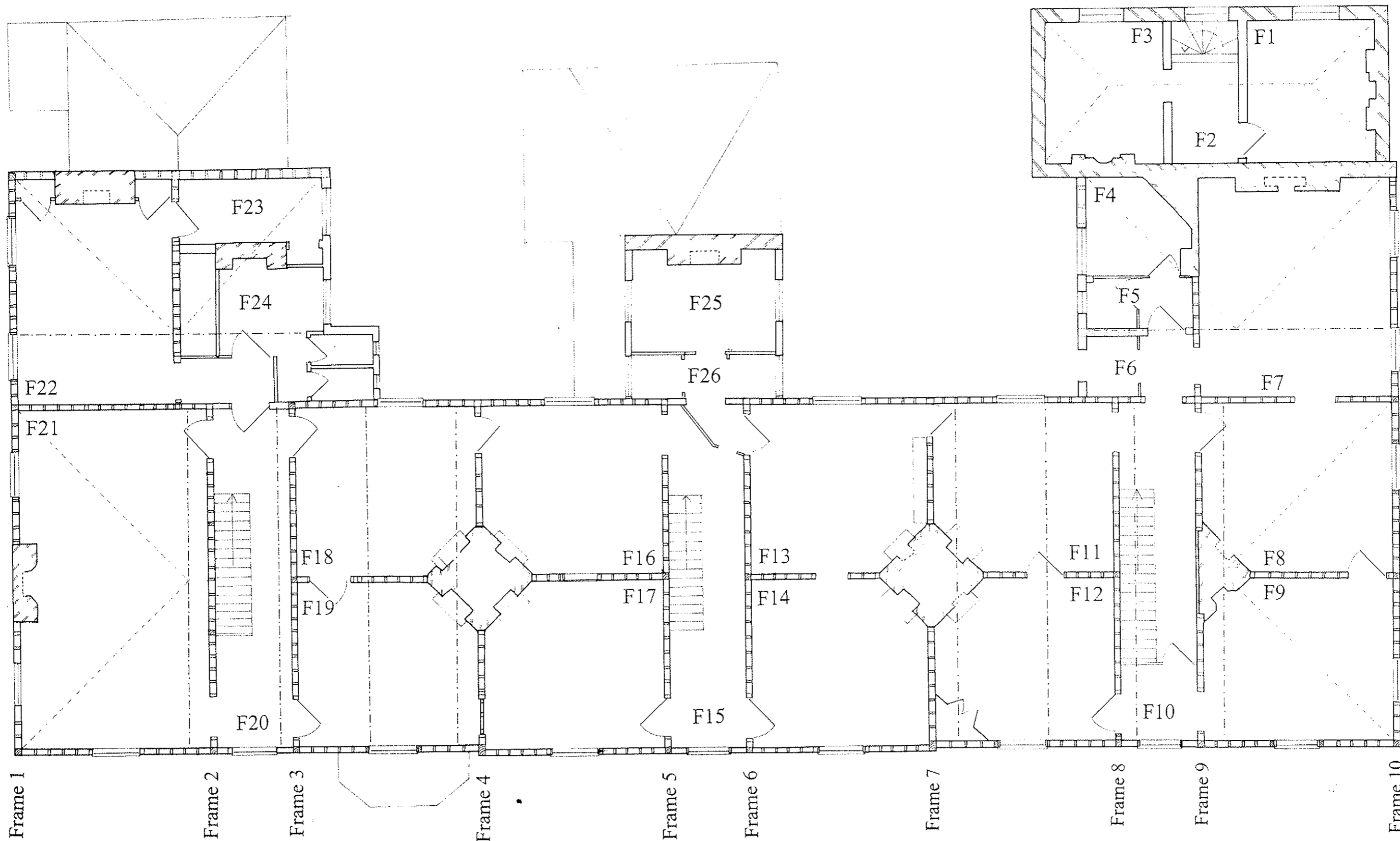


# Ground floor

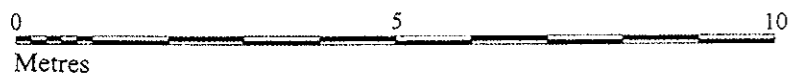


Brick  
Concrete infill

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THE WHITE HOUSE, MAIDSTONE  
**FIGURE 3: Ground floor plan**  
Survey: Feb 2000. Scale: 1:50 at A1

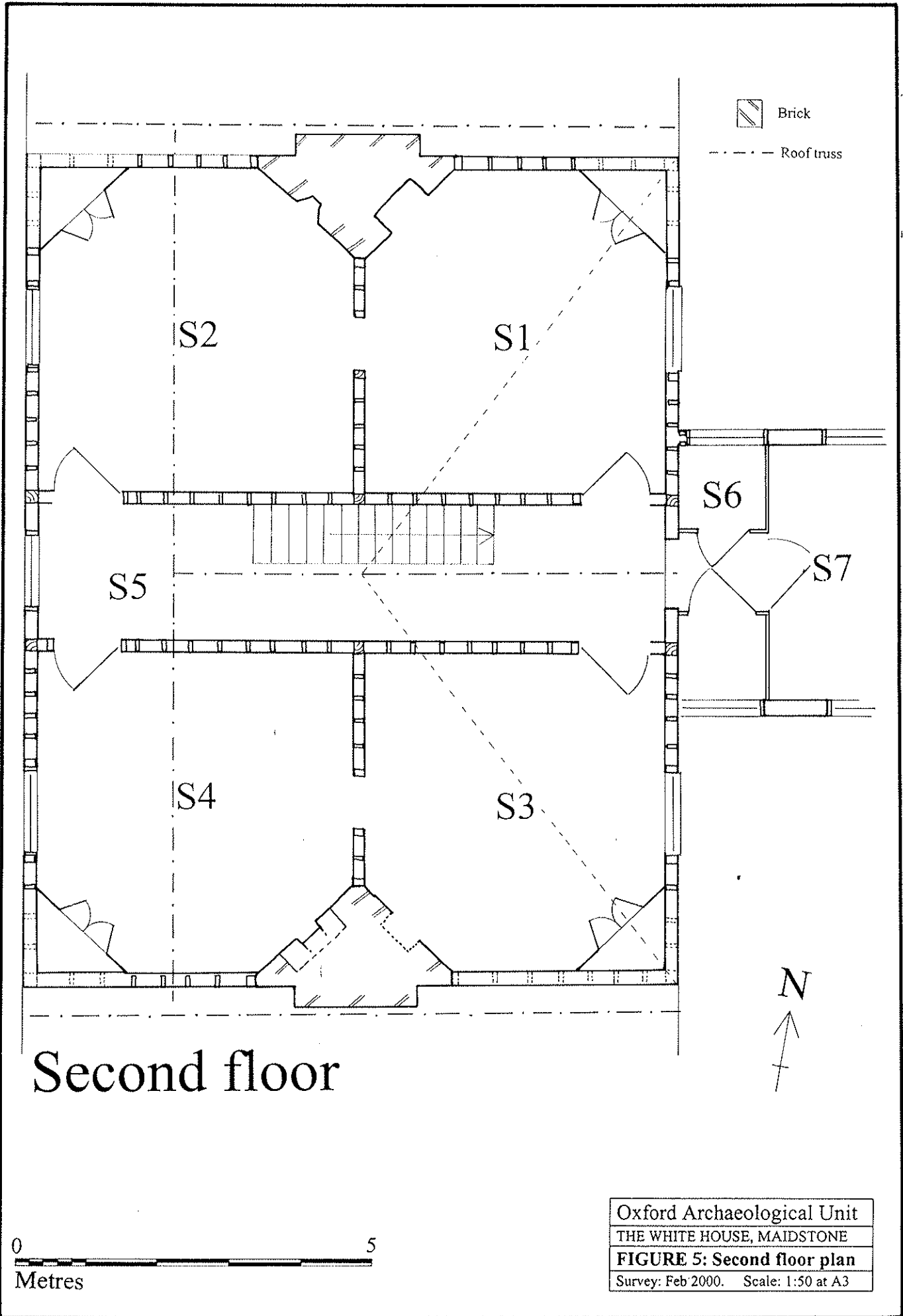


# First floor

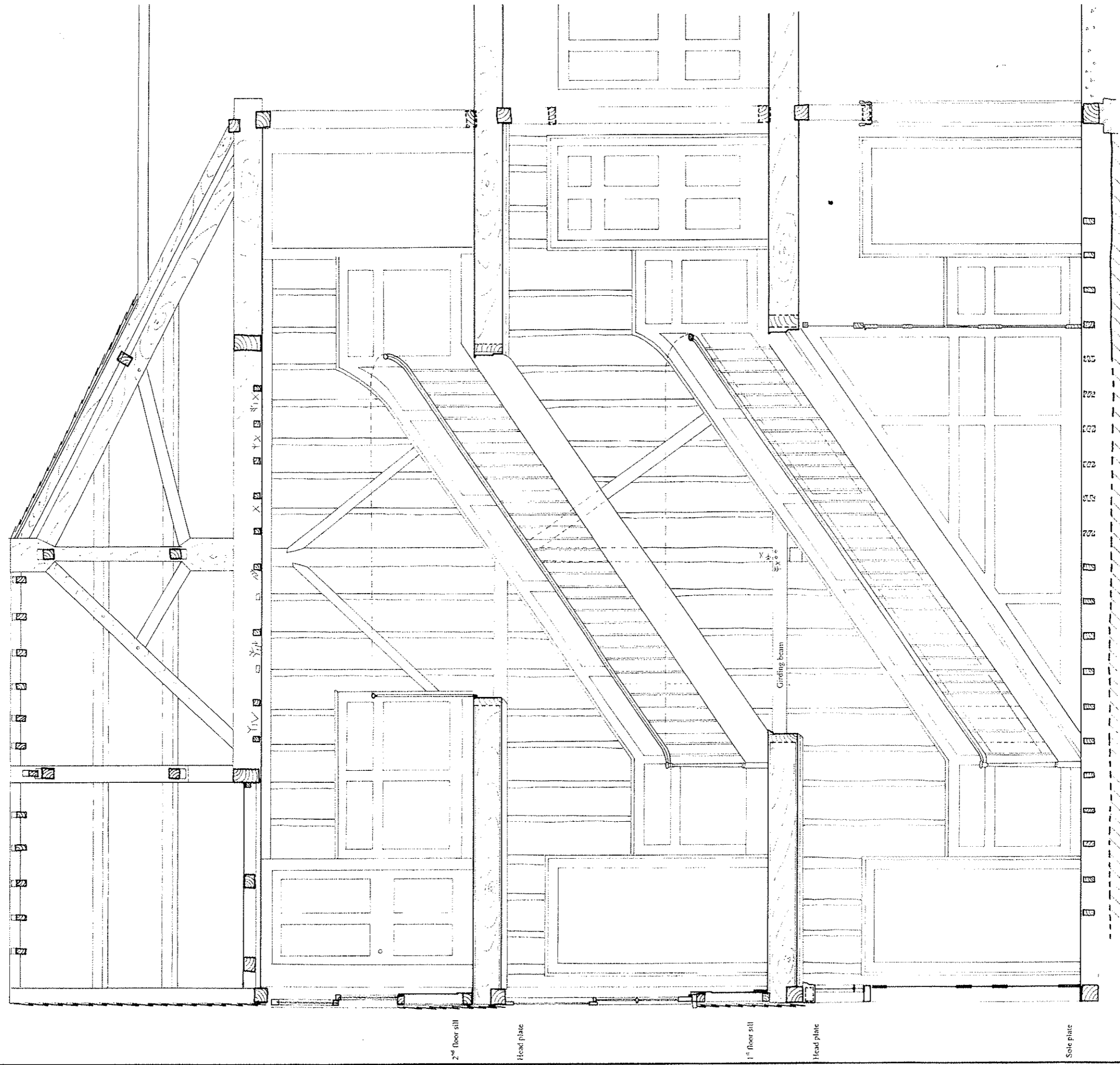


Brick  
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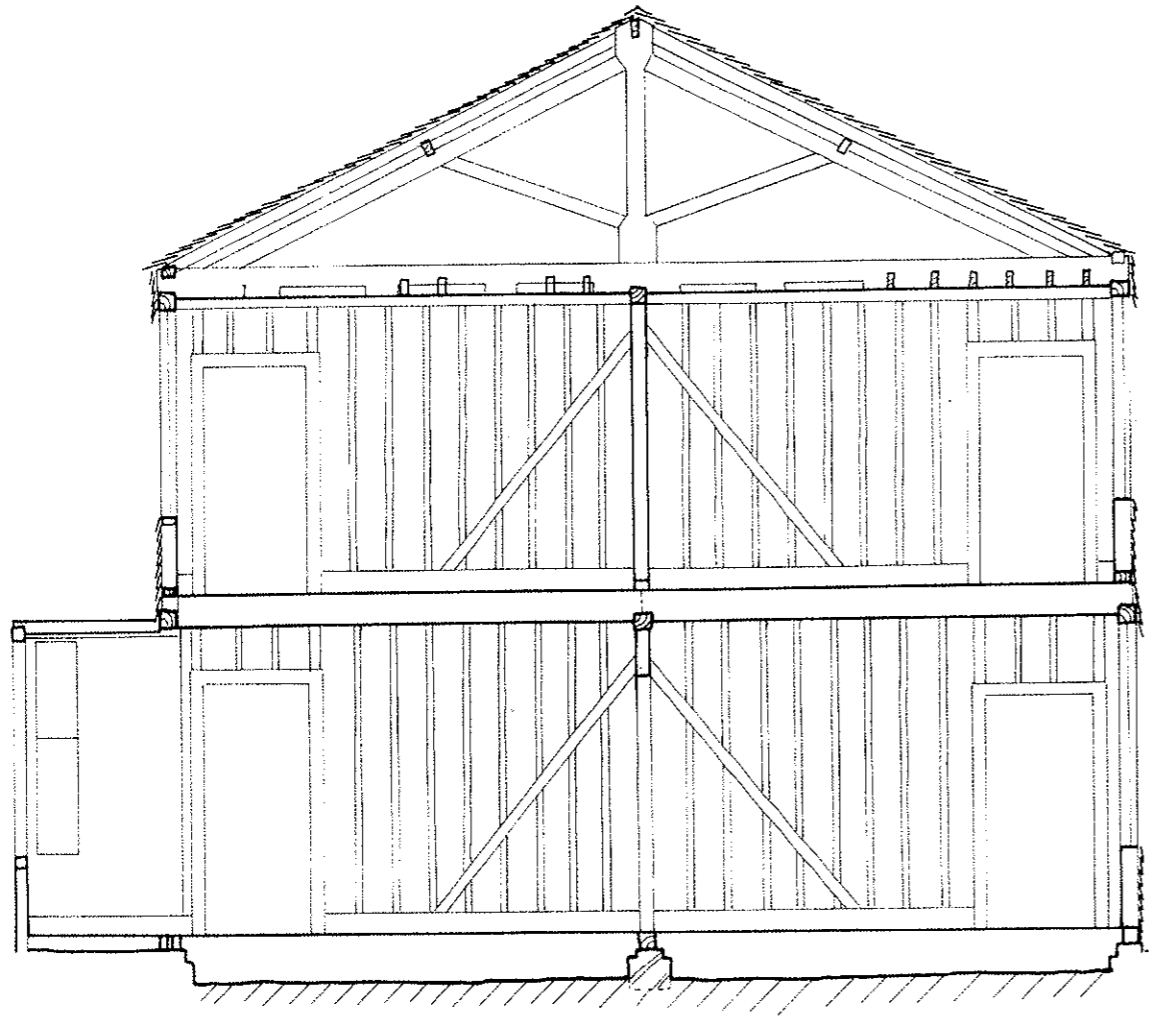
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 THE WHITE HOUSE, MAIDSTONE  
**FIGURE 4: First floor plan**  
 Survey: Feb 2000. Scale: 1:50 at A1



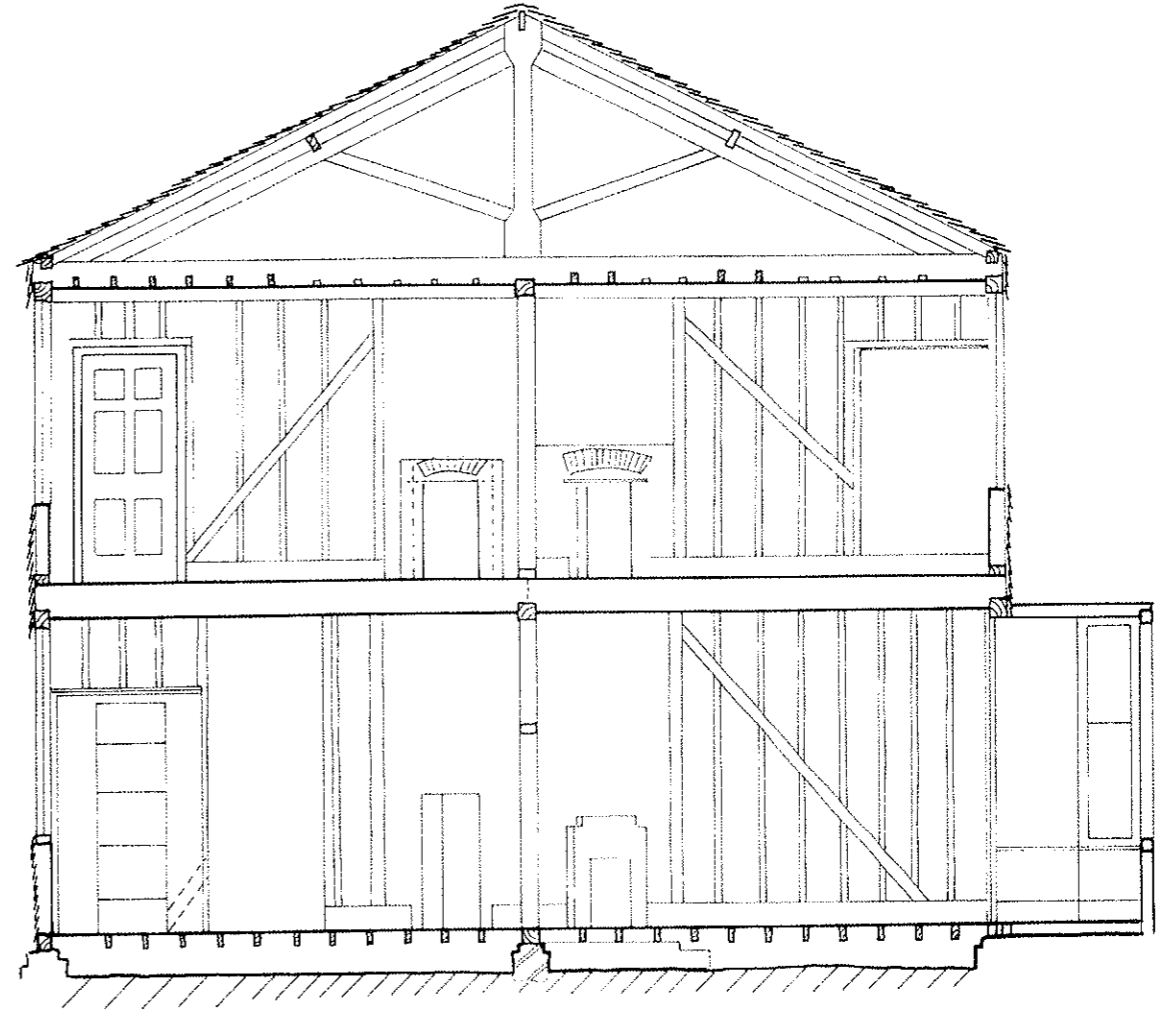
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THE WHITE HOUSE, MAIDSTONE
<b>FIGURE 5: Second floor plan</b>
Survey: Feb 2000. Scale: 1:50 at A3



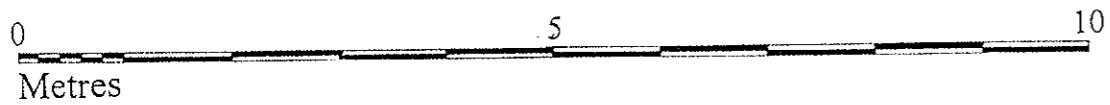
Frame 5 (looking north)



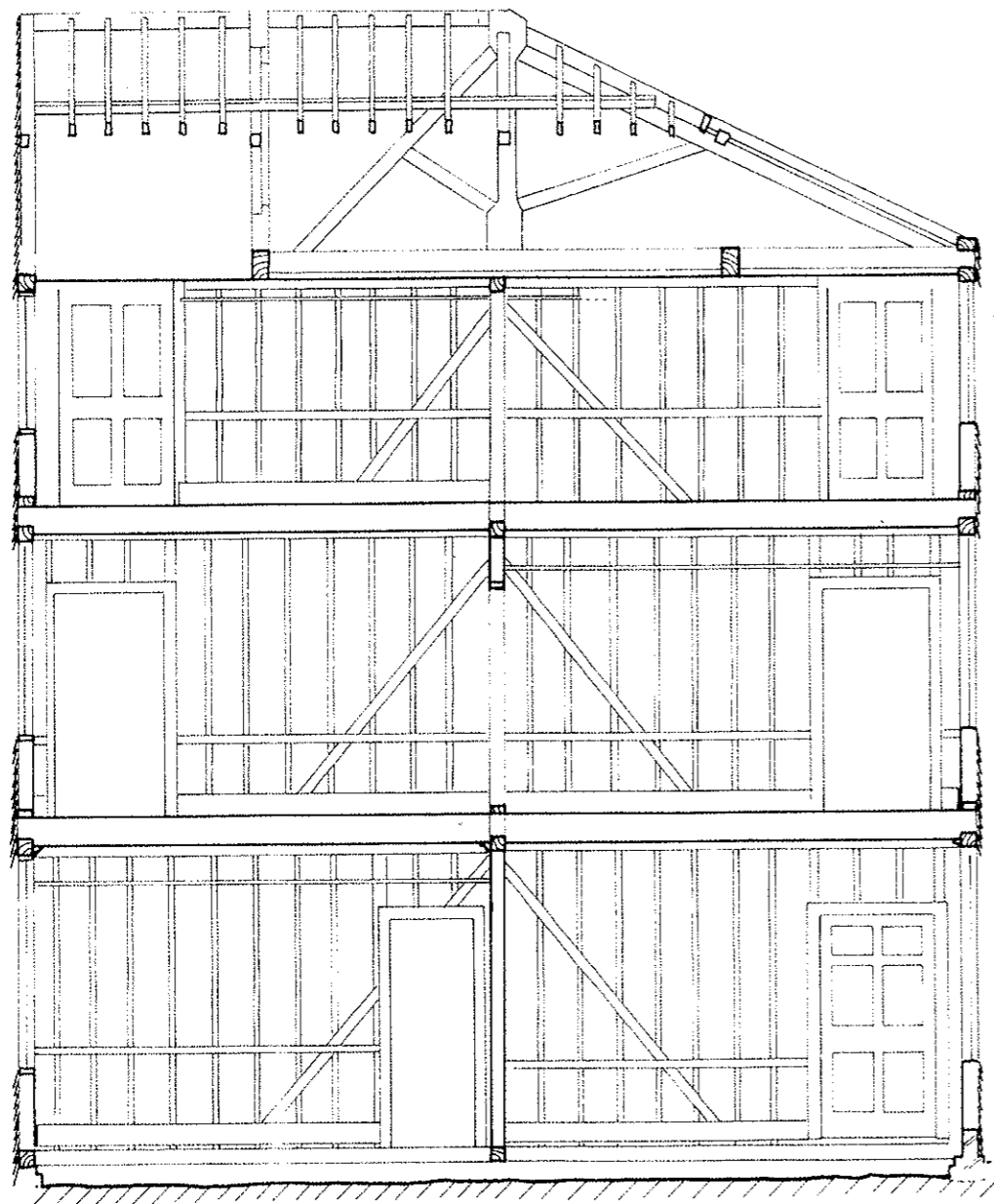
Frame 3 (looking north)



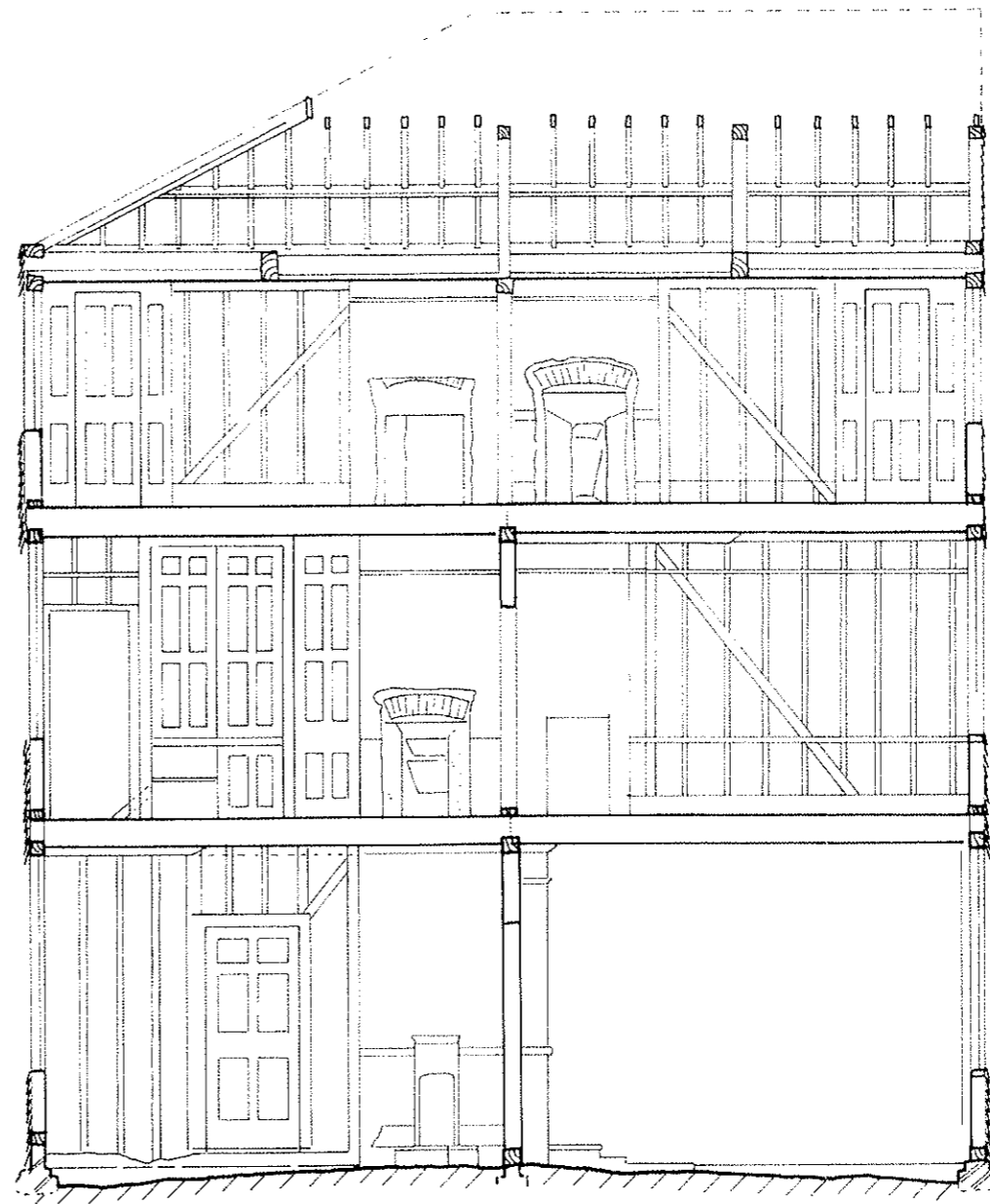
Frame 4 (looking south)



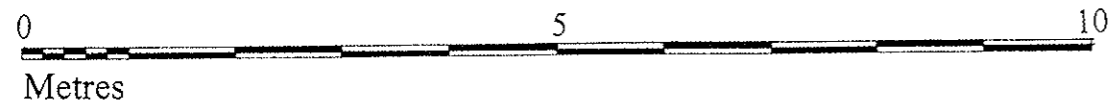
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<b>FIGURE 7: Cross-frames 3 + 4</b>
Survey: Feb 2000. Scale: 1:50 at A2



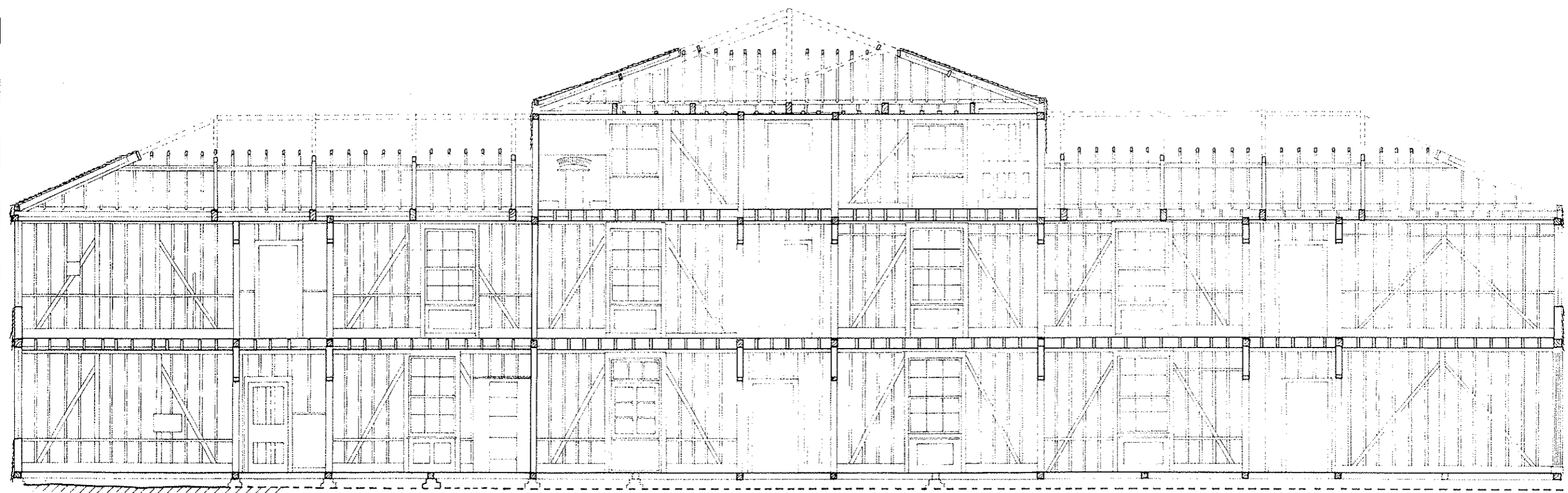
Frame 6 (looking north)



Frame 7 (looking south)



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**FIGURE 8: Cross-frames 6 + 7**  
 Survey: Feb 2000. Scale: 1:50 at A2



East Frame

0 5 10  
Metres

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FIG 9: East wall-frame looking east  
Survey: Feb 2000. Scale: 1:50 at A1



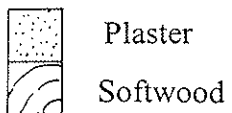
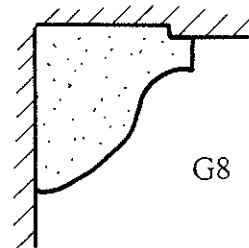
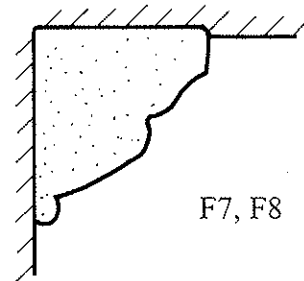
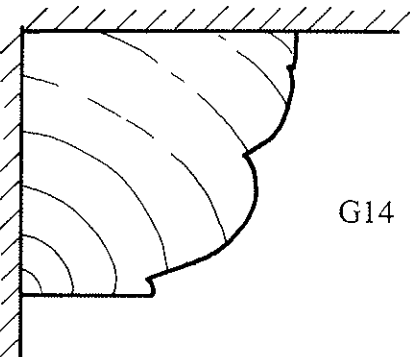
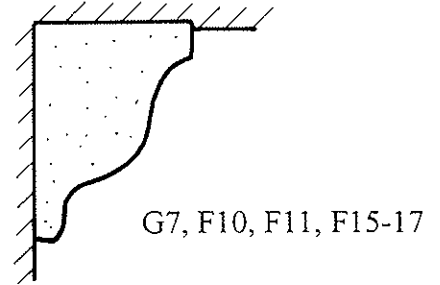
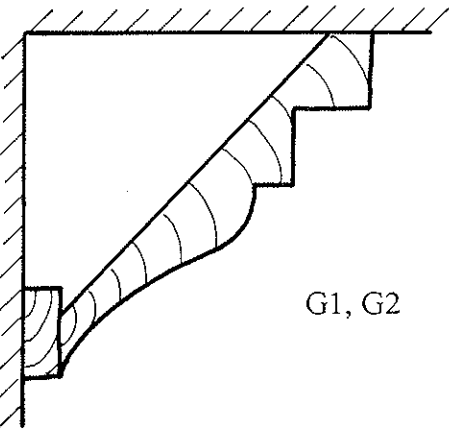
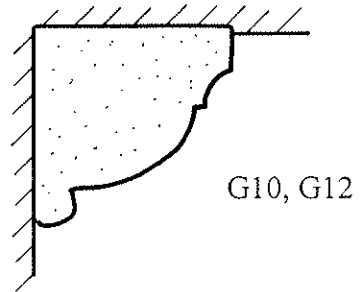
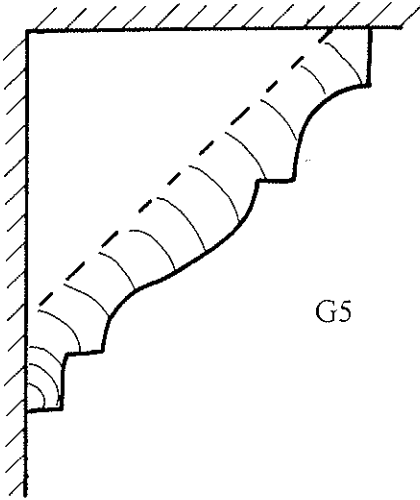
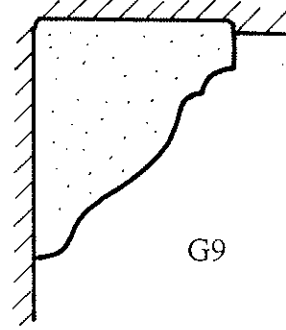
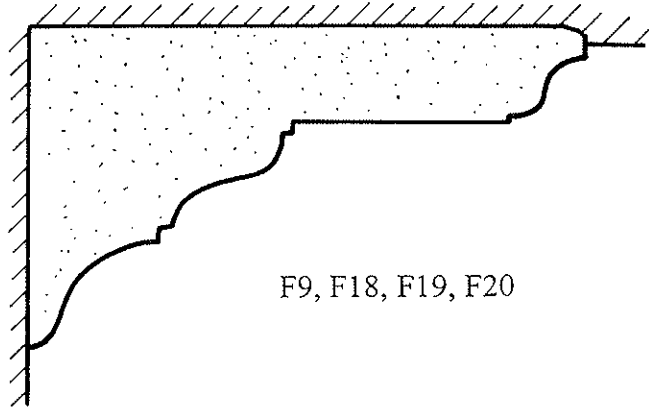


Figure 10 Cornice profiles



Plate 1: General view from west

Plate 2: General view from east

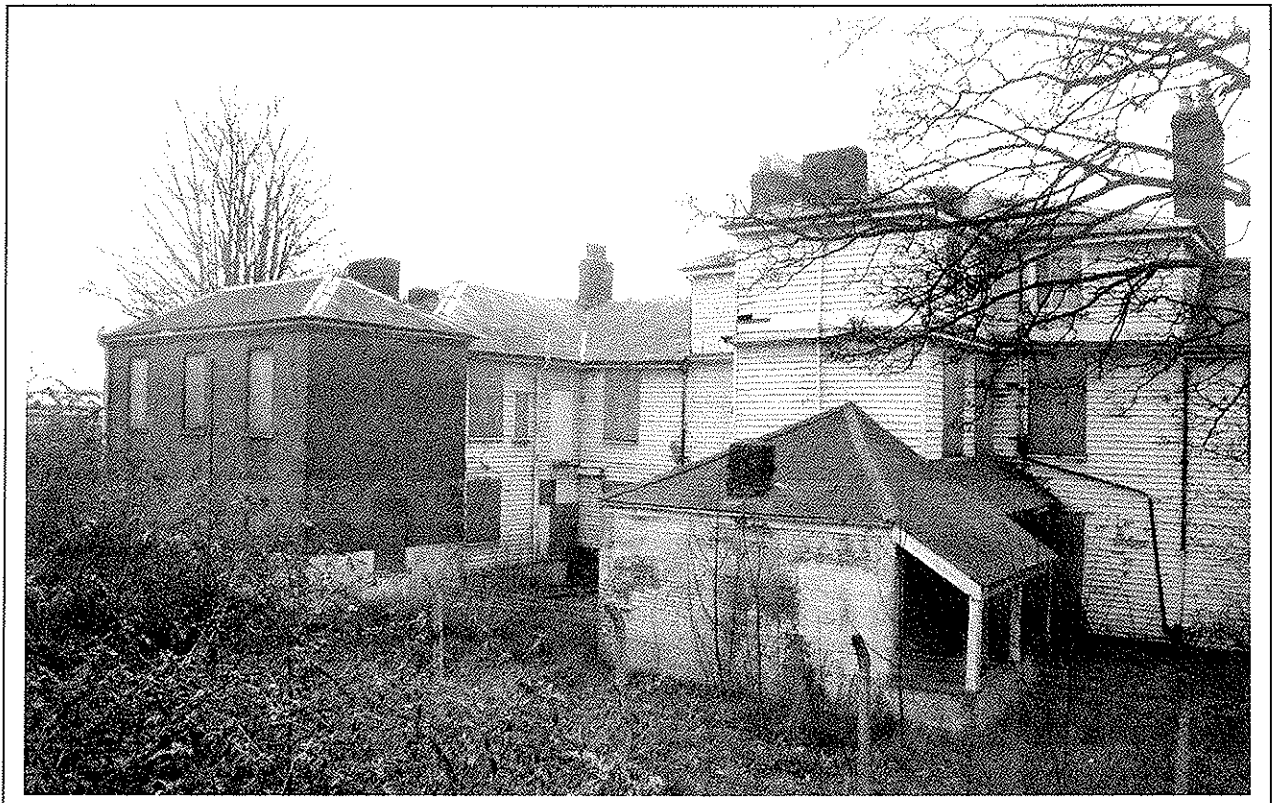




Plate 3: Foundations of corner fireplaces removed when G5 created

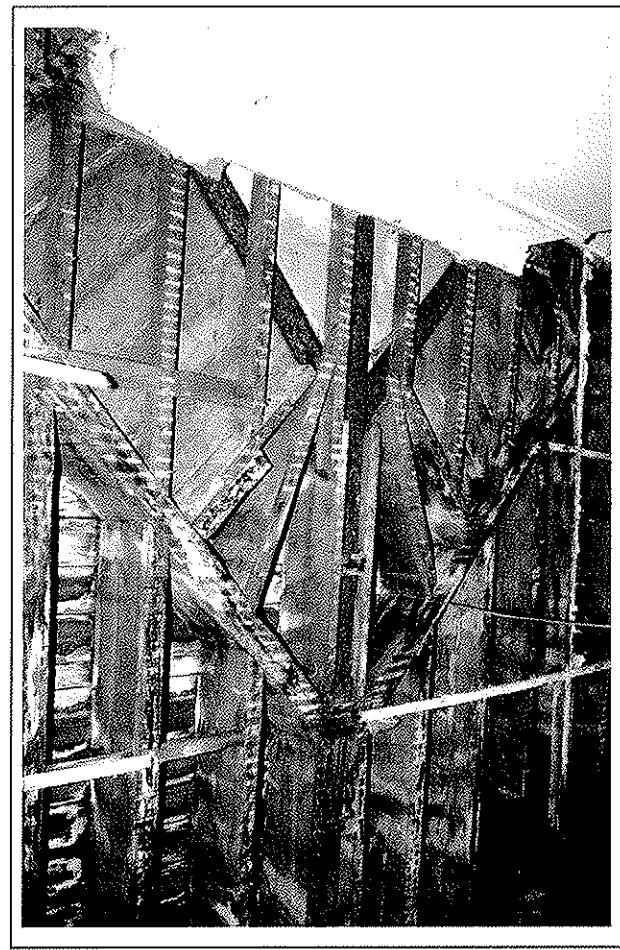


Plate 4: Support for first floor corner fireplaces visible within G5

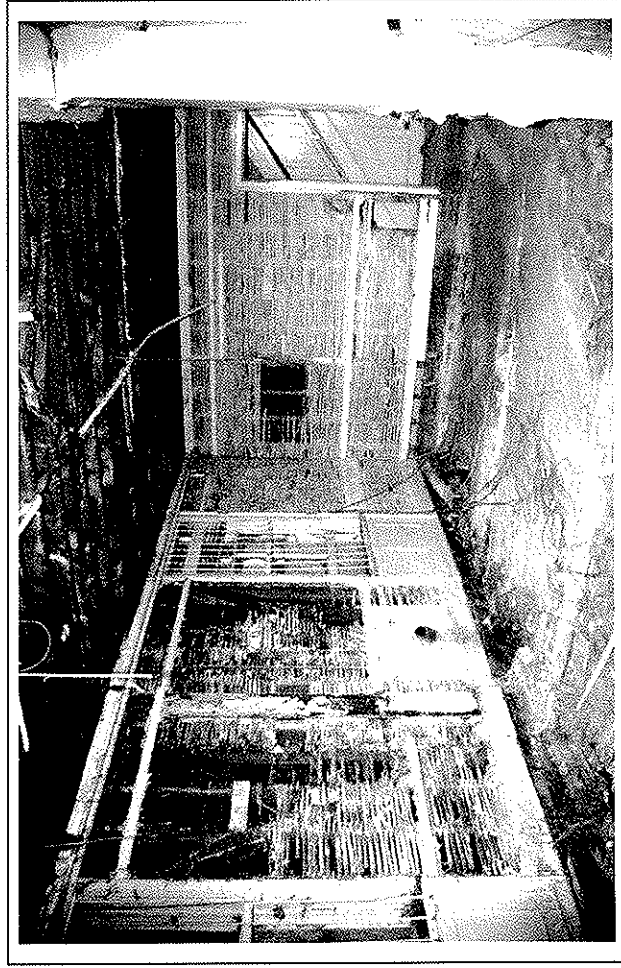


Plate 5: General view within G5

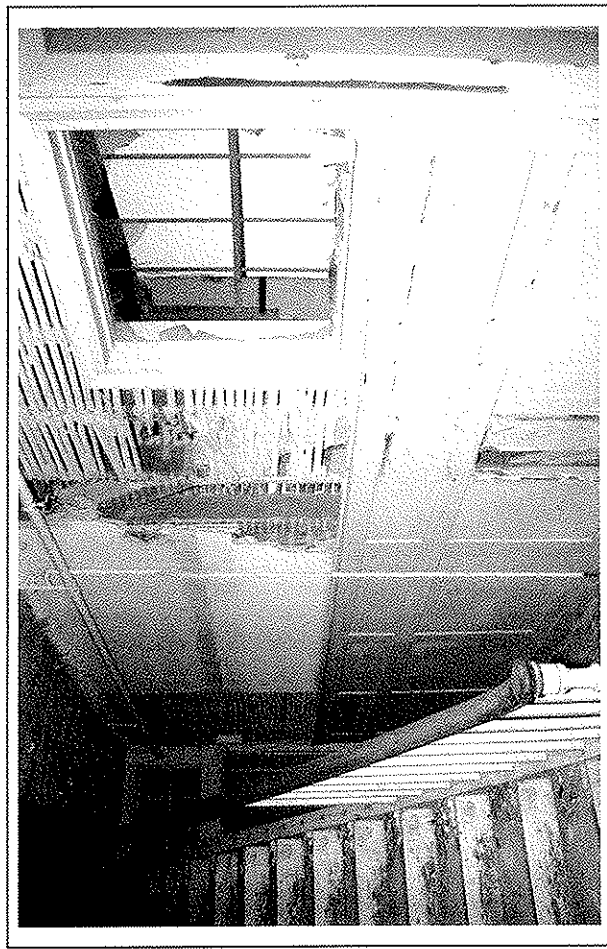


Plate 6: View within G4

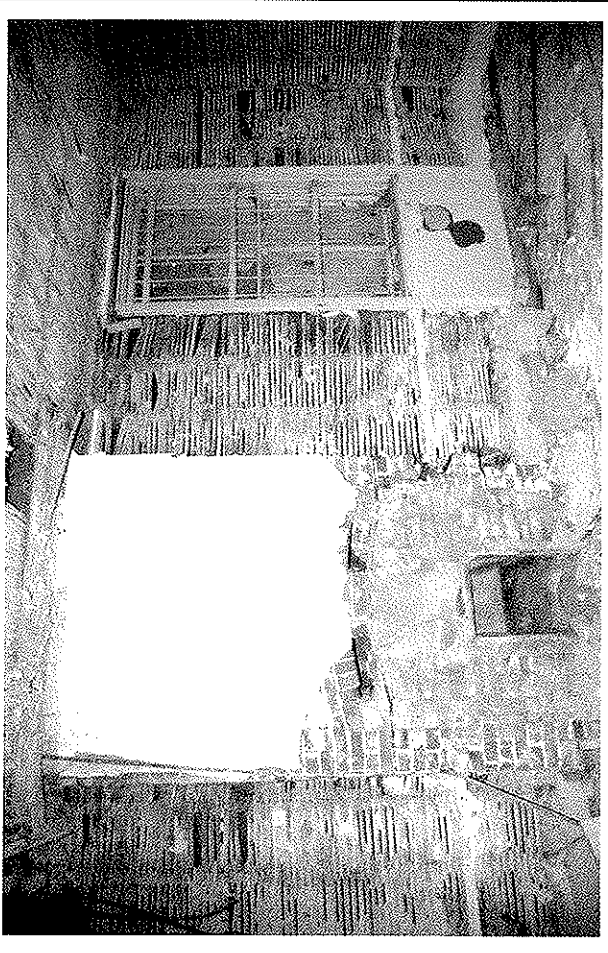


Plate 7: General shot within G14 showing secondary chimney breast



Plate 8: Exposed floor within G11

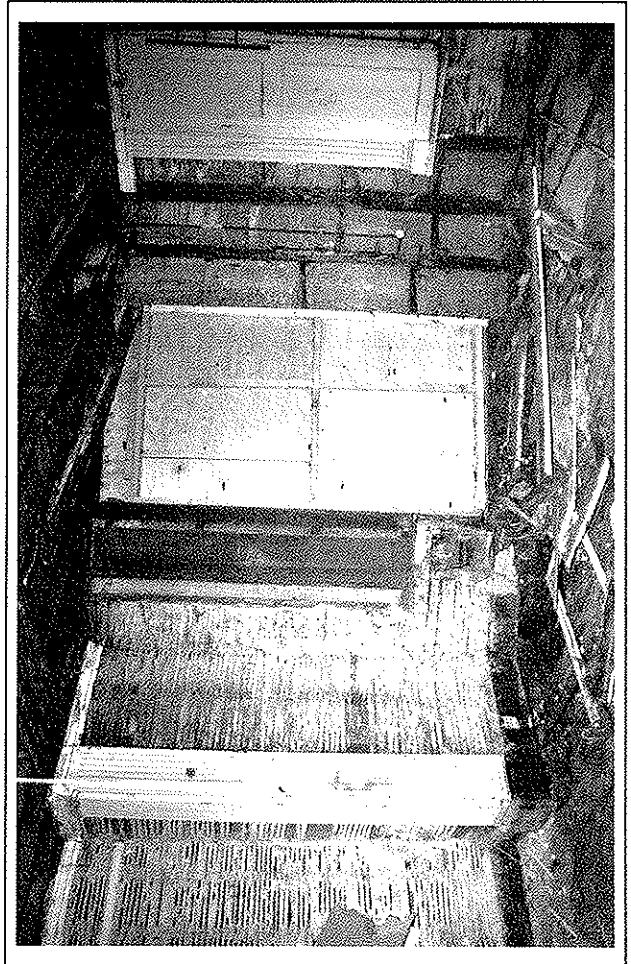


Plate 9: General view within G1



Plate 10: Structural joint at first floor within Frame 5



Plate 11: Door within G13

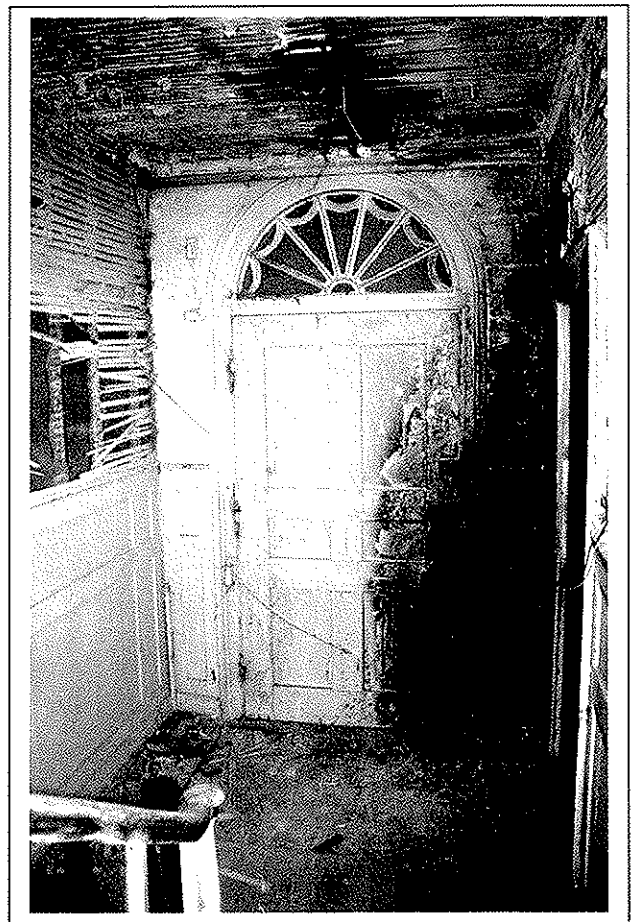


Plate 12: Door within G8

Plate 13: Door within G4

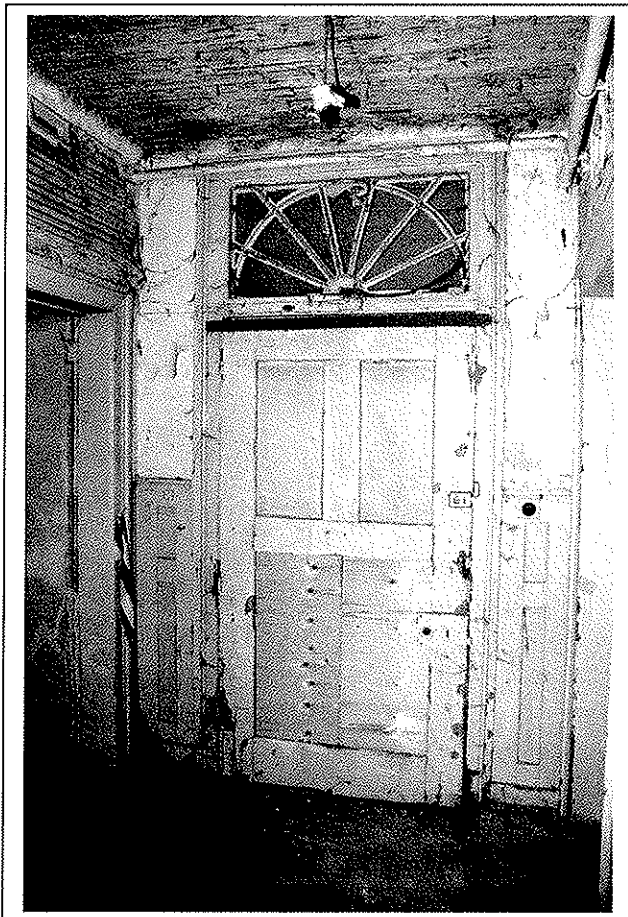


Plate 14: Staircase within G13

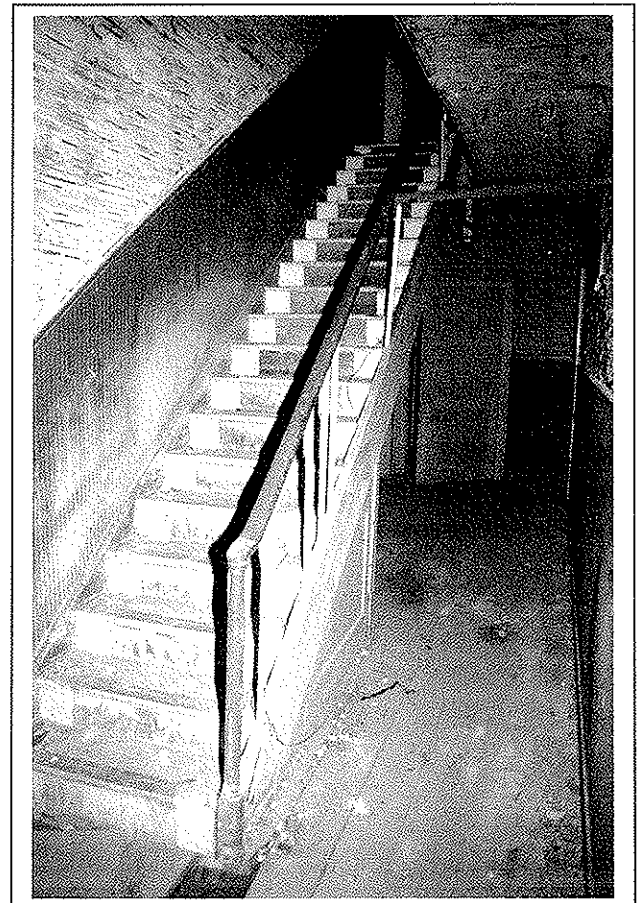




Plate 15: Central staircase at ground floor

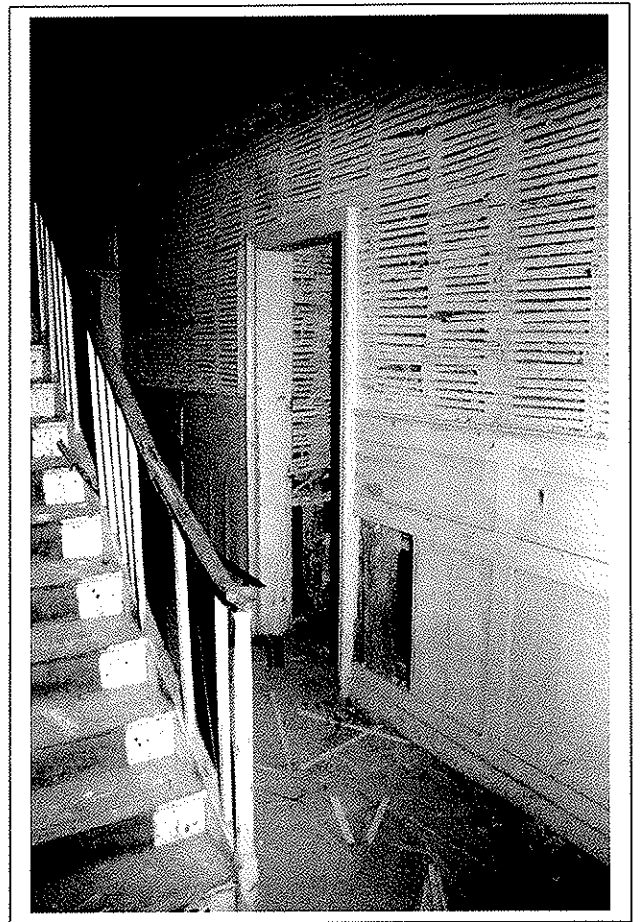
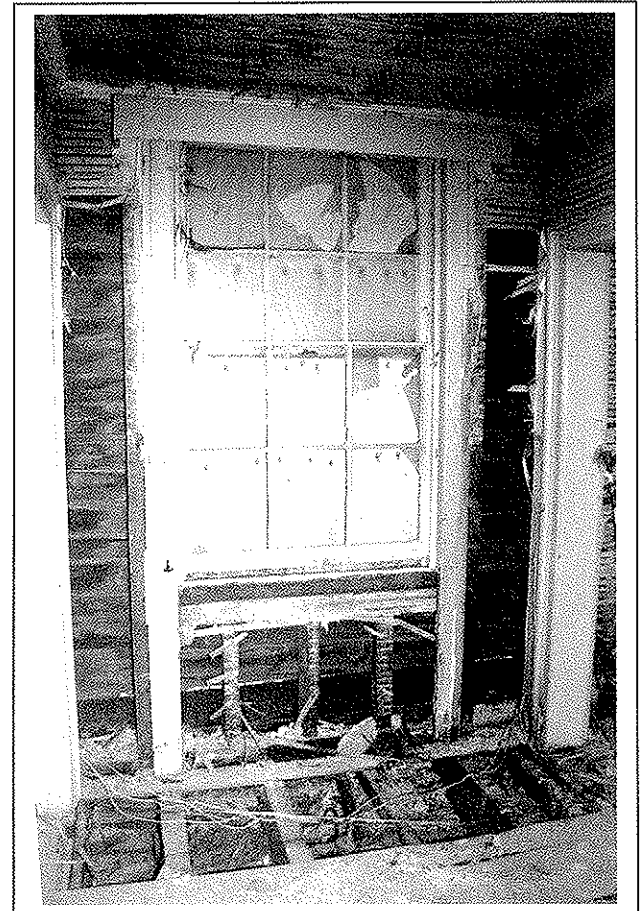
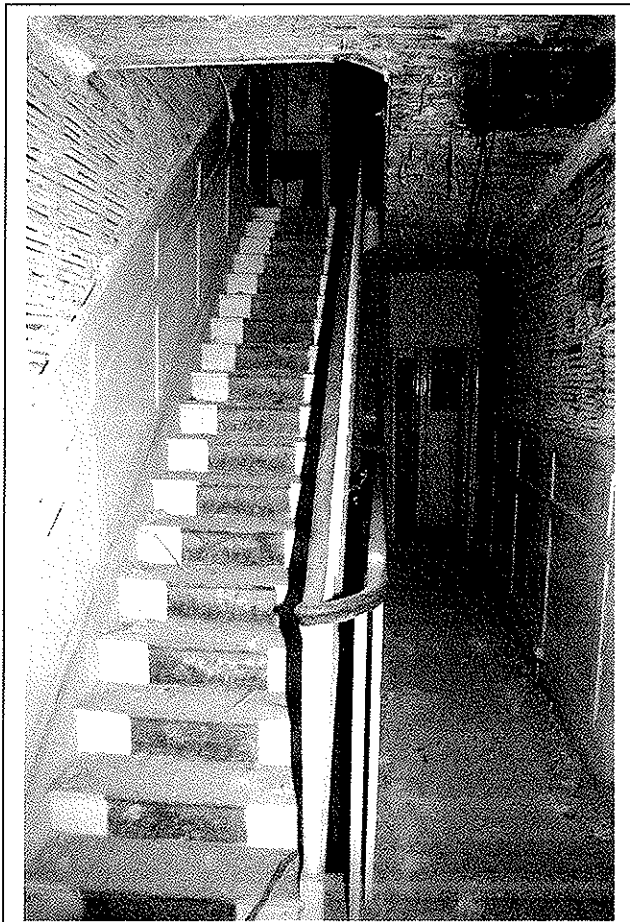


Plate 16: General view within G8

Plate 17: Central stairs at first floor (F15)

Plate 18: Window within F15



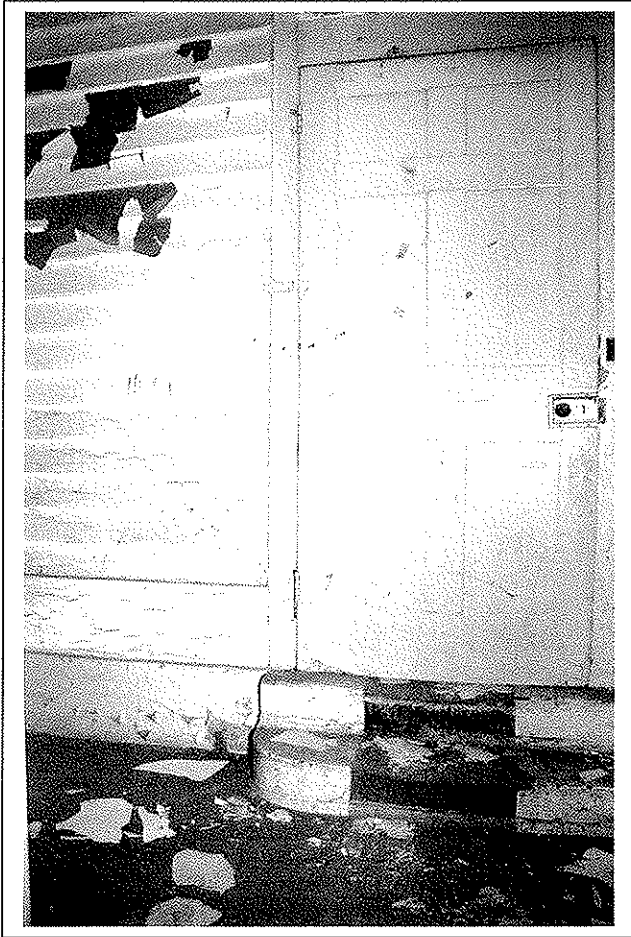


Plate 19: Steps and formerly external weatherboarding within G27

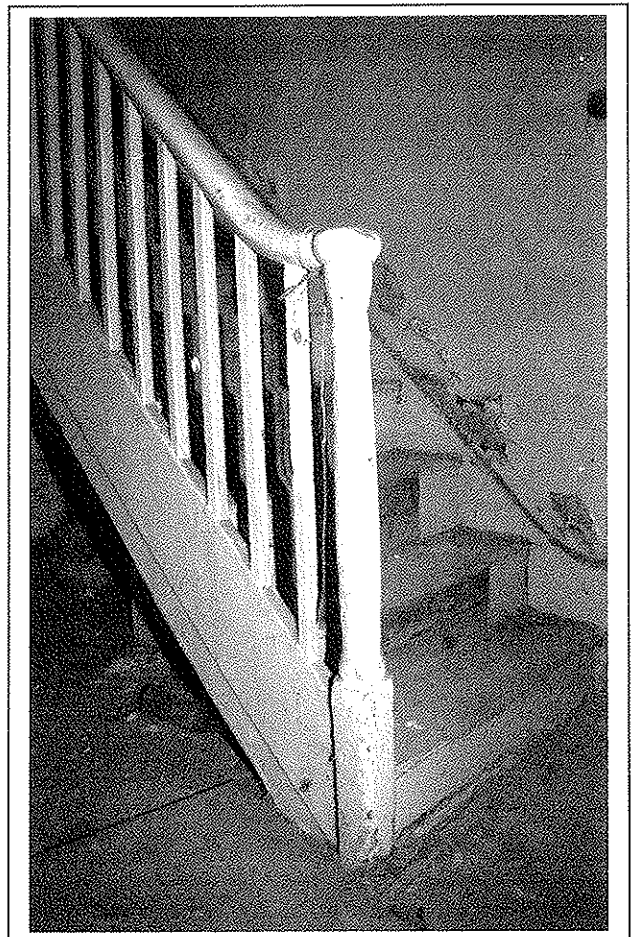
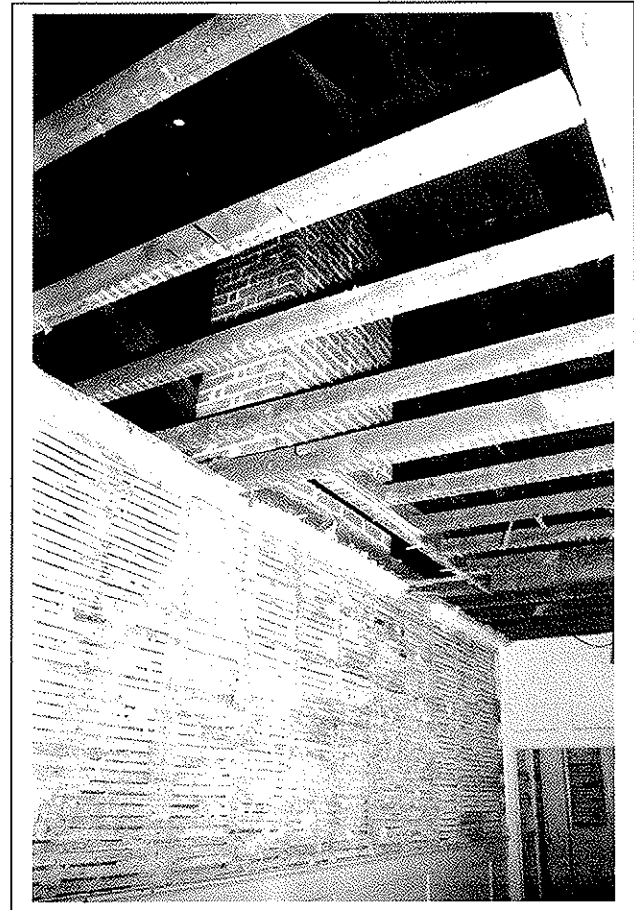


Plate 20: Newel post at foot of stairs within eastern projection

Plate 21: Newel post within F21



Plate 22: Trimming around chimney in F10



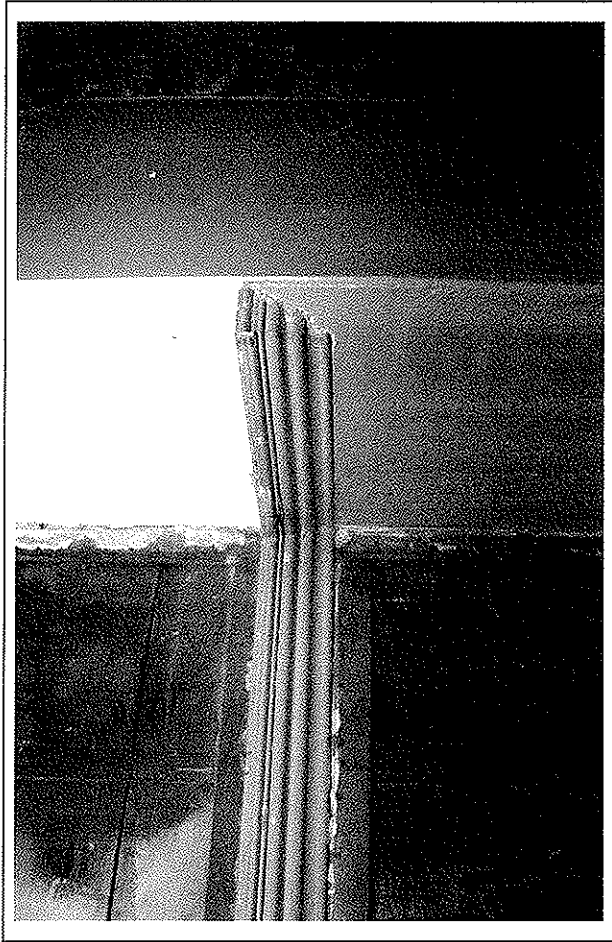


Plate 24: Dado within F21

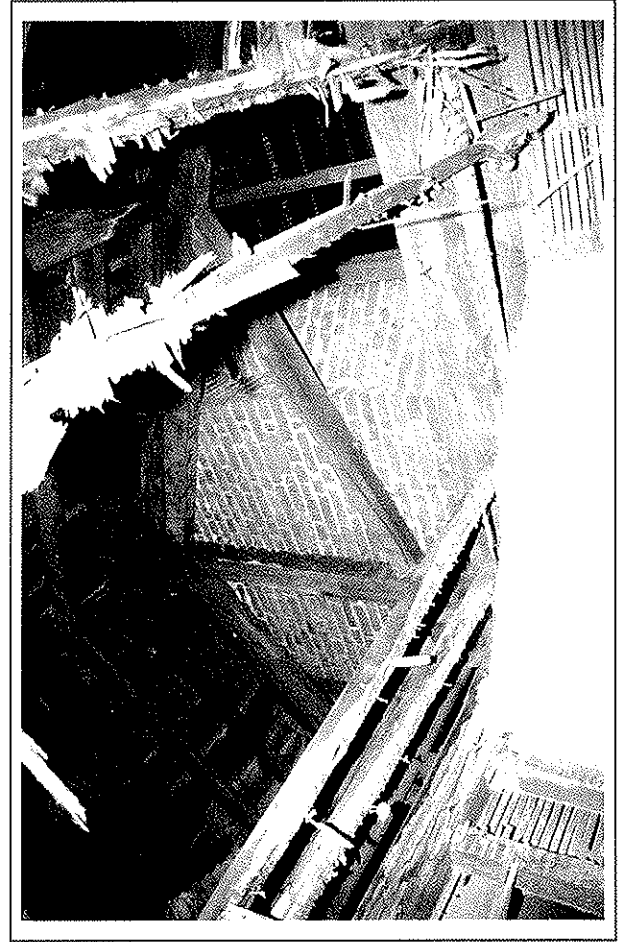


Plate 26: Chimney breast visible from within F19

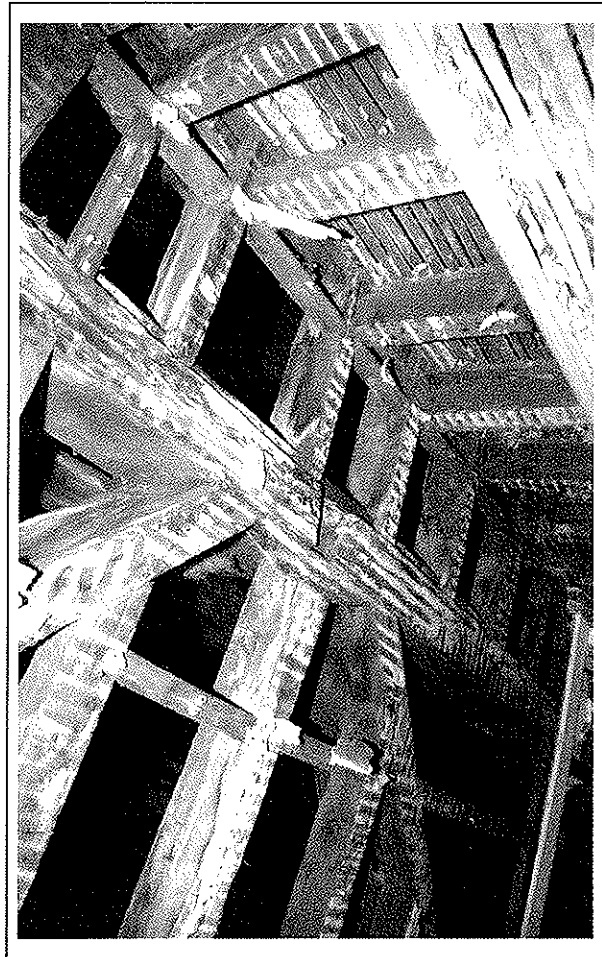


Plate 23: Detail within ceiling above F21 at former location of chimney



Plate 25: Trimming within ceiling above F20 suggesting former chimney



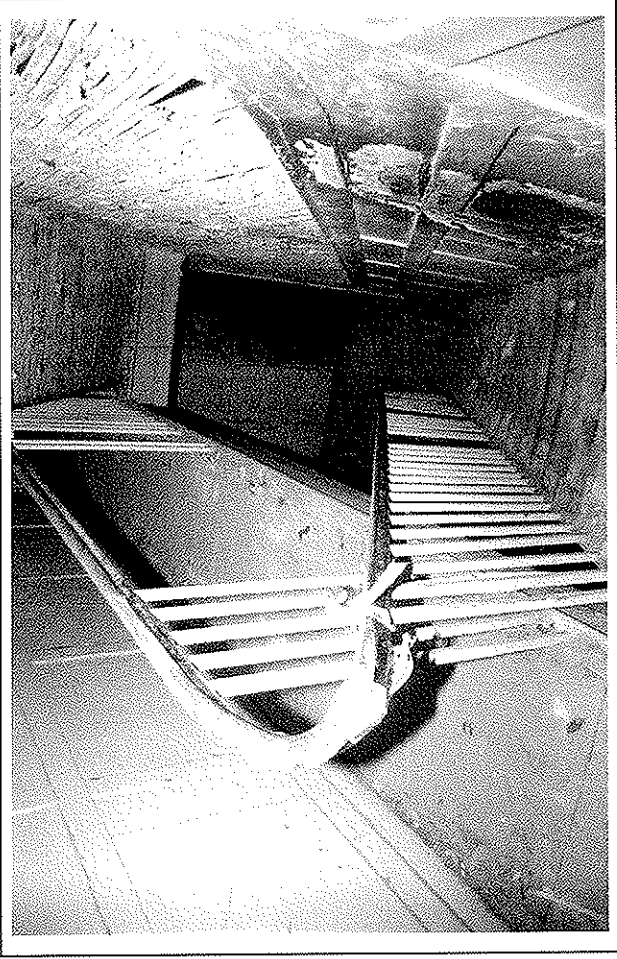


Plate 27: Central staircase from first floor

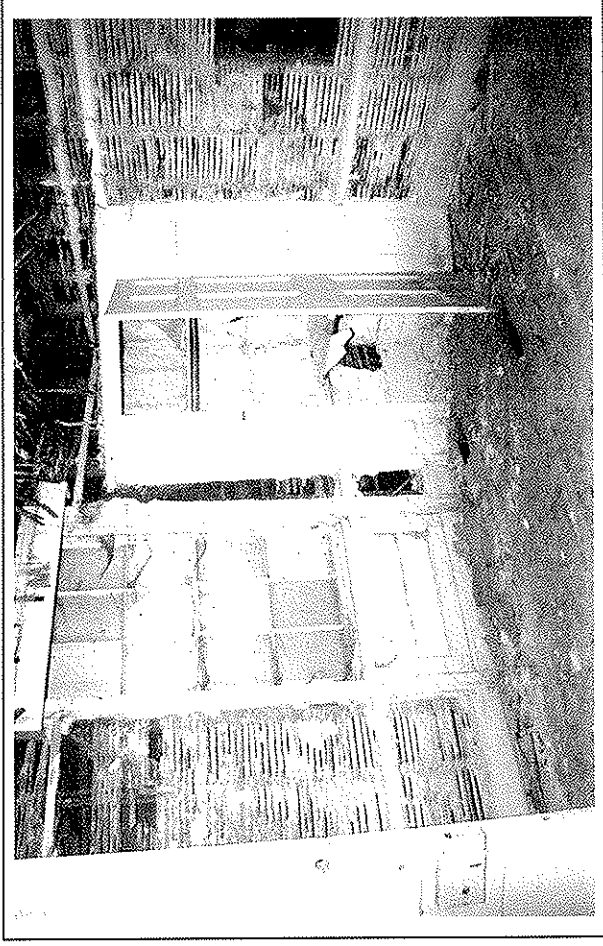


Plate 28: General shot within F12



Plate 29: View from within S2 of adjacent roof space



Plate 30: Eaves detail within roof space adjacent to S2



Plate 31: Bottles laid against foundation within G14



Plate 32 : Slate damp proof course between sole plate and brick foundation within G10

Plate 33: Exposed trimmers within G15 supporting hearth

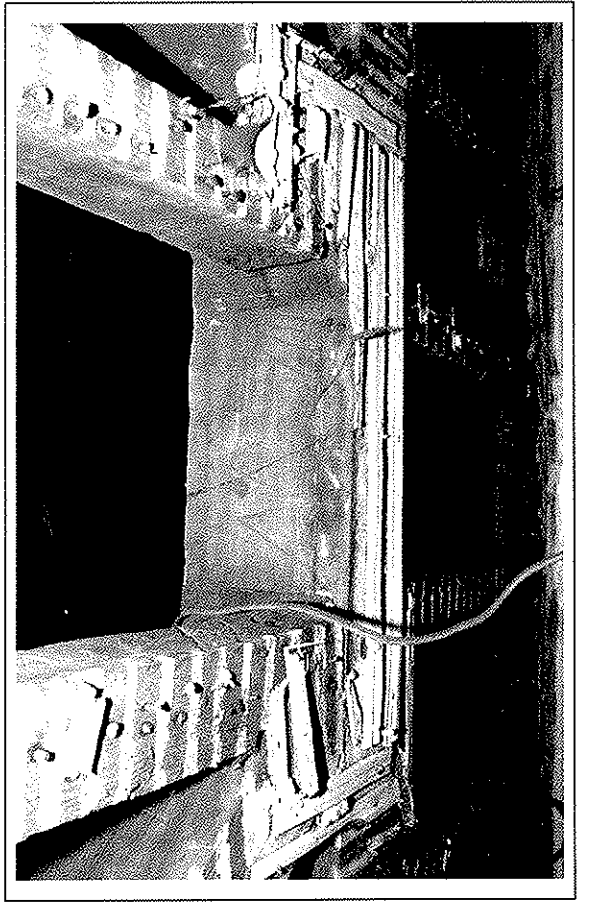
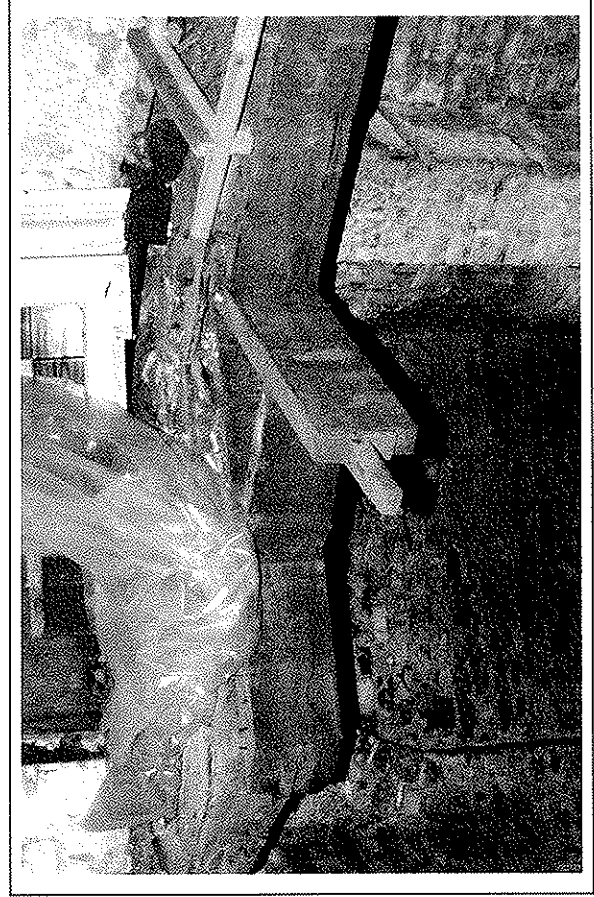


Plate 34: Inscribed carpenter's marks on south face of tie beam.



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