

SS/V
S/2380

SURVEY by Somerset and South Avon Vernacular Building Research Group

The Treasurer's House, Martock

June 1986

Survey by J & J Penoyre and
J Dallimore, by permission of
Cdr.G.I.Palmer and the National Trust.

Parish Martock
Grid ref. ST 4615 1920
Local Authority South Somerset District
Listed Grade

The house stands about 60m SE of All Saints Church across the road and comprises a double-height Hall running N-S, joined by a cross-passage to a 2-storey E-W wing at the S end with a First Floor Solar. A separate double-height Kitchen adjoins the Solar wing at the SW corner. There is a C19 addition at E end of Solar wing.

EXTERIOR

Walls: Rubble hamstone with ashlar dressings. All walls approx. 75 -78cms thick, except W wall of the Solar which is 90cms thick at ground level, to accommodate the later windows. Walls of the Kitchen, 65cms. There are low angle-buttresses at the N & W ends of the Hall and Solar wing respectively. Relieving arches in rubble masonry are built over the Solar gable window, W3.

Roofs: Gabled and coped with finials; modern pantiles at approx 50° pitch.

Windows: Hall N (high) end, W1, tall, 2-light plate tracery cinquefoil transomed window with quatrefoil light above; cinquefoil inner arch, plain chamfered with pointed central lobe.
E & W sides, low heavily transomed 2-light plain chamfered cinquefoil windows with deeply incised spandrels externally; cinquefoil inner arches as N window. All Hall windows rebated for shutters.
Solar wing W end, ground floor Parlour; 2 3-light mullioned cinquefoil arched, hollow chamfered, incised spandrels, dripstones with long down-turns.
W end first floor Solar window (W3), tall 2-light plate tracery trefoil arched, plain chamfered without transome, quatrefoil light above; trefoil inner arch, plain chamfered. The mullion has integrally carved stone bolt-keeps, the window rebated for shutters.
N elevation to Solar wing (W4) first floor, 2-light mullioned window, originally arch-headed, hollow chamfered. Grd. fl, modern.
Kitchen One depressed 4-centred Tudor arched, plain chamfered single light window; otherwise 2-light rect. plain chamfered mullioned windows without dripstones.
Blocked windows At first floor level, small loop on W gable of Solar wing (NW corner) and, on N face adjacent, a small rect. window.

Doorways: D1 & D2 to cross-passage, 2-centred plain chamfered, D2 arch made of 2 large stones. D3 in an unusual position giving access direct to the Hall on W side, 2-centred (small stones) plain chamfered (no chamfer to S jamb).
D6 (Kitchen) has dep. 4-c Tudor arch of 2 stones, plain chamfered.

Treasurer's House continued.

INTERIOR

Roofs: Hall 5-bay roof. 6 arch-braced collar-trusses, T1 to T6 have cambered collars and plain tenoned apexes (without notches). 3 butt purlins each side; 3 tiers of windbracing, top and bottom tiers with 2 wind-brace arches per bay divided by a short strut, central tier with one arch, undivided; principals, hollow chamfered; arch-braces moulded cavetto/ogee; purlins and wind-braces plain chamfered. Principals are slightly curved into the wall.

Solar wing 5-bay roof. 3 collar trusses, T8 to T10 have cambered collars, 2 butt purlins each side with wind-bracing in the central tier. Purlins and wind-braces chamfered. T7 has a cambered tie-beam (27 x 12cms) curved down at ends on underside, hollow chamfered on E side (away from Solar) only. It is closed with wattle and daub between collar and tie and below tie, but open above the collar. In the wider bay between T7 and W gable, all details are obscured.

Kitchen 3 bays. T11 & T12 are collar trusses with cambered collars, 2 butt purlins each side and no wind-braces.

There is no visible smoke blackening on any of these roofs.

Staircase: None remains. Blocked loop and window adjacent may indicate a former newel stair at NW corner of Solar wing. Present staircase is modern.

Doorways: D4 is similar to D5, both with low 2-centred stone arches and plain chamfers. D4 has cushion stops. D5 may have been moved from the cross-passage when the Parlour fireplace was inserted and is now an inner arch to a recent window.

Fireplaces: Hall none.

Parlour, F1 has a timber beam, plain chamfered on plain chamfered stone jambs, rather plain for the room.

Kitchen F2 has a massive stone dep. 4-centred arch made of 2 stones spanning 3.15m. with a relieving arch over in rubble masonry. Arch and jambs, plain chamfered.

Beams: Parlour, 4-panel framed ceiling with half-beams round the edge of the room, all moulded cavetto, bead, step, ogee. Beam over the S side of D4, from cross-passage to Solar wing, is a massive timber morticed for floor joists indicating a former floor approximately 54cms below the present floor to the Solar. B2 and HBlin Solar wing have narrow chamfers and run-out stops.

Other features: 3 lighting consoles, 2 in the Hall, one in the Solar, are in carved hamstone of conventional C15/C16 design, see drawing.

Wall painting, rather faint over Solar window (W3) comprising concentric circles and imitation stone joints in thin brown lines.

Historical dates taken from Victoria County History, Vol 1V.

- 1226 The Treasurer of Wells received half the rectorial manor at Martock in exchange for other property from Bishop of Bath.
- 1262 The Treasurer bought a plot of land 80' x 40', east of his barton (thought to be the Rectory plot, W of this house).
- 1293 The Treasurer spent money on his "New Hall". He retained it until the mid-C19.

The Treasurer's House continued.

INTERPRETATION

Suggested stages of building:

- 1 Mid C13 An East-West range (the Solar wing) existed at this time with an upper chamber lit by a tall W-facing plate-tracery window (W3) with trefoil arches. No roof survives from this period, nor do we know where the Hall would have been; it could have been at the upper level of the Solar range or have occupied a separate wing as at present. The clear evidence for the original first floor being at a lower level than the present one suggests that the main rooms were upstairs. The small loop window in the NW corner of the Solar may indicate the position of a former staircase.

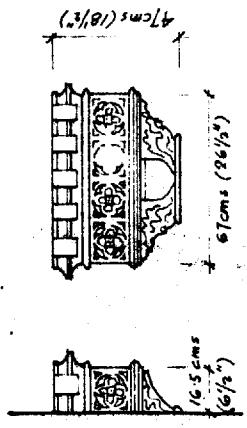
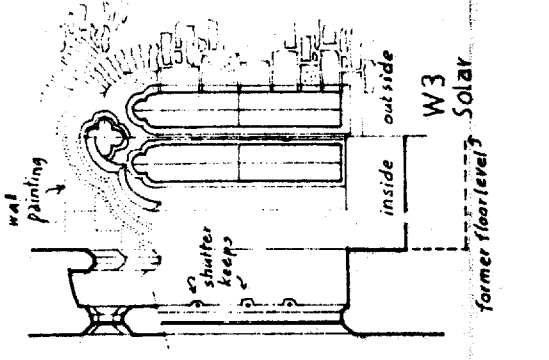
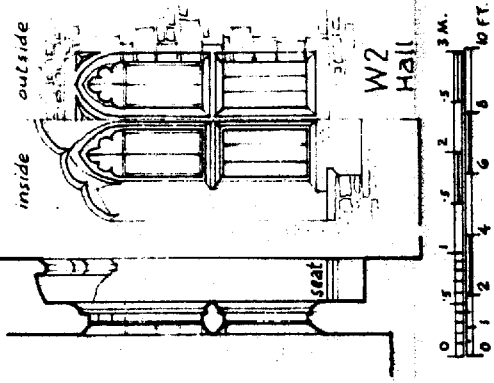
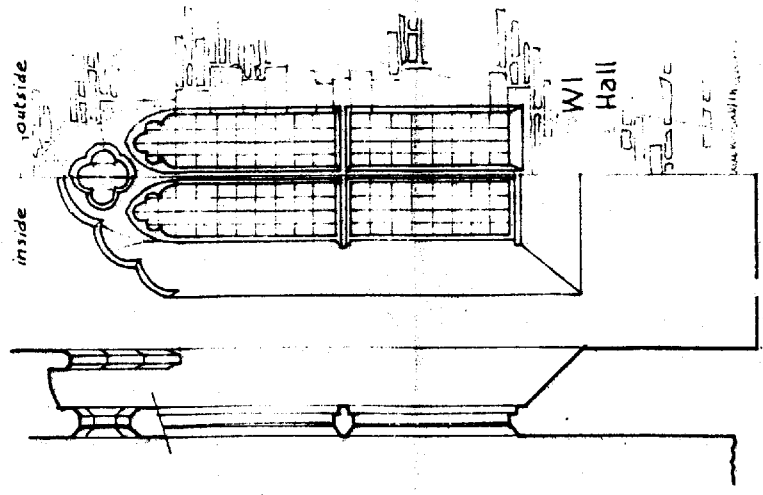
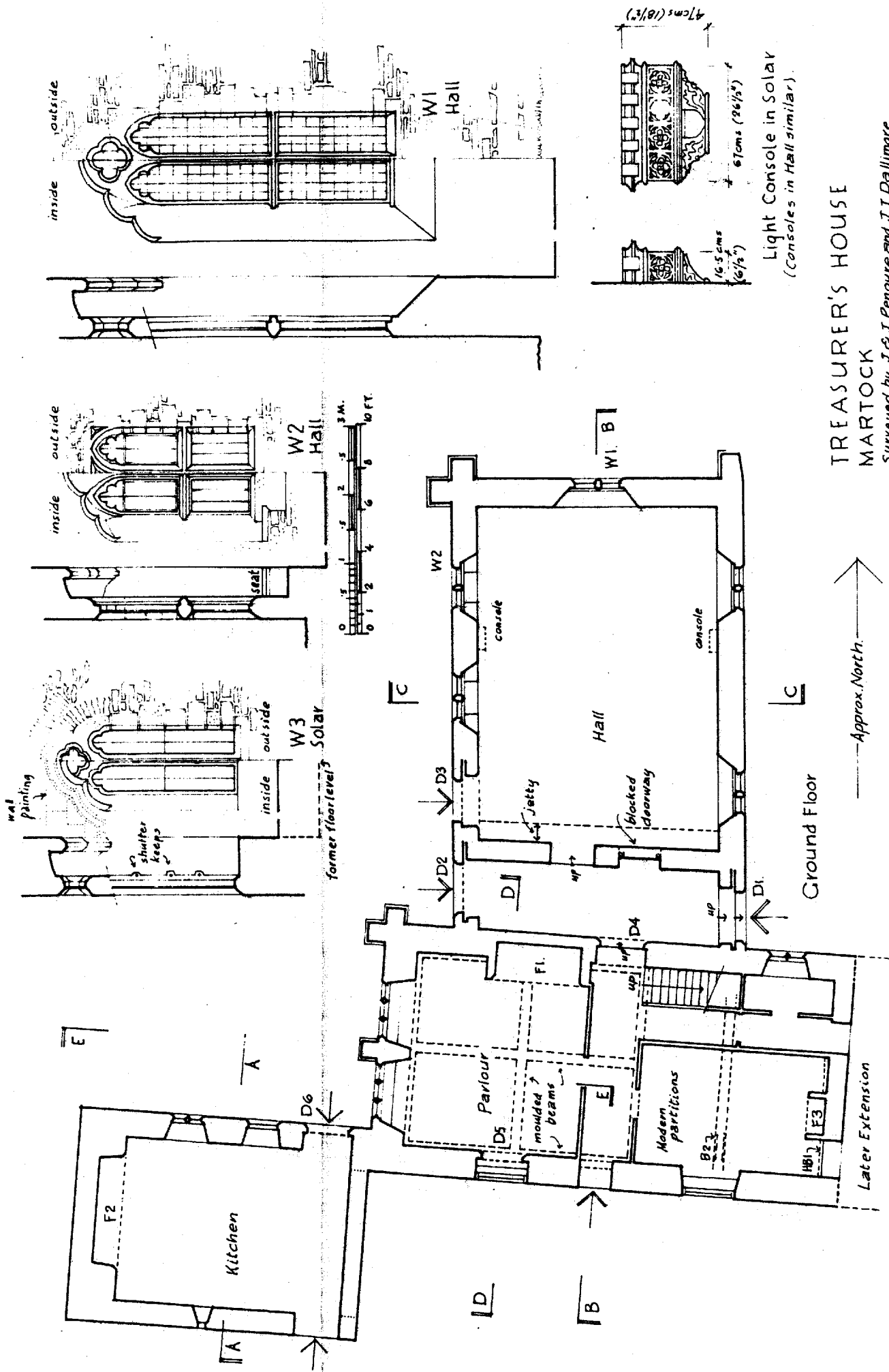
- 2 Late C13 A "New Hall" * was built (1293) at an irregular angle to the Solar wing, with no accommodation beyond the high end, hence the large gable window (W1) over the dais - this window, similar in style to the Solar window, is an early example of plate-tracery combined with cinquefoil arches (cf. Meare Manor Somerset, mid C14). The side windows appear later in style with their heavy transoms and deeply incised spandrels, and may have been modified at a later date. The side door (D3) also appears of a different build to the screens doors (D1 & D2). As there is no apparent smoke blackening nor traces of a former fireplace, it must be assumed that the Hall was unheated and therefore perhaps only used for official business rather than domestically.

- 3 Late C15 The whole house was "re-worked":
 - a) the Hall was re-roofed and possibly the jettied gallery was built over the cross passage to give access to the EW wing. Lighting consoles were added to the Hall and Solar.
 - b) the Solar floor was raised and a new Parlour made to replace the original ground floor Service rooms, with a moulded framed ceiling and new W facing windows. There is no sign of a fireplace at this date.
 - c) the Solar wing was re-roofed with tie-beam trusses, the Solar itself being sub-divided with the closed truss T7 (the only truss of this roof to survive). Tie-beam trusses are not usual in this area, where arched braced collar roofs are more common. The tie-beam of T7 is strongly cambered with a chamfer on the E side only, indicating an important first floor chamber on this side, now gone. The principal rafters are tenoned into the top with a collar set higher than those in the other trusses of this range.
 - d) a new Kitchen block was built, which extended further E than at present, perhaps to accommodate displaced service rooms. (the E wall is a re-build). The kitchen is rather large for the period. It presumably served the Hall via the kitchen court and D3.
 - e) a Gatehouse was built on the roadside N of the Hall. Only one side arch remains with a broken jamb of the main gateway beside it.

The Treasurer's House continued

- 4 Late C16 the Parlour fireplace and stack was inserted, blocking a former cross-passage door (D5), now moved to the S wall of the Parlour. The Solar wing was re-roofed with collar trusses and wind-bracing (T9 to T11), leaving tie-beam truss T7 in position.
- 5 Later additions made in C18/C19, running N to the road, have now been demolished. At one time these blocked the gable window in the Hall. Another addition, extending the Solar range eastwards, survives and is now part of the house.

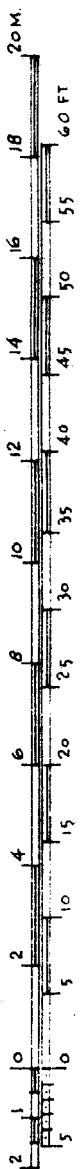
The Treasurer's House has features of unusually early date and is undoubtedly one of the most interesting and attractive medieval house in the county. It would be interesting if further research could throw more light onto the use to which the building was put by the medieval Treasurers in their official and domestic capacities over three centuries.

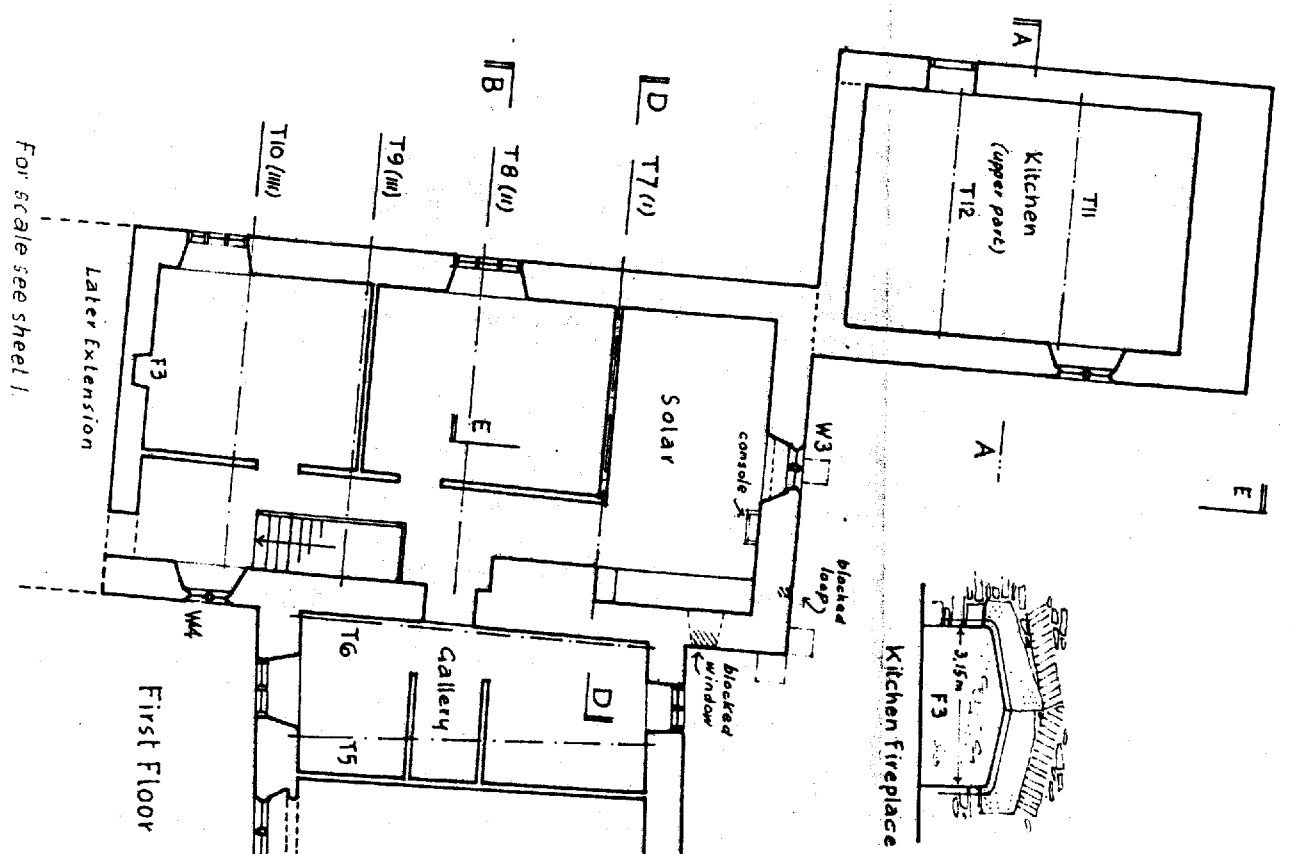


TREASURER'S HOUSE
MARTOCK

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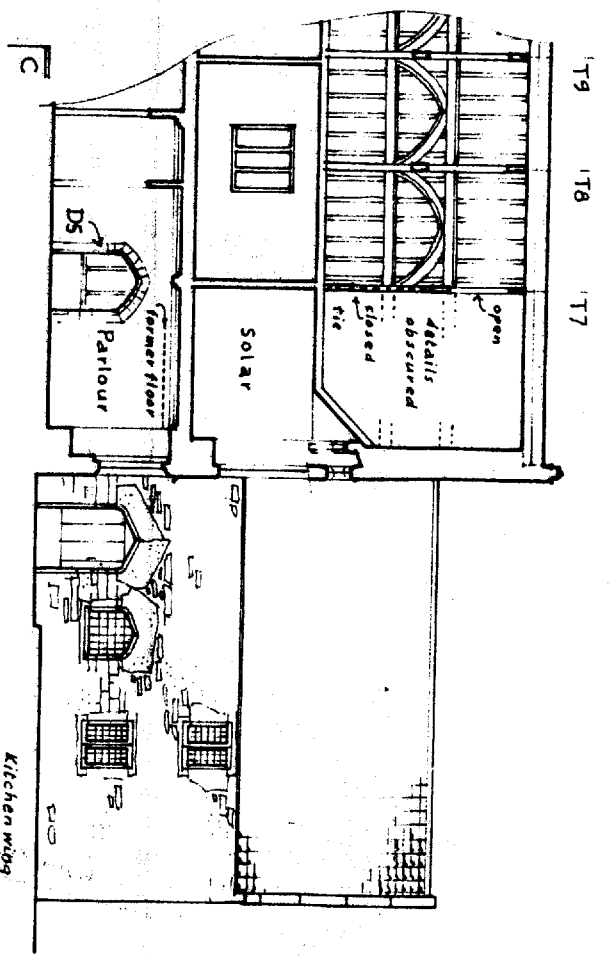
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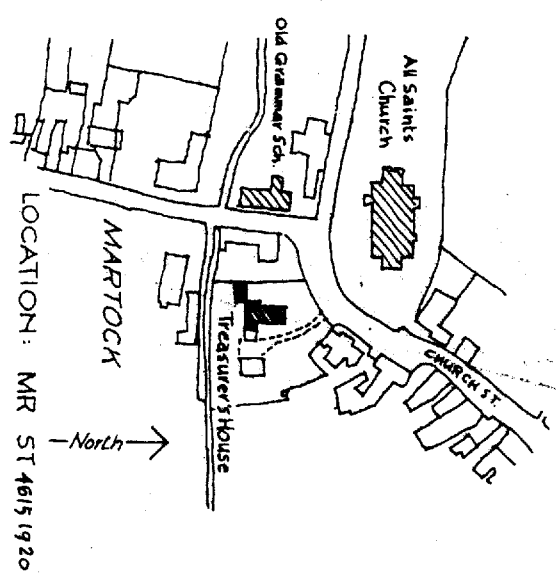


For scale see sheet 1

First Floor

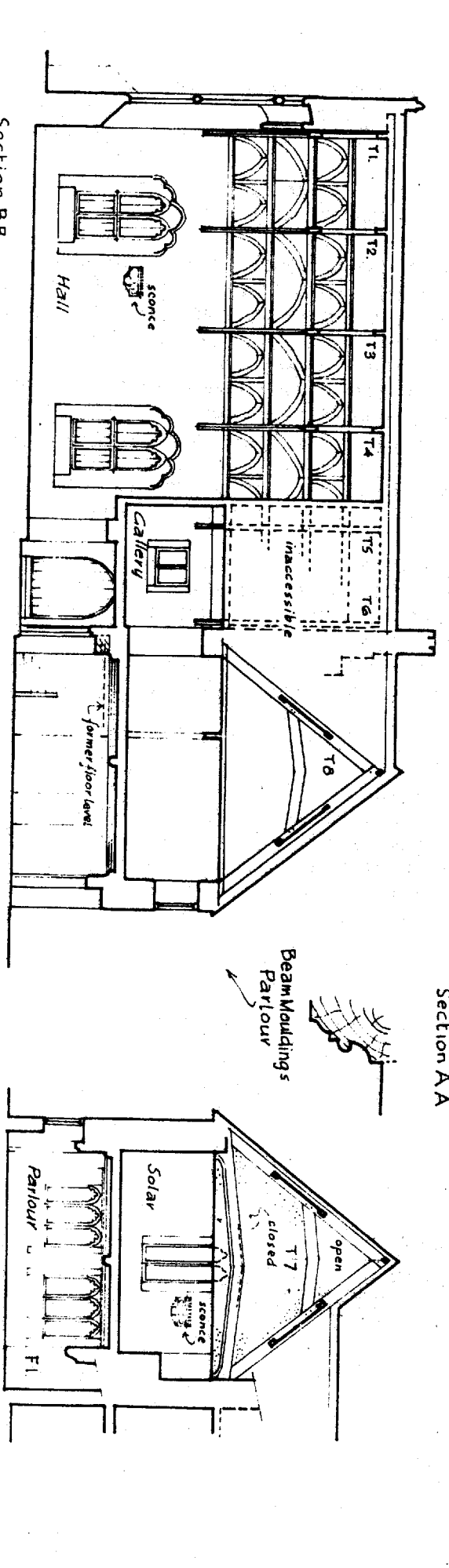
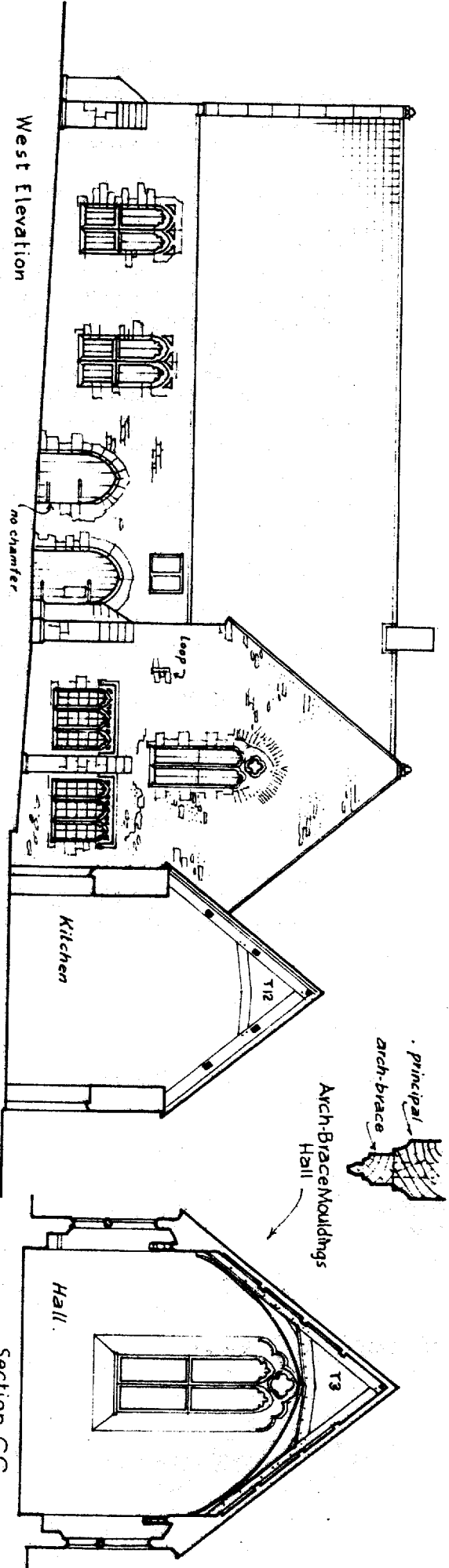


Section E.E.
Kitchen wing



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LOCATION: MR ST 4615 1920



For scale see sheet 1

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