

**Lyddington Manor History Society
Historic Building Survey**

**Manor House,
Thorpe by Water, Rutland**

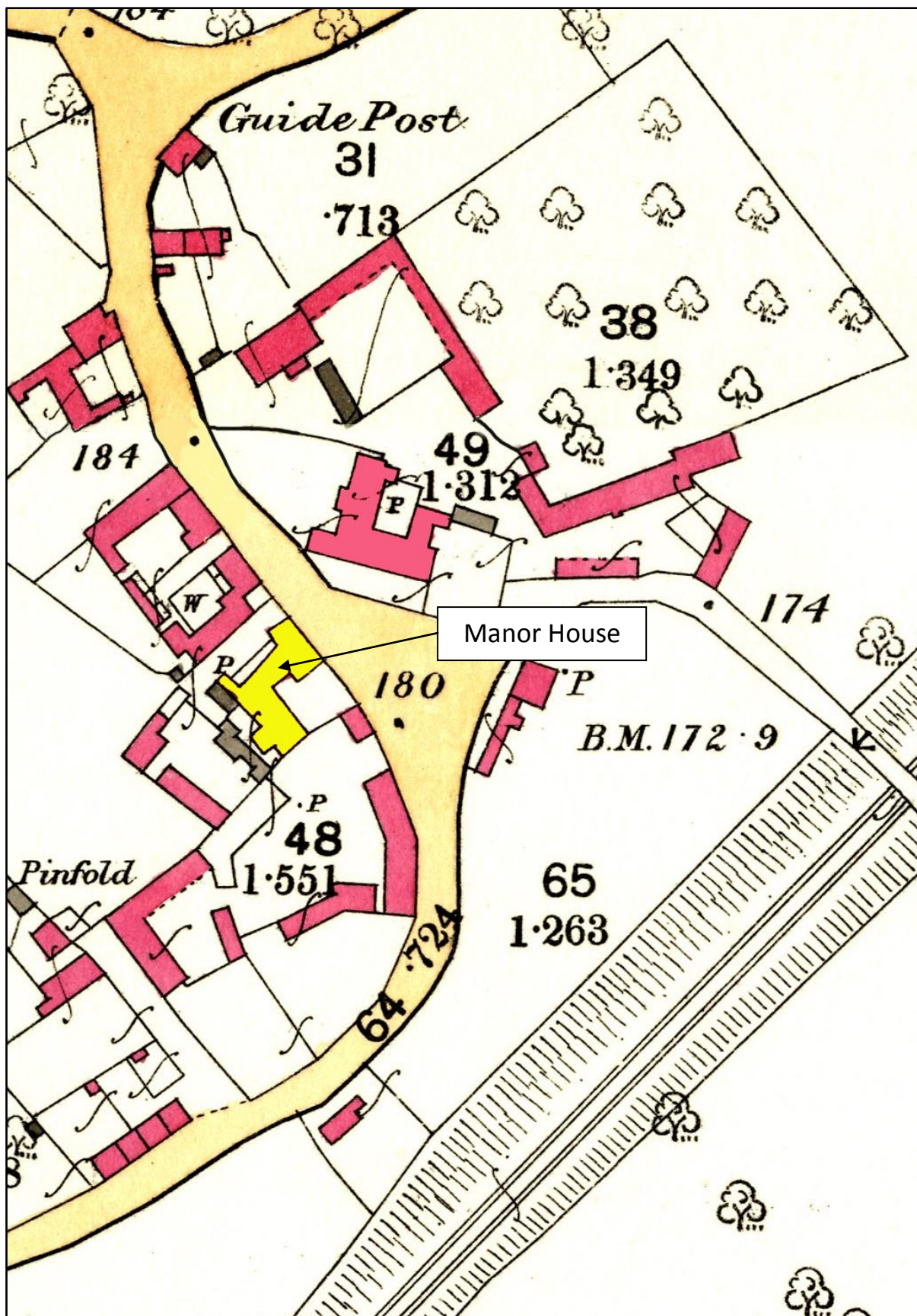


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Location Map - Manor House, Thorpe by Water
Ordnance Survey 1st Series 1886

HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY REPORT

MANOR HOUSE, THORPE BY WATER

Survey

Date of survey: 23rd February 2013

Surveyed by: Nick Hill & Robert Ovens

Summary

This fine house, built by the Harrison family, is of two phases. The earlier part of the house, dating from the first half of the 17th century, now forms a projecting front wing. Originally, however, the house also had a main range along the street frontage, as seen on early maps and a photo of c.1910, of which only parts of the lower walls survive. An impressive additional range was added in 1691, as indicated by a date-stone and tree-ring dating of the roof structure. This has high quality masonry features of sophisticated design in Ketton stone, and was accompanied by an elegant gateway with rusticated stone piers. The new range had a central doorway and 'lobby entrance' plan, but the fine oak staircase was located at the junction, to serve both the new and old ranges. There was a large farmyard, now largely in separate ownership, with the buildings converted to domestic use. The 'Manor House' name is not historic, but was transferred from Tudor House, across the street, in the mid 20th century.

Site

OS Ref: SP893965

Orientation: For report purposes, the street frontage is taken as facing E.

The main block of the house is set well back from the main street, with the NE block projecting towards the street frontage. Early maps and an old photo of c.1910 show a missing crosswing to the NE, which abutted Main Street. W of the house is a large garden, with an outbuilding. There was formerly a large farmyard to the SE, but this has been redeveloped as several separate houses.

Materials

The main block has a fine front and S gable of Ketton ashlar. Elsewhere, walls are of coursed limestone rubble, with render finish to the S and E sides of the NE block. Roofs of Collyweston slate, except for the N slope of NE block and the SW extension, which have Welsh slate.

External features

The house now consists of a 1-cell NE block and a 3-cell block main block, all of 2½ storeys. There was previously an E crosswing to the north-east block, but this was demolished in the early 20th century, and only some wall bases remain. There is a later extension to the SW, originally single-storeyed, but now of 2 storeys, with a modern conservatory to the N of this.

The S side of the NE block is rendered. Tall 4-light mullioned window to ground floor, cavetto cornice, ovolo-moulded, but with central king mullion of square-cut form, without ovolo. All of the mullions and jambs have a joint c.300mm from the top – perhaps the window has been extended. To 1st floor above is another 4-light mullion, less tall here, with normal ovolo moulding to the king mullion, and cavetto cornice. E gable to NE block is rendered, with an offset towards the N at 1st floor height (this was originally an internal wall). When render was repaired recently, a doorway with decayed timber lintel was found towards the S side of the ground floor. Coped gable parapet with plain ogee corbels below the kneelers, plain apex (now renewed, with roll apex). 4-light mullion to ground and 1st floor, ovolo-moulded king mullion, cavetto cornice – both being insertions, when the NE crosswing was demolished. The ground floor window is tall, with joints c.300mm from the top, like the S window.

N side of NE block has fairly irregular coursed limestone rubble. Re-worked quoins to NE corner, where the E crosswing once abutted. 2-light mullion window to ground floor, with odd extra timber lintel over. 1st floor is blank. To NW corner, there are good quoins to the upper part, but the ground floor has an odd splayed corner, with the upper square corner supported on rounded corbels. The former external W gable of the NE block has copied gable parapet to the N side, with plain ogee corbel below the kneeler (all as current E gable). At the apex, with seating of the gable coping, is a 2-flue limestone ashlar stack. The stack has a chamfered plinth, two separate flues, 2-stepped architrave and ovolo/cyma cornice.

Of the E crosswing, some walls of coursed limestone rubble survive to around 1m height: the NW corner, N gable and E wall, though the S wall has gone. The N end of the W wall now has a doorway, with quoins, though this is probably not an original feature. The N gable has good quoins to the NE, but is covered with vegetation to the NW. To the centre of the gable is a good quality fireplace, set flush with the wall, with a good, moulded E jamb: cyma, 2 steps, and quarter-round, with a high-set, decorated cyma stop – all the same as the fireplace to the ground floor of the remaining NE block. The E wall has continuous coursed stonework, with no doorway opening now visible. The SW corner is visible as an offset in the wall to the inside W face, though there are now no quoins to the outer E face.

The main block has very fine masonry to the E front, S gable and around the SW corner to the S end of the rear W side. Finely jointed Ketton limestone ashlar, with characteristic pink tinge in places. The E front has a chamfered plinth, which has vertical returns to either side of the original front doorway (now blocked, with a single-light window). Plain plat-band at 1st floor level, and flat chamfered stone cornice, with a large hollow-moulded section above, formed of plaster/ facia boarding. Windows set symmetrically to either side of former doorway: two 3-light windows to ground and 1st floor, with central 2-light window over the former doorway. All these windows are ovolo-moulded, but have a very unusual, ornate outer frame, with projecting cavetto moulding, which runs down onto the rounded cill. The original stone doorway has been re-set in the internal angle to form a splayed entry. It has a moulded 3-stepped architrave, cyma and bead moulded, with flat head; square plinth blocks; pulvinated (curved) frieze; cornice of cyma/corona/cyma moulding (with added timber moulding above). To the ridge of

the main block is a fine 4-flue chimney of unusual design, cruciform in plan, with chamfered plinth, plain square cornice and blocking course.

The SE and SW corners of the main block are formed with fine, rusticated quoins. The S gable has the chamfered plinth and plain plat-band. Corbels below the gable kneelers have a big hollow-moulding, to suit the upper part of the cornice; plain kneelers, coped parapet with rolled apex. A 3-light window set centrally to ground and 1st floor, with a 2-light window to the attic. All windows are the same as the E front, with projecting cavetto-moulded surrounds. Above the attic window is a date-stone: a plain block, set flush without a cornice; neatly incised lettering H E M 1691. H is for the surname Harrison, E for the husband and M for the wife's first names. Between the 16 and the 91 is a 5-pointed star (not a Star of David, which has 6 points).

The fine masonry, though with coursed rubble not ashlar, turns the corner and runs a short distance along the rear W side, with the rusticated quoins, plinth and cornice with chamfer and big, plaster hollow-moulding. This masonry detail terminates at an original c.100mm projection, where the later SW extension abuts. There is a blocked rear doorway to the SW with rubble jambs and an old, unchamfered oak lintel. To the N of the SW extension, the W wall has a 2-light mullion with cyma cornice to ground floor; the ovolo moulding of the head has been cut away. Just N of this is a modern double doorway. Near the splayed N corner is a 2-light mullion window with cyma cornice. The staircase has a 3-light mullion window at mid-floor height, here with a cavetto cornice – perhaps reused from the earlier NE block. There is one further 2-light mullion window to the 1st floor just N of the SW extension, with cyma cornice.

The splayed N wall has rubble quoins to the lower part of the NW corner, but better quoins above. The ground floor here is blank except for an inserted casement window beside the junction to the NE block. The 1st floor has a single-light window, then a 2-light mullion, both ovolo-moulded, with no cornice.

The SW extension S wall has a raking line which shows this was originally a single-storey lean-to, not of 2-storey gabled form. The lower part of the SW corner has rubble quoins, but the later upper part has better quoins, of limestone and ironstone. Ground floor doorway with fair-sized rubble jambs and plain oak lintel; plain-boarded door, C20th. The W gable has a ground floor timber window with brick jambs and timber lintel. Timber/iron casement window to 1st floor with good jambs and timber lintel. Quoins to NW are again partly of ironstone. The roof is of c.35° pitch, to suit the Welsh slate covering. The N wall of the SW extension has a small, single light ovolo-moulded window to the ground floor, probably re-set here. Timber casement to 1st floor, with large limestone and ironstone blocks to either side.

Internal features

Ground floor

The S room of the main block has a large fireplace with an arched oak beam. Transverse ceiling beam, chamfered. To the NW a deep, moulded timber cornice is set at ceiling level, forming a recess, probably for a fitted dresser – probably later

C18th. In the rear W wall here, a narrow doorway, probably of later date, leads into the SW extension. The recess to the W of the inglenook has a blocked opening with old oak lintel to the W wall, perhaps also a former doorway into the SW extension. Neither of these doorways could have been used while there was a fitted dresser. In the SW corner is a secondary, service staircase, which goes up to 1st floor and attic levels. It looks inserted, probably in the C18th. The door to the stairs is of 2-panel type, with shallow bolection moulding to the front face, on strap hinges – probably an original door of 1691, but re-set.

The former lobby entrance hallway between the S room and the central room has two 2-panel doors, of the same type as those to the S room stairs. Both have shallow bolection moulding to the front face and non-projecting moulding to the rear. The S door still has its original H hinges with shaped ends, and the marks of these are also visible to the N door, though the hinges have been replaced. The N door has been stripped of paint, showing that these doors, of the 1691 phase, are of pine.

The central room has a large fireplace with a timber beam, but the beam is square-edged and of rough timber. The beam seems to be original, not a replacement. Together with the plug holes to the left jamb, this indicates that the fireplace was fitted from the start with a timber surround. Transverse ceiling beam, chamfered with run-out stops. The W window has C18th pine shutters, with raised and fielded panels, hung on plain H hinges. Fine floor, probably original, of Ketton paving, with square slabs set in a diamond pattern.

Beyond the central room is a compartment designed for a fine oak stair, of 1691. The stair has two flights, with a half-landing, the 3-light mullion window to the W wall being set at the landing height. Large square newel posts, with recessed panelling to the sides, and a flattish, moulded top. The upper newel and half-newel have plain flat, moulded terminations to the bottom, with no drop finials. Heavy balusters, with barley-sugar twist. The handrail is stout and rectangular, with plain mouldings and slightly canted, flat top. The whole of the balustrade is original, with pegged joints to the newel/rail junctions. Underneath, it can be seen that the stair treads have been reconstructed, mainly in softwood, with additional propping. The partition on the S side of the stair compartment still rises from ground floor to first floor ceiling. On the N side, an under-stairs cupboard has been inserted, which has a 2-panel door, with moulded front and square-edged back, set on shaped H hinges. A little further N, on the line of the original stair compartment wall is a transverse ceiling beam, now rotated by 90°, with chamfers, ogee stops and a row of mortices to the former underside, to receive the studs of a partition wall. The ground floor door here is of the 1691 type, of 2-panels with bolection moulding. At first floor level, the original stair compartment wall is still in place, with a distorted ceiling beam at its head.

The NE room has a fine stone fireplace with quite wide, 4-centred arch, moulded with a cyma, 2 steps, and quarter-round, with high-set, decorated cyma stops – all the same as the fireplace in the demolished E crosswing. There are two transverse beams, with good quality bar stops to the chamfers. The king mullion to the S window is of plain, rectangular profile internally, without the normal ovolo moulding (as noted also to the exterior).

First floor

Access to the NE wing from the main stair is via a corridor to the N, and a narrow, roughly formed door opening through the original W gable wall. The 1691 access was probably direct from the head of the stair, into the NE room, on the S side of the chimneybreast. The NE wing would originally have formed a single room, before the late addition of partitions and corridor. The room has two transverse ceiling beams with good quality bar and step stops. These two beams act as the tie-beams to the roof trusses (T1 and T2) above. In the W wall is a blocked, flush fireplace. Some good oak boards survive here, up to 330mm wide, perhaps original.

In the main block, the top of the S partition to the stair compartment has a transverse beam with step stops – the tie-beam for the roof truss (T3) above. The central room has another ceiling beam, here of elm, with run-out stops. Both doors to this room are of the 1691 bolelection-moulded type. The fireplace has been blocked off.

From the half-landing of the main stair, an inserted secondary stair runs S into a corridor – probably of C18 date. At the S end of this corridor some plain oak studwork forms the frame for a 2-panel door, which has flat moulding to the front and is square-edged to the back, set on shaped H hinges. The S room has a transverse beam with run-out stops and a blocked-off fireplace. The closet to the E of the central chimneystack has a narrow 2-panel door of 1691 type, with bolelection moulding and plain H hinges. This would originally have been the main doorway, so the narrow door must have been re-set, probably from a closet to the W side of the chimneybreast. The service staircase to the SW corner has a 2-panel door, flat moulded to both sides, on re-set H hinges.

Attic and roof structure

The roof void to the NE block, now only a roof space, was previously a habitable attic. It has floor joists and an old, boarded floor. In the central bay, there is a partition, of oak studs, with reed and plaster finish. This seems to be a later insertion, not original to the roof structure. The partition is in two, offset sections, with a doorway, oriented W-E, to the centre. The door frame is chamfered to the N, with ogee stops, and a tenoned head with mason's mitre. It has a pintle hinge and a clasp for a latch/bolt. When the stud partition was inserted to create two rooms, a ceiling was also fitted, with oak joists and reed/plaster. The internal W gable has a 200mm step for the chimneybreast towards the N side. The internal face of the E gable has been refaced with 20th century commons bricks.

The NE block roof has two trusses with tie-beams, tenoned collars, two sets of tenoned purlins and no ridge. There are paired rafter couples, though rafters and some purlins to the N slope have been replaced in softwood in the C19th. The roof has no obvious evidence of carpenter's marks. Truss T1 to the E has chamfers to the underside of the principal rafters and collar, with bar and step stops at the collar/principal junction. The opposite E face has run-out stops or waney-edged timber. Truss T2 to the W has similar stops to the E face, but run-out or no stops to the W face. It seems that the central bay of the original roof was the most important part. On the S side of this bay, the lower purlin is truncated a short distance W of T1,

on the line of the stud partition; the purlin did not continue W to truss T2, as there is no mortice here to receive it. This gap in the purlin placing is probably because the original roof had a dormer window to the central bay. With no windows evident to the W gable, and the crosswing to the E, the roof space would otherwise have been unlit.

The main block has attic rooms, accessed by the stairs to the SW. The balustrade at the top of the stair is modern. Gypsum plaster floor. The roof structure has three main trusses (T3-T5) of clasped principal type, with no ridge. The principal rafters and collar are fairly slender, with the underside of the principal cut away above the collar to allow insertion of the clasped purlin. It seems likely that the trusses have tie-beams, as beams are visible to the 1st floor ceiling below at the truss locations, but the junction of the principal and tie-beam is concealed in the floor structure, and there are added tie-bars. The timbers are square-edged, without chamfers. No carpenter's marks were evident. Rafter couples have a bridled joint at the apex, and the purlin joints are straight-splayed scarfs. The roof hip has a further roof truss (2a), into which a half-truss joins, both of the same clasped purlin type.

Outbuildings

There is a fine front gateway, with a pair of rusticated piers. Moulded base, cornice and ball finials – all evidently of the same build as the 1691 phase. The walls to either side with ramped copings may be later. The listed building description says: 'Piers are said to have been re-sited C20 from former nearby position.'

In the front garden, beside the path leading to the current front door, there is an old well, with a later stone capping. There is another well with modern wellhead to the SW of the main block (as marked 'P' for pump on the 1886 map).

To the SE and S of the house there was previously a large farmyard, but this has been redeveloped and is in separate ownership. Along the road frontage is a fine C18 outbuilding, of limestone rubble with ironstone quoins. Around the late C19 two stable doorways of brick were inserted in the rear wall. Prior to this, it may have been a barn, though the only openings on the road frontage are two small windows. There are two ventilation slits to the upper N gable, and a former loft window to the S gable. Attached to the S end is a lower outbuilding, of limestone with ventilation slits.

A long range of single-storeyed stone building runs SW from the SW corner of the house. Another single-storey stone-built range, within the Manor House ownership, is set at right angles to this. It is of later C19 date, with a bolted king-post truss roof.

Site history

The 1846 tithe map shows the house with its lost NE crosswing and also a small extension to the rear of the main block. The large farmyard with surrounding outbuildings is shown to the SE, and a small range of outbuildings, now lost, is also shown to the rear of the main block. The schedule which accompanies the tithe map lists plot 32 as 'Farmhouse buildings and Yards', 1 rood 31 perches in area, owned by the Earl of Harborough and occupied by Thomas Stokes. Thomas Stokes also had plot 33 to the SE, listed as 'Orchard' and plot 34, listed as 'Garden'. It is useful to note that the adjoining plot to the W of Manor House (Ivy Cottage, No 4 Main Street)

was in separate ownership: plot 31, owned by John Monckton Esq., occupied by Joseph Drake and described as 'House buildings & Yard', 1 rood 12 perches in area. The boundary of the Ivy Cottage holding angled across the W end of Manor House, and then ran across to the E, quite close to the S of Manor House. By the time of the 1886 1st edition OS map, Manor House had gained from Ivy Cottage an area of land to the S of the house, forming an additional farmyard.

At the time of the 1846 tithe schedule, the two largest farmers in the parish were Thomas Stokes (170 acres) and John Stokes (178 acres), who had Tudor House. The next largest farmer was Joseph Drake of Ivy Cottage, who had 70 acres.

The lost crosswing is still indicated on the 2nd edition OS map of 1900.

Tree-ring dating

Tree-ring dating was carried out in 2013 by Robert Howard of Nottingham Tree-ring Dating Laboratory. Nine samples were taken from the roof structure: two from the NE wing and seven from the main block. Four of the samples from the main block roof formed a good chronology, giving a precise felling date of 1688. So the timbers for the roof were felled three years in advance of the completion of the main structure, with its 1691 date-stone. The two samples from the NE wing unfortunately had rather few rings, and so failed to date.

Date and development

The features of the surviving part of the NE wing indicate that the original house was built in the first half of the 17th century. Features typical of this date are the cavetto-moulded cornices to the mullioned windows, the moulded, 4-centred arched fireplaces and the mouldings of the chimneystack. It seems this original house had a front range of two cells and a crosswing to the rear, forming a 'T' shape. It was a well-built house, with large, 4-light mullioned windows and good quality stone fireplaces. From the details of the surviving fireplaces, it seems the crosswing was contemporary with the front range, rather than being a later addition. The ground floor room in the rear crosswing seems to have been a parlour, as it had a stone fireplace of moderate size. The N room in the front range seems, unusually, also to have been a parlour, as it had a similar fireplace. The lost S room would probably have had the hall/kitchen, where one would expect a large inglenook fireplace as the main cooking hearth. The first floor had two good bedchambers with fireplaces to the rear crosswing and to the N end of the front range (as a 2-flue fireplace is visible in the photo of c.1910). This original house was probably built by the Harrison family. The 1665 hearth tax for Thorpe lists two houses, both with 6 hearths, held by the Harrison family: one by Ann Harrison, widow, and the other by Edward Harrison. One of these must have been the Manor House, as no other houses in Thorpe, apart from the 9-hearth Tudor House, had more than 3 hearths. If the bedchamber at the S end of the front range had a fireplace, as seems likely, this would give a 6-hearth house.

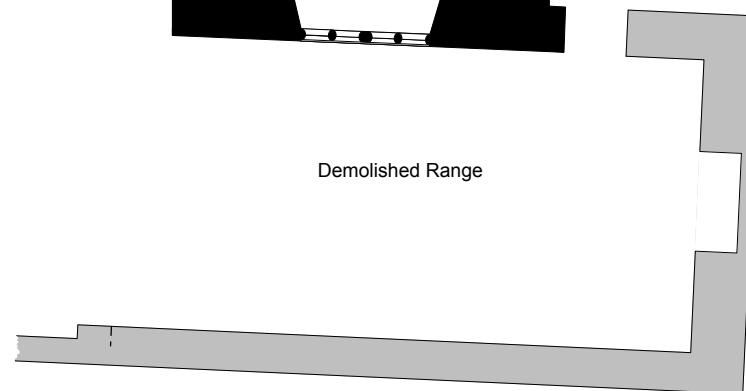
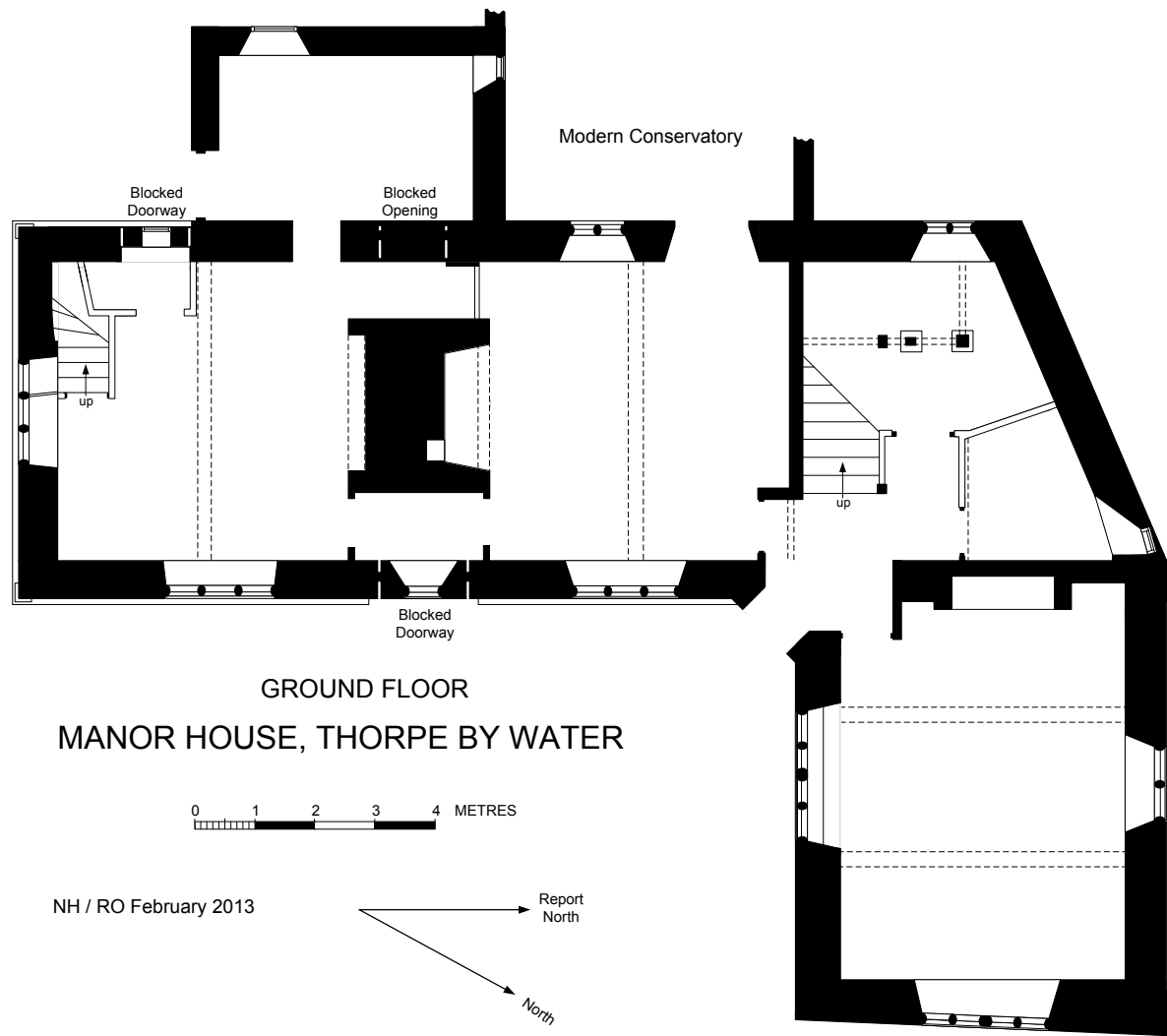
The fine additional range was added in 1691. The new block had very high quality masonry features, including the unusual mouldings to the windows, a fine moulded front doorway, the unusual sophistication of rusticated quoins, an eaves cornice and a cross-pattern chimneystack. The unusual clasped purlin roof form was also used at the north end of Tudor House, across the road, in 1668. The new block had its own

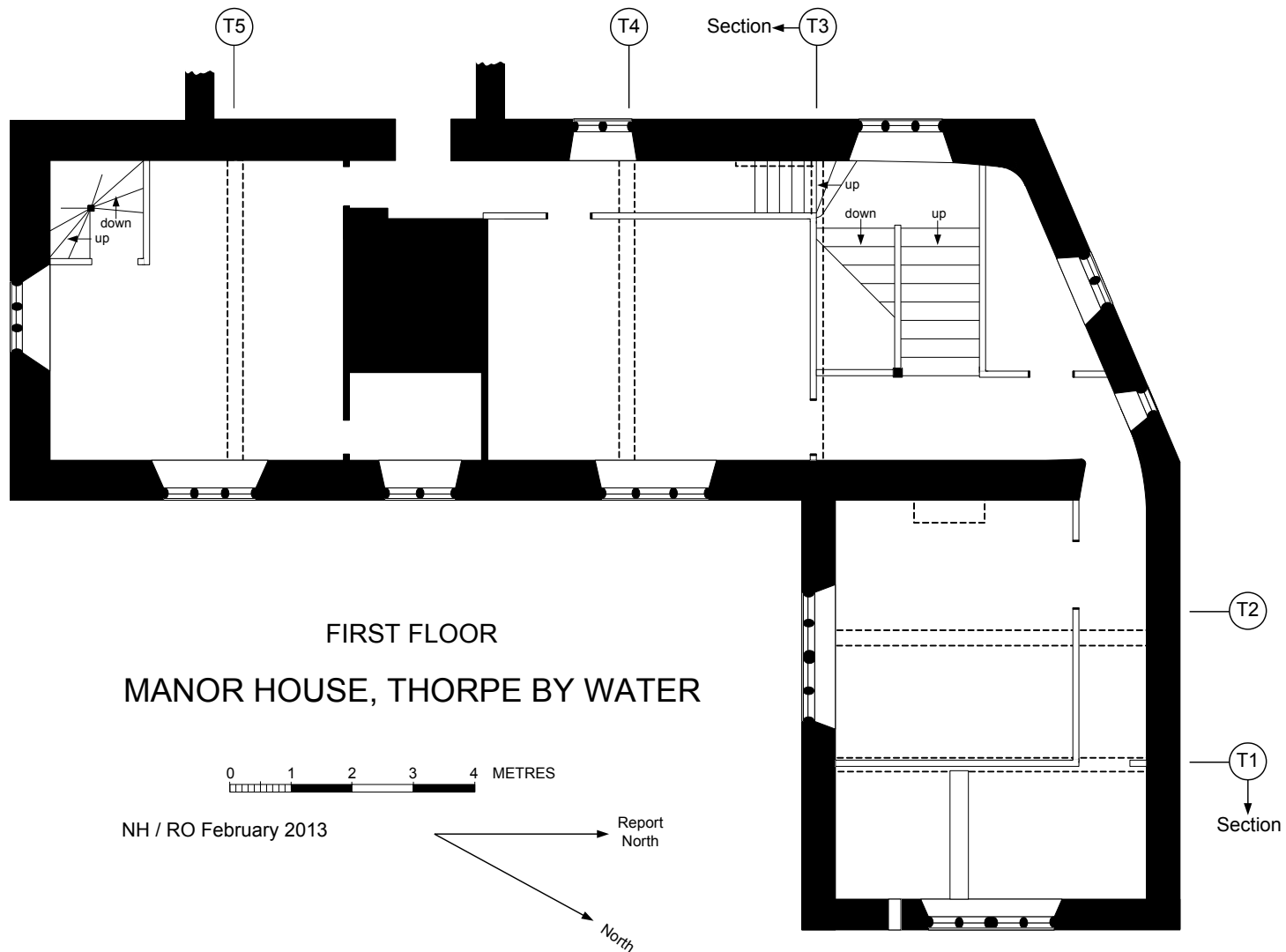
plan form, of 'lobby entrance' type, with a central front door and large central chimneystack. The kitchen was to the S, with a large, beamed fireplace as the cooking hearth. N of this was a parlour, which seems to have had a fireplace with a timber, moulded surround – probably of the bolelection type which was fashionable at that date. Beyond the parlour, the third large bay, unheated, was devoted to an impressive oak staircase. The first floor had two good quality bedchambers, both with fireplaces. Together with the earlier 17th century 'T' shaped building, this would have formed an impressive and spacious house. It is conceivable that the new range was occupied separately from the original range, as each part could have functioned as an independent house. However, the location of the stairs at the junction of the two ranges, rather than at the centre of the new block, suggests that the house was designed to function as a single unit. The older rooms in the lost crosswing may have been taken over for service uses, for which space is rather lacking in the surviving house.

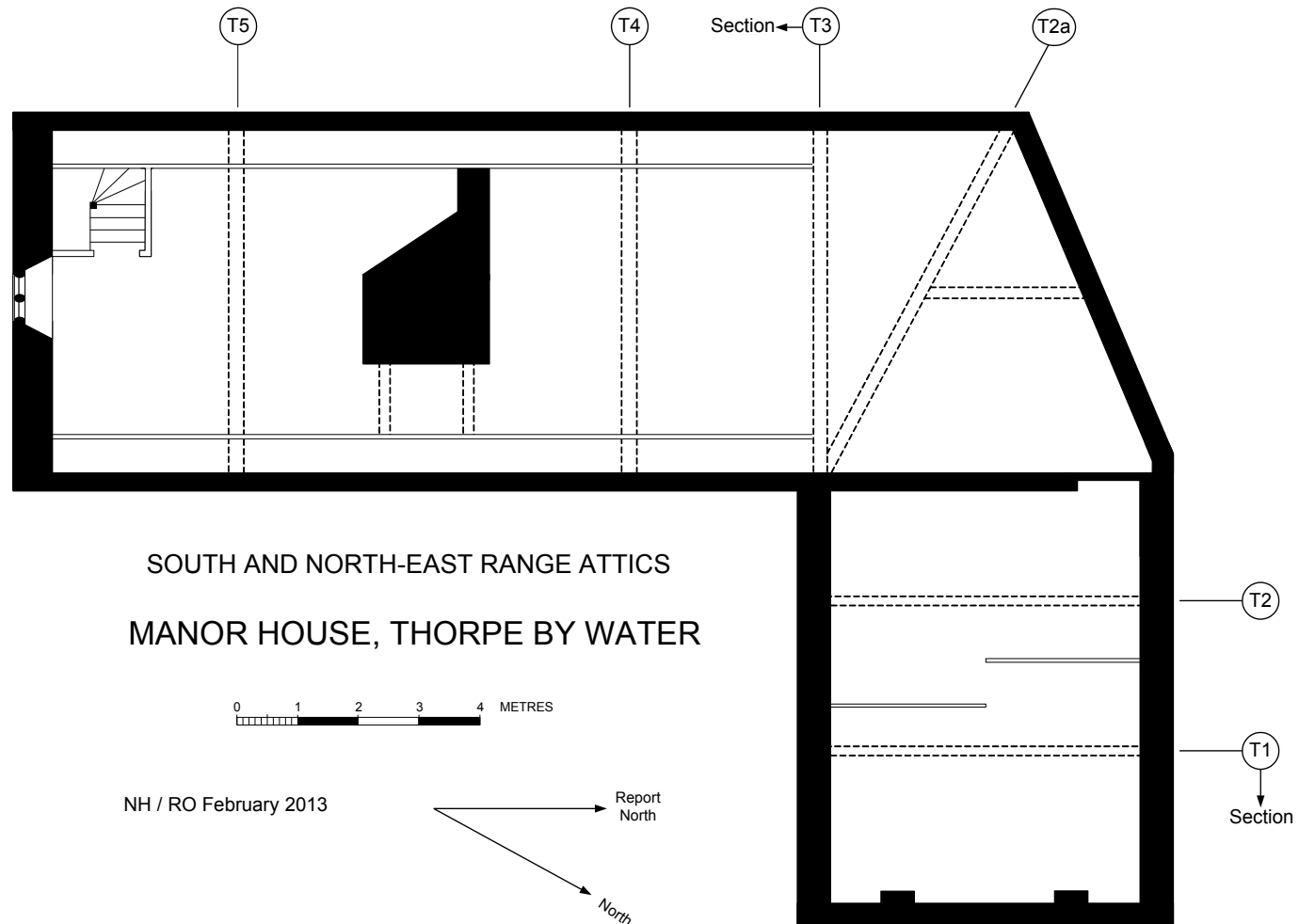
An unusual feature, especially in such a high quality extension, is the awkward splayed form of the NW corner; this shape was clearly dictated by the property boundary against an adjoining owner, as is still evident on the 1846 tithe map. Despite having a fine house and large landholding, the Harrison family were not able to acquire land from their neighbours, and had to squeeze their new extension into the existing plot.

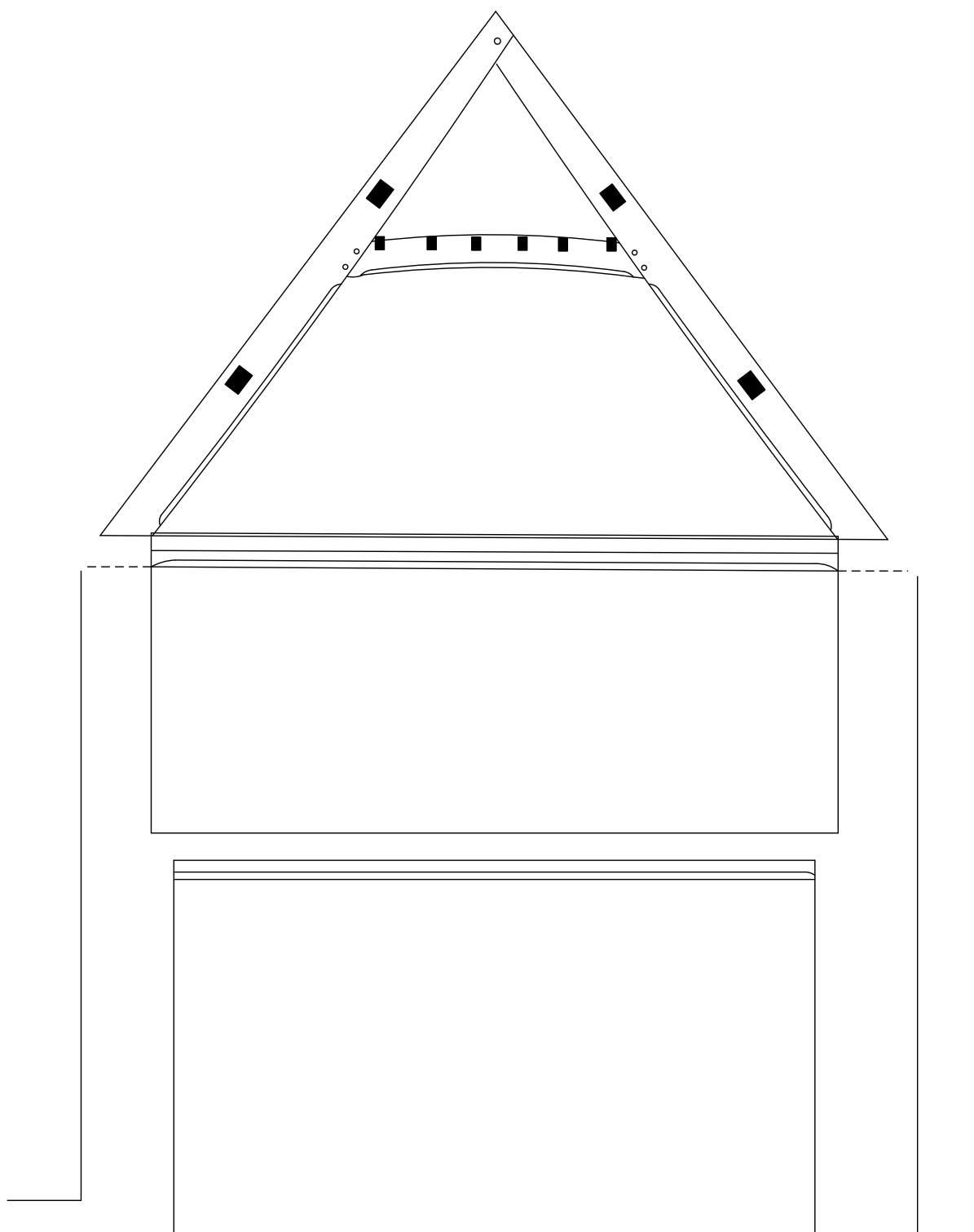
Minor alterations were carried out in the 18th century, with the addition of a back stair at the SW corner of the rear range, and independent access to bedrooms via corridors. The attics may have been brought into use for storage and perhaps some accommodation at this time. The kitchen dresser, with its unusual and high quality cornice, was probably added in this period. The rear extension was added in the 19th century.

Nick Hill
May 2014

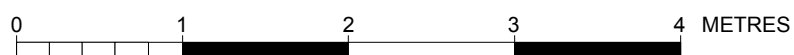


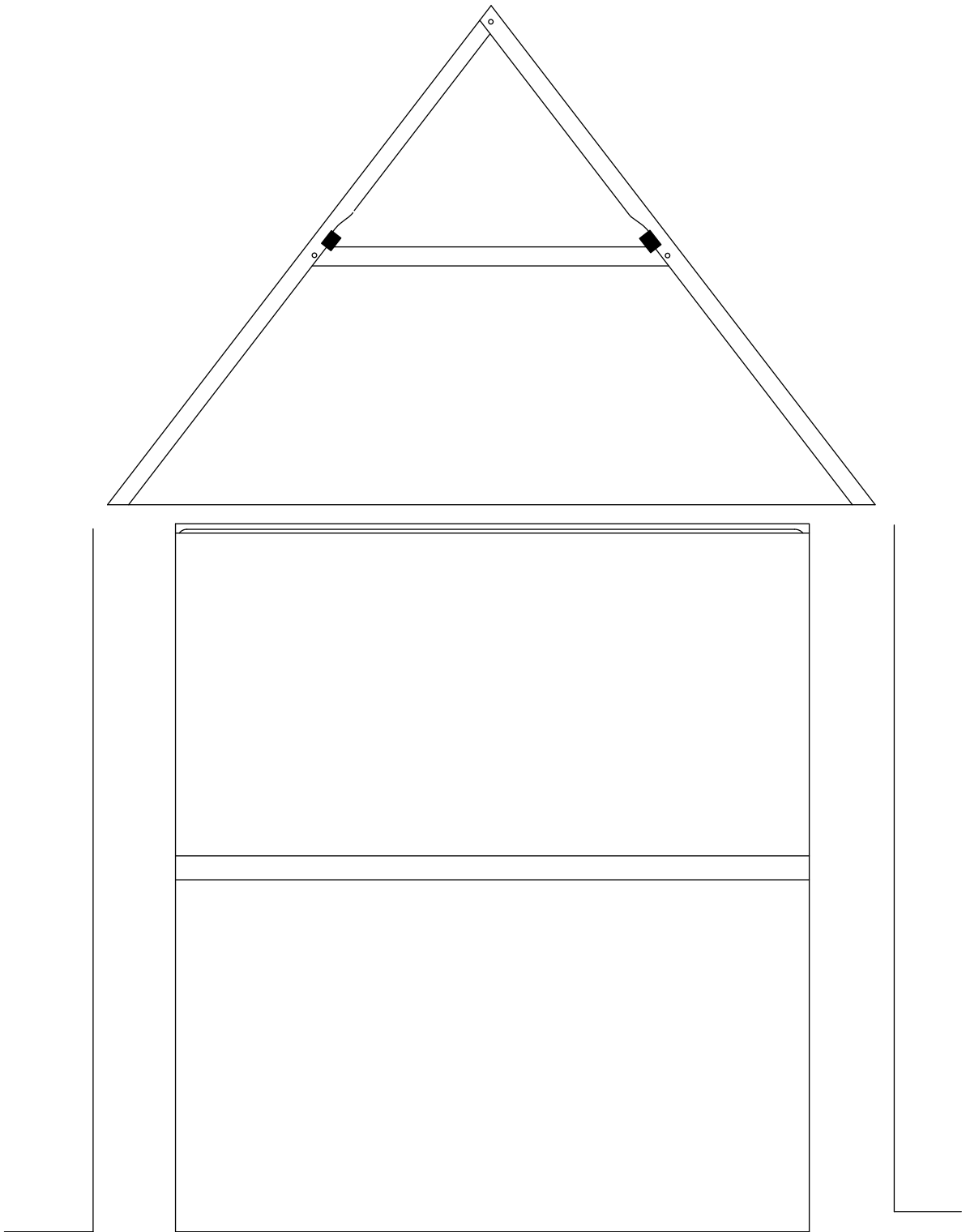






SECTION – TRUSS T1 WEST FACE
MANOR HOUSE, THORPE BY WATER





SECTION – TRUSS T3 NORTH FACE

MANOR HOUSE, THORPE BY WATER



NH / RO February 2013



The east front



The east front of the main range, with blocked central doorway



Jamb of the fireplace to the
demolished front range



The front gate piers



The front doorway, as relocated to the corner junction



Detail of the unusual moulding to the window surrounds of the main block



Chimneystack to the NE wing, of earlier 17th century



Cross-quadrant chimneystack to the main range, of 1691



View from north-west



The rear west side of the main block



The south gable of
the main block



Detail of south-west corner, with eaves cornice running up to offset



1691 date-stone to south gable of main block



The outbuildings to the south of the house



Kitchen fireplace to the south room of the main block



The cornice around the former dresser location in the kitchen



The central room in the main block



Ketton stone floor to central room



The 1691 stair to the
main block



Detail of stair



Two-panel door of 1691 to



Fireplace to the ground floor room of the north-east wing



The attic partitions and doorway
in the north-east wing



Truss T1 to the north-east wing, east face



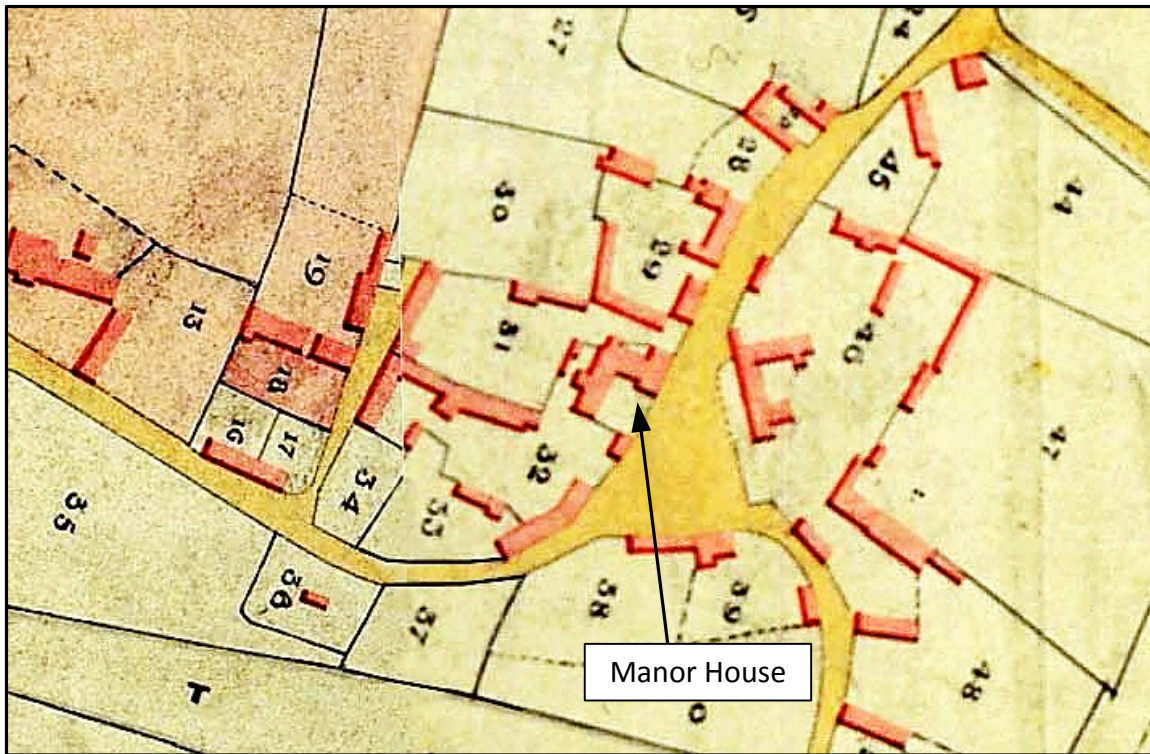
Attic of the main block, looking south towards trusses T3 and T4



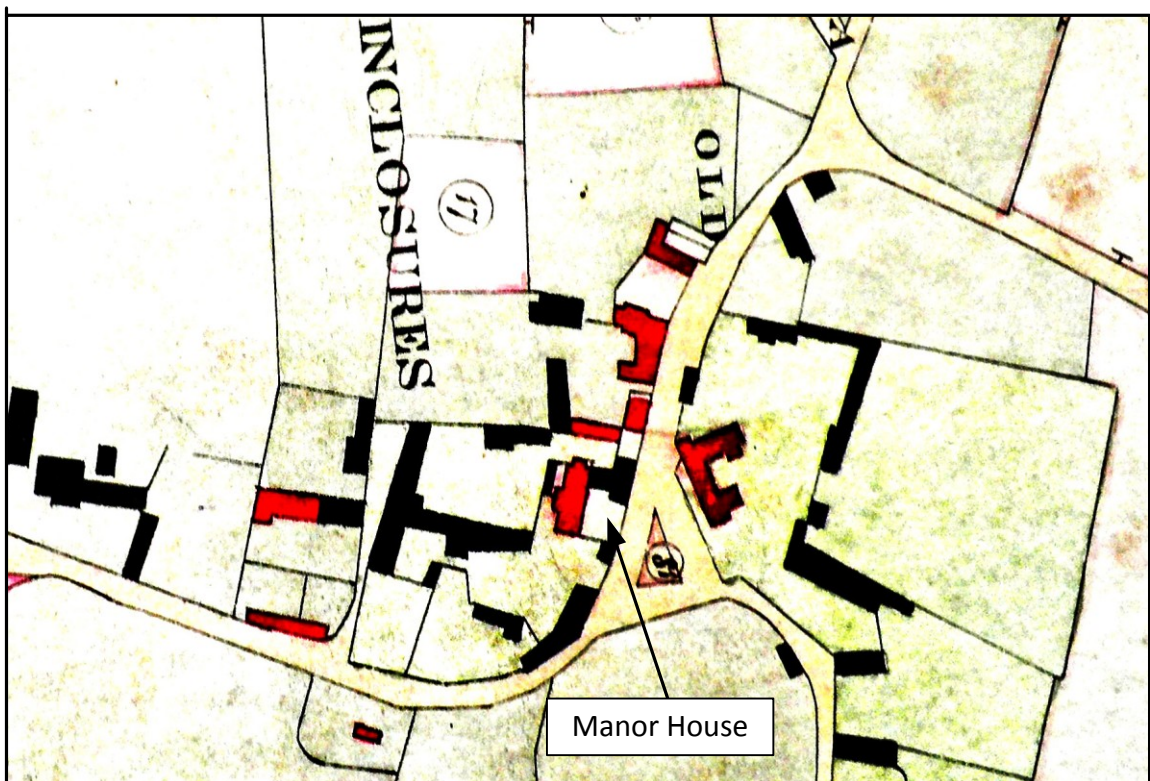
Clasped purlin truss to main block



Photo of c.1910 with lost front range of Manor House to the left
(by Stocks of Uppingham)



Thorpe by Water Tithe Map - 1848



Thorpe by Water Enclosure Map - 1858



Thorpe by Water – OS Second Series 1904