



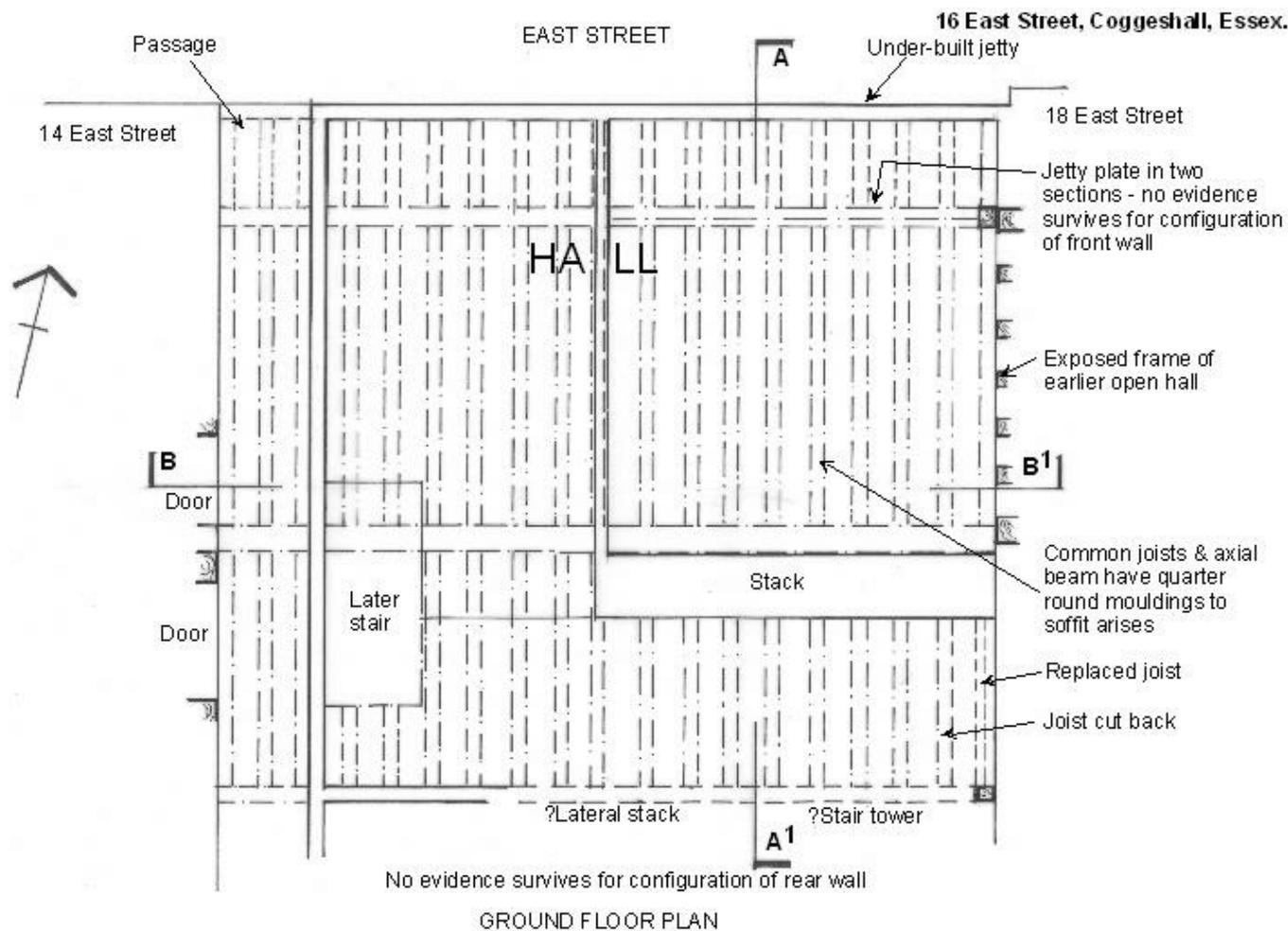
16 East Street

This house is a former hall located between two tall cross-wings at nos 14 and 18, with which it once formed one house. It was rebuilt as a single bay structure measuring about 23ft 6ins x 21ft wide, with a jetty and upper floor, in 1636, four cores taken from principal rafters having been successfully dated.

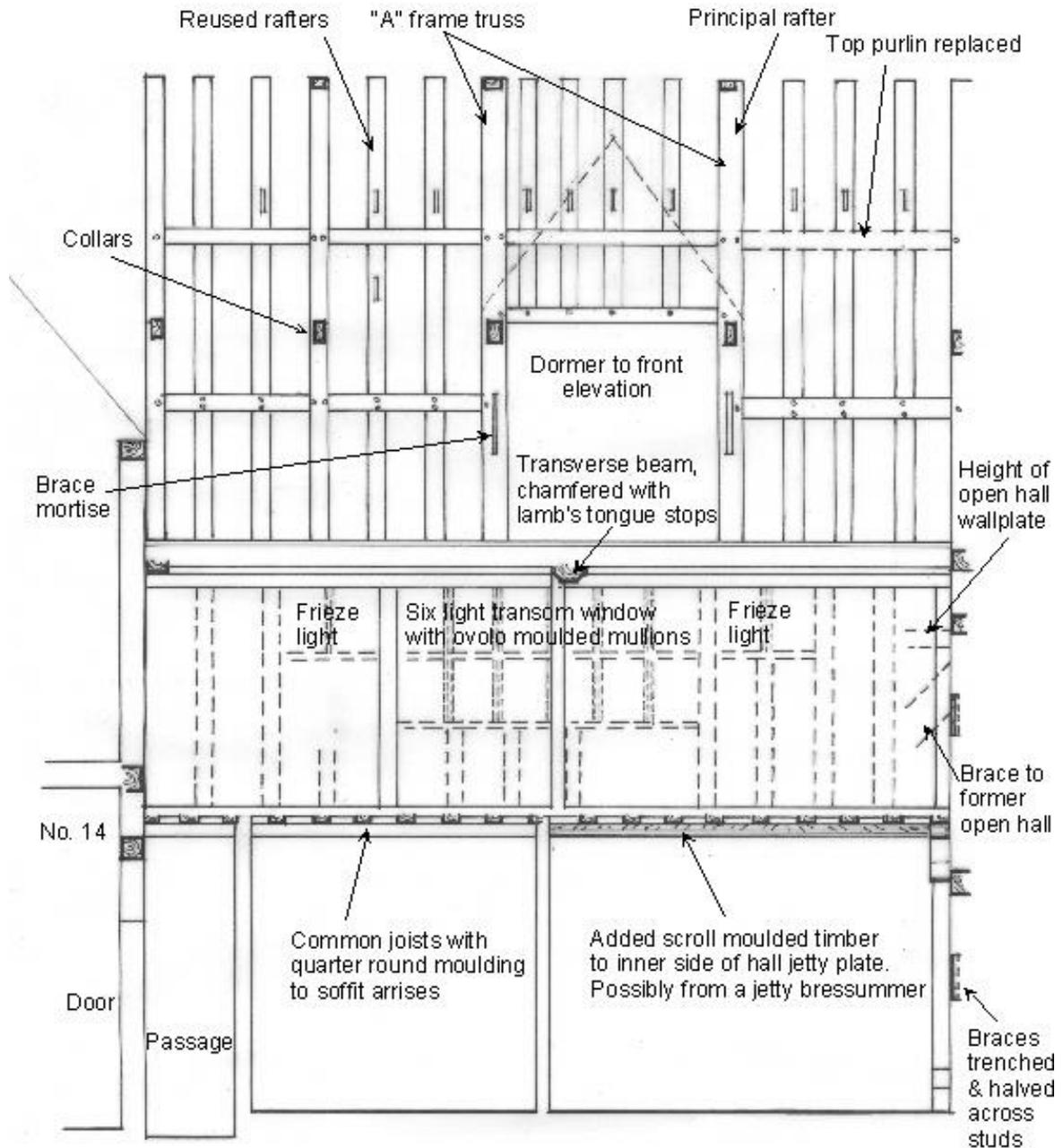
Like the adjacent cross-wings, the rebuilt hall was of high quality, of excellent oak timber, with substantial bridging joists with deep chamfers with lamb's tongue stops

at the first floor, and with principal and common joists at ground floor all with quarter round mouldings to the arrises of the soffits. The joists have housed soffit tenons.

At ground floor, the jetty has been underbuilt. The jetty plate is covered or cut back, and so the front wall cannot be reconstructed. A timber with a simple scroll moulding has been fixed to the inside face of the jetty place, forming a groove or slot where they meet. This is not an original feature; it is probably the fascia from the front of the jetty which was removed and placed here when the jetty was underbuilt. Similarly no features of the rear elevation at ground floor can be reconstructed. It is improbable that this rebuilt part of the house was not heated; the most likely position for a chimney is against the rear wall between two storey posts.



At first floor, where there was a single chamber, much of the frame is also covered. However a photograph of the front of the house with the render removed at first floor shows that there was a six-light transomed window with stanchions for attaching the glazing, and two frieze lights either side. Access to the first floor was probably via a stair tower, the best evidence for which is a gap in the rafters in the easternmost bay of the rear roof pitch where, curiously, there are two purlins set close together.



SECTION on B - B¹

The roof is of butt purlin construction in four bays with two levels of purlins, the rafters passing over the upper level and tenoned into the lower one. The common rafters are reused from the old roof, being sooted with empty mortices for collars. There are reused timbers of other types, a purlin for instance having mortices for moulded joists. The studs in the east gable wall at the junction with no. 18 next door are nailed and splay jointed into the collar; if original to the construction of the house,

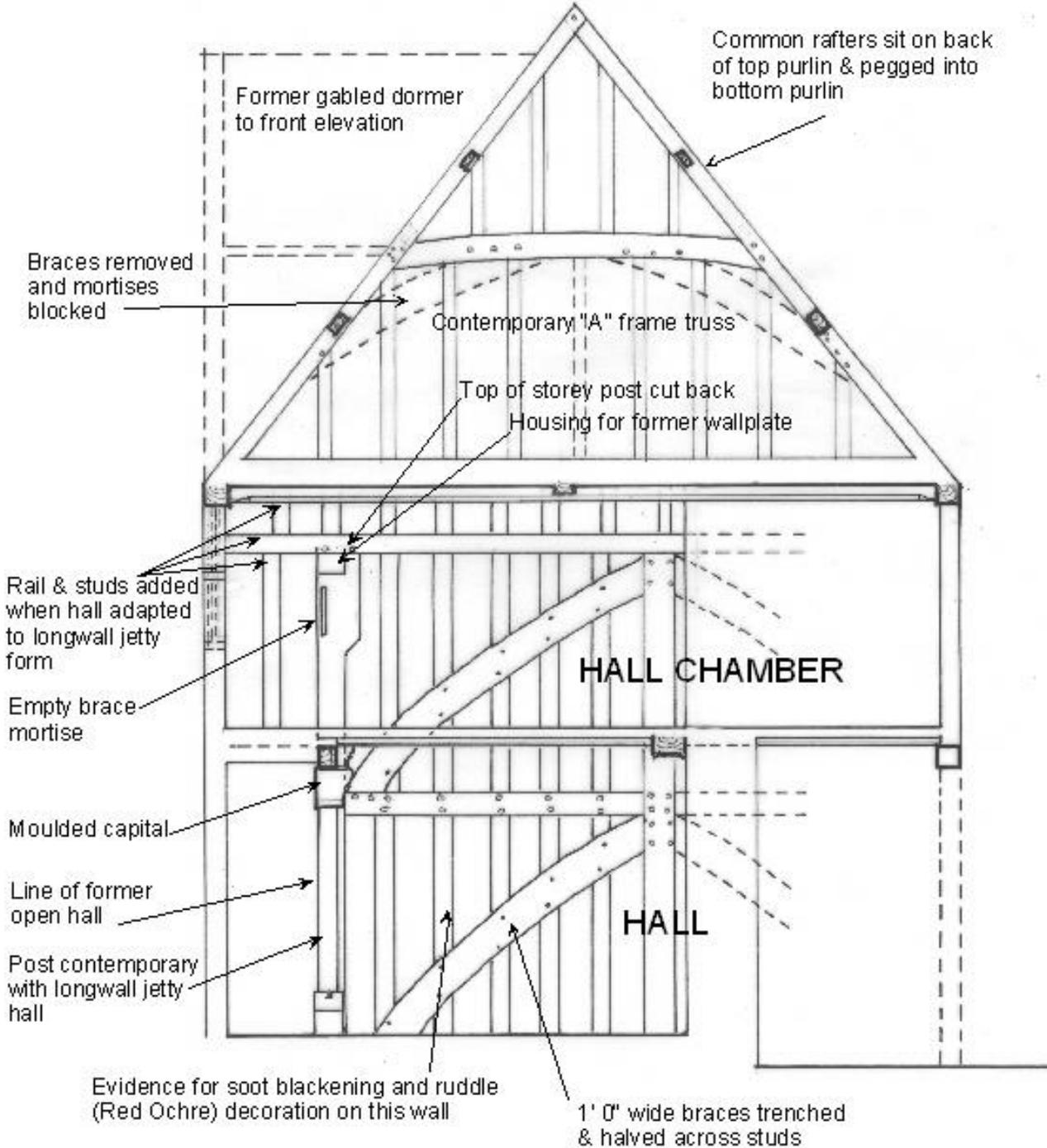
this is an early dated instance of this technique of framing. In the second bay from the east of the front roof pitch, there was a gap in the rafters which must have been for an off-centre gable forming a dormer window. The roof was used as an attic, floored with oak boards with rebated edges. There were large braces between the collars and the principal rafters located either side of the former gable on the front elevation. These are an unusual feature in a roof of this sort as they formed obstacles to movement within it. It may be that they were intended to strengthen the roof structure around the dormer, something which raises the possibility that it actually functioned as a lucam, with a pulley for lifting objects up from the street. This seems likely as the roof was clearly designed for storage.

At both floors the east wall has large tension bracing 1ft wide which is trenched into and halved over the face of the studs, and which descends from the central storey post in a fan pattern. It is clearly much older than 1636, and must be the flank wall of the hall before it was rebuilt. At first floor, modifications were made to this wall when the hall was changed to a floored long-wall jetty form. The original tie-beam was removed, the top of the north jowled post recut and a new rail, extending forward to the jetty, fitted over the stud tenons. The jowled storey post was double pegged, but both the studs and the new studs or cripple pieces set into the top of the rail to raise the height of the wall were not pegged. The front storey post has a cut-out for the wall plate of the former open hall and a large mortice in it at first floor for a tension brace that would have been visible in the front elevation of the hall. At the ground floor, this storey post is largely concealed, a post having been applied against it to support the jetty plate. This post is reused and has a curious moulded top forming a sort of bulbous capital. It may have come from an earlier phase of the hall.

The flank wall raises questions about the development of the hall and its relationship to the cross-wings. The cross-wing at no. 18, which has been dated to 1361-97, is open-framed against no. 16. The flank wall of the hall could therefore be earlier than this, but it could equally survive from a hall which was a replacement of one against which no. 18 had been built, an alternate rebuild scenario. The latter seems more probable, which suggests the hall may be contemporary with no. 14 which was dated to 1435. However, there is no structural evidence available to support or disprove this. At about 20ft, the hall was unusually wide for Essex, though that at no. 19 East Street was wider still.

Later alterations were typical of the fashionable improvements made to houses in the town in the 18th and 19th centuries, as well as being linked to the division of the property into three dwellings. It was given a flat façade with sash windows and the dormer gable was removed from the roof. Inside the timber frame was covered up, timbers being cut back as necessary to achieve flush wall surfaces, and the chimney stack and stair tower to the rear were demolished. With the sub-division of the property, the cross passage position between no. 16 and no. 14 became an alleyway.

Together with nos 14 and 18, this building was in the ownership of Richard Warner at the time of the 1575 rental.



SECTION on A - A¹

EAST STREET

16 East Street, Coggeshall, Essex.

