

40 Church Street (Craig Dhu)



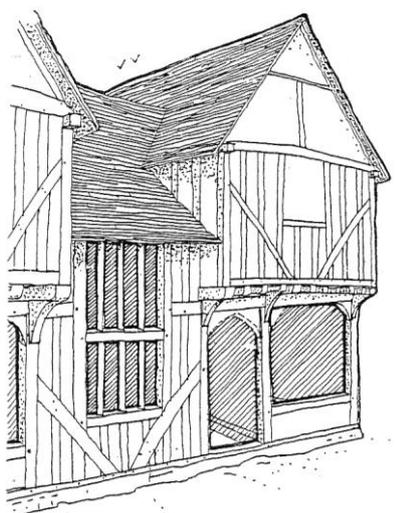
Craig Dhu today. The timber frame was exposed when plaster was removed in the 1960s

This is an important early house, one of the oldest to have been dated in Coggeshall. An offcut supplied by the owner from former repairs to the timber frame gave a date of 1387-1423.

On its front elevation, the timber frame is exposed, revealing it to be of two unequal bays, with a cross-wing to the right and a single bay hall to the left. The cross-wing was jettied, but the first floor has been cut back flush to the line of the rest of the façade, the pattern of the framing with its two braces being retained. The wing has an undershot cross passage, a necessary space saving measure in view of the small size of the hall. The door formerly had an arched head. The front of the wing was occupied by a shop with a window to the front which had short curved braces between the posts and jetty plate. The room to the rear may have had a service function or been a parlour.

Between the undershot passage and the hall there is a spere truss, with arched braces to mid rail of the cross-wing. This wall is smoke blackened. The wall on the other side of the hall has a striking pattern of saltire or X shaped bracing. A feature of the house is the straightness of the braces used in its frame. In the front wall of the hall there was a large almost full height window with diamond mullions.

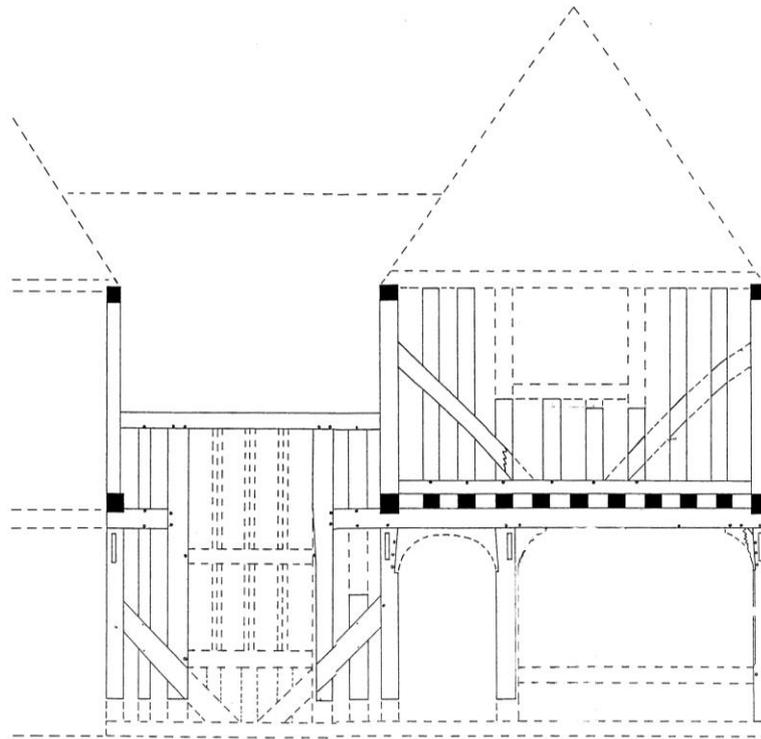
To the east of the house, adjoining the hall, there was a similar two bay house comprising a cross-wing and hall. It thus formed part of a terrace of compact dwellings with shops which had been built as a single development.



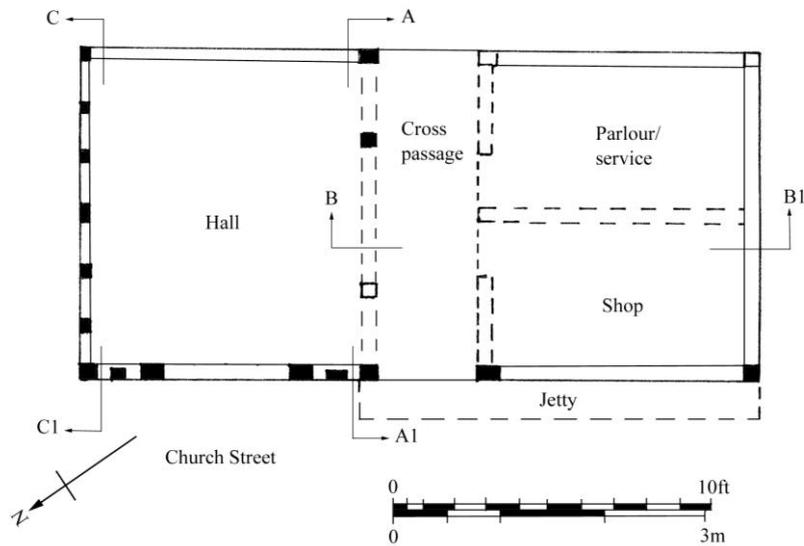
Reconstructed view of Craig Dhu

In the 17th or 18th century, the hall was raised in height and the two bays were brought together under a clasped purlin roof parallel to the street, replacing what would have been crown-post roofs. The house was also at about this time extended to the rear.

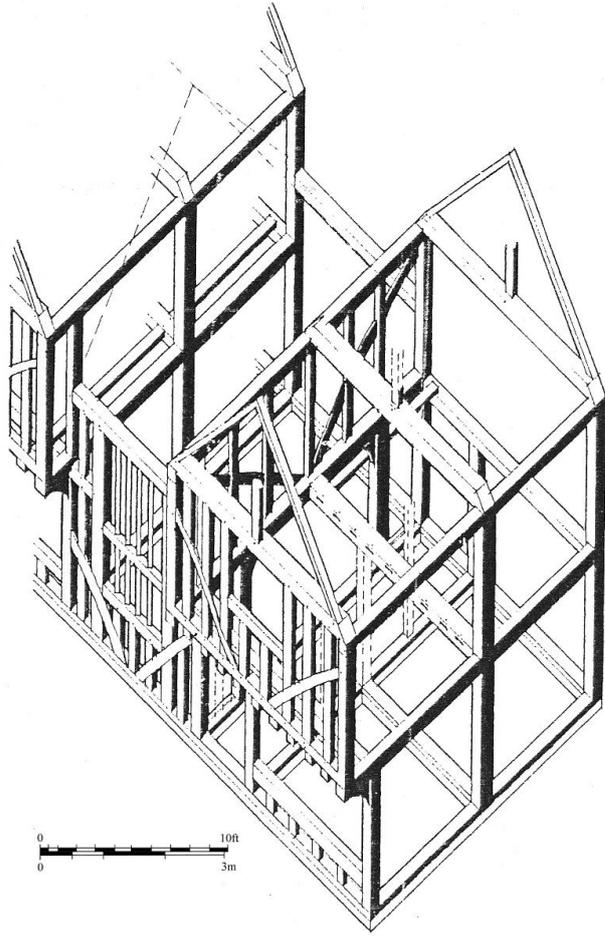
In the 1575 rental, Craig Dhu was a copyhold tenement belonging to Ellen Scarlett.



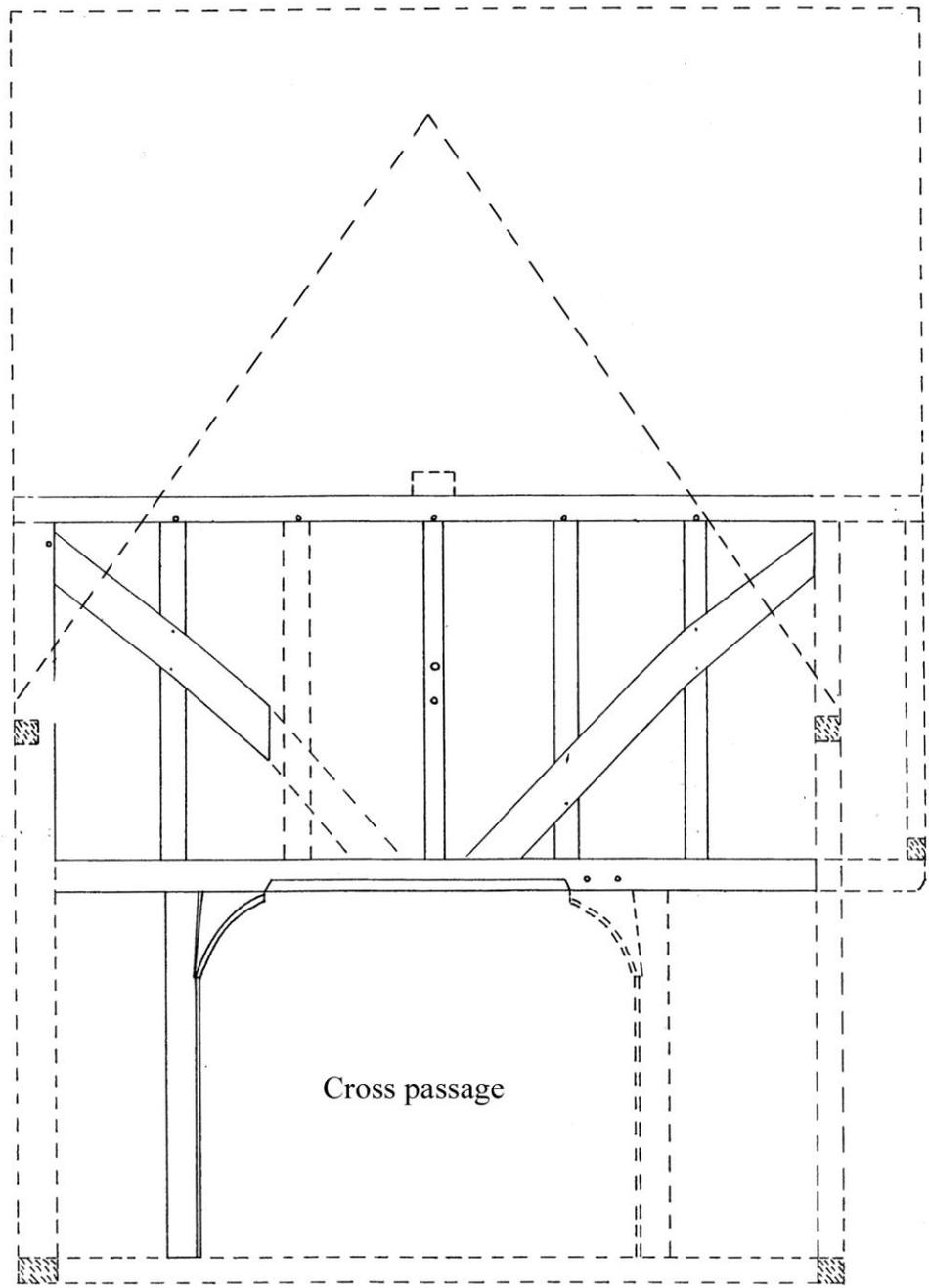
Front elevation of Craig Dhu



Ground plan of Craig Dhu

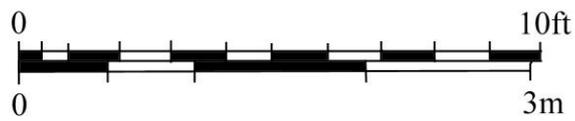


Axonometric reconstruction of the timber frame

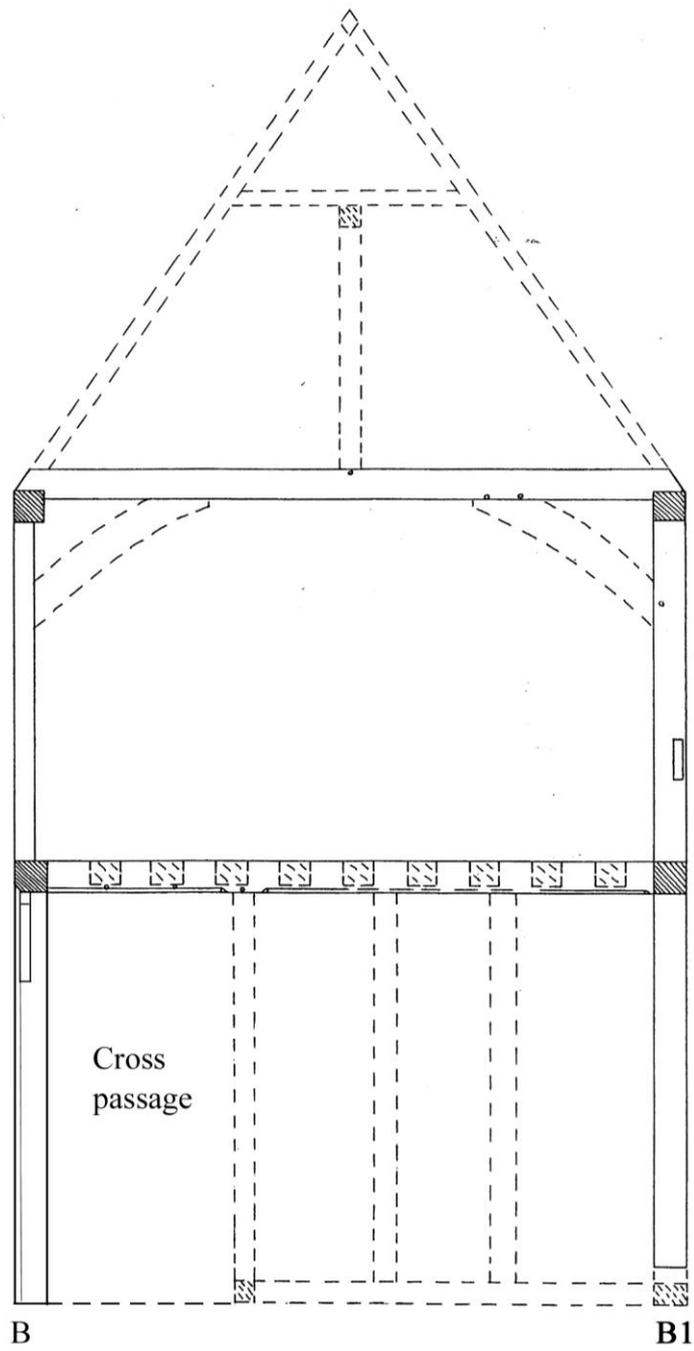


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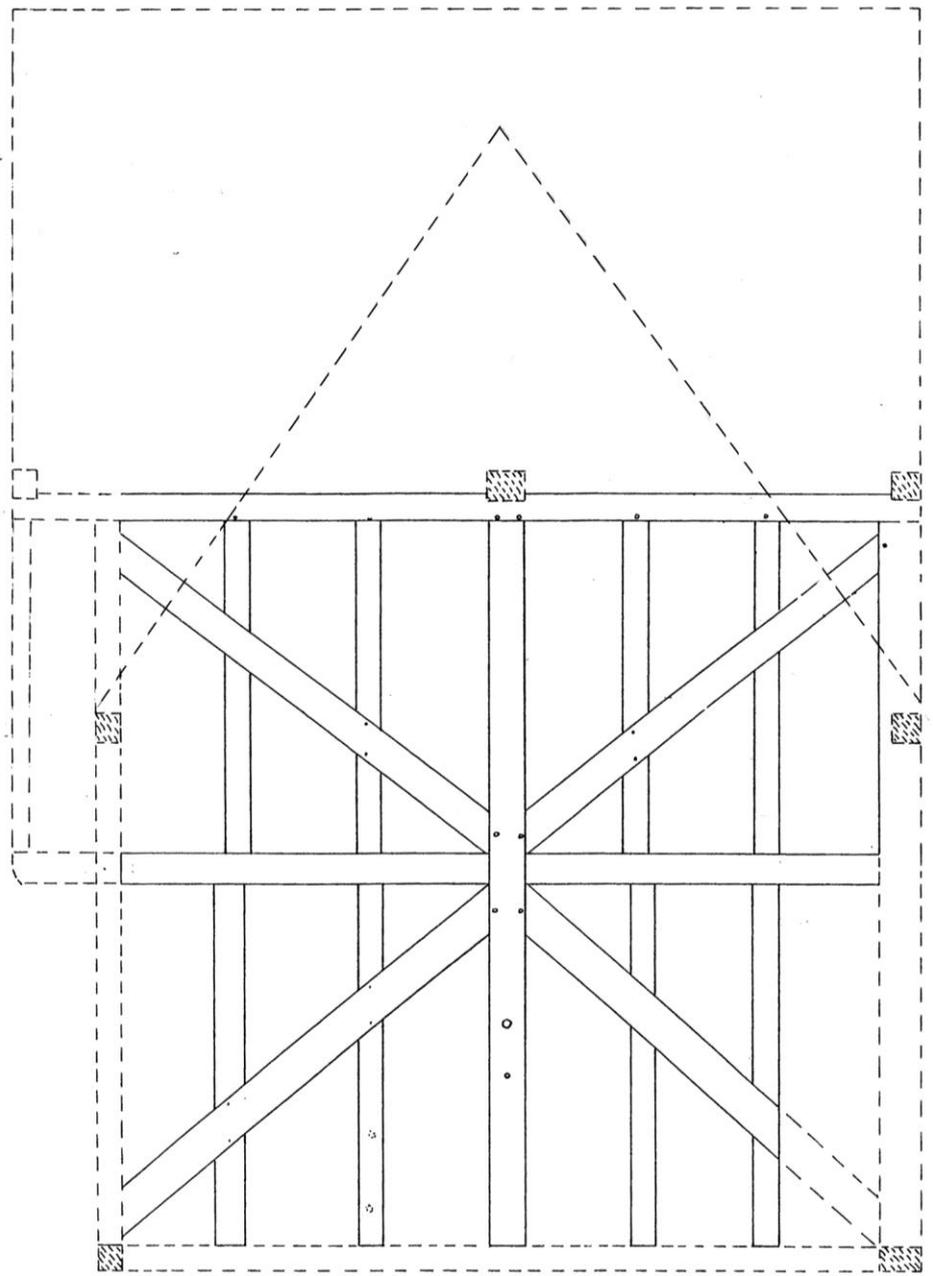
A1



Section A A1



Section B B1



C

C1



Section C C1