

**An Archaeological Interpretative Survey
of
Seymour House, off Landgate,
Rye, East Sussex**



by
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September 2007

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
INTERPRETATIVE SURVEY
OF
SEYMOUR HOUSE, Off LANDGATE,
RYE, EAST SUSSEX**

**Commissioned by
LIZ GOLDTHORPE**

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STANDING BUILDINGS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATIVE SURVEYS

AN INTRODUCTORY NOTE

ABOUT THESE SURVEYS

The intended purpose of an *Archaeological Interpretative Survey* is to give an overview of the date, sequence of construction, and principal architectural features of a building. As such, they should not be regarded as a detailed archaeological record, nor should they be taken as definitive. Further research, particularly that undertaken during building works, is likely to refine and extend the archaeological record.

These reports are aimed at three groups of user, namely those owners who wish to know more about their property, those persons (architects and planners) who are charged with the responsibility for both conserving the buildings and ensuring that they are carefully adapted to the needs of the future, and finally the academic carrying out wider historical or archaeological research. A secure use for the future is, in our opinion, the only way of ensuring the long-term survival of any historical building.

INVESTIGATIVE TECHNIQUE

Unless noted to the contrary, the assessments involve a visual inspection of the fabric, both internally and externally, including any accessible roof voids and basement areas. Except where building works are being carried out, intrusive techniques are inappropriate. Interpretation of the fabric and fittings therefore relies principally upon inspection of the visible evidence. As part of the interpretative procedure, a measured outline survey of every property is undertaken.

THE WRITTEN REPORT

For ease of reference the written reports are divided into sections under a series of headings and sub-headings. The typical sequence of headings is as follows:-

- 1 Location of the building.
- 2 Sequence of development.
- 3 Detailed architectural description, arranged period-by-period.

THE DRAWINGS

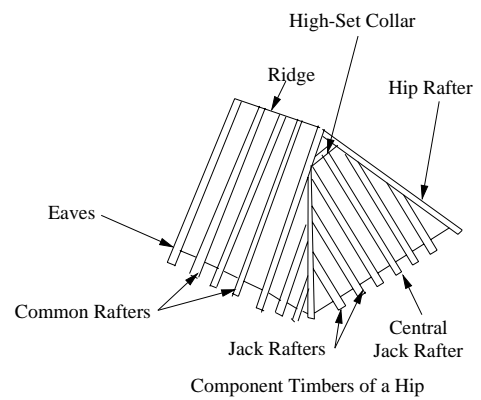
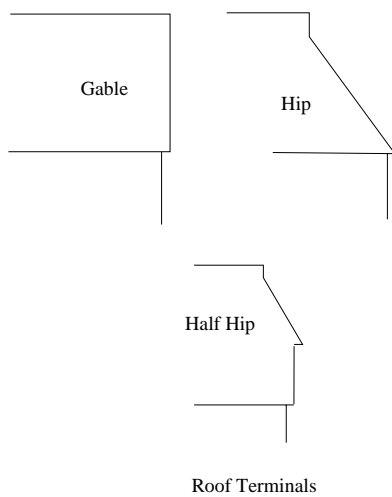
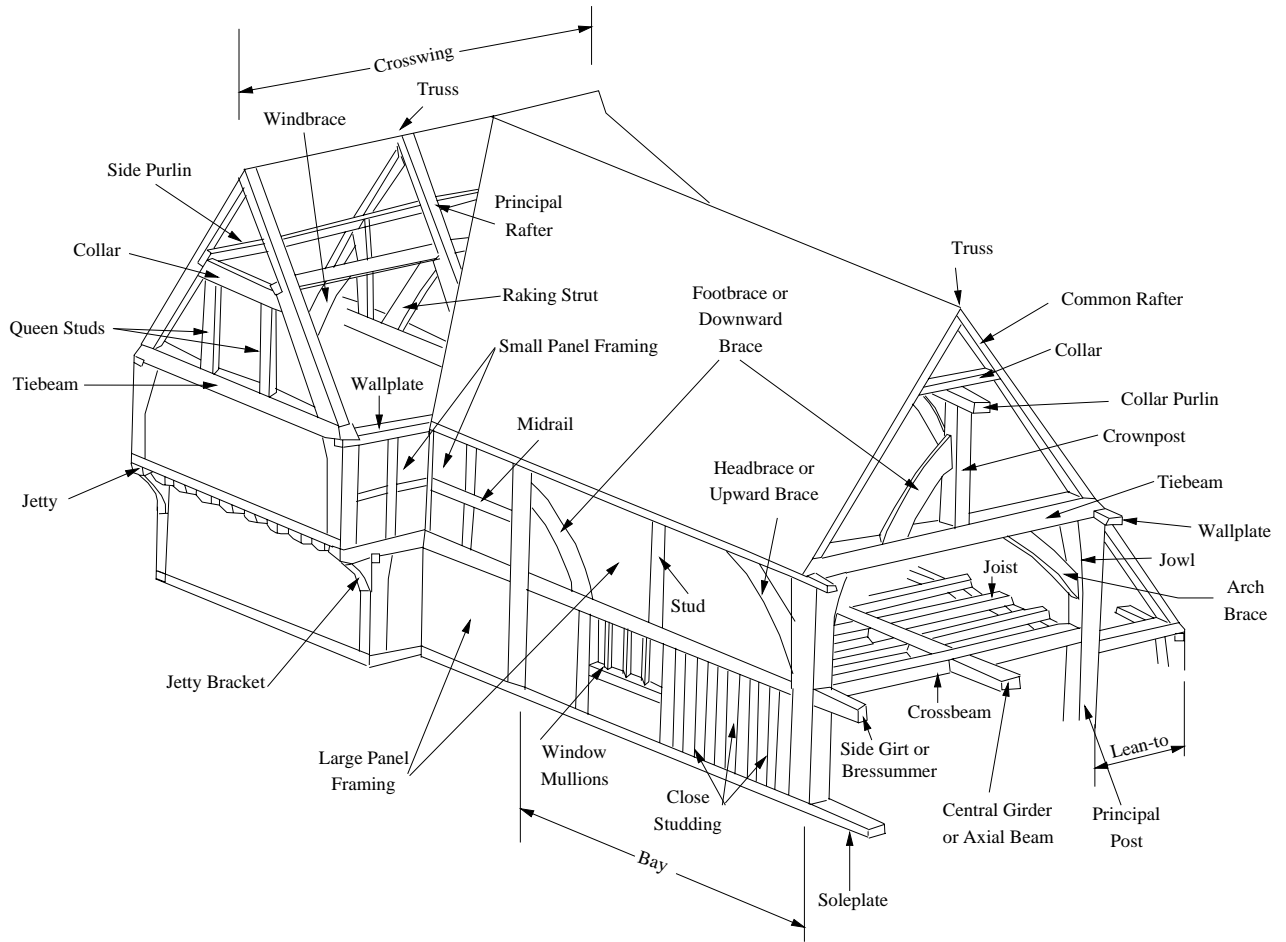
A set of drawings produced from an measured outline survey is included within the body of each report. The purpose of these drawings is to identify the features included within the written text and to illustrate, as far as is known, the form of the structure during its various stages of development. For clarity the drawings have been prepared in the form of scale 'sketches', rather than detailed archaeological record drawings. For reasons of economy, the making of detailed archaeological drawings is restricted to stripped-out or exceptionally important buildings.

The symbols as used in the drawings attached to this report are as follows:

—————	Surviving Timber-Framed Wall
///////	Surviving Brick or Stone Wall
-----	Features evidenced but destroyed or masked from view
- - - - -	Beam or feature immediately overhead
.....	Conjectural or very approximate
■	Structural timber
?	Details unknown or doubtful

OTHER CONVENTIONS USED -

- 1 Doors are shown in plan only where known: hence rooms may appear to have no obvious means of access.
- 2 With the exception of rafters, wallplates, and some chimneys and roof-lines, sections show features cut by or immediately adjacent to the cutting line only.



GLOSSARY OF PRINCIPAL TERMS

REPORT NO. 1666
RYE - SEYMOUR HOUSE, Off LANDGATE
NGR TQ 9215 2066

LOCATION (See Drawing No. 1666/1)

Seymour House represents a 'back of plot' development built upon a divided-off part of the rear garden which once belonged to Nos. 3-4 Landgate, on the western side of Landgate (formerly called Kings Street). Landgate is a suburban street which extends northwards from the town's surviving medieval gate. The house is located upon what was in 1860 the western edge of the plot, well away from the street frontage. It is built upon the upland margin of former marshland (now largely built over) called St. Mary's Marsh.

The house is constructed on an approximately north-south axis with its principal elevation facing west towards the former marshland. Today there is access to the plot from Rope Walk to the west and via an alley/twitten extending through 3-4 Landgate from the east.

HISTORICAL NOTE

A town plan of Rye prepared in 1771 and now held by Rye Museum indicates that at that time there were no buildings fronting this part of Landgate, though the area immediately to the south was built up and there was an isolated structure further to the north. Present day Landgate Square, at the northern end of the street, is also shown.

Title deeds (including an abstract of title) in the possession of the present owner, Liz Goldthorpe, indicates that the land to the north of Seymour House had once formed part of this property, but at an unknown date prior to 1804 this had been sold to Richard Worsell by the then owner, William Farr. The abstract of title gives information which is vital to understanding the evolution of the site. In April of that year William Farr's only child and heiress, Mary, wife of William Forster of Wittersham, Kent, sailor, sold what is today 3-4 Landgate, together with its back garden extending down to the marshlands, to John Loram for £315. For the boundaries of the property at that date see Drawing No. 1666/1. The property is described in the conveyance as a messuage or tenement and the court and appurtenances belonging; a building (then painted white) formerly a stonemason's shop, but in 1804 used as a storeroom; an enclosed garden immediately behind the said messuage; and also a piece of garden ground adjacent to the said premises, stumped off to separate it from other garden ground (to the north) which had previously been sold by Farr to Richard Worsell, fishcurer. The deed states 'Which said messuage, buildings, court, gardens and premises adjoin together and are situate in Rye aforesaid, without the Landgate there and abutting to the street or highway there towards the east.' This description is further qualified by the statement that 'the ground

on which the said messuage and buildings stand and the said gardens were part and parcel of [a] certain garden, ground and premises formerly belonging to John Stapeley, deceased'. Thus the property being conveyed had once been part of a larger property. The deed then gives detailed abutments and dimensions, the latter being particularly useful in confirming the boundaries of the property at that date. In summary, they are given as follows: E = 38ft 'in front' [ie. along Landgate Street, as made clear earlier in the deed]; S = 182ft against the premises of John Haddock esq., John Farmer and Sarah his wife, and Sarah Bean; W = 61ft against the marshlands of said John Haddock; N = 184ft against the buildings, ground and premises late William Farr and [?before him] John Farr, but now Richard Worsell (ie. the piece of land to the north sold off by Farr). The occupiers of the property being conveyed are given as John Loram and William Waters, and therefore the sale was, in fact, to one of the two tenants who already occupied the premises.

The dimensions given in the deed of sale to John Loram confirm that the property as sold in 1804 was the entire plot stretching back from Landgate to the edge of St Mary's Marsh. By 1807 Loram was dead and, under the terms of his will, the property was sold by his trustees and executors. The purchaser was William Cotheran and the purchase price £505. The deed of conveyance notes that the former stonemason's shop, which by 1804 was in use as a storehouse, had by 1807 been converted into a dwelling: it further states that the 'messuage or tenements and building [ie. the messuage and the stonemason's shop] were then some years ago erected and built by William Farr' and were 'formerly in the tenure or occupation of William Piper, stonemason, or his undertenants'. The abutments are given as in 1804 (with minor differences) and confirm that at this date the property still extended up to Landgate. Thus, both the house and the converted stonemason's shop referred to in the deeds of 1804 and 1807 relate to present day 3 Landgate and 4 Landgate respectively. Neither building represents Seymour House which, at this time, had still not been constructed.

A transcript of the Abstract of Title to the property up to 1835, together with further deeds dated 7th March 1856 and 8th September 1876, have been made available to the authors in the preparation of this present report. Data from subsequent deeds are not currently accessible. The last entry in the abstract relates to the will of William Cotheran, dated 13th August 1835, by which the property descended to Mary Hayes Seymour and Jane Hughes, William's only surviving children. In 1856 Mary Hayes Seymour was still alive and living in Rye as a widow, but by then Jane Hughes was dead and her share of the property had been inherited by her two children, Mary Jane Ludlow and Elizabeth Clara Hughes. In that year all three joint owners conveyed the northern building fronting onto Landgate together with a piece of garden and a right of way to John Standen. An indenture of 1856 relating to the production of deeds indicates that the property which had been purchased by William Cotheran in 1807 was by 1856 in three ownerships: (1) a messuage and garden which were at this date being conveyed to Standen (ie. 4 Landgate); (2) a cottage or tenement and premises belonging to Mary Hayes Seymour, William Ludlow and his wife, Jane, and Eliza(beth) Clara Hughes (ie. 3 Landgate) and (3) a 'messuage and premises exclusively the property of the said Mary Hayes Seymour' (ie. Seymour House).

The (assumed) deed conveying the rear part of the original property exclusively to Mary Hayes Seymour does not seem to have survived, but it seems likely that this part was transferred to her exclusive ownership when she built Seymour House. Most likely this occurred soon after the death of William Cotheran in 1835.

The bounds of the entire property as detailed in the 1804 deed are easily identifiable in the 1860 town survey and associated poor law award and are indicated in Drawing No. 1666/1. The boundaries shown in 1860 equate very accurately to the dimensions stated in the deeds [East Sussex Record Office (ESRO) PAR 467/38/1; ESRO DR/B/28/1]. Seymour House was at that date in the owner occupation of William Collins (being plot 771, described as a house and garden) with, at the eastern end of the plot (behind the buildings fronting onto Landgate) another house and garden in the same ownership, but occupied by Widow King. The ex-stonemason's shop (4 Landgate) was at that date still owned by John Standen and was occupied by James Russell, whilst the original house built by Farr (3 Landgate) was owned by [blank] Jones and occupied by [blank] Burham. Thus by 1860 it would appear that the part of the original property which had become owned elusively by Seymour and the part which had remained in the joint ownership of the heiresses had passed to new owners. Seymour house is accurately depicted in the 1860 plan in its period-A form.

OVERVIEW OF SEYMOUR HOUSE [Drawing Nos. 1666/2-3]

The architectural features - specifically the form of roof construction and the design of the finishings - indicate a build date for Seymour House during the first half of the 19th century [**Period A**]. The style of roof construction adopted is particularly late and suggests a date after c.1820. This accords well with the historical background as currently known, which implies that the house was most likely built by Mary Seymour and her husband following their inheritance of a half share in the undivided property following the death of her father in 1835. It is an 'L-plan' structure and is very typical of its period, being symmetrically fronted with a central doorway giving onto a small entrance area, immediately beyond which rises the main staircase. On either side are two reception rooms, with service areas included at the rear. The layout is repeated on the first floor where there are three bedchambers giving off a landing lit by borrowed light. Beneath the stairs is a small cellar, whilst incorporated on the ground-floor, within a small rear two-storeyed lean-to outshut, is a shed accessed from the exterior only. The whole is under a shallow cut-and-pitched roof, which is slated. There are no attic rooms. The ground-floor section of the structure is of brick construction, as too is the upper part of the front facade. The remainder of the upper storey is of tile-hung softwood studwork. Many of the internal fixtures and fittings survive, though the two principal fireplace surrounds have been replaced.

In 1860 the house still retained its period-A footprint, but subsequently a small single-storeyed externally accessed lean-to store or shed was built into the re-entrant angle between the main and rear ranges. Modern internal alterations include replacement of

the fireplace surrounds within the two principal reception rooms (parlour and hall), removal of the dividing partition forming the larder within the kitchen, and the sub-division of the rear 'L-shaped' first-floor bedchamber (Kitchen Chamber) in order to form a bathroom. The latter alteration is of mid 20th-century date and required the intrusion of a new window opening through the south wall of the rear range. Unless there was a window in the south wall (now masked by the added store) the larder appears originally to have been unlit, for the present small window opening in the east wall represents an insertion. The frames of both the rear external doorway and the rear window serving the kitchen are modern, but the openings within which they are set are original.

All work carried out since period A is excluded from the more detailed architectural description which follows.

LISTED STATUS OF THE BUILDING

Seymour House was listed grade II on 11th September 1972, its listed building reference being TQ 9220 1/277 II 2. The description in the list entry is purely for the purpose of recognition and is normally, therefore, primarily based on external appearance. The date is given as late C18 or early C19. [Source: English Heritage, Images of England - website]. The description must not be treated as a comprehensive schedule of those elements which are legally protected as, no matter what the grade, the legislative cover not only relates to both the interior and exterior, but also extends to any building within the curtilage which predates the 1st July 1948.

DETAILED ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

PERIOD A (E 19th C, probably c.1835) [Drawing No. 1661/3]

LAYOUT

The structure consists of a principal north-south aligned range which measures approximately 8.95 metres x 4.90 metres (29'4" x 16'1") overall, with a 3.05 metre x 5.15 metre (10'0" x 16'10") northern rear range and a 1.10 metre (3'8") wide two-storeyed rear lean-to outshut extending along the southern part of the main range. Measuring 2.40 metres (7'10") floor to ceiling, the ground-floor and first-floor storey heights are generous for the size of building. Because of the low-lying nature of the site, the height within the tiny cellar is only 1.35 metres (4'5") from floor to underside of the floorboards of the ground-floor room, headroom in part being increased by the presence of the sloping soffit to the main staircase above.

Primary access is from the west, via the centrally-placed doorway within the display facade which, rather curiously, faced across the marshland towards Rope Walk, despite

access to the site (even in 1860) being from the east via a narrow twitten leading off Landgate. The doorway is protected by a small open-sided portico supported on columns.

Upon entering, a pair of doorways facing opposite one another within a tiny lobby/entrance leads into two identical-sized rooms, one to the south, the other to the north. The differing quality of finish within each of the rooms makes clear that the southern served as the principal reception room (or Parlour), with the northern acting as the every day living room (or Hall). The working parts of the house, at the rear, were (and still are) reached through the hall. Here is a kitchen served by a fireplace designed to accommodate a range, with an area divided off to the south to form a larder, entrance area to the tiny cellar (largely sited beneath the stairs) and to a store (now a WC) sited within the northern end of the rear lean-to outshut. The larder has now been subsumed into the kitchen by removal of its partition, but its western door jamb (shared with an adjacent doorway) still remains, as too do the scars left by the partition on the floor, visible beneath the modern floor coverings. The back door leads directly into the kitchen and is placed immediately opposite the doorway leading from the kitchen into the hall. The kitchen is partially protected from draughts entering through the back doorway by a short panelled screen, which appears to be an original feature. The only other ground-floor room, within the southern end of the rear lean-to, was designed to serve as a store or shed and has always been accessible from the exterior only.

Extending up from the entrance lobby, and effectively forming an eastward continuation of it, is the staircase. Capped by a high-level semi-elliptical barrel-vaulted ceiling, the stairs lead directly onto a small first-floor landing contrived partially within the upper part of the rear lean-to outshut, but principally by partitioning off an area from the south-western corner of the kitchen chamber within the rear range. Although modified in recent years by the intrusion of a doorway to serve a bathroom contrived within the kitchen chamber, this arrangement is original to the house and allowed independent access to all three of the first-floor bedchambers, as well as to a closet sited within the southern part of the two-storeyed rear outshut. The two principal chambers - hall chamber and parlour chamber - are each heated by fireplaces and each has a closet contrived over the entrance lobby. Unless subsequently re-fronted, a small closet beside the chimney within the 'L-shaped' kitchen chamber appears to represent a later insertion. The finish within this latter chamber is far more basic in its quality and here there never has been a fireplace.

Because of the shallow pitch of the roof, the roof void is very low and was never intended to be utilized. The present access hatch within the ceiling of the landing area is modern, but there is an older and much smaller access trap within the ceiling of the kitchen chamber. Whether or not this is original, or represents an early insertion, is unclear.

EXTERIOR DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

All external ground-floor walls are constructed in brickwork and within the front (west) elevation this rises full height. Being an external store, the rear lean-to outshut makes use of half-brick walls laid in stretcher bond and strengthened on the internal face by means of integrated brick piers. At the point where this wall meets the south elevation of the main part of the house there is a visible straight joint which rises a few courses above ground level, above which the two parts are fully bonded together. Rather than indicating a difference in date, this straight joint reflects the method of construction, the foundation and lower courses of the outshut having been constructed after those of the main part of the building, but with both elements of the upper parts of the brickwork constructed simultaneously. This could indicate that the outshut represents a change in design made at an early stage during construction, but - given the outshut is an essential part of the means of circulation on the first-floor - it is more likely to reflect the builders' sequence of construction. Excepting the rear outshut, all external brick walls are one-brick in thickness with the full-height front (west) facade principally built in Flemish bond and all other elevations laid in English bond. Tile hanging weathers the studwork used in the construction of the first-floor walls within the north, east and south elevations. The external corners of the tile hanging are finished by means of bead-moulded timber fillets, whilst at their western ends the tile hanging abuts against the one-brick wide ends of the brick front facade, which shows in the north and south elevations as one-brick piers.

The six-panel front door is approached by a low, simple, flight of steps (rebuilt) and is flanked by reeded pilasters and capped by a simple, but effective rectangular glazed fanlight comprising a central roundel linked to half roundels at the jambs (Plate 1). The whole is protected by a flat-topped portico (largely rebuilt) supported at the front corners by slender Doric columns. Above, on the first floor, is a blind opening in the form of a slightly recessed rendered panel. The doorway and central panel are flanked by original double-hung sash windows set virtually flush with the brickwork and edged with moulded architraves. All sashes in this elevation are four panes wide and two high, giving a total of four by four to each opening. The upper tier of panes within the top sashes in all four windows are in the form of two-centred arches in the style of the Gothic Revival (Plate 2). Both lower openings are set beneath a rendered flat arch. The head of a ground-level 'window' lighting the cellar is visible adjacent to the entrance, on its north: it is the only feature which breaks the symmetry of the facade.



Plate 1
Fanlight over front door

Neither the north nor south elevations originally incorporated windows, though an opening has been intruded through the south wall of the rear range in modern times. Even within the rear (east) elevation windows were kept to a minimum. A small first-floor opening within that part occupied by the two-storeyed outshut is of indeterminate date - it could be original but is more likely to have been added in order to serve the otherwise unlit first-floor closet, whilst the window below, lighting the externally accessed store, is certainly a modern intrusion. The external doorway leading into the store, on the other hand, is original. The small window in the east wall of the rear range which lit the former larder is likewise a modern intrusion, but the opening of the back door together with the kitchen window to its north are original, though both now have replacement frames. Both openings are capped by arches incorporating a segmental intrados, but flat extrados. The replacement window frame is a three-pane casement which, to judge from the proportions of the opening, reflects the design of the original. In contrast, the centrally-placed window on the first floor, lighting the kitchen chamber, is a standard double-hung sash, each sash four panes wide and two high. Reflecting the lesser status of this elevation, the sashes are not elaborated with arched heads.

The fully-hipped roof is clad with slate which, given the very shallow pitch, must always have been the case. The shallow-pitched roof gives the house the feeling of an Italianate villa, a point further emphasized by the wide eaves soffits. Those which cap the south elevation of the rear range and the east elevation of the two-storeyed rear outshut are plain: all others are elaborated by means of paired, shaped soffit brackets (see Plate 3)

INTERNAL PARTITIONS, DOORWAYS AND ASSOCIATED FINISHINGS

As is to be expected in a house of this period and design, within the principal spaces all structural elements of the building are masked by finishings, which are themselves graded in quality to suit the importance of the individual rooms. Structural investigations



Plate 2

Typical window in front facade



Plate 3

Typical arrangement of eaves brackets

carried out on the building indicate that on the ground floor within the front part of the house the internal face of the external brick walls is finished with a clay-based hair plaster supported on cleft laths which in turn are fixed to vertical battens, thereby preventing dampness penetrating through the walls. There are no plaster skim coats, indicating that the surfaces were always intended to be lined, probably with wall paper.

Within the principal reception room - the parlour - there is an elaborately moulded skirting board (Plate 4) whilst a scar on the walls indicates where a moulded dado rail has been removed. The chimney breast is flanked by recesses incorporating semi-elliptical-headed fronts elaborated by means of simple roll mouldings. Both the window opening and the main doorway have wide reeded surrounds, the blocks at the top corners of the door surround being elaborated by means of a flower motif set within a sunk panel (Plate 5). Beneath the window is an intact vertical sliding shutter housed within a wall recess formed by a moulded panel (Plate 6).

The door surrounds within the entry have similar wide, reeded surrounds but, reflecting the lesser status of this area, here the blocks incorporate plain sunk panels without motifs.

All doors in the front part of the house are of six-panel type, as too is that leading from the hall into the kitchen in the rear range. However, in the hall the openings are fitted with standard moulded architraves, rather than a reeded surround, as too is the window opening. Here there appears not to be a vertical sliding shutter. Again there is a dado, in this instance with simple dado panelling beneath, whilst a moulded picture rail runs around the room a little below ceiling level. Original cupboards flank the chimney breast and these retain their simple panelled doors



Plate 4

Skirting and window surround in parlour



Plate 5

Decorated block to door surround in parlour



Plate 6

Vertical sliding shutter in parlour

(Plate 7).

At the rear of the house the finishings are far more basic. Here the walls are rendered (modern) direct onto the brickwork and it is likely that originally the brickwork was left visible. Even so, the remains of simple dado panelling survives on the north wall of the kitchen and there is an apparently original panelled draught screen beside the back door (Plate 8). An original cupboard, complete with its doors, survives beside the chimney, as does a small part of the lightly-constructed partition which divided the kitchen from the larder and cellar landing to the south. Here were two doorways set side by side sharing a common central jamb: the bead-moulded frame of that leading to the cellar landing survives, whilst that to the former larder is evidenced by the bead moulding and mortice for former door head on the shared jamb.

Lifted floorboards at first-floor level allowed it to be confirmed that the internal partitions at this level are of timber stud construction founded on a soleplate laid over the floor joisting. Here too the coverings are of clay-based hair plaster applied to cleft laths, and - as on the ground floor - there are no indications of a skim coat indicating former applied finishings, probably wall paper. Some probably early wall paper, very mixed in design, still survives within the closets. The doors generally are six panel with standard moulded architraves. The height of the doorway leading into the rear (kitchen) chamber is less tall than its neighbour, reflecting the lesser status of this room and also allowing the inclusion above it of a small borrowed light serving the otherwise poorly lit landing. The lower status of this room is indicated in other ways too: a lack of mouldings on the internal face of the door, simple bead-moulded skirtings, and the absence of a picture rail. Those parts of the dog-leg partition forming the barrier between the room and the adjacent landing are of panelled timber construction



Plate 7

Hall showing fitted cupboards and dado panelling



Plate 8

Draught screen in kitchen

covered on one face with hessian, but generally this partition was much disrupted when a doorway was cut through during the formation of a modern bathroom.

Although less elaborate in their finish than the rooms on the ground floor, the two front bedchambers have skirtings which are more elaborately finished than in the rear (kitchen) chamber, and here a moulded picture rail is included but (unless removed) no dado rail. The doors to the closets are less elaborate than those leading into the room. The hall chamber retains a small fitted cupboard (with doors) beside the fireplace breast and there are some indications (in the form of scars) of a removed low-level fixed cupboard beside the chimney breast in the parlour chamber. However, to judge from the scar on the wall finish, this latter cupboard represented a later insertion.

Generally the doors within the building are hung on butts and have metal cased mortice locks and brass knobs. Given the early 19th-century date of the building, these could easily be original to the build.

FLOORS AND CEILINGS

The 'modern' construction techniques utilized within the building are well illustrated by the details of the floors. The ground floor within the rear range and outshut is of solid construction, but within the main range is a suspended timber floor supported from beneath by half-brick thick sleeper walls. Only small areas of this floor were available for inspection at the time of survey, in areas where floorboards had been lifted. From this it was clear that parts of the floor joisting had been replaced in modern times, but other parts remain intact. The joists are of softwood, machine cut, and measure 55 mm x 100 mm, set at approximately 350 mm centres. These double as the ceiling joists where they cross the tiny cellar area.

At the time of survey sample floorboards had likewise been lifted on the first floor, and here too the joists are machine cut softwood, in this instance 65 mm x 150 mm in section, set at 400 mm centres. All are lodged into position, being supported over the timber plates of the ground-floor walls and partitions, and thus it is assumed that some form of noggings are included in order to stiffen up the construction, though none were visible in the areas inspected. Both the ground-floor and first-floor joists support softwood floorboards, whilst the first-floor joisting is masked from view from beneath by a lath-and-plaster ceiling.

The arrangement of the joists supporting the first-floor ceilings is visible from within the roof void and here too the joists are of softwood, in this instance of lesser scantling, being 36 mm x 95 mm positioned on average at 440 mm centres - these joists were not designed to take a loading from above, for the roof void was never intended to be utilized in any way and thus the joists merely supported the lath-and-plaster ceiling. That part over the rear range is framed in a single bay, whereas the joisting within the main range is framed in three near-equal-length bays. The construction at the bay divisions is somewhat unusual in that rather than the joists being supported by a single

tiebeam, in each case there are two 60 mm x 160 mm softwood tiebeams positioned about 230 mm apart, connected to one another at wide intervals by iron tie-rods and solid timber noggings in order to form a 'composite beam' (Plate 9). Over most of the area of the house the laths which support the ceilings are nailed directly to the soffits of the joists, but over the stair well a semi-elliptical barrel-vaulted ceiling has been incorporated for effect, and this is located a little below the level of the joists. Here the laths are supported from above by board-like ribs specially shaped to form the curved profile of the ceiling (Plate 10).

STAIRS

The stair rises between two purposely placed partition walls and consists of a simple straight flight, the construction of which is hidden from beneath by a sloping plaster ceiling. On the northern side, fixed to the wall, is a 'mopstick' handrail supported on brackets and curved inwards at each end so as to abut the adjacent wall (Plate 11). There was originally no handrail on the opposite (southern) side, though one has been added in modern times.

At the head of the stair, at the point where it meets the top landing, is a flush arch, the arris of which is bead moulded towards the landing.

CHIMNEYS AND FIREPLACE SURROUNDS

There are two chimney stacks, one each built into the rear (eastern) wall of the hall and parlour respectively. The surrounds to the fireplaces serving both the hall and parlour have been removed in modern times and replaced by lowered tiled surrounds, but the shape is still discernible in the plaster. Within the northern stack a second fireplace is incorporated projecting into the kitchen and this has a more traditional fireplace approximately 1.00 metre



Plate 9
'Composite tiebeam' in roof



Plate 10
Barrel-vaulted ceiling over stairs
viewed from within roof

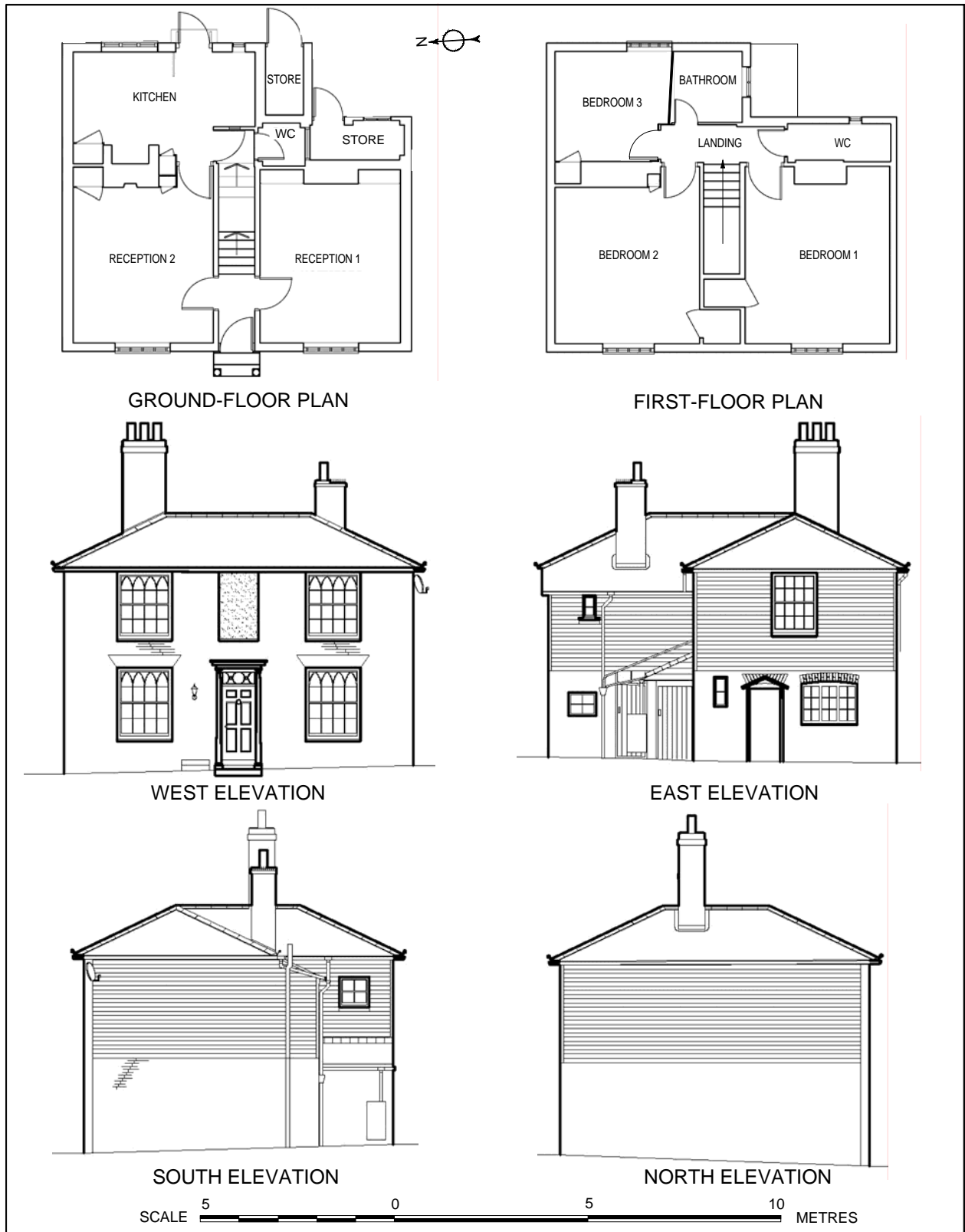


Plate 11
Curved end to 'mopstick' handrail

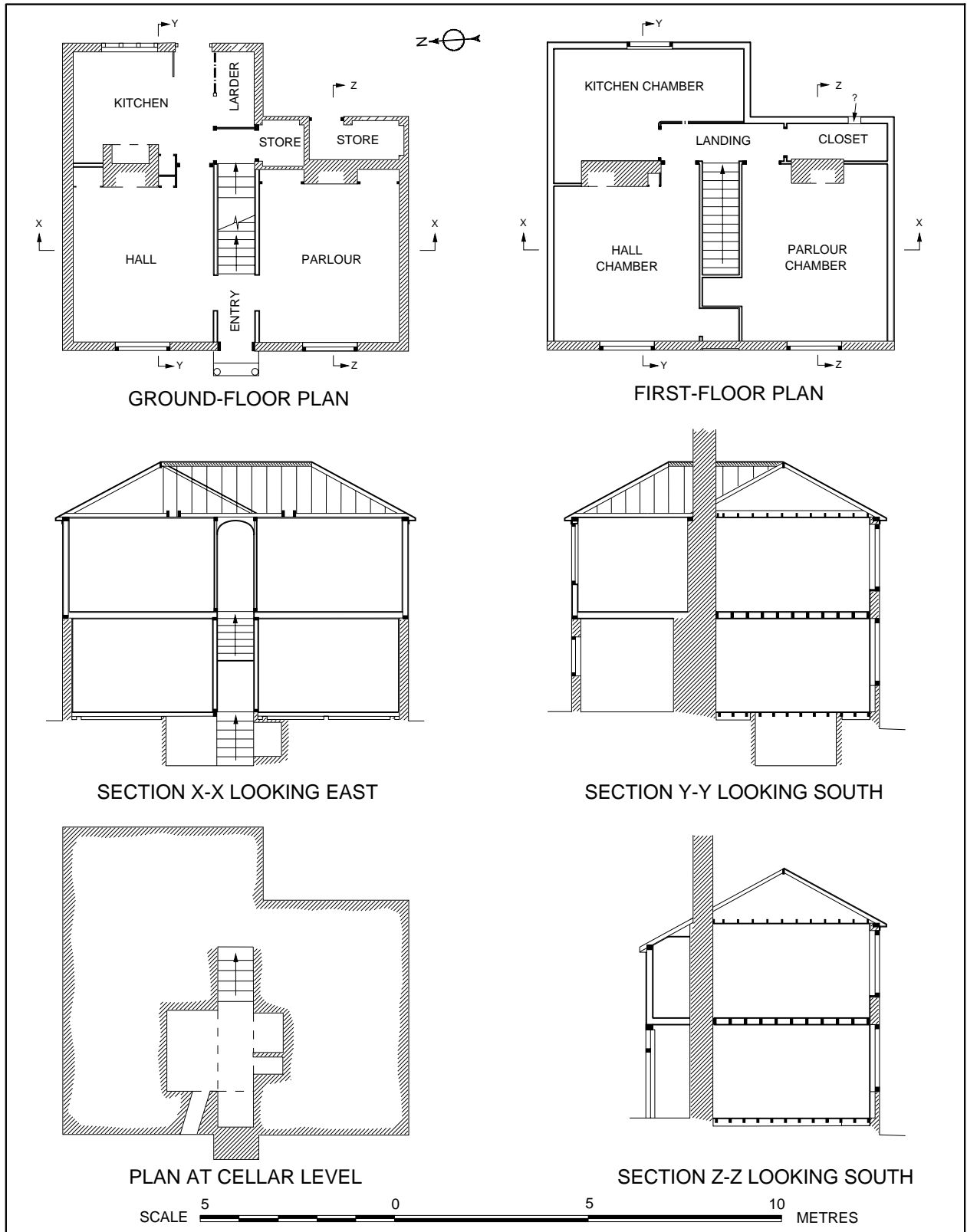
wide, 360 mm deep and 1.35 metres high, evidently designed to accommodate a range (removed). The flue tumbles back sharply so that there is no projection into the kitchen chamber on the first floor. The arrangement in the two main first-floor chambers repeats that on the ground floor, except that the fireplaces are off-centred within the breast in order to allow room for the flues rising from the fireplaces beneath. At this level both fireplace surrounds remain: they are typical of the period - reeded with plain blocks at the top corners with a simple, moulded mantelshelf above. Both fireplaces retain cast-iron grates and insets. That in the hall chamber may be original, but the semi-circular-headed inset in the parlour chamber is almost certainly later.

ROOF

As with the floor construction, the roof is typical of 19th-century work, being of cut-and-pitched construction, entirely of machine sawn softwood. The design is simple - paired rafters rising to a continuous ridgeboard without the inclusion of either collars or purlins. The valley between the two roofs is not formed using a valley rafter, but instead the southern slope of the rear range is pitched off the main range's eastern slope using lay boards. In contrast, the northern slope is extended through continuously to form the northern hip of the roof over the main range. Thus, the two roofs are fully integrated at their intersection. The construction over the two-storeyed rear outshut is masked from view by a plastered skeeling. The rafters generally support a boarded covering which in turn carries the slate roofing - whether this under-boarding is an original feature or was undertaken subsequently during a re-slating is unclear, but there were no obvious indications to suggest a later date.



SEYMOUR HOUSE, Off LANDGATE, RYE, EAST SUSSEX				Site Ref	P38/14/SH
BUILDING AS EXISTING (Survey by Conker Conservation Ltd)				Drawing No.	1666/2
Drawn By	D Martin	Revision No	-	Date of original survey	2007
				Date of this revision	2007



SEYMOUR HOUSE, OFF LANDGATE, RYE, EAST SUSSEX PERIOD-A RECONSTRUCTION DRAWINGS				Site Ref	P38/14/SH		
				Drawing No.	1666/3		
Drawn By	D Martin	Revision No	-	Date of original survey	2007	Date of this revision	2007

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