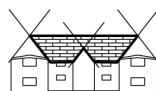




A Report on the Architectural History of Edey's Farmhouse, Gestingthorpe, Essex

April 2013



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Introduction

1.1. Project Overview

This report presents a Heritage Asset Assessment of the historical and structural significance of Edey's Farmhouse and associated structures on the site of Edey's Farm, Gestingthorpe in Essex. The barn is not part of our brief but will be considered as it forms part of the evolution of the farmstead.

The assessment has been commissioned by the project Architect, Richard Tricker from Tricker Blackie Associates, on behalf of the proprietors Mr D. Waller and Mrs. C. Waller.

The farmhouse and barn are both Listed Grade II, and date from the mid-C15. Comprehensive internal as well as external repairs are necessary to the timber-framed structure of the farmhouse due to years of neglect. The proposed scheme includes internal alterations to the late C19 and early C20 fabric and phases of alterations to the house. It is proposed to convert a range of mid to late C19 open-fronted farm buildings into living accommodation as an annex to the existing house.

The Heritage Asset Assessment has been undertaken by Nicolaas Joubert in association with Philip Aitkens Historic Buildings Consultant. It was carried out in accordance with the published guidance of English Heritage (Understanding Historic Buildings: Policy and Guidance for Local Planning Authorities 2008, English Heritage Statement PPS 5 (& the NPPF)

The report represents a Level II recording as specified by English Heritage.

1.2. Historical Context of the Site

(Please refer to Appendix 1 for a full historical report by Dr. C. Thornton)

2. Architectural Descriptions

2.1. Edey's Farmhouse

(See Drawings HBN732-001 to HBN732-006)

The farmhouse was constructed as a standard mid-15th century open hall house, at which point the planning of houses was very conventional. It is noticeable that the quality of the timbers and the quality of the carpentry are both high, suggesting that the house was well-funded. Despite its quality, the house is plain. The timber-framed walls of the house were constructed with closely spaced studs throughout the building. The house was probably constructed with plain tension-bracing (not exposed) in the longitudinal walls, and decorative stud bracing in the end walls.

The original layout of the house can still be identified even though the ground floor walling has been completely rebuilt in brick. From first floor level upwards the timber-

frame is unusually complete, and there is enough evidence in the frame to project the information downwards on paper to provide an accurate ground floor plan as-built.

It has a 3-cell layout, widely found throughout the southern counties of England. The house was divided into a two bay open hall at the centre, with a parlour to left and two service rooms or butteries to the right of the hall. A cross-passage, probably with a cross-screen, divided the service end from the hall. When the ground floor walling was rebuilt in brick, the house suffered the loss of most, if not all of its lower timber-frame. This complicates the reconstruction of the original layout of the house. However, exposed but redundant pegged mortises in the flank of a surviving binding beam which is located between the original parlour and hall enables us to reconstruct this wall. There is also evidence in this wall for a doorway which led into the parlour.

This end of the house would have been known as the 'high' end. A dais with a bench would have been placed against this wall in the hall, and was solely reserved for the head of the house.

A single surviving post, located in the current living room, shows clear evidence for a doorway on either side of it. The location of the post and doorways suggests two service doorways. These doors were located at the 'low' end of the house and confirm its original layout.

The Roof Structure

The roof is remarkably complete as constructed. It is a crown post structure which is half-hipped at both ends. Each pair of rafters is coupled together by a collar which is lap-halved to the rafters, about a third of the way down from the apex of the roof. The purpose of the collars is to prevent the roof from moving sideways under wind pressure, but more importantly to maintain the angle of the rafters. The last full pair of rafters near each end of the roof structure has two collars, one set about 450mm above the other. It is the upper collar on which the upper ends of the hip rafters are seated.

The collars are supported by a horizontal timber or collar-purlin, which runs along the length of the house. The collars are not jointed to the collar-purlin. The collar-purlin is supported on crown posts, which rise from the tie-beams to the underside of the purlin. The bottoms of the crown posts are tenoned into the upper face of the tie-beams. The crown post on top of the open truss tie-beam is of cross-quadrante design. It is purposely decorative as it takes centre stage above the tie-beam, and would have had a shadowy but defined outline through the smoky interior of the hall. The cross-quadrante form is popular in Essex and Suffolk, and it results from a desire to have a simple pilaster beneath the 4 cranked braces of the crown post. The crown post or crown stud in the two end partitions of the hall is plain and square with only 2 cranked braces, tenoned into the underside of the collar-purlin. Only one of these braces was visible from within the hall. As in the hall, the end chambers were also open to the roof, and the gable structure with which the roof terminates was visible from within each of these chambers.

The Form of the Hipped End to the Roof.

The half-hip is constructed in such a way as to allow for a window with a higher head level, bringing light into the upper chamber at each end. These windows are surprisingly big, considering they are unglazed. The half-hip is supported on a pair of substantial posts rising from the ground but supporting only the gable tiebeam, which does not span the full width of the house. This end-wall design with intermediate posts is not connected to a purlin system, and is therefore only, in a sense, 2-dimensional.

In other areas, notably north Suffolk and south Norfolk during the 15th century, these half-hipped end trusses with intermediate posts support a pair of purlins halfway up the roof slope. The purlins have a deep and narrow profile, and span inwards towards the closed truss dividing the storied end of the house from the open hall. The purlins may continue into the hall for a short distance across one or more rafters in the open hall in that context. An example of this type of roof is at Doggetts Farmhouse, Stradbroke, Suffolk.

Here at Edey's Farmhouse, the complete lack of side purlins reminds us that the crownpost roof system dominated vernacular architecture in the 15th century. The design of the half-hip structure derives from the 14th century, in which aisled houses had this type of configuration with arcade plates supported at the half-hip at the end of the building. However, arcade plates would have been abandoned by about 1400 in this type of house, and would now only have been a memory.

The Gablets.

These are of particular interest because they are unaltered at both ends of the roof structure. It is clear that the smoke production from the open hearth was confined within the open hall, and must have escaped through the roof there. The low level of soot deposits on the rafters implies that the roof may have been plaintiled from the outset. Thatch is a better insulator than plaintiles, and would therefore have evacuated the smoke from the open hearth at a slower pace than a plaintiled roof. The gablets at each end were therefore not intended to extract the smoke. In fact the primary reason for the existence of the gablets may have been structural, and connected with the framing of the hip. In many other houses they were associated with the evacuation of smoke. But in this case they were not, and they may have been boarded shut. There is also no evidence in the roof structure that smoke was evacuated through a louvre system at the ridge above the hall.

The C15 Hall

The hall was constructed in two bays with a central open truss, and its volume went right up to the underside of the rafters and roof covering. It did not contain a chimney stack and was heated by an open hearth on the ground, which was normally located near the centre of the room. The partition walls at either end of the hall continued upwards to the apex of the roof. The upper sections of the partitions, above the binding beams, were braced with mirrored tension bracing from a large central post down to the binding beam. Entry to the hall was gained through a set of opposing doorways in the front and back walls of the house. The space between these doors was known as the cross-passage, which in some cases was screened from the hall with a plank-and-muntin screen. These cross-screens rarely survive.

The central open truss has a decorative tie-beam which is cambered and chamfered. The two archbraces underneath the tie beam form a four-centred arch, similar to the door heads of the entry and the internal doors of the house. The braces have shallow chamfers along their edges which would have continued downwards to the soleplate, along a shaft on the face of the main storey posts. The storey posts are jowled at the head, with a distinctive extruded profile on the flanks. The open truss would have been a focal point in the hall.

The hall windows were located in the upper part of the hall (Bay 1), directly opposite each other. There are visible mortises for diamond mullions in the underside of the rear eaves plate (wallplate), which provide evidence to locate one of the original hall windows. The window sills would have been located at about eye level, and the window rose to the underside of the eaves plate. The midrail was probably interrupted and tenoned into large window jambs. Each window was in two sections which were divided by a transom.

The hall was the main room in the house and was the centre of activity and living space within the medieval house.

The C15 Parlour with chamber above.

The parlour formed the private accommodation of the householder. This room was located at the high end of the house. In some cases the parlour end of a rural house was divided into two separate rooms, one of which could have been a buttery accessed through a separate doorway. There would then be two doorways, one on each side of the dais. But in this case there was only one doorway to the parlour suggesting a single space or room. Unfortunately, due to the loss of the ground floor timber-frame the location of the parlour windows is uncertain, with the exception of a single diamond-mullioned window located in the back wall of the parlour. The only remaining evidence for its location is on the underside of the midrail, in the form of one diamond-shaped mortice. The discovery of this very small window is important, as it locates the original staircase lobby leading to the chamber above the parlour. This small window would have allowed natural light into the otherwise dark staircase. The staircase was located directly in front of the doorway which led into the parlour, but was set back from it to allow unobstructed entry to the room. The south-west wall of the parlour probably contained a window similar to the one in the chamber above. All of the timber-frame in the front wall has been removed, destroying any evidence for the presence of an earlier window in this wall.

The chamber above the parlour does not appear to have been originally used for living accommodation, but more likely for storage of cheeses, grain, etc., and was open to the roof. Both end walls of the house are identical in construction from midrail upwards. The end walls were constructed with stub ties. Generally, timber-framed buildings were constructed with a gable-end tie-beam in the end walls to tie the longitudinal walls together. In this building, the low position of the tie-beam within the end wall of the chamber would have dictated a window well below eye level of any person standing in the chamber. This would have also affected the amount of natural light within the room. The solution to this was to use a pair of short stub-ties. This allowed for a raised tiebeam

higher up in the end wall which could form the head of a large 6 light diamond mullion window and also support the base of the hipped roof. There is a surviving 3-light diamond mullion window in the rear wall of the chamber above the parlour which has been in-filled. This window is located at the head of the original staircase, providing natural light to the staircase landing. We are uncertain if the front wall of the chamber contained a window, but further uncovering work during the repair process will answer this as well as other questions.

The C15 Service Rooms with chamber above.

The service rooms were located at the low end of the house (north-east). The conventional plan of C15 houses was for the ground floor of the low end of the house to be divided into two rooms of equal size. These rooms were accessed from the hall, each by its own doorway, positioned as a pair at the centre of the end wall of the open hall. This was the case at Edey's Farmhouse. Although the layout of the ground floor at the low end of the house has been altered with the removal of the original partitions, there is a single surviving post located in the centre of the removed partition wall between the hall and service end of the house. It is of great importance. At the head of the post, and on either flank there is evidence for a doorhead. The evidence is in the form of mortices, with three pegs and a seating for the door head, cut into both sides of the post.

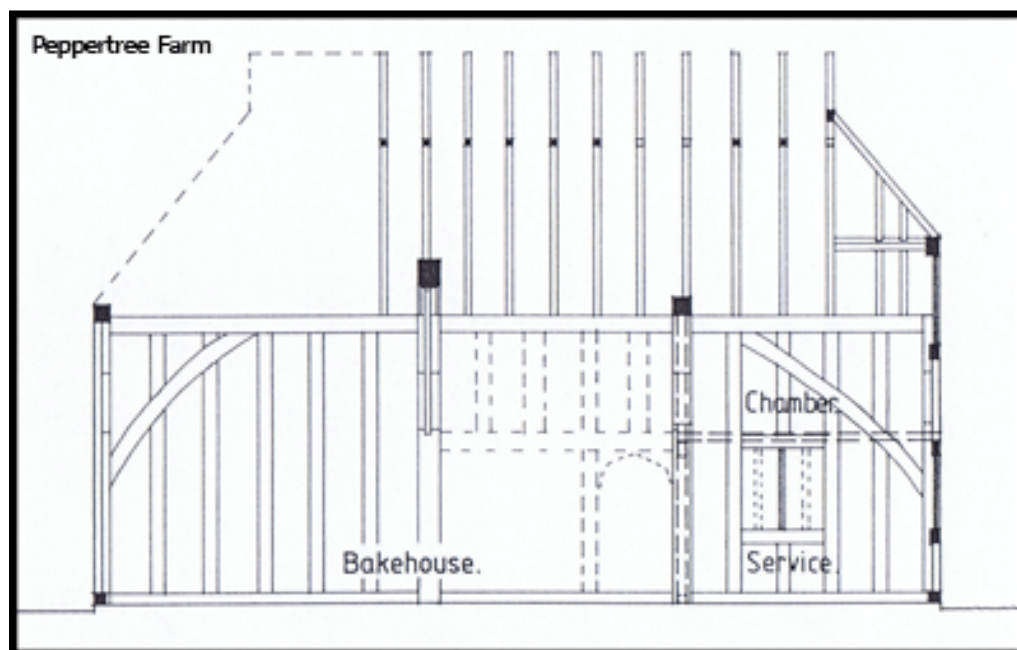
The partition wall between the hall and service rooms was located underneath a binding beam that spanned the building between the cross frame of the front and back walls of the house. This beam is still insitu and the underside is partially exposed, showing evidence for studs along the wall, and respecting the missing doorways. The reconstruction drawings show a third doorway at the foot of a staircase located against the rear wall of the house. Unfortunately the binding beam is not exposed at this point, and therefore the reconstruction is purely hypothetical and based on conventional mid-C15 floor plans. A bridging beam with a partition wall underneath divided the two service rooms. All original window evidence has been destroyed by the removal of the original timber-frame at ground floor level. However, based on other examples, both the service rooms would likely have had a window on either side of a central post or large stud in the back wall of the house as shown on the reconstruction drawings. The service staircase was probably lit by a small diamond-mullioned window, as was the case of the parlour staircase.

The service staircase led up to a chamber above the two service rooms. It was undivided and, as with the parlour chamber, open to the roof. This chamber was probably identical to the chamber above the parlour, with a surviving 3-light diamond-mullioned window located at the head of the staircase and a large 6-light diamond-mullion window in the end wall. This room also appears to have been used for storage rather than living accommodation. Neither the parlour chamber nor the service chamber show any evidence for later painted or decorative timbers, which you would have expected if these chambers were used for living accommodation by the 17th century. The end wall of this chamber was also constructed with stub ties to allow for the large 6 light diamond mullion window.

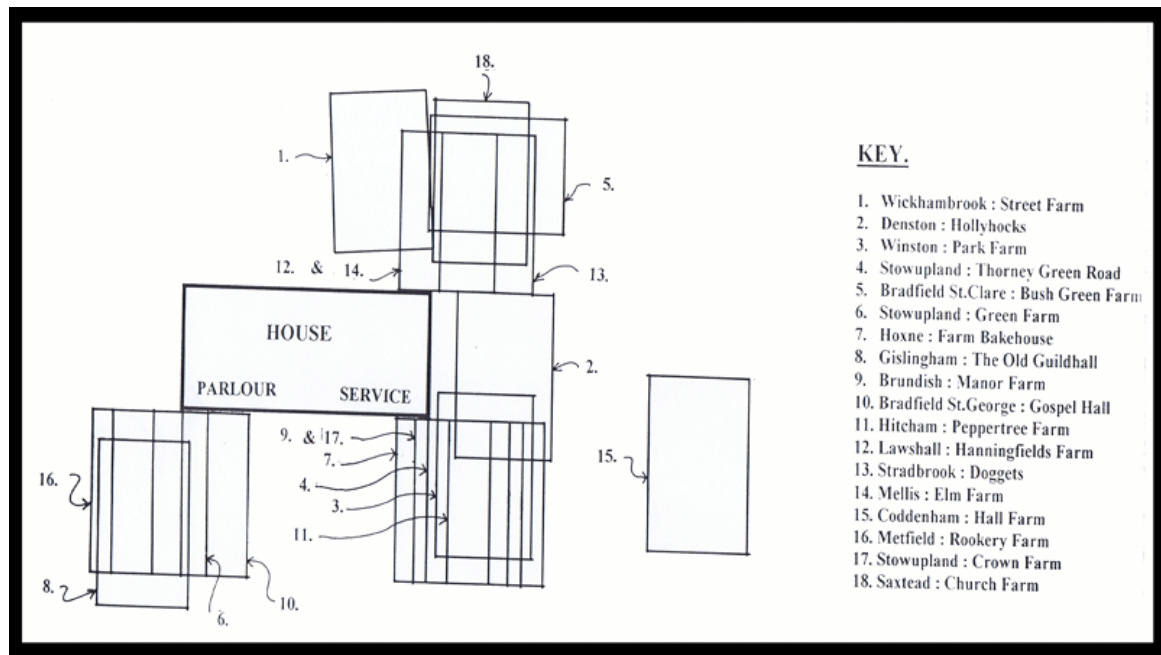
2.2. Alterations to the farmhouse.

The C16-C17 House

The earliest visible alterations to the farmhouse appear to have taken place during the first quarter of the C17. The C17 alterations to the house follow a trend which can be widely seen throughout the southern counties of England. By the C16-C17 the open hall would have been redundant in use as the central living and cooking area. This created the need for a separate area where food preparation, baking and slaughtering could take place. This need was fulfilled by the construction of a kitchen/bakehouse/backhouse. Usually, it was known as the kitchen in Essex. It was separated from the main house but in close proximity to it, generally located at right angles to the low end of the house (some examples were also located at the high end, as shown in the illustration of some Suffolk backhouses below by Philip Aitkens). It was constructed as a 2-3 bay building, with either an open hearth, or later, with its own chimneystack, located either internally or externally against one of the gable walls. This was the case at Edey's Farm. We have found reused smoke blackened timbers in the porch of the barn from a demolished kitchen, confirming our suspicions about the earlier presence of such a building on the site.



For more information on backhouses please see Philip Aitkens article on Backhouses - The Suffolk Backhouse published under his website www.aitkenshistoricbuildings.com/publications.htm



Earlier C16 alterations to the house such as an inserted chimneystack appear to have been erased by the C17 phase of alterations. The existing brick chimneystack (in the hall) was inserted during the early C17. However, it is likely to have replaced an earlier C16 timber-framed chimney in the same position. The position of the chimneystack is very interesting. Traditionally, a new C17 chimneystack would have been constructed within the old cross-passage of the house to form a lobby entrance as well as to retain the full size of the two-bay hall. In the case of Edey's Farmhouse, neither the C16 nor C17 chimneystacks were constructed within the cross-passage; instead they were placed just outside the passage. To understand the motive behind this we must look at the layout and circulation of the whole house.

When the assumed C16 chimneystack was constructed, the cross-passage tradition still had influence over the planning of timber-framed houses. As a consequence the chimneystack would have been constructed to respect the cross-passage, but also serve as a more permanent screen between the hall and service end of the house. The location of the C17 brick chimneystack suggests that it replaced a C16 timber-framed one. However, its proximity to the current front (south-east) wall suggests that the main entrance door to the house was reversed away from the current front wall to the current rear wall of the house in the C17. This was very convenient for the C17 occupants as it formed a lobby entrance, and the front door was kept in place (in the existing rear wall).

The C17 century was a period of major alterations to the layout and circulation of the house.

C17 Hall and chamber above.

In addition to the insertion of a brick chimneystack, an upper floor was inserted to form a new chamber above the hall. The C17 bridging beam, along with some of the original floor joists, have survived later phases of alterations, but the joists have been disturbed

and pushed up to allow for more headroom within the hall area. These joists were removed from their seating and placed on top of the bridging beam, supporting the floor above by their tenons only. Only the south-eastern half of the C17 floor structure has survived, the other half was removed to accommodate a C20 staircase and floor structure.

The location of the C17 hall chamber staircase is not clear, but it was likely to have been located against the northern flank of the chimneystack. The original hall windows in both the hall and newly-formed hall chamber were reduced in size, with studs and new sills to accommodate smaller windows. There are two doorways near to the centre of the north-east first floor partition. The furthestmost northern doorway appears to have been inserted during the C17, and the edges of the stud, post and tie-beam which form the doorframe have been chamfered. The doorway is only chamfered on the hall-chamber side of the partition, suggesting that the door was hung within the service-chamber. The other doorway appears to have been inserted at a later date, probably during the late C18 or early C19 phase of alterations. Both the tension braces in the partition were truncated to allow for the new doorways. Another doorway was inserted against the current front wall of the western first floor partition. It appears to have been inserted during the late C18 or early C19 phase of alterations.

During the C17 phase of alterations a ceiling was inserted over the hall chamber. The hall chamber may therefore have been used for living accommodation, but there is no decorative evidence to prove this. The bridging beam is still insitu but the joists have been removed.

C17 Parlour (old) and chamber above.

By the C17 the house was functionally reversed along its longitudinal layout. The C15 parlour appears to have been reduced in importance, and instead a new much smaller, but heated, parlour was formed at the opposite end of the house. The old parlour was now probably used as a service room such as a dairy, or possibly a lower-status reception room. The existing windows, staircase and doorway into the room would have likely been kept insitu.

The chamber above the old parlour does not appear to have been converted to living accommodation, and was still separated from the hall chamber. Thus it probably continued in use as a storage room.

C17 Service Room and Parlour (new) with chamber above.

The evidence for C17 alterations to the C15 low end of the house is not clear-cut, due to later phases of alterations. However, the location of the C17 two-flue chimneystack shows that a new parlour was formed in the old service end of the house. Whether the new parlour occupied both service rooms is uncertain, but the off-centre fireplace says that it did not. Other comparable houses confirm that it probably only occupied one of the service rooms, to form a heated 'little parlour'. Structurally, this would have made the cross-passage redundant. The central partition wall between the remaining service room and little parlour was probably extended up against the chimneystack, and a new

doorway to the parlour inserted into the extended wall, which now blocked the cross-passage. The section of the original C15 partition wall between the new parlour and the chimneystack was removed, and the redundant 'back' door in-filled. The remaining service room probably remained as a buttery, as constructed. It is not clear whether or not the staircase was removed during this alteration phase. However, the location of the chamfer on the doorway leading from the hall chamber into the chamber above the new parlour and service room suggests that a new staircase was probably formed in the hall and the C15 service staircase removed. Due to the complete loss of the ground floor timber-framed walls, we are not certain of the original window locations.

The chamber above appears to have remained undivided and open to the roof. It is not certain whether or not this chamber was used for living accommodation, but it is very possible.

The C18-C20 House

(See Drawing HBN732-007)

The C18 to C20 phases of alterations to the layout and structure of Edey's Farmhouse were significant, if only because of their destructiveness to the original layout and structure of the mid-C15 house. By the C18, traditional vernacular house designs and layouts were viewed by the educated classes as completely old fashioned, impractical and redundant. This change has been described by Adrian Green as society passing the 'Polite Threshold'. The focus now shifted away from tradition and longevity to the fashionable and newly-available construction materials. Although most mid to late C18 alterations to older houses were still making use of timber members, there was a marked decline in carpentry techniques and timber quality. This was unimportant to the home occupier, as most if not all timber-framing would have been covered by lath and plaster. This continued through the C19 and C20s.

The Hall and chamber above.

By the late C18 the house was again reversed in approach, and the front door was relocated to its current position. The hall was likely sub-divided as we see it today, but the existing partition wall between the kitchen and stair-hall appears to be late C19, even C20. The existing staircase is a C20 insertion, and the alterations to the base of the chimneystack probably date to the late C18 or early C19. The floor structure over the existing kitchen is contemporary with the early C17 phase of alterations, but the joists have been disturbed and pushed up. The floor structure over the rest of the 'hall' area was completely rebuilt, probably during the C20.

It is not clear whether the hall chamber was sub-divided prior to the early C19, but during the late C18 or early C19 two doorways were inserted into both the end walls of the hall chamber. Historic documentation suggests that the house was divided into two tenements between c.1818 and c.1841, at which point the hall chamber was certainly sub-divided, probably under the central truss of the chamber. The house was also probably completely re-fenestrated in the decades around 1800.

The Dining Room (old parlour)

During the late C18 phase of alterations, the old parlour at the south-western end of the house was sub-divided into two rooms. The room at the front of the house was the larger of the two, and probably served as a living/dining room. A new doorway for this room was formed in the eastern end of the hall/parlour partition wall, in the kitchen. The chimneystack attached to the south-western end wall of the house appears to be contemporary with the late C18 or early C19 phase of alterations. It has a single flue which served the living/dining room fireplace, and there was an oven here. The smaller of the two rooms has a very menial appearance, and probably served as a dairy. The floor structure above these two rooms has been altered, probably during repairs, confusing the location of the original staircase. There is a doorway in the partition wall between these two rooms. This partition wall was only plastered on the side facing into the living/dining room, leaving the studs exposed in the dairy. The walls of the dairy were treated with whitewash during the C19 and C20. The floor joists above the dairy are exposed with lath and plaster applied to the underside of the floorboards, and between the joists. The joists do not appear to be the original C15 joists, as they show evidence of reuse; however they could have been relocated.

The chamber above the living/dining room remained undivided. During the C18 phase of alterations a ceiling was inserted over the chamber, suggesting that it was used for living/bedroom accommodation. The ceiling is still insitu but has suffered from severe de-lamination and deflection of the ceiling joists.

The Living Room (new parlour with single service room)

There are no clearly defined surviving C18 alterations to this part of the house. It is likely that the partition wall between the new parlour and remaining buttery was removed at this point to form a larger single room, but this may well coincide with the later C19 phase of alterations. This room, along with the rest of the ground floor, was heavily altered during the early C20, practically destroying all evidence of earlier phases of alterations. This includes alterations to the fireplace.

The chamber above was sub-divided into two separate chambers or bedrooms. This may well have taken place during the late C18, but the existing partition appears to be late C19 or early C20. The original 3-light diamond mullioned window in the northern bedroom was in-filled with daub, most likely during the C18. The C19/C20 partition wall between the two bedrooms divided the original 6-light diamond mullioned window in two, with the remaining halves serving the two bedrooms. A small C19 casement window was inserted into the front wall of the house to allow more light into the south-eastern bedroom.

2.3. The C15 Construction Materials

Traditionally, most of the materials used to construct a house were normally sourced within close proximity to the site. Practically all the materials apart from the timber (in some cases even the timber) were freely available on site. At Edey's Farmhouse the C15 timber-framed walls were all in-filled with wattle and daub panels, leaving the outer faces of the studs exposed. By the mid to late C17, lath and plaster would have been

applied over the exposed exterior face of the studwork. Most of the wattle and daub panels in the upper frame of the house appear to have survived.

Geology of Essex

The oldest rocks exposed at surface level in Essex is known as Cretaceous Chalk, which dates to around 70-90 million years. Cretaceous chalk is a white limestone comprising over 95% calcium carbonate, which also contains traces of marl. This was followed by deposits of London Clay, sandier Claygate Beds, Bagshot sands, Red Grag and Boulder Clay or till. Boulder Clay is dominant in Essex with a combination of sands and gravels (Natural England).

The top soil of the fields around the farmhouse is predominantly Boulder Clay over deposits of fine and coarse alluvial sands. Although some chalk is visible on the surface it is not seen in great concentrations. However, in Bulmer located approximately 2.5 miles from Gestingthorpe there are evidence of chalk pits of which only deep impressions remain. It is recorded that in 1425 the Vicar of Bulmer received tithes from a local limekiln (Ashley Cooper). These chalk pits were still being mined by 1847. This suggests that all the materials necessary for the plasterwork at Edey's Farm were sourced locally. Cretaceous chalk, which is over 95% calcium carbonate and widely distributed over Essex suggests that the lime used at Edey's Farm would have been non-hydraulic lime.

A sample of the ceiling plaster, roughly 5cm square and 0.5cm thick was place in a container with diluted Phosphoric Acid. The concentration was purposely diluted to a point at which the lime content of the plaster would dissolve faster than the hair contained within the plaster. This allowed me to arrest the reaction at a point where all the lime was dissolved, but the residue still contained a high proportion of the hair and all the aggregate contained in the sample. The remaining hair was reddish in colour, probably from an ox and similar to that of Red Poll cattle native in Essex. The plaster contained a high percentage of hair.

The aggregate was predominantly fine sand with only a small percentage of other unidentified materials. The 5cm square plaster only contained 2.5 grams of fine, washed sand aggregate. This suggests that a lime rich plaster was used for plastering the ceiling. A closer inspection of the soil surrounding the farmhouse has revealed a deposit of sandy soil not very deep under the boulder clay which matches the aggregate found in the plaster.

2.4. Barn

The barn stands immediately opposite the south-east side of Edey's Farmhouse. The house looked towards the barn, and the main doorway of the barn faced towards the house, with a small door opposite at the rear. The 3-bay structure had a threshing floor within the central bay, and the bays were divided by archbraced open trusses.

The timber-framed walls and roof of the barn are unusually complete and enable the building to be described in detail. The walls have substantial closely-spaced studs with tension braces descending from the corner-posts. The studding would have been exposed externally at the outset and only later was the wattle-and-daub infill removed

and replaced with feather-edged boarding. The roof was hipped, and incorporated a crownpost system (however it was reconstructed differently in the 17th century).

Although the building is plainly constructed and resembles many other such barns which can be dated to the 16th century, there is a scarf joint in this building which connects it to Edey's Farmhouse. We therefore suspect that the barn also dates to the mid/late 15th century. This is an unusually early date for a small and simple barn. The joint is an edge-halved-and-bridled scarf, a very commonplace joint, but unusually long and with bridles which are also long and have two diagonally-placed pegs. Photographs of these joints illustrate their similarity, which is unlikely to be coincidence.

At some point in the 17th century, the barn was adapted in an interesting way. A porch was added to the front of the threshing floor to enlarge its area. The structure of the main roof was adapted to provide gables at both ends, enlarging the storage capacity for sheaves. The crownpost system was removed and replaced with clasped purlins. A high proportion of the timbers used to construct these alterations are distinctively second-hand, and they can be analysed as coming from a smoke-blackened medieval building. It is likely to have been a detached kitchen (known as a 'backhouse' in Suffolk where there are numerous surviving examples. Please refer to the attached drawings of the backhouse at Peppertree Farm, Hitcham, Suffolk.)

When the porch was added to the front of the barn in the 17th century, the original doorway with its substantial doorposts became redundant. These two posts were repositioned opposite in the back wall, apparently forming a doorway of an intermediate size but bigger than the 15th century one in this area. They are characterised by substantial jowls at the head (see photograph).

The two tiebeams for the new porch were second-hand smoke-blackened timbers. The first one, above the doorway, has mortises for close-studding and diamond-mullion holes for a window. The second tiebeam, within the porch, is a cambered open-truss tiebeam with long slot-mortises for archbraces. There is an exactly similar in-situ tiebeam in the backhouse at Peppertree Farm. Numerous other smoke-blackened timbers can be observed and obviously come from the same building. Careful recording might enable a digital reconstruction of the kitchen.

Chris Thornton has identified a phase of building activity in c.1618 by William Sparke, when Edey's Farmhouse may have been modernised. This is the likely date of the demolition of the detached kitchen, and associated improvements to the barn.

The first useful map to illustrate the barn is the Gestingthorpe Estate Map of 1804, which simply shows the barn as a rectangle with its projecting porch. The adjacent field to the north is marked as 'stable field', which is again identified on the 1838 Tithe Map with the same name. There is no physical evidence that any part of the barn was ever divided off as stabling and the position of a stable (which is also mentioned in other 19th century documents) is uncertain. However, the 1804 map is inaccurate enough to allow for a single-bay stable to have been attached to the north-east end of the barn, not far from the edge of 'stable field'. Boarding attached to the north-east gable of the barn gives an important clue. An area of unpainted butted hardwood boarding on the outside of the wall must have been internal to a narrower building adjacent to the barn. This narrower building is likely to have been a stable. The boarding rises, apparently, to

a low-pitched roof. At that point feather-edged boarding with black staining takes over. The open storage building now on this site was rebuilt in the late 20th century. No other buildings are shown on either the 1804 or 1838 maps, but we are certain that outbuildings such as piggeries, a hay barn or a cow shed must have existed. Perhaps they were small and impermanent.

Today, the barn is clad in feather-edged boarding of several periods. Some of it, for instance on the north-east gable, dates from at least the early 19th century and is of hardwood timber. Prior to the use of coal tar from the mid 19th century onwards, most external boarding was coated with black-pigmented distemper, but a substantial minority instead had red-ochre-pigmented distemper, a very bright colour which sometimes still survives. We believe this barn was black but cannot be sure. The entrance doors to the porch are, as usual, in four sections of vertical boarding with cross-rails and diagonal braces. The pattern is typical of the early 19th century and they may be in good enough condition to restore and keep in place for many years ahead.

More evidence of the 19th century form of the farmstead is provided by the First Edition OS Map published in 1876. The barn is shown sub-divided in a puzzling way, immediately to north-east of the threshing floor. The north-east wall of the barn (a 15th century structure) is omitted, and this is certainly a mistake. Another building of a narrower span is attached to the north-east side of the barn, abutting a long range which projects north-westwards towards the house (this long range still stands today). A leanto addition on the front of the barn is shown to the south-west of the porch. It appears to have been open-fronted and still stands today. It was either a cart-lodge or a shelter-shed for cattle.

2.5. 19/20th Century Farm buildings

The present north-east range has a low-pitched slated roof, and a red-brick back wall, unbroken but with shallow buttresses. It is open-fronted on posts and may have been designed to shelter cattle for at least most of its length. It probably dates entirely from the mid-19th century and is the range shown on the 1876 OS Map. However, butted boarding is used to form partitions for workshop accommodation at the north-west end. The boards are old and are likely to be floorboards taken from the house during the alterations carried out in the 1920s. It has been noted that entire sections of upper floor were replaced at that date. Although this range probably dates from no earlier than the mid 19th century, it is likely that minor outbuildings previously occupied this site – yet were considered too insignificant to be illustrated in 1804 or 1838.

3. Drawing & Photograph Register

DRAWING SHEET REGISTER

SITE: Edey's Farm	DATE: 15/04/2013
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Draw No.	Drawing Type	Description
HBN732-001	Ground Floor Plan	Reconstructed
HBN732-002	First Floor Plan	Reconstructed
HBN732-003	Front Elevation	Reconstructed
HBN732-004	Back Elevation	Reconstructed
HBN732-005	North-East & South-West El.	Reconstructed
HBN732-006	Sections A, B & C	Reconstructed
HBN732-007	Existing Survey Plans (House)	Phase Plan
HBN732-007	Existing Survey Plans (Farmbuildings)	Phase Plan
HBN732-009	Section A to D	Frame survey drawings
HBN732-010	Section E	Frame survey drawings
HBN732-011	Section F	Frame survey drawings
HBN732-012	Section G	Frame survey drawings

PHOTOGRAPH REGISTER

SITE: Edey's Farm	DATE: 15/04/2013
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Photo No.	Location Ref:	Dir.	Description
HOUSE (Exterior)			
IMG0253 & 0605		S-W, N-E	(0605) South-western end of house. Half-hipped roof structure with gablet. Early C19 chimneystack, with severe structural issues. End wall on ground floor rebuilt in brick with corner red brick pilasters. Upper level clad in concrete 'art-deco' panels. Upper level timber-frame still insitu. (0253) North-eastern end of house. Half-hipped roof structure with gablet. End wall on ground floor rebuilt in brick with corner red brick pilasters. Upper level timber-frame altered with removal of 4 studs to accommodate early C20 windows with brick infill. Central 6-light diamond mullioned window still insitu, although in poor condition. Stub tie to right (discussed in report). Surviving original wattle-and-daub infill panel to left with the remains of C19 lath-and-plaster over.
IMG0800-11		S-E	(0800-0811) Front elevation of the house.

			Lower level rebuilt in red brick with pilasters up to eaves level. Upper level timber-frame mostly intact with C20 windows, and clad in concrete panels. C20 Porch. (0810) Window inserted probably C18/19, blocked in during C20. Stud with mortise to left, suggesting a lean-to structure predating the C18.
IMG0255-56		N-W	(0255-56) Rear elevation of the house. Lower level rebuilt in red brick with pilasters up to eaves level (C20). Upper level timber-frame mostly intact with C20 windows, and clad in concrete panels. (0256) Infilled 3-light diamond mullioned window in upper level timber-framed wall probably blocked in during C18.
HOUSE (Interior)			
IMG0698, 0700 & 0706			(0698) Base of C17 chimneystack in kitchen, heavily altered between C18-C20. (0700 & 0706) Surviving C17 bridging beam. Contemporary floor joists have been pushed up and ends placed on top of bridging beam.
IMG0661-69			(0661-69) The remainder of the hall area. This area reflects the probable C18 layout of the house. The floor structure above has been completely rebuilt in the C19/C20. (0661-63) Location of the original parlour door and partition. (0664-69) This area was heavily altered during the C20, which includes the insertion of the current staircase.
IMG0175, 0179, 0776 & 0778		N-E, S-W	(0175 & 0179) Upper level of south-western hall partition, with a large central post flanked by a pair of slightly cranked tension braces. Doorway to left inserted probably C18/C19. (0776 & 0778) Upper level of north-eastern hall partition. This partition is similar to the opposite one in the hall, but both the tension braces were truncated to allow for doorways on either side of the central post. Left hand doorway inserted C17 (chamfered frame), the other C18/C19.
IMG0172, 0174 & 0180		N-E	(0172-0180) Central truss with cambered and chamfered tie-beam, and 4-centred archbraces underneath. (0174) C17 bridging beam, part of an inserted ceiling structure. Ceiling joists were removed when the ceiling was pushed up, probably during the C20 phase of alterations.
IMG0654 & 0659			(0654-0659) Dining Room (old parlour). Heavily altered during C18-C20. An C18

			timber-framed partition wall divides the old parlour into a dining room and dairy.
IMG0625/26/30 /32/35/47			(0625-26) C18 partition from within dairy. The studwork was originally exposed and whitewashed on dairy side (typical treatment for diaries). However, later lath and plaster was removed at an unknown date. (0630-32) Location of original parlour door. The floor joists are reused timbers, inserted at an unknown date. (0635) Original midrail with a 2-light single mullioned window. The location and size of this small window suggests the presence of a staircase in this position. (0647) An inserted C19 staircase.
IMG0607 & 0610-0614			(0611-0614) Chamber above the old parlour. This room remained un-divided since mid-C15, and used as living accommodation from C18 onwards. C18 ceiling delaminating due to deflection in its undersized ceiling joists. Walls clad with C20 vertical tongue-and-grooved boards. (0607) Back of hall partition. The sides of the studs facing into the upper chamber are very rough, confirming the menial nature of this room. (0610) Both ends of the house is similar in construction. The frame & sill of the mid-C15 6-light diamond mullioned window is still insitu. However, a smaller C20 window was inserted into the right hand end of it, the other half was blocked in by the C18/C19 chimneystack.
IMG0674-75, 0680, 0686-87 & 0688			(0674-75 & 0688) The north-eastern end of house –Sitting room (new parlour). Mid-C15, two service rooms with cross-passage. C17, new small parlour with one remaining service room. Cross-passage redundant. C18, partition removed to form room as it appears today. C20, ground floor walls rebuilt in brick. (0680) Base of C17 chimneystack altered between C18-C20. Post in foreground mark the centre line of the original perpendicular partition walls between the two service rooms and the hall. There is evidence for two doorheads on either side of this post which led to two separated butteries from the cross-passage. (0686- 0687) Mortises for studs in the underside of a binding beam, part of the original partition between the hall and service end of the house.

<p>IMG0813, 0783-84, 0788, 0790, 0793-4</p>		<p>(0783 & 0790) The rear side of the hall partition facing into the chambers (bedrooms) above the sitting room. (0784) Upper rear wall of the house facing into the chambers above the sitting room. The faces of stud work within these walls are rough, suggesting that this room had a menial nature. The walls were treated with a limewash, probably during C17 and covered with fibrous boarding during the C20 & (0788) This ceiling appears to have been inserted during the late C19 or early C20. (0793-0794) Both these internal photographs show the north-east end wall of the house. This area has suffered a high level of decay due to water penetration. The 6-light diamond mullioned window is still in situ with most of its mullions. The partition wall divides both the window and chamber into two separate bedrooms, and appears to have been inserted probably during the late C19 or early C20. (0813) This window was infilled during the C20 alterations, but was probably inserted in C18/C19.</p>
<p>IMG0202, 0203, 0209-10, 0222 IMG0188, 0190,0194 IMG0187, 0199-0200</p>		<p>(0202-0203) Crown post roof structure. Timbers are smoke blackened from open hearth. (0210) The collars are lap-halved into the rafters. (0222) Crown post is of a cross-quadrate design with simple pilaster beneath the 4 cranked braces. (0209) Both the end walls of the hall went up to the apex of roof, confining the smoke to the hall. The crown posts in these two partitions are plain and square. Both the end crown posts only have two braces up to the collar-purlin.(0188 & 0194) Both end partitions are identical. The collar-purlin continues through the partition (supported on plain crown posts), and terminates with the gablet assembly. (0190) C18 ceiling structure from above (over south western end). The undersized joists has deflected. The ceiling in the opposite end of the house was rebuilt during C20. (0187, 0199-0200) These photographs illustrate the gablet assembly, with parallel collars, one above the other. The collar purlin had been truncated, and deflected</p>

			downwards away from the collars.
BARN, CARTLODGE			
IMG0306		W	The barn from the west – showing the C17 porch extension to the threshing floor, and a C19 cartlodge attached to the right of the porch.
IMG0307		S-E	The two bay open fronted cartlodge probably added in the mid C19 to the barn.
IMG0857		S-E	There is a full set of four barn doors constructed with rails and diagonal braces in the traditional pattern. The doors may be part of an early C19 refurbishment and deserve to be repaired.
IMG0860		S-E	The north-east sidewall framing of the porch was constructed out of second-hand timbers probably from the C15 kitchen.
IMG0861		S-W	The south-west wall of the porch although depleted, has C15 reused timbers in urgent need of repair.
IMG0859		E	The tie-beam at the front of the porch is a second hand timber from the C15 kitchen. There are mortises for the diamond mullions of a 5-light wide window. This may have been the main window in a sidewall of the kitchen.
IMG0864		E	The view of the porch roof from the main doorway is showing the inner tie-beam of the porch. This is a reused smoke blackened open truss tie-beam from the C15 kitchen. It has slot mortices for long archbraces.
IMG0865-0866		N-E	A closer view of the reused open truss tie-beam shown in the previous photograph.
IMG0867		E	A view of the central threshing floor bay with its flanking open trusses and the east rear wall, with two phases of rear doorways. The present door was installed about the early C19 to provide a through draft for threshing. On either side are reused jowled doorjamb posts for the previous rear doorway.
IMG0875		E	The eastern wallplate of the barn has a long edge-halved and bridled scarf joint. The bridles have two diagonally-placed pegs each – a distinctive joint matched in the carpentry of the house.
IMG0878-0879		N	The north corner of the barn has a jowled corner post with a tension brace rising to the head and passing across closely spaced

			studs.
IMG0887		S-W	The south-west end of the roof of the barn was extended to form a gable in the early C17 (the roof was previously hipped). The extension uses smoked blackened timbers from the demolished kitchen.
C19/C20 Farmbuildings			
IMG0819 & 0823		N-E	The range along the north-east side of the yard was built in the C19, open fronted on posts and with a slate roof.
IMG0824		N	The roof structure and the red brick rear wall of the north east range. This building is likely to date from the mid-19 when it was designed as an open shelter shed, probably for cattle.
IMG0820		E	This mid-C20 building with open walls replaced a C19 outbuilding, including a possible stable attached to the north-east end of the barn.
IMG0821		S-W	The north east end of the barn has ship-lap boarding coated in tar, below this level there is butted and untreated boarding showing the position of a demolished narrower structure which is likely to have been a stable.
IMG0831		N-W	Towards the left hand end of the north-east range there are two partition walls constructed with boarding nailed horizontally to second-hand studs. The boarding is black painted on top of whitewash.
IMG0835		N	These wide second-hand boards are butted and fixed to old hardwood studs. The boards are probably floorboards from the house, brought here in the 1920s. This area became a workshop at that time.

Appendix 1

A report by Christopher Thornton on the documentary history of Edey's Farm, Gestingthorpe.

Edey's Farm, Gestingthorpe, Essex

Edey's Farm, comprising a late medieval house and barn, is located on Delvyns Lane leading from Gestingthorpe in a south-westerly direction towards Castle Hedingham. The historic building survey carried out by Philip Aitkins Associates, together with information from the earlier conducted surveys by RCHME and DoE, has identified both a period of initial construction and several significant phases of alteration. The mid 15th-century hall-house is plain in style, but built to a high standard with heavy timber studding. It has a crown-post roof. A phase of alterations, probably in the 17th century, included the insertion of floor in the hall and a chimneystack. The stack had two ground floor fireplaces, one to heat a parlour, but there is apparently no evidence of heating upstairs. In the 1920s the inserted floor was removed leaving the bridging beam. Carpentry details suggest that the adjacent small barn is also of 15th-century date, and possibly built with the house. It was also altered in the 17th century, with the hipped ends of the roof being converted to gables and the addition of the porch. Some of the timbers used for these changes appear to be second-hand and smoke-blackened, raising the possibility that they derive from an earlier detached kitchen to the house. Overall, the building evidence gives an unusually clear picture of the creation of a new complex of hall-house, detached kitchen and barn in the late medieval period.ⁱ

There is no modern historical account of the development of Gestingthorpe, although the main outlines are clear. The chief area of medieval settlement was a long straggling village running along a street, roughly aligned north-south and located on an eminence or plateau overlooking a tributary of the river Stour further east. As was typical of this area of mid- and north Essex there were also numerous dispersed farms and small green-side settlements, some of them of freehold or sub-manorial status (below, Figure 1).ⁱⁱ Many of the local place-names, manor names and farm names can be traced back into the Middle Ages. For example, Odewell farm (1272), Nether Hall (1323), Crouch House (1338), Overhall (1339), Delvyn's Farm (1385), and Parkgate Farm (1492).ⁱⁱⁱ Some of these properties and others in the area still retain their good quality late medieval houses, indicating that Gestingthorpe had a wealthy farming community. For example, Park's Farm and Parkgate Farm (both at the west end of Delvyn's Lane), are 15th century or earlier hall-houses on an H-plan.^{iv}

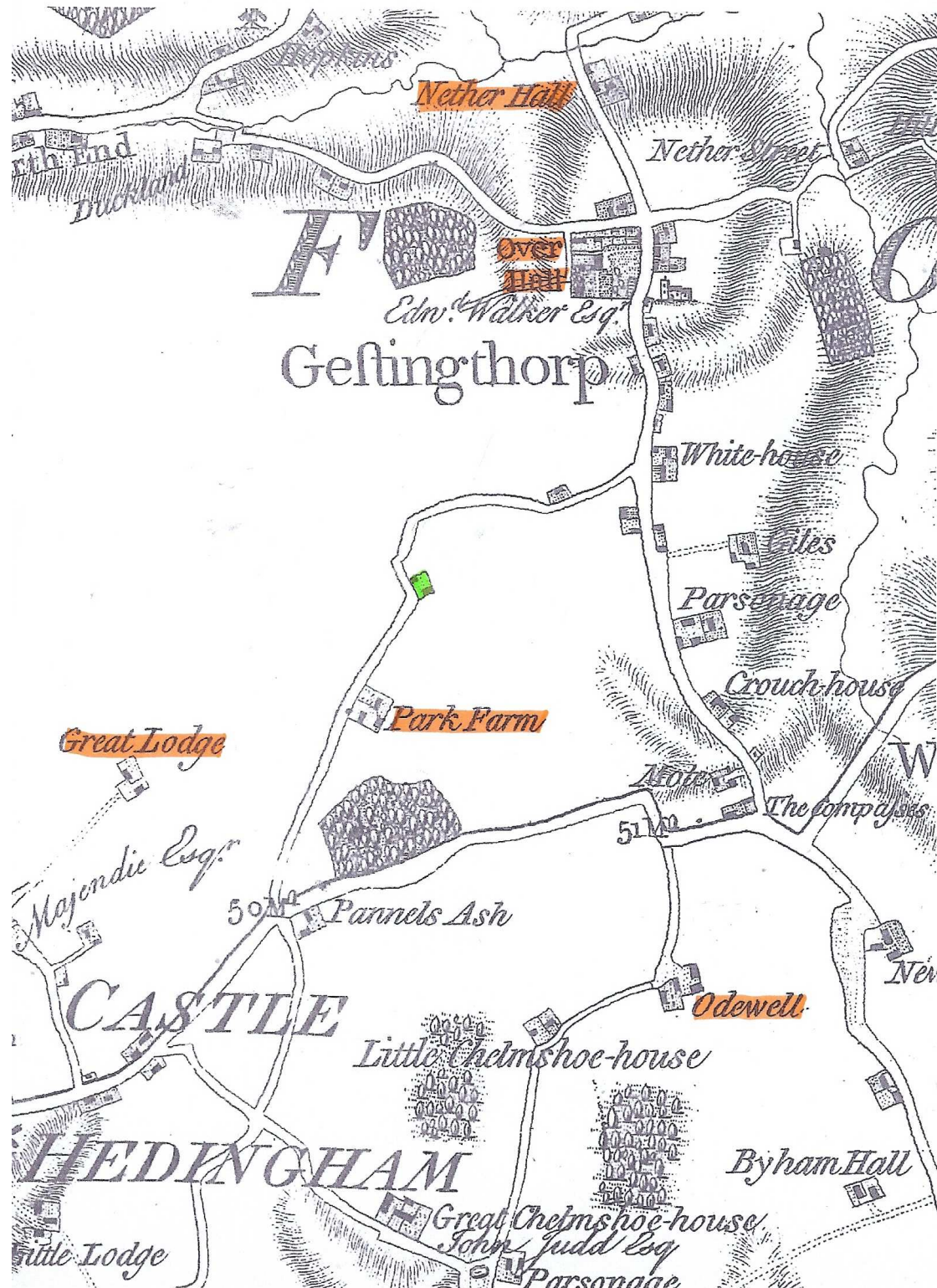


Figure 1: The location of Edey's Farm (green), with some nearby principal settlements or manors (orange). From: J. Chapman and P. André, *A Map of the County of Essex* (1777).

The parochial and manorial history of the area is complicated. The final boundaries between the parishes of Castle Hedingham, Gestingthorp and Wickham St Paul were perhaps confirmed fairly late, as in the Middle Ages there was another separate parish or chapelry called Odewell (or Oddwell), which originated in the lands accumulated by the Knights of the Order of St John of

Jersusalem (the Knights Hospitallers). As Odewell now lies in Gestingthorpe, it appears that the separate chapelry belonging to the Hospitallers was subsumed into that parish in the mid-16th century after the military orders were dissolved by Henry VIII (for location of Odewell manor house see above, Figure 1).

According to the Essex antiquary Philip Morant, the parish was divided into four chief manors or estates at the time that Edey's farm was built, as follows:^v

(1) Overhall – the manor house was located at the north end of the village near the church. The descent of its lay owners is known, and in the Middle Ages and Tudor periods it passed through various female descendants of Sir Robert Swinburne of Little Horkesley Hall (d. 1391) in the Helion, Tyrell, Fynderne, and Wentworth families.

(2) Netherhall – the manor house stands about half a mile north of the church also in the north of the parish. The descent of its lay owners is known, and it was held by the Earls of Suffolk from 1394 to 1487 and the Earls of Oxford from 1496 to 1579.

(3) Odewell – the manor house stood “in an obscure part of the parish” to the south, near Byham Hall on the boundary with Great Maplestead. In the reign of Henry II (in the later 12th century) the owner, Sir Simon de Odewell, apparently bequeathed all of his lands to the Hospital of St. John of Jersusalem. That estate was apparently expanding in 1272 when the Prior of the Hospital paid 30 marks of silver to hold a tenement in ‘Oddewell and Gestynghorp’ freely from Thomas fitz Oto.^{vi} On the dissolution of the Hospitallers in 1540, the crown then granted the estate to new lay owners, and the descent thereafter is also known.

(4) Parks – an estate that is now probably represented by Park Farm and Parkgate Farm, and perhaps named after the family of Thomas atte Parke (1331). Its manorial status is uncertain, but it may represent the quarter of a Knight's fee held in Gestingthorpe by Julian atte Parke in 1381. In the 18th century this estate passed to Thomas Ashurst, owner of the neighbouring Castle Hedingham estate, and then descended in the Majendie family.^{vii}

The first evidence of the existence of Edey's farm (as a personal name and as a place-name, rather than as a tenancy) comes in evidence relating to the manor and chapelry of Odewell. Many charters preserved in the Hospitaller cartulary (107 charters in total) record the activities of a Simon of Odewell who built up an estate in north Essex between the late 12th century and c.1245. Although married he was childless and he decided about 1242 to leave his lands (about 350 acres) and rents to the Hospitallers who had a preceptory in the adjacent parish of Little Maplestead. The estate stretched across Gestingthorpe, Foxearth, Halstead, Castle Hedingham, Sible Hedingham, Little Maplestead, Ridgewell, Sturmer, Tilbury-iuxta-Clare (all in north Essex), and Sudbury (Suffolk). It was very diverse and built up of small parcels of land rather than a consolidated block, although much probably lay within Gestingthorpe where Simon's manor house was located and where he was granted the right of a chapel c.1231x1238 whose chaplains would pray for his soul and that of his wife.^{viii}

References to Edey's farm in these charters are as follows. About 1235x1247 (probably before c.1242) a grant was made by Isabel de Forholte to the Hospitallers of her dower land in Ryhenacre field in Gestingthorpe that abutted upon ‘Edingacre’. At the same time Everard son of William [of Birdbrook], parker, granted to the Hospitallers 9 acres of land in Ryhenacre (or Rienacre) field of which one end abutted upon ‘acram Edine’.^{ix} Other charters from the 1230s and 1240s also mention the grant of lands called ‘Delvyn’ and of woodland groves in the vicinity of ‘Delvyn field’ and ‘Delvyn croft’, indicating that Simon de Odewell had built up holdings in and around the later Delvyn Lane and Edey's farm.^x Later 14th century charters also record members of the Ede family who presumably had taken (or their ancestors had originally given) their name from or to the farm. Thus in 1338 Eve the widow of a Richard Ede is recorded in a charter relating to lands in Gestingthorpe, and in 1355 a Thomas Ede of Belchamp Walter was party to an agreement over 10s. rent from lands and tenements in Gestingthorpe. A Robert Ede was also witness to several Gestingthorpe charters in

1362 and 1369.^{xi}

The above information is important in establishing that Edey's farm existed in the 13th and 14th centuries. Nonetheless, the references in the Hospitaller cartulary are all indirect, suggesting that the farm was not owned by Simon of Odewell (and later the Hospitallers), but instead that their lands only abutted against Edey's farm that must have been in other ownership. That conclusion is supported by the survival of a deed from 1492 that links Edey's farm with the estate of the de Vere, Earls of Oxford, of Castle Hedingham, who also owned estates in Gestingthorpe (see above).^{xii} In 1492 John de Vere, earl of Oxford, entered a legal agreement to exchange land with Alexander Cressuner (d.1496) and his wife Cecily, and other feoffees. The agreement was for Cecily's life, with the exchanged land thereafter passing to Sir William Fynderne who lord of the manor of Overhall, Gestingthorpe, when he died in 1515.^{xiii} By this agreement the Earl of Oxford exchanged 3 acres of land in 'le Vaux meadow' in Belchamp Otten, and 40 acres of land, wood, meadow and appurtenances in Gestingthorpe called 'Edys otherwise Harwardys', for 60 acres of land in Gestingthorpe called 'le lystaple' between the park of Castle Hedingham on the west and the land called Gardeners Lane, extending from Northeygrene to le parkgate, on the east. The exchange was specifically intended to allow the 60a. of land to be united, imparked and enclosed within the Earl's park of Hedingham. The alternative name of 'Harwardys' given in the deed, may indicate the name of the tenant of the Edey's farm in 1492; certainly a John Harward is named in the deed as holding land next to 'le Vaux meadow'.^{xiv}

The inference of the deed, therefore, is that before 1492 Edey's farm formed part of the de Vere, Earls of Oxford, estates, but in that year the Earl transferred Edey's farm to new owners and ultimately to the owner of Overall manor in Gestingthorpe (William Fynderne). In this land exchange Edey's farm was stated to be 40 a. in size, which is quite typical of a medieval yardland or virgate farm, and representing a very substantial medieval farming tenancy.^{xv} As the Earls were able to transfer this property without restriction it was probably part of their demesne or a customary landholding rather than a freehold. Construction of the mid-15th century house and barn can therefore comfortably be attributed to the de Vere estate, most probably for a tenant farmer (or alternatively to a manorial servant of some type). The quality of construction must reflect the timber resources available to such a major local landowner as the Earl of Oxford, including the timber available in his nearby park. Nonetheless, there appears to be no direct evidence that Edey's farm was built specifically as 'the house of the park-keeper' (of Castle Hedingham); indeed, the deed rather infers that Edey's farm was not part of the park.

The history of Edey's farm after 1492 can be partially traced in the records of Overhall manor that are preserved in the The National Archives (TNA) and in the Essex Record Office (ERO). Rentals in the TNA dating from 1538 record a tenement then known as 'Edes',^{xvi} and the holding can be traced in Overhall manor's court rolls and rentals in the ERO from 1518 to 1877.^{xvii} Before 1535 the farm may have comprised part of the demesne (home) farm of Overhall manor, but in that year the lord of the manor of Overhall leased the tenement called Edes to Joan Spark, widow, and William Spark her son. A very full description of the holding was given, summarised in the Table below. Reference to several parts of it being called 'Merywethers' suggest an alternative name as used at some point, or the name may be a reference to an earlier lessee or tenant:^{xviii}

'Edes' Farm in 1535 (note the boundaries of all fields are given in the document)

A garden
Walfeld (1 acre and 1 rood)
Edescroft (3 acres)
Bemecroft (2 acres 3 roods) [probably 'Barncroft']
Pagecroft (3 acres 1 rood)

Merywethers Litill croft (2½ acres)
Redleycroft (5 acres)
Merywether's Pightle (1 acre)
2 pieces of land called Little Delbers and Merywethers Leye
Copse called Merywethers Grove
1½ acres of meadow

The court rolls for the late 16th century are not complete, and the descent of Edey's farm cannot be traced precisely, but it evidently remained in the Spark(e) family. In 1617 a William Spark surrendered into the lord's hand a croft called Wallfield (1 acre 1 rood), with a tenement lately built upon it, and Pagecroft (3 acres 1 rood), to the use of himself and afterwards his son Richard. This may represent an endowment being made to a younger son (with a new house) and a reduction in the size of the main Edey's farm. Furthermore, two years in 1619 later William Spark was presented for making 'waste' in his tenement by cutting down six trees and many called 'polling okes' (i.e. oak pollards) for making a new barn without licence, although the court case does not say whether the barn was on Edey's farm or on other lands held by Spark and set aside for his son Richard. Nonetheless, it is possible that this court roll entry indicates the date of the alterations made to the barn at Edey's farm.^{xix} About this time in 1618 William Sparke was also admitted in the Overhall court rolls to extensive lands formerly held by William Harrington and his wife, and it may well be that the period 1617-1619 is the most likely period for the alternations made to Edey's farmhouse. Later 17th century records do not appear to indicate an equivalent period of prosperity for the family.^{xx}

In 1637 William Sparke, senior, surrendered the tenement to the lord for his own use for life, and then to Katherine the wife of William Sparke, jun., his son (deceased), for the use of William Spark his grandchild. Katherine evidently died by 1642 when her son William Spark was admitted to the holding. As William was under age guardians were appointed. The farm which apparently paid 34s. rent was described as follows, confirming that Walfield and Pagecroft had indeed been separated away from the farm (probably in 1617):^{xxi}

'Edes' Farm in 1642 (the boundaries of all fields given in the document)

1 garden
Edescroft (5 acres)
Bemecroft (2 acres 3 roods) [probably 'Barncroft']
Merryweathers Little croft (2½ acres) with Merryweathers garden
Redleycroft (5 acres)
Meryweathers Pightle (1 a)
Merryweathers Great croft (7 acres)
2 pieces of land called Little Delven and Merywethers Leye (3 roods)
Grove called Merywethers Grove
Pasture on Taylors Street from the gate of the great Park to Merryweathers grove (1½ acres)

The guardians of the younger William Spark were John and Frances Tiffin, but by 1654 William had evidently come of age and was admitted to the tenement called Edes comprising 16 acres of land and pasture paying a yearly rent of 16s.^{xxii} In 1680 a William Sparke, possibly the same man, still held the tenement called Edes with about 16 acres of land, paying 16s. rent, then described as 'a parcel of Merywethers', and a man of the same name was still paying 16s. rent in 1693.^{xxiii} Some court rolls at the end of the 17th and beginning of the 18th century have not survived, and it is evident that sometime during that period the farm passed from William Sparke to Samuel and Hannah Sparke. In 1708 they surrendered the farm, presumably as the result of a sale, and Jacob Brewster was admitted to the tenancy. In 1715 Brewster in turn surrendered the farm, presumably under another

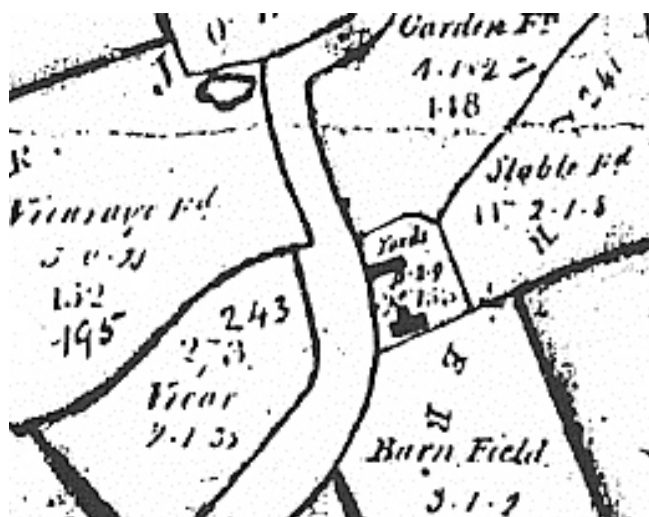


Figure 2: Edey's Farm as depicted on a Gestingthorpe estate map of 1804 (ERO, T/M 111; copyright ERO)

Deal had apparently died by 1858, when his executor, John Sudbury the elder of Halstead, repaid all the principal and interest to Brewster.^{xxviii} Subsequently, in August 1860, Sudbury placed the farm at sale by auction when it comprised 25a. 1r. 13p. with the tenement being described as divided into three tenements. The purchasers were evidently Anthony and Elizabeth Bentall. By this date manorial control of the sale of copyholds was breaking down the sale was not recorded in the court rolls until after Elizabeth had first been widowed and then died herself in 1866, leaving 'Edes' farm to her grandson David Taylor Collis of Pebmarsh (an infant, and represented by his father John Collis). As Merryweathers Croft was still occupied by the representatives of Isaac Deal, so the rent for Edeys farm had been reduced to 13s. per annum. The connection with the Overhall manorial estate, which itself had been sold in 1869, was ended in 1870 when David Taylor Collis paid £100 for its enfranchisement and conversion from a copyhold to a freehold. In this period it was described as being a timber built and tiled messuage divided into three tenements, and having a barn, stable, yard, piggeries, orchard, a shed, 4 closes of arable and 2 pigsties.^{xxix}

Edey's farm is first depicted on a county map in 1777 when two buildings are shown in a small enclosure along Delyn's Lane north of Park Farm (above, Figure 1, highlighted in green). As the scale of the 1777 map was only 2" to the mile, smaller buildings were often representational rather than being precisely surveyed. A better idea of the layout of these buildings derives from a Gestingthorpe estate dated 1804, undertaken at the expense of the local rector, shown above in Figure 2.^{xxx} The Gestingthorpe tithe map and award of 1838 confirms the owner and occupier of Edey's farm as Isaac Deal.^{xxxi} In the 1841 census return it was still named 'Deals Farm', although then occupied by others, probably Deal's sub-tenants or farmworkers. In 1841 Edey's Farm's fields formed a very small compact arable estate of 25 acres. on either side of Delvyns Lane (below, Figure 3). Isaac Deal's farm also had a share in Gestingthorpe's common meadow, probably an ancient feature of the medieval farm and part of the area described as 1½ acres of meadow in the earlier court rolls. The court roll entries reveal that several fields were detached from the farm before 1838, but the 25 acres that survived through to 1838 probably represented the core of the medieval farm.^{xxxii}

Tithe plot no.	Name	Land use	Size (acres, rods, perches)
37	Piece in Common Meadow	Meadow	0a. 1r. 20p.
194	Ridleys	Arable	3a. 2r. 6p.
195	Five Acres	Arable	5a. 0r. 21p.
197	Mere Withers	Arable	3a. 2r. 11p.

199	Long Field	Arable	2a. 1r. 14p.
240	Garden Field	Arable	4a. 1r. 2p.
241	Stable Field	Arable	2a. 1r. 8p.
242	Farm Yards	--	0a. 2r. 9p.
252	Barn Field	Arable	3a. 1r. 2p.
Total			25a. 1r. 13p

The depiction of the buildings on the tithe map of 1838 would appear to be cruder than on the estate map of 1804, as the barn porch is apparently not shown (below, Figure 3(B)).

Figure 3(A)

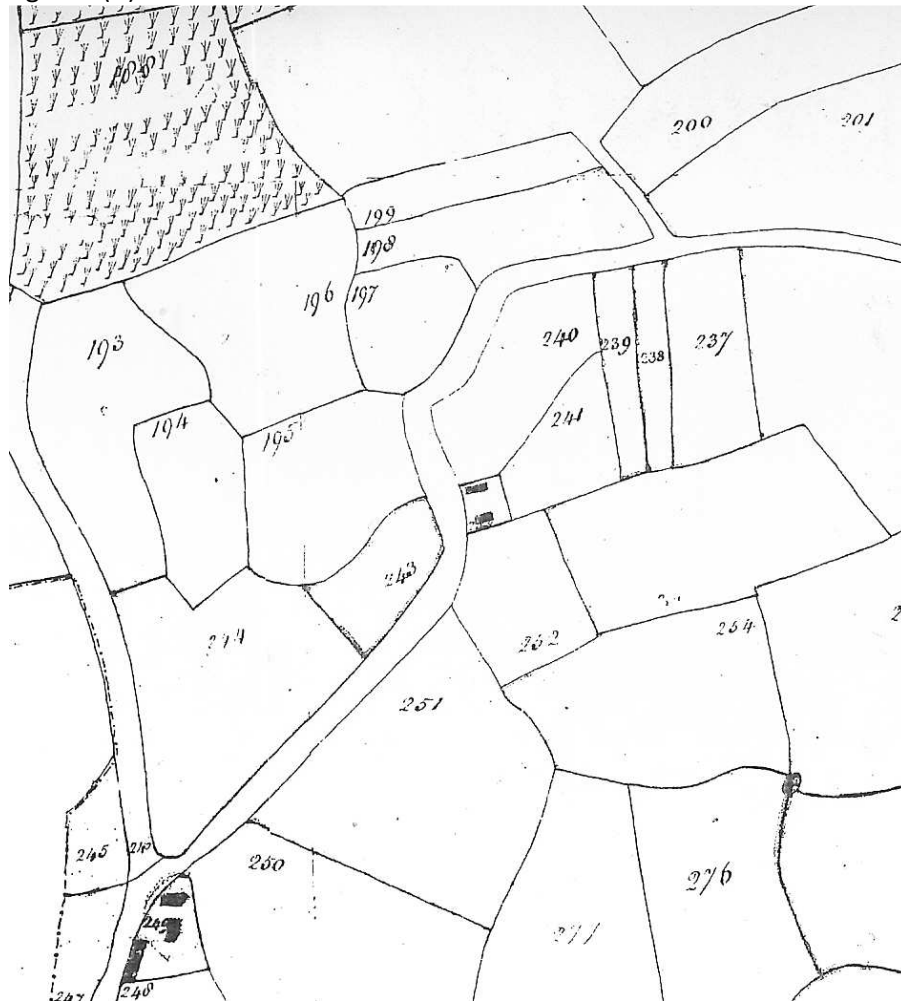


Figure 3(B)



Figure 3: Edey's Farm on the tithe map of 1838 (ERO, D/CT 149A), showing:
 (A) layout of fields (B) Showing close-up of buildings.

The changing occupants and usage of Edey's Farm can also be traced from the mid 19th century to the late 19th century using census returns. In the 1841 census, when it was named as 'Deals Farm' the building was apparently divided into two cottages. The first was occupied by John Butcher (aged 44), an agricultural labourer, and his wife Mary (aged 45), and their four children William, Jacob, Harriet and Mary (aged 20, 18, 12 and 10). The two elder male children were also agricultural labourers. The other property was occupied by Thomas Marten (aged 35), who was another agricultural labourer, his wife Mary (37), and their three children Charles, George and David (aged 13, 9, and 6).^{xxxiii}

By 1851 the building had apparently changed its name to 'Hungary Hall', for which there is no surviving explanation. It might be a comment on the value of the land – meaning 'Hungry' (i.e. demanding of manures; sometimes you will see a 'Hungry Lane' or 'Hungry Field'). The change of name is documented elsewhere, but seems to have been limited to this mid-19th century period. In Patchett's history of Getingthorpe published in 1905 is the following passage:

"About half a mile from the entrance of Delvyn's Lane is an ancient tenement, now divided into three cottages. Supporting the roof, and resting upon the two exterior walls, is a principal with ogee mouldings. This property is now called Ede's Farm, but in the overseers's book of 1839 it is described as Hungary Hall."^{xxxiv}

Certainly the same building is meant, as in 1851 it was occupied by the same families who had occupied Deals Farm in 1841, although some of the elder children had left home. One part of the building was occupied by John Butcher and his wife Mary, their adult daughter Harriet, and one of his adult sons Jacob and Jacob's wife Sarah and their 4 month old child. John and Jacob were still described as farm labourers, but all three women, Mary, Harriet and Sarah, were described as 'plaiters' indicating that they worked in the north-essex straw-plaiting industry. The other part of the building was still occupied by Thomas and Mary Marten, and their three children. Thomas was now a farm bailiff, his son David (now aged 16) a farm labourer, and his wife Mary and two daughters Sarah (9) and Mary (6) were all 'plaiters'. They also had two adult female visitors on census night, one of whom was a strawplaiter and one a servant.^{xxxv}

These two families remained in occupation of the building throughout the 1850s, 1860s, and probably most of the 1870s. The layout of the farm and building towards the end of that period is revealed by the 25" Ordnance Survey map of 1876 (below, Figures 4 & 5).

In 1861, when the building was known as 'Eades Cottage', the two separate parts were occupied by

John and Mary Butcher, and Thomas and Mary Martin (the form of the latter's surname had changed from Marten to Martin). Only unmarried female children had stayed at home – Harriet Butcher (aged 32), Sarah Martin (aged 19), and Mary Martin (aged 16).^{xxxvi} By 1871, when the property was still called 'Eades Cottage', John Butcher had died, and his widow Mary (then aged 75) lived with her unmarried daughter Harriet (aged 42) who worked as a 'general needlewoman'. Thomas and Mary Martin still lived next door, working as an agricultural labourer and a strawplaiter respectively. Also living there was a Jane Butcher, apparently their grand-daughter (aged 9 and born in Gestingthorpe). The coincidence of the name strongly suggests that the Butcher and Martin families had intermarried, though the names of Jane's parents (who must have been a son of John and Mary Butcher and a daughter of Thomas and Mary Martin) is not known. Presumably the two families who shared the cottage were extremely close.^{xxxvii} Mary Martin was still alive in 1881 when she shared her part of 'Eadys Cottages' with her unmarried daughter Sarah (aged 32, a domestic servant – cook) and Jane Butcher (aged 19) who was by then described as a strawplaiter. The Butchers had gone from the cottage next door, and had been replaced by another family, Walter (aged 35) and Hannah (aged 34) Felton and their three children, William (aged 10), Edith (8) and Kate (5). Walter and William were both agricultural labourers.^{xxxviii}

The families occupying the property in 1891, then known as 'Edeys Cottages', were entirely different. In one half lived Charles Downs, and agricultural labourer, and his wife Evelina (both aged 47), and their five children Susan (13), Edith (11), Charley (8), Emily (6), and Arthur (3). Next door lived John Downs, and agricultural labourer (aged 63), and his wife Hannah (aged 61).^{xxxix} Ten years later these two families were not recorded in the 1901 census, and as the property is also not named in that document I have so far been unable to trace its occupants at that date, although there were several cottages on 'Delvyn's Lane'^{xl}

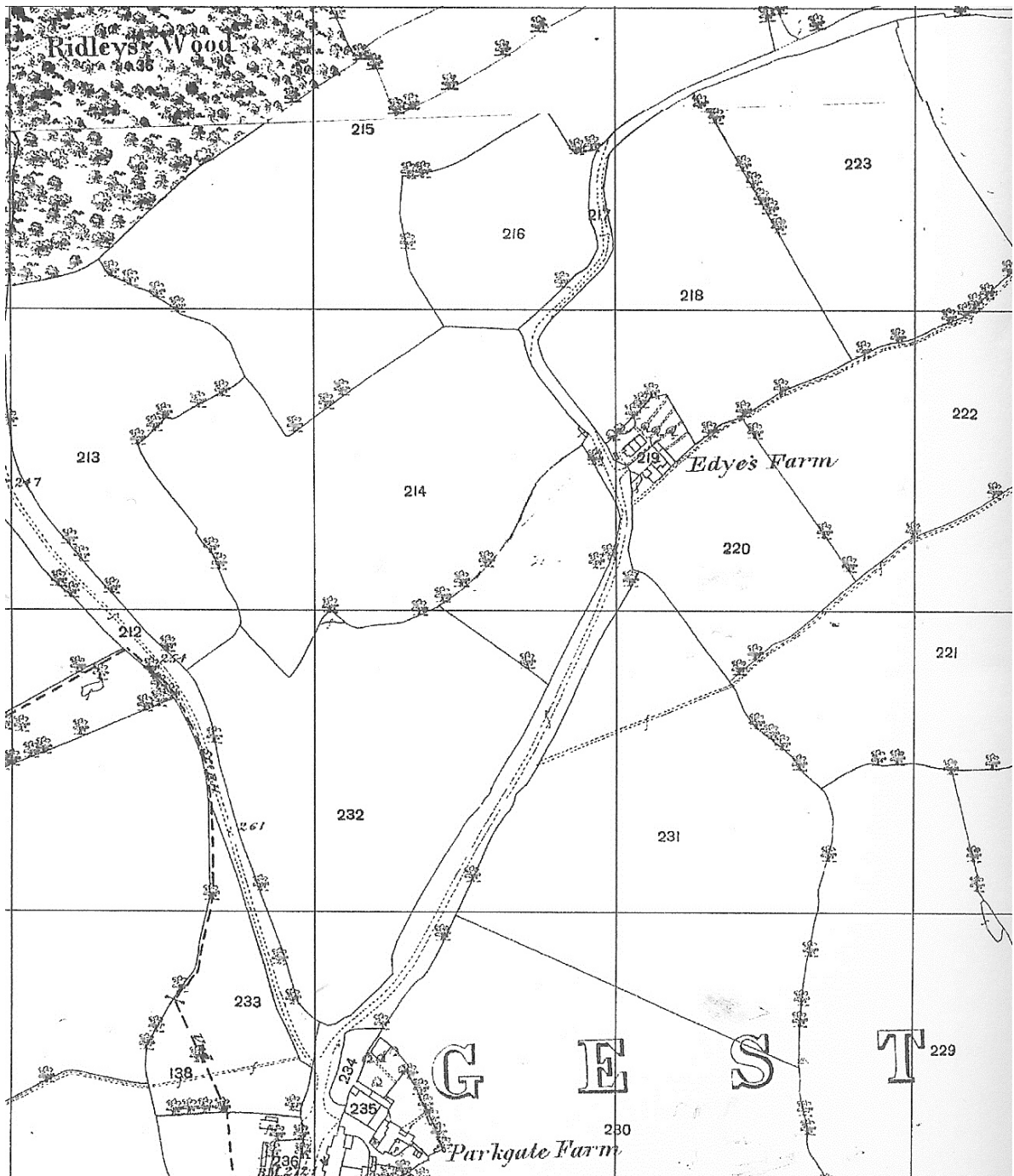


Figure 4A: Edey's Farm as depicted on OS Map 1:2500 Essex (1st edition, 1876). [Landmark map via Philip Aitkins Historic Buildings Consultants].

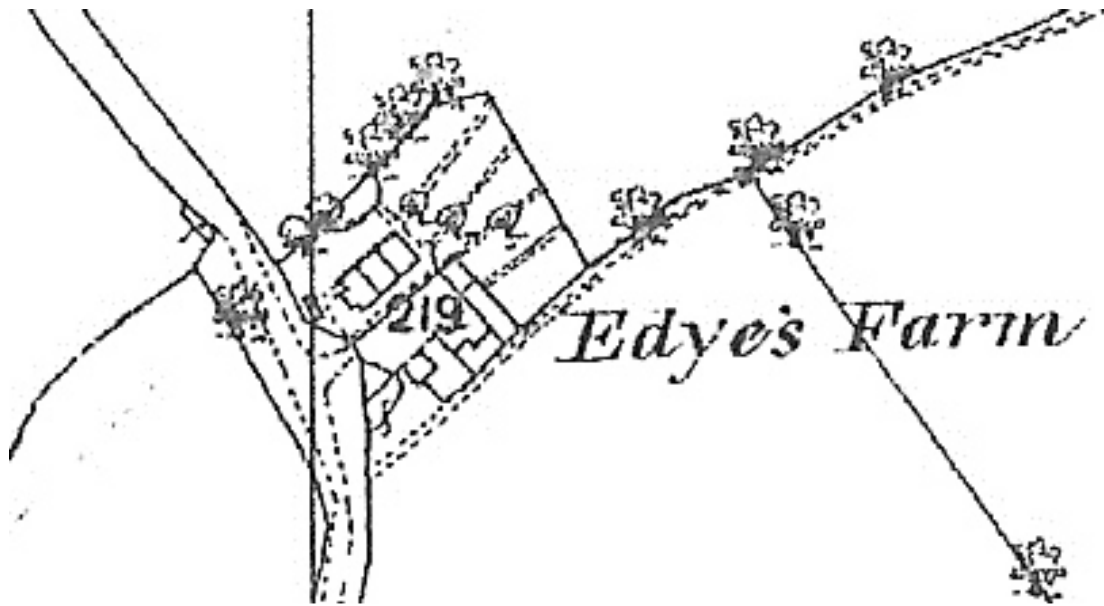


Figure 5: Close up of the farmyard and buildings as depicted on OS Map 1:2500 Essex (1st edition, 1876). [Landmark map via Philip Aitkins Historic Buildings Consultants].

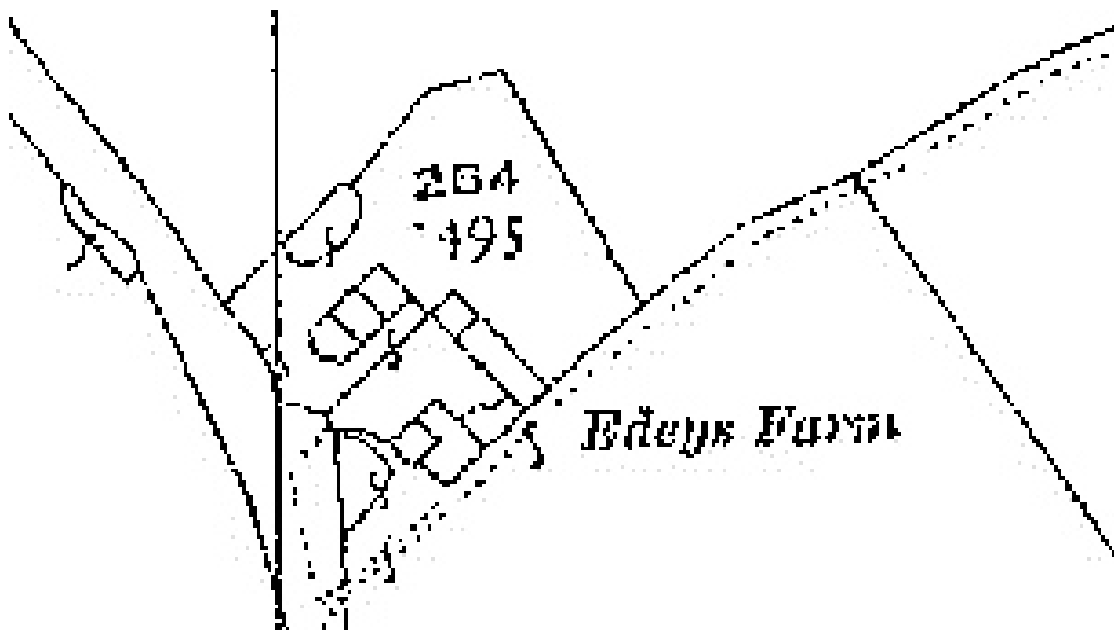


Figure 6: Close-up of the farmyard and buildings as depicted on OS Map 1:2500 Essex (2nd edition, 1923). [Landmark map via Philip Aitkins Historic Buildings Consultants].

Figures 5 and 6 indicate that the farmstead underwent little or no development through the later 19th century: this finding accords with the evidence presented above that it had probably ceased to become an independent centre of farming operations by the time it was purchased by Isaac Deal in the mid-19th century, presumably on account of its small acreage. How the land was farmed is not known, but it was occupied by agricultural farm labourers and their families. The occupants were presumably of no social or economic significance in the 19th and earlier 20th centuries as they are not recorded at all in local directories.^{xii}

Deeds and indentures that have descended with the farm reveal some final details concerning changes of ownership from the period after it was converted to a freehold down to the 1920s. D.T.

Collis who had enfranchised the farm in 1870 had apparently died by 1882 when his trustee conveyed the estate to John Collis, presumably a relative and heir. John Collis of Pebmarsh also purchased a field called Merry Weathers (3a. 2r. 11p.) in 1871 for £175, and was admitted to that holding in the court held in June 1872. This purchase probably reunited a part of the farm that had earlier been separated from the rest. It was therefore still copyhold and Merry Weathers was only finally enfranchised and converted to freehold in July 1922. John Collis died on 27th April 1892 and was succeeded by his wife Susannah Collis, who in turn died on 24th November 1906. John Martin Turpin and Frederick Joseph Hollingsworth, the executors of John and Susannah Collis, sold the estate on 13th September 1907 to John William Nott of Pebmarsh. In 1921 Nott sold the estate to John Thomas Taylor of East Dulwich, an architect, who was probably responsible for the changes made to the house in the 1920s. The purchase price was £550 (£500 for the tenement, £50 for the land comprising 22.285 acres plus Merry Weathers at 3.292a.). Taylor evidently did not have enough capital to buy the property outright, and took a mortgage of £350 at 6%, borrowing the money from the vendor, J.W. Nott.^{xiii} Taylor is not recorded in post office directory entries for Gestingthorpe in the 1920s, so it must be doubted whether he was ever a permanent resident.^{xliii}

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- ¹ Draft report by Philip Aitkins Associates (February, 2013); RCHM, *Essex*, Volume I (1916), p.101; Department of Environment, List of Buildings, District of Braintree (1984), p.5.
- ¹ J. Chapman and P. Andre, Map of Essex (1777).
- ¹ P.H. Reaney, *The Place-Names of Essex*, English Place-Name Society, Vol. XII (1935), p.431.
- ¹ RCHM, *Essex*, Volume I (1916), p.101; Department of Environment, List of Buildings, District of Braintree (1984), p.3.
- ¹ P. Morant, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Essex*, Vol. II (1768), pp.305-09.
- ¹ R.E.G. Kirk, *Feet of Fines for Essex*, Vol. I (1899-1910), p.282.
- ¹ Morant, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Essex*, Vol. II. p.309; Reaney, *The Place-Names of Essex*, p.431.
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- ¹ Gervers, *The Cartulary of the Knights*, pp.194, 425-6 (Charters 328, 736-7).
- ¹ Gervers, *The Cartulary of the Knights*, pp.408-10, 434 (Charters 710, 712, 751).
- ¹ Gervers, *The Cartulary of the Knights*, pp.480-1, 494, 503, 509, 511 (Charters 824, 848, 861, 873, 877).
- ¹ The deed is published in: W. G. Benham, 'Shakespearean Characters connected with Essex. A De Vere document of 1492', *Essex Journal*, 14 (1905), pp.97-104.
- ¹ Benham, 'Shakespearean Characters connected with Essex, p.104; Morant, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Essex*, Vol. II, p.306.
- ¹ Benham, 'Shakespearean Characters connected with Essex, p.100-01.
- ¹ The rounded-figure acreage refers to a taxation assessment rather than to a 'real' acreage, though often they were similar. A 'hide' was a medieval unit of taxation and land assessment, often sub-divided into 4 virgates. A hide of 160 = 4 x 40a., while a hide of 30 a. = 4 x 30a. Most medieval peasant farmers held fractions of virgates, for example ½ or ¼ virgate, or even less.
- ¹ Reaney, *The Place-Names of Essex*, 431. The 1538 rental cited by Reaney must be: TNA, DL 43/239 (30 Hen. VIII) or DL 43/2/40 (30 Hen. VIII). There is another rental DL 43/3/15 (temp. Elizabeth). These rentals presumably will record the name of the 16th century tenants of the farm, but have not been examined. Reference information has been taken from the TNA on-line catalogue, PROCAT.
- ¹ ERO, D/DOa M1 to M26.
- ¹ ERO, T/P 242/1 (transcript of D/DOa M1).
- ¹ ERO, D/DOa M3.

- ¹ ERO, D/DOa M3.
- ¹ ERO, D/DOa M4.
- ¹ ERO, D/DOa M5.
- ¹ ERO, D/DOa M5, M20, M23
- ¹ ERO, D/DOa M8, p.24; D/DOa M21, M22, M24.
- ¹ ERO, D/DOa M8, pp.82, 148; D/DOa M25, John King's will, proved in the Archdeaconry court of Middlesex (Essex & Herts section) also survives but has not been examined.
- ¹ ERO, D/DOa M9, pp. 3, 54.
- ¹ ERO, D/DOa M9, pp.93-9, 97-101 [then switches to folios], ff.179v-181.
- ¹ ERO, D/DOa M9, ff.207d-208; see also Warrant of Satisfaction in possession of Mr and Mrs Waller.
- ¹ ERO, D/DOa M9, ff.233-39; ERO, T/P 136/6; Sale Catalogue, 28th August 1860, Schedule of deeds, 6 Oct. 1859 to 25th Feb. 1871, Indenture of Enfranchisement, 25th Feb. 1871, all in possession of Mr and Mrs Waller.
- ¹ ERO, T/M 111.
- ¹ ERO, D/CT 149A&B.
- ¹ ERO, D/CT 149A&B.
- ¹ TNA: PRO, HO 107/332/1.
- ¹ A. Patchett, comp., *Notes on the Parish of Gestingthorpe, Essex* (London, 1905), p.62.
- ¹ TNA: PRO, HO 107/1788.
- ¹ TNA: PRO, RG 9/1127.
- ¹ TNA: PRO, RG 10/1714.
- ¹ TNA: PRO, RG 11/1825.
- ¹ TNA: PRO, RG 12/1439.
- ¹ TNA: PRO, RG 13/1741.
- ¹ For example, *White's Directory of Essex* (1848, 1863); *Kelly's (Post Office) Directory of Essex* (1866 to 1937), passim.
- ¹ Schedule of deeds, 1882 onwards, and collection of Indentures and copies of Court Rolls from 1871 to 1922, all in possession of Mr and Mrs Waller.
- ¹ *Kelly's (Post Office) Directory of Essex* (1922, 1926, 1929).