

Building Archaeology  
Research Database

# RECORDING KEY BUILDING FEATURES: AN ILLUSTRATED GLOSSARY



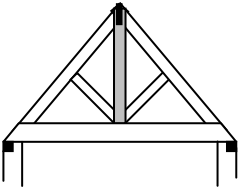
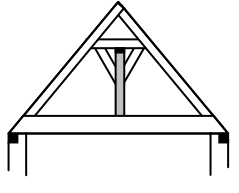
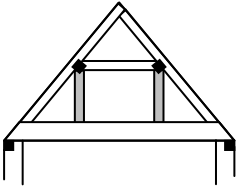
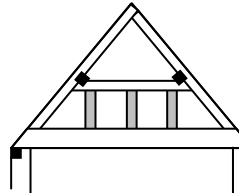
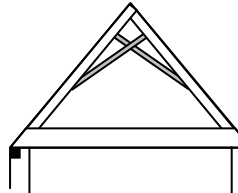
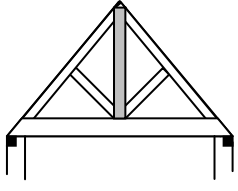
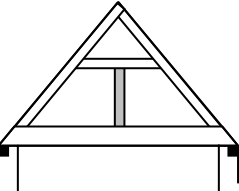
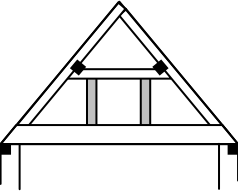
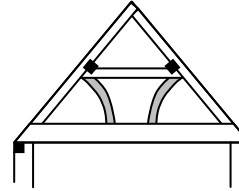
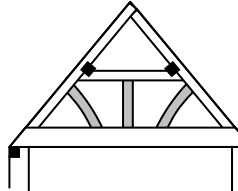




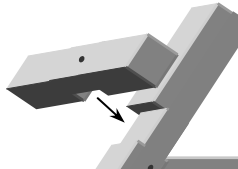
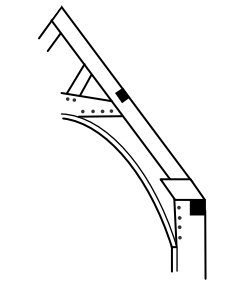
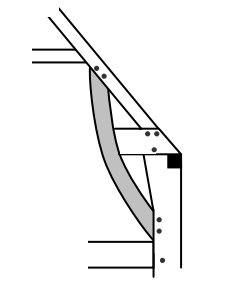
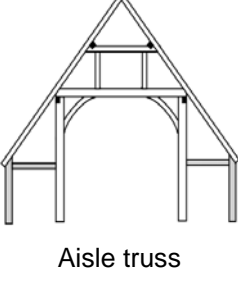
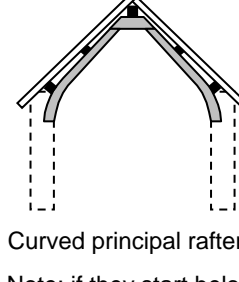
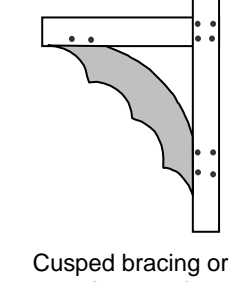
This Glossary is available for download from  
[www.buildingarchaeology.com](http://www.buildingarchaeology.com).

This illustrated glossary is intended to help with the identification of features on the "Tick-box building summary" sheet, for entry into the building archaeology research database (BARD) located at [www.buildingarchaeology.com](http://www.buildingarchaeology.com). It does not cover all features and the booklet Recording Timber Framed Buildings (see further reading) should be checked for additional types. The features mainly cover 300 years from c.1400 to c.1700.

| <b>Main plans &amp; building types</b> |  |                                      |                              |   |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
|  |  |                                      |                              |   |
| Basic house – one room deep            | House with outshot                       | House with lean-to                   | House with cross wing        | House with two face wings (front or rear) |
|  |  |                                      |                              |   |
| Open Hall (smoke blackened rafters)    | Half-floored hall (½ roof smoke blacked) | Smoke-Bay (limited smoke blackening) | Floored house with smoke-bay | Chimney House (no blackened rafters)      |

| <b>Roof types</b>     |                                  |         |                    |  |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------|--------------------|--|
|                       |                                  |         |                    | <p>Note:<br/>Narrow gablets (supporting 1 rafter) are typical for Surrey. However, mid Suffolk has examples of wide gablets (supporting 3 rafters), so the thickness of thatch did not block the escaping of smoke through the gablet opening.</p> |
| Hipped                | Half-hipped                      | Gable   | Hipped with gablet |  |
|                       |                                  |         |                    |  |
| Catslide over outshot | Pentice (projects from the wall) | Gambrel | Mansard            |  |

# Roof and Roof Structure

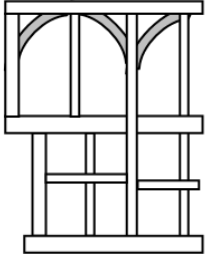

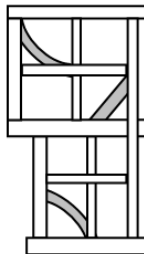
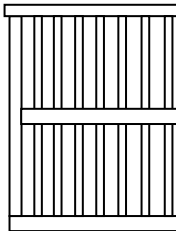
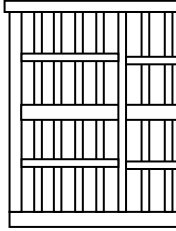
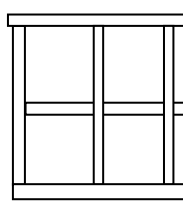
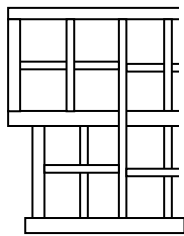
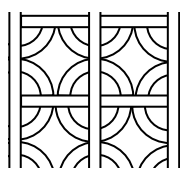
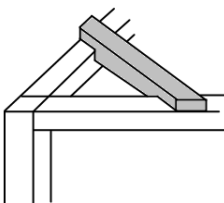
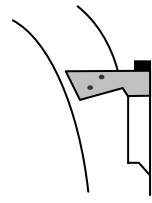
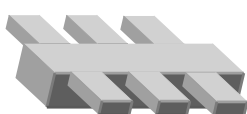

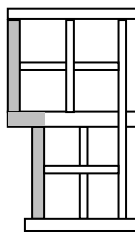
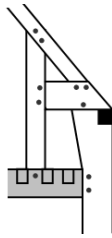
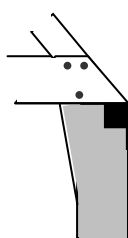
|   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|    |    |      |                           |    |
| King Post   | Crown post  | Queen Post  | Queen strut (3)   | Scissor brace   |
|    |    |      |                           |    |
| King strut  | Crown strut   | Queen strut (2)   | Raking Queen strut  | Fan truss   |
|    |    |      |                           |    |
| Common rafter roof<br>- has no purlins or<br>other longitudinal<br>timbers.         | Butt purlins in-line<br>(horizontal) at joint with<br>principal rafter<br>(sloping) | Butt purlins staggered<br>(horizontal) at joint with<br>principal rafter<br>(sloping) | Clasped purlin<br>(horizontal) between<br>diminished principal<br>rafter (sloping) & collar                 | Trenched purlin<br>(horizontal) & principal<br>rafter (sloping)                       |
|  |  |    |                         |  |
| Post & Rafter truss   | Sling brace   | Aisle truss<br>Note: this is a type<br>of framing                                     | Curved principal rafters<br>Note: if they start below<br>the wall top, they should<br>be noted under crucks | Cusped bracing or<br>cusping on other<br>timbers                                      |

Notes:

**Struts** do not support a longitudinal timber which is shown here in black, except raking struts which may support a purlin.

**Roof truss other** is on the tick-box list and on the database this field has a drop down list from which you can choose from the following types: Collar truss (i.e. without posts or struts, just a collar or collars, aka – A-truss), King post, King strut, Queen post, Hammer beam, False hammer beam, Single arch braced, Waggon roof (aka-Double arch braced), Braced collar, Fan truss and 7-canted roof.

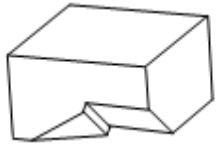
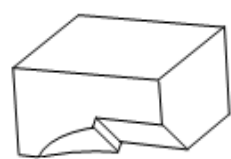

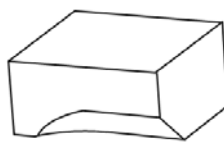
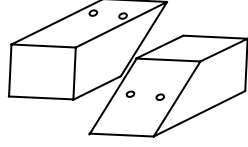
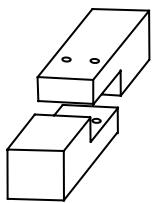
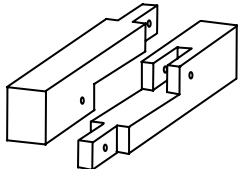
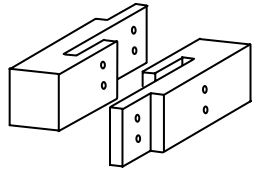
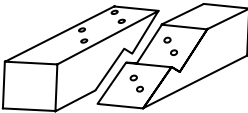
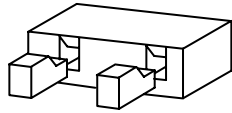
## Framing

|   |   |  |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|--|
|  |  |   |    |   |
| Arch braces   | Passing wall brace  | Down braces  | Close studding   | Close studding with rail   |
|  |  |   |    |   |
| Large panels  | Small square panels   | Decorative panelling   | Dragon tie   | Spur (jointed to cruck blade)  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Joists flat (six joists joining into a spine beam)                                | Joists on edge (six joists joining into a spine beam)                             | Jetty  | Dropped tiebeam  | Jowled post  |

Notes: Full Wealden (floored bays and both ends of hall) and Half Wealden (Floored bay at one end of hall only) can be distinguished by listing their full type under key features.

## Carpentry

(Scarf joints are usually found in wallplates and purlins, see framing for jowled post)

|   |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|---|--|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Stops - flat step   | Stops - curved step   | Stops - Lamb's tongue (scroll)  | Stops - run-out  | Splayed scarf   |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Scarf Side-halved   | Scarf Side-halved & bridled   | Scarf Face-halved & bladed  | Through-splayed & tabled scarf<br>(AKA: trait de Jupiter)                            | Joist joint - Diminished haunch   |

### Carpenter' Marks:

In this field you can either simply type in Scribed or Chiselled if they are present, or for more detail please use the following annotation:

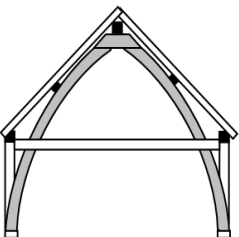
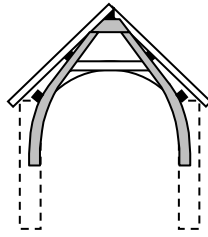
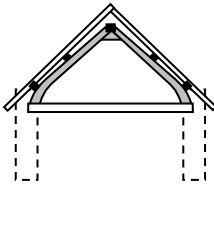
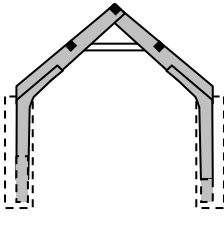
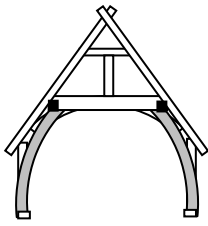
1st figure to identify the length in centimetres

2nd letter to identify the type: (S) = Scribed, (C) = Chiseled or (B) = both.

3rd letter to describes the characters used: (R) = Roman numeral, (A) = Arabic or (O) = Other.

4th & 5th letters to identify the use of additional details: (H) = half circles, (F) = Full circles, (T) = Tags or Flags.

# Cruck types

|   |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|---|--|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Cruck   | Raised cruck  | Upper Cruck   | Jointed cruck  | Base cruck  |

Notes:

**Cruck** = a single piece of timber, straight or curved, serving as the principal roof, and stretching from a point at, or close to, the apex of the roof to a point substantially down the side walls.

**Raised Cruck** = where blades start some way up the wall, crucks in buildings with solid walls are virtually without exception of raised form.

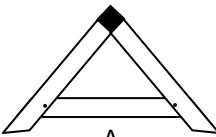
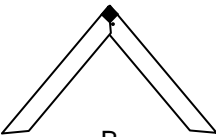
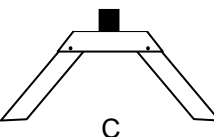
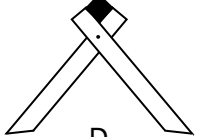
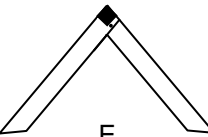
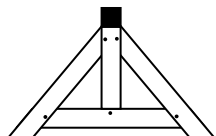
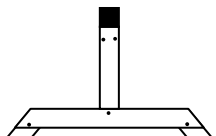
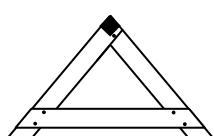
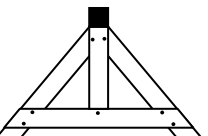
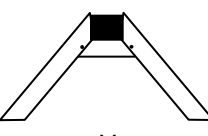
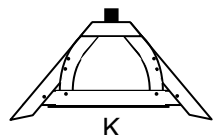
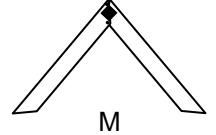
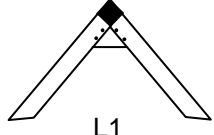
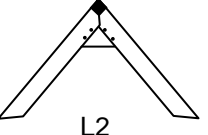
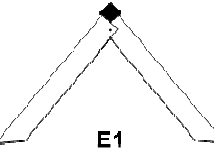
**Upper Cruck** = feet tenoned not to cill, but into the ends of the main ceiling beam, restrict usage to blades that reach well below the wall-top.

**Jointed Cruck** = rafter & post separate timbers jointed at the elbow (Either post or rafter must be curved at end).

**Base Cruck** = single baulks of timber which start well below the eaves and rise to the lowest transverse member.

**Two-tier Cruck** = supports a small pair of cruck-shaped blades over the collar (and should be recorded as Cruck apex type K, see below)

# Cruck apex types (after Alcock 1981)

|  |  |   |  |  |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| <br>A<br>(Collar shown)                               | <br>B<br>(Poss. collar not shown) | <br>C<br>(Saddle shown not poss. collar)       | <br>D<br>(Poss. collar not shown)  | <br>E<br>(Poss. collar not shown)       |
| <br>G<br>(Collar or yoke shown)                       | <br>F1<br>(Collar shown)          | <br>F2<br>(Collar shown)                       | <br>F3<br>(Collar shown)           | <br>H<br>(Yoke shown, not poss. collar) |
| <br>K<br>(AKA: Two-tier cruck, saddle & collar shown) | <br>M<br>(Poss. collar not shown) | <br>L1<br>(Poss. collar not shown)             | <br>L2<br>(Poss. collar not shown) | V = Half-hipped or full-hipped cruck in an end wall.   |
| W = Blades truncated above collar, passing the collar but with no upper structure (contrast F)   | W1 = Blades truncated above collar, passing the collar which carries a short king-post (contrast F1)                 | <br>E1<br>New variant (Poss. collar not shown) | Note: Please e-mail any other variants that might be added   |  |

**Cruck Apex Notes:**

The symbol \* should be add after the entry letter if no ridge piece present

The cruck blades of all F types stop at the collar and have separate structures above.

H also shows an example of a Yoke, which is a short timber linking two pieces of timber, such as cruck blades.

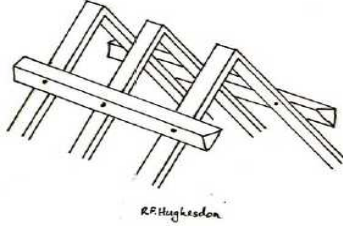
C & K show Saddles (the short timber set on top of two cruck blades).

L1 and L2 also show examples of a Block, which is a small piece of timber occupying the angle between two other timbers, such as in a cruck apex.

## Miscellaneous Features



Smoke louvre – an opening with a hood for smoke to escape (very rarely survives)



Evidence of a smoke louvre includes – pegs holes at top of rafters, charred short collar & smoke blackened cut rafters

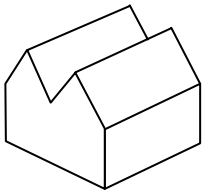
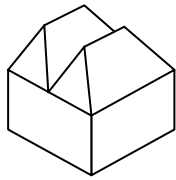
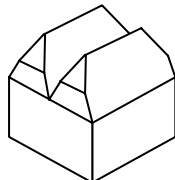
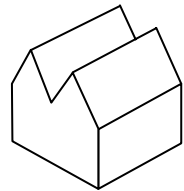
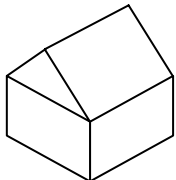
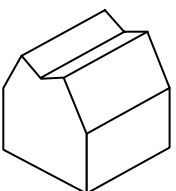
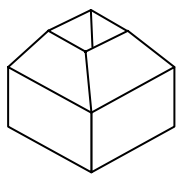
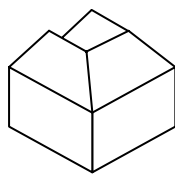
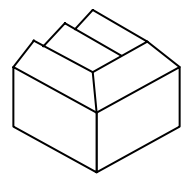
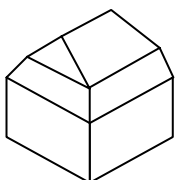


Mullion window (timber), with diamond mullions

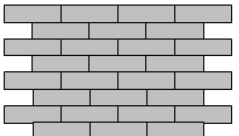
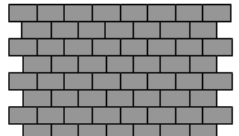
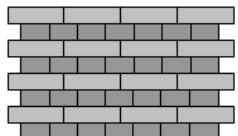
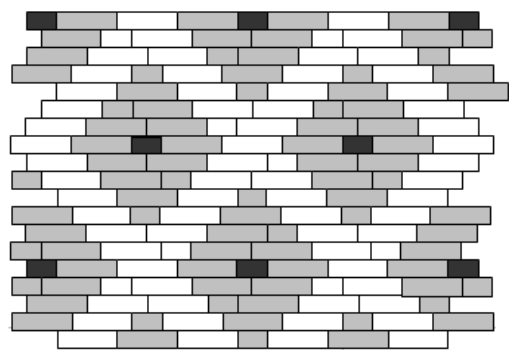
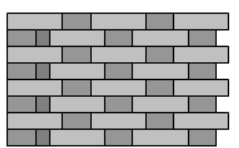
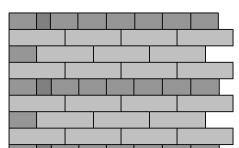
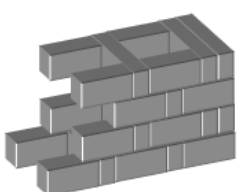
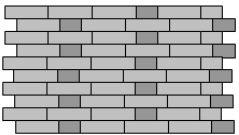
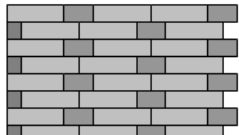
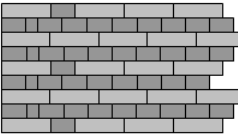
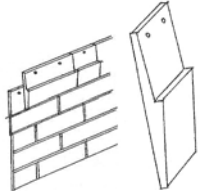
Notes: Features normally associated with a **louvre** include: horizontal peg holes towards the top of a few rafters (typically three pairs) which would have held its frame; a lap joint high up a rafter for an additional short collar (where the collar survives, it can often be charred from sparks drawn up by the airflow); or the tops of the rafters are cut out and smoke blackened. Evidence for a louvre is normally found in the lower bay, set towards the central truss, but can often be destroyed by the later insertion of a chimney stack.

**Overshot cross entry** - has a ceiling at first floor level, even though it faces into a hall without a partition.

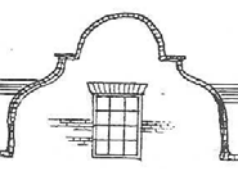

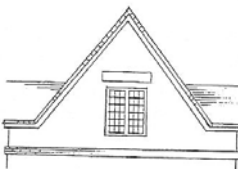
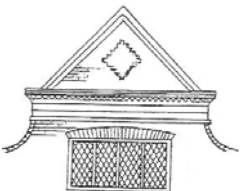
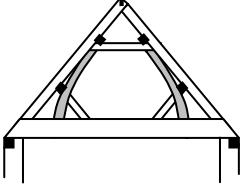
## Double pile - roof types (\*may be also be gabled, hipped or half-hipped)

|   |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|---|--|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Double pile   | Hipped  | Half-hipped   | Gable  | Double Span Gable*  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| M-Shape*  | Truncated Pyramid<br>(valley open)  | 2 rear Wings*   | 3 Rear Wings*  | Mansard   |

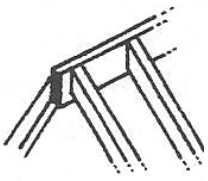
## Brick bonds & Wall coverings

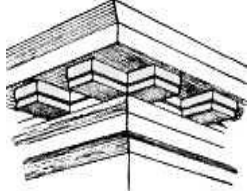

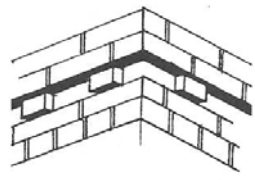
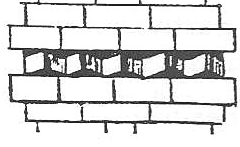

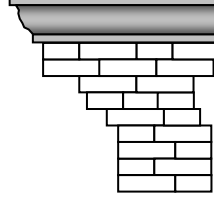
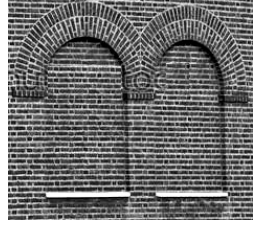
|   |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|---|--|---|
|    |    |    |   |   |
| Stretcher Bond  | Header Bond   | English Bond  | Flemish Garden Wall  |   |
|  |  |  |  |   |
| Flemish Bond  | English Garden Wall   | Rat Trap  |  |   |
|  |  |  |  | Note: <b>Mathematical tiles</b> = also known as brick tiles. They are designed to look like brick work and can be quite difficult to detect |
| Flemish Stretcher Bond  | Monk Bond   | English Cross Bond  | Mathematical tiles   |   |

## Roof structures

|   |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|---|--|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Dutch Gable (1)   | Dutch Gable (2)   | Jacobean Gable (1)  | Jacobean Gable (2)   | Cranked inner principal   |

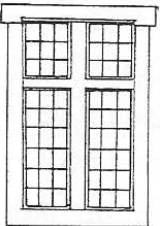
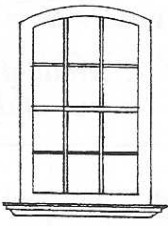
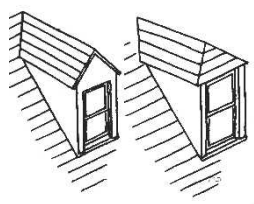
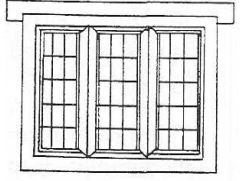
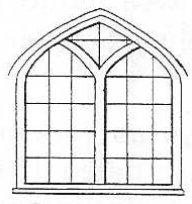
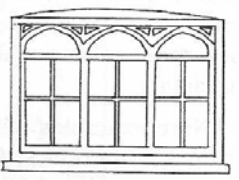
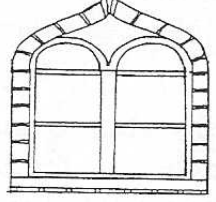




|  |  |   |   |  |
|--|--|---|---|--|
|  <p>Ridge board</p> | <p><b>Butted vertical purlins:</b> are butt purlins which are horizontal in the normal way but set square to the ground: their width is vertical and their depth horizontal.</p> | <p><b>Butt rafters:</b> are rafters which tenon into their purlins rather than pass over them. They usually go with butt purlins.</p> | <p><b>Level assembly:</b> is where the tiebeam is tenoned into the wallplate so that the top faces of both are level.</p> |  |
|--|--|---|---|--|


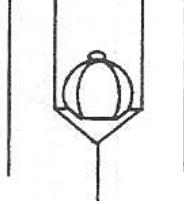
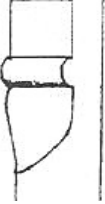
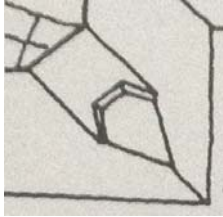
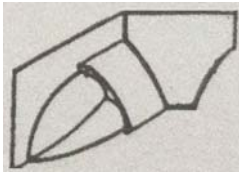
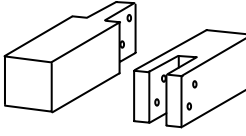
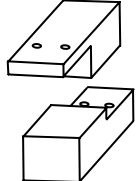
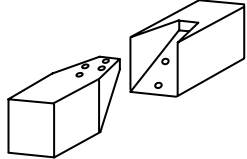
|  |   |   |  |  |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| <h2>Façade Features</h2>   |   |   |  |  |
|  <p>Modillions (block)</p>  |  <p>Parapet (with moulded bricks modillions below)</p>   | <p><b>Parapets:</b> are upward extensions of the wall, sometimes with a coping at the top and corbel below.</p> |  <p>Dentils</p>  |  <p>Dentils (Dog-tooth)</p> |
|  <p>Porch of 2 storeys</p> | <p><b>String course</b> is a decorative, horizontal course of brick or stone set in the wall of a building. Typically 3 courses of bricks slightly proud of the wall surface at the levels of the upper floors.</p> |  <p>Cornice</p>               | <p><b>Cottage ornee style:</b> is a highly decorative Regency style including such things as Gothic windows, arched doorways, verandas, leaded lights, thatch and exposed external woodwork.</p> |  <p>Blind arches</p>       |

Notes:

**Parapets** surrounding roofs are extremely common in London. This dates from the Building Act of 1707 which banned projecting wooden eaves in the cities of Westminster and London as a fire risk. Instead an 18-inch brick parapet was required, with the roof set behind. This trend was continued in many Georgian houses, as it gave the appearance of a flat roof which accorded with the desire for classical proportions.

|   |  |  |   |   |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| <h2>Windows</h2>  |  |  |   |   |
|  <p>Mullion &amp; Transom</p>                  |  <p>Arched (1)</p>  |  <p>Dormers</p> |  <p>Mullion</p> |  <p>Gothic</p> |
|  <p>Gothic effect in a rectangular opening</p> |  <p>Gothic Ogee</p> |  <p>Bay</p>     |  <p>Bow</p>     |   |

## Carpentry

|   |  |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|--|---|
|  <p>Stops - broach</p>       |  <p>Stops - pumpkin</p>                                       |  <p>Stops - roll</p>   |  <p>Stop – geometric<br/>(C16th)</p> |  <p>Stop – keel (shield)<br/>(C17th)</p> |
|  <p>Scarf – face bridled</p> |  <p>Scarf – side <math>\frac{3}{4}</math> depth<br/>joint</p> |  <p>Scarf – socket</p> |  |   |

### Acknowledgements:

Grateful thanks are due to DBRG(Surrey) for permission to use Pauline Huxtable's drawings from George Howard's book (see below) in the Brick - Roofs, Facades and Windows sections of this Glossary, to Rosemary Hughesdon for the smoke louvre drawings and to Rod Wild for all his useful comments.

### Further reading:

Recording Timber Framed Buildings: An Illustrated Glossary by Alcock, Barley, Dixon and Meeson. A Council for British Archaeology booklet. ISBN number is 1-872414-72-9. Cost £6.50.

The Smaller Brick, Stone and Weatherboard Houses of Surrey, 17<sup>th</sup> to mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century: A Statistical Analysis by George Howard. Domestic Buildings Research Group (Surrey). Cost £3.60.

Discovering Timber-framed Buildings by Richard Harris. From the Shire "Discovering" series. ISBN 0 85263 427 7. Cost £6.99

### Useful link:

Domestic Building Research Group Surrey - Illustrated glossary of architectural terms:  
<http://www.dbrg.org.uk/GLOSSARY/INTRO.html>