

## TABLES OF TREE-RING DATED BUILDINGS IN ENGLAND

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Before using the index for the first time you are recommended to read or print the *introduction and guidance*, which includes a key to the abbreviations used on the tables.

The tables are available in two forms -

NATIONAL LISTS arranged mainly by half-century, and COUNTY LISTS approximately in chronological order.

Index compiled by Bob Meeson for the Vernacular Architecture Group from data in *Vernacular Architecture* volumes 11 (1980) to 46 (2015). The index is a work in progress, based mainly on entries edited by Dr Nat Alcock and also (since 2011) by Cathy Tyers from lists provided by the dating laboratories, published annually in *Vernacular Architecture*. The index should be complete up to volume 46 (2015). During 2016 a very small number of date-ranges have been added from historical sources: these are entered onto the tables entirely in italics.

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### INTRODUCTION AND GUIDANCE

#### *Introduction*

Since 1980 lists of tree-ring dating reports have been published by the Vernacular Architecture Group in their annual journal *Vernacular Architecture* (VA). Tree-ring dates and reports can now be referred to in individual volumes of VA, on-line via the Archaeology Data Service web site, and on-line at some tree-ring dating laboratory web sites. These resources establish the felling dates and date-ranges of timbers employed in more than 3600 discrete building phases. In addition to dating individual building phases, the data is becoming sufficiently robust to enable comparative studies to be made.

The tables are organised in two ways -

- (a) In approximate felling date order, each file spanning 50 years. In this chronological form the lists have a range of potential applications, but in particular they can be used by anyone seeking to identify potential sources regarding tree-ring dated building phases throughout England and Wales.
- (b) For regional and local research, the same data is provided in individual files for each historic county.

Researchers who find errors, or who wish to contribute additional information, for example on wall-frames, are invited to e-mail bob@bmeeson.co.uk. Additions and corrections should preferably be supported by such evidence as descriptive texts or drawings. In particular, it is important to make clear that any additional information supplied relates to the same building phase as the tree-ring dated timbers. Contributors will be acknowledged on any revised county files but it may not be possible to enter into correspondence if a large volume of work is generated. Hopefully, updated and revised tables will again be made available in due course.

#### NATIONAL LISTS

The national lists are organised mainly into half-century blocks, ranging from the second half of the ninth century to the twentieth century. This format will be most useful to anyone seeking to identify national distribution patterns, parallels and trends. To locate building phases which span the divisions across centuries or half-centuries it may be necessary to check the surrounding files.

#### COUNTY LISTS

The county lists of English tree-ring dated buildings published in VA up to 2014 are organised in approximate felling date order. In this chronological form the lists have a range of potential applications, but in particular they can be used by anyone seeking to identify local parallels within established dating parameters.

Continued ...

## Using the tables

The national tables are set out in the following format -

Place holder	Felling date range	County-historic (later)	Placename	Address	VA ref; EH ref; (other ref)	Description / keywords	NGR
1300	1294 -1306	Berks (Oxf)	Harwell	Lime Tree House (Winchester's Manor)	14.62 (1)	Base cruck, <i>arch-braced tiebeam</i> , crown post, <i>collar purlin</i> , <i>splayed and tabled scarf</i> . For primary aisled hall see 1243 -47.	SU 492888
1300	c.1290 - 1310	Cambs	Ely	Ely Cathedral: nave roof	- CfA 9/2005	Wide range of felling dates but report concludes this was date of 1st replacement of Romanesque roof. Coupled rafters, <i>ashlar pieces</i> , low <i>collar</i> with <i>passing scissor braces</i> , high collar. Some timbers from Baltic.	TL 541803

### Place holder

On the national tables the place holder given in the first column is not a felling date and should never be cited as such. Nor should it be cited as a likely 'average' within a felling date range: it corresponds to the central point between the two extremes of the published felling date range. The place holders were used during the compilation of the master tables to 'sort' the entries into an approximate sequence. They have also been used for statistical calculations and plotting, to fix the block of dates or centuries with which the recorded features are associated.

### Felling date range

A single date in this column (e.g. 1450) is held to represent the year during which the timber was felled, but this might not be the same as the year in which the given building was constructed.

A date range in this column (e.g. 1436-64) indicates that the sampled timbers are held to have been felled at an uncertain time between the earliest and latest dates cited. A date range first cited in VA as 1307(-1+4) is generally cited in the tables as 1306 – 1311 and given a place holder of 1309.

### County

The historic (pre-1974) counties are employed in the tables because they are designed primarily to ease access to information for historical research. Due to local government boundary changes some entries do not correspond with those given in VA. Where two counties are listed in this column the first (top) entry is the historic county (e.g. Berks) and the second (bottom) entry is the county as originally listed in VA (e.g. Oxf). As a result of ongoing changes some of the local authorities listed in this second group, mainly derived from the original entry in VA, have already been superseded.

In this index the counties correspond mostly with those defined in the first edition volumes of Sir Nicholas Pevsner's *Buildings of England* series. The main exception is York, which Pevsner placed in his East Yorkshire volume; in these tables York has not been associated with a particular riding.

### Place name

Generally the place name given in this column is that cited in the entry in VA. There are various exceptions, including some 'listed buildings' whose place names are given in a different form in the statutory lists, and some larger buildings (e.g. National Trust) some of whose locations are differently cited on recent web site entries.

### Address

In most cases the address given in this column is that cited in the entry in VA. There are various exceptions, including some 'listed buildings' whose addresses are given in a different form in the statutory lists, and some larger buildings (e.g. National Trust properties) whose addresses are differently cited on recent web sites.

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## References

This column is still 'work in progress'. The index is designed to aid access to sources, not to replace them. Researchers should always check primary sources.

The first reference cited in this column is generally the volume and page number in *Vernacular Architecture* (28.43 = volume 28, page 43). N. Alcock and D. Miles *The medieval peasant house in midland England* (2013) and the individual building codes used therein are cited thus – *MPHE* ALC-A.

Numbers in brackets – e.g. (18) – refer to end-notes. These sources were used to support the paper in *Vernacular Architecture* for which the tables were originally compiled. Many more primary sources can be found in the original entries in *VA*.

A number of tree-ring dating laboratories and individual specialists can be identified from the initial letters that are also included in this column, but some early entries in *VA* have been amended to indicate where the primary data may have been moved to (thus Miles and Haddon Reece has been subsumed into 'Oxf'). Anyone seeking to refer to the original reports can check the original entries in *Vernacular Architecture*, use the English Heritage report numbers, or refer to the ADS website. Reports commissioned via English Heritage are variously cited: AML = Ancient Monuments Laboratory, CfA = Centre for Archaeology, RDRS = Research Department Report Series. Summaries of many English Heritage reports can be accessed online at <http://research.english-heritage.org.uk>.

AM = Andy Moir. DCL = Ian Tyers (as Dendro Consultancy Ltd). FI = J Fletcher [some data now held by Oxf]. IT = Ian Tyers. MB = Martin Bridge (at various institutions). MoL = Museum of London. Notm = Nottingham Tree-Ring Dating Laboratory. Oxf = Oxford Tree-Ring Dating Laboratory (subsuming Haddon Reece and Miles and some others). Sh - Sheffield (subsuming ARCUS). UoW = University of Wales. Reports by Tree Ring Dating Services are cited in the following format - *RUSK/34/03*. UKDS = United Kingdom Dendro. Services.

Some entries in the Welsh tables now include references to the NPRN (National Primary Record Number) on the 'Coflein' web-site.

## Description / key words

This column includes summaries of the original entries in *Vernacular Architecture*, sometimes just using key words. Where it has been possible to cross-check with the original tree-ring dating reports, listed building descriptions, or primary sources, a number of amendments and additions have been made.

In many cases the terminology has been up-dated or amended to comply more closely to the CBA Glossary – N W Alcock, M W Barley, P W Dixon and R A Meeson *Recording timber-framed buildings: an illustrated glossary*. Practical handbook in archaeology 5 (Council for British Archaeology 1999).

## Grid references

Some grid references have been amended, either to correct errors, or to standardise them in accordance with accepted O.S. methodology.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The compilation of the index was prompted by a suggestion from Cathy Tyers. Dr Dan Miles allowed unrestricted access to his library of tree-ring dating reports. I am grateful to Dr Nat Alcock for his constructive help and advice. Many people provided information, especially David Clark, Dr Christopher Currie, Andy Foster, Nick Hill, Robert Howard, David Martin, Sarah Pearson, Dr Edward Peters, Pam Slocombe, Dr David Stocker and John Thorp. Jean Meeson offered support throughout. None of these tables could have been compiled without the continuing work of the tree-ring dating laboratories. Other acknowledgements can be found on the individual county tables.

Lorraine Moor is thanked for posting the original tables and the 2016 revised versions on the VAG website.

Bob Meeson.