

Building Survey Report

Nos 8 to 10 Old Market Place, Altrincham, Trafford

Report by:

Michael Nevell & Hazel Pryor

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Summary

This report details the archaeological and historical research undertaken by the South Trafford Archaeological Group subsequent to the discovery in October 2019 of a cruck-framed truss in Nos 8 to 10 Old Market Place, Altrincham.

The South Trafford Archaeological Group has been exploring the historic Old Market Place in Altrincham since the group was founded in 1979. STAG have excavated in several locations and recorded a number historic buildings in this area. However, one set of properties, Nos 8 to 10 (SJ 768 880), remained off limits until they were sold in 2019.

Extensive renovation work followed during October to December 2019. This work revealed the fragmentary remains of a previously unrecorded cruck-framed timber building, a building type most commonly found in the late medieval period and 17th century in Britain. This building lies in the historic centre of Altrincham, a medieval market town with a charter from 1290. Although not a listed structure the property does lie within the Old Market Place Conservation Area.

Nos 8 to 10 Old Market Place is a two-storey timber and brick property. The front two bays, which unusually for the Altrincham are aligned with their long axis to the Old Market Place, represent the earliest portion of the property and contained extensive timber-framing. The current Old Market Place elevation is a 19th century rebuild, whilst the two-bay extension to the rear (east) appears to have been built in the period 1835-51. It was used as shops during the 19th and early 20th centuries and as offices in the later 20th century and until 2019.

Externally, the property is of brick construction and has a slate-covered roof suggesting that the building dated from the 19th century. Yet a stretch of timber-framed walling and two chamfered ceiling beams visible on the ground floor of Nos. 8 and 10 prior to renovation suggested an earlier origin. Sadly, all of these features were removed during the renovation work in the autumn of 2019.

Emergency recording (photographs and a measured survey of the cruck truss and timber-framed partition) was undertaken by the South Trafford Archaeological Group and Altrincham History Society revealing a single surviving cruck-truss exposed in the northern wall of No. 10. The cruck truss only survives at first floor and roof height. The wide cruck blades (up to 0.35m) were adzed finished. The blades were braced by a tie-beam and a collar beam, and at ground floor were probably c. 5m apart – although no evidence for this location was recovered. The apex of the cruck-truss is roughly 6m above the current ground level and followed Alcock's L1 style, where the two trusses were tied together at the very tip with the aid of a short brace. There was evidence at the top of the western cruck blade for blocking showing the original roof line.

The evidence for wattle and daub panelling on the upper and underside of the tie-beam and a lack of any evidence for original door openings suggested that this cruck truss was



the gable-end of a timber-building running into No. 12 Old Market Place. It therefore formed a separate structure from the property in Nos 8 to 10 Old Market Place which had box timber-framing. A fragment of this box-framing survived on the ground floor of No. 10. Nos 8 to 10 appear to have been a single property, two bays long and one bay deep, and two storeys high.

The history of the two properties during the late 18th to early 21st century indicates that they were for many years in separate ownership. No 10 was owned along with No 12 by the Lupton family, clock makers and ironmongers from the 1780s until the 1850s. The two properties were split in the late 1850s after the Luptons moved on and for the rest of the 19th century and most of the 20th century No 10 was occupied by a variety of businesses, including from the 1900s to the 1940s a tobacconist. No 8 was occupied by boot and shoemakers between the 1830s and 1870s, by oil and lamp dealers from the 1880s to the 1930s, and by a children's outfitters in the mid-20th century. In the mid-1990s Nos 8, 10 and 12 were bought and run as offices by a firm of medical insurers, before being sold for renovation in 2019.

Nos 10/12 Old Market Place is not the only cruck building known from Altrincham Old Market Place. In 1932 a cruck-framed house was demolished on the corner of the Old Market Place and Victoria Street. This stood immediately to the north of No. 16 Old Market Place, on the same side as Nos 8 to 10. Other box-framed timber buildings are known to have existed in this area, including No 6 Old Market Place (demolished in 2004) and the Orange Tree pub on the western side of the Old Market Place, opposite nos 8 to 10.

Although the buildings lie within the Old Market Place Conservation Area (established in 1973), unlike other historic properties in this area, Nos 8 to 10 were not listed buildings. This lack of protection undoubtedly helped lead to the removal of the box-timber framing seen within these two properties.



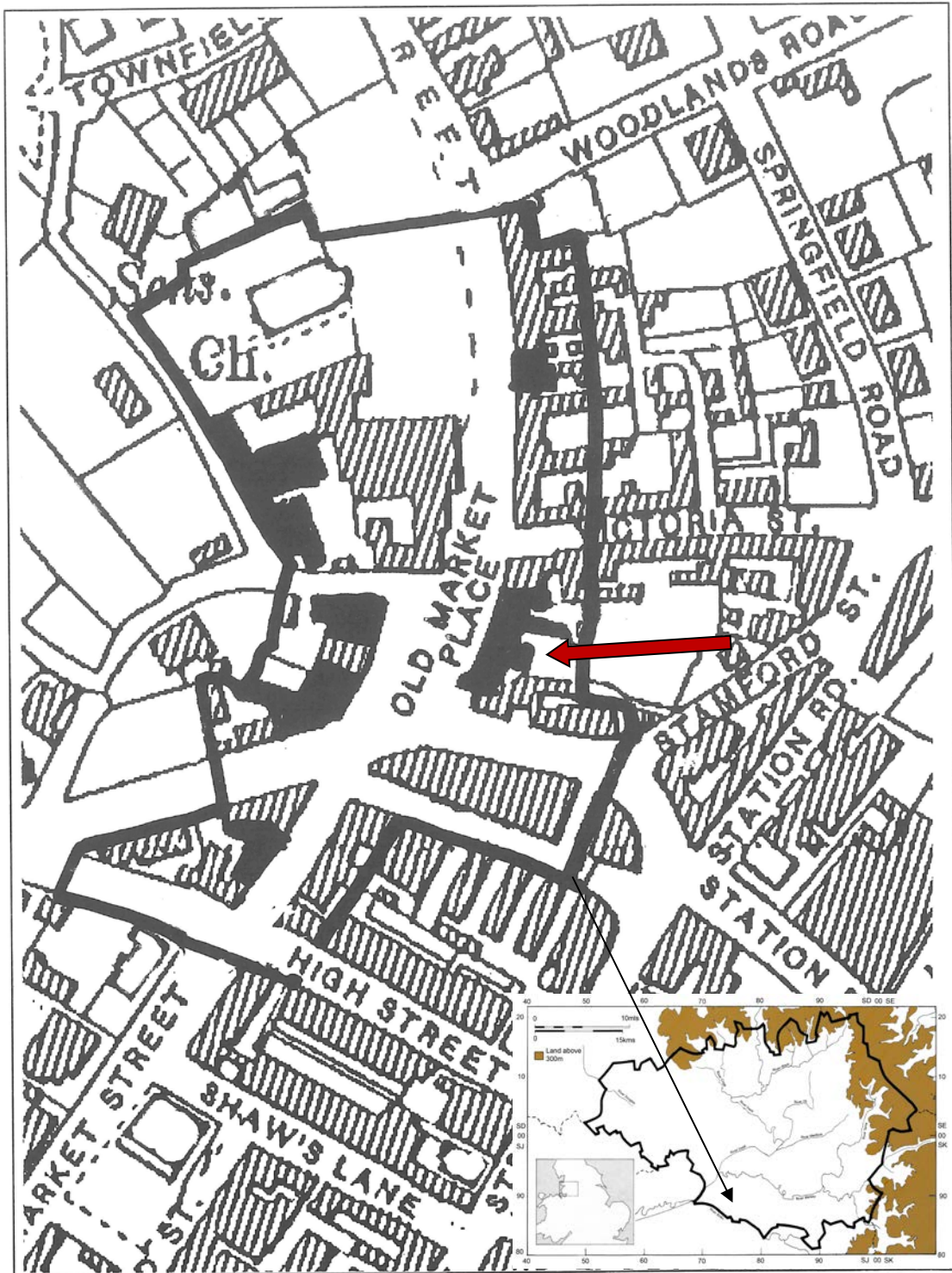


Figure 1: The location of Nos 8 to 10 Old Market Place, Altrincham (Arrowed). The Conservation Area is outlined and the buildings surveyed by STAG are shaded black. Source: Ordnance Survey 1:10,000, Cheshire Sheet 18, 1938 revision.



Figure 10: The Old Market Place, Altrincham looking north. Nos 8 to 10 (arrowed) lies on the righthand side of the road.



Figure 11: The western elevation of Nos 8 to 12 Old Market Place, Altrincham in 2000.



Year	Property Numbers as 2000					
	16	14	12	10	8	6
1782			G. Lupton Clockmaker			
1821/22			G. Lupton Clock/watch maker & corn dlr			S. Bruckshaw Grocer
1824/25			G. Lupton Clock/watch maker John Lupton Miller & corn dlr			S. Bruckshaw Baker & Flour dlr
1834			H. Lupton Milliner Watchmaker	J. Lupton C. Lupton Ironmonger	J. Adshead Boot & shoe maker	S. Bruckshaw Grocer
1838			J. Lupton Watchmaker C. Lupton Ironmonger		J. Adshead Boot & shoe maker	
1841			H. Lupton Ironmonger & Watchmaker		Elizabeth Adshead Boot & shoe maker	J. Bruckshaw Grocer & Corn dealer
1853		E. Hughes Insurance agent	H. Lupton Ironmonger & Smallware dealer		Elizabeth Adshead Boot & shoe maker	J. Bruckshaw Grocer & Seedsman
1855		E. Hughes Chemist & Druggist	H. Lupton Ironmonger		Elizabeth Adshead Boot & shoe maker	J. Bruckshaw Corn dealer
1857	R. Poole Esq	E. Hughes Chemist & Insurance agent	G. Thornley Saddler & Watch/clock maker		Elizabeth Adshead Boot & shoe maker	J. Bruckshaw Grocer, Seedsman & Off-licence
1858	Miss A. K. Poole (Gentry)	E. Hughes Chemist & Insurance agent	G. Thornley Saddler & Watch/clock maker		Elizabeth Adshead Boot & shoe maker	J. Bruckshaw Grocer, Seedsman & Off-licence
1859	Miss A. K. Poole (Gentry)	E. Hughes Chemist & Druggist & Tea dealer	G. Thornley Saddler & Watch/clock maker	Williamson Ironmonger	Elizabeth Adshead Boot & shoe maker	J. Bruckshaw Grocer, Seedsman & Off-licence
1861	Miss A. K. Poole (Gentry)	E. Hughes Chemist/Druggist & Insurance agent	G. Thornley Saddler		Elizabeth Adshead Boot & shoe maker	J. Bruckshaw Grocer etc C. Bruckshaw Boot & shoe maker
1874			Syers Accountants	Mary Collins Boot & shoe maker	Mary Collins Boot & shoe maker	
1886		Hughes Chemist	H. G. Syers House & property agent	C. Brown Joiner, Lamp & oil dealer		Worthington & Hulme Grocers
1888	W. A. Renshaw Surgeon		Syers & Nephew Estate agent			R. Worthington Grocer
1899	W. A. Renshaw Surgeon	E. Hughes Chemist	Miss Jeffery Circ. Library Miss Owen Tabacconist	C. Brown Joiner, Lamp & oil dealer		G. Whitwham Grocer
1902	W. A. Renshaw Surgeon	E. Hughes Chemist	Richardson Confectionery	G. H. Aldcroft Oil & lamp dealer		G. Whitwham Grocer, prov. Mcht Wines
1906	W. A. Renshaw Surgeon	E. Hughes Chemist	A. J. Richardson Confectionery Jackson Tabacconist	10A G. H. Aldcroft Oil & lamp dealer		G. Whitwham Grocer
1912	W. A. & W. C. Renshaw Surgeon	E. Hughes Chemist	A. J. Richardson Confectionery Mrs E. Woolley Tabacconist	10A G. H. Aldcroft Oil & lamp dealer		G. Whitwham Grocer
1915	W. A. & W. C. Renshaw Surgeon	E. Hughes Chemist	A. F. Richardson Confectionery Mrs E. Woolley Tabacconist	10A G. H. Aldcroft Oil & lamp dealer	G. H. Aldcroft Oil & lamp dealer	Whitwham Grocer
1916	W. A. & W. C. Renshaw Surgeon	E. Hughes Chemist	A. F. Richardson Confectionery Mrs E. Woolley Tabacconist	10A G. H. Aldcroft Oil & lamp dealer	G. H. Aldcroft Oil & lamp dealer	Whitwham Grocer
1923	W. C. Renshaw Surgeon	E. Hughes Chemist & Druggist		T. Oldham Tabacconist	G. H. Aldcroft Oil & lamp dealer	G. Whitwham Grocer
1930		E. Hughes Chemist & Druggist	G. Prichard Restaurant & café	T. Oldham Tabacconist	G. H. Aldcroft Oil & lamp dealer	P. G. Litter Grocer Whitwham Wine/spirit merchant
1934		E. Hughes Chemist & Pharmacist	10A T. Oldham Tabacconist			G. Whitwham & Co Grocers
1938			10A T. Oldham Tabacconist		Paul Lades & Children's outfitters	
1939	W. C. Renshaw & Morrish Physicians & Surgeon	E. Hughes Chemist	Mrs E. Prichard Confectioners	Mrs E. A. Oldham Tabacconist		Whitwham & Co Grocers

Figure 20: Selected occupants of Nos 6 to 16 Old Market Place, Altrincham, covering the years 1782 to 1939. Sources: deeds (1782-1834); Altrincham Tithes Award; Census returns (1841 & 1861); trade directories. Nos 8 to 10 are arrowed.



Figure 22: Cruck truss looking north with the timber-framed wall still in situ at the base of photograph.



Figure 28: The timber-framed wall in No 10 OMP looking west, before removal, October 2019.

Figure 29: Right: detail of the lower wattle and daub panel in the timber-framed partition wall, No 10 OMP>



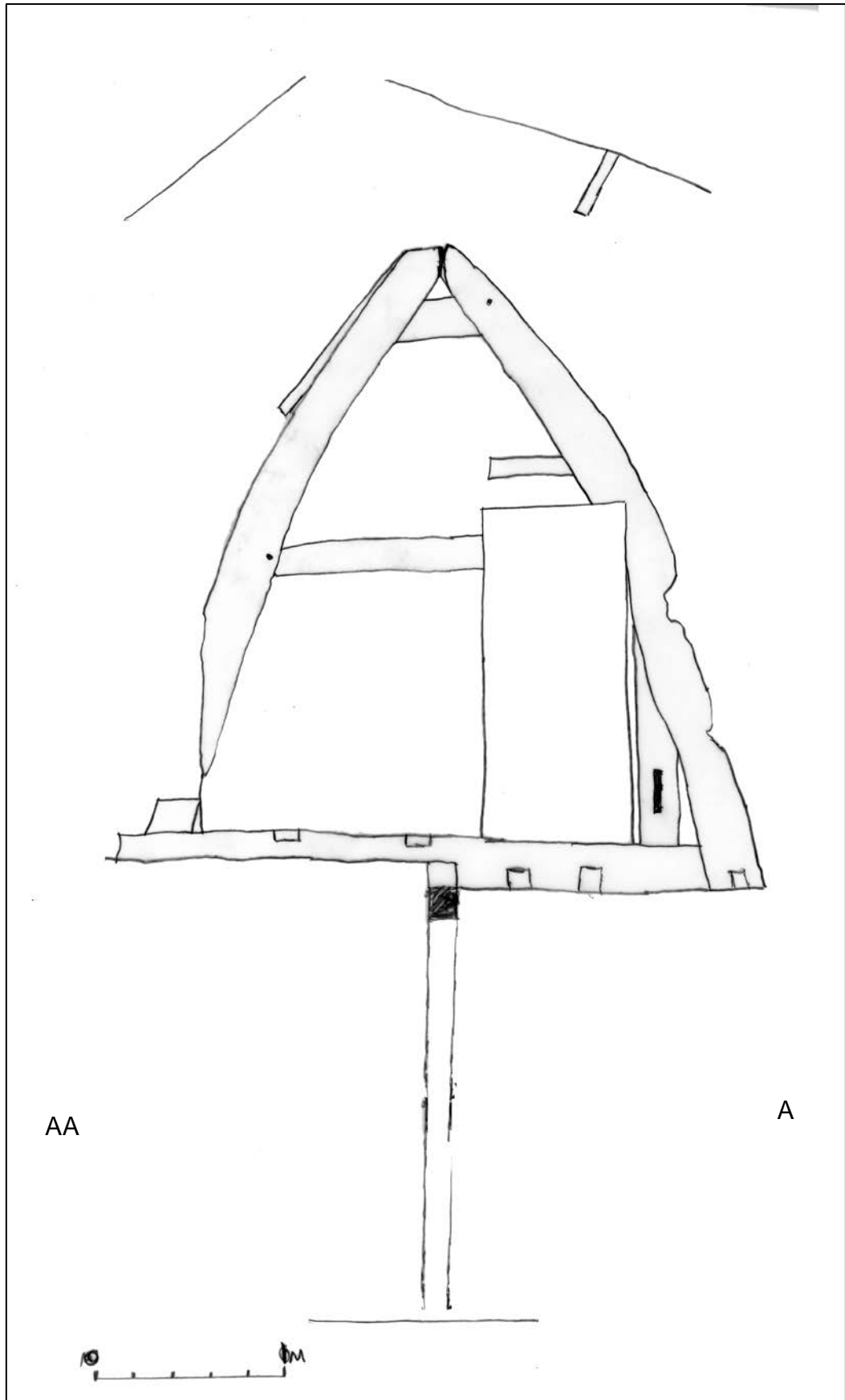


Figure 39: The cruck truss between Nos 10 and 12 OMP, section A-AA.

5. Acknowledgements

The South Trafford Archaeological Group (STAG) would like to thank the current owners of Nos 8 to 12 Old Market Place, Altrincham for access to the site in the autumn of 2019.

Contact details:

Dr Michael Nevell, BA (Hons), MPhil, DPhil, FSA, MCIfA

Chair, STAG

Email: mikenevell.cfa@hotmail.co.uk

www.archaeologytea.wordpress.com

twitter: @archaeology_tea

