

Report and Documentary History for

96 and 98 High Street, Long Crendon,  
Buckinghamshire

*Site Codes: LON-D (96) and LON-K (98)*

*from*

The Medieval Peasant House in Midland England

by

Nat Alcock and Dan Miles



Fig. 1. View of 96 (right) and 98 High Street (left) in the 1920s (Photo: Eric Sewell collection)

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***Oxbow Books***

LON-D: 96 HIGH STREET *and* LON-K: 98 HIGH STREET, LONG CRENDON, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

*Note: Although these originated as two independent cruck houses, at some time after 1910, one bay that was originally part of no. 96 was transferred to no. 98. Their architectural descriptions and documentary evidence are given separately, but the truss and bay numbering is continuous.*

Grid reference: SP 6975 0903      Survey Dates: January 1989 & 1993      By: D. Miles

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Documentary history by Nat Alcock and Eric Sewell, building on the work of John Chenevix Trench†.

*For court roll and documentary source references, see the bibliography of primary sources:*

*Abbreviations:*

Bodl	Bodleian Library, Oxford
CBS	Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies
TNA	The National Archives

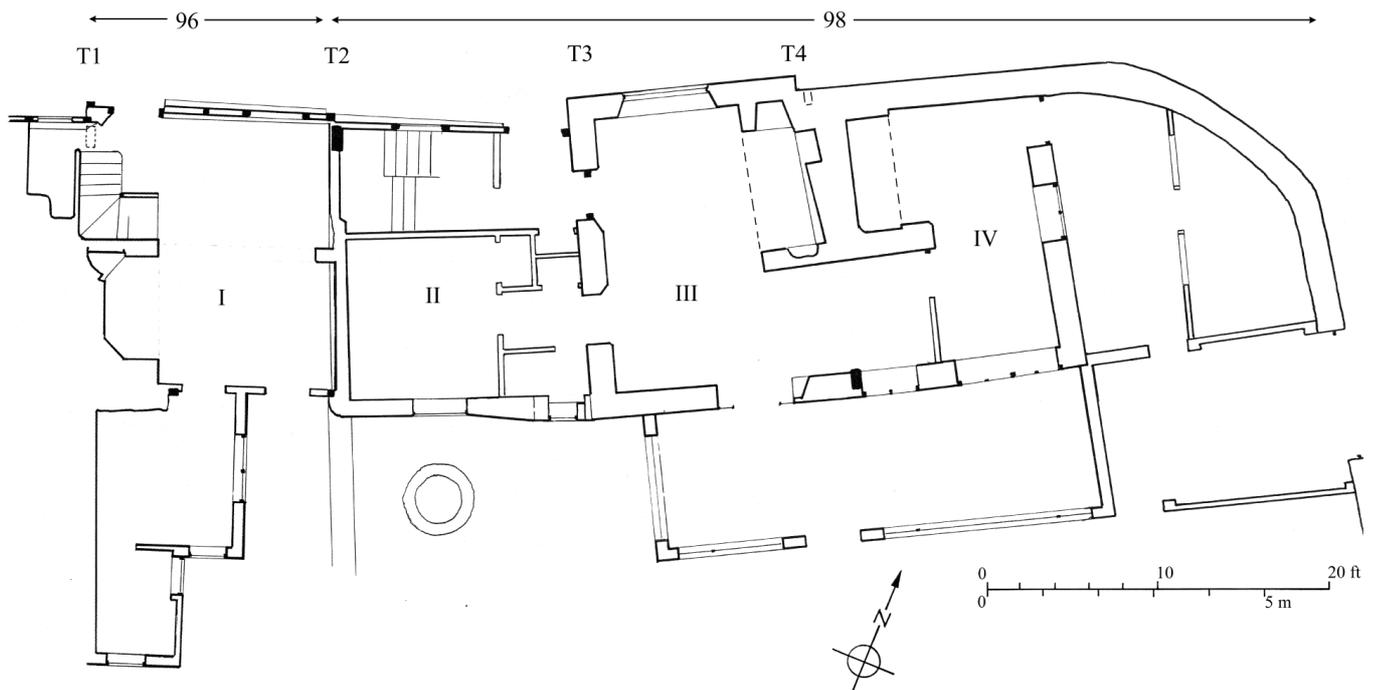


Fig. 2. Plan, showing truss and bay numbering.

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION (96)

### SUMMARY AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

PHASE 1: No. 96 High Street is a house of at least two bays built up against the previously existing house at No. 98 (LON-K); the latter now includes one bay (II) that was originally part of no. 96. It is aligned parallel to High Street, on the south side. The single bay (I) existing within no. 96 clearly formed the eastern half of the hall, originally of two bays. This is evidenced by soot encrustation on the western side of T2, but not on the east side, indicating that the bay presently in No. 98 was the chamber end. It is not known how far the house extended westwards. The crucks have truncated blades (type 'W' apex). A felling date range of 1494-1506 has been found for this phase.

PHASE 2: Probably in the seventeenth century, the hall was floored over, as evidenced by the axial beam with nicked stops.

The transfer of one bay of no. 96 to no. 98 seems to have taken place some time after 1905, since the present ratio of the frontages is 0.3:1, whereas on the 1905 edition of the Ordnance Survey 25 in map (as used for the 1910 Valuation), it was about 0.8:1. The corresponding ratio, if the additional bay is included with no. 96 rather than 98, becomes about 0.7:1.

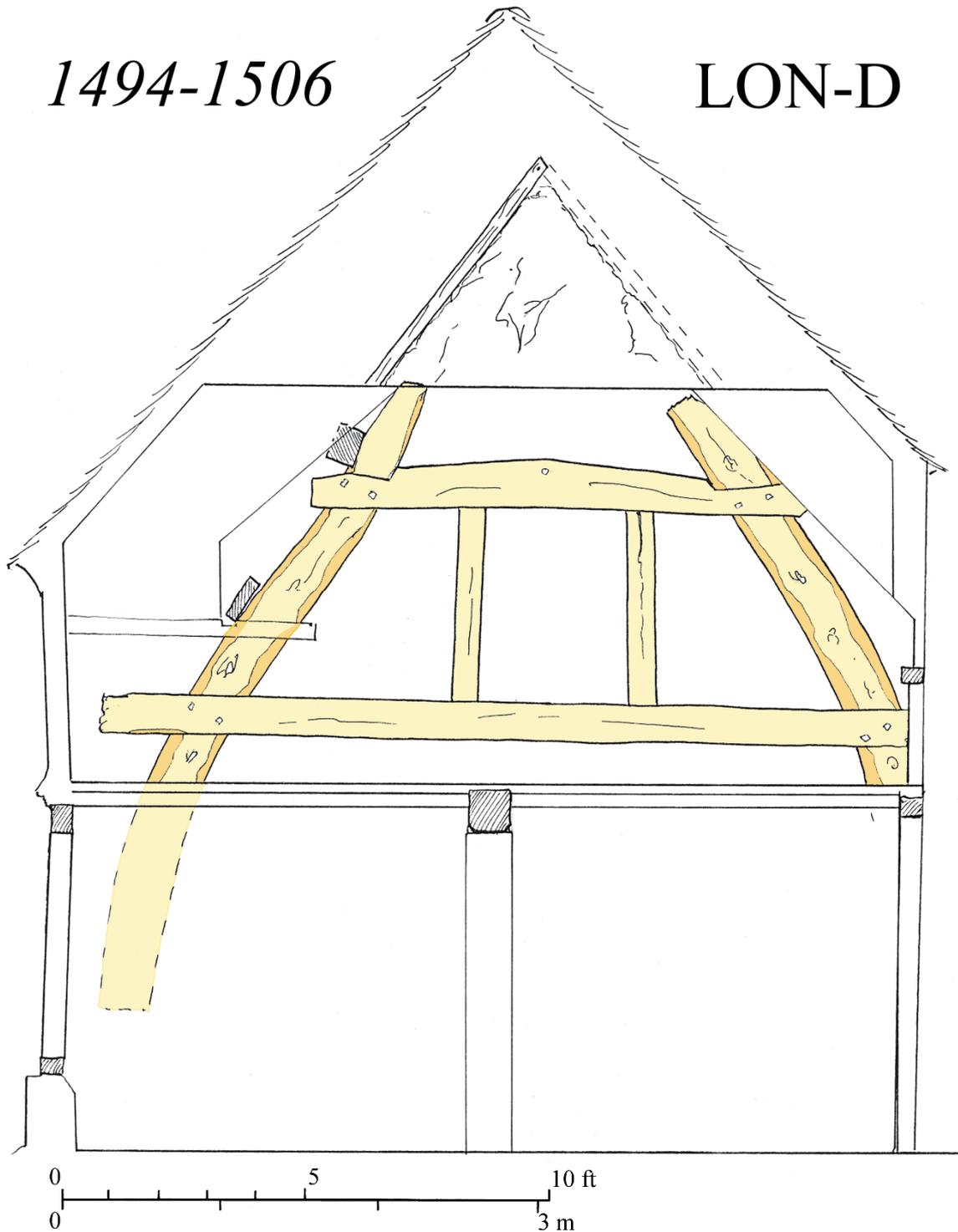


Fig. 3. Section of Truss T2, from the west.

## STRUCTURAL FEATURES

PHASE 1: Both cruck trusses T1 and T2 have substantial blades and thick collars, each with a hole in the upper centre; little can be seen of T3. The crucks terminate slightly above the collar (type 'W' apexes), with pairs of common rafters continuing above to the apex. Although the rear rafter of T2 has been removed, the wattle and daub panel still remains in situ up to the apex. The tiebeam clearly extended to the wall-plate, although the front wall has since been reconstructed, and the tie now stops about a foot short of the front of the house. The 6 x 8½in purlins were originally supported on the extended ends of the collar, braced by heavy windbraces (3in) thick. The rafters seem to have been 3in thick originally. Most timbers seemed to have been converted from whole trees, with the collar from truss T1 and the tiebeam from truss T2 being of elm. Timber conversion was both by saw and by axe.

PHASE 2: INSERTED FLOOR: The axial beam is 9½in wide with a 1½in chamfer and a stepped and nicked stop. The joists are of elm, 3-3½in wide, apparently about 5½in deep.

## DENDROCHRONOLOGY (96)

For dendrochronology abbreviations see page facing Introduction.

*Sampling Comments:* Seven samples were obtained through coring by Robert Howard on 16 January 1989.

### TREE-RING SAMPLE RECORD AND SUMMARY OF DATING

Sample Code	Sample Location	Total Rings	Sapwood Rings	FMR Date	LHR Date	LMR Date	Date Cat
LON-D01	Rear cruck blade truss T2	76	14	1418	1479	1493	4b
LON-D02	Front cruck blade truss T1	72	09	1410	1472	1481	4b
LON-D03	Collar truss T1	Not oak	—	—	—	—	—
LON-D04	Rear cruck blade truss T1	NM	—	—	—	—	—
LON-D05	Front cruck blade truss T2	87 +1NM	10+1NM	1402	1478	1488	4b
LON-D06	Collar truss T2	NM	—	—	—	—	—
LON-D07	Tiebeam truss T2	Not oak	—	—	—	—	—
Average date of last heartwood ring					1476		

Site sequences: (composed of samples 1, 2, 5), 92 rings long dated 1402-1493 with *t*-values of 6.5 (BROUGHTON), 5.2 (RAD-B07, sample from Bakers' Close, Radley).

95% felling date range: 1495-1507 (previously 1494-1514). OxCal refined felling date range **1494-1506**

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION (98)

### SUMMARY AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

PHASE 1: No. 98 High Street, Long Crendon, is a three bay house, the western bay of which was formerly part of no. 96 (see above). The other two bays form part of a taller cruck structure entirely within No. 98. One cruck truss remains (T4, T3 being concealed), and an associated windbrace was tree-ring dated with felling date range of 1430-1461. As so little remains of this primary phase, all that can be deduced is that the house was of least two bays in extent, ran nominally east-west along the south side of the High Street, and that the chamber end was situated at the west end in bay III, adjacent to No. 96. Bay IV, and possibly a bay V if it existed to the east, comprised an open hall. At one time a gallery may have run along the front at first floor level providing access between the chamber and an eastern bay. However, the development of this area is not clear.

LATER PHASES: Probably in the eighteenth century, the eastern bays were demolished, leaving only truss T4 and part of bay IV existing, the latter converted to a lean-to. The boundary wall was formed curving around to the south into Church Green. These changes may have taken place in 1731, the date on a cupboard in bay III.

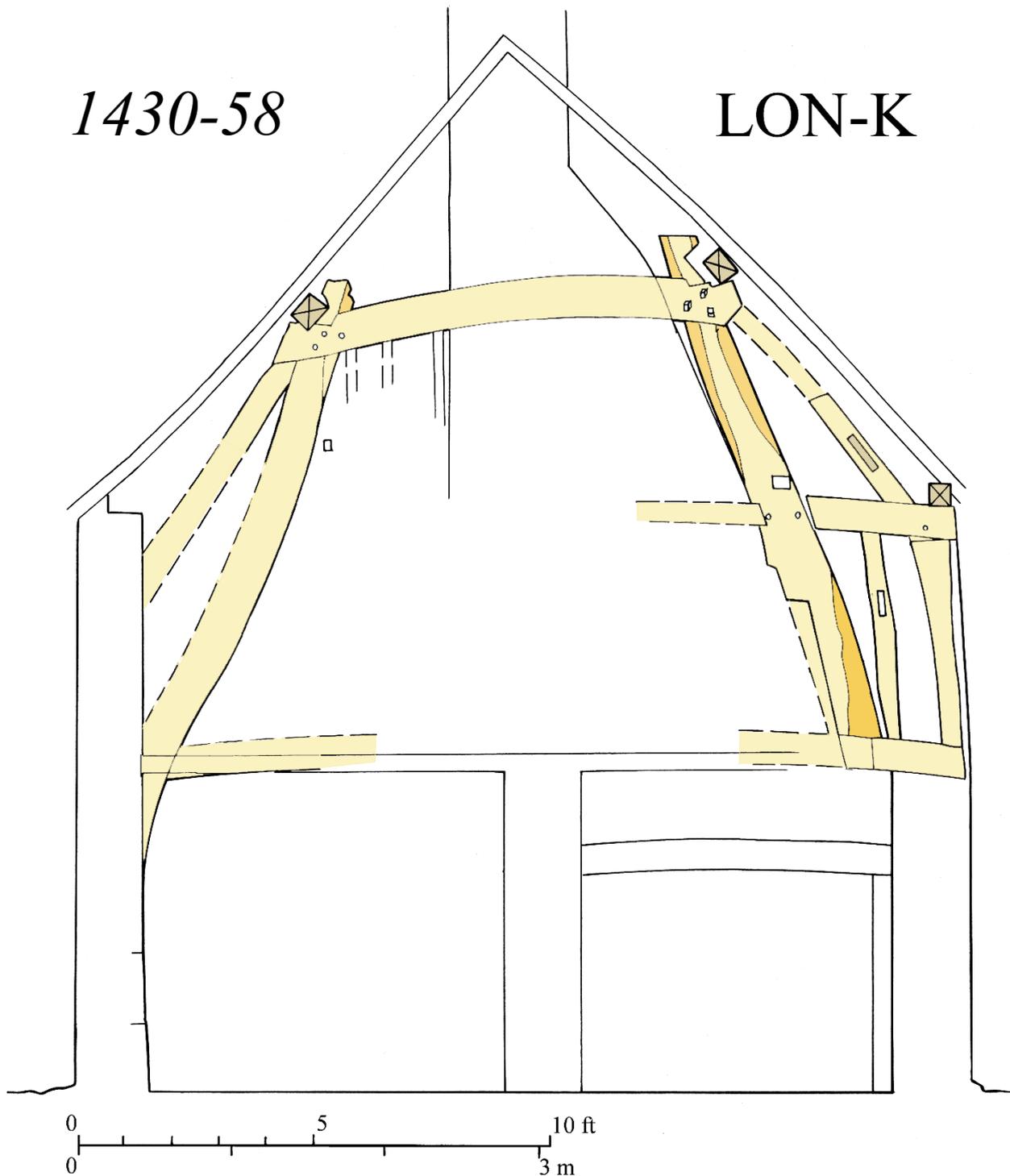


Fig. 4. Section of Truss T4, from the east.

### STRUCTURAL FEATURES

PHASE 1: The collar of truss T4 is set high, and the truss is truncated above this (type 'W' apex), although it is possible that the crucks were cut off later. The purlins span bay III and extend into bay IV where they are truncated some five feet beyond T4. The absence of soot blacking in bay III indicates that this was a chamber, and the heavy sooting on the other side of T4 indicates that bay IV was an open hall. Possible evidence for a smoke louvre is seen on the last rafter to the east which has a lap joint high up for a short collar (a feature normally associated with a louvre). The rafter immediately opposite however lacks a similar halving, suggesting that it was re-set when the roof was truncated. Most of truss T4 is of elm although the purlins and rafters are of oak.

A short section of upper wall-framing is visible at the front of bay IV adjacent to T4. This includes a curved wall brace and some original smoke blackened lath and daub above. One very peculiar feature is its jettied construction (visible at the end of the far house in Fig. 1). Large joists are cantilevered out from what is now the chimney stack and carry the upper wall, and these too appear to have some soot encrustation. One of these joists however appear to be re-used as it has a hollow chamfer on one upper arris. The cruck blade has a mortice for a missing lower cruck spur tenoned at jetty level. It seems likely, therefore, that this area was reconstructed while the open hall was still in use. This may correspond to the rebuilding of the outside ground floor wall here in stone, set inside the original wall line and supporting the jetty.

LATER PHASES: A lath and cob partition in the roof space probably dates from the late 18th/early 19<sup>th</sup> century. A deep cupboard reputedly for storing needles is set on the left of the fireplace in bay III, with '1731 TG' picked out in small holes, supposedly for Thomas Gregory. The depth of this cupboard suggests that it was used for storing iron bars as well as finished needles, in a warm and dry place.



Fig. 5. Needle cupboard in 98 High Street (LON-K).

## DENDROCHRONOLOGY (98)

*Sampling Comments:* Four samples were obtained, three through coring and a fourth a section of stave, by Daniel Miles on 22 March 1994. Although both purlins were sampled, had complete sapwood, and had 48 and 62 rings respectively, they failed to match each other or to date independently. A third sample from a windbrace with 81 rings including nine rings of sapwood did date. A fourth sample, a section of elm stave with bark had only 40 rings and did not match any of the other samples.

### TREE-RING SAMPLE RECORD AND SUMMARY OF DATING

SAMPLE CODE	SAMPLE LOCATION	TOTAL RINGS	SAP RINGS	FMR DATE	LHR DATE	LMR DATE	DAT CAT
LON-K01	North purlin (lcc1)	48	14¼C	—	—	—	—
LON-K02	South purlin (lcc2)	62	18¼C	—	—	—	—
LON-K03	Windbrace (lcc3)	81	9	1349	1420	1429	—
LON-K04	Stave (lcc4)	40 Elm	¼C	—	—	—	—

Site sequences: (composed of sample 3), 81 rings long dated 1349–1429 with *t*-values of 7.4 (MDM-1), 6.7 (SENG), 6.3 (EMID).

95% felling date range: **1430-1461** (previously 1430–1463).

**DOCUMENTARY HISTORY (96) (LON-D)**

The documentary history refers to the position prior to the transfer of one bay from no. 96 to no. 98.

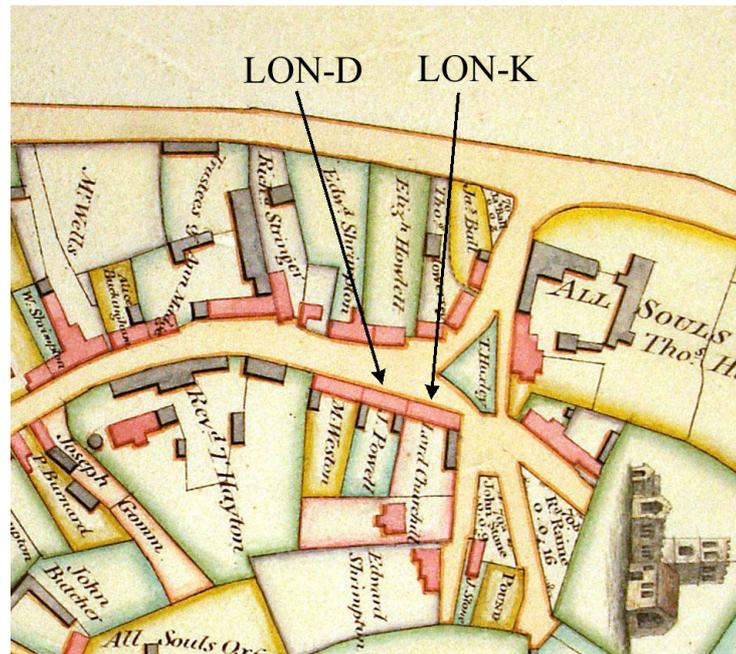


Fig. 6. Part of the 1827 map of Long Crendon (CBS IR/95/Q).

*Summary*

This cottage was a Notley Abbey copyholding, associated with three acres in the open fields, traced from about 1595. In 1789, the land was detached from the cottage. It was enfranchised in 1891.

*Copyhold admissions*

No. 96 High Street can be traced back to 1720 through Notley Abbey copyhold admissions as a cottage with three acres, initially held by Thomas Williams. It passed through a number of hands before 1813, when John Powell was admitted, whose name is shown on the 1827 map (Fig. 6).<sup>1</sup> It paid a rent of 5s 8d in 1720, but in 1789, the land was acquired by John Brangwin and, when next recorded, the rent had been reduced to 3s. The cottages (divided by 1797) passed through various later hands until the admission of Rev. J.G. Ogden in 1891, which was followed by its enfranchisement. With the other Ogden properties, it was then acquired by Rev. Elwell.<sup>2</sup>

The adjoining house, nos. 90-92 High Street (M. Weston in 1827) has a similar history, as a cottage and four acres also paying 5s 8d rent, which can be traced from the 1692 admission of John Cox; its land was detached from the cottage in 1813 and the rent reduced to 1s 6d.<sup>3</sup> The admission of the 1827 tenant, John Weston (M. Weston on the map) was only recorded belatedly in the court rolls, in 1830.

<sup>1</sup> John Powell owned half a yardland and an acre of meadow freehold in the common fields, in right of his wife Sarah (née Hearne) (CBS, IR/95/Q), and was admitted in 1819 to a half-acre of pasture held of All Souls, formerly in the tenure of Richard Hearne. At enclosure, he received 7 acres for his freeholding and ½ acre for the copyholding.

<sup>2</sup> Revd F E Ogden died on 18 Apr 1900, intestate and the administration was granted on 30 Aug to his sister, Mary Susannah Catherine Chapman, widow (HM Court Service); she presumably sold the Long Crendon cottages to Elwell. Part (perhaps all) of this range of cottages was sold in 1919 to George (or Edward) Cadle (TNA, IR58/2155).

<sup>3</sup> In 1813, John Boddington and Ann his wife surrendered 3 butts of arable land to the use of John Dodwell of Long Crendon, yeoman (CBS, D-HO/457).

*Earlier history*

The 1728 and 1760 Notley rentals list these two 5s 8d rents, initially in the hands of Thomas Williams and John Cox. The 1635 rental lists three 5s 8d rents, paid respectively by George Edmonds for a cottage and three acres, Robert Bolseworth for a cottage and four acres, and Edward Blake for a cottage, four acres and a rood. Presumably, the first of these was no. 96 (from the holding size), and one of the others no. 92. In the first of these rentals, of c. 1595, George Edmonds's predecessor can be identified as Rowland Edmonds. The latter's 1619 will indicates that he was a husbandman and confirms that George was his son, and mentions six half-acre strips in the fields (corresponding to the expected three-acre holding), but it gives no further details about the house.<sup>4</sup>

*Court References*

- 1720 Thomas WILLIAMS, senior, surrenders cottage with land, Thos WILLIAMS his son is admitted, rent 5s 8d.
- 1724 At last court 1722 Thomas WILLIAMS surrenders a cottage & 3 acres, to use of Johanna wife of John PERROTT of Wooton Underwood, husbandman, 5s 8d rent, fine £4 4s.
- 1753 Johanna PERRETT died since last court holding a messuage & 3 acres.
- 1753 George PARROTT of Stratford, Essex, labourer, surrenders a cottage & 3 acres occupied by John PARROTT to use of Gilbert JACKSON of LC.
- 1755 Gilbert JACKSON admitted to cottage & 3a late PAROTTS. Rent 5s 8d.
- 1789 *John BRANGWIN admitted on the surrender of Gilbert JACKSON, [to the land only] occupied by John BRANGWIN to which GILBERT was admitted on surrender of Geo PERROTT in 1755. [2s 8d rent]*
- 1797 Wm FRANKLIN on surrender of Gilbert JACKSON in 1796 messuage sometime since divided into two, occupied by Gilbert JACKSON & Francis FEASEY.
- 1798 Court of Duke of Marlborough: Gilbert JACKSON surrenders a tenement divided into 2 occ Gilbert JACKSON & Francis FEASEY with garden, to use of Wm FRANKLIN, draper, of LC. Rent 3s.
- 1813 John POWELL, labourer, admitted on surrender of John BODDINGTON & Ann, to a messuage divided into two, late Gilbert JACKSON & Francis FEASEY then Wm ING & Elizabeth GREGORY, rent 3s.
- 1834 John POWELL, yeoman, died since last court, messuage or tenement now divided into two, formerly occ by Gilbert JACKSON, decd, & Francis FAZY, since Wm ING & Elizabeth GREGORY & now John POWELL & John SEARS. To use of Sarah POWELL, wife of Jn POWELL, admitted. Rent 3s.. Fine £6.
- 1838 Sarah POWELL surrenders messuage or tenement since or now divided into two tenements with gardens & appts now occ by Sarah POWELL (Mrs POWELL aged 73) & John SEARS to George Wainwright, butcher, for 3s a week for life to Sarah POWELL. Geo WAINWRIGHT adm. Rent 3s.
- 1855 Geo WAINWRIGHT surrenders out of court to use of Thos PERKINS, grocer of Little Milton. Fine £4.10s
- 1891 Thos Charlton PERKINS. Rent 5s [sic]
- 1893 Messuage or tenement now divided into 2 with gardens, now or late in occ of Zaccheus SHRIMPTON & John GREGORY Copyholders Sarah POWELL 1838, Geo WAINWRIGHT 1855, Thos PERKINS 1891, Thos C PERKINS, Revd OGDEN 1891. Enfranchised 1891. Rent 3s.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> CBS. DAWe: 27/241; the crops on the six half-acres strips were bequeathed to his wife. Rowland is not recorded as holding any other property. Thomas Edmonds (will, 1617, DAWe: 26/515) appears to have been George's brother.

<sup>5</sup> CBS, D78/Box 6, Herbert Dodwell's Court book.

### *Census listings*

For a summary of the reconstructed census listings, see below. Zacchaeus Shrimpton, named as a former tenant in 1893, is located at no. 94 High Street in 1851.

### *Building References*

In the Hearth Tax return, the only Edmonds entry is for John, with two hearths. However, we know too little about the succession to the cottage in the later 17<sup>th</sup> century to be confident about identifying him as the then tenant.

1910 Valuation: Hereditaments 539 & 538, two rooms up and two down in each cottage. Occupied Geo CADLE (94), Geo BECKETT (96); owner Revd ELWELL.

## **DOCUMENTARY HISTORY (98) (LON-K)**

### *Summary*

No. 98 High Street is marked on the 1827 Enclosure Map as ‘Lord Churchill’s’. It was a cottage leased with the Notley Manor demesne in 1728 and 1809. It was sold by Lord Churchill in 1873, and later came into the ownership of Rev. Elwell. From c.1730 or before until after 1876 it was occupied by the Gregory family, as a needle-maker’s cottage. It was previously identified as a copyholding that escheated to the lord in 1821, but this is no longer considered to be correct.

### *Sources*

This is the least-well documented of all the Long Crendon cruck houses. It is marked ‘Lord Churchill’ on the 1827 map, and remained in this ownership until it was included as Lot 7 in the 1873 Churchill sale, as a freehold rather than a copyhold. It was apparently bought by Richard Coltman, the owner in 1876.<sup>6</sup> By 1910, it had come into the hands of Rev. Claude Elwell (along with nos. 90-96), and was apparently sold by him in 1919.<sup>7</sup> In the 1824 abstract of claims, Lord Churchill claimed for two messuages and seven cottages.<sup>8</sup> The latter were in the occupation of: Sarah Sims, Sarah Rush, Francis Becket, Ric Caudle, Thos Gregory (perhaps no. 98), Wm Osborn, Robt Buckle.

The 1809 survey of the Long Crendon estate belonging to the Duke of Marlborough (Lord Churchill’s predecessor) lists three holdings: William Cannon with the ‘Manor House, Homestall & Cottages’, and 340 acres; [Emanuel] Rhodes, holding ‘an antient homestead & buildings’, with 53 acres, and an un-named tenant (probably George Fuller), holding the White Horse, a garden and 7 acres.<sup>9</sup> Thus, the cottages formed part of the Duke’s freeholding but were being let with the main farm, rather than individually to tenants.

Only the 1824 abstract gives the names of the cottage tenants, and we do not even know where most of their cottages stood. We can, however, be sure that no. 98 was one of them, with another one being the adjoining cottage to its south, shown on the 1827 map (Fig. 6) but demolished by 1873. We can follow the Duke’s freehold cottages back to 1728 in the Notley Manor rental. In that year, Mr Cannon

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<sup>6</sup> He is named as owner in the 1876 Valuation, with David Gregory as occupier. Coltman was a wealthy London publican who married Sarah Matilda Cannon, daughter of the landlord of the Crown Inn, Long Crendon. His family became village benefactors.

<sup>7</sup> Noted in the 1910 Field Book, TNA, IR58/2155, hereditament 537.

<sup>8</sup> CBS, D78/11. The messuages were Long Crendon Manor held by John Dodwell (freehold, LON-V) and (apparently) an All Souls copyhold in the occupation of George Fuller, probably located at 10-14 Bilwell. However, the claim omits another All Souls yardland, and both his Windsor holdings, for which he received enclosure allotments, so it is probable that the messuage held by George Fuller was the White Horse Inn, which became the Churchill Arms (1 High Street).

<sup>9</sup> Wiltshire RO, 1033/8.

held three or four cottages, a four acre croft, three named closes and eight yardlands in the fields.<sup>10</sup> The 1760 rental gives names and rents only, showing him paying £111 for both the tithe and 'Spurlings Farm', which presumably included the cottages. In the c. 1635 rental, Mr Sterne may be Mr Cannon's predecessor, holding two one-yardland and one two-yardland holdings; one of the former is described as 'one yardland to the house he dwells in', and the other yardlands may have had un-named houses associated with them.

We can only guess at the earlier history of these freehold cottages. Perhaps the most likely explanation is that they had previously been associated with landholdings that had fallen into hand and been combined with the demesne leasehold properties.

#### *Occupiers*

We have one clue about the occupiers of no. 98, a note made by Miss N[ora] J.Gregory:

*I am the last of an old Crendon family, born in the year 1856, quite close to the church, in the last cottage on the right hand side of the High Street, approaching from the Square. My great grandfather and father were all born in the same cottage and my family lived in it for more than two hundred years. There is a cupboard in the cottage, which my great-grandfather put there, bearing the date 1731, and the initials E.G.T.G., which were the initials of my father's grandfather and grandmother. My grandfather and great-grandfather were needlemakers in the cottage and one room was always kept for the purpose of making needles until the needle factory came to Crendon. ...this cottage is now occupied by Mr George Cadle.<sup>11</sup>*

A further note reads:

*The Gregory family lived in the cottage near the church until the late 19th century, and then it was occupied by cousins until recently. There is (or was) a cupboard in the bedroom dated 16 hundred or something built for William and Elizabeth Gregory. This was built in the bedroom and was too big to move out when Nora wanted to do so when her parents moved. It should still be there and the date can be checked. The annex to the cottage was added to make needles when it was a cottage industry. This was done with a lot of old cottages which are now destroyed or altered.*

The latter part of this narrative is confirmed from the 1851-81 census listings, which locate David Gregory (and then his daughter, Sarah) at no. 98 High Street. The cupboard in the sitting room (see above) has the initials TG and date 1731; the cupboard in the bedroom is no longer in the house.

The parish registers and the GRO index identify successive members of the Gregory family:

Thomas (1) (d. 1759), married (1717) Elizabeth Turner.

John (1) (b. 1718), son of Thomas & Elizabeth.

Thomas (Griggory)(2) (1721-80), son of Thomas (1) & Elizabeth, married (1750) Mary Fryday.

John (3) (1751-1823), son of Thomas (2), married (1784) Mary Badrick. Needlemaker in the 1798 *Posse Comitatus*.

John (4) (1787-?), son of John (3) & Mary, married (1811) Alice Alett.

David (1813-86), son of John (4), needlemaker, & Alice, married (1834) Jane Baldwin.

Sarah (GRO Index, Dec 1851, Thame, vol 16, p. 104)

Nora (1857-1949), daughter of David and Jane.

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<sup>10</sup> Bodl, Ms. Top.oxon.c.381/e.299 (two copies). The first lists four cottages and 160 acres, the second three cottages and eight yardlands. The rent is unstated. Sarah Winter also held both a messuage and a cottage, which later escheated to the Earl of Abingdon. This property was acquired by Queen Anne's Bounty, to be added to the Long Crendon glebe, and her messuage apparently became the later vicarage (84 High Street). The cottage (apparently at North End) was presumably added to the manor freeholdings.

<sup>11</sup> From Joyce Donald's papers. It presumably dates from the 1940s. The identification of George Cadle as living in no. 98 is incorrect, unless he had moved there by the time this note was written.

*Census Reconstruction*

The reconstructed sequences of occupants (heads of household) from the census and the 1910 valuation are:

<i>Year</i>	<i>No. 98</i>	<i>No. 96</i>	<i>No. 94</i>	<i>No. 92</i>	<i>No. 90</i>
1851	David Gregory	Ebenezer Buckle	Zacchaeus Shrimpton	Henry Towersey	George Beckett
1861	David Gregory	Thos Elkenton	Thomas Turvey	William Baldwin	George Sawyer
1871	David Gregory ag. labourer	Jonah Lovell needle-maker	Thomas Turvey shepherd	William Baldwin shepherd	Solomon Hawkes ag. labourer
1881	David Gregory	John Warner	Thomas Hinton	Richard Shrimpton	Solomon Hawkes
1891	Sarah Gregory	John Hawes	George Cadle	Richard Shrimpton	Solomon Hawkes
1901	George Mortemore	George Beckett	George Cadle	Jonah Blincoe	Edward Cadle
1910	George Mortimore	George Beckett	George Cadle	Arthur Edwards	Edward Cadle

It is reasonable from this to accept the validity of Nora Gregory's family history, taking no. 98 back to at least 1731 as a a needle-maker's cottage, leased with the main Notley Manor freeholdings. However, the lack of parish register references to the Gregory family in the 17<sup>th</sup> century makes it less likely that they occupied the house before about 1700.

*Building Description*

1910 Valuation (hereditament 537). Cottage and garden. Three bedrooms, two living rooms, pantry. 15 perches. Owner: Claude Simeon Elwell. Occupier: George Mortemore.