

Report and Documentary History for
**Long Crendon Manor, 13 Frog Lane, Long
Crendon, Buckinghamshire**

Site Code: LON-O

from

The Medieval Peasant House in Midland England

by

Nat Alcock and Dan Miles



Fig. 1. Composite view of courtyard side of house in 2009.

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Oxbow Books

LON-O: LONG CRENDON MANOR, 13 FROG LANE, LONG CRENDON, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

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

References and abbreviations:

John Bailey (1994) *Vernacular Architecture Group Buckinghamshire 1994* (Conference Programme).

Building News, August 5th 1921, Plan of house with Tilden's alterations.

Philip Tilden (1954), *True remembrances: the memoirs of an architect*, London, Country Life
For court roll and documentary source references, see the bibliography of primary sources.

CBS Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies

Rousham Rousham (Cottrell-Dormer) archive; T-numbers refer to Long Crendon deeds.

TNA The National Archives

VCH *Victoria County History, Buckinghamshire*



Fig. 2. View from the gatehouse in c. 1905 (Eric Sewell Collection)

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

This house has not been fully surveyed. The section drawings are based on Bailey, 1994, with additional measurements by Eric Sewell.

The close-studded exterior of the house is the result of restoration work by architect Philip Tilden in about 1920.¹ Prior to this, the house had been Victorianised by the Dodwell family, with the timber frame hidden under stucco. The building was worked on extensively by Tilden, enlarging it, as he says, from a farmhouse of two sitting rooms and four or five bedrooms to one of five sitting rooms and nearly twenty bedrooms. His work included in particular the addition of the stone porch and staircase wing on the courtyard (north) side, greatly altering the appearance of this side the hall. (compare Figs. 1 and 2).



Fig. 3 View from the garden used in c. 1910 (copyright University of London (Victoria County History)) At the centre of the house is the two-bay 13-14th century base-cruck hall, whose roof profile and low eaves are clearly seen in the early view from the garden (Fig. 3). This had been the kitchen, and it was still open to the roof, as seen in a pre-restoration photograph (Fig. 3).



Fig. 4. View of the Kitchen before restoration (from a postcard in the Eric Sewell Collection)

¹ See Tilden, 1954, 60-4.

The fireplace and chimney standing against the spere truss was removed by Tilden and replaced by the present gallery and a fireplace at the other end of the hall. It is not clear how much of the spere truss was restored or reinstated by Tilden, and it is also unclear how much of the truss at the other end of the hall is original. The only known pre-restoration photograph (owner's possession) of the exterior of the north side of the hall shows two dormers, which may have lit a gallery or passage along part of this side.

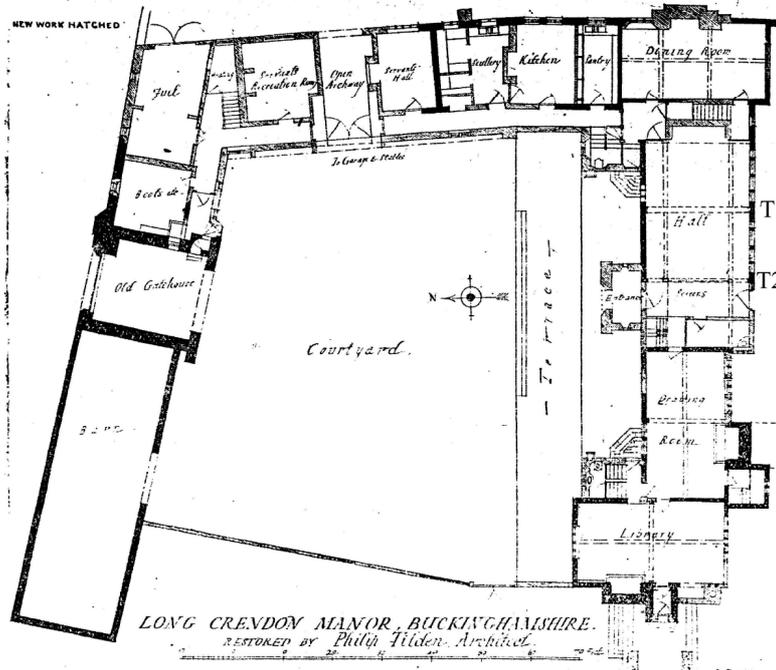


Fig. 5. Plan in 1921. The positions of trusses T1 and T2 have been marked. (*Building News*)

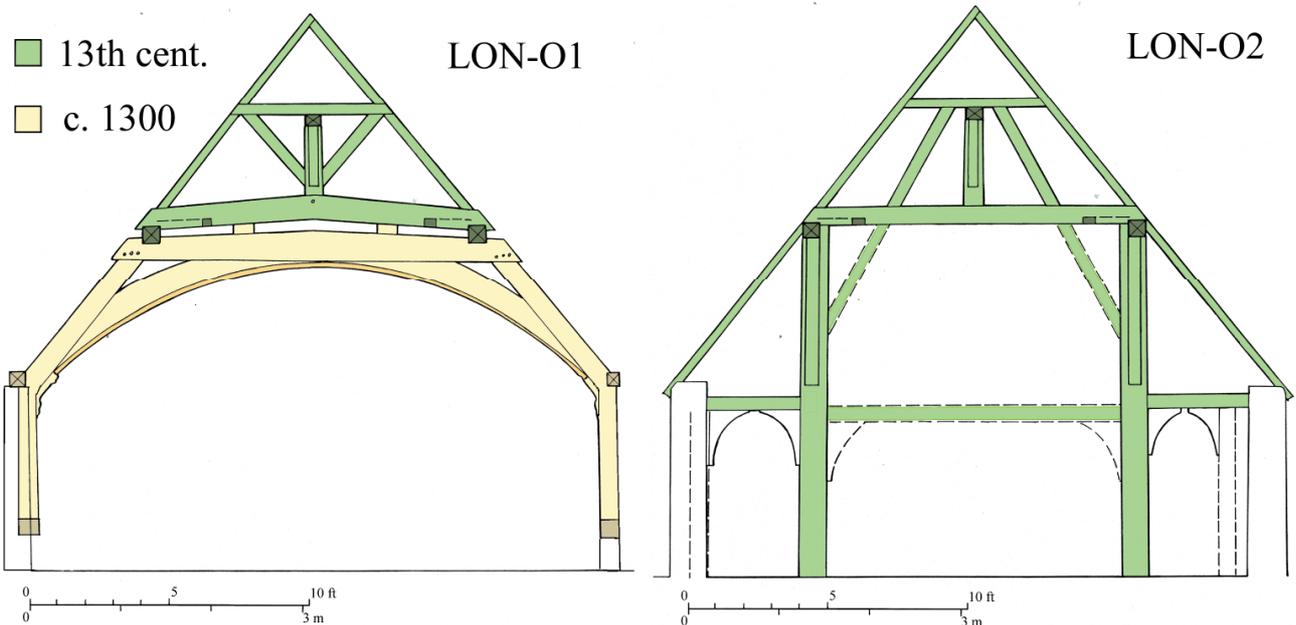


Fig. 6. Sections of trusses T1 and T2. Redrawn from Bailey, 1994.

The base-cruck truss has a double tiebeam, and it is clear that the blades and lower tiebeam were inserted, replacing a formerly aisled truss, since the upper tiebeam has mortices on its soffit for braces, now blocked by the lower tiebeam. The base-cruck blades carry a series of rolls, making up a capital-like decoration (Fig. 7). The house has not been dated, but the later 13th century is suggested for the original aisled hall, with the base cruck blades inserted in c. 1300.

DENDROCHRONOLOGY

Tree-ring dating has not been undertaken on the house.



Fig. 7. Capital on base cruck blade.

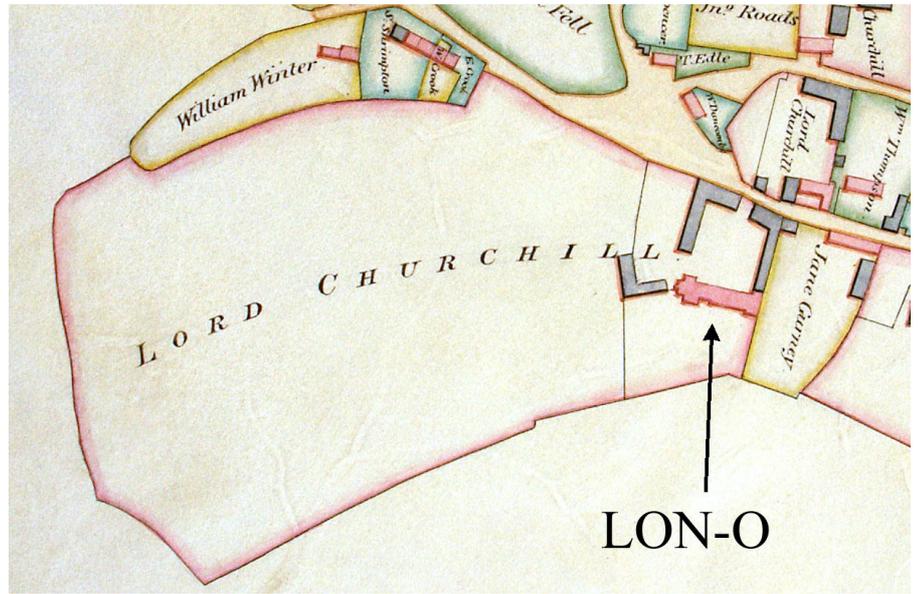


Fig. 8. Part of the 1827 Enclosure map of Long Crendon (CBS, IR/95/Q).

DOCUMENTARY HISTORY

Summary

Long Crendon Manor can be identified with the capital message of the sub-manor of Lovedens; the manor name is recorded in 1809, probably applied after 1764, when the Duke of Marlborough bought this property from William Cannon, and the Notley manor (without a house) from the Earl of Abingdon. It was associated with about 250 customary acres in the 16th century.

Topography

The key to the identification of the house as the major freeholding, Lovedens, comes from a deed of 1658.² This records the purchase by William Cannon from Henry and Christopher Allnutt of the 'capital message called Lovedens Farmhouse, with the 10 acre close called Conygree Close lying near to or adjoining the said capital message'. Conygree Close retained its name into the 18th-19th century, as the large field to the south-west of the Manor ('Lord Churchill' on the 1827 map, Fig. 8).³ Although later documents do not give such definitive evidence of its location, the ownership of the house can be followed through from 1658.

² The identification was worked out by Christopher Hohler. John Chenevix-Trench published an alternative identification of Lovedens with Northend Farm ('Northend Farmhouse Revisited', *Records of Buckinghamshire*, 35 (1993), 78-80) which is disproved by the evidence set out here. His identification was based on the 1567 court roll, in which James Braybrooke was told to scour his ditch at North End. It is known that the property held with Lovedens included land at North End (sold in 1658: CBS, AR 42/51, P134/5/2), but this comprised a close rather than the capital message that Chenevix-Trench assumed.

³ This field is called Conygree Hill in the 1873 Lord Churchill sale catalogue, and the enclosure allotment to Lord Churchill (168) adjoining it to the south is stated to lie on Conygree Hill. In 1596, the enclosure of land on Connygre Hill by Margaret Braybrooke, widow was presented in the manor court; at this time, Lovedens was the property of the Braybrooke family.

Later Ownership

It is probably no coincidence that the 1658 purchase by William Cannon(2) (Fig. 9) took place immediately after his grandfather's death. Following this, the property descended to a second and third William (dying in 1725 and 1732), and then to the latter's brother, Thomas Cannon (dying in 1756) (see Fig. 9); he had borrowed extensively on its security, and in 1764, his son, William, sold all his freehold and copyhold property to the Duke of Marlborough, apart from some cottages.⁴ It seems that the Cannon family remained as tenants to the farm. Thomas Cannon, the son of this William was tenant from 1782 until 1819, just before his death in 1820.⁵ He was succeeded by his nephew, John Dodwell, whose family continued as tenants until the house and farm was sold by Lord Churchill in 1874, to John Dodwell, grandson of the former tenant. Herbert Dodwell sold the property to Lt Col Arthur Preston Hohler in 1917 and it remained in the Hohler family until 1977.

Early Deeds

Lovedens took its name from Thomas de Loveden, who is recorded as holding half a knight's fee in 1330; as the 'Manor of Lovedens'; his holding was apparently combined with that of John de Warmondston, who held almost 200 acres in 1362.⁶ In 1561, it is recorded as being held of All Souls College.⁷ The Loveden and Fitzwaters freeholdings were bought by Michael Dormer from Thomas de Loveden in 1517, including a 'capital messuage'.⁸ In 1552, William Dormer sold to Nicholas Bethom a capital messuage and 8½ yardlands called Lovedens.⁹ The estate was then acquired in 1564 by James Braybrooke.¹⁰ In all these transactions it is described as a 'manor', although 'reputed manor' would have been more accurate. The Braybrookes were a recusant family, living at Hampstead Norris, Berks, and had tenants at Lovedens whose identity has not been discovered.¹¹ As recusants they had a hard time in the seventeenth century, and they sold Lovedens to Henry Allnutt in 1652.¹² He and his brother, Christopher, sold the estate off piecemeal, the capital messuage being acquired by William Cannon in 1658.

Land holding

In the medieval period, Lovedens was clearly a substantial holding, though the only clear evidence of its size comes in 1552, when it had 8½ yardlands, and in 1561, when, in evidence to the manor court, William Dormer stated that it consisted of 9 yardlands, i.e. about 250 customary acres. Although William Cannon bought it with only some 15 acres, he also acquired two yardlands that had been sold off by

⁴ CBS, D-X595/2, 7, 8; Wiltshire & Swindon Record Office, T1033/8 is a series of abstracts and memoranda relating to the Duke's purchases. In 1764, the Duke was admitted to Thomas Cannon's copyholds. In the same year, he acquired the Notley manor from the Earl of Abingdon (*ibid.*).

⁵ CBS, Land Tax assessments (surviving from 1782).

⁶ TNA, C135/175/9, Inquisition post mortem of John de Wermeston *or* Warmeston of Crendon.

⁷ In the court rolls.

⁸ *VCH* Bucks iv, 41-2; TNA, C54/385 (9 Hy VIII, no. 22).

⁹ Rousham, T26 & T23. The second deed includes another property, 2½ yardlands called Digby's, about whose early history little is known. In 1554, Dormer also sold Bethom a 1½ and two 1-yardland holdings, two cottages and three closes (see LON-U).

¹⁰ *VCH* Bucks iv, 42; Rousham, Crendon loose papers, summary of title to Lovedens.

¹¹ W Bradbrooke, 'Notes on the Braybrooke Family of Brightwalton', *Berks Archaeological Journal*, Vol 36 No 2, (1932), 164-173.

¹² An apparent sale in 1632 seems to have been a settlement on trustees, as the 'purchasers', Anthony Langstone and William Adams, do not appear again, and Richard Braybrooke still owned Lovedens in 1648 (*VCH*).

Henry Allnutt, from the Braybrooke property.¹³ He also had other property, both freehold and copyholdings from both the All Souls and Windsor manors.¹⁴ By the time William Cannon sold out to the Duke of Marlborough, his property included two All Souls and two Windsor yardlands. In 1809, Thomas Cannon was leasing 340 acres from the Duke (which must have included the copyholdings); at enclosure, Lord Churchill was allotted 118 acres for his freeholding.

Building References

In William Cannon's will of 1679, he left his son, William the house bought from Henry Allnut, the wording suggesting that he was then living there.¹⁵ If so, then it had five hearths in 1662 (Hearth Tax). In 1756, Thomas Cannon left half the house to his wife, Mary for life, comprising, 'the best end of house from the entry, all of the right hand above stairs & below wherein I do now dwell'. This presumably represented the western part of the house.

¹³ CBS, D-X595/1, 3-5.

¹⁴ A freehold yardland was associated with 'Claydons' (see LON-H); see also LON-M.

¹⁵ CBS, DAWf: 51/22.

Fig. 9. Family tree of the Cannon family

Sources: Parish registers, wills (W) and court records. Entries of deaths in the latter were often made a year or two after the actual date.

