



STEEPLE ASTON VILLAGE ARCHIVE

CEDAR LODGE, NORTH SIDE, STEEPLE ASTON

Final report on architectural history

SAVA visited Cedar Lodge on 2nd October 2012 at the kind invitation of David Kewley and Jan Maulden. Paul Clark joined SAVA to inspect and attempt to analyse the history of the house. A second visit was made on January 24th 2013.

Jan believed that 1730 was the likely date of construction.

This report is organised as follows:

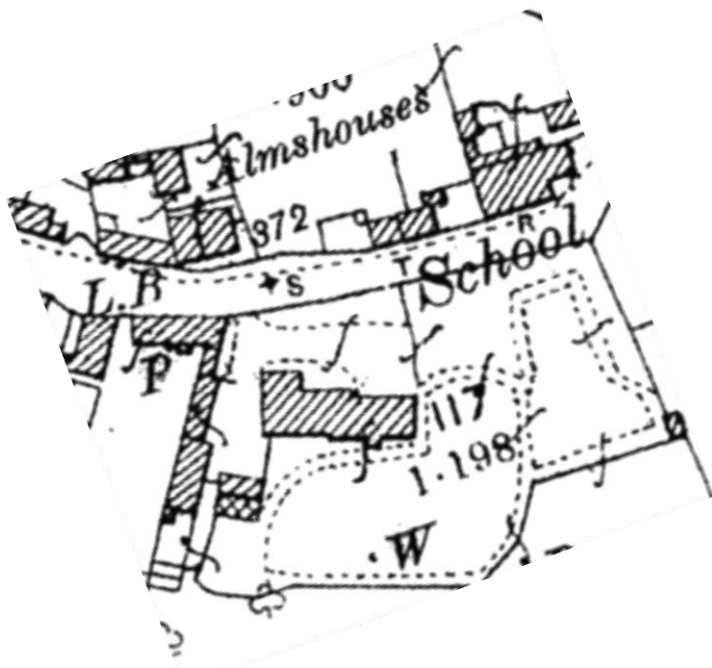
1. Survey of historic maps showing Cedar Lodge
2. Documentary information sources
3. Findings
4. Analysis, preliminary conclusions and Appendices

1: HISTORIC MAPS

On close inspection of the 1768 Inclosure Map following the visit, it is apparent that there were previously three buildings on the site that is currently occupied by Cedar Lodge. These are shown below (right map), and inspection shows that they are divided by boundaries suggesting three separate sites, although not necessarily in different ownership. This compares with the 1900 OS map (left map) which shows the current single site configuration.

Reading from left to right along the south side of North Street, the 1768 map shows firstly a long frontage divided into two attached dwellings A and B. A would appear to be what is now Cedar Cottage, but it seems that B was demolished after 1768. In its place, as can be seen from the 1900 map, are the narrow outbuildings of the present day Cedar Lodge which run back at an angle to the road, and which now join up with C, a slightly wider building to the south of them on the boundary line – a building which appears to have been extant in 1768. This may have been a barn or other agricultural building, accessed from the south.

The next building D is set end-on to the road, at a slight angle to it, and at its southerly end is a small separate but joined building E orientated parallel to the road. The position of E is very similar to the current location of the western end of Cedar Lodge. The longer building D linking it to the road, however, seems to have disappeared without trace (if indeed it was a building). The close created by B and D has an opening onto the road near to the current position of Cedar Lodge's secondary site entrance which was previously its primary entrance – see later). Next along the road to the east is a smaller building F end-on to the road, directly opposite the almshouses, followed by another larger building G opposite the gap between the almshouses and the school, and in a location currently occupied by Cedar Lodge's main site entrance. The site boundary line opposite the east end of the school building corresponds exactly with its counterpart on the 1900 map. If the placing of buildings on the 1768 map is taken to be reasonably accurate, as it is believed to be, then the only elements of building on the Cedar Lodge site surviving from 1768 are C and (ii) possibly E. See discussion of this later in this report.



1900 OS map (above); 1768 map (right)

2: DOCUMENTARY INFORMATION SOURCES

2.1 Listed Building description:

STEEPLE ASTON NORTH SIDE SP4725 (South side) 9/117 Cedar Lodge GV II Substantial house. Possibly originally mid C18, re-modelled late C18 and extended C19. Limestone and marlstone rubble with some wooden lintels; Stonesfield-slate and Welsh-slate roofs with brick stacks. Double-depth plan with service ranges. 2 storeys plus attic. Entrance front has a symmetrical window arrangement of 16-pane sashes with brick jambs and wooden lintels, and has a central 6-panel door with marlstone jambs and a C18 flat canopy with panelled soffit and shaped brackets, to extreme right a rubble projection with a similar window has been added, probably to contain a stair. Symmetrical 3-window garden front, stuccoed over limestone rubble, has a more elaborate entrance canopy with dentil decoration below round window; outer bays have architraved tripartite sashes. Two-span roof has end stacks in both sections but is of unequal spans. A late-C18/early-C19 hipped-roofed Welsh-slatted range, running at right angles to the house, has a 3-window front with leaded 2-light casements at first floor, and lower windows with ornamental cast-iron grilles flanking the 6-panel door; it has been joined to the right end of the main range by a C19 marlstone linking section, altered C20. Interior: some late-C18 panelled doors and shutters. For many years the home of the novelist, Iris Murdoch. (VCH: Oxfordshire: Vol XI, p23)

2.2 The Victoria County History has the following:

Among converted farmhouses in the street are the former manor house and Cedar Lodge (formerly the Lodge), a two-storeyed house of the early 19th century which incorporates an older building at its west end. The interior was remodelled c. 1960. The house was the home of the Lamley family, farmers in Steeple Aston and elsewhere. At inclosure in 1767 Judith Lamley obtained by exchange closes on either side of the property, thereby securing extensive grounds which were added to in the later 20th century. The improvements of the early 19th century may have been the work of Judith's grandson, the Revd. Robert Lamley Kening, who scandalized the neighbourhood by preaching from the pulpit on the virtues of the French Revolution. (FN: O.R.O., incl. award; Misc. RO. I/11; Brookes, Steeple Aston, 154–5.)

The Lamley family seems to have become established in Steeple Aston in the early 17th century. By 1662 Henry Lamley, husbandman, occupied a six-hearth house, possibly that on the south side of North Street known as the Lodge in the 19th century and as Cedar Lodge in 1981. (FN: P.R.O., E 179/255/4, f. 80; Brookes, Steeple Aston, 154.) In the 18th century the Lamleys styled themselves gentlemen, an unusual affectation in Steeple Aston, and rented out their 2½-yardland estate; presumably they owned other land elsewhere. (FN: Bodl. MS. Top. Oxon. d 694, ff. 29, 76, 102; Rousham Mun. G 64; Oxon. Poll, 1754; O.R.O., incl. award.)

3: FINDINGS

3.1 Externally

The house as it is currently configured presents a very odd face to the road, because this north frontage - of what is essentially a double-pile house - is to the lesser of the two ranges. The gable ends, visible from the street approach, show that the roof of this elevation is lower and of much lesser depth than that of its counterpart. The more typical M-roof section found in a few houses in Steeple Aston has here been modified so that normally equal halves have become worse than one third/ two thirds (internal spans are 6 feet and 15 feet respectively). The windows on this north elevation, whilst of symmetrical arrangement, are of lower status than those on the south frontage. Window heads are spanned by simple timber lintels, without any chamfering or mouldings. The central "front door" however is wider than its counterpart on the south elevation, and has a panelled canopy on brackets. The overall impression is that the north elevation represents the service side of the house, despite the location of what appears to be the main entrance. This is reinforced by the addition of a two-storey flat roofed extrusion (possibly early C20th) to the right of the front door, which contains a WC at ground floor level. There is also a further building attached to the west end of the main house, set two steps lower at ground floor level and with a much shallower roof pitch. This contains a number of service rooms.

There is no evidence on the east gable end of any change in construction, so it appears that both ranges were built together. This roofing arrangement, and the plan form it covers, presents a conundrum: it would have been perfectly feasible to have constructed one double-pitched roof rather than two with a valley gutter, given the modest depth of the house (21 feet internally). Gable end windows in the attic of the larger range have been closed up in red brick.

The garden front, facing south, is clearly meant to be the most impressive elevation. As well as another centrally positioned door, there are symmetrically arranged windows of much greater size and impact, having a triple sash design with narrower windows flanking a wider one. These were probably replacement windows for earlier smaller ones, possibly carried out after 1810 when windows of this style were apparently invented by Thomas Wyatt. Above the central doorway is a Georgian roundel window. Until 1994 the ground sloped steeply up to the south front of the house with no terracing as there is now, making it unlikely that the "garden front" was ever used as the principal entrance. The north front internal floor level is slightly below external ground level.

The lower extension at the west end of the main house presents a symmetrical two storey façade to the west, with stonework comprising thin regular coursed slabs, and with casement windows with timber lintels; the ground floor windows have unusual decorative iron screens over them. The roof is slated and hipped at both ends. Turning the corner to the south side, the stonework is completely different, being square pieces of ironstone laid in courses. The upper floor windows are sashes in 8x8 pattern with stone lintels, and without horns. The most westerly ground floor window was inserted by the current owners. A garden wall runs off from a point adjacent to this window at

an angle to the building, and contains the remains of a bread oven. It is worth observing that the angle of this wall might be related to the similarly-angled building shown on the 1768 map.

The north elevation of the lower range appears to have a straight joint where the north-south range joins to the linking section, and this north façade appears continuous with the protruding turret at ground floor level, but has a straight joint at first floor level, with stonework similar to the south elevation. The ground floor window and first floor window in this turret are not in line. The ground floor having a wide casement window under a timber lintel, while the upper floor sash window is identical with those on the south elevation, having stone quoins and lintel.

The wall fronting North Side was inspected on the second visit, and traces of the possible location of its junction with building F on the 1768 map were found.



*Above: north front in 2010
Below south front in 2012.*



The aerial photo above from the 1970s shows Cedar Lodge before a second access was opened off the road. The photo below believed to be from the 1900s shows the garden front. It is clear that the lower range to the left was set back from the main elevation; the linking section with bay window and extended roof (visible in the aerial photo) was added between the dates of the two photos. Note also the tall dormers in the earlier photo, their complete absence in 1970s and their reinstatement in modern times. The ridge of the lower range exactly meets the valley gutter of the taller range.



The eponymous cedar (left side) over the gateway to the Lodge around 1910

3.1.1 Stonework

There are three distinct types of stonework visible at Cedar Lodge.

Firstly- the random rubble stonework of the north, south and east elevations of the Lodge: this is mostly light-coloured stone but with some darker Hornton mixed-in, more in some areas than others, completely absent in other areas. Photographic evidence suggests that the south elevation was rendered in the 1900s, but it was subsequently removed.

Second- light-coloured stone made up from relatively flat pieces laid in courses. This is found on the west and north elevations of the service wing, and also on the northernmost outbuilding on the western fringe of the site.

Third- Hornton stone pieces of varying sizes, but laid in courses. This seems to characterise probably the last phase of building as it is found on the linking sections (both south- and north-facing elevations). This type of wall is found elsewhere in the village from around 1820-40. There is also an anomalous area of brick-on-edge walling on the first floor west side of the WC “tower”.

There are notably four types of window opening- those formed from the stone used in the wall around the opening; those with reveals formed of dressed stone of a different type; those with dark brick reveals, and finally those with red brick reveals. It may be conjectured that each type of stonework and window opening is contemporary with others of the same type regardless of location.

3.1.2 Outbuildings

A range of outbuildings runs roughly parallel to the angled wall containing the remains of the bread oven, including a small barn, storage rooms and stables. Some of these outbuildings were converted as the groom’s cottage. The evidence of the maps of 1768 and 1900 is that the building shown on the left of the photo below (building C) was in existence before 1768, and that the lower buildings adjacent were constructed subsequently.



3.2 Internally

3.2.1 Central spine partition

Exposed section adjacent to the cellar stairs, with north laths removed. Heavy oak studs with chestnut or pine horizontal laths with lime plaster. Laths secured predominantly by wrought iron nails but two cast iron nails were also present. Cast iron nails were produced in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Current research suggests cast iron nails of the style present here were commonly used in the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

3.2.2 First floor arrangement

The stair to the attic rises from the landing in front of the roundel window, but it is possible that the main stair from ground level arrived in this area previous to there being a need for attic accommodation. Both bedrooms have apparently original door openings from this landing adjacent to the south wall, now unused. The cornice to the landing stops mid-way on each side, adjacent to the current door openings. There have been alterations made to the existing staircase, although it is difficult to detect what the changes are.

3.2.3 Windows and doors

Paul Clark has provided the following comments regarding the variety of windows, doors, etc.:

North windows (main range only): five vertical window openings set well below the eaves and with brick jambs, over-width and un-squared timber lintels and ashlar sills. Bricks 2½" thick. No evidence for rendered facade. Eight over eight sash frames without horns. Recessed and concealed sash boxes. Approx. 24mm wide glazing bars. Some Crown glass.

For a relatively high status house the proportions of the window openings suggest early eighteenth century onwards. The use of un-squared timber lintels is unusual, particularly in the principal facade, suggesting the north elevation was not constructed as such (although the "front door" is wider than that on the south elevation). The 8 x 8 sashes, glazing bars and concealed sash boxes suggest a date within the last quarter of the eighteenth century. The size of the bricks suggest seventeenth to mid eighteenth century so are probably re-used material. The absence of horns and presence of Crown glass are features which continued until circa 1850.

Internal panelled folding shutters set in window reveal boxes. H hinges of various sizes with decorative ends. The style of hinge dates from the seventeenth to early eighteenth centuries. Latest date suggested by Hall* (p.53) is 1734 (Surrey).

At ground floor level there is an odd window shared by the WC in the flat-roofed "tower" and the next door room, having splayed reveals, whilst at first floor level the corresponding window is a replica of those on the main north front but with brick jambs using later bricks. This suggests that the ground floor of the "tower", being continuous with the adjacent bay to the west, was part of the same build. The stonework also suggests that the upper floor of the tower was added, presumably as a further WC, some time later.

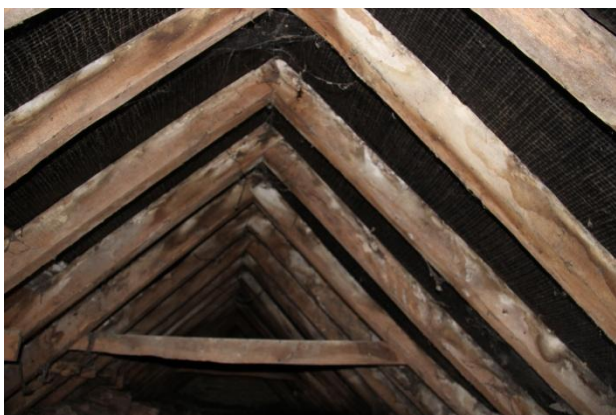
South windows (main range only): single central first floor ocular window with circular central and outer radiating glazing bars of relatively narrow section. This is a typical Georgian feature. The profile of the glazing bars suggests it is contemporary with the windows of the north façade. Four very large tripartite windows with six over six and two over two sashes, the west without horns, the east with horns, so are probably replacement frames. Set under probably timber lintels currently lead covered. Thin glazing bars. Similar windows in intermediate west range but these with smaller panes and slightly thicker glazing bars. The size of the opening and the tripartite style confirm these are not eighteenth century windows and rather probably date to the first half of the nineteenth century. The absence of horns confirm they are pre 1850. Internal panelled folding shutters set in window reveal boxes. Small plain inset nineteenth century hinges.

Roof structure

The two apparently contemporary parallel gable roofs share a valley wall-plate; the longitudinal wall was not constructed to take the load of the valley gutter. There are paired common rafters

without ridge pieces. In the lower roof, the common rafters measure 3.25 x 2.75 in. at a pitch of 15 in., with a principal rafter being 4 x 2.75 in. There are collar trusses, joined with single pairs of loose-tenon purlins with mortised upper and lower rafters. All in good quality, pit-sawn oak with pegged un-numbered assembly (except for one truss marked II).

This is a high quality roof both in terms of structure and of materials. The overall width of the building did not require two parallel roofs, suggesting that fashion may have been a major influence in the choice of design. Both these factors suggest a high status building. The structure, in particular the lack of ridge piece, suggests a construction date either within the late seventeenth or at the latest, early eighteenth centuries. The purlins show evidence of the removal of rafters to create dormers on the south slope. The rafters are, unusually, mortised into the purlins rather than notched and nailed. The attic has clearly been used historically as accommodation (lath and plaster finishes).

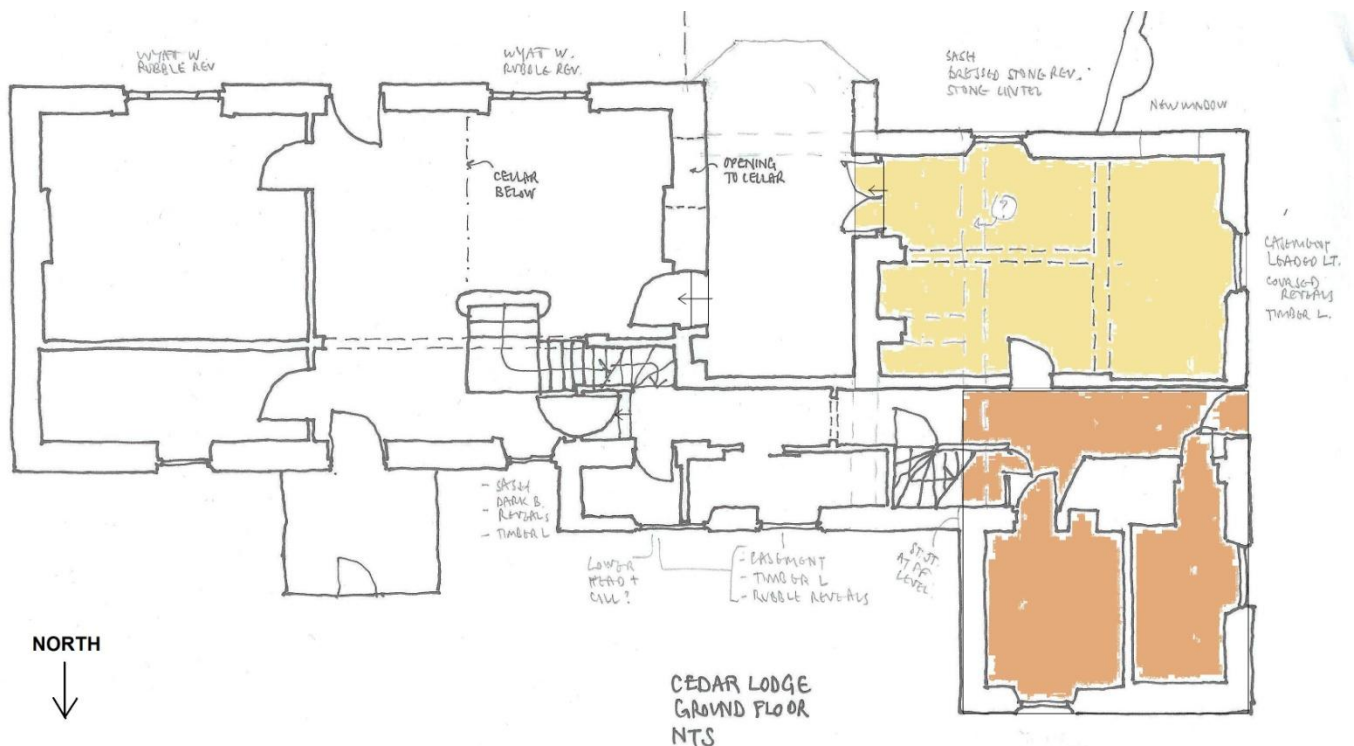


4: ANALYSIS AND PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

There are a number of striking aspects to the evidence of the maps, documentary sources, and the extant buildings. Firstly, according to the VCH, there was a six-hearth dwelling on the site in 1662. In 1768, building G could have been this house, as it appears to have a deliberate street frontage and not be part of an agricultural group. The current Cedar Lodge appears to have been a replacement for this house, built as it is further back on the site and further west: the decision to site the new house there must have coincided with the amalgamation of sites referred to in the VCH. Another possibility is that the pair of cottages fronting the road at the west end of the site – marked A and B on the 1768 map – represent the six-hearth dwelling, and that G was perhaps a barn. Cedar Cottage (A) survives as possibly half of that dwelling.

Either way, it is clear that the opportunity arose to radically alter the accommodation on the site after 1767, when the survey for the map was done. It seems likely that building E was retained and incorporated as part of the service wing to the new house built alongside (the element coloured yellow below). (An alternative theory requires that the 1768 map was not accurately drawn, and that in fact building E represents the then recently-constructed taller element shown uncoloured below). Whichever element was built first, it appears to have dictated the alignment of its counterpart alongside, which was offset sufficiently to permit a service corridor to link the two elements, at both ground and first floor levels.

The further portion of the service wing coloured ochre below may possibly also incorporate survivals from the buildings shown in 1768, in particular the massive kitchen stack which could have been part of building D. It appears, however, that these two coloured elements together were anyway substantially remodelled (or constructed new) to create a unified whole as seen from the West, where an apparently symmetrical “front elevation” to the service side has been re-created in stonework of a different type to that used anywhere else on the house. The floor plan, however, reveals that it is not a symmetrical or indeed a recognisable dwelling type, and that it must be an amalgamation.



Ground floor plan showing the possible survival of earlier buildings shown on 1768 map

The new house (uncoloured) was constructed with a cellar under the south-west corner (indicated below), which had an opening to ground level on the west side. This strongly suggests that the space now occupied by the bay window room was originally a service yard. This yard appears to have been infilled, but with a continuous straight south wall before the bay extension was later added.

The most likely scenario from the alternatives under discussion here seems to be that the new Cedar Lodge was constructed in 1768 or shortly thereafter, but certainly after 1767 when the earlier buildings still remained and were surveyed on the site. Several conundrums, however, remain. Firstly - if, as we appear to have established, the garden frontage of the new house was the principal frontage – meant to be seen and admired – how did visitors get to see it? There is no evidence of there having been a route for those arriving to reach the “front” door. That is unless we consider that the neat symmetrical west-facing “cottage” frontage was intended to be the visitor’s entrance. This seems unlikely as it leads into what is very clearly a service corridor. We have to conclude that the arrangement in use today – with the north entrance front serving as the main way in, was always the case, and that the garden front was intended to be seen on the return from a garden stroll.

Next – were any of the older buildings incorporated into the present dwelling? It seems very likely, but no definitive evidence has been found so far other than that the sections shown coloured on

the plan above would probably not have been constructed in that arrangement if they were new. The ground floor window with splayed reveals next to the north “tower” is suggestive of incorporation of an earlier section of building. There is also evidence elsewhere of the re-use of materials (bricks in window jambs) and possibly of ironmongery, and of roof structure joinery that seems too early for the likely date of construction.

What do the complex elements of building in the north-west part of the site represent in terms of building sequence? The following conjectural sequence is suggested:

Possible history:

- 1574 Henry Lamley living in a house on or near the site
- 1650? Edward Lamley listed in 1662 as living in a house with six hearths
- 1752 R R Kening married Mary Lamley
- 1767- 1780 Judith Lamley, Edward Lamley’s widow, acquires more land and constructs new house (The Lodge) adjacent to previous buildings, while demolishing others, including the other half of the pair of cottages leaving what is now Cedar Cottage. Builds single storey link to Lodge in ironstone.
- 1806? R.L.Kening adds linking section to south front, windows matching those in the Lodge; internal remodelling throughout.
- 1838? Wyatt windows inserted in Lodge by Elizabeth Jones?; south elevation rendered; staircase relocated and first floor room alterations; first floor added to linking section
- 1860? First floor added to square bay on north front (WC?) with flat roof; outbuildings added to north of existing barn
- 1920s Stables added to south of barn (or replaced?)
- 1930s? Shallow-pitch extension added to south front linking section with bay window at GF level
- 1960s Bayleys create large opening from entrance lobby to main room and reposition stair
- 1994 Bay window removed and conservatory added; terrace constructed



Aerial photo of 2009