

VICTORIAN HISTORY OF MOSTON



Title	Watch Lane Cottage, Elton
Type	Cottage
Date Produced	15 Sep 2023
Internal Reference	E72P
1840 Owner	Lord Crewe
1840 Occupier	Samuel Foxley
Tithe Map Apportionments	115a
1840 Area	0.13 acres (20 perches)



Watch Lane Cottage 1970



Watch Lane Cottage 2022



Watch Lane Cottage at the junction of Plant Lane is one of the older properties in the area, with a plaque on its outside proclaiming that it was built in the second half of the eighteenth century.

On the 1840 tithe map for Elton, it was part of Lord Crewe's estate and recorded as a single property with no additional land attached to it, which seems to be consistent with the occupiers in Victorian times who were notes as shoemakers (Cordwainers) and employed of the Railway Company (The Sandbach line through Elton was built in 1846).



Source 1840 Tithe Map

The occupant at the time was a Samuel Foxley but a year later when the census was taken, he appears to have moved out as he was by then an agricultural Labourer at Longfold working on one of the many farms found on Clay Lane.

By 1851, the occupier was Thomas Spode, a shoemaker (or cordwainer) who came from a line of shoemakers with his grandfather also Thomas being apprenticed to William Ryder of Sandbach in 1763.

1851 England Census for Thomas Spode
Cheshire > Elton > Sandbach > 13

20	Thomas Spode	Head	M	44	Cordwainer	Do Warrington
	Catherine Do	Wife	M	37		Do Warrington
	William Do	Son	M	11		Do Warrington
	Elizabeth Do	Daughter	F	4		Do Do

Unfortunately for Thomas, died only a few years later in tragic circumstances, leaving his wife and two young children. His wife Catherine remarried a Samuel Sherwin and lived her life on Elton Moss.

After Catherine moved out, the next incumbent at the cottage was John Hulme, the son of William Hulme a farmer from Elton Villa on Clay Lane but like Thomas Spode, he was also a shoemaker. This is perhaps more than a coincidence and John may well have been working alongside Thomas. It is hard not to imagine that he took over the tools of trade vacated on the death of Thomas.

1823	Jan 7	John	William Hulme	Elton	Farmer	W. Crewe
	19	Son	5			
			Anne			

No. 380.

Source : Warrington Parish Register

1861 England Census for John Hulme

Cheshire > Elton > Sandbach > District 17

John Hulme	Head	Mar	37	Shoe maker	do	Elton
Ann Hulme	Wife	Mar	36	do's wife	do	Elton
Allen Hulme	Son		10		do	Elton

Source : National Archives 1861 census

John Hulme died in 1862 and the new occupant was George Proudlove who moved to Elton as did many others to reap the benefits of the railway that was by then running through the township.

1871 England Census for George Proudlove

Cheshire > Elton > ALL > 18

				Males	Female		
Elton	1	George Proudlove	Head	Mar	35	Railway Porter	Cheshire, Elton
		Elizabeth	Wife	Mar	24	Porter's wife	Cheshire, Church Halls
		Margaret	Daughter		3		do
		Ann Jane	Daughter		1		Cheshire, Sandbach

Source : National Archives 1871 census



Source : OS Map 1st Edition

1881 England Census for George Proudlove

Cheshire > Elton > ALL > District 18

George Proudlove	Head	Mar	42	Railway Porter	do	Stafford
Elizabeth	Wife	Mar	40		do	Stafford
Ann Jane	Daughter		11	Servant	do	Elton
John	Son		9	Servant	do	do
William	Son		7	do	do	do
Henry	Son		1		do	do

Source : National Archives 1881 census

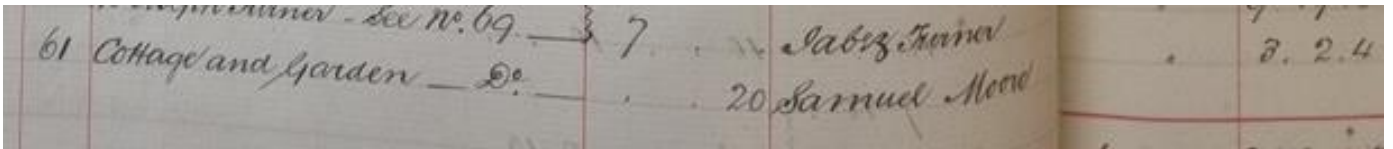
By 1891 George had moved away to Ettiley Heath where he was recorded as a coal seller. From 1886 to 1895 according to the electors roll, the new occupant at Watch Lane Cottage was Samuel Moore who was the son of a boatman and born in Elton. Samuel had a direct lease with Lord Crewe paying an annual rent of £3 2s 4d in 1888

1891 England Census for Lamb Moore

Cheshire > Elton > ALL > District 18

1	John Moore	Head	M	30	Wife	28	Wife
3	Flay do	Wife	M	28			
	Anna G. do	Daughter	F	6			Scholar

Source : National Archives 1891 census



Source : Crewe Estate Rental Accounts 1888

Throughout his life, Samuel seemed to move around quite a bit but never more than a mile away from his birthplace.

The one major constant though was his employment at John Pring's wire factory. He was there in 1871 as a young lad of 13 and by the 1911 census he was still there having worked his way up to being a production manager.

In all, he possibly worked for 60 years at the factory



The building that used to stand opposite the railway station.

John Pring premises on Station Road, Elworth

Next to move in was Charles Davies and as with Samuel Moore before him, he was also employed in the rapidly expanding local industry of Elton working in the salt business which were setting up alongside the Trent & Mersey Canal which eventually became part of ICI. Charles was on the electors roll from 1897 to 1912

FUNERAL OF MR. C. G. DAVIES.

The funeral of Mr. Charles George Davies, 8, London-road, Elworth, who died on Wednesday week, aged 67, took place on Sunday at Elworth Church, the Rev. J. R. Jones officiating.

The mourners were Messrs. George and William Davies, sons; Mrs. W. Fortune and Mrs. W. C. Atkinson, daughters; Mr. Harry Davies, brother; Mrs. H. Davies, sister-in-law; Morrey Fortune, Arnold and Allen Davies, Mrs. M. Fortune, grandchildren;

Representing I.C.I. were Messrs. J. Chapman, J. Houghton, and W. Shaw.

Source : Crewe Chronicle 25th April 1936

1901 England Census for Charles Davies

Cheshire > Elton > Sandbach > District 18

No.	Name	Relationship	Sex	Age	Married	Profession	Occupation	County
1	Charles Davies	Head	M	33		Stationary Engine Driver	Worker	Cheshire
2	Elizabeth - do.	Wife	M	32	32			do.
3	George - do.	Son	M	7				- do -
4	Catherine - do.	Daughter	F	6				do.
5	Mary A. - do.	- do.	F	4				- do -
6	Ellen - do.	- do.	F	1				- do -

Source : National Archives 1901 Census

1	Charles G. Davies	Head	44	Married	20	6	6	0	Chemical Labourer 788	Alkali Works Worker 4
2	Elizabeth Davies	Wife	43	Married	20	6	6	0		
3	George C. Davies	Son	18	Single					Boiler Maker 627	Steam Wagon Works Worker 4
4	Catherine E. Davies	Daughter	16	Single					Domestic	
5	Mary A. Davies	Daughter	14						Tustiam Cutter 836	Velvet Manufacture Worker 4
6	Ellen Davies	Daughter	11						School 390	0
7	Harry P. Davies	Son	5							
8	William Davies	Son	9							

Source : National Archives 1911 Census

For the next occupant of Watch Lane Cottage, we learn why it was known for a while as "Clowes Cottage"



Emily Clowes was the Daughter of John Clowes. John's family had been the village blacksmiths for many generations at The "Span" Smithy which was found next to the Fox Inn on Booth Lane. John will have learnt his trade from his father William and after he married at the end of 1874, he and his wife (also Emily) moved to Alsager where he set up as a Blacksmith in the town

Sketch of The Fox and Smithy at Elton Booth Lane 1872

1877 August 5 th	Emily	John & Emily	Clowes	Alsager	Blacksmith	
No. 562						
	Emily Clowes	Alsager	June 9 th 1886	35 years	George H Tracy	
No. 214						
	John Clowes	Alsager	January 18 th 1886	36 years	Langford W. Hutchinson	
No. 198						
1886 February 7 th	William John	John & Emily	Clowes	Alsager	Blacksmith	George H Tracy Rev. P. Taber
No. 751						

Source : Alsager parish records 1877 and 1886

At first, things would have gone well for the family and their first born Ada came along in 1876, followed by Emily in 1877. I'm sure John and Emily would have been delighted to find out they were expecting another child in the summer of 1885 however little did they know that their children would be orphaned within a year. John died early in 1886 without seeing his son born then catastrophe struck as when the baby was only three months old, his mother also died.

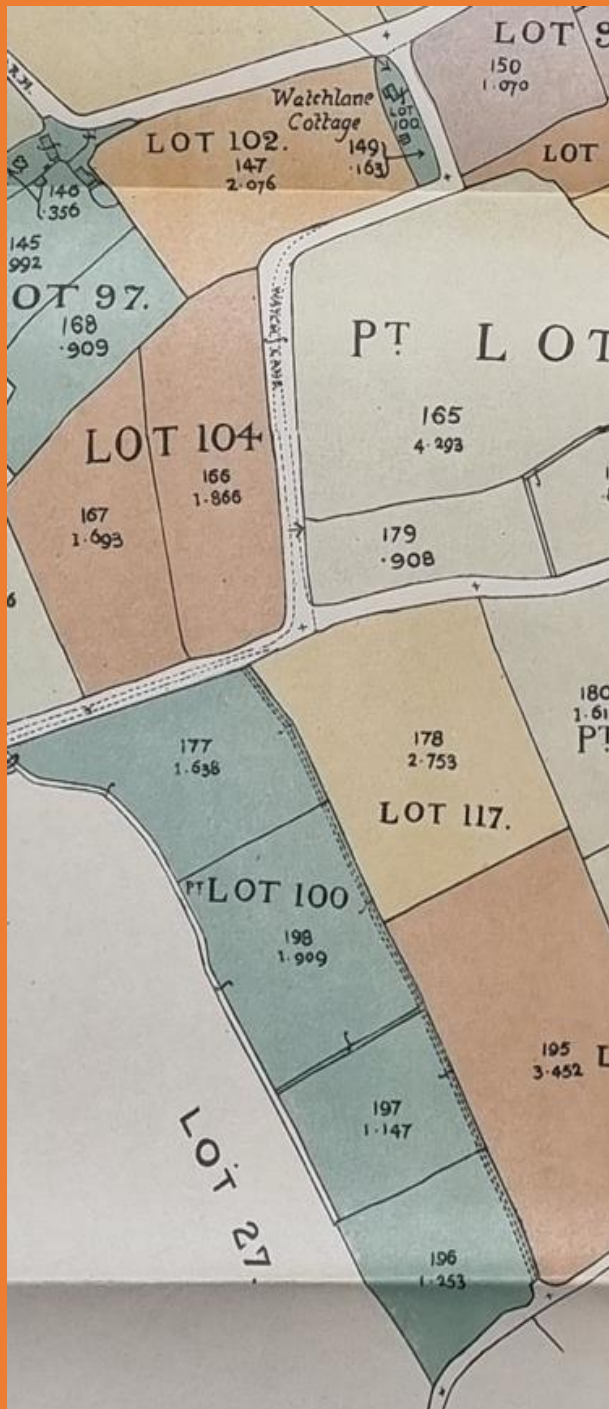
As was the norm in Victorian times, the family would rally round and the three children were shipped out to family members, John came from a family of 11 so I guess there were plenty of aunts and uncles to help out. The 3 children all moved back to Elton to different relatives where Emily found herself at Longfold on Clay Lane to live with her Uncle Frederick Cooke (a Road Labourer) and Mary Ann (nee Clowes).

3	Fred. Cooke	Head	M.	39	19	do
	Mary Ann	do	Wife	38		
	Emily Clowes	Daughter		10		

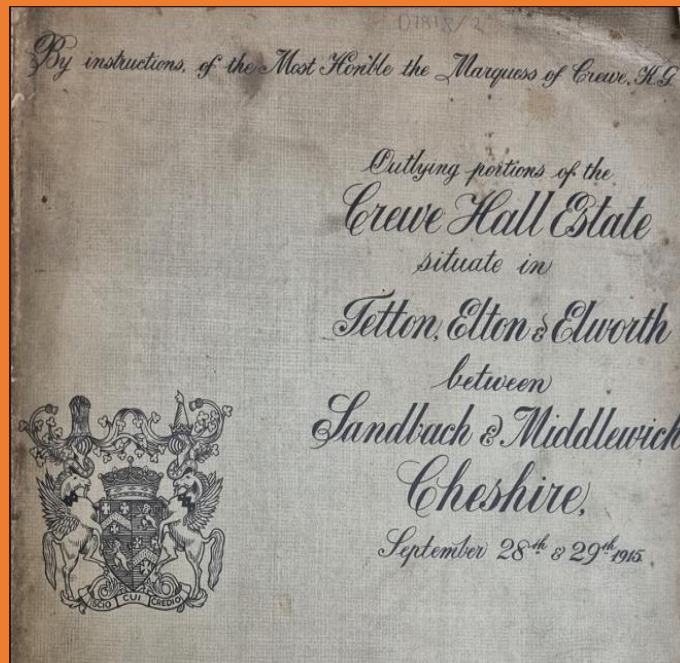
Source : 1891 Census, Longfold, Clay Lane, Elton

Emily was "the daughter Frederick and Mary Ann never had" and indeed she lived with them for the rest of their lives. In about 1914 the family moved from Longfold to take up the lease at Watch Lane Cottage and after Mary Ann died in 1916, Frederick and Emily would have been at the property when Lord Crewe decided to sell so as sitting tenants they were in a prime position to purchase the property and indeed Frederick became the owner in 1919. Around that time, his brother Oliver also moved in until he died in 1925.

Lord Crewe Estate Sale 1915 (Aborted)



Source : Crewe Estate Sale Elton 1915



LOT 100
Coloured Blue on Plan No. 3.

A Valuable Freehold Cottage Holding

Known as
WATCH LANE COTTAGE
In the occupation of Mr. F. Cook, situate in Watch Lane, Elton,
Comprising an Area of
6 acres 0 roods 17 perches
Or thereabouts.

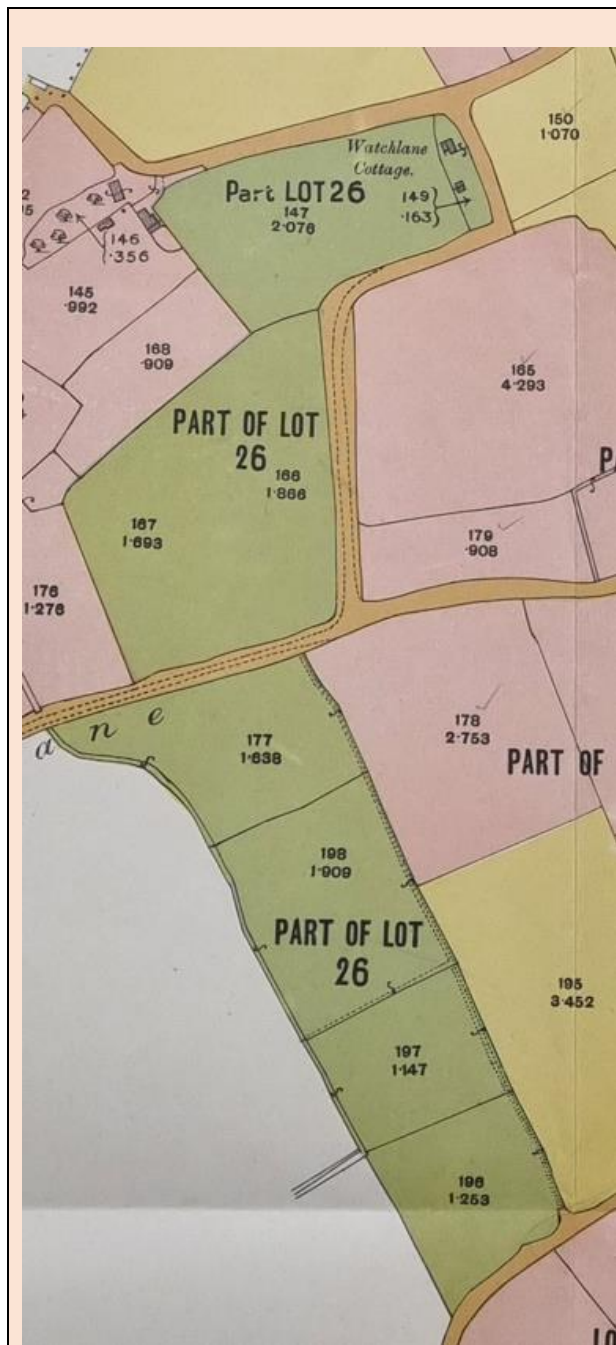
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The HOUSE contains Front Room, Kitchen, Pantry, Wash-house, and 2 Bedrooms.
There is also a Pigsty.

SCHEDULE

No. on Ordnance Survey.	Description.	Acres.
149	Cottage and Garden.	.163
177	Field.	1.638
198	do.	1.909
197	do.	1.147
196	do.	1.253
Total Acres ...		6.110

Lord Crewe Estate Sale 1918 (Completed)



Source : Crewe Estate Sale 1918

A Valuable Freehold Cottage Holding
 Known as
WATCH LANE COTTAGE
 In the occupation of Mr. F. Cook, Mrs. Turner, and Messrs. S. & J. J. Ellison,
 situate in Watch Lane, Elton.
 Comprising an Area of
11 acres 2 roods 39 perches
 Or thereabouts.
 The HOUSE contains Sitting Room, Kitchen, Pantry, Wash-house, and 2 Bedrooms.
 There is a Pigsty.

SCHEDULE.

No. on Ordnance Survey.	Description.	Acres.
149	Cottage and Garden.	.163
177	Field.	1.638
198	do.	1.909
197	do.	1.147
196	do.	1.253
147	do. (Mrs. Turner)	2.076
166	do. (S. & J. J. Ellison)	1.866
167	do. (S. & J. J. Ellison)	1.693
Total Acres ...		11.745

When the Elton portion of the Crewe Estate was finally sold in 1918, the property had virtually doubled in size making it a more substantial smallholding with easy access to all the fields.

As it turned out though, the property never took off as a smallholding. Frederick Cooke as tenant purchased the cottage. Francis Poole (a lawyer and property developer now Poole Alcock Solicitors) retained the field just to the south on which a row of bungalows was built.

Unfortunately the land just south of Watch Lane was effectively lost to the subsidence that happened in the 1930s and now forms part of Watch Lane Flash and the 2 acre field to the back of the cottage was sold separately.

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	
1	Frederick Cooke	Head	69	9	M	Widower	Cheshire	Warrington	Road Labourer
2	Oliver Cooke	Brother	44	0	M	Single	Cheshire	Warrington	Road Labourer
3	Conily Clowes	Niece	43	0	F	Single	Staffordshire	Alsager	Home Duties

Source : National Archives 1921 census

It doesn't come as a surprise that when Frederick Cooke died in 1930, he left the property to his niece Emily who continued to live there as a spinster until she also died in 1956. Emily left no will and the property passed to her brother the next of kin who rented it out until he died in 1967 when it was finally sold outside of the family. Such was the connection with the Clowes family for over 50 years, the property even became known as "Clowes Cottage" as shown in the 1953 footpaths map below. The original house name plate to that effect has also been retained for propriety.

1939 England and Wales Register for Emily Clowes

Cheshire > Congleton Rd > Lgfj

Watch Lane Cottage - 1 CLOWES EMILY - F 1st June 78 S Unpaid Domestic Duties

Source : National Register 1939



Source : Moston Footpaths map 1953

CLOWES John William of Glenariffe Victoria Street Sandbach Cheshire died 9 January 1967 Probate London 10 March to Barclays Bank Limited. £27580.

Source : Probate Records 1967

By Instructions of the Executors of John W. Clowes deceased.
ELTON, Near SANDBACH
 WITH VACANT POSSESSION
 Freehold Modernised Detached
 Country Cottage and Garden Land
WATCH LANE COTTAGE
ELTON
 The well maintained property with modern fittings, occupies a pleasant corner site, comprising:
 Sitting Room, Kitchen (H. & C.), Bathroom (H. & C.), 2 Spacious Bedrooms, Plot of Garden Land, Mains Electricity and Water, Septic Tank Drainage.
JOHN W. HILDITCH & SON
 will offer for sale by Auction at the LITERARY INSTITUTION, SANDBACH. On THURSDAY, JUNE 22nd, at 7 p.m.
 Solicitors: Messrs. Speakman, Hill and Longden, Nantwich Road, Crewe. cc

Crewe Chronicle : 8th Jun 1967

CLIVE JAMES & CO.
 ESTATE HOUSE,
 108 NANTWICH ROAD, CREWE.
 Telephone Crewe 4228/9.

PRELIMINARY NOTICE
 For Sale by Auction
 at Sandbach, on 24th March, 1970.
LOT 1
CLOWES COTTAGE
WATCH LANE
ELTON, SANDBACH
 Freehold, detached cottage property, containing hall, lounge, kitchen/breakfast room, 2 bedrooms, bathroom, Garage, Large Garden.

Crewe Chronicle : 26th Feb 1970

Chronological List of Owners and Occupiers

Year	Source	First Name	Surname	Lived	Age	Years at		Occupation	Status	Other
						Property				
1840	Tithe	Hungerford	Crewe	1812-1894	28	0		Gentleman	Owner	
1840	Tithe	Samuel	Foxley	1785-?	55	3		Agricultural Labourer	Sub-Tenant	Longfold in 1841 census
1841	Crewe Lease	Joseph	Turner	1802-1887	39	0		Bricksetter	Tenant	Son of Thomas
1841	Census	John	Smith	1786-	56	c10		Shoemaker	Sub-Tenant	
1851	Census	Thomas	Spode	1819-1854	31	c10		Shoemaker	Sub-Tenant	
1861	Census	John	Hulme	1822-1862	39	c10		Shoemaker	Sub-Tenant	
1871	Census	George	Proudlove	1839-1914	32	c20		Railway Porter	Sub-Tenant	
1881	Census	George	Proudlove	1839-1914	42	-		Railway Pointsman	Sub-Tenant	
1887	Crewe Estate	Samuel	Moore	1857-1923	34	10		John Pring Wireworks	Tenant	
1891	Census	Samuel	Moore	1857-1923	34	10		John Pring Wireworks	Tenant	
1901	Census	Charles George	Davies	1869-1936	32	c18		Engine Driver - Fodens?	Tenant	
1911	Census	Charles George	Davies	1869-1936	42	-		Rookery Chemicals	Tenant	
1914	Elector	Frederick	Cooke	1851-1930	63	16		Road Labourer	Tenant	
1918	Crewe Sale	Francis Joseph	Poole	1867-1940	51	0		Lawyer	Owner	
1919	Sale	Frederick	Cooke	1851-1930	68	-		Road Labourer	Owner	£350, £200 loan
1921	Census	Frederick	Cooke	1851-1930	71	-		Road Labourer	Owner	
1930	Inheritance	Emily	Clowes	1878-1956	52	42		Spinster	Owner	Niece of Frederick Cooke
1939	Nat Register	Emily	Clowes	1878-1956	61	-		Spinster	Owner	
1957	Inheritance	John William	Clowes	1902-1967	55	n/a		Joiner	Owner	Brother of Emily Clowes
1959	Elector	Henry & Margaret	Wright			10?			Tenant	
1965	Elector	Henry & Margaret	Wright						Tenant	
1967	Sale	Barry	Millington			3		Company Director	Owner	£1,100 sitting tenant
1970	Sale	Alan Stuart	Thomlinson			5		Crewe Engines	Owner	£3,000 at auction
1975	Sale	Arthur	Hewitt			4		Sandbach Tyres	Owner	£14,500 Private Sale
1979	Sale	Alfred Milton	Halliburton			9			Owner	£25,000 Private Sale