

# VICTORIAN HISTORY OF MOSTON



Title	Elton Hall Farm
Type	Farm
Date Produced	20 <sup>th</sup> October 2023
Internal Reference	E03P & E08P
1840 Owner	Lord Crewe
1840 Occupiers	Margaret Lowe & Ralph Kettell
Tithe Map Apportionments	Various (see Appendix)
1840 Area	95 & 45 (plus 65 in Warmingham)



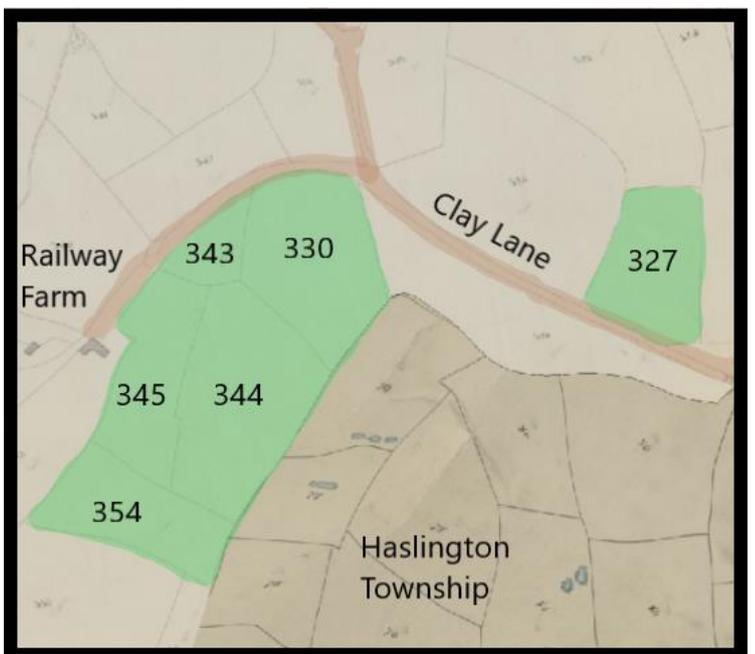
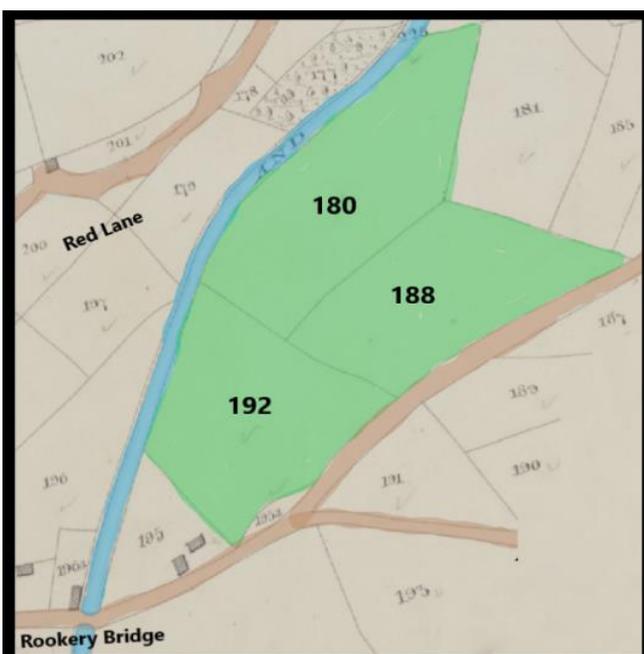
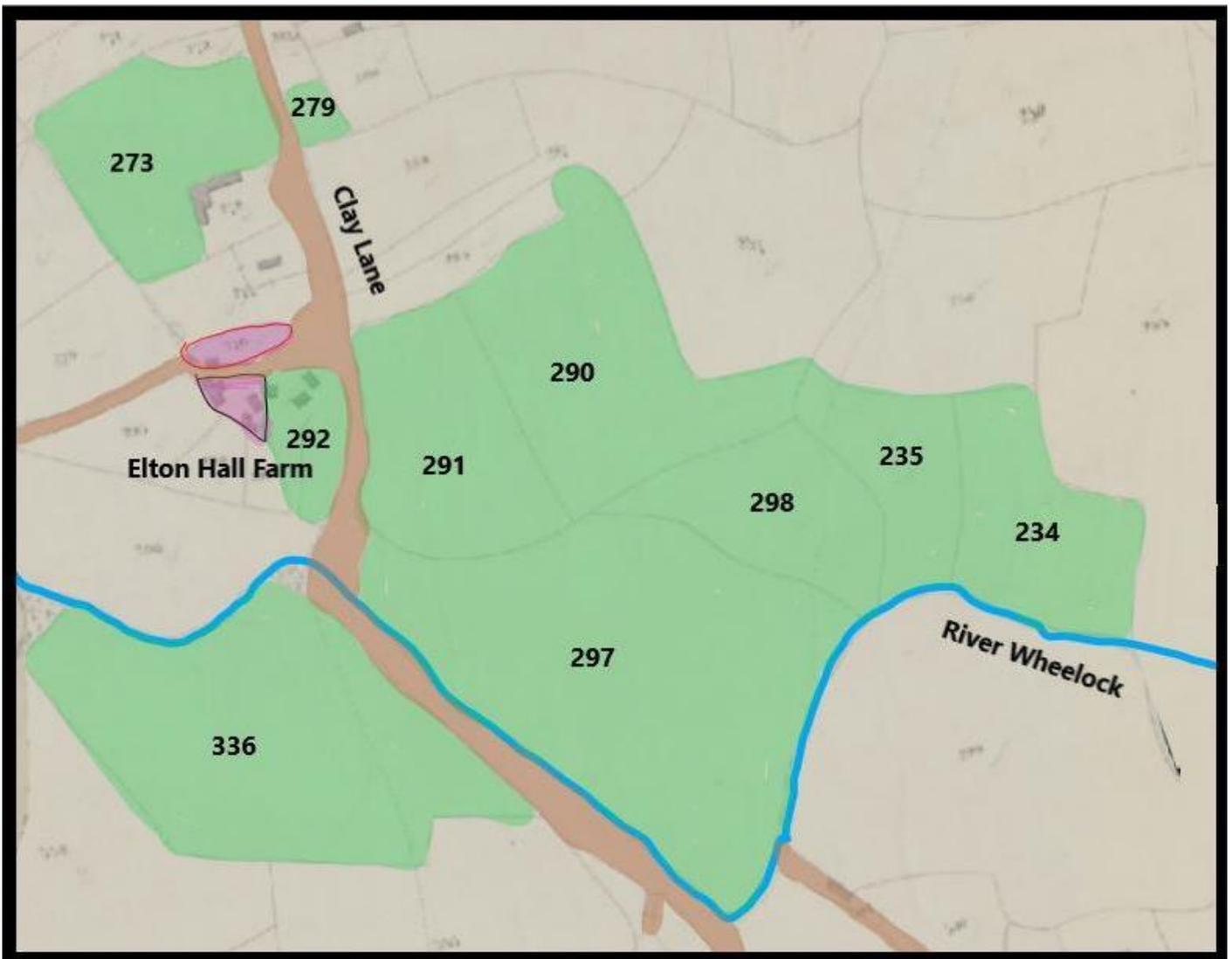
Elton Hall Farm 1915



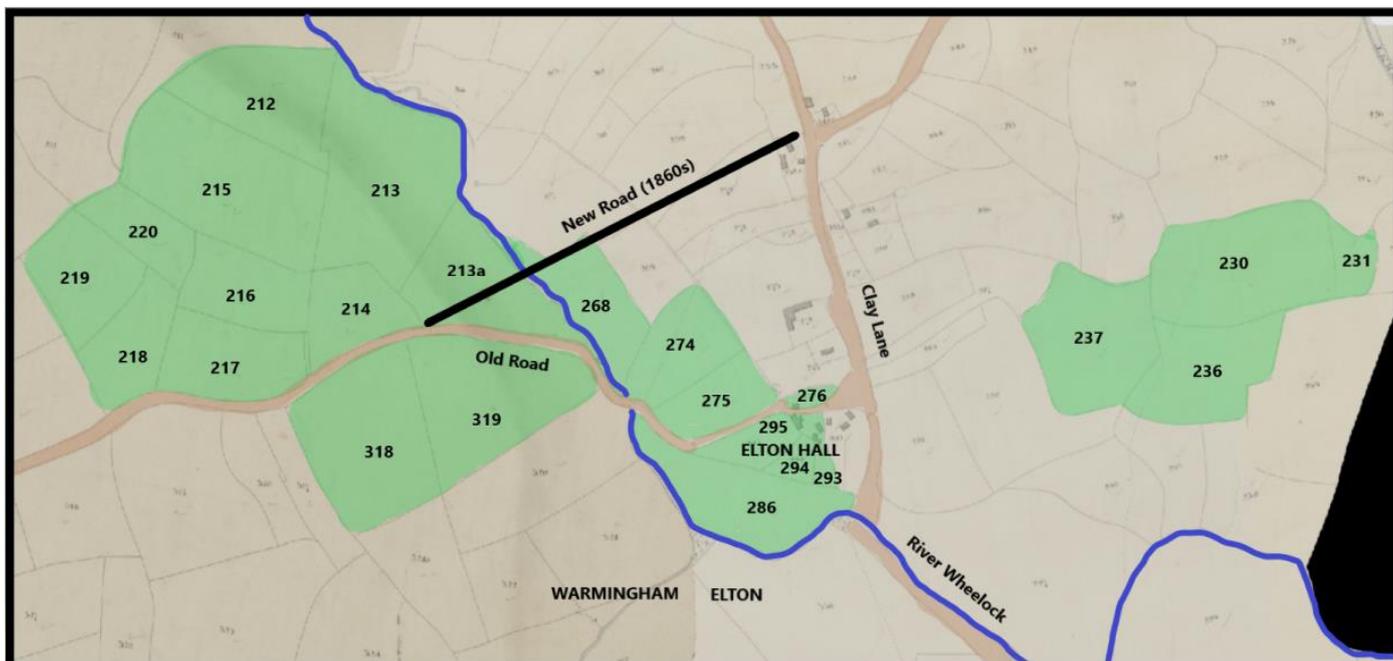
Elton Hall Farm 2023



It can be seen that the property we now know as Elton Hall Farm encompassed land from two separate farms, occupied by Ralph Kettell and Margaret Lowe. Ralph and Margaret were both descended from Samuel Kettell of Acton near Nantwich. Margaret was the daughter of Ralph's first cousin.



Elton Hall 1840 Tithe Map – Farm of Margaret Lowe



### Elton Hall 1840 Tithe Map – Farm of Ralph Kettell

The 1840 Tithe map shows that Elton Hall Farm was the third largest farm in Elton behind Flash Farm and Fields Farm

The Farm can be split into three distinct areas shown above and outlined in the following table below. At the time, the farm was recorded as being occupied by Margaret Lowe.

Occupier	Location	Description	Acres
Margaret Lowe	Moston Road	Bound by Moston Road and the Canal. Part of this land eventually became the Rookery Bone Mill.	12
Margaret Lowe	Elton Hall Farm	Land around the farm homestead. Much has since been affected by salt subsidence and forms part of the flashes.	44
Margaret Lowe	South Elton	On the far side of the Crewe to Manchester railway adjacent to Railway Farm.	38
			<b>94</b>
Ralph Kettell	Warmingham	Land in the adjacent parish straddling either side of Hall Lane and the old road	65
Ralph Kettell	Clay Lane	Land to the East of the road which has mainly been lost to Salt Subsidence and the railway	18
Ralph Kettell	Elton Hall Farm	Land to the West of Clay Lane divided by the old road and bound by the River Wheelock.	27
			<b>110</b>

In the Crewe Estate Accounts, there were 8 farms with land in excess of 50 acres so Margaret and Ralph will have been important tenants of Lord Crewe. The estate records around that time consistently say Margaret had 90 acres however the tithe map is also quite clear at 94.

### 1841 England Census for Ralph Kettle

Cheshire > Warrington > Sandbach > District 21

Name	Age	Occupation	Sex
John Lowe	19		M
James Charbonnet	30	M. Servant	M
George Tomson	30	M. Servant	M
Peter Brooks	30	M. Servant	M
Richard Phillip	15	M. Servant	M
Mary Jones	25	F. Servant	F
Sarah Palin	18	F. Servant	F
Ralph Kettle	62	Farmer	M
Elizabeth Carter	70	F. Servant	F
Catherine Kettle	27	F. Servant	F
Ann Tomkinson	17	F. Servant	F
James Cook	16	M. Servant	M

In the Crewe Estate Accounts, there were 8 farms with land in excess of 50 acres so Margaret and Ralph will have been important tents of Lord Crewe.

The estate records around that time consistently say Margaret had 90 acres however the tithe map is also quite clear at 94.

Margaret was assisted by he son John who was only 12 when his father died in 1834.

Both Margaret and Ralph were well supported by their servants and they will have also given employment to the many Agricultural Labourers recorded on the same census return.

Township	No	Description of Property	Quantity A. r. p.	Tenant's name.	due at Lady day 18/12	Years Rent
Eton	1	Rack/rents due at Lady day 18/12.		George Johnson	—	167. 16. 6
		Latham's Farm	90. 2. 3	Margaret Lowe	—	
	2	A Farm and Lands	110. 1. 8	Ralph Kettle	—	160. 12. 0

Crewe Estate Accounts 1842

The above account was the last year that Ralph appeared in the Crewe estate records as he died in the Autumn of 1842, a confirmed bachelor. His will showed that he was a man of considerable wealth and many of his family were well catered for both during and after his life.

He left two cottages in Sandbach and two in Ettiley heath (one newly built) and various closes of land. These were generally left during life to cousins and a sister, passing to great nephews after their deaths.

On top of these he left many monetary legacies of which one of £60 was to his nephew George Hodgson who a year later appears to have taken over the lease on the farm. George took on 101 acres after some redistribution and land taken by the railway company. It was to be another 4 years before the railway opened in 1846.

One slightly unusual aspect of Ralph's will was that he left specific instructions for a gravestone "with proper inscription" for both himself and his parents

His epitaph tells us that he was not of good health, perhaps for some time.

**"Afflictions sore, long time he bore. Physicians were in vain. But death did ease when God did please and freed him from his pain"**

His family did well and 180 years later, the inscription at Warmingham St Leonard is still clear for all to see.



Rack rents due at Lady day 1844					
Elton	1	Late Samuel Latham's Farm	90 " 2 " 3	George Johnson and Margaret Lowe	167. 16. 6
	2	A Farm & Lands except part let to Sho <sup>r</sup> Hassall (N <sup>o</sup> 3) one piece let to Cottagers, and Land taken by the Manchester & Birmingham Railway	101. 1. 29	George Hodgson late Ralph Kettle	153. 0. 0

These two farms ran alongside each other until 1863 when a major change occurred to the occupation. It was at this stage that Margaret Lowe and her son John took out a lease on a new farm now called "Elton Hall Farm" with a new farmhouse and buildings. Rent on the new 128 acre farm was set at £240 a year later increasing to 246 after expense incurred by Lord Crewe of £75 in 1864 and £55 in 1865 on drainage, an activity which seemed to be being undertaken on all the estate farms in Elton.

Rack Rents due at Lady day 1864					
		Late Samuel Latham's and George Hodgson's Farms (except the premises entered N <sup>o</sup> 10 Warmingham) now called Elton Hall Farm.	128. 1. 31	Margaret and John Lowe	This rent is increased from £154. 10. 0 to £240 in consideration of a New House and Outbuildings having been erected on the premises and part of George Hodgson's farm laid thereto. See N <sup>o</sup> 10 Warmingham.

3	George Johnson and Margaret		
	LOW for lake Latham's Farm except	1856	154. 10. 0
	Land taken by the Railway Comp <sup>y</sup> / 153. 0. 0	1857	154. 10. 0
	D <sup>o</sup> for a Croft part of lake Walley's	1858	154. 10. 0
	Farm 1. 10. 0	1859	154. 10. 0
		1860	154. 10. 0
		1861	154. 10. 0
		1862	154. 10. 0
	Margaret Lowe and John		
	LOW for the above, except the premises	1863	240 0 0
	In head N <sup>o</sup> 34 <sup>th</sup> Act 76 - and for part of Geo.	1864	243 15
	Hodgson's Farm N <sup>o</sup> 4, now called "Elton	1865	246 10
	Hall Farm", a new house & outbuildings	1866	246 10
	having been erected thereon. Cont <sup>ts</sup> 128 1 31	1867	246 0
		1868	246 10
		1869	246 10
	John Charles Billington for	1870	266
	the above Farm from Spring 1870	1871	266
	Contents: . . .	1872	256
		1873	256
4	George Hodgson for a Farm	1856	150 0 0
	and Lands except part let to Thomas	1857	150 0 0
	Haswell one piece let to Cottagers and	1858	150 0 0
	Land taken by the Railway Company	1859	150 0 0
		1860	150 0 0
		1861	150 0 0
	D <sup>o</sup> for the above for 1862 . . .	1862	151 4 0
	D <sup>o</sup> Interest on £24. expended		
	in draining at 5% on Cont <sup>ts</sup>	1863	
	Sunday day 1862 . . . . .		

# 1851 England Census for John Lowe

Cheshire > Elton > Sandbach > 13

Margaret Lowe	Head	Wife	33			So	Townsend
John Lowe	Son	Wife	29			So	Warrington
Sarah So	Daughter	Wife	25			So	Elton
Margaret So	Granddaughter	Wife	5				
Mary So	So	Wife	1				
Thomas & Minton	Serv	Wife	28		House Servant		
Mary Palin	Serv	Wife	19		House Servant		Cheshire Lighton
Joseph Palin	So	Wife	45		Farm Servant		So Warrington
Thomas Hoole	So	Wife	26		So So		So Middlewich
James Charleworth	Wife	Wife	16		So So		So Lighton
George Hodgson	Head	Wife	46		Farmer employing Labour		So Elton
Catherine Hodgson	Wife	Wife	45				So Stockport
Sarah So	Mother	Wife	45		Storekeeper		So Elton
Thomas So	Daughter	Wife	7				So Elton
Ralph So	Son	Wife	5				So So
Wesley So	Son	Wife	4				So So
Chary Ann So	Daughter	Wife	4				Cheshire Liverpool
Mary Ann Hobin	Niece	Wife	12				So So
Caroline Cook	Serv	Wife	21		House Servant		Cheshire Warrington
Richard Philips	Serv	Wife	20		Farm Servant		So So
William Boston	So	Wife	15		So So		So Elton

So in the 1851 census we now see Margaret Lowe with her son John at the one farm, and George Hodgson next door. John by this time was married with two young children. John's marriage complicates the family relationships further as his wife Sarah (nee Latham) was a first cousin to his mother Margaret.

George Hodgson (1805-1876) was also related to the Lowes on many counts in that he himself was a descendent of a Kettell/Latham marriage. His father William had also married Sarah Kettell, the sister of Ralph and his wife Catherine (nee Kettell) came from another line.

The returns of the 1861 were similar to 1851 but over the next 10 years there were many changes at Elton Hall. The mid 1860s was a very difficult period for UK farming in that it (and especially Cheshire) was hit by cattle plague (Foot & Mouth disease) and Elton Hall. For two years, Lord Crewe generously allowed a 25% reduction in rents due to the impact of the disease though how much this helped the stricken farmers is down to debate.

Description of Property.	Quantity.			Tenants' Names.	Yearly Rent.	Allowances in respect of Taxes, &c., less by the amount allowed for Cattle Plague	Net Cash received.
	A.	R.	P.				
<i>Rack Rents due at Lady day 1866</i>							
Elton Hall Farm	128	1	31	Margaret & John Lowe	246. 10	61. 12. 6	184. 17. 6

To cap off a bad decade for the Lowe family, Margaret Lowe died in 1869 and with that John moved to Church Coppenhall as a small time farmer albeit on a freehold basis so he would have had wealth. He died there in 1885.

George Hodgson moved out to take on the lease of a 68 acre farm in Warmingham until his death in 1876

The Crewe records and 1871 confirm that the new tenant was a John Charles Billington a young lad of 24...so how did he persuade Lord Crewe to take what was effectively a risk putting him in charge of one of his flagship farms in Elton?

1871 England Census for John E Billington  
Cheshire > Elton > ALL > 18

Ellen Hall	1	John C. Billington	Head	Ann	24	Farmer (of 132 acres employing 1170)
		Frances do	Mother	W	64	Annuitant
		Ellen Shannon	Servant	Ann	19	General Servant (Domestic)
		George Lightfoot	Serv	Ann	15	Farm Servant (Door)

The first clue is that John's mother was an "annuitant" indicating she had wealth and didn't need to work. In the 1851 census John was with his aunt a "Landed Proprietor". His family came from Madeley in Staffordshire, another stronghold of the Crewe Estate where they farmed over 400 acres.

Tracing back his line further, his grandmother was Ellen Sutton, the sister of John Sutton (Moston Manor) whose parents were Ambrose Sutton (Pettywood Farm) and Catherine Percival (Whose family farmed nearly 400 acres on the Crewe estate at Tetton Hall) To sum up, John Billington had a farming pedigree next to none.

<p><b>CHESHIRE CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE.</b></p> <p><b>NEW MEMBERS.</b></p> <p>Mr. Wright (Minshull), who had been formally proposed, was elected a member of the chamber, and the following were proposed—Mr. Richard Pedley (Haslington), Mr. Geo. Cooke (Haslington), Mr. Alfred Cooke (Over), Mr. Wm. Thompson (Wrenbury), Mr. Thos. Whittingham (Batherton), and Mr. <b>John Billington (Elton Hall).</b></p>	<p>So in the Spring of 1870, John Billington took over the largest farm in Elton of 128 acres with an annual rent charge of £266.</p> <p>In his 2<sup>nd</sup> year, he had an allowance against this rent of £50 due to flooding.....</p> <p>He immediately started to put his name about, so to speak in both a professional and pastoral capacity</p>
<p>Chester Chronicle 25th Feb 1871</p> <p><b>OVERSEERS APPOINTED IN THE NORTHWICH DISTRICT.</b></p> <p>Elton, <b>John Broad, John Charles Billington</b></p> <p>Northwich Guardian 31 Mar 1877</p>	

1891 England Census for John C Billington  
Cheshire > Elton > ALL > District 18

13 Ellen Hall	1	John C. Billington	Head	M	44	Farmer
		Ellen do	Wife	W	44	
		Wm do	Son	M	14	Scholar
		John C do	Son	M	10	do

## 1901 England Census for Jno C Billington

Cheshire > Elton > Sandbach > District 18

Household	Name	Relationship	Sex	Age	Married	Single	Widowed	Divorced
Elton Hall, 1	Jno: C. Billington	Head	M	54	✓			
	Ellen -do-	Wife	M	51	✓			
	Katherine -do-	Daughter	S	23	✓			
	Mary -do-	-do-	S	11	✓			
	Bertrude -do-	-do-	S	9	✓			
	Sydney -do-	Son	M	12	✓			
	Alice Corrob.	Serv.	S	19	✓			Domestic

National Archives 1901 census

In time John Billington proved his worth and stayed on the farm for 36 years

This was at a time when the Agricultural Depression brought on by the abolition of The Corn Laws had made British farming a very difficult industry to work in.

By this time, John was sixty years of age and perhaps ready to retire with none of his children wanting to farm taking on more academic careers.

He moved to Ashley near Market Draton in Shropshire where he died in 1911.

**BILLINGTON** John Charles of White House Ashley Staffordshire died 27 October 1911 Probate Lichfield 26 January to Ellen Billington widow William Billington surgeon and George William Sutton Billington gentleman. Effects £29007 7s. 9d. Resworn £29388 1s. 6d.

His body was returned to Cheshire and he was interred at Warmingham where his burial is marked by an impressive gravestone.



Warmingham St Leonard Graveyard

## SOLDIER FAMILIES.

Four sons of Mr. John Charles Billington, who formerly resided at Elton Hall, Sandbach, are also serving their King and country: Captain W. Billington R.A.M.C.; Lieutenant S. G. Billington R.A.M.C.; Private F. H. Billington South Irish Horse, and Private F. H. Billington, Kitchener's Army.

Private F. H. Billington went to France with the first contingent of the British Expeditionary Force, and was present during the retreat from Mons.

# Tithe Map Apportionments

Township	Parish	Ref	Owner	Occupier	Name	A	R	P
Elton	Warmingham	180	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	Heath Piece	5	0	0
Elton	Warmingham	188	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	Three Day Math	3	0	12
Elton	Warmingham	192	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	Heath Piece	3	2	32
Elton	Warmingham	234	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	Yeowood Riddings	4	3	20
Elton	Warmingham	235	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	Pease Croft	3	2	8
Elton	Warmingham	273	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	Barn Field	3	3	24
Elton	Warmingham	279	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	Inclosure	0	0	23
Elton	Warmingham	289	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	Dinn Butts	1	0	0
Elton	Warmingham	290	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	Well Lands	6	0	28
Elton	Warmingham	291	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	Great Rye Field	5	0	32
Elton	Warmingham	292	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	House Garden and Orchard	2	0	0
Elton	Warmingham	297	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	Hay Meadow	14	1	12
Elton	Warmingham	298	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	Modes Croft	3	3	0
Elton	Warmingham	327	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	Haslington Flatt	5	0	4
Elton	Warmingham	330	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	Wilfow Nickow	6	2	10
Elton	Warmingham	336	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	Finneys	8	3	20
Elton	Warmingham	343	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	Woodhouse Field	1	0	28
Elton	Warmingham	344	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	Woodhouse Field	7	2	13
Elton	Warmingham	345	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	Woodhouse Field	4	2	20
Elton	Warmingham	354	Lord Crewe	Margaret Lowe	Woodhouse Field	4	0	4

Township	Parish	Ref	Owner	Occupier	Name	A	R	P
Elton	Warmingham	230	Lord Crewe	Ralph Kettle	Hays Fields	6	0	0
Elton	Warmingham	231	Lord Crewe	Ralph Kettle	Yeowood Croft	0	3	36
Elton	Warmingham	236	Lord Crewe	Ralph Kettle	Hill Field	5	3	29
Elton	Warmingham	237	Lord Crewe	Ralph Kettle	Big Field	5	0	0
Elton	Warmingham	268	Lord Crewe	Ralph Kettle	Town Field	4	1	0
Elton	Warmingham	274	Lord Crewe	Ralph Kettle	New Field	3	2	16
Elton	Warmingham	275	Lord Crewe	Ralph Kettle	Croft	2	3	36
Elton	Warmingham	276	Lord Crewe	Ralph Kettle	Garden and Building	0	1	30
Elton	Warmingham	287	Lord Crewe	Ralph Kettle		3	2	29
Elton	Warmingham	288	Lord Crewe	Ralph Kettle		3	2	11
Elton	Warmingham	293	Lord Crewe	Ralph Kettle	House Garden and Orchard	1	0	0
Elton	Warmingham	294	Lord Crewe	Ralph Kettle	Barn Field	0	2	0
Elton	Warmingham	295	Lord Crewe	Ralph Kettle	Barn Field	1	2	0
Elton	Warmingham	296	Lord Crewe	Ralph Kettle	Meadow	5	3	33

**Plus a further 65 acres in Warmingham**

# Chronological list of Owners and Occupiers

Year	Source	First Name	Surname	Lived	Age	Years at		Occupation	Status	Other
						Property	Acres			
1840	Tithe Map	Hungerford	Crewe	1812-1894	38	0		Gentleman	Owner	Owner of Crewe Hall
1840	Tithe Map	Margaret	Lowe	1796-1869	44			Farmer	Tenant	Widow, with son John
1840	Tithe Map	Ralph	Kettell	1777-1842	63			Farmer	Tenant	
1841	Census	Margaret	Lowe	1796-1869	45			Farmer	Tenant	
1841	Census	Ralph	Kettell	1777-1842	64			Farmer	Tenant	
1843	Crewe Estate	Margaret	Lowe	1796-1869	55		90	Farmer	Tenant	
1843	Crewe Estate	George	Hodgson	1805-1876	46		101	Farmer	Tenant	
1851	Census	Margaret	Lowe	1796-1869	55			Farmer	Tenant	
1851	Census	George	Hodgson	1805-1876	46			Farmer	Tenant	
1861	Census	Margaret	Lowe	1796-1869	65			Farmer	Tenant	
1861	Census	George	Hodgson	1805-1876	56			Farmer	Tenant	
1863	Crewe Estate	John	Lowe	1822-1885	41	48	128	Farmer	Tenant	and Margaret mother
1871	Census	John Charles	Billington	1846-1911	25	36	132	Farmer	Tenant	Combined Farm 1863
1881	Census	John Charles	Billington	1846-1911	35			Farmer	Tenant	
1891	Census	John Charles	Billington	1846-1911	45			Farmer	Tenant	
1901	Census	John Charles	Billington	1846-1911	55			Farmer	Tenant	
1906	Electors Roll	John Charles	Billington	1846-1911	60			Farmer	Tenant	
1908	Electors Roll	Frank	Willis	1880-1957	28			Farmer	Tenant	
1910	Crewe Estate	Frank	Willis	1880-1957	28		148	Farmer	Tenant	£298 annual rent
1911	Census	Frank	Willis	1880-1957	31			Farmer	Tenant	
1917	Sale	Markham and Co	Limited	n/a	n/a	0	86	Salt Mining	Owner	62 acres to Railway Farm
1921	Census	Frank	Willis	1880-1957	41			Farmer	Tenant	
1925	Sale	British Soda Company	Limited	n/a	n/a	0		Salt Mining	Owner	
1926	Electoral Roll	John	Oulton	1902-1883	24	c5		Farmer	Tenant	
1939	Nat Register	William	Darlington	1891-1981	48			Farmer	Tenant	
1970	Voters Roll	George William	Beech	1915-	55			Farmer	Tenant	also Flash Farm
1987	Sale	John Barrington	Beech					Farmer	Owner	son of George