

VICTORIAN HISTORY OF MOSTON



Title	Moss House, Elton
Type	Small Farm
Date Produced	27th Aug 2023
Internal Reference	E18P
1840 Owner	Lord Crewe
1840 Occupier	Edward Cookson
Tithe Map Apportionments	117-123 & 125
1840 Area	8 Acres 2 Roods

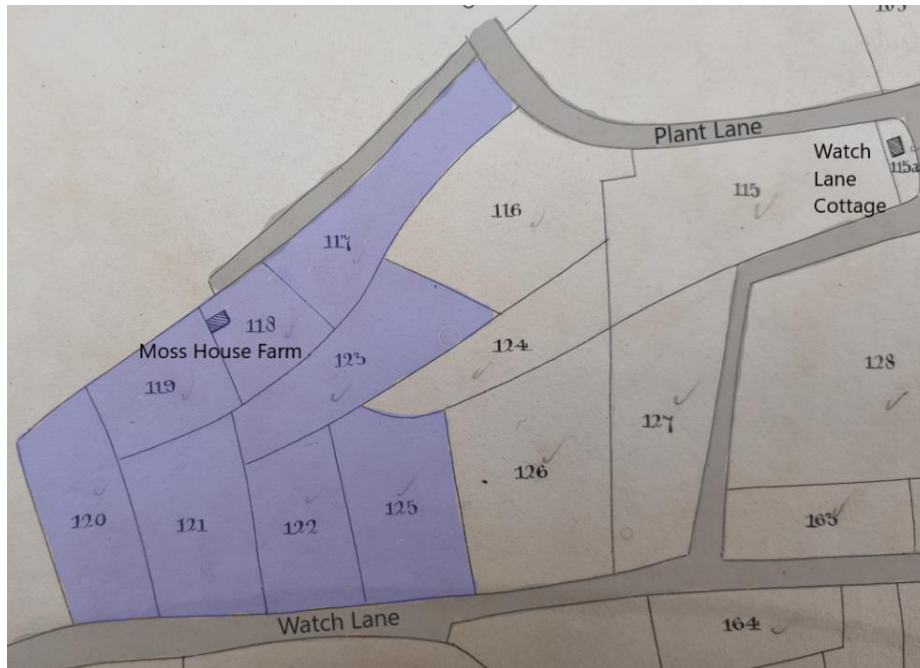


Moss House 1978



Moss House 2022





On the 1840 tithe map, Moss House was in the occupation of Edward Cookson (1777-1859) who was a farmer born in Moston though had been recorded as a weaver on previous records.

By this time he had already been at the property for some 30 years having taken out a lease for three lives from Lord Crewe on 20th January 1809.

The final life on the lease did not die until 1886 when the lease expired.

Source : 1840 Tithe Map for Elton

1841 England Census for Edward Cookson				
Cheshire > Warrington > Sandbach > District 21				
Edward Cookson	60	Farmer	4	
Sarah do	60		4	
James do	25	Sailor	2	

Source : National Archives 1841 census

Edward's wife Sarah (nee Skerratt) was the daughter of a landowning family from Moston and between them, they had ten children from the years of 1798 and 1816. Sarah died on 11th May 1844 and a mere four months later, the following appeared in the newspapers.....an article certainly worth further investigation and which leaves many unanswered questions!

On the 28th ult, at the the Old Church, Manchester, Mr E. Cookson, farmer, Elton Moss, Warrington, aged 70, to Miss Mary Moston, aged 16 !

Source : Macclesfield Advertiser 5th October 1844

The girl that Edward married (if the marriage actually took place in Manchester) was actually Mary Lewis of Moston. Mary probably was indeed 16 years old (Edward was 68) and the eldest daughter of Samuel Lewis a freehold landowner of Walnut Tree Farm. (See report M08P). At the time Samuel's family (also of 10) was not complete and Samuel will have had quite a (marriage) challenge as his first six children were all daughters (followed by 4 sons).

BAPTISMS solemnized in the Parish of Warrington
in the County of Cheshire in the Year 1829

May 3 Mary Samuel & Anne Lewis Moston Farmer G. G. Hargreaves

Samuel Lewis and Edward Cookson will have been well acquainted with each other being of not dissimilar age and having lived within half a mile of each other for all their lives. Perhaps this was some sort of agreement in that despite the age gap, Samuel got to marry off one of his daughters to someone he knew and trusted and Edward got someone to care and look after him in old age?

As to the 1844 marriage itself did it happen? Clandestine marriages often took place in Manchester. The newspaper report would also seem to be obscuring the details by omitting Mary's surname and not putting it in a local newspaper. Having said that, if one wanted to hide a marriage why put it in the newspaper at all? Who actually put it in the newspaper, perhaps a reporter who liked the story?

The newspaper report says the marriage took place in September 1844 (a mere 4 months after Edward's first wife died) whereas it was actually recorded at the general record office in quarter 1 of 1845.

1845. Marriage solemnized at the Parish Church in the Parish of Warrington in the County of Cheshire

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
71	Feb 4 15	Edward Cookson Mary Lewis	68 under age	Widower Spinster	Farmer	Elton Moston	Richard Cookson Sam'l Lewis	Farmer Farmer

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church by me, J. Haydon Astle

This Marriage was solemnized between us, { Edward Cookson
Mary Lewis } in the Presence of us, { Samuel Pierpoint
Mary Stettin }

A licence does exist for the marriage which states Mary to be 20 years old (incorrect) and that Samuel Lewis as father consented to the marriage. It is also worthy of note that the marriage was not witnessed by family members as would be the norm and the licence was also not signed by the local vicar but John Armitstead of Sandbach.

So in conclusion, the marriage did take place but it is anyone's guess as to the motives. Around this time Edward also moved out of Moss House but this was probably for practical reasons as by then, his daughter Ann and her husband John Smallwood had six children of their own so it was they who moved in and continued the farm while Edward moved into a cottage nearby which was part of another lease he had taken on in 1822.

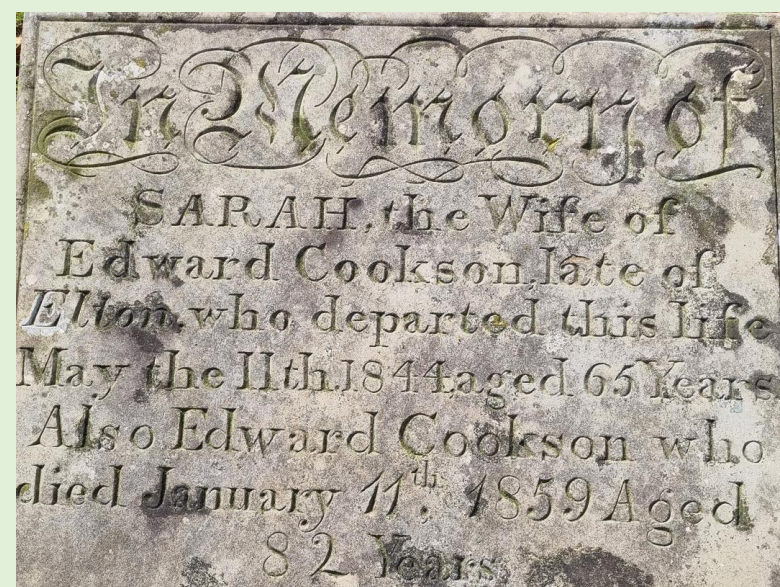
Lease expired 34 25 March 1869		Edward Cookson for late Ellen Mellors formerly Moores D ^r for late Johnson's Cottage and Lands	1856 1857 1858 1859 1860 1861 1862 1863 1864 1865 1866 1867 1868 1869	2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0
35		Samuel Joynson for late Belle's Tenement D ^r for several Inclosures	1856 1857 1858 1859 1860 1861 1862 1863 1864 1865 1866 1867 1868 1869	2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0 2. 0. 0

Source : Lord Crewe Estate Rentals for Elton 1856-1873

Edward Cookson continued to pay the Rent for Moss House (Known at the time as Johnson's Tenement) until he passed away in 1859, Edward had been lucky in his choice of lives for the lease as the 14 year old Ann Arden lived until she was 90 years old and as such the lease didn't expire until 1886. Ann was the daughter of Henry Arden of Greenbank Farm (See Property M02P) and took to farming herself at Yew Tree Farm, Tetton after her husband James Shakerley died young.

BURIALS in the Parish of <u>Warrington</u> in the County of <u>Chester</u> in the Year 18 <u>59</u>				
Name.	Abode.	When buried.	Age.	By whom the Ceremony was performed.
Edward Cookson	Elton	January 11 th 1859	82	Henry J. Blackburne Rector

of Edward Cookson late of Elton in the County of **Chester** Yeoman deceased who died 11 January 1859 at Elton aforesaid was proved at **Chester** by the oaths of Mary Cookson of Elton aforesaid Widow the Relict and John Buckley of Moston in the said County Farmer the Executors.



Edward Cookson Gravestone Warrington St Leonard

Edward Cookson died in 1859 and in his will, he left the sum of one hundred pounds to his wife Mary.

The remaining lease (of 27 years as it turned out) on Moss House he bequeathed to his Daughter Ann who was already living there

the other lease (which lasted a further 10 years) to his daughter Mary Buckley (Wife of John Buckley of Cherry Tree Farm (See Property M13P)

In addition he made cash legacies to other members of his immediate family

The next occupant at Moss House was John Smallwood (1803-1878) a farmer and his wife Ann, the daughter of Edward Cookson, he probably moved in at around 1845 when Edward Cookson married along with his retired father also John who had previously farmed at Ivy Cottage Farm about a mile away (See Property M11P).

18	Moss House	John Smallwood	Head	Mar	44	Small Farmer
		Ann Smallwood	Wife	Mar	43	
		John do	Father	Ret	76	Retired Farmer
		William Cookson	Nephew	Un	11	
		Sarah Smallwood	Serv		6	
19	The Croft	Joseph Brown	Head	Mar	65	Greenwich Pensioner
		Harriet Brown	Wife	Mar	10	
20	Watch Lane Cottage	Thomas Spode	Head	Mar	54	Cordwainer
		Catharine do	Wife	Mar	50	
		William do	Son	Un	5	
		Elizabeth do	Serv		14	
21	The Cottage	Edward Cookson	Head	Mar	44	Labourer
		Mary Cookson	Wife	Mar	23	Wife

Source : National Archives 1851 census

1861 England Census for William Cookson									
Cheshire > Elton > Sandbach > District 17									
John Smallwood	Head	Mar	59	Farmer of 12 acres	do	Master			
Ann Smallwood	Wife	Mar	54	Farmer's Wife	do	Elton			
Sarah Smallwood	Serv	Un	15	Scholar	do	do			
William Cookson	Nephew	Un	21	General Servant	Cheshire	Manchester			

Source : National Archives 1861 census

Ten years later in 1861, John Smallwood was by now a farmer of 12 acres. In 1868, he took out a lease on 4 acres which had previously been attached to Crabmill Farm. He had possibly rented this land on an informal basis previously and this position was put on a firmer footing at that time. It can also be seen that the presence of his daughter Sarah and nephew William was more of a permanent fixture with them working on the farm alongside him.

31 st	John Smallwood for two								
	pieces of Moss land part of the Crabmill								
	Farm - No 6. from Ladyday 1868. -								
	Contents 4 acres.								
				1868		8		8	
				1869		8		8	

Source: Crewe Rental Books 1856-1873

1871 England Census for John Smallwood									
Cheshire > Elton > ALL > 18									
John Smallwood	Head	Mar	67	Farmer of 13 acres employing 13	Cheshire	Master			
Ann Smallwood	Wife	Mar	63	Farmer's wife	Cheshire	Elton			
Sarah do	Serv	Un	23	Farmer's daughter	Cheshire	Elton			

Source : National Archives 1871 census

Ann's sister Mary was the wife of John Buckley of Cherry Tree Farm at the end of the drive leading to Moss House, albeit in Moston.

Mary was the mother of the notorious James Buckley (1827-1896) who had been tried (and controversially cleared) of the murder of PC Green in 1873.

Despite having wealth, James was a petty criminal with many convictions to his name at Knutsford Assizes.

James Lived at Rose Cottage, Plant Lane and most of his pilfering was against members of his own family including his mother shortly after she became bereaved. His cousin Ann and her husband John Smallwood were not immune from his misdemeanours.....

BUCKLEY COMMITTED FOR STEALING HONEY.

At the Sandbach Police Court on Saturday last, Aug. 1st, James Buckley, of Moston, labourer, the person charged and found not guilty at the spring assizes in 1873, with the murder of police constable Green, was charged before G. W. Latham, Esq., and J. W. Makin, Esq., with stealing a quantity of honey, and also with attempting to steal a hive of bees, belonging to John Smallwood, on the 30th July, 1874.

Sarah Smallwood said—I live at Elton, with my father, John Smallwood. My father had two hives of bees near to the house wall in the garden, about five or six yards off. On Thursday last, about half-past nine at night, my father's horse made a noise. I went outside into the garden, and there I saw a man kneeling down against a bench on which the bee-hives were. He was opposite the hive. The slate was taken from under the hive, some of the comb was on the ground, and a hen's nest on the top of one of the hives. It was a nest made of straw. Some of the straw was under the hive. I had seen the hive all right about half-past two in the afternoon. I did not speak to the man. He ran away, but I did not see which way he went. I am sure the prisoner, James Buckley, is the man. I have known him a good many years—he is cousin to me—he had no right to be in our place. I followed the man to the top of the lane. I overtook him. He then went towards his own house, which is close at hand. I went back to the hive and found honey and comb on the floor. The bees seemed to have been disturbed.

Crewe Chronicle 8th August 1874

John Smallwood died on 5th February 1878 and was buried at Warmingham. In his will (Incidentally written the same day in what is called a "death bed will"), he left £150 to his spinster daughter Sarah probably as a thank you for her help, care and assistance on the farm. The rest of his estate was to be divided equally between his three married daughters, Martha Cooke, Ann Clough and Mary Brereton.

6 May. The Will of John Smallwood late of Elton in the County of Chester Farmer who died 5 February 1878 at Elton was proved at the Principal Registry by Joseph Clough of Elton Tailor and Thomas Cooke of Sandbach in the said County Blacksmith the Executors.

From a review of the 1881 census, it appears for (part of?) her share of the spoils Mary took on the lease at Moss House for what turned out to be a further 8 years before it expired. I should have imagined that she negotiated a bit more of the estate of her father as by that time, the last named life had already passed 80 years of age.

1881 England Census for Thos. Brereton

Cheshire > Elton > ALL > District 18

Thos Brereton	59	Farmer	do
Mary do	114	Scholar	do
Eliza do	116	Scholar	do

Source : National Archives 1881 census

Thomas was a blacksmith by trade (as was his father before him) and originated from Haslington and married Mary in 1865 at Warmingham. At the time of John Smallwood's death he was living in Ettiley Heath and I should imagine he worked in one of the two Smithy's at Booth Lane Head near the Fox Pub.

1865. Marriage solemnized at the Parish Church in the Parish of Warmingham in the County of Cheshire								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
271	September 25 th	Thomas Brereton	full	Bachelor	Blacksmith	Sandbach	George Brereton	Farmer
		Mary Smallwood	full	Spinster		Elton	John Smallwood	Farmer
Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, after Banns by Mr. Henry J. Hubbard, Rector								
This Marriage was solemnized between us,		Thomas Brereton		in the Presence of us,		Joseph Pulton		
		Mary Smallwood				Mary Ann Brereton		

Source : Warmingham Parish Register Marriages 1865

No sooner had Thomas and his family moved in, he had to deal with this unsavoury incident...

<p>AN INDECENT ASSAULT.—William Jones, boatman, hailing from Tunstall Staffordshire, was charged before Mr Latham and Mr Wilbraham, on Tuesday, with committing an indecent assault on a little girl named Eliza Brereton, daughter of Thomas Brereton, farmer, of Elton, on Thursday, the 15th inst. Complainant, an intelligent little girl, said on Thursday she went in <u>Watch-lane</u> to throw away an old can. While she was engaged in gathering some violets for her little sister, prisoner came up to her and assaulted her in an improper manner. She cried "Mother," but the prisoner did the same thing a second time. He did not say anything to her when he committed the offence.—Complainant's sister, Mary Ann, said she was with her sister. She saw the man (meaning prisoner) throw her on the ground and assault her. She got</p>	<p>up, but the prisoner followed her and did the same thing again.—Thomas Brereton, the father of the two little girls, was next called, and said that on Thursday evening, the 18th inst., his two little girls came to him and told him that a man had been assaulting them. Witness went out into the lane and asked a boy whom he saw there where the prisoner had gone, and the boy told him that prisoner had gone across the fields.—The prisoner, in answering the charge, denied what had been stated, and said that he had been gathering watercresses when he saw the two little girls, and he only told them to go home.—Prisoner, who was apprehended at Barnton, near Northwich, on Sunday night last, by P.C. Williams, was committed for three calendar months with hard labour to Knutsford House of Correction.</p>
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Source : Alderley Advertiser 27th April 1878

After the lease expired on Moss House, Thomas and Mary moved to Ettiley Heath where Mary died in 1901 to be outlived by Thomas by over 20 years. Having said that, the rates return for Elton confirm that Thomas continued the lease on the land at Moss House with Thomas Mason moving into the property itself

Thomas Mason was a local lad (born at Rose Cottage on Elton Moss Bridge) who had recently married so the move would give him the opportunity have his own house with his wife and start a family.

between us, 1885. Marriage solemnized at Elworth in the Parish of Elworth in the County of Chester

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
276	Jan ^y 22 1885	Thomas Mason	20	Bachelor	Labourer	Elworth	Alfred Mason	Labourer
		Kate Newton	21	Spinster	Servant	Sandbach	Isaac Newton	Labourer

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, after Banns by me, Thurst

This Marriage was solemnized in the Presence of us Thomas Mason Isaac Newton
Kate Newton Elizabeth Newton

Source : Elworth St Peter Marriage Register 1885

No. of Assessment	NAME OF OCCUPIER.	NAME OF OWNER.	DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY.	NAME OR SITUATION OF PROPERTY.	Estimated Extent.
30	Brereton Thomas	Earl of Brewe	do	do	13 - 21
31	Mason Thomas	do	House & garden	The Moss	11 3 15
33	Lowe Adam	do	House & land	do	1 - 38
33	Kelly Bernard	do	do	do	7 3 44

Number.	NAME OF OCCUPIER.	NAME OF OWNER.	Description of Property.	Name or Situation of Property.	Estimated Extent.
	Discharged.				
34	Thomas Brereton	Earl of Brewe	Land	The Moss	13 3 12
35	Thomas Mason	"	House & garden & Orchard	"	1 - 38
96	John Pung	himself	Wine works	Mount Pleasant	
	Additions				
34	George Hodgson	Earl of Brewe	Land	The Moss	14 3 15
35	Thomas Mason	"	House & garden & Orchard & Land	"	9 - 22
96	John Pung	Self	Wine works	Mount Pleasant	

Source : Elton Rates Returns 1897 & 1901

The rates return for 1901 confirm that after the death of his wife Thomas Brereton gave up farming and retired to Chester where he lived with his daughter. Thomas Mason already occupying Moss House took control of the immediate land with George Hodgson taking the 4 acres which was previously part of Crabmill Farm.

1891 England Census for Thos Mason									
Cheshire > Elton > ALL > District 18									
44	Thos Mason	Head	M.	26	Widow	Widow			
	Kate	Wife	M.	27	Scholar				
	John	Son	M.	3					
5	Arnold	Son	M.	3					
44	Thos	do	do						

Source : National Archives 1891 census

1901 England Census for Thos Mason

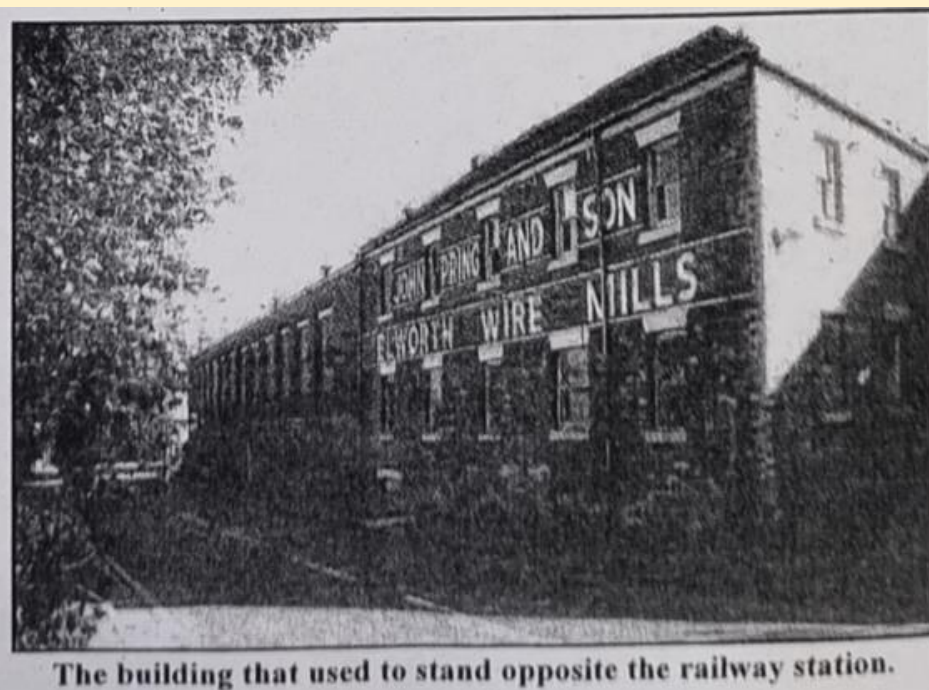
Cheshire > Elton > Sandbach > District 18

Moss Lane	1			Thos Mason	Head	M	35	9	✓	General Labourer	Worker
				Catherine -do-	Wife	M	36		✓		
				John -do-	Son		10		✓		
				Ethel -do-	Daughter		15		✓		
				Ernie -do-	-do-		8		✓		
				Bertha -do-	-do-		6		✓		
				Cecil -do-	Son		4		✓		
				Ida -do-	Daughter		2		✓		
				Ave -do-	-do-		7mo		✓		

Source : National Archives 1901 census

It can be seen from the 1891 census that Thomas was a wire worker which would have meant that each day he would be taking a twenty minute walk to the factory of John Pring on Station Road in Elworth.

Perhaps he gave up this work and started to farm when he took the land at Moss House but whatever he did was short lived as he died a few years later in 1904, aged 39 leaving his wife with a family of seven



The building that used to stand opposite the railway station.

John Pring Wire Works Station Road Elworth

As for Thomas's wife Catherine, she moved out of Moss House and a couple of years later remarried a Levi Stubbs but unfortunately this marriage didn't work out and by 1911 she was separated and lived her life out on Bradwall Road, Sandbach.

Next to move in was Henry Lowe, another local lad who came from a large family in Elton. His father Adam Lowe moved to Elton from Stone in Staffordshire in the 1860s and Henry was born in Ettiley Heath shortly before Adam took out his lease on The Croft. As a fifteen year old, he was learning how to become a farmer under the tutelage of Kester Kettle at Watch Lane Farm however after he married Mary Higgins in 1884 (with his brother in law and sister as witnesses) he moved to Northwich where over the next 14 years they had 6 children.

1884 Marriage solemnized at Warrington in the Parish of Warrington in the County of Cheshire

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
388	<u>Decemr</u> <u>30</u> <u>1884</u>	<u>Henry Lowe</u> <u>Mary Higgins</u>	<u>Minis</u> <u>full</u>	<u>Barbata</u> <u>Shroton</u>	<u>Labauna</u> <u>—</u>	<u>Elton</u> <u>Elton</u>	<u>Orlam Lane</u> <u>John Higgins</u>	<u>Labauna</u> <u>Labauna</u>

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church after Banns by me Henry J. Blackburne Rector

This Marriage was solemnized between us, { Henry Lowe
Mary Higgins her mark } in the Presence of us, { John Smallwood
Charlotte Lowe

Source : Warrington Parish Register 1884

As the First World War came along, Hungerford Crewe who was now spending little time in Cheshire, decided to sell his estate. As with many of the great landowners at the time, it was becoming increasingly difficult to make a profit from agricultural land and a mass sale of property took off around this time, including the Moston Estate which was sold in 1910.

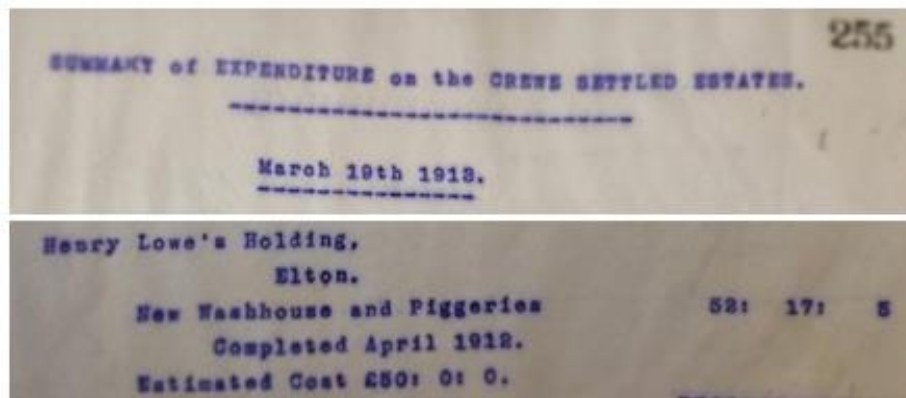
It can be seen that when the 1911 census was taken, Henry was at Moss House with his wife Mary (who had been born in one of the long since demolished properties on Red Lane) along with his two youngest children, Ernest and Ada who were assisting on the farm.

1911 England Census for Henry Lowe									
Cheshire > Elton > ALL > 18									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Henry Lowe	Head	44		Married 26	7	6	1	Farmer 100
2	Mary Lowe	Wife		48	Married 26	7	6	1	
3	Ernest Lowe	Son	18		Single				Farmer son working on farm 110
4	Ada Lowe	Daughter		13					Dairywork 110

Adam Lowe at this time also leased a field just south of Watch Lane (Opposite the junction with Red Lane) which meant at the time of the sale he and his son Henry were farming roughly 17 acres between them. This can be seen in the Congleton Borough Council rates return.

No. of Assessment.	NAME OF OCCUPIER	DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY.	NAME OR SITUATION OF PROPERTY.	Estimated Extent.			Gross Estimated Rental.		
				A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.
27	Lowe Henry	House & Buildings	The Moss				6	10	
		Land							
28	Lowe Adam	House & Buildings		9		22	18	10	
		Land					6	15	
				7	3	4	10	10	

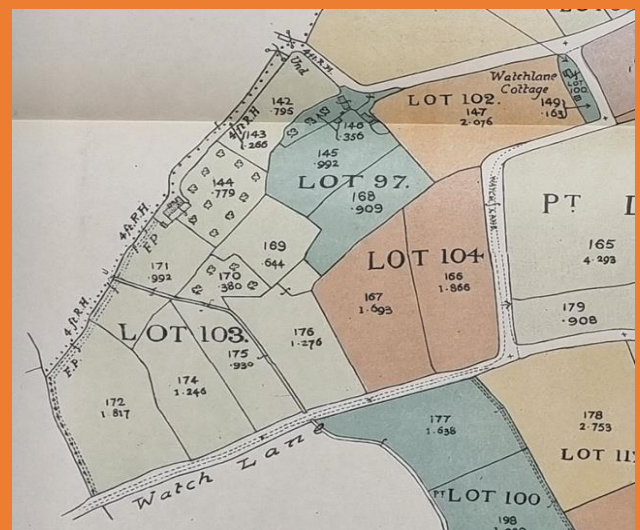
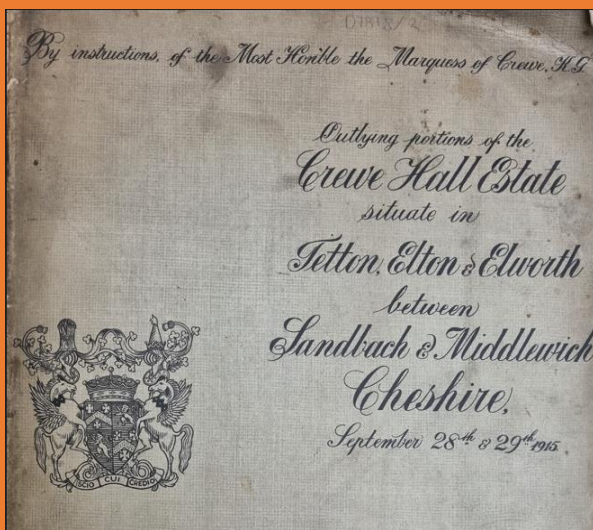
Source : Congleton Borough Council Rates 1914



In 1913, Lord Crewe spent £50 on buildings at Moss House, which would have helped to add to its value when the time came to sell. This was standard practise on the Crewe estate where the tenant would then have his rent increased to cover interest on the cost of the improvements

Source : Crewe Estate Letter Books Ref : DCR 59-24-1 (1910-1916)

The Elton part of the Estate was first put up for sale in 1915 but much of it, including almost all the properties along Plant Lane, Watch Lane and Red Lane failed to sell. In this sale, the properties leased by Henry and his father were split into two separate lots perhaps to reflect the fact that the fields weren't all adjacent to each other,



LOT 103
Coloured Green on Plan No. 3.

A Valuable Freehold Small Holding
Known as
MOSS HOUSE,
In the occupation of Mr. Henry Low, situate in Moss Lane, Elton.

Comprising an Area of
9 acres 0 roods 20 perches
Or thereabouts.

The HOUSE contains Parlour, Kitchen, 2 Pantries, new Wash-house, and 3 Bedrooms.
The BUILDINGS contain Two-stalled Stable, Shippin for 4 Cows, Loft, and 2 Piggeries.
There is also a good Orchard.

No. on Ordnance Survey.	Description.	Acres.
142	Field.	.795
143	Road.	.366
144	House, Orchard, &c.	.779
169	Field.	.544
170	do.	.380
171	do.	.992
172	do.	1.817
174	do.	1.246
175	do.	.930
176	do.	1.276
Total Acres		9.125

LOT 97
Coloured Blue on Plan No. 3.

A Valuable Freehold Cottage and Land
Known as
PEAR TREE COTTAGE
In the occupation of Mr. Adam Lowe, situate in Moss Lane, Elton.

Comprising an Area of
2 acres 1 rood 0 perches

The HOUSE contains Living Room, Back Kitchen, Bakehouse, Pantry, and 2 Bedrooms.
The BUILDINGS contain Shippin for 4 Cows, Calf Cote, Barn and Pigsty.
The Wooden Erections belong to the Tenant.

No. on Ordnance Survey.	Description.	Acres.
146	House, Garden, &c.	.356
145	Field.	.992
168	do.	.909
Total Acres		2.257

Source : Crewe Estate Sale Brochure 1915

The newspaper article below shows that Henry had every reason to be very proud of his sons who chose to fight for their country during the war and put on hold any other plans they may have had.

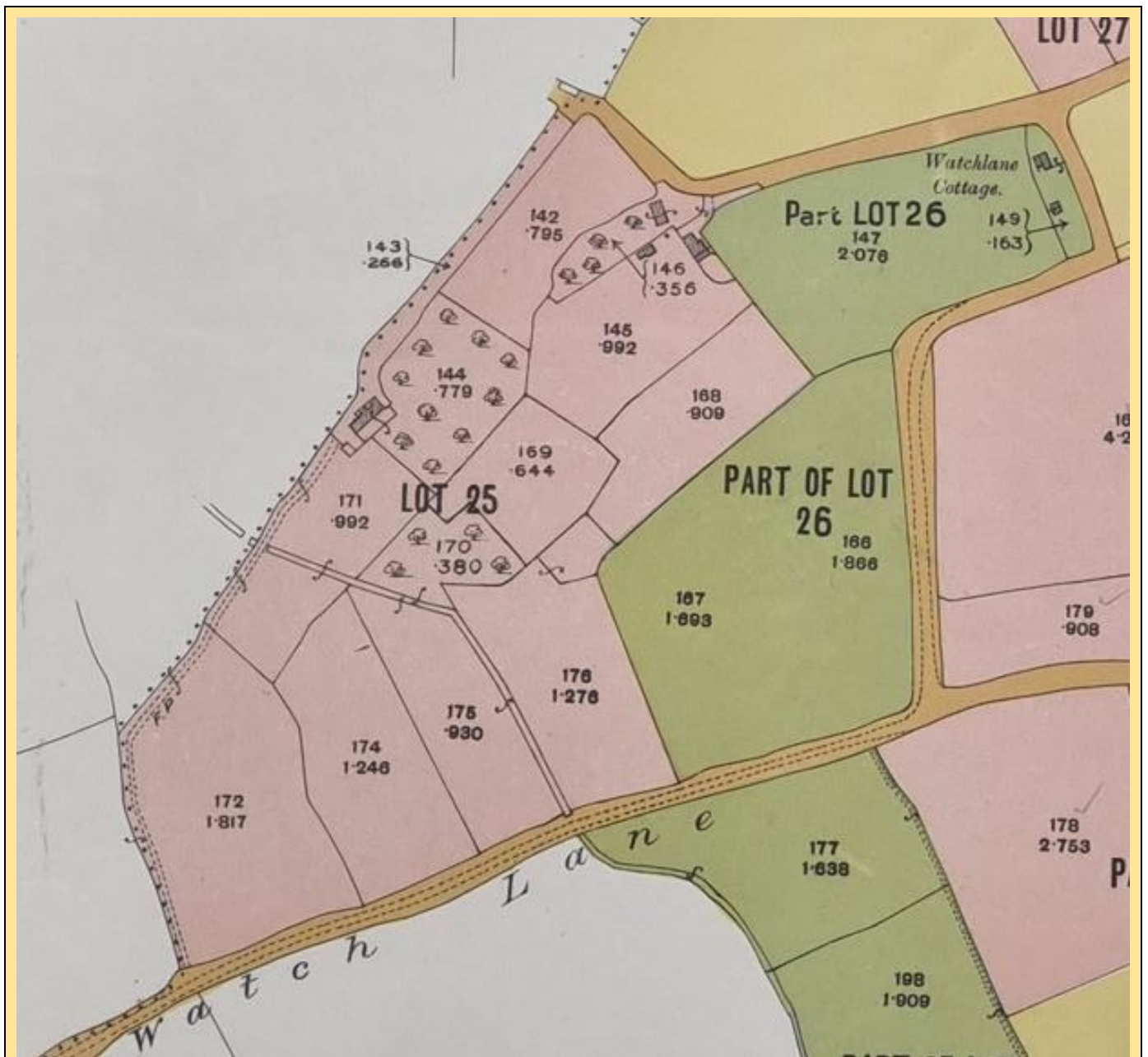
<p>FOR KING AND COUNTRY.</p> <p>CHESHIRE FARMER'S FINE RECORD.</p> <p>FOUR SONS WITH THE COLOURS. ONE LEAVES HIS NEW ZEALAND FARM TO FIGHT.</p> <p>There are in Cheshire few farmers who have sacrificed as many as four sons to fight for King and country in the present struggle, but at Elton (Sandbach) there is one farmer named Mr. Henry Lowe, Moss House Farm, who is in the proud position of having such a number with the colours. Like their father, all four sons are of fine physique, and it would be difficult to find their equal. The eldest, Staff Sergt.-Major Lowe, was formerly employed at Messrs. Brunner and Mond's works, Winnington, and was a champion heavy weight lifter. Some few years ago he took the Sandow gold medal for the finest developed young man in Great Britain. He also captured Professor Inch's gold medal. Seven years ago he went out to New Zealand,</p>	<p>and commenced to work on a 500 acre farm. He subsequently sold this and took over a farm of 5,000 acres. Although he was experiencing great prosperity he decided to answer the call of his old country, and joined the New Zealand force which will shortly be sent to the front. During his absence he has placed a manager on his farm, and also leaves behind him a wife and three children. His father hopes that farmers of Cheshire who would not release their sons would bear that in mind.</p> <p>The second son is Pte. James Lowe, 6th Dragoon Guards. He has experienced a little of the trench life in France, but he is now at Canterbury suffering from rheumatism. Pte. Ernest Lowe, who went out last August to join his brother in New Zealand, entered the Waikato Rifles, which regiment is now in the Dardanelles. He was formerly a member of the Runcorn police force. Herbert has been in the firing line several times. Walter Lowe, A.B., has been in the navy for about six years. He is at present on H.M.S. Albion, which ship has taken part in the Dardanelles operations. Not able to procure any writing material, Herbert writes to his father on a piece of cardboard, acquainting him that his eldest son (Sergt.-Major Lowe) had joined the colours. Mr. Lowe is keeping this piece of cardboard as a souvenir.</p>
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Source : Chester Chronicle 17th July 1915

<p>TUESDAY'S SALE.</p> <p>The remaining portions of the Marquis of Crewe's property at Sandbach were offered for sale by auction at the Institution on Tuesday, the auctioneers being Messrs. Frank Lloyd and Sons. Four lots only were offered, Mr. Lloyd announcing that the Elton portion of the estate had been withdrawn, having been disposed of privately in one lot.</p>

Source : Crewe Chronicle 3rd August 1918

At the 1918 auction, the Elton part of the estate was withdrawn before the auction and then sold to Mr F J Poole (as in Poole Alcock Solicitors) who in general sold the properties back to the tenants with no doubt a nice markup in price for his own cut



Source : Crewe Estate Sale Brochure 1918

In 1918, the organisation of the land and properties had been significantly adjusted into a more logical fashion and perhaps to reflect that Mr Poole had already agreed with the tenants how to split up the land and who wanted what.

At that time Adam Lowe's next door neighbour was of course his son Henry Lowe and I am sure this would be the driver to combine the two properties into a single lot which was then sold to Henry Lowe with completion on 10th April 1919.

The purchase price of £665 which was part funded with a mortgage of £400 from Francis Poole, Annie Foden and a James Proudlove of Fields Farm, Bradwall.

Freehold Small Holding

Known as

MOSS HOUSE & PEAR TREE COTTAGE.

In the occupation of Messrs. Henry Lowe and Adam Lowe, situate in Moss Lane, Elton.

Comprising an Area of

11 acres 1 rood 21 perches

Or thereabouts.

The HOUSE occupied by Mr. Hy. Lowe contains Parlour, Kitchen, 2 Pantries, new Wash-house, and 3 Bedrooms.

The BUILDINGS include Two-stalled Stable, Shippon for 4 Cows, Loft, and 2 Piggeries.

There is also a good Orchard.

The COTTAGE occupied by Mr. Adam Lowe contains Living Kitchen, Back Kitchen, Bakehouse, Pantry, and 2 Bedrooms.

The BUILDINGS comprise Shippon for 4 Cows, Calf Cote, Barn and Piggery.

NOTE:—The Wooden Erections belong to the Tenants.

SCHEDULE.

No. on Ordnance Survey.	Description.	Acres.
142	Field.	.795
143	Road.	.266
144	House, Orchard, &c.	.779
169	Field.	.644
170	do.	.380
171	do.	.992
172	do.	1.817
174	do.	1.246
175	do.	.930
176	do.	1.276
146	Cottage and Garden.	.356
145	Field.	.992
168	do.	.909
Total Acres ...		11.382

Given that Henry Lowe by the time of the sale was 66 years old, and his wife had died in 1928 so one can reasonably conclude that retirement and the loss of his wife were the motives to sell Moss House.

By then, his family were well dispersed and during the war his son Ernest had joined his elder brother in New Zealand leaving him with just his wife and daughter Ida who had married a John Hunt, a council worker.

Henry may have also been thinking about how he would ultimately distribute his assets as there was no one to take over the farm.

Unfortunately, this arrangement didn't work out as perhaps intended because between the original sale and completion, on 27th January 1919, Adam Lowe passed away and was buried at Warmingham St Leonards.

On the other hand, by this time Adam was a very elderly gentleman and maybe knew his time was limited so wanted to secure this one off opportunity to pass a reasonably substantial farm on to his son.

Henry Lowe and Family continued to own the premises up until 1930 when he put the property up for sale which included The Croft. (See Property E026P)

To be Offered by Public Auction by
JOHN W. HILDITCH at THE LITERARY INSTITUTE, SANDBACH, on THURSDAY, 18th September, 1930, at 3 p.m., subject to conditions.

Lot 1.—FREEHOLD AND WITH VACANT POSSESSION ON COMPLETION, ALL THAT desirable compact SMALL HOLDING, known as Moss House, Elton, near Sandbach, comprising Dwelling-house, good range of Outbuildings, and 11 Acres, 1 Rood and 21 Perches or thereabouts of excellent Grass Land, owned and occupied by Mr. Henry Lowe.

The House contains two Bedrooms, two Box-rooms, Parlour, Kitchen, two Pantries, Scullery and usual Out Offices.

The Outbuildings consist of Shippon for 4 Cows, Barn and Loft over, Wood Stable and two Piggeries.

There are two Orchards well stocked with good Fruit Trees.

Water is laid on from the Rural District Council Mains.

Source : Crewe Chronicle 13th Sept 1930

		years, months,					
1	Henry Lowe	Head	56	6	m	Ind	Cheshire Elton Smallholder Farmer 011/4
2	Mary Lowe	Wife	58		F		Elton Home Duties
3	Ida Lowe	Daughter	23	10	F	Single	Cheshire Lavenham General Help ?

Source : National Archives 1921 Census

Henry hence put Moss House up for sale and it was sold at auction to a James Ernest Davies who at the time was a cattle dealer. Henry was by then a retired farmer and living in Buxton. A day later on 16th October, 1931, Moss House and approximately 4 acres of land was sold on again to Ellen Barnes.

In December 1931 after perhaps a change to the original plan, Ellen Davies sold some of the land back to James Davies and he sold to her another plot. On the conveyance of the field, James was described as a builder which I guess gives away his intentions as to the land he purchased.

Unfortunately Henry did not have long to enjoy his retirement and he died two years later in 1933 having moved back to live with his daughter Ida on Clifton Road. Unfortunately, this was another tragic death.....

RETIRED FARMER'S TRAGIC DEATH.

"Noise Like Engine Going" in Head.

SUICIDE BY CYANIDE.

"Suicide whilst of unsound mind" was the verdict recorded by Mr R. A. Daniels, the Central Cheshire Coroner, at an inquest held at Sandbach on Henry Lowe (66), a retired farmer, of Clifton Road, Elworth, who was found dead in a cycle shed at the rear of his house on Saturday.

Mrs Ida Hunt said deceased, who was her father, resided with her. Six years ago he had septic pneumonia, and had been troubled with an abscess on the jaw. Last Christmas he was medically attended for gastritis and inflammation of the ear, but was better until recently when his face became very swollen. On Friday he said his head had been very bad all night, and that he had a noise "Like an engine going." He had not previously complained of pains in the head. He only ate part of his breakfast, and obtained a bottle from her saying that he was going to see Dr Bennett.

Witness added that her father had no troubles or financial worries which she knew of, and had never suggested suicide.

Answering the Coroner, witness said deceased had never gone out to destroy wasps, and there were no wasps about the house, therefore, so far as she knew there was no necessity for him to purchase anything of a poisonous nature.

NOT UNUSUAL.

John Patrick Hunt, of the same address, said that early on Friday morning Lowe told him that he had had a bad night with his face, and that his head was throbbing "just the same as an old engine." When witness went to bed at 10-30 that night, Lowe had not returned home, but that was not unusual.

Witness expected that Lowe had gone out several times before, and had come back the same night. Sometimes he would go away on Friday, and would return on Tuesday. "He used to stay somewhere in Crewe I think, but would never tell us anything," witness added. "When he goes out we leave the back door loose."

THE DISCOVERY.

Witness said he went to the bicycle shed in the garden about 6-30 on Saturday morning, and saw Lowe lying dead on the floor with the bottle produced sticking out of his inside jacket pocket.

Dr. C. H. W. Bennett said a post mortem examination revealed conclusively that Lowe died of cyanide of potassium poisoning. Lowe had not called to see him on Friday morning, nor had he previously complained of noises in his head. If Lowe had an abscess in his ear it would cause the pains he had spoken of.

The Coroner pointed out that the poison was purchased on Thursday, and that the tragedy did not happen until next day. If Lowe intended to take his life when he bought the poison would he show symptoms of it by a peculiar manner or anything? he asked.

Witness: I cannot say; he might not.

Discussing the matter further with the Coroner, witness agreed that if Lowe had an abscess it might under certain circumstances upset his mind.

The Coroner: Possibly in view of what he had previously gone through?—Yes.

Fred Greenwood, Limerick Hill, Warrington, said he saw Lowe early on Friday evening going towards Warrington, and he said he had noises in his head "like a traction engine." Shortly after nine o'clock the same evening he saw Lowe returning home, and he then said his head was easier.

"WANTED POISON FOR WASPS."

Ralph Austin Smith, 26, 2nd Avenue, Crewe Road, Sandbach, said that he was a registered chemist. Lowe came into the shop where witness was employed on Thursday and asked for 6d. worth of cyanide for the purpose of destroying wasps. Lowe said he knew Mr. Morris next door, and after satisfying himself on that point witness supplied Lowe with the poison, and Mr. Norris himself witnessed Lowe's signature in the poison book. Lowe's manner appeared to be perfectly all right, and witness had no reason to suspect that he wanted the poison for any other purpose than the one he had stated.

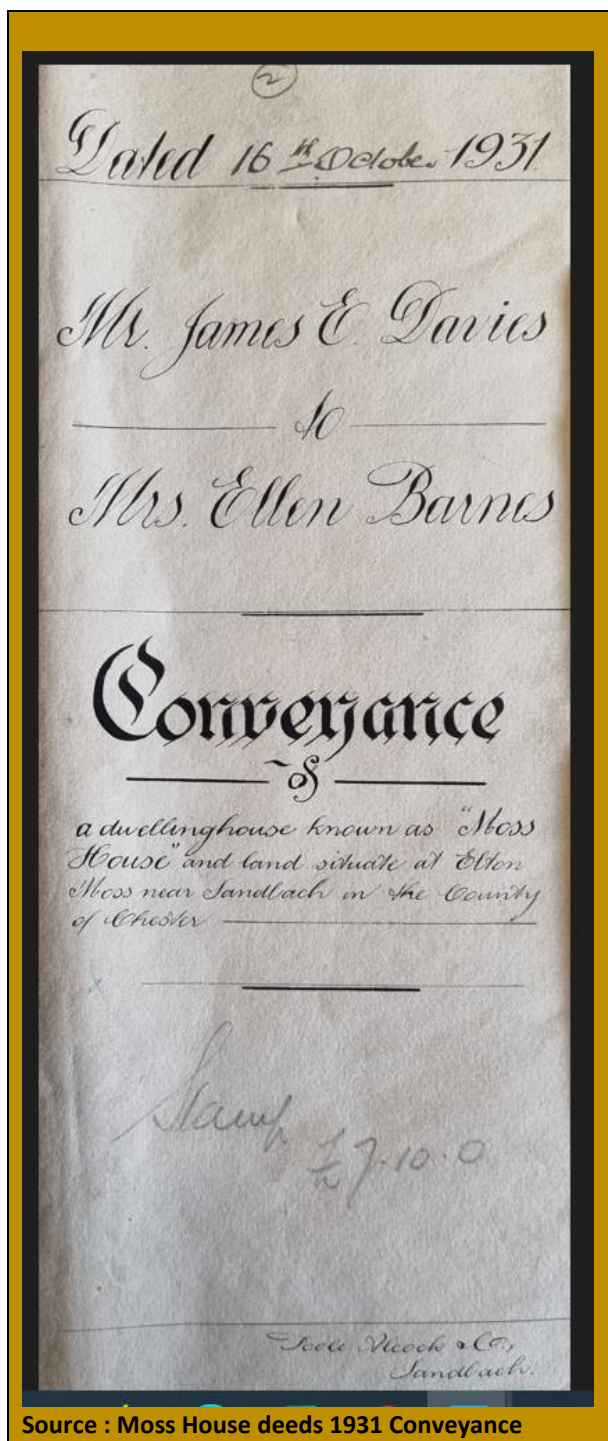
Summing up the Coroner said he could not find anyone who knew that Lowe had been in the habit of destroying wasps, and there were none about the home. They could only assume that Lowe had put the poison in the medicine bottle, diluted it with water and then taken what proved to be a fatal dose. The chemist had acted very cautiously. "The only difficult point to my mind," added the Coroner, "is that the poison was purchased on Thursday, but Lowe did not complain of the pain in his head until the next day. In view of the doctor's evidence and the other evidence I am justified, however, in coming to the conclusion that at the time he did this he was not of sound mind."

THE FUNERAL.

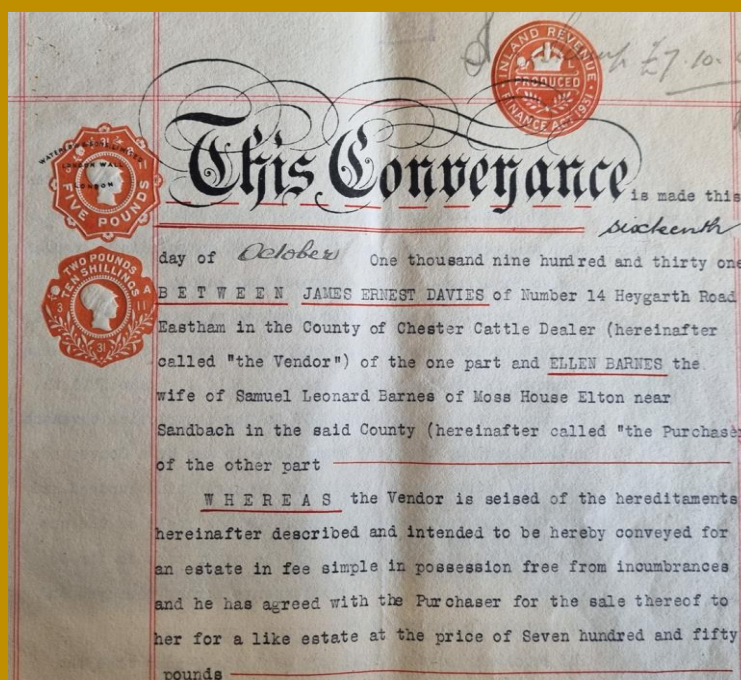
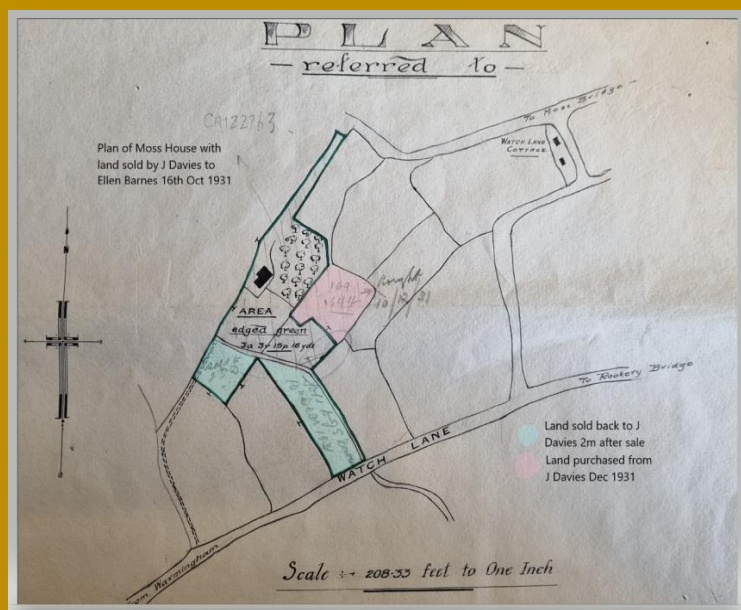
The funeral took place at the Warrington Church on Tuesday, the Rev. R. Hargreaves officiating. The bearers were Messrs. C. Cross, P. Kesteven, H. Kesteven, Smallwood and Cross.

The chief mourners were: Mrs J. Hunt (daughter), Messrs. H. Lowe, W. Lowe and J. Lowe (sons), Miss E. Lowe (sister), Mrs H. Lowe and Mrs J. Lowe (daughters-in-law), Mr J. Hunt (son-in-law), Mrs Cross, Mrs Smallwood.

Messrs. F. T. Blease and A. Honour represented the Ellor Parish Council, of which the deceased was a member.



Source : Moss House deeds 1931 Conveyance



As it was Ellen died two years later and for then on, the occupation at Moss House seemed a bit sporadic with various people living there, firstly a tenant, Alfred Jones, then various family members.

1939 England and Wales Register for Samuel L Barnes

Cheshire > Congleton Rd > Lgfl

Moss House Elton	61	1	BARNES Samuel R.	-	M	27 Jan 86	M	Hairstress (Charles)
		2	BARNES Violet	-	F	2 Oct 13	M	Domestic Duties
		3	BARNES-William G. D.	-	M	17 Feb 29	S	at School
CR283 CH 2740		4	SPEARE Ellen	-	F	17 Oct 33	S	at School
This record is officially closed.								
CR283 CH 211058		6	WOOTTON BARNES Mary A	-	F	3 Aug 39	S	at School

JAMES—Loving birthday memories (August 6th) of a dear Wife and Mother. (No card, no kiss, no birthday wish, but just sweet memories of you.)—Always remembered by Husband and family, **Moss House, Elton.**

Source : Crewe Chronicle 4th Aug 1951

Ellen's husband Samuel (a hairdresser) lived there with his new wife, Violet James who came from Needhams Bank. Samuel's nephew Edward James (who also lost his wife at a relatively young age then moved in with a house swap as Samuel Barnes moved to Needhams Bank where he died in 1962.



Source : Moss House deeds 1964 conveyance

After Samuel died, the family finally managed to catch up with the legal ownership of the property with it being vested in the names of Ellen Barnes two (by then) married daughter and widowed daughter in Law. Once this legal work was complete, the property was sold to Derek Whitelegg.

The photo below was taken about the time that Derek moved in. This photo very much also matches the description in the 1930 sale and probably very similar going back into the Victorian Era.



Moss House Aerial Photograph 1968.

Chronological List of Occupants and Owners

Year	Source	First Name	Surname	Age	Years at		Occupation	Status	Other
					Lived	Property			
1840	Tithe Map	Hungerford	Crewe	28	1812-1894	0	Gentleman	Owner	Owner of Crewe Hall
1841	Census	Edward	Cookson	64	1777-1859	c35	Yeoman Farmer	Tenant	Lease for Lives from 1809
1851	Census	John	Smallwood	48	1803-1878	c34	Farmer	Tenant	Son in Law of Edward Cookson
1861	Census	John	Smallwood	58	1803-1878		Farmer	Tenant	
1871	Census	John	Smallwood	68	1803-1878		Farmer	Tenant	
1881	Census	Thomas	Brereton	39	1842-1924	8	Blacksmith	Tenant	Son in Law of John Smallwood
1891	Census	Thomas	Mason	26	1865-1904	22	Wire Labourer	Tenant	1809 Lease Expired in 1886
1901	Census	Thomas	Mason	36	1865-1904		Labourer	Tenant	
1911	Census	Henry	Lowe	45	1866-1933	23	Farmer	Tenant	
1918	Sale	Henry	Lowe	52	1866-1933		Farmer	Tenant	
1918	Sale	Francis Joseph	Poole	51	1867-1940	0	Lawyer	Owner	Purchased from Lord Crewe
1919	Sale	Henry	Lowe	53	1866-1933		Farmer	Owner	Paid £665
1921	Census	Henry	Lowe	55	1866-1933		Farmer	Owner	
1929	Elector	Hunt	John	35	1894-1979	2?	Council Worker	Tenant	Son in Law of Henry Lowe
1931	Sale	James Ernest	Davies		?	0	Cattle Dealer	Owner	Paid £925 15/10/31 inc Croft
1931	Sale	Ellen	Barnes	41	1890-1933	2	Poultry Farmer	Owner	Paid £750 16/10/31
1933	Assent	Samuel	Barnes	47	1886-1964	c25?	Hairdresser	Owner	Not proven until 1962
1935	Elector	Alfred	Jones		?			Tenant	
1939	Register	Samuel	Barnes	53	1886-1964	10?	Hairdresser	Owner	Husband of Ellen Barnes
1950	Elector	Edward	James	43	1907-1979	5?	bricklayer	Tenant	Brother in Law to Samuel Barnes
1962	Deeds	Ellen & Annie	Speare & Ward	29	1933-	5?	Housewife	Co-Owners	Dau of Samuel Barnes (sis Annie)
1964	Deeds	Derek	Whitelegg			11	Plumber	Owner	Paid £850
1975	Deeds	Alan	Thomlinson			3	Garage Owner	Owner	Paid £13,750
1978	Deeds	Malcolm & Margaret	Owen			21	Fodens	Co-Owners	Paid £22,500
1999	Deeds	John & Kristine	Pemberton			23+	Accountant	Co-Owners	