

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

The compact village of Moulton lies in the very heart of Cheshire three miles to the south-east of Northwich, four miles north of Middlewich and three miles north-east of Winsford. Originally it was a township within the ancient parish of Davenham a few miles to the east but since 1877 it has had its own parish church. It occupies about 450 acres of land much of which was once put to pastoral farming but is now primarily housing as a dormitory village for those working in the nearby towns or further away in the Manchester and Liverpool conurbations. Its western boundary is formed by the river Weaver whilst to the north is the rural township of Eaton, to the east the villages of Davenham and Bostock whilst to the south is Wharton, a part of Winsford. At the last count the village had about 2000 residents.

MOULTON'S ORIGINS

A question often asked is 'where did it get its name?' Unfortunately, there is no straightforward answer to this as the spelling has varied over the centuries and its original sense has been lost. Many English place-names were coined in the mid-Saxon period and then re-interpreted and altered with the arrival of the Normans in the eleventh century. The earliest form is found in the pages of the Domesday Survey (1086) as *Moletune*, but *Molton*, *Multon* and *Moulton* are also found in mediaeval sources. Old English *tūn* in the earliest times meant 'farmstead' and later 'village' or 'hamlet', from which we now have the word town, is the most common of all place-name elements. The popular suggestion of Moulton's meaning is given by Dodgson in his work on Cheshire place-names as 'Mūla's farm', from an Old English personal name. However, *mūl* meaning 'mule' and thus a farm where mules were used or bred is possible. A further meaning comes from the French and Latin word for 'mill', *mola*, thus the farm by the mill, is not inconceivable as here there might well have been either an animal powered mill or a watermill powered by the river Weaver, as indeed there was one the opposite bank at Bradford. Interestingly, during the mediaeval period there was a mill at Eaton, a place not named in Domesday but which was probably then a part of Moulton, and this may be suggestive of the meaning. A further interesting suggestion and perhaps less convincing, is 'mussel farm' – a farm where mussels were found from the Latin *molluscus*. This fresh water creature may have been in abundance in the waters of the river or its tributaries.

Whatever the meaning of the settlement there can be little doubt that people lived in the area during the Saxon period. There may have been a settlement during much earlier periods of history. In 1849 during work on building the foundations for a new bridge across the Weaver to Bradford Roman artefacts were found by the workmen.¹ What was deposited in the mud may have course have been left by any one at any time and does not on its own indicate Roman settlement. However, evidence of earlier presence may be inferred from a Bronze Age bowl barrow about 150 yards north-east of Moulton Bank Farm at a site once occupied by a water tower. Mounds of earth and stone were placed over a burial or cremation and may have been used by successive generations. Often these funereal deposits were located on the boundaries of a tribe's estate and in prominent positions so that they could be observed from some distance away, but whether this was a northern, southern or western boundary we cannot tell, though its position on a ridge above the river might suggest the latter. Ormerod describes it as being on 'the highest point of the ridge' and 'a tumulus of considerable elevation and an extraordinary large diameter', but unfortunately nothing remains of it today.²

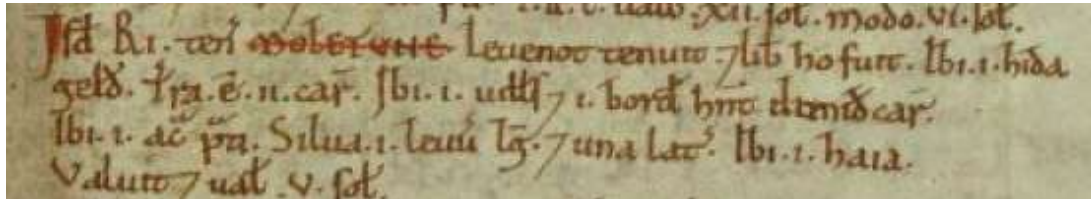
During the Saxon period we may suppose, from the evidence of the Norman organisation of the area, that Moulton was a part of an estate based on a centre at Davenham where a local

¹ (CCC, SMR no. 792; Journal of the Chester Archaeological Society, 1849, 1/48; VCH, 1/232, Petch DF 1987)

² (CCC, SMR no. 791; Ormerod (1882), iii, 264; Watkin, Roman Cheshire (1886) p. 314; VCH (1987) Longley 1/87)

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

lord had his residence and established a church. The name of this settlement means 'hamlet on the Daven (the ancient name for the river Dane)' and the use of *ham* and the topographical reference suggests that it is an early Saxon name. From here a number of minor settlements, including Moulton, will have been established which eventually became the parish: *Leoftæt's wic* ('Leoftat's dairy farm') or Leftwich; *Bota's stoc* ('Bota's stockaded place') or Bostock; *Wane tune* ('the farm by the Weaver') or Wharton, and *ēg ton* ('the farm with water meadows') or Eaton. Later still more minor settlements were established at *sur lache* ('the boggy stream') or Shurlach; *si broc* ('the brook where sheep were washed' or 'stream crossed by a beam bridge') or Shipbrook; and *stan byrle* ('the stoney passage' perhaps alluding to a Roman road that passed through here) or Stanthorne.



The Moulton entry in Domesday

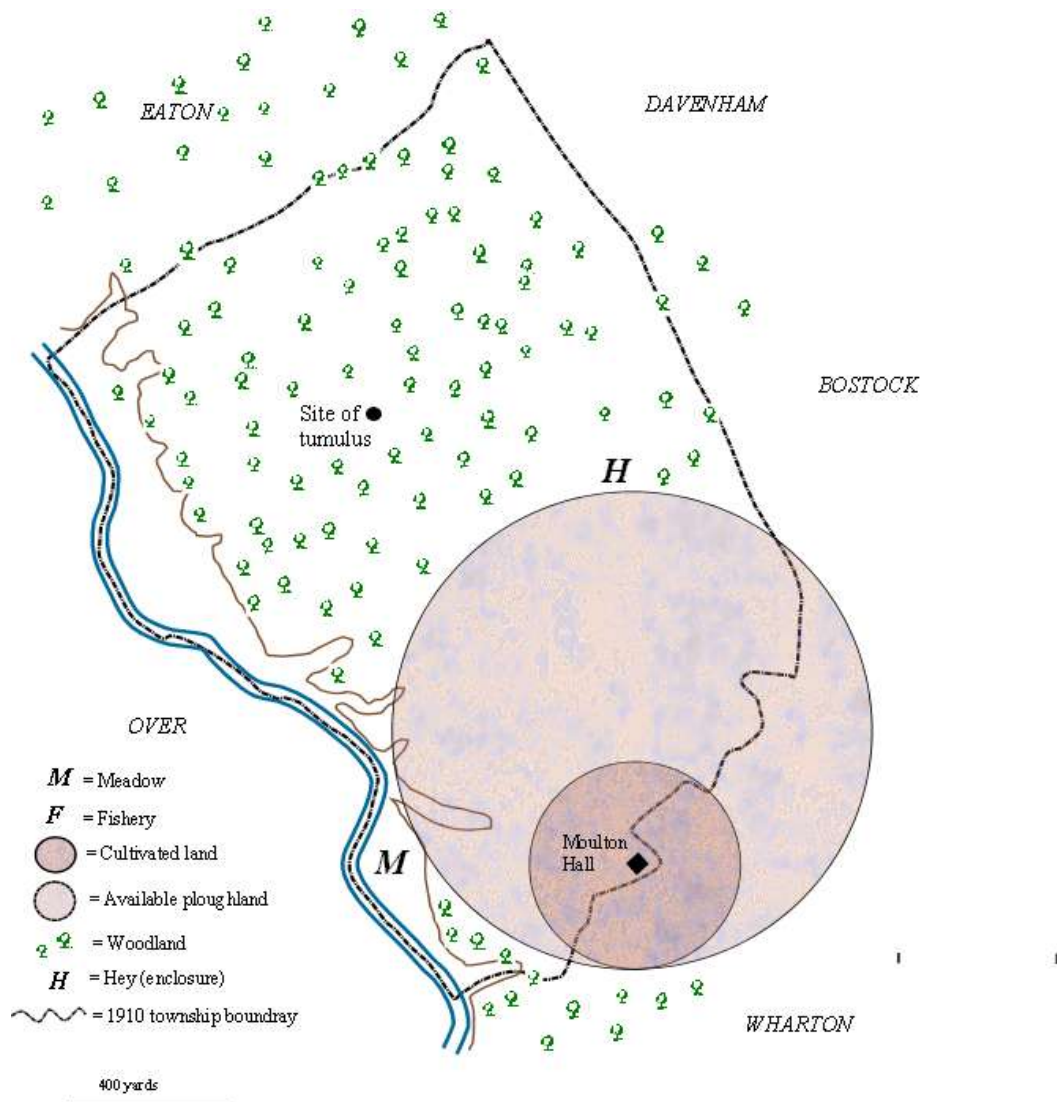
DOMESDAY MOULTON

The Domesday Survey is valuable in giving us a retrospective look at the late Saxon era. It informs us that in the mid 1060s, during the reign of Edward the Confessor, Moulton was a manor under the control of a Saxon named *Leofnoth*. A man of this same name was lord of several places throughout Cheshire and North Wales, especially on the Wirral and in part of what was to become the parish of Great Budworth, notably Winnington. We have no way of knowing if the occurrence of this name refers to a single individual; if it does then Leofnoth was an important Saxon lord, perhaps on a par with *Osmaer* the Saxon lord of Davenham, Shipbrook, Bostock and several other places in Cheshire. At the time of the record the manor was worth five shillings and had enough available land for two ploughs – two *carucates*, about two hundred and forty acres. With arrival of the Normans in Cheshire during the 1070s Saxon lordships were broken up and divided between the conquerors. Moulton was one of several manors granted to Richard Vernon who established himself at Shipbrook where he built a small castle. In effect he took over all of *Osmaer's* manors in Cheshire and controlled the whole area of the parish of Davenham in addition to other manors on the Wirral.

Living at Moulton in 1086 we are informed that there were a *villanus* (villein) and a *bordarius* (bordar), presumably with their respective families: between them these men worked an area described as being half a *carucate*, or about sixty acres. 'Villeins' were peasants tied to the manor and their lord; both they and their possessions were the lord's property. They occupied a small-holding which they cultivated for themselves. For this privilege they were required to work on the lord's demesne for a number of days a week. 'Bordars' were of inferior status to the villains holding less land which may have been on the margins or wastes of the settlement. In addition to the arable lands farmed by these two peasant families there was a small area of meadow described as containing one 'acre', but we should not interpret this as anything like a modern statute acre or even a traditional Cheshire acre which was just over twice the statute version. It is likely that this meadow was somewhere down by the river, perhaps below the site of Moulton Hall. There was also a significant area of woodland, which measured one 'league' in breadth and in length the largest area in the immediate area: in fact there is no recorded woodland at Davenham and Wharton and only a small portion at Bostock. A 'league' may be interpreted as being about a mile and a half in length, but we should not assume that the area was square or in anyway rectangular or even a single block of woodland, rather this was an estimate of the total area. It is likely to have consisted of a strip of woodland along the steep slopes of the river bank with a small portion to the south of Moulton Hall in an area of what is now Wharton, where there were fields named 'Wood Field', and another small area to the east along the boundary with

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

Bostock. However the most extensive area will have been to the north of Moulton Hall towards the boundary with Eaton and perhaps have included that township which is not named in the Domesday Survey. We are also informed that there was a *haiae* ('hay') which was an enclosure in the wood where animals could be impounded. It has been suggested that the hay was in the vicinity of the tumulus but it is more likely to have been just south of what used to be Moulton Lodge where two fields were known as 'Little Heys' and 'Big Heys'. Altogether the value of the manor was given as five shillings in both King Edward's time and when acquired by the Norman lord and was taxed as one 'hide'. This unit of taxation is normally taken to represent an area of about one hundred and twenty acres but in actual fact was not an areal measure as it took into account the total assets of a manor. It is better described as an area of land with its appurtenances that could sustain a freeman's family and his dependants for a whole year.



Possible Domesday Landscape

From a very early on Moulton was the property of a family that took the name of the township as was customary though there is little record of them: a Robert son of Robert de Multon occurs at the beginning of the fourteenth century. The origins of this family are certainly obscure: they may have been descended of a Norman family who were distantly related to Richard de Vernon's or members of his retinue when he arrived here and were then

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

subsequently rewarded with a grant of land, or else they may have been descended of Saxons already settled in the area.

The main line of these Multons will have lived at the manor house - Moulton Hall - though they seem to have died out during the mid-fourteenth century when an heiress married a member of the neighbouring lords of Bostock and founded a family of that name that was to continue to reside at Moulton Hall until the late seventeenth century. But, exactly how the Bostock family became possessed of lands here is not clear. It seems that a junior line of Multon family, or else a separate family that might have made small-holdings for themselves to the north of the hall who also adopted the name, continued to reside here for there are late fourteenth and fifteenth century documents mentioning 'de Multons' as owning property here and in neighbouring townships; they too seem to disappear.

During the thirteenth century there is evidence that some of the unused, 'waste', lands of Moulton were being gradually improved and brought into cultivation by a number of people from the surrounding area. In 1260 there was a case before the County Court brought by John le Barker of Middlewich, Richard Golde and their wives for possession of three oxgangs of land in Moulton (about forty-five acres), against Roger de Bostock. They claimed right of inheritance from their ancestors but Roger was able to successfully bring a witness to the effect that he had granted the land to a Richard Snel of Wereford though the charters had been lost in a house fire. In 1289 William Bostock of Moulton sued Nicholas de Hova for a small area of woodland. Nicholas claimed that his father had held it as one of a number of co-tenants and that he succeeded as heir when his father died. The case was found in favour of Hova and Bostock was fined for bringing a false case. The matter was appealed but again lost resulting in Bostock being sent to prison. He eventually made a payment for his release. The detail given in this hearing indicates that Nicholas' father, Randle, and his partners had possession of the wood to do as they pleased by 'assarting' (clearing for cultivation), taking 'pannage' (pasture for pigs) and taking honey. There were also squabbles between the Bostock cousins. In 1288 William sued Philip Bostock of Bostock for possession of a very small piece of woodland in Moulton. In defence Philip said he was only claiming a pigsty which was the property of his father's manor of Bostock: the outcome of this case is not known –perhaps they settled it amicably.

For the rest of the medieval period the records are silent as regards the manor or township of Moulton.

MOULTON UNDER THE TUDORS & STUARTS

The earliest listing of people resident in Moulton is the Muster Roll of February 1548/9. During the Elizabethan era a number of musters for military service survive. These list men and their armour and equipment. That for February 1548/9 names the following individuals as living in Moulton: Henry Wrenche had a jack³ and a pole axe⁴, Raff Bostocke had a jack, sallet⁵, bill⁶ and splints⁷ and that Robert Bulkley had a sallet and pole axe: of these men, although they possessed armour and weapons, non were able to serve in the army.

The list is important as it suggests that there were only three freeholding homesteads. Raff (or Ralph) Bostock lived at Moulton Hall; the Wrench family probably inherited that other holding was in possession of the Moulton family; and the Buckleys another in the north of the township near to the boundary of Eaton. Another landed family here was that of John Holford of Davenham whose name survived in meadows known as 'Holford's Eye' through to the last century, though at this time the family do not seem to have lived here. In addition to these men and their families there may have been one or two peasant families so that we can estimate a population of about thirty people.

A little later, in 1580, a list of Cheshire freeholders lists only Ralph Bostock in Moulton and the family's pedigree and arms were entered in the *Visitation of Cheshire* for that year which was subsequently updated in 1613.

The parish registers of Davenham which commence in 1560 occasionally mention families as living in the township. Thus we have the family of Richard Wrench, Robert Hanley, William Bostock and the odd mention of the Farringtons in the last two decades of the 16th century and that of Thomas Buckley, Ralph Buckley, Ralph Bostock, Ranulph Wrench and Thomas Farrington in the first two decades of the next century.

Once again the records are silent until we reach the seventeenth century when there are two taxation returns that may be consulted to find out who lived in Moulton. The first of these is the Poll Tax of 1660. The Act which introduced the tax contained an elaborate system of charges on rank, rising through the degrees of the nobility from £40 on a Baron to £100 on a Duke. A scaled charge of £10 was imposed on 'Every person of the degree of an Esquire or so reputed above the age of one and twenty years'. Widows were liable to one third of the rank charge to which their late husbands would have been liable if still alive. The majority of charges were imposed under the provision that "Every person that can dispend in Lands Leases Money Stocke or otherwise of his or her owne proper estate one hundred pounds per

³ **Jack:** Doublet or jacket usually lined with small metal plates, but sometimes just padded.

⁴ **Poleaxe, pollaxe, polaxe:** "A knightly staff weapon, its head being an axe head, usually balanced by a hammerhead, and surmounted by a steel spike. The shaft was protected by steel checks and the hand by a steel [rondel](#). Used from the fifteenth century for foot combats and for war. The component 'pole' in the name refers not to the staff, but to the Old English word 'head.'" - David Edge and John Miles Paddock, *Arms and Armour of the Medieval Knight*.

⁵ The **Sallet, Salade:** A common helmet of the 15th century, varying in style according to national preferences and rapid changes in defensive requirements. Most sallets are characterized by a flared tail, drawn out either from a single or several attached pieces. Some sallets were fitted with visors, while others were worn open-faced.

⁶ **Bill:** a pole arm used by infantry in Europe in the Viking Age by Vikings and Anglo-Saxons as well as in the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries. It was a national weapon of the English, but was also common elsewhere, especially in Italy. Derived originally from the agricultural billhook, the bill consisted of a hooked chopping blade with several pointed projections mounted on a staff. The end of the cutting blade curves forward to form a hook, which is the bill's distinguishing characteristic. In addition, the blade almost universally had one pronounced spike straight off the top like a spear head, and also a hook or spike mounted on the 'reverse' side of the blade. There were many types of bill. English bills tended to be relatively short, with broad chopping heads.

⁷ **Splints:** Usually used on arm and leg defences during the 14th and very early 15th century, the idea was to add longitudinal strips of reinforcing to a heavier leather gutter that formed the [vambrace](#) and another that formed the [rerebrace](#). The [couter](#) was generally, but not always, attached with internal straps rather than [articulated](#) with [lames](#). The leather vambrace and rerebrace are often depicted in surviving effigies and brasses as being tooled; the strips might have been formed from iron, brass, bronze, or latten, though iron was probably the most common.

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

annum the sum of forty shillings and soe proportionally for a greater or lesser estate provided it extend not to persons under five pounds yearely. Every person being a single person and above the age of sixteene yeares the sum of twelve pence And every other person not rated before in this present Act, nor receiving Alms, and being above sixteene yeares of age shall pay six pence." Thus for people not being liable to a charge on their rank or on the annual value of their estate, a charge of one shilling was due if single, and six pence if married. Accordingly a married couple living together would be charged a shilling. Where a gentleman had multiple estates lying in different townships these were charged on the whole in the location of the greatest part.

According to the Poll Tax there were nineteen households paying tax on property in the township each of whom were probably resident, unlike in some townships where a person might hold property in one place and reside elsewhere. The principle land holder was John Holford, gentleman, with an annual income of £50 a year who was paid £1 tax. The other significant land holders were: Ralph Bostock, gentleman, with £10 a year; Philip Bostock, gentleman, with £20; Richard Wrench, clerk, with £20; Thomas Lowndes with £17 10s; Alice Buckley, widow, and her son George, husbandman, with £13 between them; and John Symcock, husbandman, with £5. Each of these paid tax at a proportional amount. Then we have 10 married couples, 4 labourers, 3 widows and 10 spinsters who all pay the basic tax of 1s.

In all forty-five people are mentioned in the list and if we add to this a few unmentioned wives, children under sixteen and the poor who were exempt from paying tax, a likely population figure of about seventy seems appropriate.

The second taxation list is for the Hearth Tax of 1664 which was introduced for 'the better support' of the king's Crown and dignity. The legislation stated that every fire-hearth and stove within each house and 'ediface' was to be taxed at 2 shillings a year. Based on the number of fire-places within a house the records give us an insight into which families lived in which sorts of houses and how prosperous they were. Unlike the Poll Tax, these records also list those families who were exempt from paying on the grounds of poverty.

In Moulton there were only four houses with more than one hearth and one of these, with three hearths, was Moulton Hall. The other three houses may have been on the sites of what were to be known as Moulton Lodge, Hillside Farm and Moulton Bank. The vast majority of people lived in single storey cottages with a single, central hearth. In 1664 there were sixteen houses and such a number would suggest a population estimate of about seventy-five people.

<i>Chargeable</i>		<i>Not chargeable</i>	
John Holford, gent	3	William Barnshawe	1
Raphe Bostocke	3	Elizabeth Gallemore	1
Thomas Lownds	2	Dorethy Dampont	1
Robert Wrench	2	Alice Pearson	1
Thomas Deane	1		
Raphe Renscroft [<i>Ravenscroft?</i>]	1		
Thomas Leister [<i>Leicester?</i>]	1		
Widow Coupes [<i>Cooper?</i>]	1		
George Buckley	1		
Alice Buckley	1		
Widow Dekin [<i>Deakin?</i>]	1		
Dorethy Wrench	1		

The Hearth Tax 1664

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

	£	s	d
John Holford, gent., £50 pa	1	0	0
Ales Adamson sp.		1	0
John Coop[er] husb. & Marie his w.		1	0
Edward Anderton lab.		1	0
Raph Bostocke gent., £10 pa		4	0
Phillip Bostocke gent., £20 pa		8	0
Elizabeth Bostocke sp.		1	0
Ellin Bostocke sp.		1	0
Marie Bostocke sp.		1	0
Richard Wrench clerk, £20 pa		8	0
Robert Wrench husb. & Isabell his w.		1	0
Raph Stringer lab.		1	0
Elizabeth Gerrard sp.		1	0
Thomas Lownds husb. £17 10 0		7	0
Randle Lownds husb		1	0
Marie Lownds sp		1	0
Ann Lownds sp		1	0
Alice Buckley wid £6 5 0 pa		2	6
George Buckley husb. her s. £6 5 0 pa		2	6
John Symcocke husb £5 pa		2	0
Joyce Cowap, wid.		1	0
Ellinor Cowap, sp.		1	0
Alice Pearson wid.			
Thomas Pearson lab.		1	0
Phillip Pearson lab.		1	0
Dorothie Wrench wid.		1	0
Raph Ravenscroft Webster & Jane his w.		1	0
William Decon lab. & Jone his w.		1	0
Thomas Deane lab. & Ann his w.		1	0
Rob Wrench lab. & Sarah his w.		1	0
John Darlington Carpenter & Ellin his w.		1	0
Thomas Leicester Carpenter & Ann his w		1	0
Ann Leicester sp		1	0
Thomas Leicester younger Carpenter & Margaret his w.		1	0
Wm Deane dawber & Ellin his w.		1	0
Ales Millington sp.		1	0
The whole sum assessed in Moulton	4	2	0
Raph Bostocke, Collector			

The Poll Tax 1660

MOULTON FAMILIES

The Bostocks of Moulton

Ormerod states that the first to reside here was Ralph, second son of Sir William Bostock and his wife who was the sole heir of William de Moulton.⁸ The *Visitation of Cheshire*, 1580, states that Ralph was 'a younger son' to William de Bostock who had married Alice, daughter and co-heir of Randoll de Moulton.⁹ Leycester states that William de Bostock, lord of Bostock, married Jane heiress of the Moultons and that his second son Ralph married Alice daughter and heiress of Randoll de Marton.¹⁰ Whatever the truth of the matter the family held lands here before the end of the thirteenth century and also held lands in Marton, Wharton, Shurlach and Stanthorne by the end of the next century.

Unfortunately there is little to say of the medieval characters that belong to this family.

Ralph Bostock of Moulton is said to have contracted a valuable marriage to the daughter and heiress of Henry Hulse and his wife who was the heiress of the Pickmere family and as a result inherited lands in Stapleford and Pickmere. In 1493 this Ralph was bailiff of Middlewich.

Robert Bostock died in 1537 and his will, written on 31 March and proved on 9 October, mentions his 'well beloved kinsman and especial friend Raffe Bostocke of Norcrofte'.¹¹ Robert attempted to leave all his goods to his servant Anne Lowe in recognition of her 'true, diligent and paynefull service' during his 'greate sekenes and contynuell paynes' but it seems that this will was contested as the named executors were excluded and administration of the estate was granted to Robert's widow Anne.

Ralph Bostock of Moulton, who eventually succeeded to the family estates, occurs in 1548 and 1552 as a juror on *inquisitions post mortem*. His is the last generation to be recorded in the Visitation of 1580. Ralph Bostock of Moulton and Emme Rode had several children: Robert, Thomas, Edward, William, Elin, Margaret (who married Henry Bostock of Bostock), Anne and Elizabeth.¹² Ralph was buried at Davenham on 13 January 1595.

Robert Bostock when in his late twenties he was convicted of murdering his mother-in-law – sadly the conviction was overturned after he had been executed. The circumstances were that in 1553 a burgesship was conferred on John Browne and his heirs – daughters who married a John Reynolds and Robert Bostock. Following his marriage to Cicely Robert occurs as a burgess in 1556, 1557 and 1565. However, he was barred from continuing in his burgesship on the grounds that he and his wife were accused of the murder of Joyce 'late wyffe of John Browne'. On 9 December 1568 Robert and Cicely, Reynold Duncalfe and Isabel Alexander, all broke into widow Browne's house and that Robert and Reynold strangled the old lady. The two men and Isabel were executed for the offence despite their pleas of innocence and Cicely, being pregnant was imprisoned for life. At the time of her confinement Cicely again stated her innocence and alleged that those who committed the murder had fled to Ireland. Her appeal, heard by John Throkmorton, Chief Justice of Chester, on 28 February 1571, succeeded and she was pardoned.¹³ Letters Patent were issued on 15 January 1574 and then on 14 December 1576 the pardon was again confirmed when Cicely and her new husband,

⁸ Ormerod, III, p 264

⁹ Harleian Society, vol. xviii, pp 27, 29

¹⁰ Merton, or Marton, is an area on the opposite side of the river Weaver that became a part of the Vale Royal Abbey estates.

¹¹ *Cheshire Sheaf*, September 1920, p 88. See Appendix I (Wills)

¹² Harleian Society, vol. xviii, p 30

¹³ *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1572-1575*, p 245 (C66/1112)

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

Ranulph Pickmere, were granted, in free burgage, a salt-house, two cottages and a garden, and the restitution of all other goods and arrears of profits forfeited since Robert's attainder.¹⁴

On 11 September 1572, following Robert's death the surviving feoffee of the earlier grants enfeoffed Robert's son Ralph Bostock with the family properties in Middlewich and Newton. The document mentions Robert's other children: William, John and Isabel.¹⁵

Ralph, son of Robert and Cicely, is the first of the family to appear in the Davenham parish registers; he was christened there on 3 June 1567. In 1607 he sold the family's lands in Pickmere to the Starkey family. Ralph may have married twice: firstly to Elinora, daughter of Laurence Swettenham on 14 February 1600, and then, Georgina Whalley in 1608. Ralph's eldest son, Ralph, was baptised at Davenham on 23 April 1603. In April 1625, Ralph obtained a lease of a barn and orchard in Middlewich from the Venables family.¹⁶

In the records of the Cheshire Quarter Sessions there is an interesting case that was heard at Knutsford on 18 October 1642. Ralph Bostock, the younger, of Moulton, delivered articles against his brother Robert. It was alleged that Robert, who was of no fixed abode, was 'dissolute and disorderly', 'very wasteful' and 'given to prodigal and needless expenses' and that due to debt he had fled to Scotland and Ireland. Over the years Ralph had tried to help his brother, by giving him large sums of money, but now Robert was suggesting that Ralph's title to their father's estate was questionable and had threatened to kill him. On 6 September, whilst he was working in the fields, Robert threatened to kill Ralph and struck him with a bill knocking him senseless. Following this incident Robert continued to make threats and constantly carried his bill 'ready sharpened'. The papers continue with evidence that Ralph's wife Ellen was constantly in fear when she left the house, that they were fearful for their six-years old son, and that Robert was also threatening a neighbour, Philip Pritchard to whom Ralph had sold a parcel of land known as 'the Tunstalls'. The petition ends with an application for Robert to be brought before the next session, but nothing further is known.¹⁷

Ralph Bostock of Moulton, gentleman, was born in 1603 and married Ellen, daughter of John ap Richard on 25 June 1622. On 18 March 1642 he, styled Ralph 'junior', entered into an agreement with Philip Bostock of Bostock concerning lands in Bostock known as: 'Field at back of house, 'Black Acre', the two 'Riddings', 'Malenscroft', the two 'Deanes' and 'Davies Meadow', and a cottage in the holding of Thomas Oakes. Ralph agreed to pay Edward Minshull and Philip's other creditors £123 6s 8d before 20 May, and to pay John Maynwarding of Bostock the sum of £150 two years after Philip's death. Further it was agreed that Ralph would pay annuities to Philip of £4 for two years then £8 for lifetime of Philip's mother, Anne, and to the mother £10 a year. This agreement seems to be bound up with property known as Worth Hill House in Bostock. During the Civil War Ralph Bostock, junior, was a collector of subsidies and rents on behalf of Parliament. In 1649 and again on 27 March 1660, an indenture records that Thomas Gill and Richard Willcoxson purchased from Ralph and Ellen a messuage and tenement called Worth Hill which included the fields mentioned before. In consideration they were to pay £110 to Ralph, £8 a year to Philip and £200 within two years of Philip's death to whoever then held the lands. Previously, on 27 October 1634, this property was conveyed by Philip Bostock to William Oldfield of Leftwich and Thomas Minshull of Bradwell as trustees for the use of Philip, his wife Frances and their issue; at this time mention was made of a cottage occupied by Laurence Oakes.¹⁸

¹⁴ op cit, 1575-1578, p 329 (C66/1158)

¹⁵ *Middlewich Chartulary*, p 357

¹⁶ CRO: DVE1/MIX/4

¹⁷ Quarter Sessions

¹⁸ CRO: DFN 2705/2

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

Ralph appears in taxation returns of 1660 and 1664. Described in the Poll Tax as 'Raph Bostocke gent', he had an income of £10 a year and paid 4s tax for his property in Moulton and 3s 7d tax on property in Wharton worth £9 p.a.; he was also the collector of taxes for Moulton. Four years later he paid hearth tax on three hearths in his house. The family also appear in records concerning Northwich and at this time they held two salt houses in Northwich; one in Seath Street facing the Market Place, which was later owned by the Pickmere of Hulse, and the other in Yate Street. On 14 October 1662, Ralph presented Thomas Johnson, cobbler, of Over to the Quarter Sessions for poaching – night walking, cutting fish reels and destroying fish. Ralph lived to be eighty years of age and outlived his eldest son and some of his relations: he was buried at Davenham on 30 January 1682.

Ralph Bostock's will no longer survives but a day before his funeral an inventory of Ralph Bostock's goods was made which were valued at a total of £82 6s. The majority of this sum, £45, was the capital value of a tenement worth £4 a year which Ralph had possession of for an unexpired term of twenty-one years.

Inside his home there were seven rooms: 'Hall', 'Out roome', 'Buttery', 'little Chamber', 'great Chamber', 'back Chamber', and 'Cheese Chamber'. The furniture listed included a table, a bench, a form, three 'Joynt stooles', other stools, a 'Joyn. Chaire', a little desk and 'bedstids'. Bedding, curtains, valances and rugs are all listed along with sheets and table cloths. The ladies of the house presumably did some spinning as there were two spinning wheels. A few kitchen implements are mentioned along with a few items associated with husbandry. An interesting item is 'The souldiers Armes' presumably his sword and other weapons along with pieces of armour. His wearing apparel amounted to £1 10s. and he had £1 5s in ready money. In livestock he had nine cows, a gander and a goose. Producing cheese seems to have been a significant part of the household economy for he had fifty-eight cheeses, worth £6, in the cheese chamber along with two fitches of bacon.

Philip Bostock of Moulton, who was born in 1636 and married Margaret Chawley at Davenham on 4 June 1659, predeceased his father in 1680. According to the Poll Tax returns Philip had an income of £20 a year and paid 4s tax and lived with his three spinster daughters – Elizabeth, Ellen and Marie – who together paid 3s. Philip does not appear in the Hearth Tax returns and may have been living with his father in the family home.

A few days before he died, on 19 December 1680, Philip made his will. In it he mentions his daughters Mary, Martha, Ellen, Elizabeth and Eleanor who were to be paid £100 each within two years of his death by their brothers Philip and Ralph. Philip's wife Margaret was to hold messuages and tenements in 'Preston on ye Hill' and in Astley near Legh, Lancashire, until their son Ralph became of age, keeping him 'in meat and drink lodging and apparell' and ensuring that his name was added to the new lease. The major part of the estate, which included property in Wharton and Northwich, was left to the son and heir Philip who could only enter his patrimony on the death of Ralph Bostock, 'the elder'. The estate included lands and messuages in Moulton Moss held by Thomas Leicester, carpenter, Ralph Ravenscroft, webster, and William Barnshaw; in Wharton, held by George Wetherall of Guilden Sutton, silkster, and in Northwich by George Robinson, shoemaker. Philip had two other sons, Thomas and William, who both moved to live in Knutsford and whose wills are dated 1722 and 1726 respectively. Thomas had issue by his wife Abigail – Thomas, John and Mary – and had property in Wales, Staffordshire, Shropshire and the city of Chester. William had sons George and William and daughters Elizabeth Radcliffe of Marple and Mary Yarwood of Knutsford.

The inventory of Philip's goods made by George Wetherall, Thomas Tomlinson and Robert Wrench on 29 December 1680, was valued at £168 8s. His home, Moulton Hall, had several rooms: 'little Chamber', 'great Chamber', 'little roome ov' ye dineing roome', 'greene Chamber', the 'roome ov' ye greene Chamber', 'roome ov' ye Kitchin, 'the Dwelling House',

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

and 'Old M^r Bostockes Roomes'. Interesting items in the list are a red bed, a red rug and a green rug, red curtains, a 'sett of Kidderminster Curtaines & valance', window curtains, two looking glasses, a 'longe gunn, a warming pan and a lantern. In livestock he had geese, hens, sixteen cattle, six sheep, three nags and a mare. Crops included wheat, barley and corn. A lease of Holford's Eye is also mentioned.

Several debts 'by Speciality' amounting to £119 are listed as though owed to Philip, and a further list of debts 'wthout speciality' amounting to £4 8s 9d seem to be for goods and services owed by him. When either of these sums of money or both are added to the value of Philip's goods and chattels they do not equate with the final total of £283 16s 9d recorded at the foot of the page.

Philip junior was born circa 1665 and married Mary daughter of Thomas Weston of Christleton, clerk, in 1686. The couple had four children: Peter (baptised in 1690), Raphe who died in infancy, Christiana who also died young, and Frances.

Other Ancient Families

Brett

Another family who had lands in Moulton during the mediaeval period were the 'le Brett' family of Davenham. A Richard le Brett and his wife were sued in 1330 for a messuage, one 'carucate' of land (about 120 acres) and a further nineteen acres in Moulton. During the early part of the sixteenth century this family also died out through two heiresses who married members of the families of Holford of Holford and Wyche of Alderley, with the Moulton estates passing to the Holfords.

Holford

This family descended from the Holfords of Holford had their main residence in Davenham but held property in Moulton for a number of generations and from whom the areas known as 'Holford's Eye' and 'Holford's Meadow' are named.

In 1660 John Holford had property worth £30 a year here and in 1664 had a house with three hearths. When he died in 1667 he was living in Moulton and his will published that year he is described as being 'of Moulton'. John's lands in Davenham based on a property known as Newhall were bequeathed to his brother Richrd. When John's wife Eleanor (nee Swettenham) died in 1691 she too is described as living here.

It is likely, due to the later history of the property, that the Holford's resided at what was to become Moulton Bank Farm

Bulkeley

The Bulkeleys who lived at Eaton may well have had property in Moulton.

Lowndes

Another family that held an estate here for a number of generations was Lownds, sometimes spelled Lowndes or Louds. Exactly when this family became settled in the township is difficult to ascertain: perhaps during the late-sixteenth century.

At the end of June 1617 Randle Lowndes, yeoman, of Moulton, died and was buried on 1 July. The next day an inventory of his possessions was drawn up by Robert Wrench, William Davies, Richard Fleet and Richard Lowndes. The total value of his goods and chattels came to £83 9s 6d. Much of the list includes animals: oxen, bullocks, sterks, sheep, cows, and pigs. Crops too feature with barley, oats, wheat, flax and hemp. The remainder of the list consisted of items of husbandry and a few household items. Unfortunately the will that would have accompanied the inventory does not survive.

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

According to the Poll Tax returns of 1660 Thomas Lowndes had an estate worth £17 10s a year and had three children then aged over sixteen years: Randle, Marie and Ann. The Hearth Tax of 1664 shows that they paid tax on two fireplaces in their home. Thomas died in February 1786/7 and was buried at Davenham on 7 February. The next day an inventory of his estate was made and valued at £193 4s 3d. of which £114 was in debts owing to him. Thomas' will grants the bulk of his estate to his three daughters, one of whom was married to John Poole of Moulton, yeoman. To his youngest son Raphe who lived in Bostock he gave £20, but there is no grant to the eldest son Randle who was made executor of the will. It may be that his real estate, i.e. his property, had already been passed to the eldest son.

Randle Lowndes in his will dated 31 May 1704, mentions his 'messuage, cottage and lands' in Moulton and his son Roger and his wife Ellen; unmarried daughters Eleanor and Elizabeth; and son-in-law Samuel Fluitt. All his household goods which were inside 'Bradford Wood House' then in possession of Richard Weston he gave to his son Roger. Randle died in November 1704 and the total of his inventory came to £299 13s 10.5d. In August 1701 Randle leased some of his property to his son Roger which resulted in £300 being raised for the benefit of his daughters.¹⁹

Roger did not survive his father for very long and died in January 1713. His will mentions his 'ancient lands in Moulton' which were to pass to his eldest son William, and money raised from the lands were to provided for his younger children Thomas, Katherine and Elizabeth. It seems that at some time he had purchased lands from the executors of Mr. Holford. The bulk of his goods went to his wife and her mother to be sold for the benefit of the younger children. Samuel Fluitt of Oveton and Peter Baker of Middlewich were named as executors with William Wrench of Moulton and Thomas Tomlinson of Wharton as overseers. A month after Roger's death Samuel Fluitt and Peter Barker resigned their role as executors in favour of Roger's widow, Ellen.

In March 1735, William Lowndes entered into a lease with Mary Piggott, Elizabeth Piggott, Robert Baxter and William Fogg, and Randle Fluitt and Jonabab Vernon. In November thirteen years later William's will was published. He left two daughters – Catherine and Elizabeth. From an abstract of title dated 13 February 1802 it seems that the property of the Lowndes family descended from William to his two daughters Catherine and Elizabeth. Elizabeth married William Venables of Frodsham and Catherine married a Mr Shaw of Frodsham and had a daughter named Catherine. This Catherine was heir to both her mother and her aunt and conveyed property in Moulton to her husband Joseph Richardson of Beeston Hall. Joseph then conveyed the property to his son John.²⁰

A part of Lowndes tenement later in the possession of the Darlington family: William and then his brother John. This consisted of: The Moulman's field; the Well field; the Flash meadow; the Clover croft; the Big Bank field; the Little Bank field; the Gorsey field; the Odd field; the Nearer Odd field; the Swine Cote meadow, the Moss; the Sandy field; the Heifers Long; the Nearer Broom field; the Far field; the Bridge Meadow; the Wood; the Gorsey Bank; the Barn field; and the Moor meadow. In all thirty-five and a half acres.²¹

Charles Sydebotham paid £3075 for this estate.

Wrench

¹⁹ CRO: DFN 2705/7

²⁰ CRO: DFN 2705/7

²¹ CRO: DFN 2705/7

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

The Wrench family is a long established family in Moulton and in neighbouring townships within the parish of Davenham. Henry Wrench is listed in the muster roll of 1548 and a Richard Wrench fathered children baptised at Davenham in the 1580s and a Ralph Wrench had children in the 1600s. A Richard and John Wrench occur in 1606 as parties to a fine.²² In June 1611 an indenture was drawn up between Richard and Randle Wrench and Richard Whittingham concerning a house and a 'loont of land' in Moulton which was then occupied by Richard Davyes.²³ John Wrench married Margaret Massie in 1612 at Davenham church.

On 13 June 1648, Randle Wrench, yeoman, made his last will and testament. In it he informs us that he wished to be buried in the churchyard at Davenham and to the poor of the parish he granted twenty shillings. The main beneficiary of Randle's estate was his eldest son Richard. He received a parcel of land on Moulton Moss which was subject of a lease for three lives and twenty-one years which was presumably granted to him by the Bostock family. Richard was also to receive all his father's 'tables formes' boards shelves trestles Cupbards & presses all my Chests and Coffers all but that Coffe which usually stands at my beds head': this latter item he gave to his other son Samuel. The will continues by disposing to Richard the 'bedsteids Joyned and other of the best Chaires furniture to one bed as followeth my best fettered a boulder a pillow and a pillowe & beare two blankets & two of the best bed hillings & the best paire of Curtaines with the ballantes belonging to them'. Randle appointed Raphe Alsager of Alsager, gentleman, and Robert Wrench of Bostock, husbandman, his brother, as his executors. Robert Wrench along with Roger and Margerey Bossen witnessed the will. An addition to the will decreed that each of his sister's children were to receive forty shillings.

On 30 April 1650, presumably about a week after his death, an inventory of Randle's belongings was compiled by Raphe Alsager, William Wrench and Raphe Ravenscroft. His household belongings, presumably those that were left after Richard and Samuel had taken their bequests, and his 'implements of husbandry', which included 'two carabines a musket and a sword, a piece of silver plate, and 'his Apparell with riding furniture'. In all these were valued at £25 2s 10d. To this is added a list of debts owing to Randle by thirty-six people at the time of his death which totalled about £95, of which one debt, owed by Roger Bosson was for £34 13s. These debts were off-set by about £17 which the testator owed to three men. It seems that the debts owed may have been for agricultural products delivered. Thomas Buckley, and Raphe Bostock, senior, owed money for measures of barley, Robert Bosson owed for measures of white peas; Thomas Deane for a horse; and Roger Bosson for a cow.

Family members are mentioned in the Poll Tax, 1660. Richard Wrench, clerk, had an annual income of £20 from lands here. He features in a lease of a 'dwelling house and a loont' to Raph Ravenscroft, webster, for 20s., a rent of 3/4d, and for the lives of himself and his sons Raphe and Peter Ravenscroft, in April 1659.²⁴ Richard agreed to the lease for the good of the children as their recently deceased mother had been one of his relations and had served his mother during her last sickness. In August of the same year Richard granted Robert Wrench, junior, for the sum of £3 a lease of two pastures – 'Further Oldfield' at 20s a year, and 'Nearer Oldfield' at 4s a year – which were occupied by him and his mother, Dorethy, for their lives and that of Robert's wife Sarah.²⁵

Richard Wrench may have been an absentee landlord as he was a Bachelor of Divinity and Prebendary of Durham Cathedral so his estate was worked by his son/brother/cousin Robert Wrench, a husbandman, and his wife Isabell, assisted by Ralph Stringer, a labourer, and

²² CRO:DDX/208/9

²³ CRO:DDX 208/10

²⁴ CRO:DDX 208/11

²⁵ CRO:DDX 208/12

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

Elizabeth Gerrard. In 1664 the house in which Robert lived was assessed as having two hearths.

Richard died sometime before May 1676, when his executrix, Ann Wrench was party to a lease in favour of Robert Wrench for £20 to have a house, land and two cottages lately owned by Richard.²⁶

In October 1725 Richard Wrench left a will. He had property in neighbouring Bostock kown as the 'Demmises' or 'late Nixon's tenement' which he left to his son William. He also had property in Wharton

Ravenscroft

Mention has already been made of some members of this family, particularly Raphe, the Webster, his wife Jane and their two sons, Raphe and Peter. Raphe senior lived on Moulton Moss and leased a cottage and a plot of land there from Philip Bostock.

A Raphe Ravenscroft, husbandman, of Moulton left a will which bears a date 30 April 1688, but this seems to have been a post-date for he died a week before and was buried at Davenham on 24 April. to coincide with the . In this document he left his bed and bedding, including sheets in his chamber, twenty shillings, and a cottage in Davenham, to his sister-in-law, Alice Millington. After her decease the bedding was to go to his son Raphe. The cottage was to pass to Raphe's grand-child Mary Ellis. Another grand-child Ellen Ellis received a calve. All the remainder of Raphe's estate passed to his son Raphe.

Raphe must have died very shortly after making his will for his inventory, made by William Wrench and John Poole, is dated 30 April. In the preamble to the inventory Raphe is styled 'weaver', rather than 'husbandman' which was the term he used for himself. In total he left goods worth £19 16s and these included his 'looms and reedes'

²⁶ CRO:DDX 208/13

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

In 1777 Burdett produced his map of Cheshire which is the first scale road map of the county. Despite the detail on the map it is still somewhat haphazard in its detail and appears somewhat schematic. Nevertheless it does tell us something of Moulton at this time.

In the immediate are of Moulton the only properties marked are a few cottages on Wharton Green, Moulton Hall, 'Eyton Hall', cottages at Bostock Green, Davenham village and its church. The road network has the main Northwich to Middlewich road with a parallel branch running round Bostock Green. From here there is a road leading up towards Eaton Hall which is what is now Main Road from the Bee Hive corner. The lane a little further south of this is now Niddries Lane and leads through the fields, past what was once Moulton Lodge and Hillside Farm, to drop down to the bridge across the River Weaver just north of Bradford Mill. Leading south from the crossing is a lane leading past Moulton Hall to Wharton Green, which is now known as Smokehall Lane. There will have



Burdett's Map, 1777

been a few other minor routeways but we have to rely on later maps to pick these out.

The crossing point on the River Weaver is 'Newbridge' then so called because it was new in comparison to the bridges at Winsford and Hartford. Prior to the building of the bridge there had been a ford here and hence the name Bradford now associated with the other river bank. When exactly the bridge was built is not known, but it would have been after 1619 for at that time the 'Constables and Supervisers of Bridges and Roads' for the Northwich Hundred listed only a cart bridge at 'Winterford' (Winsford) which was then the responsibility of both Over and Davenham parishes.²⁷

Taking the average number of christenings recorded at Davenham Parish Church during the first quarter of the century, we find that there were about 75 people living in the township.

At the end of the eighteenth century there were several people who owned land in the township. Principally there was Edward Tomkinson, esquire, of Bostock Hall who owned the Moulton Hall estate. Next came Thomas Ravenscroft, esquire, of Davenham; Mrs Richardson; Thomas Higginson and Robert Ashley, esquire.

In 1784 Edward Tomkinson held the Moulton Hall estate which he leased to John Tankard; he also had a small plot of land which he leased to a John Jones which subsequently was held by a John Bennett. Six years later Tomkinson had leased a small plot from the Moulton Hall estate to Jonathan Wilding. In June 1796 Tomkinson's Cheshire estates were sold by auction at 'The White Bear' in Middlewich.

The Moulton Hall Farm was described as: 'comprizing Two Hundred and Six Acres, three Roods and nine Perches, Statute Measure, be the same more or less, of excellent Meadow, Arable, Pasture, and Wood Land, together with the Coppice Timber growing thereon, and a

²⁷ Cheshire Sheaf, xxii (1925), p.62. Parishes had been responsible for maintaining bridges and roads since Elizabeth I's reign.

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

substantial and convenient Dairy Farm-house and Out-buildings'.²⁸ Joseph Tankard was the tenant farmer at Moulton Hall and paid an annual rent of £120. Thomas Chatterton of Bostock held a lease for a number of years, which was due to expire in the spring of 1801, for five acres of land called 'The Tunstall' for which he paid £5 10s rent, which was a part of Moulton Hall Farm. In addition to the farm Tomkinson also owned four acres of meadow to the north of the township called Royal's Moss, which was occupied by Jonathan Wilding for £4 10s a year.

A number of houses and cottages were also owned by Tomkinson and leased out to local families. One building plot of nearly half an acre had two dwellings with gardens and a quarter acre croft tenanted by John Plant, John Bebbington and Thomas Darlington at a combined annual rent of a shilling. In 1795 it was held for the life of a person aged 53, but was shortly later held for the lives of Mary, wife of William Brown, a flatman from Northwich, and then Mary Sumsted aged 46. The next property, containing a quarter acre, was similarly divided into two dwellings with gardens for each at a shilling a year. This was held for two lives, those of Thomas and John Moores aged 39 and 41. Another messuage and garden was leased by Thomas Deakin aged 79 for six pence a year and was to last for his lifetime and that of his son Thomas who was aged 44. The last piece of land was a garden containing fifteen perches held by Mr. Thomas Higginson for two shillings a year, and let on a three-life lease to Mary Higginson (later wife of William Whitby) aged 32, Samuel Higginson aged 43 and Jane, wife of Peter Robinson aged 44.

Some other small plots were also auctioned off. Robert Ashley had properties known as 'late Lowndes's and 'late Steel's', which together contained three quarters of an acre for which he paid Tomkinson three shillings and six pence a year. Mrs Ravenscroft had another part of Steel's for which she paid nine pence.

In addition to the Moulton Hall Farm there were another five during the latter part of the century.

Thomas Ravenscroft's farm was that now known as Moulton Bank Farm. This was leased to Randle Lamb from the 1760s until the end of the century. By 1800 this farm was in the hands of a Mr. Lowe and his tenant Charles Holbrook and then subsequently by Lord Delamere and Thomas Moseley.

Mrs Richardson held three of the Moulton farms in the 1780s. One was leased by Samuel Sadler, another by Samuel Clayton, and the third by Joseph Ambery, then Jonathan Wilding and by 1800, Thomas Darlington.

Thomas Higginson was the owner and occupier of a small amount of land which remained in the family until the 1830s.

During the 1780s Robert Ashley, esquire, owned a farm which he leased to William Darlington. By 1790 the owners were Mr Joseph Richardson and Mr Ashley and by 1800 and Richardson was the sole owner and John Darlington was his tenant.

²⁸ CRO: DFN 2705/60

NINETEENTH CENTURY

Land Ownership and Land Use

At the commencement of the nineteenth century Moulton was still an isolated farming community with a small population numbering about one hundred: a township that had hardly altered in shape or character over the preceding centuries. All this was to change with the opening of salt works along the banks of the River Weaver and the coming of the Grand Junction railway with its station to the south at Wharton.

During the last decade of the previous century Moulton had been divided between several landlords: Edward Tomkinson of Bostock Hall; Thomas Ravenscroft of Davenham Lodge; Joseph Richardson; Mrs. Richardson; and Thomas Higginson. Of these Tomkinson was by far the major landowner.

A map dated 1817 was drawn up to indicate the way in which waste land within the township had been then recently 'inclosed' or 'approved'. The area covered by this map is of the northern part of the Moulton in an area once known as Moulton Moss. The 'inclosed' plots of land detailed on the plan were parts of the wide roadways which were to form the basis of the village. Along what is now Whitlow Lane, Edward Tomkies of Moulton Lodge had reduced the width of the lane alongside his fields; Charles Sydebotham added an extra quarter acre to his large field from the same lane; William Harper of Davenham, the lord of the manor, approved a long strips of land along Whitlow Lane, the Main Road and at the very end of what was to be the village; and William Allen of the Bee Hive Farm added a strip along the Main Road. Thomas Darlington extended his broad strip, which was probably an earlier improvement, along the Main Road and each of the other neighbouring minor landlords did likewise.

In addition to the farm buildings at Bee Hive corner and at Moulton Lodge, the plan of the village area shows eighteen residential property blocks. One or two of these will have been a single house but a few would have been divided into two, three or four cottage type dwellings suggesting about thirty dwellings in the 'village' area. Elsewhere at this time there would have been the buildings at Moulton Hall, Hill Farm, Bank Farm, Moulton Lodge, Lodge Farm and Bee Hive Farm; perhaps another eight dwellings, making a total of about thirty-eight. A list of all the property in Moulton drawn up for the purpose of recording the tithe payments due on each piece of land corroborates this number of dwellings.

The 1824 list gives the names of the owners and occupiers of each piece of land together with its description and acreage. Of the total four hundred and thirty-seven acres, there are four prominent land owners holding 80% of the total: Charles Sydebotham, esquire, with ninety-one acres; Lord Delamere of Vale Royal with ninety-one acres; James France of Bostock with one hundred and eighteen acres, and Edward Tomkies with fifty-three acres.

Twelve years later Parliament passed the Tithe Commutation Act that sought to replace the traditional but out-dated payments to the church by standardised rent charges. To establish these charges it was necessary to apportion values to every plot of land and for this purpose large-scale accurate maps were drawn up. The 'tithe map' and 'apportionment' for Moulton were drawn in the autumn of 1841. As with the earlier listings, the 'tithe apportionment' details all the plots, their owners, occupiers, areas, and the uses to which they were put allowing us to make a thorough analysis of the township's character. At this time the extent of the township was given as being four hundred and eighty-three acres – and increase on the measurement given twenty years earlier. There were four principle landowners: James France of Bostock Hall who, with his lessee James Greenway, owned almost half of the total acreage; Lord Delamere of Vale Royal; Catherine Richardson; and Samuel Allen. Between them they held 87% of the allotted land. A particularly useful feature of the tithe returns is the listing of property from which it would seem that in late 1841 there were fourteen houses and

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

forty-three cottages in the whole of the township. This suggests an increase of about twenty dwellings in about twenty years: a new dwelling each year.

Greenway property

On 11 July 1835 an agreement of exchange was made between James France and James Greenway of Darwen Bank, Blackburn. Greenway, a calico printer and cotton manufacturer, was to have the Odd Croft (2/0/38) and the Snail Hole ((2/1/31) occupied by James Sydebotham, merchant, of Liverpool and then by his brother and heir Charles. These parcels of land were exchanged for the Picco (0/2/30) and the Mill field (4/2/39).²⁹

In 1805 Charles Sydebotham had paid £838 10s 6d to William Richardson, for twenty acres comprising of the Little Pickow, the Two Adcrofts, the Cappings croft, and the Blake field.³⁰

A deed dated 28 October 1858 between France and James Greenway refers to a lease between Joseph Lea and France dated 1836 concerning the Gouldens croft, the Snail Hole and the Blake field.³¹ It also refers to the mines of rock salt and the brine springs which Charles Sydebotham demised to Mr Mather, a merchant, of Liverpool; these subsequently passed to Greenway.

James Greenway also acquired property once held by the Holfords and Bostock families. In September 1706 Elizabeth Holford, Richard Holford and Charles Hawes leased property to William Wrench. In November 1708 Philip Bostock and his son Thomas leased property to Thomas Yates. These properties seem to have descended to Charles Sydebotham who, in his will, bequeathed ownership of an estate called 'Moulton', then occupied by Mary Darlington, along with the mines under the lands then occupied by Thomas Mather, to Henry Jenkin and Ambrose Lace to hold for the use of his nephew James Greenway.³²

Miscellaneous

France complained to the Weever Navigation that the building of a bridge at Newbridge would cut is communications with the Navigation in case he should wish to erect salt works on Holfords Eye. It was resolved that France ought to have an uninterrupted approach to the Navigation and that another approach should be found.³³

Population

In 1801 Parliament passed an Act ensuring that every ten years there would be a full and comprehensive census of the population. Unlike the previous census which had been simply head counts, the 1841 census, and those made subsequently, allows for a detailed analysis of the people who lived in the township, their families and occupations. Over the century Moulton's population had risen steadily with a surge in the first decade and a dramatic increase in the 1870s. Between 1801 and 1831 there was 136% increase, over twice the national average (50%) and between 1831 and 1851 the increase was a further 25% which was on a par with the national average (25%).

²⁹ CRO: DFN 2705/7

³⁰ CRO: DFN 2705/7

³¹ According to DFN 2705/85 Lea had leased the property amounting to 16a 1r 17p to France in consideration of £980.

³² CRO: DFN 2705/7

³³ CRO: DFN 2075/34

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Number of occupied houses</i>	<i>People per household</i>	<i>Houses un-occ.</i>	<i>Houses being built</i>
1801	103						
1811	187	85	102	21	9		
1821	196	101	95	39	5	1	
1831	243	131	112	41	5.9	0	0
1841	316	171	145	60	5.2	1	2
1851	323	167	156	70	4.6	3	
1861	394	196	198	91	4.3		
1871	511	262	249	111	4.6	2	4
1881	1113						
1891	1143						
1901	1004						

Moulton in 1841

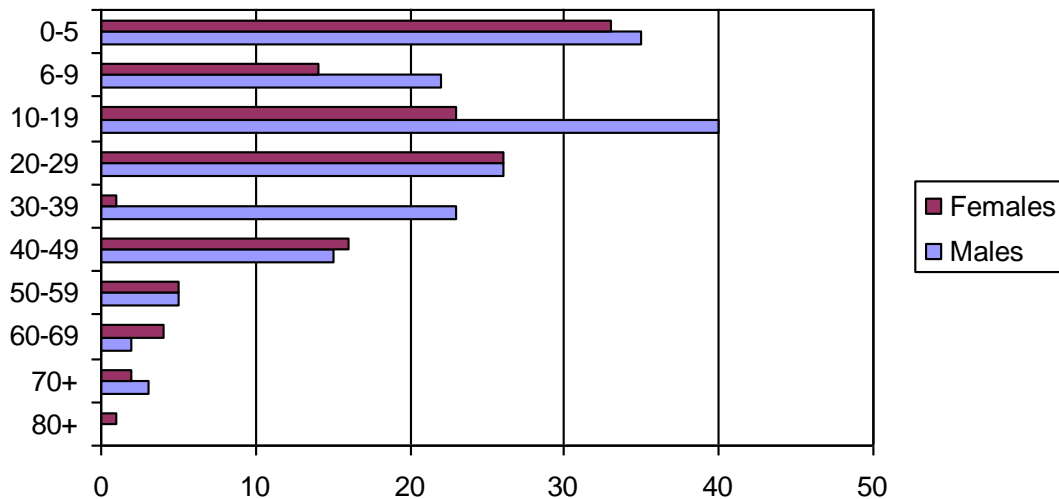
For an insight into life in Moulton in the 1840s we have the census of 1841 which now lists individuals by household, and although it doesn't give as much detail as later censuses, it is still a very useful resource for local and family historians. For the first time we have direct evidence upon which to construct a picture of the village and its immediate area.

In order to obtain details from a semi-literate population, an "enumerator" was sent from door to door to make enquiries and to fill in his forms. He needed to know who was living, or staying, at each address for the night of Sunday June 6th 1841. He also needed to know everyone adult's approximate age and the exact age of children, therefore ages of adults were rounded down to the nearest five years and those of children under fifteen were given in actual years. Ages of individuals will appear in () brackets.

Whilst it is apparent that in some townships the enumerators listed the families as they made their way around along a set route, this is not the case in Moulton. The listing is somewhat haphazard. Basically he commenced in the very heart of the village, then progressed east and then back again, then went out to the outlying farms and then returned to the village centre. By comparing the data given in the census with the tithe map and its schedule, or 'apportionment', which were made about six months later, it is possible to deduce where many villagers lived. Property references from the tithe schedule are shown in [] brackets.

Before considering the details of the residents some statistical evidence is worth noting. Moulton was home to 316 people: 171 males and 145 females. They were grouped into 64 families who lived in sixty houses. In the majority of cases a single dwelling house had a single nuclear family, sometimes living with unmarried lodgers or servants. In only five instances did a house contain two families, however in at least two instances there was a connection between the two families thus forming a single extended family. The average family size was about five, and the average number of people to a building was just over five. The largest families were those of Thomas and John Ravenscroft and their respective wives who both had ten children. In another two houses we find that there were large households. At Moulton Hall, the home of the Horton family, the five family members lived with a dressmaker, five servants and a clergyman and his wife. Likewise, John Vernon, a tailor, lived with his wife, their three children and four other people. Overall in comparison to other townships it would seem that in Moulton overcrowding and the consequent poor living conditions were not a problem.

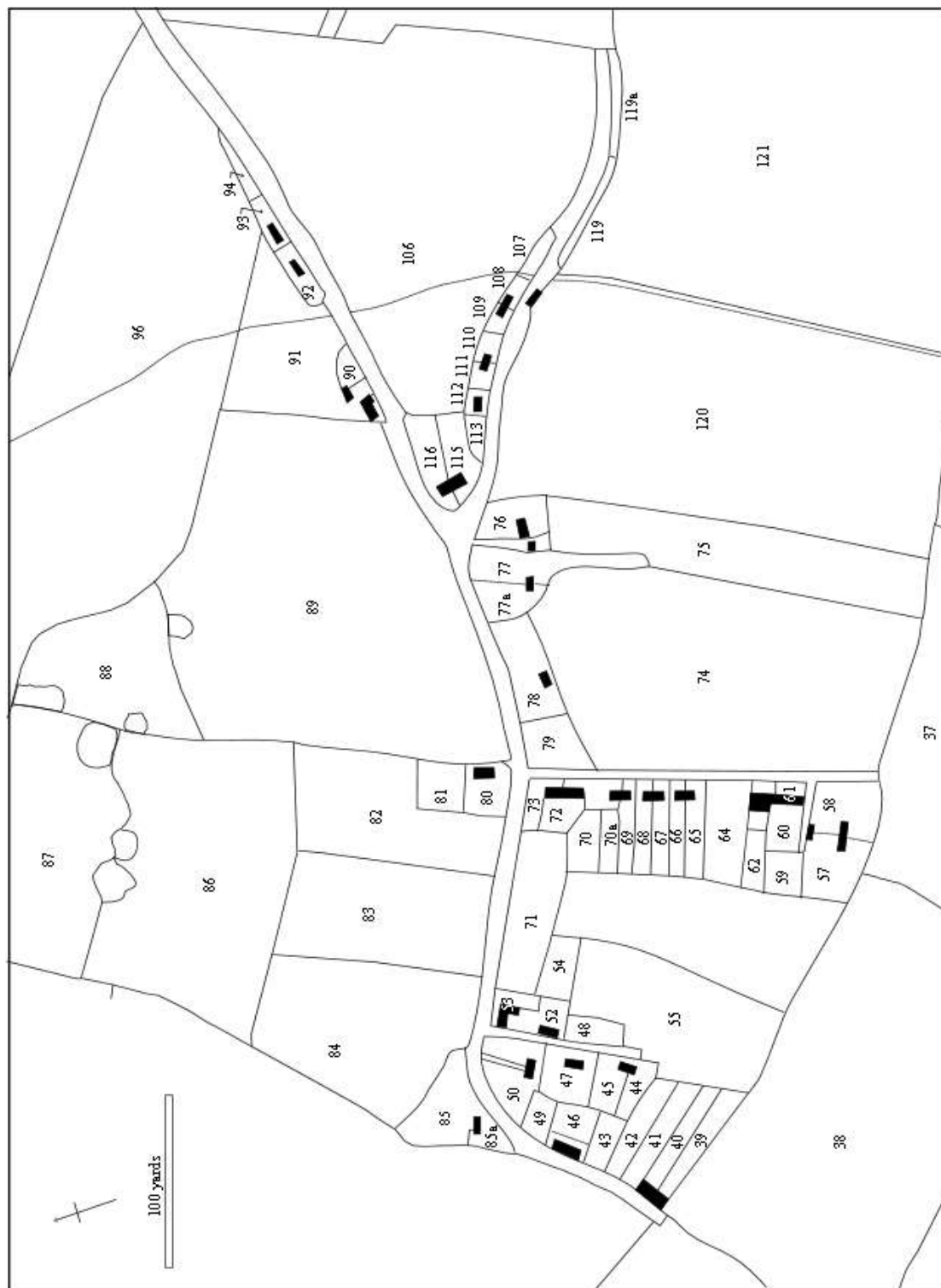
TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON



The proportion of the population under twenty years of age was 53% higher than the national average of 45%. At the other end of the scale there were only 4% over the age of sixty as opposed to a national average of 7%. In essence the population was predominantly a young one.

The occupational structure displays a predominance of those engaged in the nearby salt works. Twenty-seven of the adult male population were described as a 'salt maker' and presumably worked in the brine processing operations in the factories along the banks of the river. Three other men were also involved in the salt industry: one as a 'rock getter', and therefore employed in a salt mine; another as a 'pan smith' employed in repairing the many large iron pans in which the brine was boiled; and the third as a 'salt agent', a company representative. One other man, a clerk, may have been employed in the industry, and if so this means that 42%, nearly half, of the adult male population were engaged in the industry. Agriculture which had dominated these parts for centuries was still well represented with sixteen employed as farmers or agricultural labourers (22%): in addition to these men, six boys were engaged as agricultural labourers. Of the other adult males there was a 'miller', who no doubt worked over the river at Bradford Mill; a 'grocer'; four 'brick setters', who were perhaps engaged in house building; a 'cotton dyer', who may have worked at the cotton mill in Over; a 'tailor'; a 'clergyman'; a 'cordwainer', who made leather shoes; a 'shoe maker' who would have made cheaper shoes and clogs; a 'waterman', who worked on the river boats; a 'joiner'; a 'plate layer on the railway'; a 'groom' who may have been employed at one of the gentry houses such as Bostock Hall; and an 'Independent', a man with a private income. Of the adult women there were two described as being 'Independent'; a 'salt maker', two were described as being a 'farmer'; two who were a 'female servant'; and lastly a 'mangler'. Seven girls were employed as a 'female servant'.

Moulton was essentially a new village that had been established in the 1930s so a particularly important factor is where the residents came from. Unfortunately the 1841 census only



THE TITHE MAP OF THE 'VILLAGE' AREA

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

records whether or not an individual was born in the same county and, unlike the subsequent censuses, does not give the actual place of birth. However by using the 1851 census and the Davenham parish registers it is possible to identify the origins of the majority of the Moulton people and from the birth place and date of the children it is possible to estimate when a particular family arrived in the village.

Only seventy (22%) of the total population had been born in Moulton and of the sixty-four heads of household only thirteen (20%) were born in Moulton and of these nine had grandparents who were also born there. Seven families came from outside the county, but many came from neighbouring townships such as Davenham, Wharton and Bostock with a few coming from further away: Barthomley, Broxton, Wybunbury and Crowton. Whilst several families arrived in Moulton within a year or so prior to the census, the majority seem to have arrived between 1826 and 1838. Three people came from Ireland: Alleyne Rogers (30), a clergyman, and his wife Harriet (30) who lodged at Moulton Hall, and Barbara Tomkies (50) of Moulton Lodge.

Having considered the population statistics based on the census we may now take a tour around the township. In the paragraphs that follow the numbers given in square brackets are the property numbers of the tithe map. Ages of individuals, rounded down to the nearest five years, are given in round brackets.

Beginning at the far end of what is now Main Road, once appropriately called 'Village Road', at the very end of the village, we find a few cottages facing across the road into the open fields beyond. The first four were owned by Lord Delamere of Vale Royal [39, 40, 41 & 42] and the first of these was occupied by Joseph Plant (40, a salt worker, and his family of a wife and five children and two members of his wife's family – William (70) and James Eaton (30) who were both agricultural labourers. Next door was the Davies family, headed by John, another salt worker, who also had a seventy-years old father-in-law living with them. The next two were occupied by James Nickson (65), who had been here since at least 1824, and his daughter Jane (14), and John Talbot (40), a farm labourer, his wife and their two children. Thomas Kennerley (30) a joiner, his wife and their six children, lived in the first of three cottages owned by a John Walton [43, 46 & 49]. Next were the two cottages occupied by salt workers and their families: Samuel Wildrig (45) and George Burrows (35). On the opposite side of the road, the north side, in two houses owned by a John Hayes [85 & 85a], lived another two salt workers: Peter Clough (35) seems to have held both and in one of them he lived with his wife Elizabeth and sister Anne, and the other he sub-let to William Tomlinson (25) with his wife Hannah. Returning back to the south side of the road, on the slight bend of the road were two cottages [50&50a] owned by Thomas Bebbington (65) an agricultural labourer who lived in one of them with his seventy years old wife Mary. In the other lived another farm labourer, Thomas Eaton (40) and his wife and their two children.

Next we enter Chapel Street, once known as 'Primitive Chapel Street' due to the Methodist Chapel built there in 1842. The first house on the left [53] was owned by William Barton and occupied by William Buckley (40) a salt maker, his wife, their four children, along with a lodger called George Littler (55), a pan smith, and his daughter. Thirty years later William's son Mark occupied the same home. Next door [52], in another house owned by Barton lived Peter Gardner (30), a salt maker, and his family. Almost opposite them, in a house owned by a John Thompson [47], lived Esau Sadler (30) a waterman, his wife and their baby daughter. A little further along on the same side were two cottages [44 & 45] owned by Ann Kettle and occupied by the families of William Higgins (25) and James Dodd (20), the first of whom was a farm labourer and the other a salt worker: Dodd still lived in the house thirty years later.

The next residential area was along the west side of Chapel Lane on land owned by the Darlington family. William Darlington (45) with his wife Sarah, resided in a large house at the end of Chapel Road called 'Moulton Bank' [58]. He also had another large house next

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

door called 'Beech Grove' [57] which he let to Joseph Hall (40), a salt agent, and his wife Lucy. Another member of the same family was Mary (70) who farmed 80 acres at Moulton Farm, later known as Hillside Farm, which was owned by James Greenway. Along Chapel Lane, William Manley (25), a groom, and his wife Mary had the first cottage [59] and Adam Dickenson (50) had the next [60] both of which neighboured Beech Grove. He worked as an agricultural labourer who lived with his three children. Joseph Whitlow (20), a railway plate-layer with his wife and a baby daughter come next [61], followed by Ralph Kennerley (60) who is described as a farmer [62]. Ralph Darlington is mentioned in the tithe return as being the owner and occupier of the next cottage [64] but he is not listed in the census. After him, Thomas Hitchenson (35) an agricultural labourer with his wife and their three children lived in a cottage owned by Elizabeth Darlington [65]. She also owned the next-door cottage [66] tenanted by James Bower (40), a salt maker, with his wife and five children and a lodger named George Price (30) who was also a salt maker. The next pair of cottages [67 & 68] were owned by Ralph Darlington and occupied by the Gregory and Ravenscroft families. Samuel Gregory (40) was another salt worker who had seven children whose ages ranged between eleven months and fifteen years: his wife's name was Ann. John Ravenscroft (40), a salt maker, and his wife Hannah had ten children aged between about seventeen years and two months at the time of the census. Next [69] came Jesse Jervis (25), a miller, with his wife Mary, their son Edwin and Anne Farrell aged fifteen. Ralph Darlington also owned the next two cottages [70 & 70a] occupied according to the census by Benjamin Davies (45), a clerk, his wife and their six children, and Thomas Darlington (30) a grocer. The last property in the lane, a large house and garden [72] was owned by William Darlington but it is not clear who lived in it at the time of the census. It might have been John Darlington (20) the show maker, his wife Margaret and their three years old daughter. In April 1841 there were two houses being built in this part of the village.

On Main Road, directly opposite Chapel Lane, were two cottages and gardens owned by John Hayes [80 & 81]. One of these, the one on the corner with the road, was occupied by John Breese (50) an agricultural labourer who may have lived there with his wife and son George (13). The other may have been occupied by Thomas Maddock (40) a brick setter, and his family. Almost opposite, on the south side of Main Road lived William Darlington (45) and his wife Sarah in a house [78] which they owned along with about three acres of land. William is said to have been a man of 'Independent means' but seems to have died before 1851 when Sarah is shown as being the head of the house and an 'Annuitant'.

Further east along Main Road towards the point where the road forks the next two semi-detached properties [77a & 77] were owned by Ralph Bury and occupied by Peter Maddock and James Preston. Maddock (25), a rock getter, lived with his wife Eliza and a Richard (35) and Harriet Plumbley (15), both of whom were cotton dyers and born outside the county. James Preston (30) was a salt maker who lived with his wife Sarah and their four children, the youngest of which was only two weeks. According to the tithe returns in a cottage [76] alongside these last two families lived Joseph Kennerley who also occupied an acre of land that stretched back from the road all of which he rented from James Anderson. By the time of the census Margaret Kennerley (40) who was described as 'Independent' lived in the building with Thomas Higginson (40) a farmer, his wife Jane and their three children, but where Higginson was farming is not at all clear.

In the fork now created by Main Road and Whitlow Road where the present Travellers Rest public house stands, there were two cottages [115 & 116] in 1841 which were both owned by John Whitlow and occupied by his relations Samuel and Thomas Whitlow. Samuel (50) was an agricultural labourer and Thomas (25) was a brick setter.

Moving along Whitlow Lane there were several cottages along the left hand side all owned by John Ravenscroft. The first of these [113] was occupied by John Beeton. Next according to the tithe return came James Hulse [112] but he does not appear in the census; then Betty

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

Latham (50) and her family [111]; then George Whitlow (25) a salt maker and his family [110]; then Joseph Ollier (35) a salt maker his wife and their six children [109]; then lastly Isaac Corns (65) a salt maker lived here with his wife, William Tomlinson and his wife and their child [108].

Across the fields to the north, back on the Main Road, there were four cottages owned by John Ravenscroft. William Maddock (20), a salt maker, his wife and their two years old daughter occupied the last cottage listed in the census [95]. Next door to them lived John Shenton (30), salt maker, and his family [94], and next to them Sarah Bebbington (55) a mangler who seems to have lived alone [93]. The last cottage in this section [92] was occupied by William Postles (30) and his family. In the position of what is now the Lion public house, stood a cottage [90] owned by John Carter and occupied by Joseph Kennerley (35), a brick setter, and his family.

Beyond the village, among the surrounding fields there were a number of farm houses. At the junction of the main village road and the road from Davenham to Wharton stood Bee Hive Farm [102]. This along with forty-three acres of land was owned by Samuel Allen and farmed by Thomas Moseley (70) and Ann (65), their three children and three servants. Alongside this property was a beer house [101] also owned by Allen and occupied by Joseph Hockenhull who is not mentioned in the census suggesting that the beer house was built or established in the later months of 1841.

To the south of Bee Hive Farm lay Moulton Lodge [124] the home and property of Catherine Richardson at the time of the tithe survey but occupied by Barbara Tomkies (50) a lady of independent means, and her family. In all Catherine Richardson owned nearly fifty-nine acres which was farmed by Joseph Astbury (35) who lived at the farm house next door [123] with his family and their servants.

Just south of Moulton Lodge stood Moulton Hill Farm, or simply Moulton Farm, [143] the home of Mary Darlington (70) and her family. She occupied eighty-three acres of land which was presumably worked by her two adult sons. This estate was the property of James Greenway a Lancashire entrepreneur who also owned a salt works down alongside the river.

To the west of Moulton Hill stood Moulton Bank Farm with ninety-three acres [29]. This farm and its lands were owned by Lord Delamere of Vale Royal and leased to Thomas Moseley and his wife, the same couple who held Bee Hive Farm. Also here was a cottage [28] which according to the tithe return was occupied by James Blackwell though he does not appear in the census of 1841. It seems likely that he moved into Moulton shortly before the tithe returns were drawn up for ten years later he is listed as a forty years old proprietor of a salt works who was born in Nottingham.

The last farm to mention is Moulton Hall Farm [159] which was owned by James France France of Bostock Hall. Ann Horton (60) and then her son Samuel (25) farmed the eighty acres of land here. Samuel and his wife had two young children and shared the house with a number of lodgers: a dress-maker, two female servants, three agricultural labourers, a clergyman and his wife.

Details from later census returns

It would be tedious to continue with the same exercise for each of the subsequent censuses for the rest of the century, so, having set the scene in 1841 it will now be sufficient to extrapolate some of the details from the successive censuses.

According to the 1851 census, which was recorded on Sunday, 30 March, there were 167 males and 157 females giving an overall increase of only eight people over the previous ten

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

years. These folk were divided into seventy families giving an average of between four and five to a household. When members of extended families, lodgers and servants are removed from the numbers an average family unit numbered just four – certainly it seems that there were still no overcrowding problems. The largest households both contained eleven. Thomas Blease (31), a salt boiler, had a wife, five children, another child ‘visitor’, a servant and two lodgers. Samuel Horton (40), who farmed Moulton Hall, had a wife five children and four servants.

Of the total number of villagers 33% were born in Moulton which is a significant increase over the figure ten years earlier. However, the origins of the seventy heads of household indicates that less than 10% were actually born in the township, a lot less than the situation ten years earlier. The six household heads born in Moulton were: Mary Darlington, a farmer, aged 81; George Whitlow, a coal carrier, aged 68; George Whitlow, a salt maker, aged 39; Thomas Darlington, a grocer, aged 44; Peter Clough, and agricultural labourer, aged 43; and Henry Whitlow, a labourer aged 23. Only eight wives were Moulton-born. There had clearly been some movement of families both into and out of the village. Half of the sixty-six families listed in 1841 had moved out and been replaced by thirty-five new families, which again represent half of the families listed in 1851.

Of the total born in the village, twenty-two were aged ten years and over but under the age of twenty years and sixty-two were under ten, meaning that of the adult population very few were native to the village. Fifty-three people had been born in Davenham and a further thirty-one had been born elsewhere in the parish at places such as Wharton, Bostock and Stanthorne. A further forty-three originated within a five miles radius of the village so were in a sense local, thus bringing the local, mid-Cheshire number to about two-thirds of the population.

<i>Birth place</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Moulton	109	33.6
Elsewhere in Davenham parish	89	27.5
Within 5 miles of Moulton	52	16
Elsewhere in Cheshire	57	17.6
Out of Cheshire	17	5
	324	99.7

Those originating from outside of the county included places such as: Ireland, Yorkshire, Lancashire, Nottinghamshire, Warwickshire and Flint.

The occupational structure again displays an emphasis on those engaged in the nearby salt works. Twenty-five of the adult male population were described as a ‘salt maker’ which is a remarkably similar number recorded ten years earlier. In addition to these there were two ‘salt labourers’; one ‘rock getter’; a ‘pan smith’; two ‘salt manufacturers’, presumably entrepreneurs who had set up business themselves or else senior managers employed by someone else. It may be that the following were also employed in the industry: twenty-four labourers, an ‘engine driver’ and an ‘engine tender’. If these latter men are included then this means that 59 men, two-thirds, of the adult (eighteen years and over) male population were engaged in the salt industry. Agriculture was still well represented with nineteen, a quarter, employed as farmers, including a ‘retired farmer’, or agricultural labourers. Of the other adult males there were two employed as a ‘miller’; a ‘school master’; a ‘publican’; two ‘grocers’; three ‘brick setters’; four ‘tailors’; a ‘joiner’; two carpenters; one ‘smith’; two ‘railway labourers’; a ‘coal carrier’; a ‘butler’, who may have been employed at one of the gentry houses such as Bostock Hall; and a ‘landed proprietor’. Of the adult women there were two described as being an ‘Annuitant’; one as ‘National School Mistress’; two were described as being a ‘farmer’; and lastly a ‘pauper’. Fifty-four boys and girls are described as being ‘scholars’.

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

By the time of the 1861 census which was taken on Sunday 7 April, there were 196 males and 198 females giving an overall increase of seventy people over the previous ten years. These folk were divided into ninety-five households giving an average of just over four to a household.

Of the total number of villagers 36% were born in Moulton, a significant rise since the previous census. However, the origins of the ninety-five heads of household indicates that only 4% were actually born in the township, a lot less than the situation ten years earlier. A further fifty-eight were from a township within a radius of five miles from Moulton and therefore 80% were in a sense 'local'.

By the time of the 1871 census which was taken on Sunday 2 April, there were 262 males and 249 females giving an overall increase of one hundred and seventeen people over the previous ten years. These folk were divided into 111 households giving an average of between four and five to a household. There were 115 families and when members of extended families, lodgers and servants are removed from the numbers an average family unit numbered just over four – certainly it seems that there were still no overcrowding problems. The largest household contained nine and that was the home of Joshua Oakes (38) who had a smallholding at Moulton Hall where he lived with his wife and seven children.

Of the total number of villagers 31% were born in Moulton similar to the figure ten years earlier. However, the origins of the 115 heads of household indicates that 15% were actually born in the township. A further 33% were from a township within a radius of five miles from Moulton and therefore 48% were in a sense 'local', a lot less than the situation ten years earlier.

<i>Birth place</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Moulton	160	31.3
Elsewhere in Davenham parish	112	21.9
Within 5 miles of Moulton	92	18
Elsewhere in Cheshire	118	23.1
Out of Cheshire	29	5.7
	511	99

In 1871 there were 135 adult males (over eighteen years) and once again, as expected the majority (46%) were involved in the salt industry, though their number (fifty-nine in 1851 and now fifty-eight) had hardly changed. The term 'salt boiler' is now used for the first time and was applied thirty-five men; nine were 'salt makers' and another ten were labourers at the salt works. Other salt employees were: three 'firemen'; one 'foreman'; one engine driver; one 'coal discharger'; one 'rock getter'; two 'boiler makers', one of whom was unemployed, and who had replaced the 'pan smith' of earlier years; and one 'salt agent'. Two of the salt workers, a 'salt boiler' and the 'foreman' were also described as being 'Methodist preachers'. As in 1851 there were still a significant number employed in agriculture with eight farmers, including a 'retired farmer', and eleven 'agricultural labourers': as a proportion of the working population these had dropped to 14%. With the coming of the railway, transport occupations feature in the lists: there were two 'engine drivers' other than the one specifically employed at the salt works; two 'railway pointsmen'; a 'platelayer'; an 'engine smith'; and a 'highway labourer'. Of the other occupations there were: twenty-one 'labourers'; a 'sawyer'; three 'bricklayers'; three 'butchers', of whom two were unemployed; a 'carter'; a 'smith'; a 'grocer'; a 'tailor'; a 'joiner'; a 'painter'; a 'shoe maker'; a 'warehouseman'; a 'corn dealer'; and a 'book agent'. Of the adult females with specific occupations, one was a 'farmer', another was a 'charwoman'; two 'housekeepers'; and a 'former laundress'. One hundred and twenty-one boys and girls are described as being 'scholars'.

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

By 1881 one hundred and fourteen extra houses had been built. These consisted of twenty-eight in Church Street and eighty-six in Regent Street and established a small factory colony of rows of tall terraced houses behind each of which was a wash-house and a yard. Church Street was home to one hundred and thirty people the vast majority of whom were local Cheshire people; the few exceptions included a lady from Liverpool and another from Ireland. In Regent Street there were 433 people with another small 'foreign' minority who hailed from places such as Birmingham, Manchester, Northampton, Warwickshire, Lancashire and Staffordshire. In particular there were two Irish labourers and their families and a total of five Irish adult males lodging in one of the houses and employed at the 'Labour Farm'. It seems that the building of these new houses attracted Moulton people for we find at least three families moving from addresses in Village Road into either Regent Street or Church Road.

On the whole it seems that the accommodation afforded the residents was 'comortable' in that there was little overcrowding. However, in one house, number 57 Regent Street, there was a family of nine with another family of three from Liverpool lodging there.

TONY BOSTOCK'S LOCAL HISTORY NOTES: MOULTON

By virtue of a deed dated 18 April 1723 Seymour Cholmondeley leased property he had by grant from Philip and Thomas Bostock to Nathew Meakin, merchant of Nantwich. This was subsequently purchased by Richard Vernon of Middlewich.³⁴

In November 1834, Ralph Darlington, corn merchant of Over, leased to William Darlington of Moulton part of the Old field which was bounded on the north by the lands of William Darlington of Newbridge, on the east by Joseph Lea's land and on the south and west by 'the said' William's land. On this land, which measure thirty roods(perches?) two cottages had been built. The lease was to remain in force during the lifetimes of William Darlington aged 41, Rupert son of John Darlington, schoolmaster of Northwich, then aged 12, and his brother Thomas aged 10. The rent was £1 p.a.³⁵ (CRO: DFN 2902/33)

³⁴ CRO: DFN 2075/104

³⁵ CRO: DFN 2902/33

