

Appendix 9.2 A Short History of Weston

The Parish of Weston is a civil parish now administered by the unitary authority of Cheshire East. It used to be administered by The Borough Council of Crewe and Nantwich, till its abolition in 2009.

Weston Parish consists of the village, and the hamlets of Stowford, Carters Green, Snape, Englesea Brook, Gorsty Hill, Rosehill (Gorsty Hill and Rosehill became part of Balterley, Staffordshire in 1965) and now also Wychwood Park and Village. The name of the village means 'Western Farm', it is directly west of Barthomley, which is an ancient parish dating from Saxon times.

Weston was part of the Parish of Wybunbury, which was also an ancient parish dating from Saxon times. Weston became a parish in the early 1840s. It is not included in the Domesday Survey of 1086, however it is very likely that Weston was included with Basford, which is listed in the Survey, and is recorded as consisting of three manors; these three manors probably represent Basford, Hough and Weston.

Weston Hall was the Manor of Weston, which sadly burnt down in 2005. The site was originally moated, a succession of buildings have probably stood on the site. Archaeological evidence in the parish points to its ancient inhabitants. Flint tools have been found in and around the parish, signifying activity from the Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age), right through to the Iron Age. Roman activity is also suggested by the finding of a number of roman coins and artefacts in and around the parish, and a possible roman track running from Middlewich to Balterley.

At the time of the Civil War, the Royalists passed through the village from Barthomley, 'plundering and destroying' their way until they laid siege to Crewe Hall and then taking it from the Parliamentarian Garrison. Later after the Battle of Nantwich, the Parliamentarians retook it. One of the Royalists, a Captain Fisher had to be protected by the Parliamentarians after they retook the Hall, because of his actions against the local people, who were ready to kill him.

The two main landowners of Weston were the Delves Broughton family of Doddington and the Crewes of Crewe Hall (later sold to the Duchy of Lancaster). However throughout history there have been many smaller landowners owning different properties, which have changed hands many times.

Weston has predominantly been a farming community in the past, as most of Cheshire. The Industrial Revolution and the coming of the railways and the development of Crewe town, allowed villagers to change from mainly agricultural related vocations to other areas of work over the years. Ever since then the work of the people of Weston has diversified with human progress, whilst farming carries on around the village.

There are numerous examples of historic buildings in the parish, with many being listed, to protect their historic heritage. There are examples of 17th century timber framed buildings and later Estate cottages, farms and farm buildings, with rich vernacular architecture, especially those at Stowford, which were built for Lord Crewe's Estate, and also the church and vicarage in the

village. Over the years many old farms have disappeared, being demolished and replaced. Even now in the current climate many of the surviving old farms are no longer involved with farming activities. Two water mills are known to have existed in the past, one near Weston Hall, and another at Crotia (Crowshall) Mill.

There have been a number of public houses over the years, the two surviving ones being The White Lion and The Broughton (old name – The Plough). The White Lion used to be a farm before an inn, called Green Farm. Other public houses were The Vine next to the village shop, The Red Lion, and the oldest inn was The Ostrich, which was pulled down and replaced by the Malthouse Cottages in 1776, next to the Red Lion.

The Church of All Saints was built between 1838 and 1840, however other places of worship did exist in the village, a Wesleyan Methodist Chapel and a Primitive Methodist Chapel, along with another older Primitive Methodist Chapel and school in Englesea Brook.

At the time of the Second World War there was a prisoner of war camp for German and Italian POWs, at Snape Farm, some of whom were put to work on the surrounding farms. Crewe Hall housed Australian and American soldiers, and later became a prisoner of war camp for German officers, during the war.

In modern times Weston has seen much development, roads to the Motorway, then the A500 bypass, Wychwood Park and Village, and more development has been planned, the Crewe Green A500 link road, and Basford East Development Site.

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