

Drakeford Clocks and Watches made in Congleton, Cheshire - 1816 to 1865

Early 19th century by Edward Drakeford

Edward Drakeford (1779 - 1859) and his brother, John Drakeford (1784 - 1874) made clocks & watches in Congleton between 1816 and 1865.

This is a personal story by Jeremy Drakeford.

It was in 1971 that I stumbled upon my first Drakeford clock; my wife Sally had a car accident in thick fog near Chester and the garage owner who repaired the car, told me that he had an Edward Drakeford longcase clock in his porch at home. It stood in the porch of the bungalow because it was too tall to be inside!

To cut a long story short, 2 years later I was able to persuade this garage owner to exchange his clock for a much smaller new 'grandmother' clock costing me just £240.

So this clock(see photo right) took pride of place in our family home over the ensuing years during which time I established that Edward was clearly my great great great grandfather who lived in Congleton, Cheshire and jointly made clocks & watches with his younger brother John.

I retired from my work in 1999 and we moved house to North Devon where it was in 2005 when I was contacted by my 5th cousin, David Drakeford from Dublin, who alerted me to an Internet enquiry by the owner of an Edward Drakeford longcase clock living on the West Coast of USA.

It was then I realised of the likelihood that the Drakeford brothers whose names as clock and watch makers were fully recorded in Brittens Book and also Loomes 'Watchmakers and Clockmakers of the World', that the Drakeford name is likely to appear on many other timepieces of their making between 1816 and 1865.

I then registered an earlier version of this website with search words linked to the name Drakeford and clocks and watches, and watches, and many owners throughout the world made contact with me or I was able to locate items for sale through my own searching.

So, through many intriguing experiences, I am now the owner of some 8 longcase clocks and have purchased others on behalf of other Drakefords including my cousin David who now lives in Co. Wicklow.



Of the 47 clocks/watches that I have so far recorded existing today, all where possible featured at the end of this paper, I can mention locations outside the UK as Washington State, USA; Brazil; Ohio, USA; Italy; Sweden; Berlin and Chicago, USA. The last one I airfreighted back from Chicago!

It can be noted that of the clocks/watches discovered to date, 32 are named to Edward, 10 to John and some 4 are just stated as 'Drakeford', possibly meaning that the family were working together at this particular time.

All these clocks were made in Congleton, Cheshire and I suppose in the early to mid 1800s, there was new wealth being created and a growing awareness for better timekeeping as the pace of life increased. There must have been a status symbol in bringing a grand clock into the family home without radio in those times, and sundials not precise instruments. Would the great Mills of the day have used sirens of some form to achieve worker punctuality and of course, with Churches mostly nearby, the clock chimes would be of help.

I display below a selection of clocks and a watch of significant interest for you to appreciate fully the variety of timepieces that were on offer from these two very skilled men.

One supposes that 'Messrs. Drakeford' would have had catalogues displaying the range of clocks and watches they were prepared to manufacture for potential customers. You will see the fantastic variation of dial design. Just compare the Roman and Arabic numerals and the subsidiary dials - moon dials, date dials and seconds dials, the curved date apertures, etc. Apart from my number one clock with a brass dial, all other clocks found have painted dials which fits well with the date period. And then there was the variation of dial paintings; who were the painters as they are not named, yet on the moon dials, without exception there is a building displayed shown opposite a ship? (The Drakefords were clearly involved in the Staffordshire pottery industry where artists were also working as painters of china).

The clockmaker, Drakeford in this case, is named on the face of the dials whereas the dialmaker's name is often on the reverse side of the dial and/or cast into the 'falseplate'.

The dialmakers (all from Birmingham) that I have come across with 'Drakeford clocks are:-

Walker & Hughes, Wright, Wilke & Son, & Finnamore.

So the Drakeford clockmakers would have obtained parts for the movements from a 'materials' supplier often in Birmingham, or made the parts themselves and then assembled the complete movement. The movements of all discovered Drakeford clocks appear similar. All the longcase clocks I have experienced have been 8 day mechanisms apart from some specialist time pieces upon which I elaborate separately. I have not come across a 30 hour clock.

The mahogany or oak cases, and their inlay and veneer work were probably made by specialist 'casemakers', local or otherwise, but built to the specifications of the clockmaker to satisfy customers' individual requirements.

There has to be a certain sadness that despite the clear evidence that the Drakeford brothers were registered in the Congleton Directories as having various premises over the years, there are no paper records remaining of day to day business activities.

Here is a plea to you as the visitor to this study paper. Should you come across additional 'Drakeford' timepieces or any catalogues or paperwork featuring this 'Drakeford' time in history, please do get in touch via the 'Contact us' offered [here](#).

A FULL LISTING OF DRAKEFORD CLOCKS DISCOVERED so far are featured where possible at the end of this paper but here are some examples with descriptions of specimen timepieces made between 1816 and 1865 by the Drakeford brothers:

Clock no. 1. Edward Drakeford - Congleton

The dial depicts the phases of the moon interspersed with Astbury Church (the mother church of Congleton), the scene believed to have been created by the painter, John Halifax.

This oak longcase clock circa 1800 is one of only two known Drakeford clocks to have a brass dial of 18th century style. One theory is that Edward Drakeford was requested to replace an older movement with one of his making giving him the opportunity to add his name plate to the brass dial on completion of the work. The interior of the case appears to show a chalk writing 'Rode Hall', which may mean it was originally at the Rode Hall, down the road from Astbury, Congleton.



Clock No. 4. Edward Drakeford - Congleton

A George III mahogany longcase clock, the eight day movement running on anchor escapement and having arched 14ins painted Roman dial decorated with flowers at the angles and pastoral vignette to the arch with subsidiary seconds dial and crescent date aperture: the case having caved 'Chinese' cushion pediment above parcel gilded swan neck moulding and flanking reeded columns, the crossbanded shape flame veneered door flanked by quartered reeded columns, the panelled base raised on ogee feet, 8ft 3ins.



Watch No. 8. John Drakeford – Congleton

A silver cased pocket watch with white enamelled dial & signed fusee lever movement 'John Drakeford - Congleton, No. 9413. Case dated 1819 with Anchor for Birmingham. In the back of the case are three watch tickets: One stating John Drakeford, Clock & Watchmaker, Congleton. There is a picture assumed to be old father time with a sickle. On the perimeter of the ticket it states, 'Fishing Tackle of all descriptions' and 'Wedding Rings' - Plate &c. The second ticket states 'Adams Clock & Watch Maker, Middlewich - Buys Old Gold, Silver, Brads, Pewter or Lead. Sells Gold Rings &c. The third ticket has written on it in ink 'Cleaned April 1845' and then 'Cleaned Jan 1847'.



Clock No. 17. Edward Drakeford – Congleton

A delightful wall clock, the only one of its type that has been discovered for this maker. This is today owned by a distant relative with the expectation that it has continued in family ownership since its making.



Clock No. 21. Drakeford - Congleton

Victorian 8 day oak longcase clock with painted dial. This is unusually without the Christian name attached to the maker: 'Drakeford'. Edward had a son, William (1819 - 1849) who was recorded as a Clockmaker, probably working with his father. Could this clock be of his making?



Clock No. 29. Drakeford - Congleton

This clock was in Italy in the Turin/Milan area with a dealer having bought it from a distinguished Italian family. This clock has perhaps the best case I have ever seen with beautiful veneer worn on mahogany. A very high price indicated for sale after restoration. Fascinating - another Drakeford clock without Christian name.



Clock No. 33. Edward Drakeford - Congleton

Early 19th Century 8 day unusual pine clock. This came up for auction in Berlin, so a ferry crossing and autobahn travel was required to bring this clock back home to England.



Clock No. 37. John Drakeford - Congleton

An 'Apprentice piece' made by John Drakeford circa 1816. Very much a special one-off one would suspect. This is an 8 day miniature grandfather clock, under 6ft in height with an alarm and a single winding hole. The dial (East or West Coast style) is unusual for this period, but all features emphasise the 'apprentice' really wanting to make his mark!



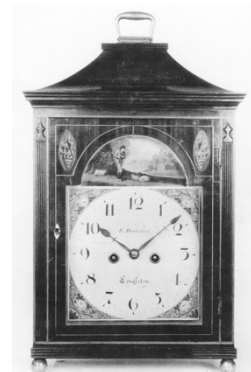
Clock No. 40. Edward Drakeford - Congleton

An unusual charming mahogany cased alarm clock with an arabic numbered painted dial being 8 1/2 inches into an arch. 3 western dressed ladies watch Moses in a basket on The Nile. Pyramids are in the background. Both the arched hood and the dial door have box wood inlay. The hood also has long side windows. The key wound movement runs for about 48 hours and the alarm is wound by pulling the weighted rope down by hand. The clock is certainly rare and attractive that may well have been Edward's Apprentice piece(see 37 above). Circa early 19th Century.



Clock No. 43. Edward Drakeford - Congleton

An illustration in the authoritative book 'The Georgian Bracket Clock - 1714 to 1830 by Richard C. R. Barder'. The owner of this clock is not known, but through the purchase of the above Clock No. 40, a strong likeness can be recognised and it is exciting to see such an eminent book choosing to illustrate Edward Drakeford's work. Page 196, shows Illustration Plate VI/28 Title: E. Drakeford, Congleton, Cheshire. Unusual mahogany provincial clock. Normally provincial bracket clocks follow London styles. This is an exception. Circa 1815. This clock is also referred to on Page 193 of this book.



DRAKEFORD CLOCK & WATCHMAKER RESEARCH

<p>BRITTEN'S BOOK OF CLOCKS Drakeford, Edward, 1818; Congleton, (Bri) Drakeford, John, 1818; Congleton, (Bri)</p>	<p>KEITH APPLEBY'S CLOCKMAKERS OF CHESHIRE Edward Drakeford, High Street, Congleton, 1822-1850 John Drakeford, Mill Street, Congleton, 1816-1817 John Drakeford, High Street, Congleton, 1818-1846</p>
<p>BRIAN LOOMES BOOK OF CLOCKS. Drakeford, Edward, Congleton, 1818-1857 Drakeford, John, Congleton, 1828-1865</p>	<p>RICHARD BARDER'S 'THE GEORGIAN BRACKET CLOCK 1714 to 1830' Edward Drakeford, Congleton, circa 1815</p>

Edward Drakeford (1779 - 1859) & and his brother, John Drakeford (1784 - 1874) made clocks & watches in Congleton between 1816 and 1865.

TRADE DIRECTORY and other ENTRIES

Name	Dates	Addresses in Congleton	Date	Detail	Source
Edward (2 nd wife Sarah Lownds m. 30MAR1814)	1779-1859	42 High Street	c 1851 30/05/1847	Clock & Watchmaker Watchmaker	Census
William son of Edward	1819-1849	Little Street	c 1841	Clock & Watchmaker	Census
John (wife Hannah Hiorns m. 7DEC1819)	1784-1874	206 High Street	c 1841	Clock Maker	Census
		70 Victoria Street	c 1851	Clockmaker	Census
		100 Albert Street	c 1861	Watchmaker & Provision Dealer	Census
		7 Albert Street	c 1871	now a Grocer only!	Census
		Mill Street	1816-1817	Cheshire Clock & Watchmakers	
		High Street	1818-1846	Cheshire Clock & Watchmakers	
Edward & Ann	c1801	206 High Street	c 1841	Clock Maker	Census
Edward	Chester Chronicle - 8th October 1824				
	NEW PATENT, to Charles Jeffrey, of Havannah Mills, near Congleton, silk throwster, and EDWARD DRAKEFORD, of Congleton, watch maker both of the County of Chester, for their method of making a swift and other apparatus thereto belonging, for the purpose of winding silk, and other fibrous materials.				
Edward & John	History of Congleton(page 103) -Corporation bought The Congleton Gas and Light Company iin 1866. The gas works had been financed by local industrialists and business men - including William and Charles Vaudrey, Thomas Reade, Charles Barlow, Edward and John Drakeford and Samuel Yates. The Act permitting the setting up of the works was obtained in 1833.				
John	Congleton Chronicle issue of Thurs. April 6th, 1939				
	John Drakeford, a former jeweller and clothier in Congleton. Miss Harriet Susan Hill and Miss Mary Drakford Lamb, of High Lane Ends, Burslem, grand-daughter and great grand-daughter respectively of John Drakeford presented a certificate to the Corporation which conferred on John Drakeford the freedom of the Borough as from February 6th 1818. "His name is still to be found on many an old clock in Congleton and district". John Drakeford - Died 11th Dec1874				
	Chester Record Office - Within the Index to Wills proved at Chester District Registry 1858-1929. Feb 1875 Drakeford, John of Congleton, Clock and Watch maker. Extracted from the Probate Registry Grants Calendars (Nov 1994)				
	"The Will of John Drakeford late of Congleton in the County of Chester Clock and Watch Maker, who died 11 December 1874 at Congleton was proved at Chester 22 February by Harriet Hill(Wife of William Hill Silk Throwster) of Congleton the daughter the sole Executrix. Effects under £100.				

TRADE DIRECTORY and other ENTRIES(continued)

Pigot 1834 Sundries, Canal Street, Congleton	John Drakeford	Shopkeeper & Dealers in Groceries & Sundries
Pigot 1822/30/32/34 High Street, Congleton	Edward & John	Watch & Clock Makers
Pigot 1830 High Street, Congleton	Edward	Machine Makers (patent winding)
Slater's 1848 High Street, Congleton	Edward	Watch & Clock Makers
Bagshaw 1850 High Street, Congleton	Edward	Watch & Clock Makers
Slater's 1848 Albert Street, Congleton	John	Watch & Clock Makers
Bagshaw 1850 Albert Street, Congleton	John	Watch & Clock Makers
Slater's 1848 High Street, Congleton	Edward	Inspector of Weights and Measures
Bagshaw 1850 High Street, Congleton	Edward	Inspector of Weights and Measures
White 1860 Albert Street, Congleton	John	Grocers & Tea Dealers
Worrall's 1872 7 Albert Street, Congleton	John	Shopkeepers
Cheshire Sheaf 10596 High Street, Congleton #	Edward	Clockmaker 1822-1850
Cheshire Sheaf 10590 Mill Street, Congleton #	John	Clockmaker 1816-1817
Cheshire Sheaf 10590 High Street, Congleton #	John	Clockmaker 1818-1846

Summary

1822 - 1850	Edward	Watch & Clock Maker	High Street, Congleton
1816 - 1817	John	Clockmaker	Mill Street, Congleton #
1818 - 1846	John	Clockmaker	High Street, Congleton #
1822 - 1834	John	Watch & Clock Maker	High Street, Congleton
1848 - 1850	John	Watch & Clock Maker	Albert Street, Congleton
1860	John	Grocers & Tea Dealers	Albert Street, Congleton
1872	John	Shopkeepers	7 Albert Street, Congleton

Clockmakers of Cheshire, Keith Appleby, Page 101

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DRAKEFORD CLOCKS

BRITTEN'S BOOK OF CLOCKS

Drakeford, Edward, 1818; Congleton, (Bri)
 Drakeford, John, 1818; Congleton, (Bri)

BRIAN LOOMES BOOK OF CLOCKS.

Drakeford, Edward, Congleton, 1818-1857
 Drakeford, John, Congleton, 1828-1865

KEITH APPLEBY'S CLOCKMAKERS OF CHESHIRE

Edward Drakeford, High Street, Congleton, 1822-1850
 John Drakeford, Mill Street, Congleton, 1816-1817
 John Drakeford, High Street, Congleton, 1818-1846



1. E Drakeford Congleton
 Owned by: Jeremy - found 1973



3. E Drakeford Congleton
 Owned by: Mr P. of Washington State, USA



4. Ed Drakeford Congleton
 Owned by: Michael - Sep 2012



5. John Drakeford Congleton
 Owned by Mr H. of Congleton



6. Edwd Drakeford Congleton
 Owned by Mrs S. of Congleton



7. Edwd Drakeford Congleton
 Owned by: Mr & Mrs W. of Congleton



8. John Drakeford Congleton
 Owned by: Mr D. of Sandbach



10. John Drakeford Congleton
 Owned by: Mr & Mrs S. of Congleton



12. Edward Drakeford Congleton
 Privately owned



13. Edwd Drakeford Congleton
 Owned by: Jeremy - June 2007

DRAKEFORD CLOCKS (DISCOVERIES UP TO JANUARY 2010)



14. Jno Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by Mr S. of Solihull



16. Edw Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by Mrs K. of Powys



18. E DRAKEFORD Congleton
Owned by: Jeremy - ex Ebay Jan 08



19. E Drakeford Congleton
Owned by Mr H. of Stoke-on-Trent



20. Drakeford Congleton
Owned by Mr B. from Brazil



21. Drakeford Congleton
Owned by David in Dublin



22. Jno Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by Mrs H. of Leek



26. Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by Tina in Stoke-on-Trent



27 Jno Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by Mr H. of Ohio, USA



28 Edw Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by Mrs J. of Cardiff, Wales

BRITTEN'S BOOK OF CLOCKS
 Drakeford, Edward, 1818; Congleton, (Bri)
 Drakeford, John, 1818; Congleton, (Bri)

BRIAN LOOMES BOOK OF CLOCKS.
 Drakeford, Edward, Congleton, 1818-1857
 Drakeford, John, Congleton, 1828-1865

KEITH APPLEBY'S CLOCKMAKERS OF CHESHIRE
 Edward Drakeford, High Street, Congleton, 1822-1850
 John Drakeford, Mill Street, Congleton, 1816-1817
 John Drakeford, High Street, Congleton, 1818-1846

DRAKEFORD CLOCKS (THE LATEST DISCOVERY MAY 2012)



29. Drakeford, Congleton
Located in Italy



30. Edwd Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by Mr D. of Ilfracombe



31. Ewd Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by: Charles - from auction 2010



32. Edwd Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by Jeremy – from Sweden 2010



33. Edw Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by Jeremy – from Berlin 2011



34. John Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by Mr H. of Hexham 2012



35. Jno Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by Chris of Sussex 2012



36. Edwd Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by Jeremy – auction 2012



37. Jno Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by Mr M. of Edinburgh



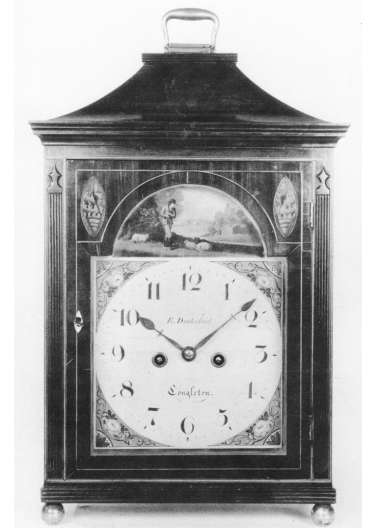
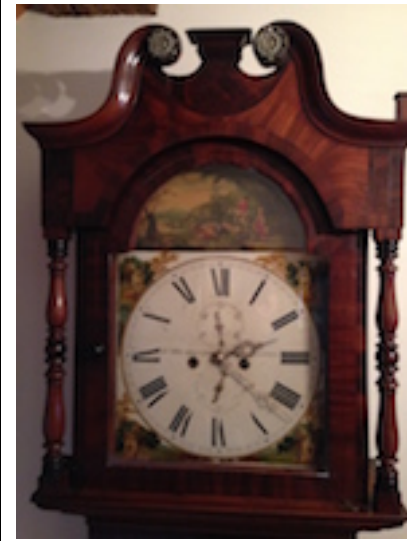
38. Ewd Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by Jeremy – private purchase 2014

BRITTEN'S BOOK OF CLOCKS
Drakeford, Edward, 1818; Congleton, (Bri)
Drakeford, John, 1818; Congleton, (Bri)

BRIAN LOOMES BOOK OF CLOCKS.
Drakeford, Edward, Congleton, 1818-1857
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KEITH APPLEBY'S CLOCKMAKERS OF CHESHIRE
Edward Drakeford, High St. Congleton, 1822-1850
John Drakeford, Mill Street, Congleton, 1816-1846

RICHARD BARDER'S 'THE GEORGEAN BRACKET CLOCK 1714 to 1830'
Edward Drakeford, Congleton, circa 1815



39. EDWD Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by Jeremy – auction Chicago 2014

40. E. Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by Simon – bought SEP 2015

41. EdwD Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by Mr D of Leeds

42. Ed Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by Mrs N of Staffs – JAN 2015

43. E. Drakeford, Congleton
Barder's Bracket Clock Book- p



44. Ed Drakeford, Congleton
Cheltenham Auction – FEB 2017

45. J Drakeford, Congleton
Newquay Auction – JUN 2017

17. Edward Drakeford, Congleton
Owned by Cecil Drakeford, Poole

46. E. Drakeford, Congleton
Knutsford, Auction - MAR 2019

47. E. Drakeford, Congleton
Clevedon Bristol, Auction – JUN 2019