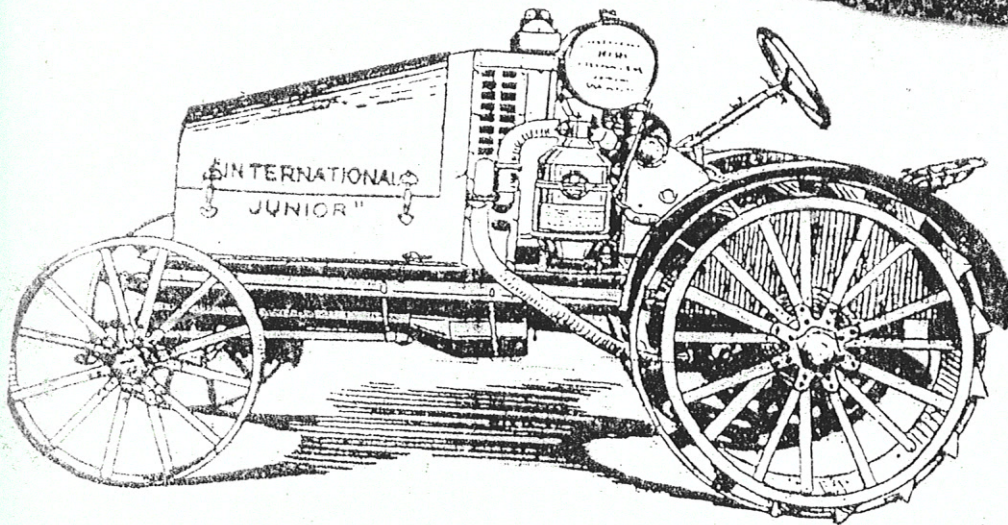


# 200 YEARS OF FARMING IN WOODHURST









# FARMING IN WOODHURST SINCE 1800

## The Enclosure Act

Enclosure Acts changed the farming system, from farmers having strips of land in each of the large Parish fields, to farmers having their land altogether in a few smaller fields. Each area of England and Wales had their own Enclosure Act. The one for Somersham Heath included Woodhurst, and a part of Somersham and Pidley. The Enclosure Act which included Woodhurst became law in 1802. The farm land around Woodhurst consisted of three large open fields (Stocking Field, East Field and Goslinbush Field) and several small fields including Lamp Hill, Church Field, Water Furros, Okley Piece, and Dudick.

Prior to the drafting of the Act, the farmers and smallholders of the village were asked to stake a claim for the land they thought they were entitled to. Examples of this are :-

***I Ann Smith claim to be entitled to One Commonable Messuage<sup>1</sup> and an Acre of Pasture Land in Woodhurst, in my own Occupation; Copyhold<sup>2</sup> of the Manor of Woodhurst. Also One other Commonable Messuage, now a Blacksmith's Shop in Woodhurst,<sup>3</sup> in the Occupation of John Dring, Copyhold of the Manor of Woodhurst.***

*Ann Smith*

***I John Borrett claim to be entitled to one Commonable Messuage and Toft also 116 Acres<sup>4</sup>, 1 Rood<sup>5</sup> and 20 Poles<sup>6</sup> Arable Land and 12 Acres of Pasture or Meadow Land in Woodhurst, in the Occupation of John Bletsoe; Copyhold of the Manor of Woodhurst. Also one other Commonable Messuage, in occupation of the Town for a Workhouse<sup>7</sup>; Copyhold of the Manor of Woodhurst***

*John Borrett*

The Enclosure Act for Somersham Heath was first put forward in 1796 and it took 6 years for them to divide the large fields into smaller ones and to sort out who had what land. Eventually there was a written schedule of land and a map. Unfortunately the Enclosure map containing the parish of Woodhurst is missing, but the written schedule is available and is in the Record Office in Huntingdon. It contains details of roads, footpaths, drains and ditches. It also designated the area to be used as a mortar/clay pit for people to use for building and repairing their houses, and next to it some land for the Trustees (Churchwardens and Overseers) of the Poor of Woodhurst<sup>8</sup>. An area for a stone and gravel pit was also chosen to the east of the village. This was for repairing the roads.

Most of Woodhurst was still copyhold land held by right from the Lord of the Manor of Woodhurst

---

<sup>1</sup> A dwelling house with its surrounding property

<sup>2</sup> Copyhold tenants held their land by right of a title held in Manor Court Roll; paid a nominal annual rent to the Lord of the Manor

<sup>3</sup> Swan Weir cottage

<sup>4</sup> Acre originally was as much land as much as a yoke of oxen could plough in a day. Now it is 4840 square yards

<sup>5</sup> Rood is a quarter of an acre

<sup>6</sup> 160 poles in an acre

<sup>7</sup> Before the Poor Law Amendment Act in 1834 each parish had their own Workhouse. It is not known where it was in Woodhurst

<sup>8</sup> This land is still rented out and nowadays the rent is divided between households with an Old Age Pensioner who apply for it. Members of the Parish Council are now the Trustees. It is known as the Town Lands Charity.



1813 map of Woodhurst showing fields created by the Enclosure Act





# AGRICULTURE IN WOODHURST 1811

- LAND** 800 acres of arable; 50 acres of meadow; 50 acres of pasture  
800 acres are strong clay; 100 acres are turnip land
- WATER** Comes from springs (*Oldhurst & Pidley's water comes from ponds & wells*)
- ESTATES** Owned by John Carstairs Esq, and Mr Bull. Chiefly copyhold, remainder freehold.
- HOUSES** 6 farm Houses; 30 dwelling houses; 10 cottages (*repaired by landlord*)
- FARMS** Size 40 to 300 acres. Rent 17 shillings an acre.  
(*rents in county between 5 & 30 shillings an acre*)  
Woodhurst was tithe free. The poor rate 3 shillings. Leases 21years  
Fields of 6, 10, 20 to 24 acres enclosed by quick(*hawthorn*) hedges with ash & elm timber. Roads tolerably good
- PLOUGHING** By 4 or 6 horses and a driver for fallows. Plough 3 times & a seed ploughing
- CROPS** Summer fallow, barley, clover, wheat.  
If clover lays longer than one year then beans are sown
- MANURE** Yard dung
- CROP YIELD** Wheat 2 bushels sown = 20 bushels produced  
Barley 5 bushels sown = 40 bushels produced  
Beans 5 bushels sown – 28 bushels produced
- GRASS** Red clover; trefoil and some ray grass
- LIVESTOCK** **Cattle** Cows mixed breeds 35 Calves reared 20  
**Horses** Cart kind 20 Foals 8  
**Sheep** Leicester & Lincoln 500; 4 to 5 fleeces to a todd (*about 28 pound in weight*)  
**Hogs** Mixed 60
- COST OF LABOUR** 12 shillings a week in winter: 15 shillings a week in summer  
(*Old Hurst 12 shillings milk & small beer in winter, 18 shillings milk & Small beer in summer*)

## PRICES OF FOOD

Cheese=7d a lb;	Butter= 1s 2d a lb:	Eggs= 10d a score;	Milk= 1d a pint;
Cabbages =1d each	Potatoes=4d a peck	Turnips=4d a peck	Pease=6d a peck
Beans =4d a peck	Geese=5s each	Ducks=3s per couple	Hens=4s6d per couple
Turkeys=7s each	Beef=8d a lb	Mutton=8d a lb	Lamb=10d a lb
Pork=9d a lb	Bread = 11d a quarter loaf (about 4lb in weight)		
Wheat for bread making=10s a bushel			

*d=old penny (240 in a pound) s=shilling (20 in a pound) lb =pound weight (484 grams)*  
*A bushel is a unit of dry or liquid measure equal to 8 gallons*  
*A peck is a quarter of a bushel*

Taken from 'Agriculture in Huntingdonshire' by Parkinson. Mr George Ekins was thanked for his help in supplying this information.

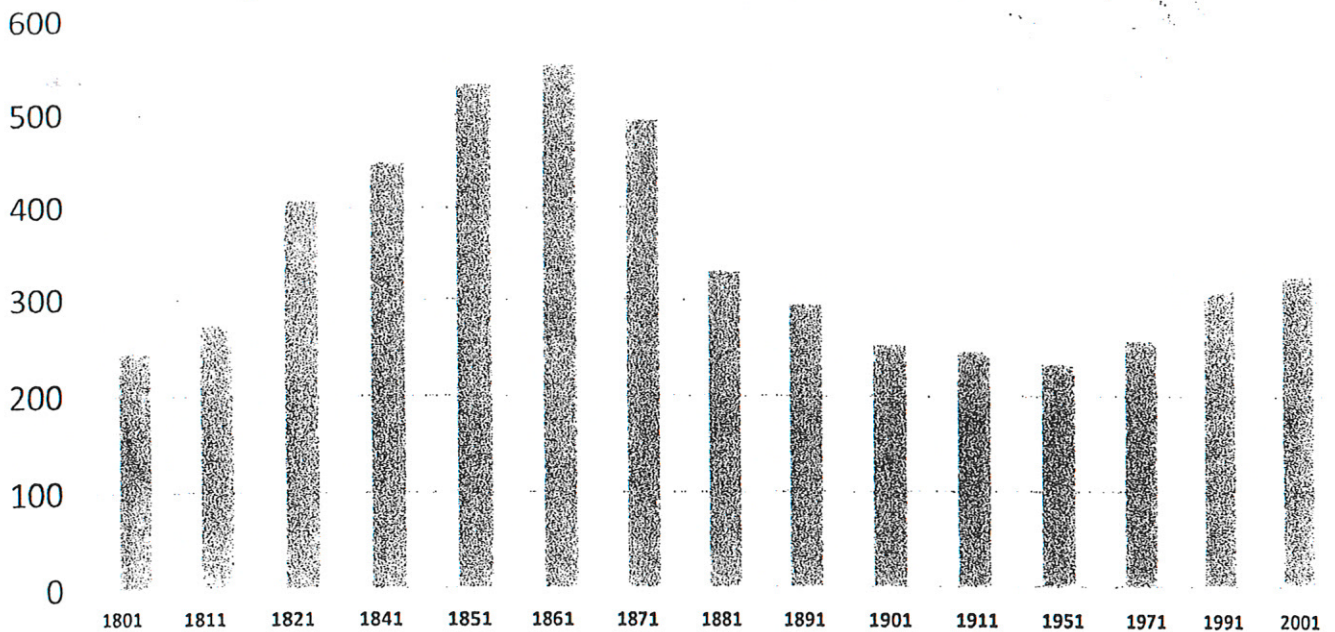


## Changing fortunes of farmers in Woodhurst in 19c

At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the population was 245 and a 100 years later in 1901 it stood at 253. Although these numbers are very similar a lot had happened to the village in that 100 years. The population more than doubled by 1861; it was 554, the highest it has ever been and about 200 more than it is today. But problems in agriculture, which was the life blood of the village, combined with an emigration of the younger element to factories in the north and various trades in London, saw the village begin to die. There was concern expressed at this. The church magazine for May 1897 states:-

*At the rate we are losing our friends from one cause or another, the village seems to be rapidly fulfilling the prophecy of a former inhabitant, that it is one day to consist of a signpost to say where it stood and nothing more*

## Population of Woodhurst 1801-2001





1872 was a particularly bad year. To illustrate this here are some extracts from Jeremiah Moseley's diary. He was a farmer in the adjoining parish of Somersham.

*August 5<sup>th</sup> A very wet day*

*August 6<sup>th</sup> At 3 o'clock down came the rain again in torrents, sending the people home soaking wet. I now begin to think the hay will never be got up.*

*August 7<sup>th</sup> About 3 this afternoon we had a very heavy thunder storm with tremendous heavy rain, the land is completely saturated & harvest work terribly procrastinated.*

*August 8<sup>th</sup> This is a wet day with thunder and an immense deal of rain has fallen so much so that the brook through the farm is running full, and my Harvest Men are doing nothing in cutting wheat, it is getting ripe.*

*August 9<sup>th</sup> Mowing wheat, all my wheat is mown this year not a sheaf reaped. Earith Causeway is 2 feet deep in water.*

In his end of year summary he wrote:

*The wettest year throughout I almost ever remember, a bad Hay time, much entirely spoiled bad harvest, poor yield of wheat. Seeding, much of which sown has been submerged by heavy floods & destroyed, added to which many thousand acres cannot be sown at all, thus making the prospect for another Harvest a very bad one.*

The Hunts Guardian of 17<sup>th</sup> August 1872 states:-

*The few days of last week which were so hopeful have given place again to violent storms and floods, doing further heavy damage among the crops, and turning the outlying heaps of late mown hay completely into muck, while the potato grounds show very extensive signs of disease in the black and nearly perished haulin. The unfavourable spring therefore which nearly destroyed all our fruit and dangerously prevailed during the blooming time of much of the corn, may possibly be followed by a disastrous gathering, and our necessary food seems now threatened both in quantity and quality. Such floods and storms as we have recently experienced are beyond the memories of many aged men.*

The following table which gives names of farmers and number of their employees, illustrates how farming was constantly changing. 1861 was at the peak of farming prosperity in the village. The Barton family at Wigan Farm is a good example. There was a significant drop in workers from 1861 to 1871 and looking at 1881 the acreage dropped to 400 and only 13 men and 4 boys were employed. .

I have used the censuses for 1851, 1861 and 1871 to make the tables but as the 19c census returns for the village do not always give the names of farms and sometimes they record a few houses in Church Street and then change to South Street, it is difficult at times to pinpoint exactly where the farms were. But where possible I give the correct address. In 1881 both Fullards Farm and Holdich Farm farmhouses were uninhabited, the people working the farm having left. Both these farms were copyhold to the Manor of Woodhurst.



The prosperity of the village was almost entirely dependent on farming and the sharp rise and fall in population reflected the changes in agriculture.

At the beginning of the century with industrialisation, and the rapid increase in population, the demand for food rose and farmers were increasing their output. The agricultural depression in England was increasing in the early 1870s and this affected the cereal farmers far more than the dairy farmers. This decline was due to several factors. The import of cheaper, and in some cases better quality grain, from the United States. The gradual introduction of more efficient methods of farming required fewer labourers. Thirdly in the early 1870s there were several years when the weather was atrocious. There was a lot of rain and the ground became waterlogged, especially in areas where there was a lot of clay. The farmers' income was reduced and they employed fewer workers. The result in Woodhurst was migration from the village, and in 30 years Woodhurst's population dropped by 47%, a larger percentage than all surrounding villages.

Not only was the population decreasing, but some of those left behind were becoming poorer. In 1871 there were 31 heads of household designated paupers in the village, out of a total of 111 households receiving outdoor relief. This relief was designed to keep people out of the workhouse if possible. Ralph Murden and his wife Elizabeth lived in Church Lane, one of the cottages adjoining the Travellers Arms<sup>9</sup>. As non able-bodied old people he received 6 pounds fourteen shillings nine and a half pence every half year.

In 1861 using details from the census in Woodhurst there was one agricultural worker for every 14.5 acres; in 1871 there was one worker for every 16.7 acres. The 1881 census only quotes figures for two farms and using these there was one worker to 27.7 acres There was also an increase in the houses that were uninhabited particularly in this year.

**Table showing details of inhabited and uninhabited houses between 1801 and 1901**

DATE	No. of Houses	Inhabited	Uninhabited	% Uninhabited
1801	41	41	---	---
1811	57	57	---	---
1831	54	54	---	---
1851	120	112	8	6.6%
1861	118	115	3	2.5%
1871	124	115	9	7.2%
1881	111	83	28	25.2%
1891	91	75	16	17.5%
1901	84	66	18	21.6%

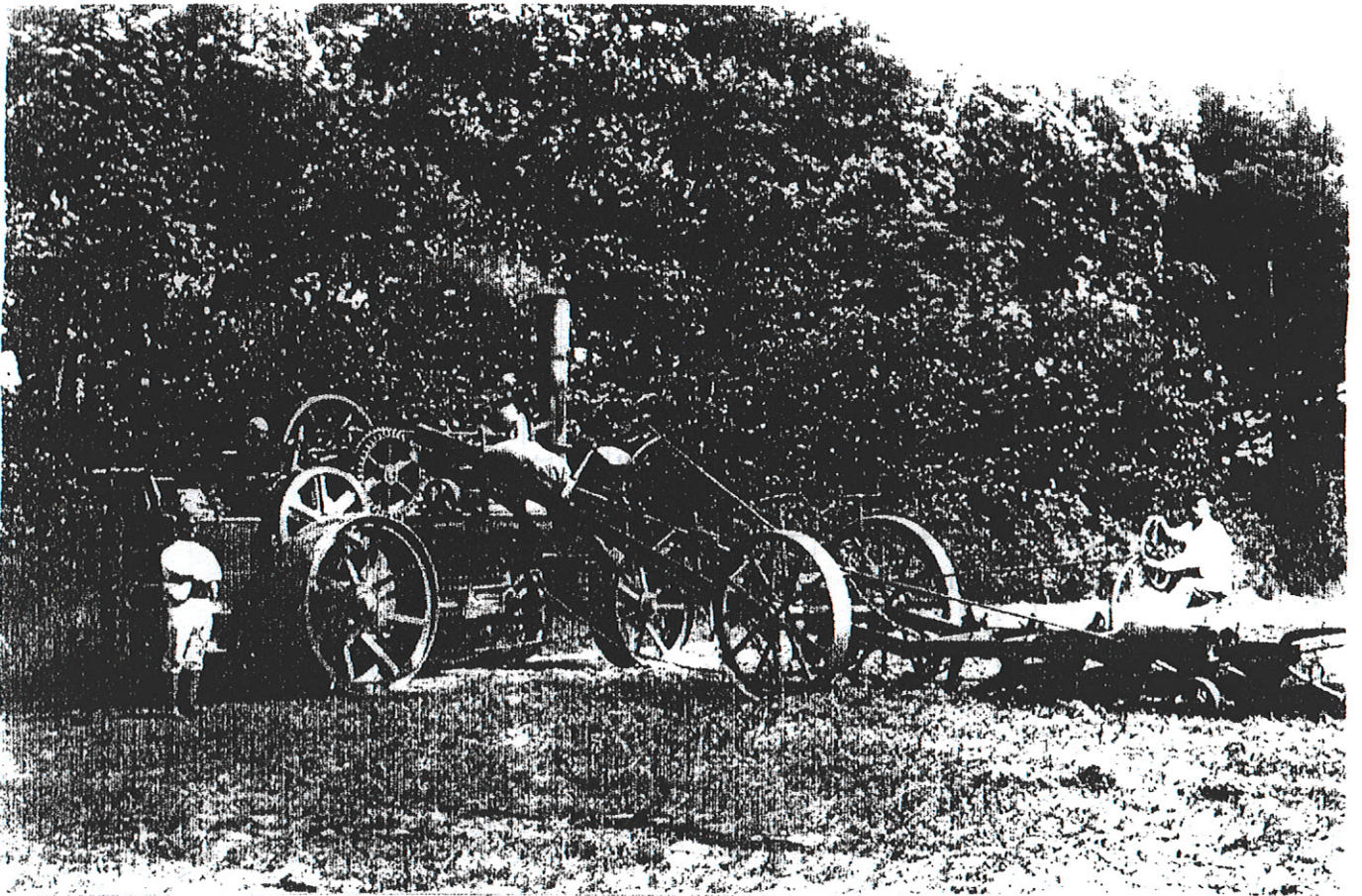
<sup>9</sup> Now St John's House



NAME	1851			1861			1871			Women	
	Acreage	Labourers	Boys	Acreage	Labourers	Boys	Acreage	Labourers	Boys		
Edward Fyson	223	9	3	420	17	9	307	12	4	---	Lived in Manor Farm
John Stokes	40	1	---	45	3	2	---	---	---	---	Lived in 3 Horseshoes pub
John Brittain	162	7	3	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	Lived in Church Street
John Longland Ekins	<u>Absent</u>	<u>for</u>	<u>census</u>	642	20	11	232	11	3	2	Built Baptist Chapel & School & liv
John Ekins	90	8	1	201	12	4	---	---	---	---	Lived with father
George Dring	12	---	---	12	---	---	12	---	---	---	Living in Church St; South St & Dring Yard
Edward Shelton	40	2	1	40	2	1	---	---	---	---	Living in Church Street
William Beck	58	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	Living in Church Street
Ebenezer Gurry	188	3	3	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	Living in Fullards Farmhouse, bailiff to
James Cox	6	---	---	---	---	---	20	1	---	---	Lived in Cherry Tree House
John Fyson	375	20	3	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	Lived in Fullards Farmhouse
Thomas Wales	20	2	1	47	3	1	70	3	1	---	Living in South Street
John Silk	8	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	Living in South Street
William Fyson	185	6	2	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	Lived in Holdich Farmhouse
Robert Barton	565	21	5	595	47	11	513	25	7	---	Wigan Farm
John Rolls	---	---	---	60	1	---	70	1	1	---	Living in farmhouse on corner of Church L which was been pulled down to build St J
Lucy Fyson	---	---	---	176	8	5	190	8	2	---	Living in Fullards Farmhouse
James Anniss	---	---	---	25	1	1	100	3	1	4	Living in Epworth Lodge
Martha Fyson	---	---	---	185	7	4	---	---	---	---	Living in Holdich Farmhouse
William Barton	---	---	---	---	---	---	108	6	2	---	Living in Church Street
Frederic Fyson	---	---	---	---	---	---	200	7	3	---	Living in Holdich Farmhouse
Emmanuel Gurry	---	---	---	---	---	---	19	---	1	---	Living in South Street
William Morris	---	---	---	---	---	---	89	4	2	1	Living in Morris's Farm which is now Gran



One farmer who was affected by these conditions was William Viles. He was born in Woodhurst; lived in The Wheatsheaf pub at the crossroads, and in Needingworth Road St Ives before returning to Woodhurst. He described himself as a 'Steam Thresher and Chaff Cutter' . He was very interested in the new methods of farming and besides his Fowler Steam Ploughing Set he owned a steam elevator and a threshing drum. He worked for farmers with this machinery, steam ploughing, seeding, harvesting and threshing, wheat, oats, barley and buck wheat. When the depression came farmers did not require his services so much, he had to sell the land he owned and moved to Fullards Farm Woodhurst as a tenant farmer in 1882 where he died in December 1883. The picture below was taken in 1878 and shows his sons William and John working the steam plough.



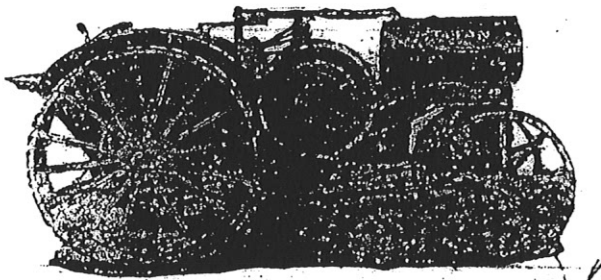


## Changing times in 20<sup>th</sup> century

. By now there was an Agricultural Wages Board . In 1919 they set a weekly wage for Horsekeepers, Cowmen and Shepherds, of 36 shillings a week. . Overtime 8 pence halfpenny an hour 10d on Sundays. Under 19 years old wages ranged from 10 shillings a week to 26 shillings depending on age. Female workers over 18 had 5 pence an hour.

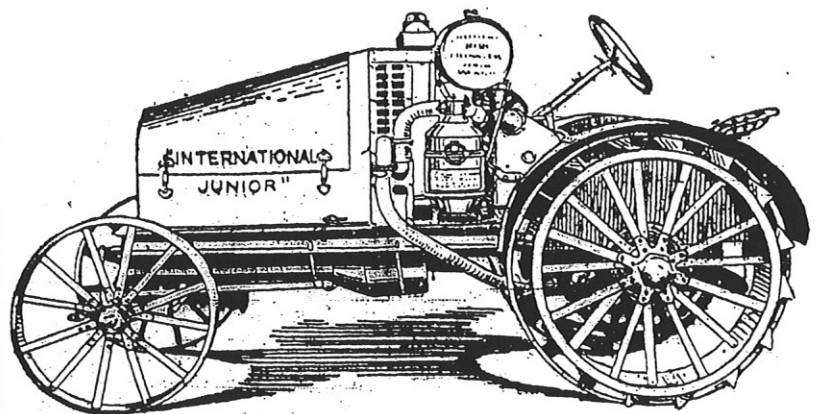
Mechanisation of farm work began in earnest in this century, below are two adverts for tractors taken from a 1919 Hunts Post

# TITAN TRACTORS



Price £385.

This tractor has been proved by the English and American Governments to be the best Tractor for all-round work in the World to-day. Don't experiment with unknown and untried makes. Take advantage of the experience gained by the Government Agricultural Department during the past 3 years and buy the Tractor that has proved itself the best

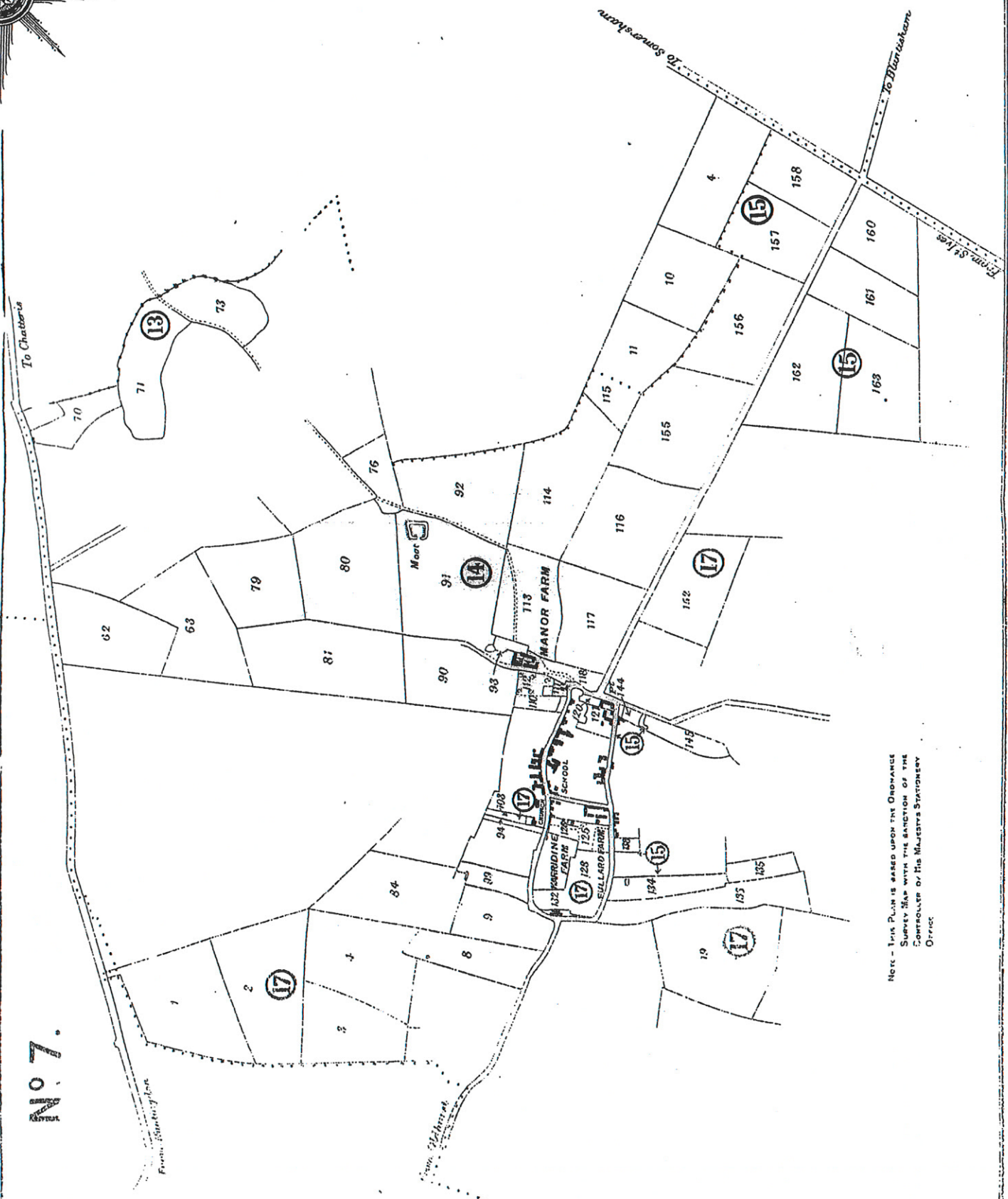


Easy to Operate. Throttle Governed.  
Durable Chain Drive.  
Spring Mounted Front and Rear.





No. 7.



NOTE - THIS PLAN IS BASED UPON THE ORDNANCE  
 SURVEY MAP WITH THE SANCTION OF THE  
 CONTROLLER OF HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY  
 OFFICE.



In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the importance of the Lord of the Manor had diminished, and in the case of Woodhurst properties enfranchisement (making the land freehold) had been occurring for a while. In 1918 four farms and two other small pieces of land were auctioned.

**LOT 13 (on plan 7)**

**A valuable small holding known as  
DERRICKS**

**Situate near the Village of Pidley and abutting the Oldhurst and Pidley Road extending to  
25a. 3r. 36p (more or less)**

In the occupation of Mr. F W Gurry, on a Yearly October 11<sup>th</sup> Tenancy expiring 1010, at a  
Rental of **£18**

**MANOR FARM**

**LOT 14 (Plan No. 7)**

**An attractive and compact Farm, situate close to the Village extending to  
285a. 0r. 32p.(more or less)**

The Residence with South aspect, pleasantly situated and approached by a Carriage Drive, is commodious and substantial, with Gardens and Orchard.

**House** Brick and tiled Containing Hall, Dining Room, Drawing Room, Breakfast Room, Two Kitchens, Dairy, Pantry, Five Bed Rooms and Attics

**Buildings** The Buildings are well situate and sufficient, comprising Brick and Tiled Granary, Large Brick and Tiled Barn, Four-bay Open Hovel (wood and iron) Shelter Hovel, Thatched Barn, brick-boarded and Tiled Cart Lodge, Six-bay Open Hovel, Brick and Thatched Cart Horse Stable for seven horses and Chaff House.

The Pastures are good feeding quality and the Arable deep staple root and corn growing land, abutting on public road three miles from the important Market of St Ives Hunts.

In the occupation of Mr J H Ringrow on a Yearly October 11<sup>th</sup> Tenancy expiring 1919, at a Rental of **£178.15s** per annum.

The Tenant is allowed £4 yearly in lieu of a Cottage.

**HOLDICHS FARM**

**LOT 15 ( Plan No. 7)**

**Situate 3 miles from the Town and Market of St Ives, Hunts and three miles from Somersham Station on the G.E.R. Joint, extending to 109a. 3r. 38p.(more or less)**

The residence is a substantial old-fashioned house with large and lofty rooms and the Farm Premises ample and convenient.

**House** Brisk and Tiles, containing Large Hall, Fine old Staircase, Dining Room, Drawing Room, Breakfast Room, Kitchen Dairy, Four Bedrooms, Three Attics.

**Farm Buildings** Brick and Tiled Cow Lodge and Stable, Two Bay Open Hovel, Dovecote, four Bay Open Hovel, Two bay Cart Hovel, Thatched Piggeries, Large Thatched Barn, Cart Hovel and Hen House.

The Lands open on the St Ives and Somersham Road and are of excellent quality, producing large crops of root and corn.

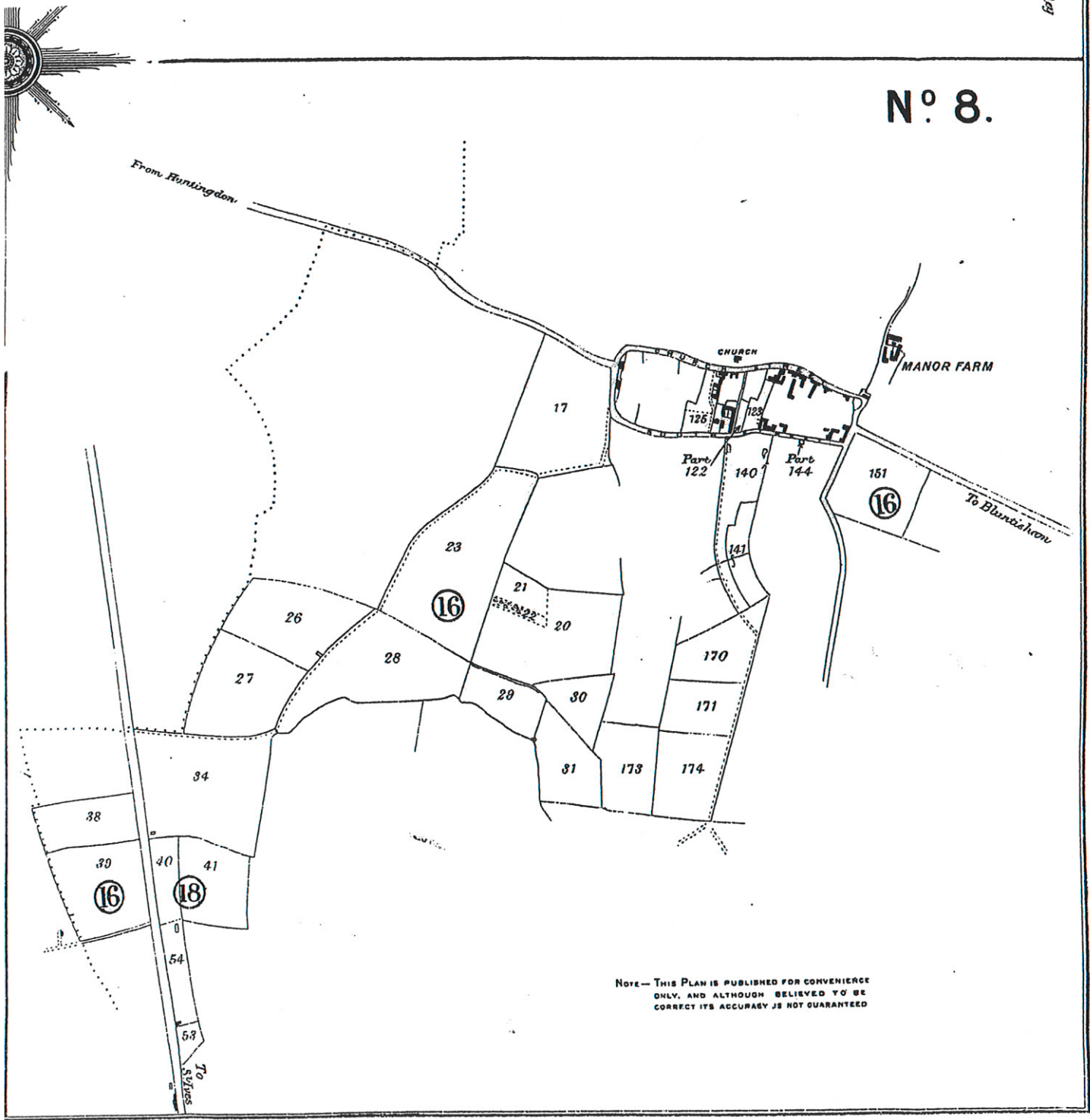
In the occupation of Mr George Gurry, on a yearly October 11<sup>th</sup> Tenancy, expiring 1919, at the low Rental of **£95** per annum.



# Nº 8.

From Huntingdon

To Blankenham



NOTE— THIS PLAN IS PUBLISHED FOR CONVENIENCE ONLY, AND ALTHOUGH BELIEVED TO BE CORRECT ITS ACCURACY IS NOT GUARANTEED



It is interesting to note that except for Manor Farm they were all farmed by Gurrys. These were descendants of Ebenezer Gurry who came to live in the village in the 1830s..

**FULLARDS FARM**

**LOT 16** (on Plan No. 8)

Situate in Woodhurst Village. Three miles from St Ives Market and G.E.R. Station  
extending to 230a. 2r. 21p.(more or less)

**The Residence** is pleasantly situate with South aspect, and the premises are substantial and convenient.

**House** Brick and Tiled and containing Drawing Room, Dining Room, Kitchen, Dairy, Pantry  
Five bed rooms and Two Attics.

**Farm Buildings** Brick and Slated Nag Stable, Four-bay Hovel, Another Four-bay Open Hovel, Granary and Meal House, Two Pigstyes, Eight bay Hovel, Large Barn. Two Cow Lodges, Stable, Chaff Place, Detached Large Cart Hovel and Hen House.

The arable Lands are of good quality, producing large crops.

In the occupation of Mr Edward Gurry, on a Yearly October 11<sup>th</sup> Tenancy, expiring 1919 at the low Rental of £155 10s per annum.

Land Tax £7. 1s. 10d

**HARRADINES FARM**

**LOT 17** (on Plan No. 7)

Situate in Woodhurst Village, three miles from St Ives Market and G.E.R. Station, extending to  
152a. 1r. 1p. (more or less)

**The Farmhouse** is modern and the premises substantial and convenient.

**House** (nearly new) brick and slated, containing Sitting Room, Kitchen and Scullery, Two Pantries  
Three Bed Rooms

**Buildings** Trap House, Four-bay Cart Novel, Stable for nine horses with Chaff and Gear Place,  
Loose Box, Granary, Three-bay Open Cattle Hovel, Loose Box, Two-bay Open Hovel and  
Barn (all brick and slated)

The land is of good, sound, yielding quality.

In the occupation of Mr Ebenezer Gurry, on a Yearly October 11<sup>th</sup> tenancy, expiring 1919, at the low Rental of  
£103 per annum.

**N.B.** There is a Right of Carriage, Cart and Footway by the Tenant of Lot 16 over No.133, which Right expires  
October 11<sup>th</sup> 1919

**LOT 18** (on Plan No. 8)

**Small Holding of Valuable Accommodation  
Pasture**

Situate on the St Ives and Ramsey Road, two miles from the important Market of St Ives,  
abutting on the public road, extending to

18a. 0r, 16p.(more or less)

In the occupation of Mr Edward Gurry, on a Early October 11<sup>th</sup> Tenancy, expiring 1919 at the  
inadequate rental of £17. 10s per annum



# THE OLD WAY OF HARVESTING



## **WAR AGRICULTURAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

These were originally formed during the 1914-1918 war, but disbanded when the war finished. On the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 these committees were reformed. They had the power to determine land use, type of crops to be planted, and ploughing up pasture land for arable farming.

A census of all farms was carried out in 1940 and the information on the following pages comes from these tables.

There was not much information for Farms 9, 10 and 11. Their details are below.

### **FARM No. 9**

**W Cowling at Trinity Hall Farm Old Hurst**

### **FARM No. 10**

**L Sell in South Street who had  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre of strawberries  
and  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre of raspberries.**

### **FARM No. 11**

**This is Huntingdonshire War Agricultural Gr. Sc H (this is as printed on form)**



## FARM No. 1 HOLDICH (RED HOUSE) FARM

<b>OWNER</b>	R Anderson & sons	<b>FARM No. 2</b>	
<b>FARMING</b>	R Anderson & sons	<b>OWNER</b>	Executors of F Reynolds Woodhurst
<b>LAND</b>	50% heavy      50% gravel	<b>FARMING</b>	H Cade tenant (part time)
<b>FARMING QUALITY</b>	40% Fair      60% Bad	<b>OTHER OCCUPATION</b>	Blacksmith
<b>POSITION</b>	Road - good:    Railway - good	<b>LAND</b>	100% heavy
<b>FARM ROADS</b>	None	<b>FARMING QUALITY</b>	Conveniently laid out
<b>FENCES</b>	Bad	<b>POSITION</b>	Road - good:    Railway - bad
<b>DITCHES</b>	Bad	<b>FARM ROADS</b>	None
<b>FIELD DRAINAGE</b>	Fair	<b>FENCES</b>	Good
<b>COTTAGES</b>	None	<b>DITCHES</b>	Good
<b>INFESTATION</b>	Rats & mice Weeds - Twitch - Ragwort - Thistles - & many others	<b>FIELD DRAINAGE</b>	Fair
<b>DERELICT FIELDS</b>	7.636 acres	<b>COTTAGES</b>	None
<b>WATER SUPPLY</b>	Farm house & buildings - well Fields - pond	<b>INFESTATION</b>	None
<b>ELECTRICITY</b>	None	<b>DERELICT FIELDS</b>	None
<b>CLASS</b>	<b>A B C</b>	<b>WATER SUPPLY</b>	Fields - pond
<b>REASON</b>	Lack of capital	<b>ELECTRICITY</b>	None
<b>CONDITION OF LAND</b>	Arable - Bad Pasture - Bad	<b>CLASS</b>	<b>A B C</b>
<b>FERTILISERS ON</b>	Arable - some Grass - no	<b>REASON</b>	Lack of interest in farm
		<b>CONDITION OF LAND</b>	Pasture - Fair

Although there may be a shortage of capital no effort is being made to do anything. What I term a very bad farmer.

The land is good and should be taken over at once.

**FARM No. 3****FARM No. 4 MANOR FARM**

<b>OWNER</b>		Executors of N Farey
<b>FARMING</b>		J Bond for executors
<b>LAND</b>	100% heavy	80% heavy 20% gravel - conveniently laid out
<b>FARMING QUALITY</b>	25% Fair 75% Bad	60% Good 40% Fair
<b>POSITION</b>	Road - Fair Railway - good	Road - good: Railway - good
<b>FARM ROADS</b>	None	Good
<b>FENCES</b>	Bad	Fair
<b>DITCHES</b>	Bad	None
<b>FIELD DRAINAGE</b>	Bad	Good
<b>FARM HOUSE</b>	Fair	Good
<b>FARM BUILDINGS</b>	Fair	Bad
<b>INFESTATION</b>	Twitch & Double back	Rooks, wood pigeons Weeds - black grass
<b>WATER SUPPLY</b>	Farm house & buildings - piped water Fields - pond	None
<b>ELECTRICITY</b>	None	Farm house & buildings - well Fields - pond
<b>CLASS</b>	<b>A B C</b>	None
<b>REASON</b>	Neglect	<b>A B C</b>
<b>CONDITION OF LAND</b>	Arable - Poor Pasture - Bad	Arable - Good Pasture - Good
<b>FERTILISERS ON</b>	None	Arable - adequate Grass - no

This land has been sadly neglected. The farmer informs me that he is now about to put land in order

Although comments appear to be on the light side this is farmed well.



**FARM No. 5 FULLARDS FARM**

**OWNER** E & F Gurry

**FARMING** E & F Gurry (full time)

**LAND** 100% heavy conveniently laid out

**FARMING QUALITY** 50% Good 50% Fair

**POSITION** Road – good: Railway – good

**FARM HOUSE** Good

**FARM BUILDINGS** Good

**FENCES** Fair

**DITCHES** Fair

**FIELD DRAINAGE** Fair

**COTTAGES** Good  
2 Farm area – 2 elsewhere – 2 let on service tenancy

**INFESTATION** Small weeds

**DERELICT FIELDS** None

**WATER SUPPLY** Farm house & buildings – well & piped water

**ELECTRICITY** None

**CLASS** **A B C**

**CONDITION OF LAND** Arable – Good  
Pasture – Fair

**FERTILISERS ON** Arable – adequate  
Grass – some

This farm is in fairly good heart & farmed fairly well.  
The grass fields 79, 80 & 81 require attention, harrowing & dressing.  
Hedges & Dykes are bad surrounding above fields.

**FARM No. 6 HARRADINE FARM**

**OWNER** Mrs S Gurry for executors of Mr Ebenezer Gurry

**FARMING** Mrs Chew (Old Hurst)

**LAND** 100% heavy

**FARMING QUALITY** 70% Good 30% Fair

**POSITION** Road – good: Railway – good

**FARM HOUSE** Good

**FARM BUILDINGS** Good

**FENCES** Good

**DITCHES** Fair

**FIELD DRAINAGE** Fair

**COTTAGE** Good

**INFESTATION** Small weeds

**DERELICT FIELDS** None

**WATER SUPPLY** Farm house & buildings – well & piped water  
Fields – ponds  
Seasonal shortage of water

**ELECTRICITY** None

**CLASS** **A B C**

**CONDITION OF LAND** Arable – Fair  
Pasture – Fair

**FERTILISERS ON** Arable – some  
Grass – no

The farm as a whole is farmed well

**FARM No. 7****NATTS FARM**

**OWNER** Mr A Cooper (Woodhurst)

**FARMING** George Ruff (tenant) (Full time)

**LAND** 100% heavy

**FARMING QUALITY** 80% Fair 20% Bad

**POSITION** Road – good: Railway – good

**FARM HOUSE** Bad

**FARM BUILDINGS** Bad

**FENCES** Good

**DITCHES** Good

**FIELD DRAINAGE** Bad

**INFESTATION** Wild oats

**WATER SUPPLY** Farm house & buildings – well  
Fields – ponds  
Seasonal shortage of water – piped water on road

**ELECTRICITY** None

**CLASS** **A B C**

**REASON** lack of money

**CONDITION OF LAND** Arable – Fair  
Pasture – Fair

**FERTILISERS ON** Arable – some  
Grass – no

Hard working farmer but on heavy going land – badly drained.  
The buildings and farmhouse are a disgrace & should be repaired without further delay.

**FARM No. 8****CHURCH FARM**

**OWNER** F & C Rowell

**FARMING** F & C Rowell (full time)

**LAND** 100% heavy

**FARMING QUALITY** 20% good 40% Fair 40% Bad

**POSITION** Road – good: Railway – good

**FARM ROADS** Fair

**FARM HOUSE** Good

**FARM BUILDINGS** Fair

**FENCES** Bad

**DITCHES** Fair

**FIELD DRAINAGE** Fair

**WATER SUPPLY** Farm house & buildings – well  
Fields – pond

**ELECTRICITY** None

**CLASS** **A B C**

**REASON** Old age

**CONDITION OF LAND** Arable – Fair  
Pasture – Fair

**FERTILISERS ON** Arable – some  
Grass – no

Although the biggest field has been taken over by the W.A.E.C there is still room for improvement on the remaining land. Old age is the chief handicap here.







## EVOLUTION OF THE TRACTOR

1919

# TITAN TRACTORS



2012

This 185 brake horsepower tractor costs about £65,000





# WOODHURST FARMLAND IN 2012



MANOR FARM	FULLARDS FARM	HARRADINE FARM	BULLS FARM	THE GRANGE	MR BIRCH	Belongs to Parish of Woodhurst	Mr Chris Cannon
				G		P	CC
MR ANDERSON	Mr BROWN	MR BURGESS	MR WATSON	MR JOHNSON	R A F WYTON	Mrs Cade	Mr Beer
						C	B

## **FARMING IN WOODHURST IN 2012**

What a contrast to 1812, when horses or oxen pulled the wooden plough, no-one had heard or even dreamt of traction engines, diesel power, combine harvesters and satellite communications. Today the life of a farmer is high-tec, his computer controlled tractor has taken the place of his office. Inside the quiet air-conditioned cab he has fingertip controls, an air suspension seat, a multi-function display screen, satellite guidance and Bluetooth radio/CD player with USB..

In 1812 a 250 acre farm required 20-30 labourers, today, except at very busy times the farm can be worked by the farmer himself and no-one else. This might seem to indicate that today's farmer has an easier life. Far from it, it is a different life, not as physical as 200 years ago, but far more technical, and today's farmer has to be experienced in so many areas. Two hundred years ago the products of the farm would be sold locally or at most within England, and what happened in the rest of the world was of little consequence. Today farming is global and prices obtained for crops can depend on what is happening in the rest of the world. It is essential today that farmers obtain 'farm assured' accreditation to access a wider market and the best prices. Inspectors come annually to access all aspects of the farm production to ensure that standards are being maintained.

Two hundred years ago, apart from grass, the main crops grown were barley, wheat and beans. Today the crops are mainly wheat and oilseed rape with some beans and barley. Two hundred years ago the crop yield for wheat was 10 times that sown. Today it is 52 times. It is said an acre originally meant as much as a yoke of oxen could plough in a day. Later by statute it was a piece of land 220 yards long by 22yards wide = 4840 square yards. Today one farmer in one tractor can plough over 35 acres in a day.

Two hundred years ago in Woodhurst there were a few large farms (over 200acres) but also some small holdings of 10-50 acres. In 1940 the War Agricultural Executive Committee of WAR-AG inspected eleven farms and smallholdings. Today there are four farms, three owned by farmers who live in the village. Other land is owned by people from outside the village. The map opposite illustrates this.



# WOODHURST IN 2012

**This is a very rough comparison with the details about Woodhurst in 1811**

**WATER** piped water to all houses, a few wells and ponds used occasionally.

**HOUSES** 3 Large farm houses 4 thatched houses the other houses from 1 to 5 bedroomed.

**PLOUGHING** By tractor and 5 furrow reversible plough

**CROPS** winter wheat, rape and spring beans

**MANURE** manufactured nitrates, phosphates/ green waste

**CROP YIELD** Wheat 75kg sown = 4,000kg produced  
Rape 2kg sown = 1,800kg produced  
Beans 100 kg sown = 1.600-2,500kg produced

**LIVESTOCK** Cattle few  
Horses Only for riding not cart horses  
Sheep a few  
Hogs a few

**COST OF LABOUR** Grades 1-6 £6.41 –£9.78 an hour Overtime £9.15 – £13-71 an hour

## PRICES OF FOOD (approximate prices)

Cheese=£8.30 a kg	Butter= £6.40 a kg	Eggs= £3 a dozen	Milk= 50p a pint;
Cabbages =80p each	Potatoes=64p a kg	Turnips=£1.10 a kg	Green Beans =£5.30 a kg
Ducks-£10 each	Hens=£5 each	Pork=£6.80 a kg	Bread 79p a 400g loaf
Beef=£10.60 a kg	Lamb=£11 a kg	Bread Flour £1 a kg	

***A kilogram (kg) = 2.2 lbs pence (p) = 2.4 old pennies***

( I tried to find an average price for all the food, which in these times is quite difficult, so apologies if prices are incorrect.

***Thanks are due to Alistair Marr and Neil Farbon who helped me with this booklet.  
Also to Cambridgeshire Record Office at Huntingdon, which holds extensive records.***







