

MEMORIES OF WOODHURST



COPY OF A PAINTING OF THE PARSONAGE WOODHURST

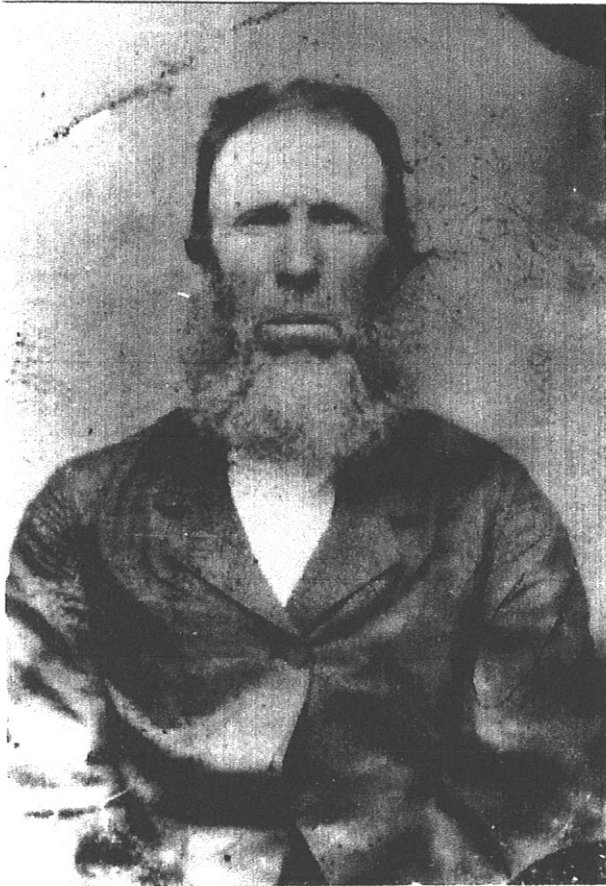
**REV T PARLEY PAINTED THIS IN 1910 WHEN HE WAS PRIEST
IN CHARGE OF WOODHURST CHURCH**

This booklet contains some of the pictures from my Woodhurst collection. I must apologise for the poor quality of some of them, but I thought they contributed to what I was trying to achieve, which was to show present day inhabitants of the village what it was like many years ago.

Many thanks to those who let me copy their pictures, and also to the Record Office and the Norris Museum.

Where the exact or approximate date is known I have included it.

John & Charlotte Viles



John Viles was born in the Wheatsheaf Public House son of William and Elizabeth. The building is still there at the corner of Woodhurst crossroads. He was baptised in Woodhurst church on 28 February 1830. He married Charlotte of Pidley in 1849. They had a daughter Elizabeth.

The family set sail from Liverpool on the ship William D Sewall and landed in New Orleans on 5 December 1851. They took with them three boxes carrying their possessions. On the ship's passenger list John's occupation is given as farmer and their eventual destination is Woodbury Hill,

The United States Census for 1860 shows John, a farmer with his wife Charlotte and four children. Elizabeth, John, Mary and Martha. By 1870 they had another girl called Anna. Charlotte died on 3 May 1902 and John on 4 November 1907. They lived in Woodbury Village, Butler, Kentucky all their lives.

Their son John died on his birthday 14 January 1941 aged 88. He was buried in the Viles Cemetery in Butler.

Woodhurst and Old Hurst Church Band

This photograph of the Woodhurst and Old Hurst Church Band was taken in the garden of the Parsonage in Woodhurst, which is now 'The Limes'. The date is 1897/8. The vicar in the back row is Rev. Kilburn who was living in the parsonage and was curate for Woodhurst and Old Hurst from 1896 until end of 1898. Others identified are Walter Cooper on left with 3 string double bass, Walter West in the middle of front row with the cello and Charles Cooper on the left with a cello.

The Parish Magazine for January 1898 gives a report of the band. It says:-

The Woodhurst and Oldhurst Church Band is also fairly under weigh. It consists of 18 performers under the tuition of Mr Edwin Tyrell of St Ives, and enjoys the distinction of been for the present the largest string band in the County. The practices are found very enjoyable by the performers which is a very good thing for all concerned on the premises and off, because people listening outside might not unnaturally think there were a lot of persons in great pain in the parsonage . The visitors from London have hitherto commented unfliningly on the deep silence reigning in Woodhurst. That complaint at any rate we have put an end to! However everything must have a beginning, and we are making progress. There are more applicants than the band can at present take.

Woodhurst Womens Meeting

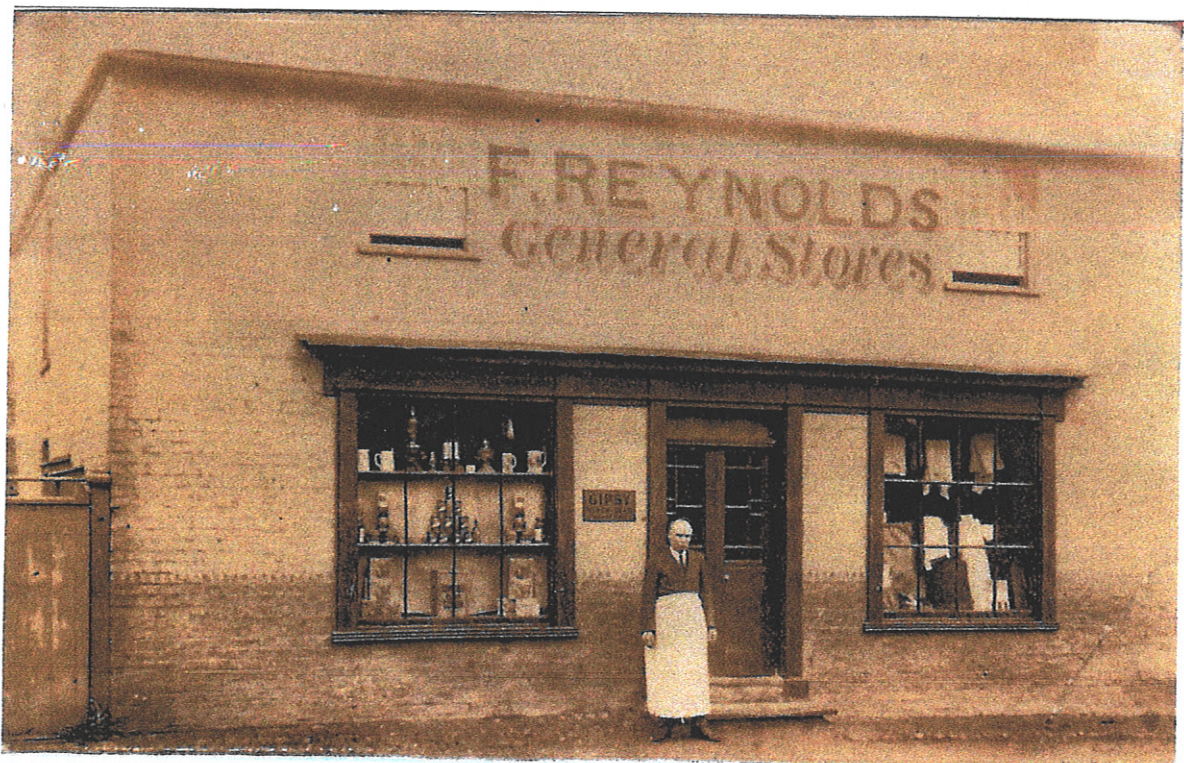
This photograph was probably taken between July and December 1898, in the garden of The Parsonage, now 'The Limes' Rev. Kilburn is again in the picture and the lady to the right of him is probably his sister, a missionary, who according to the parish magazine in July 1898 had recently returned from Bombay.

The owner of the original Mr Furness, who kindly allowed me to make a copy, says that his mother identified some of the people in the photograph. Third and fourth from the right on the front row are Mr & Mrs. Cooper, and third and fourth from the left on the front row are Mr & Mrs West. From other photographs I have I think the first and second on the left are Mr & Mrs Gurry.

Frank and Annie Reynolds and their seven daughters in the garden at Erin House



The shop next door to Erin House



Les Watson

Les was the last owner of the shop/post office before it was closed. He was a marine during the Second World War, which probably helped during this incident that happened in July 1995, just a few years before he retired.

PO robbers flee empty-handed PLUCKY LES

By GLENN THWAITES

TWO armed robbers fled empty-handed after a plucky postmaster told them where to go.

The pair walked into the sub-post office at Woodhurst, near Huntingdon, yesterday lunch-time and demanded money after threatening postmaster Les Watson with a gun.

But Mr Watson, who was alone in the Church Street shop at the time, refused to hand over any cash and swore at the men who ran off.

"Two youngsters came into the shop and one put his hand over the security glass holding what looked like an air pistol.

"I told him to b***** off and they did not stay long after that."

The brave postmaster dismissed the incident and after calling police immediately went back to work.

"They were 20 years old, if that — rough looking oiks with gruff voices. It all happened so quickly I did not get much of a chance to look at them.

"There was nobody else in the shop at all — they came at just the right time — it's the first time we have had an incident like this," said Mr Watson.

The post office was fitted with bullet-proof security glass screens several years ago — but Mr Watson said they were not the reason for his show of bravery.

"The glass panels are supposed to be bullet proof, but I would not like to stand behind them to try them out," he said.

Police launched an immediate search of the area and appealed for witnesses. The attempted robbery happened shortly after noon.

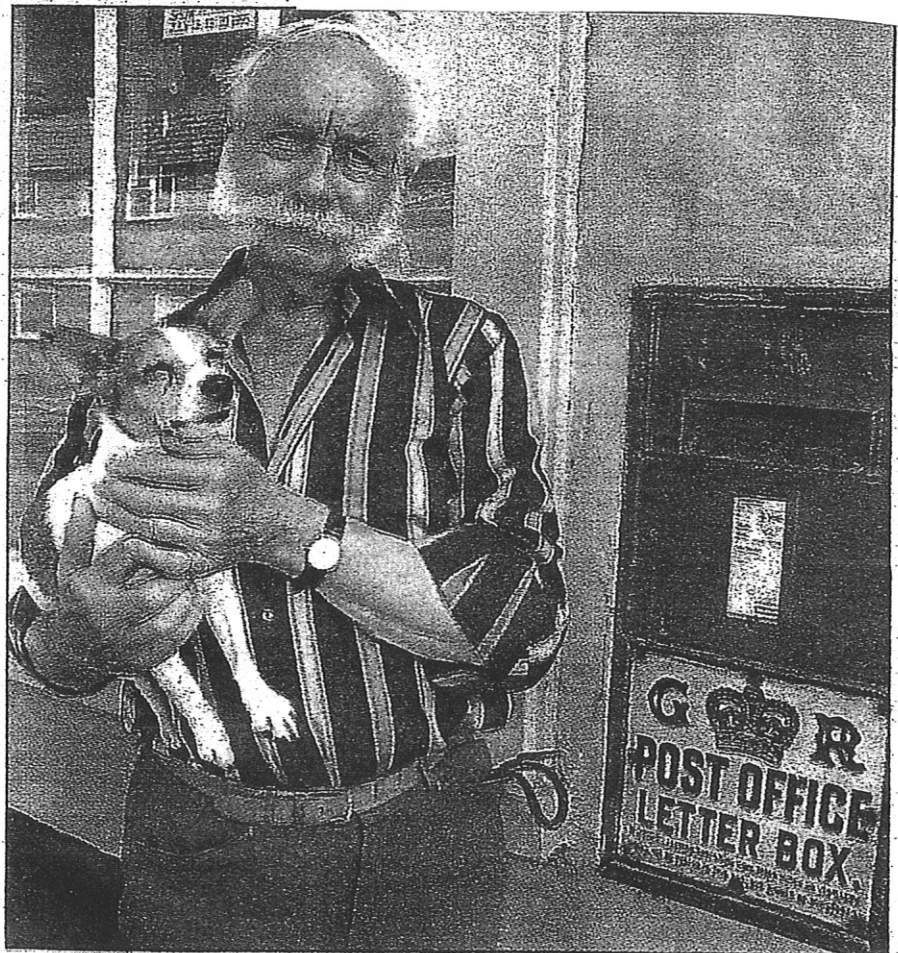
A police spokeswoman said one of the men was about 5ft tall. Both wore woolly hats and jeans. One was wearing a yellow jumper and the other a green jumper. They were both rough-looking and unshaven.

Police are also looking for a grey Ford Escort car which was seen near the post office shortly after the incident.

The car, which had three men inside, was seen to reverse into the cemetery entrance.

Anyone with information is urged to contact police on (01480) 456111.

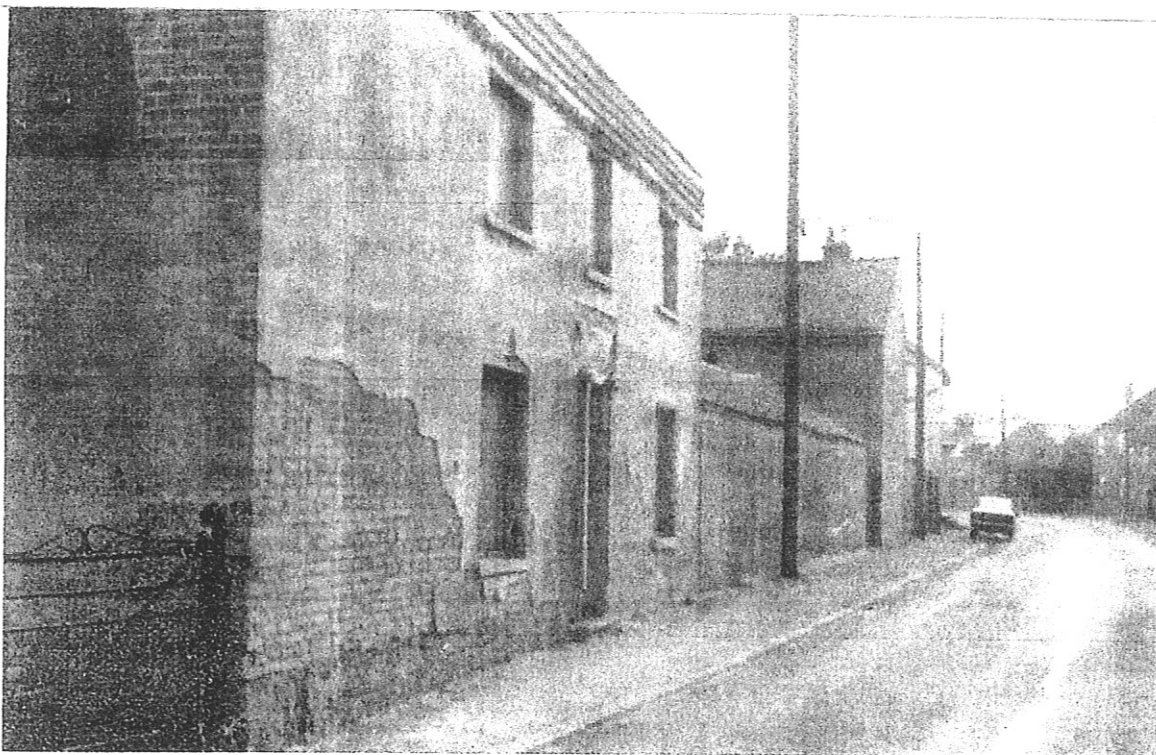
SEES OFF RAIDERS



Brave . . . postmaster Les Watson of Woodhurst sub-post office with his dog, Eli.

Picture: Roger Adams. 4471958.

Bulls Farm which was demolished and a new Bulls Farmhouse built



The original house called The Forge. This was at the west end of Church Street. It was also demolished and a bungalow also called The Forge built in its place.

Rose Cottage in South Street Woodhurst in the early 1900s. Joseph Cooper and his family.



The cottage today, now called The Willows, but on the outside little changed in over 100 years.

Horseshoe Cottage in the early 1900s when it was the Three Horseshoes Public House. It became a private house in 1922.



Manor Farm in 1897

STREET SCENES



Church Street looking west in 1930



Church Street looking west. Entrance to chapel on left. Not sure of date but think it is earlier than photograph above



Susan Cooper (in middle) and her family outside her cottage in 1930s.

Susan Cooper nee Beck was born in Dec 1859, She married Walter Cooper the parish clerk. She died in 1940 aged 80. The cottage was in the terrace which was replaced by the church bungalows



The village pump which was used in 1930s to draw water.

It is in the same position today but cannot be used to pump water.

The Woodhurst Chapel and school when they were put up for sale.

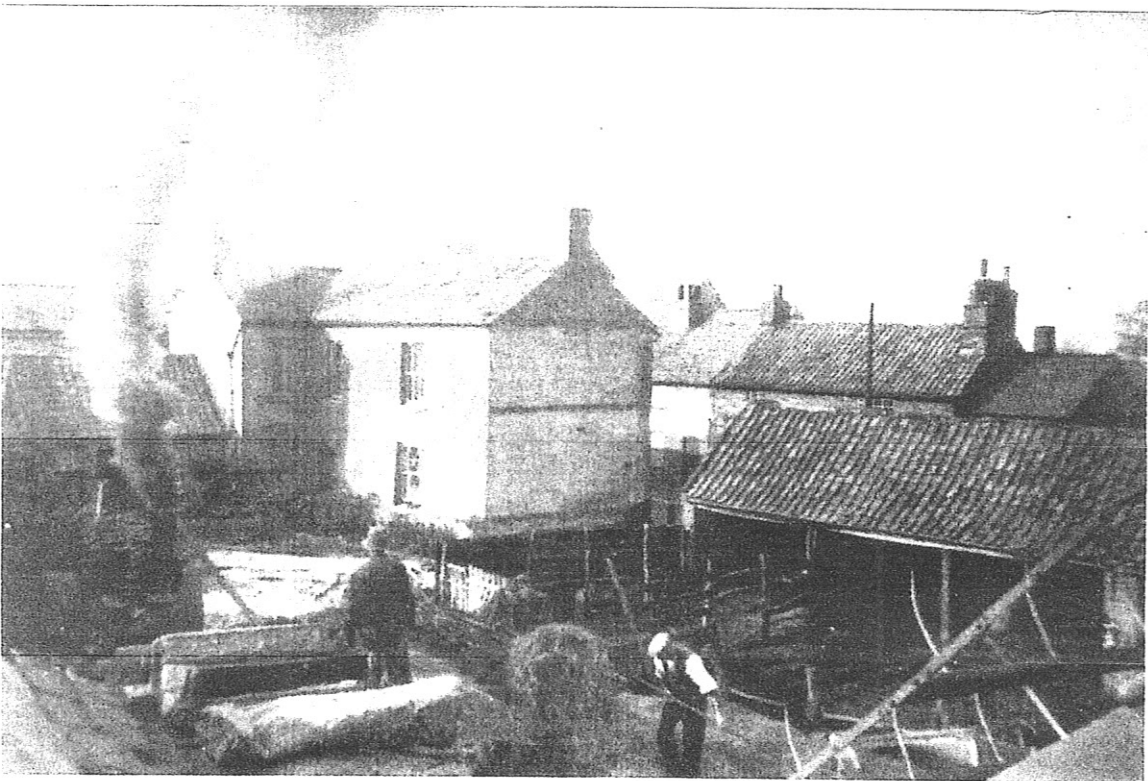
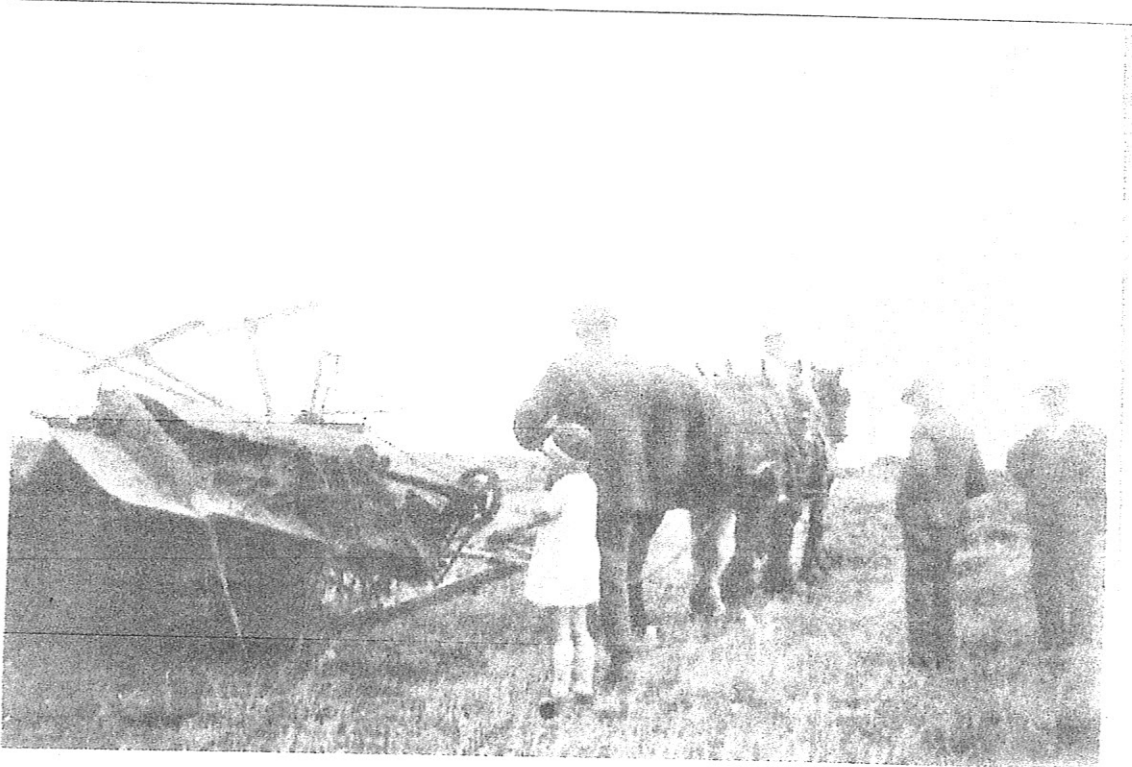


View of the back of the chapel and school. The school is the small building on the right of the picture.



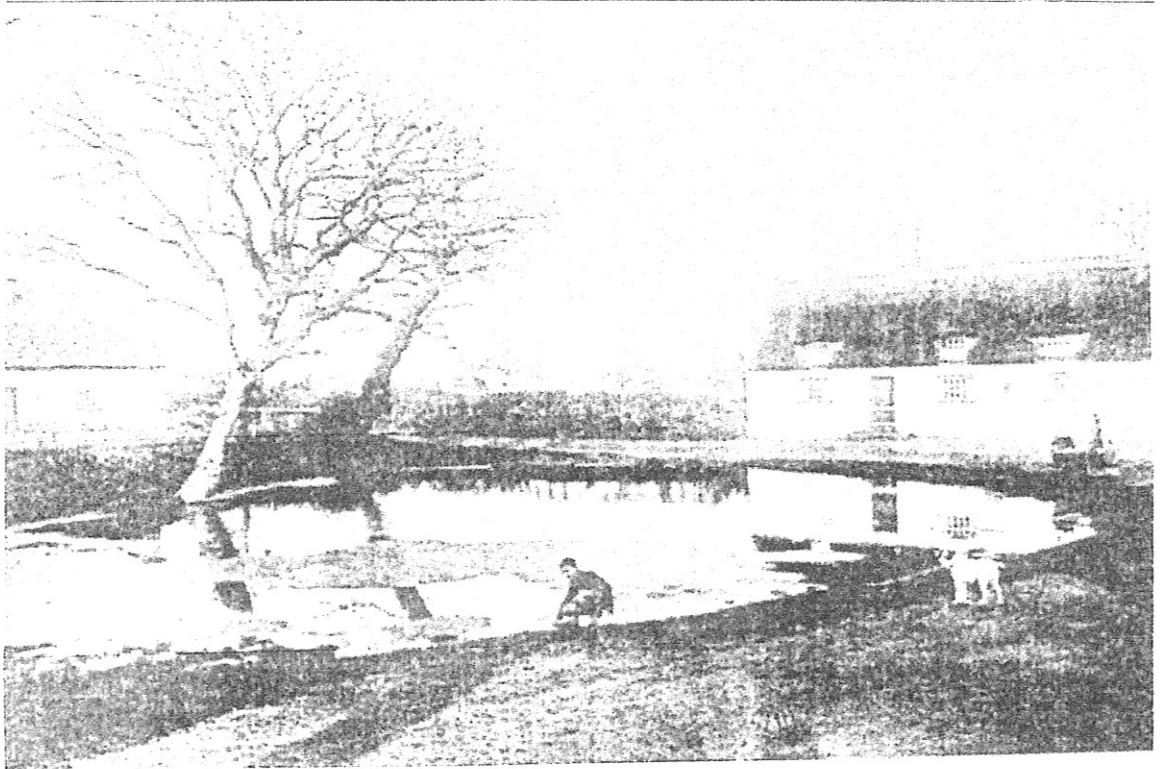
View from the front. The school closed in July 1963, the children then attended Warboys Primary School. By this time the Ivo secondary school had been built, so after 11 children went there if they had not passed the scholarship to go to Ramsey Abbey.

Reaper/binder in the fields. It cut the corn and tied it in sheaves

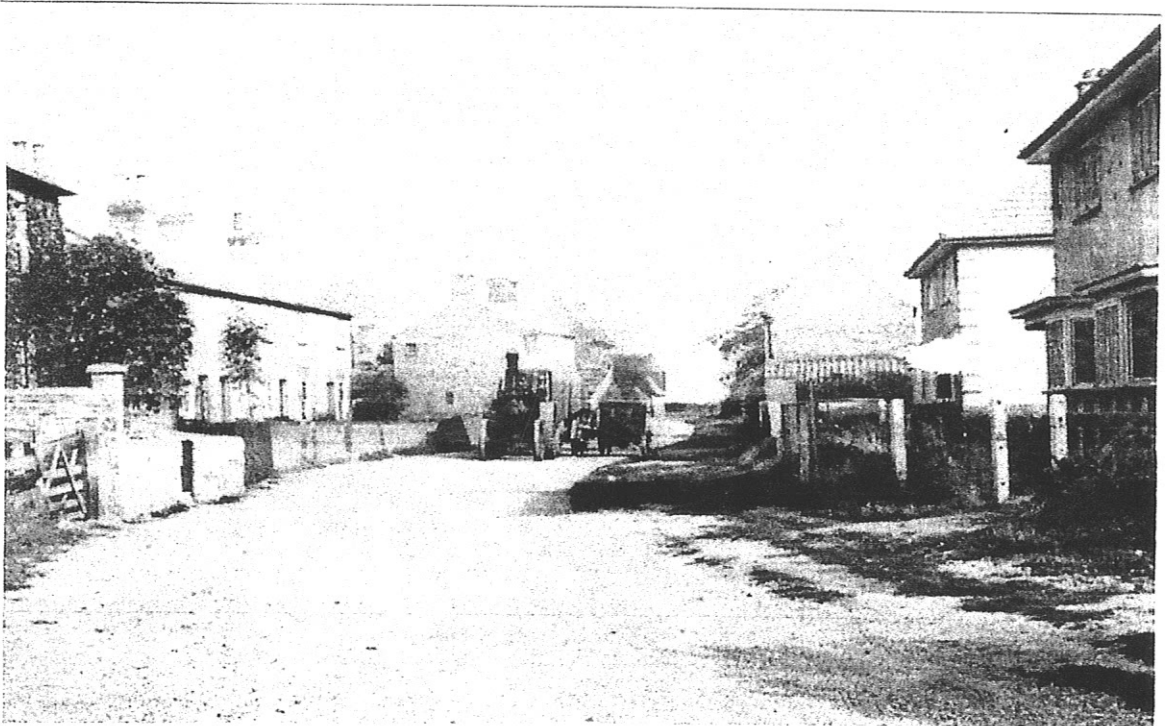


Thrashing the corn in Stokes Farmyard. St John's Close is now built where the farmhouse and yard was.

STREET SCENES



Around the pond in 1938



South Street looking east in the 1930s