

BRIGSTOCK FARMERS – PART III

OLD PARK FARM

Mr Twelvetree farmed here for many years. He mainly kept store cattle for fattening. The farm was overrun by rabbits. The farmer would catch some and take them to Kettering market most Fridays. The poachers, more than likely, would take a few. Eventually the rabbits caught a disease called 'spotted liver' and so most of them were killed.

PARK FARM BULLYMORE'S FARM

Mr Bullymore farmed there during the First World War. Mr Edward Starsmore worked on the farm. The Woodland Pytchley Hunt held point to point races on the farm land prior to moving to the site near Dusthill Road. Mr W. Buff Coales then followed Mr Bullymore at this farm. He was a dealer in cattle and attended most of the cattle markets in the area. In those days cattle were driven to the markets along the roads and casual labour, called drovers, were hired for this purpose. Cattle trucks, of course, did not exist. The two men who helped this farm to take the cattle to market were Mr Ronnie Shiells and Mr Vic Coales.

Mr Harry Jackson and Mr Coales' son, Gordon, worked on the farm with Mr George Sturgess helping in the summer. Mr Coales moved to Sudborough and carried on farming in that village. The farm was then taken over by Mr Claud Palmer who built up a herd of milking cows. He had this herd of Fresian cows for many years and then sold them to take up sheep farming. His sheep took many prizes in local shows. Mr Palmer was a keen horseman and liked hunting. He bred horses and had ponies which his daughters used to ride in gymkhanas. Mr Palmer died in his sixties and left a widow and two daughters, Anne and Jean. Jean and her husband, Mr Ritchie, took over the farm.

Mr John Wright

Mr and Mrs John Wright lived at 54 High Street, Brigstock and farmed Bocase Farm for many years. He also farmed Lucas Farm. The farm consisted of land between Benefield Road and Old Dry Lane. This farm land is now farmed by Mr Singlehurst and Mr W. Hall. Mr Wright was a forester on the Fermyn Woods Estate. Mr Davidson lived there at the time. He sold timber, most of which was exported to America. Mr Wright had four sets of horses and drags which transported the timber to the stations at Corby and Weldon. He also had three sets of horses and drags moving timber at Lincoln. These sets of horses were in Lincoln for thirteen months. The horses and drags were taken to Lincoln by train, but they had to walk back. One of the people responsible for this long walk back to Brigstock with the horses was Mr Harry Allen.

Once there was a huge oak tree standing on the side of the road leading to Luscombe's Farm near Samby Wood. It was so big it was called the King's Oak. The tree was sold (standing) for £76. The dimensions of this tree were:
Total length of tree 45 feet

Cubic volume .388 cubic feet under the bark

The tree was felled in 1911 and it was removed by Mr Miles of Stamford with his steam engine.

Mr Wright owned Pytchley House, Barrack Yard and the Blacksmith's shop all in the High Street. Mr W. Abbott built several stables in Barrack Yard where horses were stabled in the winter. Mr W. Reeve rented the blacksmith's shop for many years where he practised his craft of the village blacksmith.

Mr Wright's daughter, Elizabeth, married Mr William Shiells and they lived in Pytchley House. Mr Shiells worked on the farm and was chauffeur to Mr Jack Wright when Mr Rollie Green left.

Mr Wright had the shoot on the estate, which included several woods, which are now owned by the Forestry Commission. On shooting days the beaters would be paid 5s a day and a rabbit thrown in for dinner. When rabbit was not available a slice of meat was given to them which would be toasted on a stick in front of a wood fire. The meat was eaten between two thick slices of bread, usually followed by a bottle of beer. Mr Tommy Starsmore was in charge of the game cart.

Mr Wright was also a keen cricketer. A cricket pitch was situated in the park and friendly matches took place between different teams.

Vivian Shiells

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