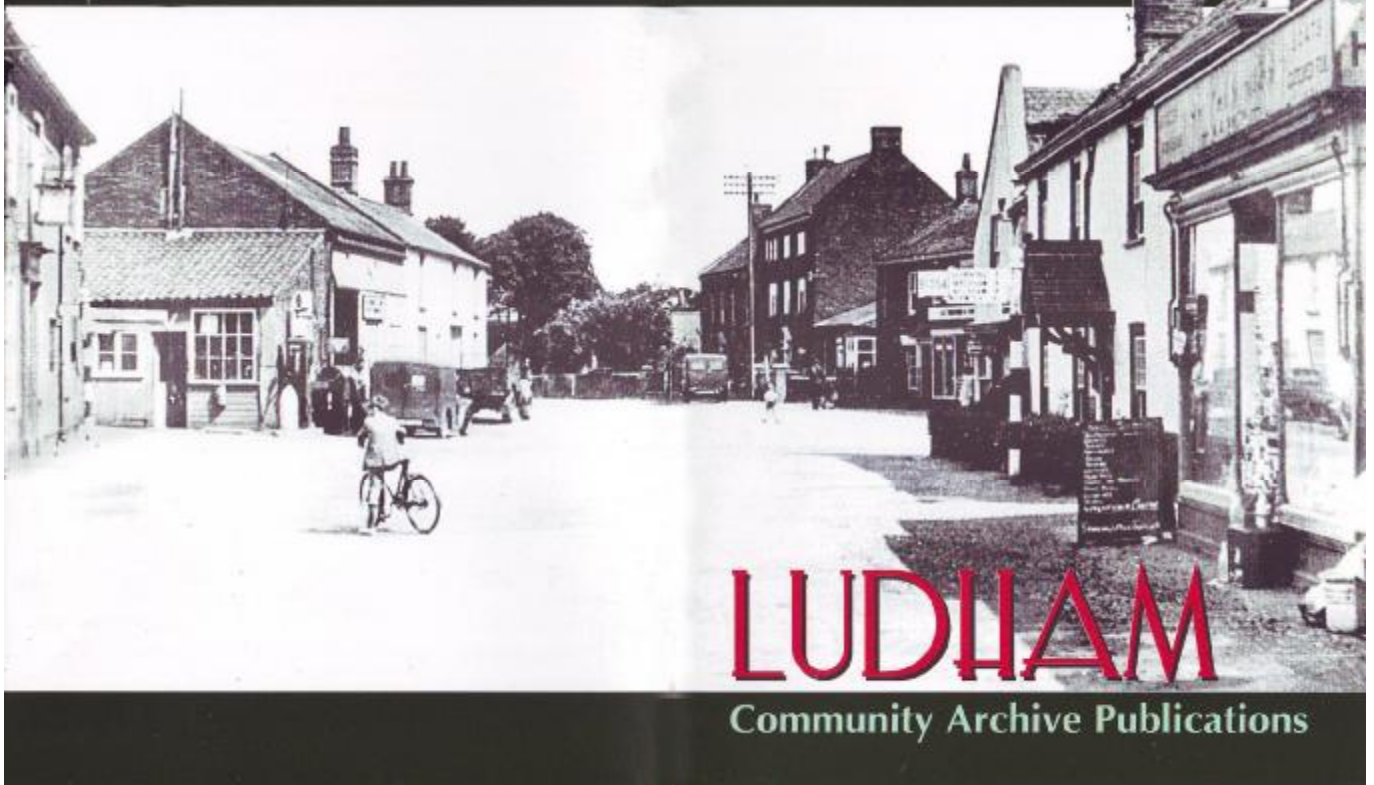


LUDHAM FARMS
1900-2000
BY MIKE FULLER



The Ludham Community Archive Group

The group came together during the Jubilee year of 2002 to celebrate it through a community event in the village. The result was a textile triptych, which was completed with the collaboration of over 100 residents of the village. It is now on show in the Parish Church of St. Catherine's. We were supported in this enterprise by the Arts Officer of North Norfolk District Council, Brenda Seymore, and by our Art Tutor, Nicky Maule.

While the project was in progress we introduced local walks, led by knowledgeable villagers, to learn more about the community in which we live. Winter walks also evolved from this. We were also introduced to a method of recording the information that we were acquiring during this process and it was at this point that the archive aspect of the project really began.

Ludham Archive is held on computer and continues to expand as further information comes to light. Photographic, pictorial and a variety of other images, supplemented by reminiscences form the basis of the archive. In addition, many people have been interviewed and the results recorded. All of this is seen as a beginning of what should become a continuing process to record the evolution of a changing community. Archive materials are open to access by villagers and can be seen at regular evening meetings. Dates of meetings can be found in the monthly parish newsletter.

The archive provides the source of material to make publications available as CD Rom and other visual media, as well as pamphlets and booklets.

LUDHAM FARMS

1900-2000

BY MIKE FULLER

The Broadland village of Ludham has its roots firmly based in agriculture. Farming has been the mainstay of the local economy for generations and provided much of the work for the local population. The village is surrounded by rich farmland which has been part of one farm or another for the last 1000 years.

Mike Fuller grew up in Ludham where his father worked on a local farm. Here Mike learned first hand about farming in Ludham.

Mike Fuller is a founding member of the Ludham Community Archive Group. This booklet contains Mike's memories of farming in Ludham. Let them be your guide and enjoy the trip.

BEECH FARM

Beech Farm stood at the much altered junction of Horsefen Road and Yarmouth Road (known locally as Pit Corner). Yarmouth Road has been straightened and widened to ease the flow of modern traffic and new houses have been built.

There were two entrances to Beech Farm, one led to the house (which is still there) and farm buildings and the second led to the stack yard and storage buildings. In the early part of the 20th century, there was a barn and cattle yard plus a pond which stood on Pit Corner where the two modern houses now stand. There was an orchard between the house and Mill Lane.

The farm was owned by George Frederick Boddy until 1922 when it was purchased by Charles Spurgeon Green. In 1961, Mrs Green sold the farm to Edward Brooks who, in



1962, created Wri-Brooks Farms uniting Beech Farm, Limes Farm and High House Farm. The farm included The Maltings (now converted to holiday homes), the nearby sand quarry and the brick kilns which stood next door near to Womack Staithe. The farm land included part of The Hulver (an area of marshy ground near Horse Fen) and the land now occupied by holiday chalets near Womack Staithe. The large tree with the "Mardling Seat" built round it at the top of Horsefen Rd was on Beech Farm land as was Latchmore Park, now a housing estate. Beech Farm donated the land for Ludham Fire Station and also for a bowling green nearby. The fire station is no longer in use, but the building (now an office) is still there.

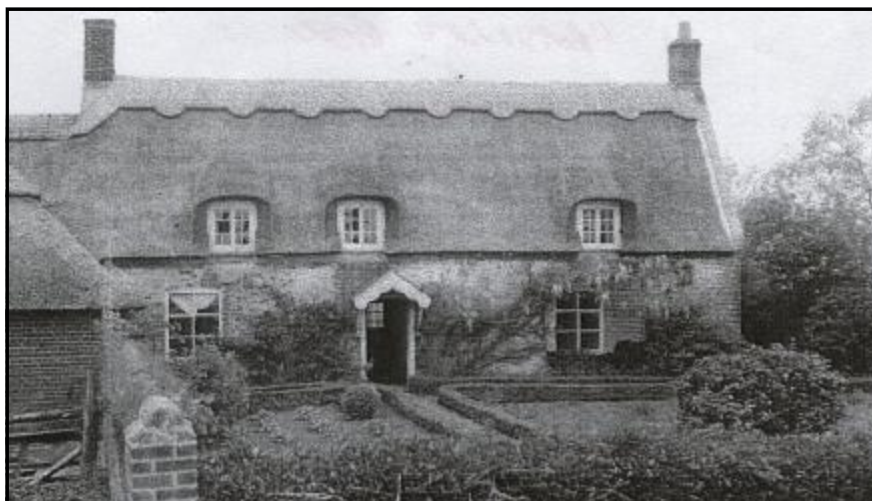
BROADMEAD FARM

This cattle and arable farm with its thatched farmhouse, barn, yard and outbuildings is situated on the right hand side of Turf Fen Road as you head towards the marshes.

In 1879, James Lemmon lived at the farm although it was owned by George Daniel

before passing to William Tubby the younger. In 1909, the farm was purchased by Edward Boardman, the owner of How Hill and it became part of the How Hill estate. The farm was let to John Wright until he died after which his wife, Charlotte, sold off the stock.

After the Second World War, the farm house was sold to Brigadier Graham and the land was farmed by the Boardman family. In 1990, Mike Flett bought the house and converted it into two houses.



RICE'S FARM

This small farm on Staithe Road next to Rice Cottages comprised a barn and sheds surrounding a cattle yard. The Ludham Strict and Particular Baptist Chapel adjoined the yard. In 1922, it was farmed by Miss Abigail Rice who lived in the cottages. Later Dennis Smith kept pigs there.

Following closure, the chapel was used for small businesses prior to being demolished to make way for housing.

COLDHARBOUR FARM

Situated at the end of Coldharbour Road, this arable and cattle farm was part of the "Goose Croft Lands" which were located to the west of Womack Water. The farm was built by Robert Dawson in 1874. In the early 1900s, James Rouse farmed here and also owned Coldharbour Mill. In 1922, J. Grimes took over and then later Dennis Roll until the farm buildings were converted into houses.



CROME'S FARM

This arable and cattle farm is located to the north of How Hill. It included Crome's Broad. Aaron Neave sold the farm to Edward Boardman in the early years of the last century. It was then let to Charles Deary. Later it was

farmed by the Drake Family until it was returned to the Boardman Family and renovated to a high standard



DOBBIN'S FARM (Home Lea)

This farm was located at the end of Turf Fen Road. The house remains, but the land has been sold to other farms.

The farm was sold to Edward Boardman about 1910 when the Aaron Neave estate was auctioned. It was let to Dobbin Alexander who farmed it for the first part of the 20th Century before it was sold to Neil Howie.

It was a marsh farm with a small amount of arable land.



GARRETT'S FARM

This farm was located in Ludham Street near to the Latchmore footpath. It comprised a large house with pieces of land scattered around the village. Sold in 1857, it no longer exists as a farm.



FRITTON FARM

This farm, situated at the corner of Fritton Back Lane and Fritton Road was an arable farm with land on both sides of the road at Fritton. It was owned by Thomas Slipper in the early part of the 20th Century. Fritton Road was known as Slipper's Loke at this time.



In the 1920s, the Government wanted land to give to soldiers returning from the 1st World War. Thomas refused to sell part of the farm and so the Government bought it all. The farm was then split up into smallholdings. There were seven to the north on the airfield side of the road where

seven wooden houses were built, and four larger holdings on the Fritton side with the tenants living in the farm house, the house next door and two cottages in Fritton Road.

This arrangement continued until the 2nd World War when the RAF Ludham airfield was built on the northern side and the holdings there were cleared. After the war, just four holdings were left and as each tenant left, one of his neighbours took over. Finally, the Council sold all the holdings in the 1980s.

Thomas Slipper bought land at nearby High Mill and in 1932 built High Mill House which was then sold to Major Medicott MP who was there until 1946

Tenants include: George King, Billy Allen, Jack Ebbs, Leslie Watson, Jack King, Donald Cooke, Herbert Clarke, Sidney Starkings, Frank Bensley and Len Fuller.



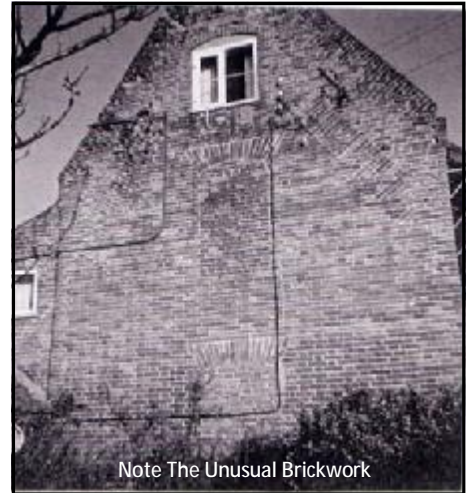
GREEN FARM (Now known as Low Farm)

This farm is located in Fritton Road near to Horsefen Marshes. It was arable and cattle with a milking herd and bullocks for fattening.

Reginald Bell farmed here from 1922 to 1935 when the farm was bought by Clifford Kittle. It was farmed with horses until 1943 when an iron wheel tractor was used. The farm house had a scullery with a butter and cheese making room at the end.

There was a small yard with two boxes at the other end of the house. Across this yard was the large yard with boxes on one side and a barn on the other. Nearer the road was the stable for 4 horses and a cow shed with 12 stalls (later another 16 were added). There was a pond at the entrance to the farm and an osier bed near the marshes. In 1935, this farm joined up with Malthouse Farm.

During the 2nd World War, the grass on the airfield was cut and carted to Green Farm as hay. The farmhouse has recently been demolished and a new house built on the site.



Note The Unusual Brickwork



THE GRANGE

This arable farm was situated at the corner of Catfield Road and Grange Road. The farm house was added to already existing stables in 1836 by William Hacon. Later, the Fitz-Hugh family moved in and had a verandah built on 3 sides. At that time, this was one of the largest farms in Ludham with land between Catfield Road and Malthouse Lane plus a cottage called Bycroft built by Mrs Fitz-Hugh in the late 1890s.

The original stables are still standing and are in unchanged condition with varnished woodwork and the horse's name plates. There is a hay loft with holes for feeding the horses and a tack room with all the harness still there complete with the tools and a stove.

The meadow (now Grange Close) was used for donkeys, but was ploughed up for corn in the 2nd World War.

In earlier years, Malthouse Farm was part of this farm.



HARRISON'S FARM AND BOATYARD

This farm was in Horsefen Road and had a boatyard which built the only wherry to be made in Ludham. It was bought on 16th April 1867 by Henry Moon Harrison. It was made up of two houses, Womack House and

Fenside with a stable block, barn, pigsty and boathouse. There was a slipway and two dykes leading from the water.

The farm stretched from South Dyke by Womack Staithe to Little Holland Cottages. The farm also had 12 acres on Horsefen Marshes including an Osier bed.

In 1904 the boatyard was sold with the houses and buildings going to different owners. In 1947, Millicent Beadle sold Womack House to Dr Gabriel and Fenside was sold to the Wards. In the late 70's Mr and Mrs Dennis bought Womack House. Chris Balls bought Misty Morn, the bungalow in the grounds of the boatyard.

Now the boatyard area is houses and the area between the boatyard and South Dyke is holiday chalets built by Ernie Taylor.



HALL COMMON FARM

Situated in Staithe Road, this farm is built with Dutch style gable ends like "The Dutch House" next door. It was a cattle and arable farm.

In the early 1900's when Mr Grapes was the owner, there was a large fire which destroyed all the thatched buildings except for the house. Later it was owned by Eric H Woods and in 1933 by Maxwell George Goodchild. By 1944 the Ritches

family were farming there before the farm was let again and fell into some disrepair. Mr Taylor bought the farm and still lives and farms there.

There used to be a footpath next to the house which led down to Womack Water.

The area is still associated with the artist Edward Seago who lived next door.



HIGH HOUSE FARM - FRITTON

Situated at the junction of Yarmouth Road and Fritton Road, this was a cattle and arable farm with yards, boxes, a barn, a stack yard and blacksmith's shop. Horse power was used until 1936 when one of the first tractors in Ludham took over.

It was farmed by Walter Barrett in the early 1900s and then until 1935 by

William Grimes when it was bought by Buller Goodwin. In the 1960s it was sold to Edward Brooks of High Mill and it is still in the family.

Water for the farm came from a well behind the house with a swivel outlet to supply both house and farm. The large barn was blown down in a 1980s gale. The house is built from old bricks thought to come from a farm near High Mill Cottages.



HOW HILL FARM

Situated near How Hill House, this farm was part of Aaron Neaves' estate in the early 1900s. Edward Boardman bought it in 1910 and his son Stuart farmed it as a fruit and arable farm until he was killed in WWII. It is now a holly farm run by his son Peter and his nephews. It includes Crome's Farm and Page's Farm. It features a water garden created from

the marshes opposite.

LUDHAM HALL FARM

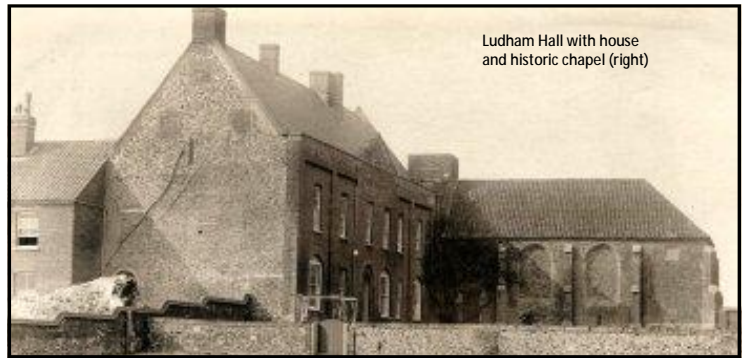
This historic farm features a chapel (now a barn) and was once the seat of the Bishop of Norwich. It has a long association with St Benet's Abbey and is situated on Hall Rd. It was owned by the Church Commissioners (later Miner's Union and now Crown Estates)

Up to the 1940s, it was farmed by William Wright and Tom Worts. After which, the Ritchie Family became tenants.

The farm has a large acreage of arable and marsh land with 3 milking parlours at

Coldharbour, St Benet's and near the St Benet's Road.

The farm has another large and historic barn and a pond. It has seen many changes down the centuries. Formerly, the farm had its own blacksmith's shop and forge.



LAUREL'S FARM

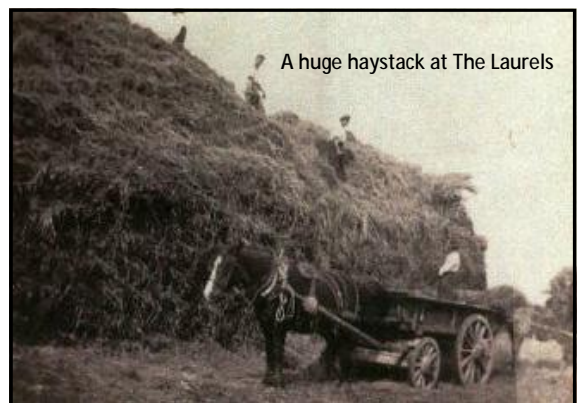
(Home Farm in 1900)

The arable and cattle farm had a house with yard and barns on one side of School Rd and boxes and a pond on the other. It was the only farm to keep sheep and the last to use horses.

In 1904 it was bought by the Mattocks Family of Page's farm. As well as the land round the farm, there were marshes beside the River Ant. The farm also included Manships Farm further down School Rd with its cattle yard, 4 cottages and wet marsh with paddock and pond where Willow Way now stands.

The Mattocks farmed until the 1960s and then sold to the Patterson Family with the Ritchies doing the actual farming. The house was then sold and the barns converted into dwellings. Manships was later converted into a bungalow and the 4 cottages converted to 3.

Adjoining the wet marsh were 3 additional cottages and a drinking water spring called The Pulk.



MALTHOUSE FARM

Situated on the corner of Grange Road and Malthouse Lane, this small arable and cattle farm is thought to have once been part of The Grange.

The first owner was Alfred Kittle, father of Clifford of Green Farm. Clifford took over the farm after his father died.

Kenneth Grapes and family lived in the house until it was sold after Clifford Kittle's death. The land then went to Michael Kittle of Horning. There was a barn and cattle sheds attached to the house. Across the road were cart sheds and boxes with a pond in the corner of the field.

MANOR FARM

This farm is located in Staithe Road at the corner with Lover's Lane. It was an arable and cattle farm with a cow parlour (now a bungalow). Benjamin Bond farmed here in the early 20th Century and then Fred Roll took over. It is still in the Roll Family today with grandson, Graham Roll.

The farm had a large barn and cattle yard with boxes in earlier times. The barn is now a house and two modern barns stand in the place where the yard was.

The farm had land behind the house and also marshes adjoining. It also owned land by Norwich Rd where Broad Reaches is now built and the site of the former Rolls Garage (now 3 houses).

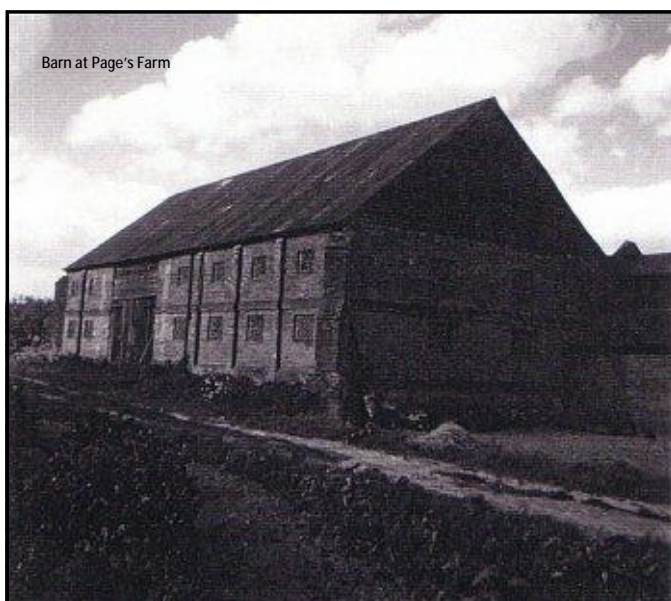
The 1933 Kelly's Directory notes that Herbert Miller was farm bailiff to J Dale of Manor Farm.



FARMS ON THE AIRFIELD BEFORE 1941

There were 7 Government smallholdings on the land which later became the airfield. They were set up after WWI for returning servicemen. See Fritton Farm for details.

The last two owners were Walter Haygreen and Wilfred Adams



PAGE'S FARM

This farm is on the How Hill Road on the right after the sharp bend. It was an arable and cattle farm and has a very interesting barn.

It was farmed by Aaron Neave until 1910 when it was sold by his estate to Edward Boardman and let to William Mattocks until he moved to The Laurels. A Mr Vincent was then there as farm bailiff until Peter Boardman incorporated the farm into How Hill Farm. It is now run by his nephew.



COOK'S FARM SHOP

A small farm behind the former shop in Ludham Street. The entrance was on Catfield Road and the land included the chapel and school field. The barn was replaced by a house and the other farm buildings were burnt down in the

1960s. Farmed by Aaron Neave and later by Herbert Cook.

LIMES FARM (Whitegates)

Located at the end of Clint Street with land between it and the River Ant. An arable and cattle farm with a barn, cattle yards and sheds. Formerly known as *Whitegates* after its owner.

It was bought by William Wright and his son Douglas lived there later. It then joined up with Beech Farm and High House Farm to become Wri-brooks Farms Ltd. After Douglas' death, his daughter lived there, but the land was farmed by other farms. Two cottages adjoin the farm house and there were once more cottages in the road.



WHITEHOUSE FARM (Tubby's Farm)

This farm is on the junction of Clint Street and Norwich Road. It has a herd of milking cows and some arable land, mostly marshes between Norwich Rd and the River Ant.

Benjamin Kittle was resident until 1912 when it was sold to William Wright who

farmed it until the 1940s. It was then bought by Mr Tubby who farmed it until his death when his son took over.

There was a house and barn with a yard, boxes and sheds. The house has been rebuilt and most of the other buildings replaced.





WALTON HALL FARM

This farm is situated on the border of Ludham and Catfield at the end of Gypsy Lane. It is named after the hall that was there in the 1800s. In a sale of this farm in 1912, it was described as a three horse stable, bullock boxes and piggeries. It was occupied by Kirby

England until Michaelmas 1912.

Samuel Johnson was the owner until the 1940s when Herbert (Dobby) Clarke took over until the 1980s when it was sold to the Helston Family.

During WWII, some of the land became part of the airfield. After the war, some of the buildings were converted into a cow parlour and then later into a piggery.

ROSE VILLA FARM

This small farm was situated behind Rose Villa House opposite the Baker's Arms on Yarmouth Road. It was owned by William Heath and later farmed by his wife up to 1939 after which it seems to have gone out of existence as a separate farm.

It had a small milking herd.



LUDHAM BRIDGE FARM

Situated between The Dog Inn and Ludham Bridge this farm had a few marshes and a small set of buildings. It was farmed by Charles Howell in the 1920s with cattle and pigs.

Mrs Airey farmed there during the war years and then it was owned by Jack King who turned much of the farm into the current caravan site. The buildings were let to Len

Fuller for pigs in the 60s and 70s and are currently occupied by a blacksmith's shop.





This barn in Malthouse Lane burned down in 1950. It may have been part of a farm in the past

Farms Booklet Issue 1. November 2008

Written by Mike Fuller

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