

## **Stanley Gordon Stephenson and John Lawrence Siddorn – Farm Students at Field Farm, 1911**

The census in Wickhamford on the night of Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1911 recorded 259 persons staying in the village. Most were permanent residents and a few were household visitors. Some permanent residents were away from home that night and were counted elsewhere. In the case of George and Helen Lees-Milne, of the Manor, they were probably overseas, as they do not appear on the returns for England, Wales or Scotland.

### **Field Farm**

At Field Farm, Longdon Hill, the home of farmer Benjamin Carter, there were two young men as boarders whose occupations were given as '*Farm Pupil (worker)*'. They were John Lawrence Siddorn, born in Heaton Chapel, Lancashire and Stanley Gordon Stephenson, born in Althorpe, Lincolnshire.



*The farmhouse at Field Farm, pictured in the 1980s.*

Benjamin Carter rented the farm from Trustees of the Estate of J.P. Lord and the Valuation Survey of 1910-15 described the house and recorded the land as consisting of 291 acres. Amongst the farm buildings listed were wood, iron and brick cow sheds, a granary and calf pen, cow stalls for 8 with a feeding passage and brick & tile cow stalls for 14. The livestock were dairy cattle and the farm pupils would have been learning the ways of tending and milking a dairy herd as well as the related farm husbandry – grass management, slurry spreading *etc.*

**Stanley Gordon Stephenson**

Stanley Gordon Stephenson’s birth was registered in the June Quarter of 1891 in the Registration District of Doncaster, West Yorkshire. This covered parts of North Lincolnshire, including Althorpe. His age was given on the 1911 census form as ‘18’ when Benjamin Carter completed it, but he was in fact 19 or just turned 20 by that time.

In the 1901 census, Stanley was living with father and step-mother, James and Susannah Stephenson at Brasted House, Althorp and his father was a farmer. (James’ first wife, Clara Frances *nee* Adams had died in 1892. She was born in Brasted, Kent, hence the name of the farm). After his time in Wickhamford, which may have been a few months or perhaps a full year, the next reference to him is his marriage in 1917. This took place at the parish church in Llandrillo yn Rhos (Rhos-on-Sea), Denbighshire. His profession was given as ‘Farmer’ of ‘Northlands, Winterton, Doncaster’ (*although nearer to Scunthorpe than Doncaster*) and his father, James, was described as a landowner. His bride was Elvira Peltzer, a daughter of Charles Armand Peltzer, a ‘Director of Machine Works’. Elvira lived in Ebbeston Road, Rhos, but in 1901 her family were in Accrington, Lancashire, where Charles was a manager in a cotton mill. He had been born in Ghent, Belgium, in about 1854 (his father being Prussian) and had married Marianne Collier in Bury in 1883.

1917. Marriage solemnized in the Parish Church in the Parish of Llandrillo yn Rhos in the County of Denbigh

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
461	June 21 <sup>st</sup> 1917.	Stanley Gordon Stephenson Elvira Peltzer	26 26	Bachelor Spinster	Farmer -	Northlands Winterton Doncaster Witcham Ebbeston Road	James Stephenson Charles Armand Peltzer	Landowner Director of Machine Works
Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England after Banns by me, E. James Poore Vicar								
This Marriage was solemnized between us,		Stanley Gordon Stephenson Elvira Peltzer		in the Presence of us,		W. Stephenson Marianne Peltzer Charles Armand Peltzer		

Church Register entry for the marriage of Stanley Gordon Stephenson and Elvira Peltzer on 21<sup>st</sup> June 1917.

## **The Great War**

A search of the World War 1 military records throws no light on whether Stanley Gordon Stephenson served in any arm of the services, but remarkably there is a record for Elvira Peltzer. She was a nurse in the French Red Cross and was awarded Distinguish Conduct Medals and Military Medals, according to the records. She had been born in Altrincham, Cheshire in mid-1891, but not baptised until 12<sup>th</sup> October 1892, in Christ Church, Accrington.

How Stanley and Elvira met is not known, but it is quite possible that he did serve in the Army in France and met her there, perhaps after being wounded. The North Wales location for their marriage is also mystifying, unless Stanley was convalescing there? There was a Red Cross Auxiliary Hospital in Colwyn Bay, adjacent to Rhos-on-Sea.

However, at least three of Stanley's six older brothers were soldiers – Frank (b.1881) and William Dalton (b.1879) were in the Imperial Yeomanry in the Boer War and were recalled to the colours in 1914 (William served in the West Yorkshire Regt); Reginald James (b. 1885) was in the Lincolnshire Yeomanry and Machine Gun Corps in the 1914-18 War. It may be that the War Office considered that the family had contributed enough and Stanley did not enlist and was not conscripted.

## **Later Life**

The birth registers show that Stanley and Elvira had six children whose births were recorded in the Glandford Brigg District of Lincolnshire, which includes Winterton. The children were Rhona E. (1918), Lydia (1919), Gordon K. (1924), Roy A. (1928), Shirley (1931) and Peter D. (1933). The *Hull Daily Mail* of 31<sup>st</sup> March 1920 reports that Stanley was elected in the Council Elections in Winterton. The *Derby Daily Telegraph* of 12<sup>th</sup> December 1922, reported on the tragic death of one his farm workers in a motorcycle accident. A newspaper report from 1925 in the *Hull Daily Mail* said that Elvira Stephenson came second in the Gold Medal Class of a piano competition.

Stanley Gordon Stephenson died, aged 44, on 20<sup>th</sup> August 1935. He had been playing with his three youngest children in his garden when he tripped and fell on a tree stump. His hand was lacerated and tetanus took hold. Despite some treatment he sadly died as a result of the infection. *The Yorkshire Post* of 24<sup>th</sup> August reported on the incident and mentioned that he had started farming in Winterton in 1914 and that he was the seventh son of James Stephenson of Althorp. Elvira died in 1982.

## **John Lawrence Siddorn**

The second Farm Pupil at Field Farm, John Lawrence Siddorn, was born in Heaton Chapel on the border of Lancashire and Cheshire in 1893. He was the son of John Henry and Gertrude Hay Siddorn who lived in Heaton Norris, near Stockport in 1911.

The Siddorn family came from farming stock in Tarporley, Cheshire and the obituaries for John Henry Siddorn's parents, in 1891 and 1897, both mention that they were celebrated cheese makers. They lived at Ox Heys Farm, Rushton near Tarporley.

He was farming by the time of the Great War and did not serve in the Armed Forces but he eventually settled in the Louth area of Lincolnshire, where he died in 1962.



*John Lawrence Siddorn*

### ***Acknowledgement***

*Thanks are due to Elizabeth Siddorn for kindly supplying the photograph of her father-in-law.*

*Tom Locke: October 2014 (revised December 2014)*