

August 22. *Weather:* Began by being rather dull but cleared up in the afternoon & became quite sunny. Close and warm all day. Saw the silo working before breakfast. 40 sacks of barley were wanted out of it for grinding. After breakfast dosed the piglets - and visited the binder. The Barley was too damp and began cutting till about 11.15 & even then it was really too wet. The barley is undersown with clover. If it were carried on the same day as it was cut it might heat in the stack with the young green stuff. After lunch we continued with the binder with an interval for tea. The tractor went well. There were quite a number of rabbits & the usual complement of small boys. The international situation seems grim but I remain an optimist if only to keep my spirits from utter despondency... One can live life to the utmost and yet not fear death. However one hopes for the best in any case...'

August 23. *Weather:* A bright fine sunny morning - clouded over a little in the evening. Warm. Dosed the piglets after breakfast - and then stacked oats. It was quite hot and sunny. There were 4 of us on the stack & one unloading. Saw a stoat struggling with a young rabbit which it was trying to kill & take away. However, the stoat left the rabbit at the sound of our voices. After lunch went on the tractor and binder cutting barley - & did some more after tea... The international tension seems to be increasing and one begins to expect the worst. It is surprising how phlegmatic and unconcerned the villagers are.'

August 24. *Weather:* Rather duller but kept fine, although there was a thunderstorm at night. After doing the piglets we did some stacking. We stacked wheat. I did a little pitching: pitching on to the stack is hard work - very hard work when the stack is at all high (Fig. 10). Stacking itself of course is no easy matter. We continued to stack after lunch - and also worked the binder finishing off some barley. Went to have a look at a gyrotiller breaking up some stubbles. The ground was pretty hard but it certainly stirs it up & goes down about 15 inches in depth. I suppose it is a good cleaning process.'

August 25. *Weather:* Some rain in the night. Very dull & overcast morning. Cleared up a little later. A day of alarms and excursions. The news is pretty bad & I have become resigned to a conflict. I took Peter to Ipswich & saw him off. He is going home to rest.'

September 1. Hitler invaded Poland. I was in Tunbridge Wells at the time with Peter Gadden (after visiting the Greenwell Estate at Marden) when I first heard the news. Returned that same day to Thurlow.'

September 3. England declared war at 11.00 a.m. Chamberlain spoke on the radio. Heard it in Gt. Thurlow Church.'

Sir Bernard Greenwell died two months later aged 65. His son, Sir Peter, was captured at Dunkirk and interned, but used his time in Colditz to study hydrology and methods of irrigating the Butley estate. These he subsequently implemented with great success. When the war ended Stephen Ryder returned to agriculture, taking on one of his father's farms.

## Valerie Fenwick

### Notes:

1. Stephen Ryder's nephew Guy Jewer loaned the xerox of an unbound gathering of pages to Vic Harrup and subsequently was kind enough to permit them to be used as the basis of this article.
2. For a detailed account see Valerie Fenwick and Vic Harrup, 2009, *Untold Tales of the Suffolk Sandlings*.
3. Journal of the Farmers' Club, Part 1, February 1939.

The photographs are from the author's collection with the exception of Fig 5 and Fig. 11.

Acknowledgment: Roy Collins' remarkable memory furnished recollections of the estate when he was a child.