

Manor Farm

The ownership of the Manor and its associated farmland is dealt with in great detail in Edward Hess's book.¹ This also details the tenancies, as follows.²

The first firm evidence is from the late 17th and early 18th centuries when Joseph Fiddes was the tenant. It is not clear whether he and the later tenants, Daniel White in the period up to 1722 and James Pryor from 1722-1728 were tenants of the Manor only or also of the associated farmland, which would then have been some 30 acres of 'ancient' enclosure around the Manor and the strip holdings.³

However, between 1728 and 1760, Joseph Sims was the tenant and he is described as 'a successful farmer'. Sims was the brother of Thomas Sims of Denton who was instrumental in building the chapel-of-ease in 1795.

From 1761 to 1826, the tenancy was held by various members of the Juggins family.⁴ Robert Juggins died in 1770 and his widow Ann took over the tenancy from 15 January 1771 to 19 February 1783, paying a rent of £135 annually in 1772. It is not clear what this rent covered but presumably at least the house and the 'ancient' enclosures around the Manor estimated to be 30 acres. Annual rents at the time were about 15 shillings per acre regardless of whether held as strips or as enclosed land, so other land would have been involved. Whether this land was as strips owned by the Smythes or whether these had been traded with other strip owners so as to convert them to a severality ownership under which they were (illegally) enclosed, it is not known but see below. The rent of the Manor House would not have been very significant, so this suggests that less than 200 acres were involved.

Ann was succeeded in 1804 by her second son Thomas who had already taken over (at the age of 24) the tenancy from 14 March 1783, holding this until 1826. Land tax returns show that he paid an annual rent of £232 6s 0d. in 1806 for nearly 269 acres. Rents at the time were around 18 shillings per acre and this rate probably applied to strips or enclosed land. Thomas held this until 1826 when he retired to a house in Waterperry with none of his children taking on the tenancy, probably because of the break-up of the Whalley Smythe Gardiner ownership.

From 1826 to 1842, Richard Way was the tenant. The 1841 census shows him as a farmer aged 62. No details of his acreage or the rent are known, but rents by 1826 were some £1 10s per acre having been boosted by the Napoleonic Wars. Farming went into recession at the end of these wars and rents followed this trend, albeit lagging many years behind it so that it wasn't until the mid-1820s that rents were probably down to £1 6s per acre.

The next tenant was George Lee from 1843 to 1847. In 1846, he paid £214 18s for the house and 129 acres of land, rents then still being some £1 6s. per acre.

¹ E. Hess, *Wheatley Manor: Its Owners and Occupants, 956-2015*, (Wheatley, 2015).

² E. Hess, *Wheatley Manor*, pp. 34-51.

³ E. Hess, *Wheatley Manor*, p. 34.

⁴ E. Hess, *Wheatley Manor*, pp. 35-6.