

Mary Ann Woods 1815 – 1877

Mary Ann Woods was the second wife of Henry Heffer of Farnham, the founder of the firm of drill makers, agricultural engineers, farmers, threshing contractors etc that traded from circa 1827 until 1964. A separate potted history of the family and firm is available on the Stratford and Farnham Parish Council website.

In the 1841 census, Mary Ann is listed as a female servant living in the Heffer household at Farnham aged 25, together with Henry's daughter Jane, 5 from his first marriage, and Emily Woods, 15 and Charles Croft, 20 an apprentice smith. She was the daughter of John Woods of Saxmundham, saddler and harness maker. In the 1841 census he is listed along with Martha, his wife, sons Alfred, 29, George, 25, both saddlers, and John, 12. Their address is "on the east of the turnpike road". Perhaps where Easey's Saddle makers were?

In the 1851 census John and Martha are still living in the same place together with a lodger, Edward Nethergate, a solicitor's clerk.

Henry and Mary Anne were married at St Dunstan and All Saints church **Stepney** on the 4th April 1844. Quite why they travelled to London to marry is a mystery but, as their son Henry was born in early August 1844, that may have something to do with it!!

Looking into this history has solved a slight mystery I had. Many years ago I had two engraved copper printing plates that I had framed. One was from around 1850 for Heffer seed drills but the other was for Woods Saddlemakers Saxmundham. I now know that this plate was obviously inherited by Mary Ann. A photo of this is attached.

Roger Horton March 2021

