

# THE FARMER'S WIFE

## THE LIFE AND WORK OF WOMEN ON THE LAND

Simon Butler

This book celebrates the women whose working traditions lie in the land and those women who laboured on the land. Theirs is a story largely untold for, as 'The Farmer's Wife', their role has often been overlooked: history is indeed the domain of men.

Of course there is no single story to tell for each farming wife will have a different tale. What if anything binds them collectively is the work that women on the land traditionally undertook and this is the theme followed here. And because working women were treated as second-class citizens throughout history it should not be assumed that our notional farmer's wife portrayed here felt anything but in control of her circumstances, proud of the essential part she played in the farming household.

The scope of this book however is not too look too much into the distant past but rather to focus on that period in history when photography begins to provide us with wonderful images of farming people, how they looked and the work they did. Here are over 250 such photographs around which their stories are told. The theme widens to look at the life of women in rural Britain more generally and it also touches on the lives of country children, for not only did the nurturing of boys and girls fall principally on their mothers; work considered suitable for women was also work considered fit for their children too. It is through these superb photographs that the life and work of these country women emerges into light.



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Simon Butler lives and works in the Westcountry. A publisher of many hundreds of titles he has also written and edited books ranging from novels to books on art. His book *The War Horses*, which tells of the tragic fate of the animals taken to war reached number one in military hardback sales. A companion volume *Goodbye Old Friend: A Sad Farewell to the Working Horse* continues the story of the working horse, following it through the nineteenth century to its disappearance from the farming landscape in the decades after the Great War. *The Farmer's Wife* draws in part on his boyhood years spent on a farm in Cornwall.

### HALSGROVE CATALOGUE

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Tel: 01823 653777  
Fax: 01823 216796  
[www.halsgrove.com](http://www.halsgrove.com)  
e-mail: [sales@halsgrove.com](mailto:sales@halsgrove.com)

## HALSGROVE TITLE INFORMATION

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SIMON BUTLER



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Phillis Collet, the milkmaid carrying her milk pails at Foxworthy Farm on Dartmoor in 1907.



Wearing her Land Army uniform a young girl rides out from Teigngrace Farm in Devon in 1915.



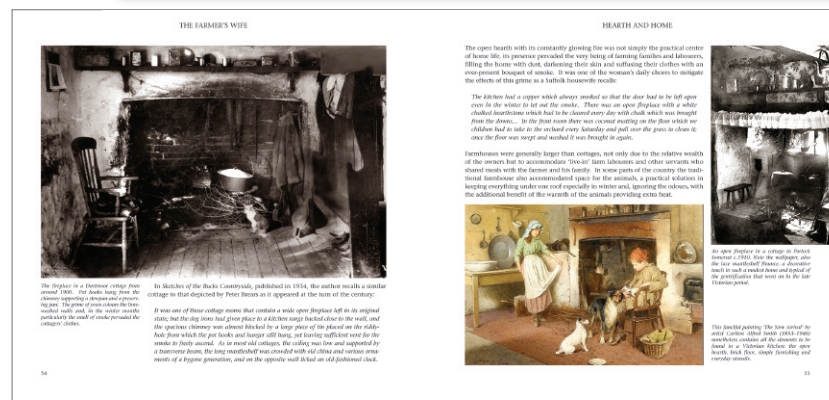
Right: James William Skinner and his wife Sarah with daughter Ada at Seaton, Devon, in 1899, surrounded by domestic pets and poultry and other live-stock.



Strawberry pickers in the Hampshire countryside in the first years of the twentieth century. The picking itself was largely left to women and children who filled baskets made of poplar wood in which the fruit was transported.



Hester Larke in the Hellesdon Dairy cart, Norfolk 1918.



Example of a double-page spread.