

# Carterton



## The Blind Poultry Farmer



Poultry farming



Woodbine Cottage,  
a St Dunstan's bungalow

Mr Clarke was both blind and deaf. Before he was sent to Germany to fight in the first world war he was inoculated with a dirty needle and caught an infection which caused him to go blind. As part of his treatment for blindness, the doctors perforated his eardrums and this resulted in him losing his hearing as well. After the war he was trained by St Dunstan's in poultry farming and basket making. He moved to Carterton with his wife and after she died, lived with his son Tom in a house on the Brize Norton Road.



The Faulders' poultry farm



Brize Norton Road 1906

One of the most successful poultry farmers was Mr William Megson who, like Mr Clarke, was blind. His plot was also strung with wires to guide him. He would often surprise visitors by knowing just which bird was where in his garden due to his very acute sense of hearing.

St Dunstan's supplied everything that was needed to start up the poultry farm. As Mr Clarke could not see there would be guide wires around the farm. The farm was pretty mucky and there was also a smelly old dog. Tom courted a girl in Witney for fourteen or fifteen years but could not marry her because he could not leave his father.



Thomas Richens 1910 - Egg Packing Vehicle

A lady called Mrs Cohen would travel to Carterton from London every couple of months to buy broody hens. Before she came, Mr Clarke would let all the other poultry farmers know and they would decide how much she should be charged for each hen. Mrs Cohen would always tell Mr Clarke that his prices were far too dear at nine pence and pound and Mr Clarke would tell her that she would not find cheaper anywhere else. Of course everyone else she tried told her the same price so, in the end, they all sold their hens at a price that they had already agreed several days earlier.

In the 1920s egg production soared and the Carterton Egg Company was formed with an egg packing station in the Burford Road.