

James Fereman, Farmer and Land Agent

James Albert Fereman was considered to be a gentleman farmer and Land Agent and there are three declarations made by him from the late 19th century that all add the title of '*Esquire*' at the end of his name. His father, also James had taken on the tenancy of Strattonborough Castle Farm at Watchfield around 1850. It was where he came into the world as the first born son, James Albert, in 1852. We know from one of the declarations, that James senior had been Agent to Henry Tucker of Bourton House Estate. He would often attend auctions and purchase land and property that Henry Tucker wanted to acquire on his behalf. After the death of Henry in 1875, James Fereman continued to be agent for his widow Elizabeth and would attend to most matters concerning the sale and purchase of estate property. But although James was a successful farmer and agent, his mental health deteriorated and he suffered from depression, and so serious was one episode that he took his own life with a shotgun in 1886.

James Albert took over from where his father left off and a declaration made in 1894 stated that he had continued to act as agent for Elizabeth Tucker at Bourton and after her death in 1891 continued in the same role for Ernest Alfred Tucker who had inherited the estate. He had married Emily Porter two years earlier at a ceremony held at St Thomas' church in Watchfield (Faringdon Adver 17th August 1889). The Fereman dynasty at Castle Farm came to an end after 60years. A newspaper advert described that the stock and implements that would be sold on the premises on 28th September 1904 (Faringdon Adver 10th Sept 1904). The census for 1911 showed that he and Emily had moved to Longcote where he was described as an Estate Agent.

War was declared in 1914 and James Fereman was at the forefront of the local government administration, with one advertisement showing that he was the Chairman of the Faringdon Rural District Council (Faringdon Adver 20th May 1914).

There are numerous references on his paperwork that described him as having an office at Shrivenham. The catalogue for the sale of the Beckett Estate in 1922 provided

the answer as to where when Lot No 32 described his house as a *'Well built stone and tiled residence,'* and furthermore that it was, *'in the occupation of J.A. Fereman Esquire, J.P.'* The sale was mostly unsuccessful and most of it was offered for sale again in 1927 with James Fereman still occupying his house on the corner of the high street and Longcot road in Shrivenham. (Below - photo by Neil B. Maw).



James Albert Fereman died in 1941 at Sutton Courtenay aged 89.