



“Impressed
from the start”

Ed Salmon & Daniel Edwards

Norfolk, AXION 960 TT

Norfolk farming business NE Salmon moved to Great Fransham near Dereham in 1955. They have been using tracked tractors for all cultivations since a Doe Triple-D was replaced by the family's first steel-tracked machine. "My grandfather and father expanded the farm from just 100ha, preferring tracked tractors to wheeled alternatives as they coped better with our challenging soils and allowed them to get the work done," says Ed Salmon. "When the first rubber-tracked Track Marshall became available, offering extra convenience and ease of transport, they moved away from steel tracks, and have remained with rubber tracks since, for all cultivations and drilling."

THE BEST TRACS ON THE MARKET

"The team at MANNS knew we were looking at tracked tractor options and asked if we would be interested in trying a new half-track type system which they felt would provide a solution," stated Edward Salmon. "Our combine has CLAAS tracks and we can't fault them; we know other manufacturers also fit CLAAS tracks to products such as potato harvesters and we believe they are the best on the market." A new AXION 960 TT with half-tracks was delivered to the farm in August 2019, just in time for autumn cultivations and drilling.

"It is just what we have been waiting for," confirms Ed. "We put it on our 7f semi-mounted plough and we couldn't fault it. Then, as soon as we started drilling, it was used on our Vaderstad 8m drill and it's excellent. Having this much power in this configuration makes it incredibly versatile so we will be selling one of our twin-track crawlers and using the AXION for ploughing, cultivations and drilling."

IMPRESSED FROM THE START

Main machinery operator Daniel Edwards says he was sceptical at first. "I hadn't used a CLAAS tractor previously so didn't know what to expect, but as soon as I drove it for the first time I was impressed. It performed well and the comfort amazed me. The cab was excellent, I liked the controls – including the CMotion joystick which is the same as our combine. The new CEBIS display is easy to use – I couldn't fault it."

Apart from the wheels, the farm's new TT version is almost identical. "If anything, now I have used the tracked version, I prefer it,"

comments Daniel. "It's quiet, and just as comfortable even on the road. It's very stable, the tracks feel planted to the ground and there is none of the swaying which occurs with large tyres."

"One thing I really like is its ability to follow the ground contours. Along the full track length it's obvious that the weight is evenly applied as the tracks and rollers mould around every undulation. Its ability to put the power to the ground is excellent and even while ploughing the slip indicator didn't move from zero. It's just as comfortable on the road as it is in the field and at almost 50kph it doesn't 'nod' as most large wheel tractors would and feels far more stable. It's easy to forget that it's on rubber tracks rather than wheels."

TIGHT TURNS

"Previously we drilled the main field, then recultivated headlands before drilling, otherwise we would be thrown out of our seat each time when the field was sprayed later in the season," adds Daniel. "Even turning on full lock, the ridges left by the new AXION TT are no larger than from wheeled tractors, so we save time and can get the field finished without waiting for a second tractor and operator. Obviously a twin-track crawler can turn on the spot, but for practical field work the CLAAS tractor turns just as tight."

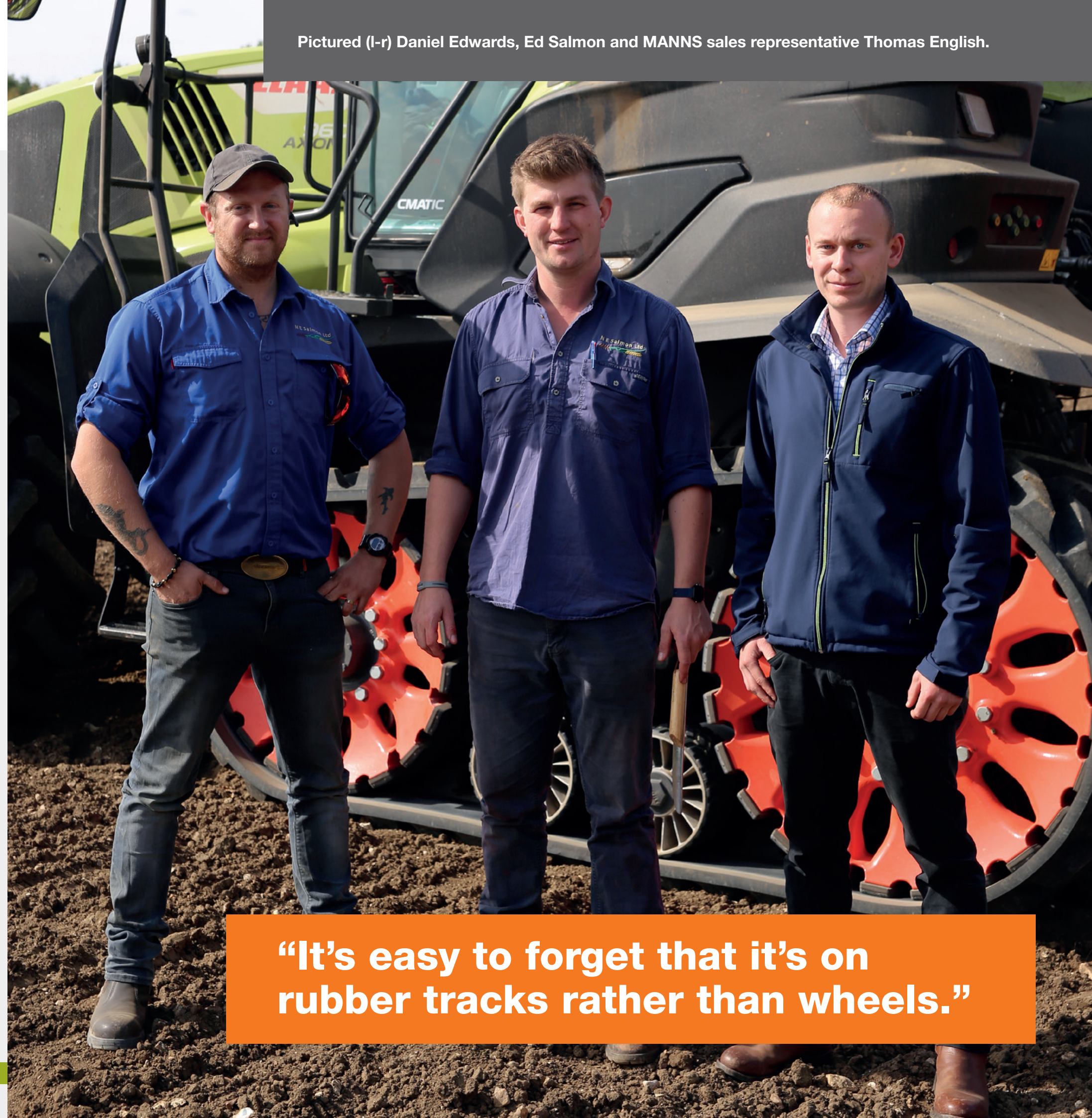
SUCCESSFUL DRIVE SYSTEM

"I think the drive system is a key part of its success," continues Ed. "Unlike conventional crawlers which disconnect the drive to one track while turning, the CLAAS design uses electronic power distribution maintaining drive through both tracks during the turn. This helps maintain traction and reduces slip and scuffing."

Ed is already considering further CLAAS products for the future, and a demonstration XERION 5000 had been trialled the week before. "Moving to CTF provides new opportunities and the big XERION's power means we could pull a wider cultivator and remain in our wheelings. The MANNS local depot is nearby and our sales representative, Thomas English looks after us well."

"We have CLAAS UK's Saxham headquarters under an hour away and Tractor Brand Manager Steffan Kurtz has also been keen to work with us and the new AXION TT. The product range is good and the brand is a logical choice."

Pictured (l-r) Daniel Edwards, Ed Salmon and MANNS sales representative Thomas English.



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