

*ALBERT EDWARD CARTER*  
*WR/319/45/20*

At the beginning of World War II, Britain needed to increase home food production, and the area of land under cultivation was rapidly increased. County War Agricultural Executive Committees and district committees under them had exceptional powers to determine the direction of farming at a local level. Once the short-term objective of increasing food production had been met, thought was given to implementing a more general National Farm Survey with the purpose of providing data to form the basis of post-war planning. Census forms were sent out on 4<sup>th</sup> June 1941 for the farmer/market gardener to complete. In addition, every farm and holding of five acres (ranging from large farms to market gardens) received a visit from an inspector who surveyed and classified according to the physical condition of the land. These records may be viewed in the MAF 32 category at The National Archives, Kew; a team of Badsey Society members visited The National Archives in January 2013 and took copies of the records.

Albert Edward Carter (1872-1946) lived at Pitchers Hill Farm (the present-day Wickham House), Wickhamford, and was a full-time farmer. He was a tenant of Miss Carter of The Glen, Staley, Hexham. "Miss Carter" was Ella Margaret Carter (1884-1965), Albert's first cousin, and the only daughter of Sydney Fletcher Carter (the younger brother of Albert's father, Benjamin), a successful yeast merchant, who had bought the farm from the Lord and Parker estate in 1922 following the departure from the village of William Smith who had been the tenant farmer there for many years.

Albert had moved to Wickhamford as a young man when his father, Benjamin Carter (1842-1926), came as tenant farmer at Field Farm and Whitfurrows at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Albert Carter had 125 acres of land, which he had occupied for 19 years. This was just under half the amount that his father had farmed. He does not specify how many people worked on the farm. He grew wheat, beans for stock feeding, mangolds, kale and Lucerne and had 90 acres of pasture. He had 43 cows, one bull, two pigs, 12 chickens, two horses used for agricultural purposes and five other horses. He had a 25 horsepower Fordson tractor and a wheel tractor for stationary work only.

As the holding was over 5 acres in size, Form B496 needed to be completed by inspectors. The inspector, A B Williams, judged the farm to be 100% good, moderately laid out, on soil which was 100% medium, when he visited on 14<sup>th</sup> June 1942. The situation in regard to road and the condition of farmhouse, buildings, farm roads and cottages was considered good; the situation in regard to railway and the condition of field drainage was bad; and the condition of fences and ditches was considered fair. There were no infestations of any kind and no derelict fields. There was piped water to farmhouse and farm buildings and a stream providing water supply to the fields; there was electricity for household and farm purposes.

Management of the farm was classed as A. The condition of arable land and pasture was good with adequate use of fertilisers.