

GEORGE FREDERICK COX

WR/319/45/28

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 4th 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.

George Frederick Cox (1890-1962) lived at Pitchers Hill, Wickhamford, and was a part-time market gardener; he was also a shopkeeper. George Cox was a tenant of R Bloomer of Evesham; he also owned land in Wickhamford. George Cox had 17 acres of land, 10½ acres of which he had occupied for seven years, 1½ acres for four years and 5 acres for two years; he worked the land with one full-time female family member and one female seasonal worker. He grew potatoes, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, onions, strawberries, raspberries, blackcurrants, redcurrants and loganberries and had 180 chickens. He had two tractors for field work: a 4½ horsepower Trusty and a 2 horsepower Gravely.

As the farm was over 5 acres in size, Form B496 needed to be completed by inspectors. The inspector, R W Sidwell, judged the farm to be 100% good, moderately laid out, on soil which was 50% heavy and 50% medium, when he visited on 18th October 1944. There was no farmhouse. The situation in regard to road and the condition of buildings, ditches and field drainage was considered good; the situation in regard to railway and the condition of farm roads and fences was considered fair. There were no infestations of any kind and no derelict fields. There a stream providing water to the fields; there was no electricity.

Management of the farm was classed as A. The condition of arable land was good with adequate use of fertilisers; there was no pasture.