

*ALLEN ERNEST HALFORD*  
*WR/319/233/45*

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.

Allen Ernest Halford (1883-1962) lived at 9 Pitchers Hill, Wickhamford, and was a full-time farmer who owned the land. Allen Halford had around 8 acres of land, part of which he had occupied for four years and part for nine years; he worked the land on his own with no assistance. He grew raspberries, redcurrants, potatoes, carrots, parsnips, broad beans, runner beans, peas and asparagus and had three pigs and 210 chickens. He had a 3½ horsepower oil or petrol engine.

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, conveniently laid out, on soil which was 100% heavy, when he visited on 17<sup>th</sup> December 1942. There was no farmhouse. The situation in regard to road and the condition of field drainage was considered good; the situation in regard to railway and the condition of buildings, farm roads, fences and ditches was fair. There was infestation with insect pests and no derelict fields. The water supply was a roof to farm buildings and a well for the fields; there was no electricity.

Management of the farm was classed as B, the reason being personal failings, given as shortage of labour, not too fond of work and lack of initiative. The condition of arable land was fair with use of fertilisers to some extent; there was no pasture land.