

# *GEORGE HENRY SMITH*

## *WR/319/45/98*

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.

George Henry Smith (1893-1963) lived at 2 Castle Street, Evesham, and was a full-time market gardener. He was a tenant of George Crompton Lees-Milne of Wickhamford Manor.

George Smith occupied around 6 acres of land at Wickhamford, which he had held for 22 years. He had no assistance. He grew gooseberries, potatoes, Brussels sprouts and peas and had a quarter of fallow land and 1½ acres of unspecified crops. He did not have a tractor.

As the holding 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 100% heavy, when he visited on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1944. There was no farmhouse. The condition of field drainage was considered good; the situation in regard to road and railway and the condition of buildings, farm roads, fences and ditches was considered fair. There were no infestations of any kind and no derelict fields. There was a well providing water supply 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.