

National Farm Survey 1941-1943

introduction

This survey was initiated in 1940 by the Ministry of Agriculture, War Agricultural Executive Committee, known as the 'War Ags' and was aimed at any farm over five acres.¹ It calculated the farmer's expected yield, and if not being filled, the committee had draconian powers under the *Defence Regulations 51 and 62* to dispossess farms that were not being farmed efficiently. This survey provided extensive data on British farming practices and monitored the effect of policies introduced by the 'War Ags' to boost food yield, improve small farms, and bring uncultivated land into use. The ministry exerted its control through the local County War Agricultural Executive Committees with whom farmers often had a difficult relationship. The survey was carried out by the district committees and the forms for the Chinnor survey were sent out by the Oxfordshire War Agricultural Committee during June 1941.

Examples from the survey relating to Chinnor:

H. Neighbour, Stockwell Farm, Chinnor.

No acreage reported for crops. Cows and heifers in milk 4, one calf for slaughter. Two sows for breeding, 17 piglets less than 5 months old. 100 hens less than six months old and 50 more than six months, one horse and a nil return for fruit and vegetables. He did not employ any extra help on the land.

A. Croxford Oakley road Chinnor.

Eight and a half acres wheat and five and half for oats forty acres for mowing and grazing. Nineteen cattle and calves, six in milk, five in calf and two bulls, one farm horse. Mr. Croxford also had a milk round. Water supply was from a well and he had an electricity supply.

E. Burton, Dairy Farm, Chinnor.

Thirty three acres of grassland, twenty cattle and calves, cows in milk 12, two in calf, one bull. Poultry, 64 and one farm horse. He employed two agricultural workers.

H. Nixey, Manor Farm Chinnor.

Total agricultural acreage: 90 acres, of which, 24 for wheat, 10 for barley, 10 for oats. Half an acre for potatoes, quarter of an acre for orchards. The rest was, was made up of grass for mowing and grazing. He employed one adult male whole time. Livestock included: 16 cattle and calves 11 of them in milk, one bull and two heifers in calf. Total: poultry 86 and two horses for agricultural purposes. He had no electricity; the water supply came from a well.

H. Rose and son, Village Farm, Emmington.

Total of 255 acres of land of which forty- seven acres of wheat, two of barley, 22 of oats and 20 acres for beans for stock feeding. The rest was made up of grazing and mowing grass and 10 acres lying fallow. He owned 56 cattle of which 23 were cows in milk, 9 in calf but not in milk and one bull. He farmed 63 sheep including 28 breeding ewes and 30 other sheep and lambs. There were four pigs and 150 of poultry as well as four horses for agricultural purposes. Three adult men were employed on a permanent basis.

Mr. Lacey Oakley Road Chinnor

had 3 ½ acres clover and grass for grazing, 26 acres grass for mowing, permanent grass for grazing 7. He employed one adult male full time and one adult male partime. He had 4 cows and heifers and one cow in calf. 3 cows over 3 years old and 10 under 2 years. 6 pigs and 12 fowls over 6 months and 25 over 6 months Two mares and three other horses.

Not only established farms, but all small holdings and commercial premises with land around them were recorded.

Wheatsheaf, public house, Chinnor sat in three acres of land and supported 18 poultry.

The Eagle public house, Sydenham, sat in one and a half acres and supported 100 poultry.

Mr. Watkins of Chinnor Hill supported 10 acres if orchards with grass and ¼ acre of orchard with fruits s well as a ¼ acre of non specified crops. One man full time worker 8 pigs over 5 months old, 50 fowls over 6 months old, 30 fowls under 6 months old and 13 ducks of all ages and one horse for agriculture.

The station approach was noted and The Kennels in Oakley Lane. In addition, a weekend cottage on Chinnor Hill was set in wooded gardens and noted to have derelict fields and no arable land.

Food production in general was an, essential part of maintaining health as well as being a patriotic duty and the Parish council kept a close eye on the use of Chinnor's allotments. The rallying cry of 'Dig for Victory' was sounded in 1941 and every available horticultural land or park land was ploughed for crops.

For further information *Chinnor, Parish Chinnor 1941-43 Farm Survey*, MAF

32/911/217 National Archives Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Departments, Kew.