

One man was handed a live hand grenade and told to pull the pin and throw the grenade into the quarry. The poor chap, I suppose being a little anxious pulled the pin and let the grenade fall to the ground, luckily the man next to him very quickly picked it up and threw it into the quarry. Very lucky for all the men around that he acted very quickly!

Another instance was a group of men were standing by the elm tree in the village awaiting the arrival of an officer who they heard would be arriving by motor cycle to inspect them. It was about nine o'clock on a dark winters evening and several of the men had been smoking. Suddenly they heard a motor cycle coming up the road. They very quickly stubbed out their cigarettes and stood to attention. The motor cycle came along and passed by. Apparently he was a school master up at St Michaels School, Tawstock Court. They were having a laugh about the false alarm, when suddenly someone said "I smell something burning". It appears one man had been smoking a pipe and in a haste he put the pipe into his greatcoat pocket. On looking he found his pocket was alight, he had not stubbed his pipe out enough. That must have nearly broken the blackout regulations. To cap the lot I do not think the officer did arrive that night.

There was the dig for victory movement, Feed the Nation. The farming world almost changed over night. It had been suppressed for so many years and suddenly, it was ordered by the government to plough up land, almost every available acre to grow crops to feed the nation. Grain, potatoes and vegetables were some of the main crops to be grown on the land to feed the nation on home grown produce, and become self sufficient. Britain had to become as self sufficient as possible or otherwise as a nation, we would be starved through Germany's submarines sinking our merchant ships and stopping over seas food supplies from reaching our country. The challenge was made and British agriculture accepted that challenge and grew the food.

Within the Ministry of Agriculture a group of advisers were set up known as The War Agriculture Committee. Each county through the land had an area department. A group of people were employed to visit all the farms in the county and order the farmers to plough as many acres of land as possible to grow food for the nation. I think it was a certain percentage of the farm, after allowing for live stock. In many cases ploughing up old pasture land which had not been ploughed in living memory or in some cases for centuries, even Hyde Park was ploughed. Some of these old meadows have never been replaced, many of the old seed mixtures were irreplaceable. If a farmer did not obey a ploughing order placed upon him, he was liable to prosecution or his land which he did not plough, taken away from him during the war years and let to another farmer who would comply with the order.