

Newtown - Farming at Ysgafell



Bob Graham (brother in law) places machine cluster when milking Red Polls in the cowshed with Manus bucket plant. In 1935, the cows would have been hand milked, the picture (1955) shows a bucket plant that had to be carried to the dairy, lifted to flow through cooler and into the churn. The cowshed would have been pipeline to bulk tank by 1965 and would be parlour and loose housing by 1980. Richard ceased milking in the 1950s rather than the capital expenditure needed for change.



Ferguson brand new diesel in the yard. They rapidly replaced the Standard Fordson petrol/tvo (tractor vaporising oil) of the Second World War. The driver was a friend of Cecil Hopkinson (step father).



A Danish firm made a small threshing drum for their home market and several were imported. Idea was to save on labour and cost of threshing drum contractor but the concept was too late as combine harvesters were rapidly coming on the market.



Free range Rhode Island Red hens were very popular. The end of rationing in 1954 started huge changes using hybrids, battery cages with large flocks often in the grain growing areas.



Staff moving what looks like a freshly calved Red Poll from pasture into the building. The Red Poll came when the farm moved from East Anglia. The Red Poll would now be a rare breed kept by a few enthusiasts.



Emden geese. Grazing geese were very popular on the smaller grassland farms of Montgomeryshire until the 1960s for the Christmas market. They were not easy to move to large scale intensive unit so a goose remains an expensive treat. A traditional fare was goose blood pudding with flour, currents and blood (pwwin gwaed gwydd).



Views of farm. The house several centuries previous would have been a long house (tŷ hir), the nearest was dwelling and the furthest was floor for stock and upper hay loft. The large barn is now grade 2 listed with a cruck.



Mother is carefully placing eggs into a tray for forwarding

to Plynlimon Hatchery incubator at Llanidloes. The eggs must NOT be washed as there is an invisible sheen on the shell that enables the embryo to breathe and prevents pathogen infection.



Trolley to take milk churns to the stand beside the road for the milk lorry to collect. This was only a short distance. Many started to use a link box on the rear of their grey Fergie when the farm dairy was several hundred yards from the accommodation lane entrance and milk stand.



Two views of Massey Harris combine. The railway line behind shows double track placed in 1912 and singled again in 1965 after closures such as Whitchurch to Welshpool & Moat Lane to Brecon. The extra capacity was of much value in both World Wars.



Close up of two-man operation with bagger combine. The contractor was Jim Cherry of Dolfor. Rapid changes, in 1940 the operation of threshing would have been a steam traction engine and threshing drum, in 1950 the power would have been a Field Marshall tractor & drum, by 1965 the combine would have taken over with the phasing in of a bulk tank and one-man operation and by 1980 it would be very unlikely that a small farm in Mid Wales would grow cereals.

Birds in deep litter shed on roosting perches. Flashlight photo followed by panic. Timed lighting with increasing light interval simulated spring to stimulate extra egg laying.



Brand new bull pen for extra safety with dairy herd. This would be almost immediately obsolete with switch to artificial insemination. Bulls for fresh semen collection were held at Leighton prior to further technique of deep frozen semen from the 1980s onwards.