

WARTIME SOCIAL SURVEY

*Seen by W. Belfour
J. M. Walton
also Mrs. Wall*

FOOD

An inquiry into (i) a day's meals,
and (ii) attitudes to wartime food in
selected groups of British Workers

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SECTION III

WHERE MEALS ARE EATEN

It is the policy of the Ministry of Food to provide extra rations for workers by supporting and founding canteens where coupon-free meals can be obtained, instead of giving extra coupons. It is therefore important to know what numbers and what categories of workers take meals outside their home.

Table 11 shows (for the whole sample) where people have their different meals.

Table 11

Where Meals Are Eaten - by Meal-time

	<u>Break- fast</u> Weighted	<u>Mid- morning</u> Weighted	<u>Midday</u> Weighted	<u>Mid- afternoon</u> Weighted	<u>Evening</u> Weighted	<u>Late Evening</u> Weighted
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Home	92	3	42	8	84	65
Cafe	-	4	11	3	2	1
British Restaurant	-	-	2	-	-	-
Canteen	2	15	22	21	3	1
Packed meal	2	21	15	11	3	1
Packed meal and Canteen*	1	9	4	5	-	-
No answer	-	1	1	1	2	4
Nothing to eat	3	47	3	51	6	28
SAMPLE	4490					

*consists of packed meal brought from home and a drink and/or bun bought from canteen.

The overwhelming majority of people eat breakfast, evening and the late evening meal at home; if packed meals are included, it will be seen that 61% of the sample also have the midday meal provided by the home. Although, on an average, 35% buy their midday meal outside their home, variations among the different industrial groups are considerable.

Two-thirds of those who do not eat at home have their dinner at a canteen or British Restaurant; again considerable industrial differences exist, especially for men.

Table 12

Where Midday Meal is EatenMale

	<u>Ship- Docker</u>	<u>yard</u>	<u>Miner</u>	<u>Build- ing</u>	<u>Public Utility & Transport</u>	<u>Iron & Steel</u>	<u>Light Engineering & Textile</u>	<u>Distrib- utive</u>	<u>Clerical</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Home	24	31	61	19	50	42	38	50	38
Cafe	11	3	-	7	11	2	5	24	33
British Restaurant	1	1	-	1	2	4	4	4	3
Canteen	42	15	21	18	13	26	29	11	15
Packed meal	5	46	5	45	14	21	17	8	47
Packed meal and Canteen	13	1	1	7	1	3	6	-	2
No answer	2	2	1	2	1	-	-	1	2
Nothing to eat	2	1	11	1	8	2	1	2	-
SAMPLE	411	298	403	208	406	415	409	208	204

Table 13

Where Midday Meal is Eaten

	Female				
	Distrib-		Light	Textile	Public
	utive		Engineering	&	Utility &
	%	%	%	Leather	Transport
Home	51	47	49	32	59
Cafe	16	24	9	7	6
British Restaurant	1	1	2	3	2
Canteen	20	17	28	37	14
Packed meal	6	9	12	13	5
Packed meal and Canteen	3	1	2	8	2
No answer	3	1	-	1	-
Nothing to eat	3	-	2	-	12
SAMPLE	466	309	248	290	204

The sample is relatively small for each industrial group, and therefore the differences are not so significant; but it is certain that few building workers manage to go home for their midday meal, and clerical workers frequent cafes more than any other group. Dockers appear to use canteens much more than shipyard workers, but this apparent difference might well be due to bias in sampling. It is extremely difficult to get a proper sample for shipyard workers and dockers, as often, for security reasons, interviewers cannot enter yards which should be visited from the point of view of sampling.

Canteens

At the factories of 61% of the workers in the sample, hot dinners were served at midday. The prices of the dinners, most of which consisted of meat, two vegetables and pudding, are shown in the following table:-

Table 14

Prices of dinners served in canteens

Under 11d.	35
11d. - 1/1d.	45
1/2d. - 1/4d.	15
More than 1/5d.	2
N.A.	3

All those for whom
canteen meals were
available 2758

In 80% of all cases the meal did not cost more than 1/1d. In most cases another penny was spent on a cup of tea. Though canteen facilities were available for 61%, not all could have obtained dinners, as the serving capacity was insufficient; this will be seen from the following table:-

Table 15

Service facilities at canteens

Up to half of the employees.	54
1/2 - whole " " "	18
N.A.	21
All who had canteen facilities	2758

More than half of those who had canteens at their work said that there was serving capacity for less than half of the employees. This fact indicates that not all (61%) of those who had canteens at their works could have had their dinner there, even if they had wanted to. In fact, 21% ate their dinner at a canteen on the day to which the interview referred. As it is the policy of the Ministry of Food to increase the number of meals taken at canteens, it seemed worth while to find out why people who could eat at a canteen did not do so. People who had a canteen at their works and did not use it were asked what their objections to canteen meals were;

Table 16

If works has a canteen and meals are not taken there - why not? *

	Male	Female
	%	%
Easy to go home, prefer to go home.	35	40
Don't like the food.	32	25
Used to packed meal.	14	8
Overcrowded, dirty.	7	5
Too expensive.	7	3
Have to use lunch-hour for other purposes, can't leave bench.	3	8
Prefer British Restaurant or Cafe.	3	4
Particular shift canteen not open.	3	1
Need a break, fresh air.	2	4
Miscellaneous.	4	3
No answer.	7	8
All who do not take meals, where there are canteens.	870	390

* One person could give more than one reason

More than a third gave as the main reason for not going to the canteen; that they prefer to go home: their wives do not like them to stay, and it is easy to go home because they live near, etc. The argument that the wife wishes them to come home is particularly frequent, and from conversation with housewives it would seem that quite a number are afraid that if a wife does not cook her husband's main meal she loses an important function in his life.

Dislike of the food served at the canteen is the next most important reason for not eating the main meal there. It is difficult to come to a definite decision as to the cause of the dislike. It is true that in some canteens the food is not satisfactory, but there are other canteens where the standard of cooking is apparently good and yet certain people say they dislike the food. One reason might be that mass cooking is probably always inferior to individual cooking. On the other hand a number of housewives are not very good cooks, yet husbands put up with their efforts; this may be due to habit.

The force of habit in feeding behaviour is also shown in the relatively large number who bring packed meals instead of going to the canteen, in spite of the fact that (as is shown in a number of inquiries) housewives complain about the shortage of fat, spreads and sandwich fillings.

Other reasons for not going to the canteen are:

- The wish to have a break and to be away from the factory for a while;
- The wish to shop during the lunch hour;
- The need to shop during the lunch hour; Interviewers came across people who had hardly eaten out in their life; the "pub" was the only social meeting-place they visited, and they never went to cafes or restaurants. They ate their packed meals in solitude behind their machines.
- Expense; A small number of people think canteen meals are too expensive. An analysis of the prices charged at their canteens shows that the prices are no higher than the average.

Women and men do not differ very much in their reasons for not using canteens. It is interesting that in all these cases the need or wish to supplement rations is not strong enough to overcome these difficulties in using canteens, which are more psychological than objective.

Packed Meals

19% of the sample bring packed meals from home to eat at midday; 30% and 16% bring something to eat at mid-morning and mid-afternoon (Table 11). People who want to eat something at the mid-morning and mid-afternoon break have to bring a cake or a sandwich from home, if, as in many cases, nothing is supplied by the works catering department. However, there are people who bring packed meals at midday, even though canteen meals are available. Some of the reasons for this are the same as those given by people for not using canteens; even so, it was thought worth while to ask those who brought packed meals why they did so.

Table 17

Reasons for taking packed meals

	%
No Canteen facilities for buying a meal	26)
Particular shift canteen not open	3)
Prefer to, habit	26
Has to, can't get out, less trouble	18
Too expensive to do otherwise	10
Food, canteen bad	9
Have to queue too long, too far to go to canteen	6
Too far to go home	5
Only like one hot meal a day, prefer this at night	3
Health reasons, special diet	2
Miscellaneous	5

All who take packed meals 1430

Nearly a third bring packed meals because canteen meals are not available. Among those who bring packed meals, when canteens are available, the reason most often given is that bringing sandwiches is an old habit, and there is no incentive strong enough to change this habit. As already stated, in some individuals custom is a very decisive factor in feeding behaviour.

The following table shows what food items are taken for packed meals at midday.

Table 18

Constituents of packed meals taken at midday

	%
Meat sandwiches	26
Bacon "	7
Fish "	4
Egg "	3
Cheese "	41
Bought meat pies	4
Potatoes	4
Vegetables	2
Bread only	3
Bread and spread	21
Puddings	1
Buns, cakes, biscuits	17
Tea	75
Milk or milk beverage	2
Other beverages	5
Others	3

All taking packed meal at midday 817

With the exception of the few who bring cooked meals and warm them up, packed meals at midday consist mainly of sandwiches and tea. Cheese is the sandwich filling most often used.

Satisfaction with canteen

So far, only the opinions of those who do not use canteens have been shown. The next table shows what the people who actually use them think.

Table 19

Are those who take meals at their works canteen: satisfied or dissatisfied?*

	Male	Female
	%	%
Satisfied	69	76
Don't like food	17	10
Not enough variety	7	9
Not enough to eat	11	4
Too expensive	2	-
Too overcrowded	6	1
Miscellaneous	1	-
No answer	1	1

All who take meals where canteen is provided 965 534

* More than one reason can be given by the informant.

The majority say that they feel satisfied with their canteen. Of those who complain, the main trouble is quality or quantity of the food.

Comparison of results 1942 - 1943

Again, the results of this section for the two inquiries are not quite comparable, but they show the same frequency figures for canteens, British Restaurants, and also (more or less) those who bring packed meals. It was also found that, wherever they are comparable, the reasons for bringing packed meals and for not using canteens are of similar frequency.

APPENDIX I

SAMPLE

Distribution by Family Size

1 in family	%
2 " "	6
3 " "	24
4 " "	26
5 " "	20
6 or more in family	12

Sample 4490

Distribution by Age

Up to 20	%
21 - 65	12
Over 65	81
No answer	3

Sample 4490

Distribution by Occupation and Sex

	Male	Female
Docker	%	%
Shipyards	14	-
Miner	10	-
Iron and Steel	13	-
Public Utility and Transport	14	-
Distributive	14	14
Clerical	7	31
Light Engineering, Leather and Textile	7	20
Building	14	35
Sample	7	-
	2970	1520

APPENDIX II - The Questionnaire

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Wartime Social Survey

Individual Meals Inquiry

Interviewer Total in Family.....
 Day to which interview refers No. of children under 14.....
 Town House of shift worked.....
 Occupation a.m. p.m. a.m.
 Sex: Male 1 Female 2
 Age: Up to 20 1 21-65 2 Over 65 3

Has the works a canteen? Yes Y No X

If Yes does canteen serve dinners? Yes O No 1

What proportion of the employees does the canteen seat?

Up to 1/2 1 1/2-3/4 2 3/4-whole 3 N.A. 4

Price of main meal served, including pudding:

Under 11d. 1 11d.-1/1d. 2 1/2d.-1/4d. 3

More than 1/5d. 4 N.A. 5

1. If works has a canteen and meals are not taken there, why not? If meals are taken, how are people satisfied or dissatisfied with their canteen:

	Not using canteen	Using Canteen
Too expensive.	Y	Y
Do not like food.	X	X
Particular shift, canteen not open.	0	0
Too overcrowded, have to queue.	1	1
Is easy to go home.	2	2
Has to use lunch hour for other purposes.	3	3
Can't leave bench, has to do shopping, preparing meal for children, etc.	4	4
Is used to packed meals.	5	5
Satisfied.		
Others		

2. If packed meals are taken, why?

No canteen, no facilities for buying a meal	Y
Particular shift canteen not open.	X
Has to, can't get out.	0
Too expensive to buy meals.	1
Profer to, habit, always did it.	2
Inconvenient to go out, less trouble	3
Has to queue too long, too far to go.	4
Food: Canteen bad.	5
Others	

3. Do you consider the food you are getting at the moment enough to keep you fit?
 Yes 1 No 2
 Uncertain 3 N.A. 4

If not enough, what is lacking?

Milk	1	Not enough variety	1
Fruit	2	Not enough vitamins	2
Meat or Bacon	3	Too starchy	3
Fish	4	Not enough	4
Eggs	5	Not able to get extras besides rations, shopping difficulties	5
Fat, Butter	6	Not enough points	6
Cheese	7	Others	
Vegetables	8		
Sugar, sweets	9		
Others			

4. What did you have yesterday:

	Breakfast	Mid-morning	Mid-day	Mid-afternoon	Evening	Late evening	No. of times eaten		
							0	1	2 or more
Bacon or Ham	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Meat or offals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Sausage meat, meat pies etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Stew	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
I Fish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Egg	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Cheese	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Made dishes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Lentils, beans and peas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Carried meat pies etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Meat sandwiches	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
II Bacon "	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Fish "	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Egg "	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Cheese "	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Potatoes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Potato Crisps and chips	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Green Vegetables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
III Root Vegetables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Carrots	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Raw Salad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Other Vegetables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Fruit	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Cereal (i.e. breakfast and porridge)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Bread only	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Bread & Spread (inc. all sandwiches other than meat, bacon, fish, cheese or egg)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Fried Bread	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
IV Milk Pudding	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Custard, Blancmange, Cornflour	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Cooked pudding, (inc. Yorkshire pudding & dumpling)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Buns, cakes, biscuits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Chocolates, sweets	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Soup	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Tea	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
V Milk & Milk beverages	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Beer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Other beverages	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
VI Nothing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Others, write which	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Substantial Meal	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	7	8	9
Packed Meal A.	X	X	X	X	X	X	7	8	9
Packed Meal B.	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	8	9
Others	1	1	1	1	1	1	7	8	9
Nothing	2	2	2	2	2	2	7	8	9
5. Home	3	3	3	3	3	3			
Cafe	4	4	4	4	4	4			
British Restaurant	5	5	5	5	5	5			
Canteen	6	6	6	6	6	6			
Packed meal	7	7	7	7	7	7			
Packed meal & Canteen	8	8	8	8	8	8			
N.A.	9	9	9	9	9	9			

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WARTIME SOCIAL SURVEY

Director of Research

Louis Moss

Senior Research Officers

Dennis Chapman
Gertrude Wagner

Research Officers

Kathleen Bex
Geoffrey Thomas
Felix Wilson
Daphne Kenwright

Investigators

Mrs. Trinick
Mrs. Folker
Mrs. Newcombe
Mrs. O'Kelly
Mrs. Dicker
Miss Hetherington
Miss Gaskell
Miss Penston
Mrs. Pursey
Mrs. Charleston-Rae
Miss Morris
Miss Frost
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Mrs. Bompas.Miss Fremantle
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Mrs. Morris
Miss Rawdon-Smith
Mrs. Hodder
Miss Kidner
Miss Cooke
Miss Braithwaite
Mrs. Croft-White
Mrs. Glover
Miss Fye
Miss Phillips
Miss Rose

Coding Supervisor

Jeannette Wensley

Tabulating Supervisor

Enid Whitelaw

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