

JOHN ALEXANDER

I STARTED SCHOOL IN 1929 AT THE AGE OF 5 YEARS OLD AS THE YEARS WENT PAST AND I WALKED UP AND DOWN THE TWO AND A HALF MILES TO SCHOOL I COULD COUNT 12 PAIRS OF HORSES WORKING IN THE FIELDS PLOUGHING IN THE WINTER TIME IN ALL KIND OF WEATHER I WOULD STOP TO HAVE A LOOK AT THE MEN PLOUGHING YOU COULD SEE THE FARROWS SO STRAIGHT WITH THE BLACK EARTH SHINEING IN THE DAY LIGHT, AS THE WEEKS WENT PAST WITH THE PLOUGHING ALL FINISHED THE SPRING TIME WAS HERE, WITH ALL THE MEN AND HORSES BUSY BREAKING IN THE PLOUGHED LAND READY FOR SOWING THE CORN IN MARCH AND APRIL, AS CORN WAS THE MAIN CROP AT THAT TIME. WHEN THE LAND WAS FINE AND DRY YOU COULD SEE ALL THE FARMERS OUT WITH THEIR SOWING MACHINES GOING UP AND DOWN THE FIELDS AS IF THEY HAD NOT A MINUTE TO LIVE, WITH THE MEN AND HORSES COMING ON BEHIND WITH THE HARROWS DOING A DOUBLE STRACK. THE FIRST FARMER I SAW ON MY WAY TO SCHOOL WAS ALEX ANDERSON OF SUNNY SIDE HE HAD ONE PAIR OF HORSES HE WOULD BE BUSY SOWING HIS CORN, THE NEXT FARMER WAS MY FATHER JOHN ALEXANDER MAINS OF BADENTOY HE HAD TWO PAIR OF HORSES AND A ORRY BEAST THE NEXT FARM I CAME TO ON MY WAY TO SCHOOL WAS CHARLIE NIVEN OF CRAIGHEAD HIM AND HIS MEN WOULD BE BUSY SOWING AND HARROWING IN HIS FIELDS WITH THEIR TWO PAIRS OF HORSES, THEN ON DOWN THE ROAD I CAME TO MR STILL OF ESKIEWELL HE HAD SMALLER FIELDS THAN SOME OF THE FARMERS HE WAS BUSY SOWING WITH HIS ONE PAIR OF HORSES AT THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROAD WAS BILL WATSON OF COOKSTON THERE WOULD BE TWO PAIR OF HORSES SOWING CORN AND HARROWING WHEN I TURNED DOWN TOWARDS THE SCHOOL THE NEXT FARM I CAME TO WAS BALQULARN THERE WOULD BE THREE PAIR OF HORSES WORKING IN THE FIELD BUSY SOWING CORN AND HARROWING THEN ON MY WAY AGAIN DOWN PAST THE SMIDDY WHERE THE BLACKSMITH WOULD BE BUSY AT HIS ANVIL AS I GOT NEAR THE SCHOOL I COULD SEE MEN AND HORSES WORKING IN A FIELD AT MAINS OF PORTLETHEN THEN IT WAS IN TO SCHOOL FOR MY LESSONS AFTER I HAD BEEN AT SCHOOL ALL DAY, WE GOT OUT AT 3 OCLOCK, ON MY WAY HOME I COULD SEE ALL THE FARMERS STILL HARD AT WORK SOME WERE STILL IN THE SAME FIELD SOME WERE INTO THE NEXT FIELD SOME FIELDS WERE LARGER THAN OTHERS SO THEY TOOK LONGER TO FINISH. WHEN THE FIELDS WERE HARROWED FOUR TIMES THEN ROLLED, SOME FARMERS HAD METALS ROLLERS SOME HAD STEEN ROLLERS BUT THEY ALL DID THE SAME JOB THE FIELDS ALL LOOKED FINE AND SMOOTH AND READY TO GROW. AS I WALKED UP AND DOWN THE ROAD TO SCHOOL I COULD STILL SEE THE MEN WITH THEIR HORSES WORKING IN THE FIELDS, I COULD SEE THE CORN SHOOTS COMING THROUGH THE GROUND AND THE FIELDS GROWING GREEN, THEN YOU WOULD SEE ALL THE FARMERS GETTING THE GROUND READY FOR PUTTING IN THE NEEPS AND THE TATTIES YOU WOULD SEE THEM GOING UP AND DOWN THE FIELDS PUTTING UP THE DRILLS AND THEY PUTT THEM UP VERY STRIGHT,