

SCHOOL DAYS, AYNHO VILLAGE

As I mentioned, we started at four years old, the eldest taking charge of the new recruit. I am quite amused to see the children today going happily to school, each carrying their bags. The older the child, the larger the bag. That wasn't me. We were always arguing as to who was to carry ours. I didn't have much hankering for school. We only had one small satchel, like an army knapsack, with our sandwiches in, which were home cured lard or dripping which we toasted on the open school fires. Afters was bread and jam. Liquids were obtained from one of the five village pumps.

The teachers were at first Mr and Mrs Hill. They soon retired. Mr and Mrs Pollard came after that. Younger teachers who came in their turn were Mrs Connie Judd, Mrs Molly Braithwaite and Mrs Taylor. Mr Pollard was very strict, no larking about in school. He didn't spare the rod. I became much acquainted with it for misbehaving in school, late to school, a few broken windows. I had it first in the infants where I jumped into deep snow after being told to keep out of it. But we took it as part of the system. If a boy cried after caning he was teased and called a sissy. One instance I remember in the infants class was when we had a knitting lesson. I wasn't very good at it and when the teacher said I had dropped a stitch I got down on the floor to look for it. The teacher gave up and gave me some drawing to do.

When in standard two (now called classes) I had a prize for writing, but farther up in the standards I had clips on my ear for scribbling. Apparently they didn't do any good. All our family reached standard seven. We left at fourteen. The school is now closed, having dwindled from a hundred pupils in our time to thirteen.