

Auctioneer tried to sell a 'Zebra'

Mr W. Young was born in 1906 and interviewed in 1990

When I went to school at Cartmel we took our dinner with us. Many a time, when we went for our dinner, it was in the classroom on a big mantlepiece, it had gone. The children who had poor parents had eaten our dinner. So we told the master that our dinner had gone and he gave us tuppence. So we went to Crawshaw's grocery shop at Townend and he knew what had happened. He gave us so many biscuits and quite a big piece of cheese to go with them. That was our dinner.

My brother-in-law, when he started farming, only had a water pump in the kitchen. Unlike some farms in the area, we'd running water in all our farms. Then legislation by the Government just after the war said that all cattle had to have piped water. At our farm, Hayfellsides there was a lot of spring water. There was a spring behind our house and that water, even in the coldest of weather, never froze, there must have been something in that water that stopped it freezing, and it was beautiful to drink. Nevertheless we had got to go to the bother of putting in pipes. We used it for watering the troughs for the cattle and as hard a frost as there ever was there was never a bit of ice on it.

There was a farmer down Heversham, on the Princes' Way on the road side. He had an old white horse and some land away from home. When he went one Sunday morning to look at his cattle he saw this white horse made into a zebra by some lads. They had taken some black paint and put stripes down it. The poor bloke brought this horse home and scrubbed all day and he couldn't get this paint off. There was a farm sale that week and the auctioneer was full of devilment. One of the lads tells the auctioneer that Jack had a zebra and he was in a doorway listening to the auctioneer selling rubbish, small tools and such like. He was shouting "Tuppence, tuppence who'll give me twopence?" After a bit he knocks the price down. He says "Tuppence to the man with the Zebra!!" Jack comes out from the back of the door and I'll not tell you what he said, but it was very rude. Jack shouted at the auctioneer "What does tha know about it?" Everybody round the ring were laughing. They all knew then." The auctioneer had let the cat out of the bag!!

There were two families at Ulverston. One family was called Kennedy, they owned the iron ore mines, the other were called Burton. The Kennedy's son and the Burton's daughter wanted to get married, very much against their parent's wishes. So these two decided they would go to Gretna Green without them being found out. One night the young Kennedy said to the coachman "I want you to be up in right good time in the morning, the blacksmith is coming." Also to the stable boy "I want the horse and the coach ready early in the morning. They arrived on time and the blacksmith shod the horse and all was ready and they set off across the sands. Of course it wasn't very long until someone was after them, but they couldn't find which way they had gone. As far as they could see the couple hadn't gone by road and they hadn't gone by the Bay as far as they could see because the blacksmith had put the horse's shoes on back to front.

We moved from Pennington to Kendal in 1929. Before that I used to walk from Ulverston to Kendal with our three horses, nearly thirty miles. The horses were all loaded up so I couldn't ride. I used to set off at half past seven in the morning and land at Castle Green at half past five at night. I was tired and so were the horses. Then I worked here during the week and I used to set off back to Pennington on the Saturday morning.

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