

## **Farming – Farm Life**

Well when it come to about May, usually people put in a field of potatoes. The first thing the ground had to be made ready and made pretty fine, the next thing it was opened with a pair of horses for the drills and usually then the farm at that time, they had a big mountain of manure in what they called the dungel, they threw it out and put it down the drills and they spread it and somebody else came after them and dropped the spuds in it and they closed the drills and as the man says in a week or fortnight after that they would pick the tops of the drills to grow a wee bit, to let the wee spuds come up so that they could put more clay up round them. Then say in a month or so, them spuds came up, they would call it the scouring in the spuds. They don't do it now and they put the mould up in the drills again and done it with the grubber and then they run the plough in it and then put the mould up round it again and then they had to turn round and knock the tops of the drills again and whenever they came up six or seven inches the farmer turned round and he had to grub them again and put the mould up round and what they call moulding the spuds and then they got on in the month of June or later in June they had to spray them.

So the spuds that time they had to sprayed with the back sprayer, they had to make up the blue-stone as the man says. There was something like forty gallon barrels that were filled, I think there were eight sprayer fulls or ten sprayer fulls in a barrel. It would have took a man about two hours or three hours to come from that spraying them with the spraying stuff and they done that till they finished the fields. They had to do that three times In that season to keep the blight away, so after that then naturally enough the spuds would ripen, then they dug them in the month end of September the first of October and they what you call they pitted them.

At that time they put them in big long pits up the field, they covered them with rushes and they shoveled the clay up over them to keep the frost from hitting them. In the Spring, whenever people were coming to buy them, you would strip

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a pit and you would scrape them up into bags and they came out of them pits the same as they were coming out of the drills, fresh and good, so that's the way the potato crop worked. Well putting in a crop of barley or corn, it usually started about at the end of March to April or so if you got it in, in March all the better according to the weather, it as a man says you had to get the ground ready for it first, then sow it and then put it in and then you run the roller over it with the horse to break all the lumps and leave it nice and smooth for mowing. So whenever it was ready for mowing, you turned round and gathered the mowing machine. If you hadn't a mowing machine and you mowed it with a scythe you needed a couple of lifters and you scooped it, they talked about in four sheaves and it stood there 'til it was nice and dry and the next thing you threw it in and you stacked it and you stacked it in a corner of a field and you thatched it and put ropes round to keep the thatch on it and then on in about say the end of September or October or so you were needing some of the corn for feeding. You needed straw for the father, he turned round and called in, there was always some man, the thrasher and you thrashed this crop and as they say, they rucked the straw. But in later years then they had bailers, they bailed the straw and it done for bedding and sometimes done for the cattle and many's and many's a time if you had a horse the horse got his half bucket whenever he was ploughing, his half bucket of corn twice a day and as the saying is, you took some of the corn to the mill and you crushed it and you crushed it through the mill, the miller done it for you and you fed it to cattle for feeding too and the hens got a brave lock of corn, it made them lay and that's how your crop of corn or barley, that's the way it was handled in those days.

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