

THE DAY THAT MOLLIE DIED

She was a beautiful pure chestnut of medium build in her late twenties, happy in her moderately easy life at Nan King's Farm. She was previously a member of Tom Carr's family at the Laund. He was glad she had found a good home with Tom Whalley, senior.

It had been quite a good early summer, and haytime was over at Nan King's. It might have been quite an easy time and a well earned rest after mowing early morning and carting in the afternoon and evening. However a request came for help at the old farm at Wardsley, where Tom Whalley, junior, was now in charge. That 26 acre meadow by the Hodder was only half cleared and the weather was deteriorating.

I hitched Mollie into the cart, threw my old bicycle in and away we went on the three mile journey. Our job was to use the farm machinery to get the hay dry and ready for carting into the out-barn, then rake up afterwards. Each evening I was told to "put her in't th'own" and I cycled home. (th'own = the Holme, a small field across the road, by the Greystonley Brook).

Mollie was not very happy and fretted a bit, but the day came when she could return home. I hooked her into the cart. She knew she was going home and was quite excited, in fact I had a job to hold her back from charging at speed all the way. There was no stopping in Chipping nor at the hill at Berry's. I made her stop for a rest at the bottom of Tweedy's. Again I had difficulty in holding her back as we went up the hill.

It was customary to stop and rest again before attempting the second steeper half of the ascent. I turned the cart across to hold the weight, pushing Mollie's head against the bank. There she swayed and fell down, sliding into the road. I tried to rouse her, but there was little response. It was my turn to be excited now and I called out for help. People came from the little house over the arch and from the houses below. Mr Whalley and his brother came down. We got the cart away. Mollie never moved. She was dead. So looking forward to going home, but she didn't quite make it.

I didn't see what happened afterwards. I was too upset and was sent home. A neighbour brought the cart home and poor old Mollie was taken away on the knacker's lorry.

Mollie and I had worked happily together and I missed her very much for some time.

From the Rev. Alec Lord, now living at Llandudno, who was farm lad at Nan King's for Mr Thomas Whalley, senior, from 1928 to 1932.

This incident probably occurred in 1929, when Alec was about 16 years old.

TWEEDY BROW

from an advertisement for Tweedy's engineering products published about 1950.

