

## WINNIE REMEMBERS

I was born over eighty years ago in Brigstock where my father was a horse keeper and ploughman. He would go off to work about four o'clock in the morning and start ploughing at about six o'clock. My grandfather used to go poaching, sometimes as far as Southwick Wood, and one he and others were caught and sent to prison in Northampton for three months. One of them was nicknamed 'Cuckoo' and he sent the wardens nearly mad by 'cuckooing' most of the night and day.

Diphtheria broke out in 1893 and 1902 when five of my family died. My brother and I were very lucky because some vaccine arrived and was given to us and we survived.

I used to go and fetch a quarter of Light Stripes for my grandfather from Colyer's grocer's shop in the High Street. They cost one penny and there were twelve of them and my grandfather used to count them when I got back to make sure I had not pinched one on the way. I also had to fetch Allcocks Porous Plasters for his back from Miss Row's shop on Hall Hill.

I went to Latham Charity School at the time of Mr Morris who was well known for caning the children, and I can remember having the cane for talking when I should have been listening. At Christmas Mr and Mrs Cookson, who lived at the Manor House, gave a Christmas tree and presents to the schoolchildren. One Christmas I had a kind of glass frame I could trace pictures in, and my brother had an ink pot. Mr Steward used to give the children an orange and a bag of sweets at Christmas too.

At the Coronation of George V all the school had tea in Rowell's big locking shed, which stood where Harper's Court is now. We used to have Sunday School treats at Farming Woods Hall. The little ones would go in waggons and the big ones would walk. Mr Gardiner Muir used to let us scramble for pennies and one boy named Height got so many that he was stopped from the scramble. I also remember Plough Monday (the first Monday in January), and St Thomas Day (December 21<sup>st</sup>) when the widows could go round the village begging for money.

We did our washing in a big built-in brick copper with a grate and chimney which was in the barn. Grandma had a big iron pot to boil the water in and in the summer time she would put it in the yard. The clothes were washed in soft water which came from a barrel and tanks, although all the drinking water came from a well quite a way from the house. Some people used a 'dollie' for washing which was like a stool with a handle and three legs, but we did not have one. Washing was very hard work. My grandfather walked to Farming Woods and did the washing there for a shilling a day.

When I left school I worked at Wallis and Linnell clothing factory for three shillings a week and I left after two and a half years and went into service in many places in the district. The first place I went to was at the butcher's in Benefield – it was the best place for food I ever had.