

South Killingholme

by Ann Dale

Introduction

My mother wrote the following account of her childhood in 1995, when she was 84. It was published in the Grimsby Evening Telegraph in 1999.

Hilary Wright

The Village

When I was born in 1911 South Killingholme was a small village. We'll start on the edge of the village and go to Habrough Road. Just past the top of Fauldings Lane, and at the opposite side of the road was a sail mill, Wiseman's Mill. Thus the steep incline in the road there was known as Wiseman's Hill.

We proceed westwards and at the Cross Roads we turn left and on the right hand side of Ulceby Road was the house of Thomas Dann J.P. (no council houses then). Back up to the crossroad we turn left and on the right hand side is the Cross Keys Inn. Past Greengate Lane is the row of semis, bay-windowed houses (these houses were built for workers building the Docks area). In one lived the Ringrose family, then Dick Smith's, Joiner Smith's, Carlile's, Burdass, Dawson, Dunn, etc. Down Greengate Lane was Stave's large farm house with its cobbled courtyard which led to the back door. On the end of Stave's barn was a painted woman's arm. No one seemed to know the origin of it. The house at the front faced towards the school and was quite imposing. Opposite was the Humphreys' farm house, a much smaller place. Across the bottom of this section were two cottages, one was Mrs Bucknall's, who used to play the organ in the Primitive Chapel, and she had a little shop in the back kitchen where she sold a few papers and sweets. Next door were the Marshalls.

Just round the bend were two more cottages straight on to the grass verge. PC Leverton lived in one, Mrs Humphreys in the other. Next door was the thatched cottage belonging to Eastons, they had an orchard and a paddock and kept a couple of cows. Then came another field and horse stables, etc. where the Drewery horses were kept. These were used to pull the coal lorries, one horse was called George, the other Tom Dan Findley. Next door was a thatched cottage with mud and stut walls, Mrs Brumpton and her family, the Kirkleys lived here. Then to the bottom of Greengate and Providence Row. Rabys lived at one end, Mr Raby used to sell baking powder round the village. At the other end lived Mr George Dawson, he was the secretary of the Sons of Temperance Friendly Society. On the opposite side was another thatched cottage occupied by a little hunchback called Billy Allen.

We now leave Greengate and turn left up Moat Lane, across the top of the lane was a wagon gate, through this and another gate was the farmyard to Moat Farm. The house was a Georgian one and my grandmother was born there. Wilkinsons were the farmers

during my childhood. We now return to Moat Lane and on the right hand side were three houses in the same garden. These families were all related. 2 families of Dennis's and the Bontofts. Next came Hewitts Row, one family who lived there for a long time was the Mawers, also Cousins, and Eric Wharton's. Next came a low roofed cottage, the Fows and right on the corner came the Alf Robinsons in the cottage looking down Town Street. Here the lane leading Humberwards was called Dixon's Lane - I believe now it is called Staple Lane. We are now in Town Street and the only house here was Bennetts together with their grocery shop.

On the right hand side of the road was a stackyard and farm building and then came a low farmhouse right on to the grass verge. This was Mr and Mrs Frank Short and their son Horatio. At the end of the farmhouse was a small cottage - Ted Dawson lived here. Under the bedroom window was a huge boulder, sometimes used by horse riders as a mounting block. Next came a very narrow green lane, Stony Lane, it always seemed spooky after dusk. Next came a pair of farm labourers cottages, one nearest to the Wesleyan chapel was occupied by the 'Jeggy' Smith family. The Wesleyan chapel was a large building with a gallery across the back and the pews had doors and at the front were two square pews, one on each side. Directly opposite was the blacksmiths shop. On the grass outside was a large, flat round iron sheet. This was where the wagon and cart wheels were shod, meaning the wooden wheels had iron rims fixed to them for use on rough country roads. Then came the Blacksmith's house. Mr Drewery was the Blacksmith and when the large door of the smithy was open and horses were being shod there was the pungent odour of burning hooves. We children used to hang around and watch and we could see the furnace being blown up by a set of bellows attached to a handle and then the iron bar was put into the fire and then when it was white hot it was brought out and fashioned into a horse shoe, on the anvil. Next down the same side was Drewery's cycle shop and four small houses, Drewery, Walmsleys, us the Clarks, and old Mr and Mrs F. Smith. Then came Uncle Joe Clark's house and tailor's shop. On the other side of the road was the back of the Old School. This was the centre of the village. On the left hand side of Town Street came a cottage and house and post office, these premises were occupied by Mrs Milne and sisters, Miss Browns.

Next were a pair of cottages, then two wagon gates, one to the back of the post office and the other leading to Farrow's field. After that a butcher's shop (Farrow's) then Mrs Neaves cottage and the double fronted Farrow house, followed by Shepherd's shop and house which was end on to the road. Opposite were two cottages, one lived in by Cobbler Drewery's family, his cobbler's shop was in the front garden, and in the other lived old Mr and Mrs Doughty. Back to the left hand side of the road and almost at Walkers Corner was the detached house where Joe Carter, the village carrier lived.

Now we cross the road and turn right into Primitive Chapel Lane. Near to the corner was Mill Farm owned by the James Chapman family. They ground corn in one of the barns. Right at the top of the lane was the 'Pines', the residence of Captain Wigfall. Next came Laburnum Cottage, Mrs Chapman and family and then Mr Hockney's smallholding. We fetched our milk from there. After that the small Primitive Methodist Chapel and adjoining

it Mr Staple's cottage. The white house end-on to the road was Harry Smith's, and almost on the corner Jack Carter's house and greengrocery. Looking down Humber Road was Walker's joiners shop. He was also the village undertaker. The Walker house was across a passage from the shop.

Back into Town Street again and the house on the other side of the road is Gunson's, with a grocery shop attached. Some patent medicines could be obtained here. On again and next comes Woods Lane, the detached house on the corner is where Mr Parritt lived after he retired as headmaster at the village school. On the right side half way along, a pair of cottages, Mrs Sanderson in one and the Newcombe Smiths in the other. Next down a long garden path were four small houses, Baxters, Carlile, Coates, and Dobsons lived here. Across the top lived the Wood family, later Fred Hall, bricklayer.

Back down the lane we turn right and the next long low farm house was where the Mawers lived. We collected butter from here. Round the bend in the road came Jobson's farmyard and then a big square farmhouse. Up Dishman's little narrow lane was South Killingholme Manor, another long low house. Across Town Street again we came to Simpson's farm, then a row of small cottages straight onto the road side, here old Mr Ware and the Good family lived. The end to the road cottage was occupied by bachelor Johnny Lee. A little further along were Fauldings Cottages. Here Dick Clark's family and the Kenworthys lived. The Fauldings farmed at South Killingholme Grange on the corner at the opposite side of the road. Now turning left we are in Baptist Chapel Lane. The Gerrard family lived in the thatched house on the right hand side and Griffins in the house further down on the left. Mayfield Terrace was the row of houses end-on to the road, and opposite Baptist Chapel Cottage and the Baptist Chapel with its own burial ground. Next came the detached house owned by Mrs Mapplethorpe and her sister Miss Motley. These ladies used to ride into the village on a tandem tricycle. Round the next corner was Fred Bell's house and builder's yard. Down this narrow lane lived Bob Short and another family Short and the Lancasters. Right at the very end of the lane was Walnut Farm, almost into Immingham. Here my grandmother's Uncle William Cuthbert lived. Back up the lane again and at the beginning of what was known as Backlanes (now Eastfield Road) was America House, owned by Short the farmer, then nearer to Humber Road were 2 farm labourers' cottages attached to Walmer Farm where the Gilliat's lived. We turn toward the Humber and Glebe Farm where the Farrows lived was about two fields down. Back up Humber Road and the only house was on the left hand side, this was where Grandad and Granny Clark lived. This later became the Police House. Nearer to Walkers Corner was the village penfold, made up of stout wood rails. This was where stray animals were secured. Back up Town Street and on the corner opposite the front of the Old School were two cottages, one lived in by the Wilsons and the other by old Mr Lawson. We are now in School Road and next came Carlton Cottage where the Appleyards lived, and Haggett's grocery shop. Opposite was a long low house. Charlie Portas lived here. Back to the left hand side and the White House was where Arthur Garbutt lived, then on the bend was Paragon House where our family went to live. Next door was Dinsdale's house and farm. Up the road on the right was the village school and school house. Next two pairs of bay-windowed villas. Here the

West's, Newbourns, and Harveys lived, and that was South Killingholme village during the First World War.

The Marsh

Another part of South Killingholme was the marsh area. Down Humber Road and under the railway we come to Rosper Road, turn left here and a little way along on the right hand side was the marsh Day School and beside it a very nice white house, where the schoolmaster, Mr Pearson, lived. Next was the Wesleyan Mission and beside it a pair of semi-detached houses, the Mawers and the Mortons. To get to these properties each one had a wooden bridge with handrail as the main drain to the Humber ran along this side of the road. Further along was Marsh Lane, end-on to the river. There was one long, straight row of forty-two houses, then the Samuels, and a farm where the Goods lived. Continuing towards the Humber were two large houses occupied by the Dobbs and Franklins, these were the foremen's houses connected to the fish meal industry. There were three factories with railway lines running in from Grimsby, also jetties running out into the river. When it was a north wind blowing the stench was carried up to the village and the men and women who worked there still smelled of it, even after baths.

Through the 'oilworks' and on to the Humber bank. Turning towards Immingham and below the bank was a low detached house and a pair of cottages, These had belonged to the old Lindsey brickyard. All that was left of it were several very deep water pits. A boy called Blanchard was drowned there. As we walk along we come to Killingholme Haven - Mitchell's brickyard here. The foreman, Mr Hanson's house with a cottage attached, and in the yard about six cottages and a small Wesleyan Chapel. Around the end of the haven and over a stone bridge where the clough gates were housed was Ned Chapman's small public house. As we walk along the other side of the haven we see about six coastguards' cottages nestling under the bank. Back to the road and half way along there's a railway signalman's house with the signal box by the level crossing. This part of the marshland was said to be some of the best cattle grazing land in Lincolnshire. Cattle were driven here from long distances to fatten up.

At the beginning of the 1900s bricks made at the brickyards had to be carted right up through South Killingholme and round by Habrough Church to be used in the building of Immingham. In those days the village was criss-crossed by field paths. From North Killingholme Church you could walk across closes right through to the top of Fauldings Lane, and from Shepherd's shop right down to the Humber bank.

Water

I was born in 1911 and at that time there was no electricity or piped water in the village. Each house had its own pump. There was always a plentiful supply of clear water, straight from the rock it was said, at depths of from eighty to a hundred and twenty feet.

Washdays were hard work for women and appliances were very simple. Usually in a small outhouse was a copper in a brick surround, and early morning a fire would be lit under it after several buckets of water had been put into it. When the water was hot the white sheets, table cloths, etc. would be placed in the galvanised dolly tub (about the size of a dustbin) and often shavings of soap were added. The whole lot would be twisted round and around by using the peggy legs, which was a small round stool on a long handle. Then the clothes were transferred to a washtub, which was rested on a high, long stool. Here the clothes which were dirty were scrubbed and then transferred to the copper to boil, under a wooden lid. More soap was shaved and put into the copper. A long, round, wooden stick, called the copper stick was used to remove the washing from the copper. The same dolly tub was used for rinsing, more clean water to be pumped, and finally came the mangle, an iron framed monster about five foot high with two enormous wood rollers. A wood handle turned the large iron wheel which then turned the rollers. The wet washing was fed in at the front and came to rest on a mangle board at the back. This laborious task was repeated until the washing was all finished. There were no soap powders in those days and half a pound of soap would cover the whole of the washing.

On fine days the washing was dried outside but on wet days it was a nightmare, Small items were put on tall clothes horses but sheets were draped over clothes lines which were hung across living rooms and kitchens and operated by pulleys which pulled the washing almost to the ceilings. Put up before bedtime, they would be dry next morning. Then came the ironing. The flat iron was placed in a clean fire to heat and then before it was used a tin 'slipper' was clipped on to it to prevent smuts getting on to the clothes.

Doing a family wash would take all day and when it came to the blankets everyone had to help. Before our blankets were hung up to dry they had to be thoroughly shaken to bring up the fluff. Our blankets were never washed in May, because to 'wash blankets in May you washed someone away'.

Of course nearly every house and building had its own supply of rain water. This was stored in barrels with piping from the roof gutters leading to the tubs. Although the barrels were very clean inside there were always lots of worm-like creatures found their way in. They were brown and about three quarters of an inch long. This meant water had to be drained before use.

It was the practice in our house to fill a water pot with about six buckets of water. This pot, called a pippin, was brown and glazed inside and half way down on the outside and was

covered with a wooden lid. From this pot the kettles and pans used during the day would be filled. It saved a lot of trips to the pump when baking and cooking were going on.

Heat and light

In those far-off days there wasn't any central heating, even the larger houses and farmhouses had to rely on coal and wood fires. Sitting rooms would have a grate and maybe a marble fireplace, but the living rooms would have a large cooking range with an oven at one side of the fire and a boiler on the other. The boiler would hold about 2 buckets of water so you just raised the lid, dipped in the boiler can and so long as the fire burned there was hot water. You always had to keep the boiler full or the side would crack. The vegetables were cooked in a pan on the open fire.

The bedrooms maybe had a small fireplace but if space was limited these were often boarded up and papered over. Great Uncle Joe, the village tailor, was taken ill in the winter. There was a fireplace in his bedroom and somebody decided to light a fire but the smoke didn't go up the chimney, it filled the bedroom and he had to be moved very quickly downstairs. A bird had built its nest in the chimney pot!

Going to bed in winter was like taking a trip to Iceland, and sometimes we took the oven shelves up to bed wrapped in old sheets. Another way was to heat brick pavers in the oven and use them as bed warmers. Of course better-off folk had bed warmers. These were made of brass with a long wooden handle and either hot charcoal or red hot cinders were put in them and the lid closed. The maid would carry it upstairs and move it about between the sheets until the bed was really warm.

Our lighting was by candles, paraffin lamps, and carbide lamps for cycles. There were lots of shapes for candlesticks but the ordinary ones were usually made of enamel and round and broad with a handle for carrying, as these were used to light the way to bed. The very small round paraffin lamps were known as kelly lamps, then came the hand lamps and lastly the bigger table lamps. The light was the centre of the room and you had to sit near it to get the full benefit from it. However, wonderful sewing and knitting was done even by candlelight.

The oil lamps had to be trimmed and filled every day and it was a very smelly job. For outside jobs after dark there were oil-filled stable lamps which didn't blow out in the wind.

Sanitation

Of course there wasn't a sewage system in the village until after the Second World War, 1945 or after. What we had was an earth closet sometimes called a privvy or petty. Usually they were situated at some little distance from the house. It was a narrow building with a box-like wooden structure in the end. In the middle of the top was a round hole and at the front of the box was a shutter which was held in place by two pegs which twisted round to allow the pan inside to be removed and replaced. The usual pan was the size of a small dustpan and had two handles for carrying. There was no toilet paper in those days, therefore the newspapers were in much demand. Every village had its own 'nightsoil' collection. Local farmers contracted for the privilege and whoever got the contract had to carry out the emptyings between 10pm and 6am. There was an iron tumbrel provided and this was emptied in an out of the way spot somewhere on the farmer's land.

I once saw someone in the village doing the job for themselves. They didn't have an ordinary pan, but a three-legged pot and it was strung on a long clothes prop as they carried it to an already dug hole at the bottom of their garden. Jungle life in Killingholme. A funny thing happened one night, the worker fell into the tumbrel as he took a ride along the road, the lid was open, and the ditty told it all. Poor Weddy tumbled backwards and found he couldn't swim. He didn't come up smelling of roses. The tumbrel was known as the Dilly Cart.

The very poor

Only the farmers were well off in those days. Most men were employed either on the land or in the brickyard. Most farmworkers lived in tied cottages and if the house was rent free then the wages were less. Sometimes they had free milk and potatoes.

Some years there would be fresh families in the school after 6th April, which was Lady Day when married men moved. If farmworkers got on well with their bosses they would settle down and not seek to move.

There was no health or social security in those days and so if anyone was desperately poor they could apply for parish relief. A Mr Ellwood had a room at Mr Staples' house on a Monday morning. He came from Barton and was the registrar for births, etc.

A widow with a family to care for would receive ten shillings a week, a poor old man would get 5 shillings. The widow would take in washing or go cleaning to help and the old man would depend on his family and neighbours to help him.

Rents of ordinary cottages would be on average about 4/6d a week, rates about £1.50 per half year, and coal would be 1/11d a bag.

There was a doctor's surgery at 'Homecroft', Dr Doughty's house on Town Street, and people would go to Dr Felton in Immingham.

Despite the fact that according to today's standards we didn't have a lot going for us, we lived a happy life. There was no trying to keep up with the Jones's. No-one had a car and in general we were a very law-abiding people and in an emergency we helped one another. We had never heard of radio or television but we did have a gramophone.

People were married and stayed together and did the best they could for their families.

War Time

I was born in a small house in Town Street, the second child of Arthur and Gertrude Clark. I had an older brother, Arthur, who was three years my senior. We lived a quiet life when we were small. We were taken to the little Primitive Chapel on Sundays, and in 1915 my younger sister Ivy was born on October 13th, my mother's birthday. Five months later our Dad was called up for the Army. I remember my sister being christened at home. It was one very cold night, and the minister had come to Killingholme to conduct a week-night service and so he conducted the christening as well. I remember kneeling in front of a blazing fire with my brother and holding on to the fireguard, and a lady called Sara Raby was the godmother. The Sunday before Dad left home there were several men at the evening service at Chapel all bound for Rugeley Camp in Staffordshire the next day. One hymn chosen by the preacher said: "One by one they leave us, one by one they fade and die". Some wives wept, but our mum was hopping mad about it. Next day all the families walked to Habrough station to see the new soldiers on to the troop train. And so started a long lonely time for our mum and us. The allowance was 28/- a week out of which went 4/6d for rent and 9/- a half year for rates, and everything else had to be paid.

I started school the day I was five. The same headmaster who had taught my dad. The infant teacher was Miss Betsy French. She travelled each day from Barton by train to Ulceby station and then walked the long straight road to and from school. She wore buttoned boots and her hair was piled up high on her head. She always told us she had eyes in the back of her head and we used to look for them but never found them. We had rag reading books and slates and pencils, and if we were naughty we were stood in the corner looking at the wall. Sometimes she used a short cane to punish us but we did learn quite a lot under her teaching.

Well, the war progressed and dad was still away. On Sunday morning after Sunday School, Mr Walmsley our next door neighbour would take us along with his own daughter Laura for walks down the lanes. It made a change for us and gave mum a break. One

Sunday we walked along the backlanes and between North End Lane and Chasehill Road was a large field known as 'hundred acres'. In the corner of the field was a steam roller and its living van and on the previous night a German Zeppelin had dropped bombs right across the field. The man in the van had a very lucky escape.

When our dad was still away we would go down Humber Road to granny Clark's and she would ask us to go gleaning with her. Gleaning was collecting heads of corn from the fields after Harvest, the corn was then fed to the chickens. Mum made us gleaning aprons, a large bag on strings tied round the waist. It was easy to collect the corn this way but my young sister stamped her foot and declared: "I'm not doing a dean a danny", which when interpreted meant "I'm not going to glean for Granny". I expect her legs had been pricked by the stubble.

I remember going to Wootton to visit Aunt Ada. Ivy was pushed in the pram which also carried a few belongings, Arthur and I walked alongside Mum. We stayed a few days and then walked home again, about five miles each way but it seemed much longer. Walking was the only way to get about. Another time we walked to Uncle Tom's farm at the far end of East Halton. Aunt Sis was housekeeping for her brother at the time. The worst thing I remember of that visit is that I fell out of the high bed, every night except one.

Our little house was warm and cosy in winter and hot in summer. I remember when Mum was decorating there was a fall of plaster in the living room so Mum took a piece of unbleached calico and covered the hole with it, well soaked in size. When the calico dried it made a very hard base for the wallpaper to stick to. This method of calico for repairs was also used in roofing small sheds but using tar instead of size. It made a lovely waterproof roof.

For decorating back kitchens and pantries there were three materials that were readily available, whitewash for ceilings, and red rudd and yellow ochre for walls. All three substances were bought by weight and in large hard lumps which were broken down by a hammer. Water was then added according to how deep a colour was required. Floors were usually made of red brick tiles, only in sitting rooms were wooden floors put in. The brick floors had to be washed regularly and therefore a thick apron had to be worn, usually made of hessian. Cocoa matting was the floor covering used and nearly always a rag rug in front of the fire. The rugs were made in the home, old woollen garments were washed and cut into narrow strips about 6 inches long. These pieces were then pegged into hessian by a special tool called a pegger. Uncle Joe the tailor had some super rag rugs. These were made from cloth patterns sent out by the mills. The settle in their living room was also covered in patchwork, including the cushions, all from these patterns. It was a change from the black horsehair which was the original seating.

I only remember Dad coming home twice during his Army service, once after Rugeley Camp and then from France. We woke up in the morning to find an army greatcoat and

a rifle in the living room, Dad was back. It was at this time my sister was heard telling neighbours, "I've got two dads, my own dad and my soldier dad".

After this leave we didn't see him again until the war was ended, but in 1917 Mum took all three of us into Grimsby to have a photograph taken. One Friday morning, all dressed in our best clothes, we went down the village street to Mr Joe Carter's for we were travelling to Grimsby in his carrier's cart. It was one of the round topped pioneers' carts with a seat down each side. Mum must have already made arrangements with him because he could only take a few people. We left home by 8am and the cart was drawn by chestnut and black horses, commonly known as cobs, meaning they weren't as big as cart horses. Their names were Dick and Charlie. We knew the horses because Mr Carter stabled them at Dixons Lane corner and he sometimes gave Arthur a ride. It was a long ride into Grimsby and the carriers all 'put up' in the Bull ring because there the country people gathered. There was a butter market where farmers' wives sold their butter, cheese and curds. We made our way down to Freeman Street where we had our photograph taken. We looked round the market and at 3.30pm we were back in the Bull Ring for our journey home. There were several calls to be made on the way back to deliver parcels, etc.

In our living room was a piece of wall between the fireplace and a cupboard, this was painted brown and was our blackboard. It was easy to clean and as our toybox was in the cupboard, that was our special place. There was an old gramophone with cylinder records. I remember "When all our labours and trials are o'er" and "Hail smiling morn".

When Dad was away it was hard for us at Christmas time but Mum always found little extras for our stockings. On Christmas Eve we would go to Mrs Mawer's farm and she would give us evergreens, laurel, holly and fir, and we would put it behind pictures and tie a big bundle together to form a tree. We'd hang it from the ceiling and trim it up.

Dad saw war service at Ypres, Menin Gate and Hill Sixty. Later on he was in Italy and had to cross the River Piave, the waters came up to his shoulders. He was once in a trench with six other men when a German shell killed all the other men and blew his pack off his back. Once on parade a young officer shouted: "the man with the black moustache pull your stomach in". That night Dad shaved his moustache off. He was also on duty as a guard over the soldiers who were suffering from shell shock, a form of mental illness brought on by war service.

During these long months we kept going to Sunday School and Chapel, and Mum took us at night with her. There weren't any street lights but we found our way by the stars, and the lanes were safe for walkers, the only problem was the cow claps on the footpaths.

Dad did send, when he could afford them, some lovely silk cards with little messages inside. These are now known as 'French Silks'.

School Life

At this time 1917 coal was 6 bags for 3/8d, paraffin 1/- a gallon and lamp glasses 5d each.

One night my mum, Arthur, and I were looking through the back bedroom window which faced towards the Humber, when we saw a Zeppelin in the searchlights. It looked like a huge fish floating along. We heard bombs and next day we discovered that the signalman at the haven railway crossing had been killed as he ran from the signalbox to go home to his cottage. During the following week a man took an unexploded bomb into the blacksmith's shop and the blacksmith decided to see what it contained. Fortunately for him and lots of other people who lived nearby, PC Leverton arrived and arrested the object. It was shaped like a huge mushroom.

School filled our weekdays and it was very different from today. For exercise we had 'drill', arms upward, sideways, forward stretch, and knees bend. Sometimes on Monday mornings Mr Parritt would march us through the village as far as Walker's Corner. Mr Walker was the school correspondent and they would talk together and then we would march back. Sometimes in the summer we were taken to Stave's field, behind the school, there we would play cricket, stando, etc. A change from the hard playground. One day I played stando with the rest of the class in the girls' playground and I fell onto the boilerhouse window sill which was about 20 inches from the floor. I was concussed and Mrs Parritt took me into the schoolhouse where she attended to me. After school my mum hired Short's pony and trap and took me to Immingham, to Doctor Felton's surgery. He stitched a cut on my forehead and then gave me a silver threepenny piece, for being brave. I still have the scar on my forehead.

I worked hard at school, and we couldn't go up to the next class until we had passed the test. Some children were still in class four when it was time to leave school. In class 1 and 2 we were given paper and pencils. I had a lovely teacher, Miss Appleby from Healing. Class 3 and 4 were at one end of the big room. Here the teacher was Miss Tomlinson and we then began to use exercise books and pen and ink. Now the desks were long and sloping with an inkwell hole in the flat piece at the top. Underneath was a shelf where we could keep a few things. The seat was backless and was fastened to the desk by heavy ironwork. I remember the ink came in powder form and was mixed together with water. The pens were wooden handled and steel nibs which crossed very easily, but we managed to write with them. Here we did a lot of poetry and singing as well as general subjects.

Class 5 was in the middle of the big room, here Miss Dishman was in charge. Here the girls did lots of sewing and embroidery, also a lot of knitting, men's navy blue socks always. I guess one farming family never wore anything else. At the end of the big room next to the schoolhouse was the section where the headmaster had his desk and he taught classes 6, 7, and 7X.

I sometimes was made to stand on the seat and sometimes even had the cane and always for talking. I didn't complain to my mum because she would only have said I must have deserved the punishment.

One incident I remember when we had a relief headmaster, was when Harold Smith cheeked him, he was caned and still answered back and the Head took a scout pole and thrashed him with it but Smithy ran out the door and returned very quickly with his mother. It was 'egg and milk' for the rest of us as we watched but the relief Head was away by the end of the week. He was an ex-army captain and was used to dealing with adults not tiresome children.

At the time the war ended and Dad was home there was a terrible 'flu epidemic and Dad became ill, got pneumonia and nearly died. He had been gassed in France and that made the illness worse. However, when he was able to walk about, he was sent to a convalescent home at Trusthorpe to recuperate. After Dad was fully recovered and back at work he began to teach in our Sunday School, and later became one of the superintendents.

In 1922, when Arthur was fourteen years old, he was awarded a scholarship to Old Clee Boys' Grammar School. We were all very delighted. He had to leave home before 8am and wasn't back again until about 5.40pm. For three years he was awarded a prize for 'Never absent, never late'.

I learned to ride a bike when I was about 10 years old. The Drewery family, who lived two doors away from us, had an old bicycle, no saddle, no tyres. You just sat on the frame and the other kids pushed you off. After falling into gooseberry bushes several times I learned the art of balancing. Down our garden paths and to the bottom of the gardens we were able to get through the hedge, jump across the ditch and into Dinsdale's field. There was a deep pond quite near and we often went 'newting' with a piece of string and a pin and worm when the weather was fine, but we had to scurry back when we heard the cows coming for they always made for the pond.

The Primitive Chapel

When I was about 11 years old I was allowed to join Miss Nellie Brown's Girls' Class, one evening a week in the Wesleyan Chapel vestry. I remember we all had to quote a text from the Bible and there was a scramble for the shortest ones: 'Jesus wept' and 'God is love'.

I remember one summer Sunday afternoon, the old preacher, Mr Hill, was telling us a story about a girl who went up to a rich lady and asked: "Please are you an angel?" The answer was "No, I'm not, get away with you", and as he said this he stamped his foot and Elliott's dog Spot flew into Chapel and barked his head off. He thought the preacher was telling him to go. Another summer Sunday Dinsdale's cade lamb came in and laid down

until the children were ready to go home after Sunday School. The little Chapel had plain glass in the windows and looking out at one side you saw Chapman's cows and at the other Mr Elliott would be walking round his garden. When the big iron stove needed to have its chimney swept Dad would go up a ladder outside and drop half a brick down, attached to a piece of string. At the other end of the string was a wisp of straw and 'hey presto' as the brick was pulled out of the stove the straw fetched the soot down. A very cheap way to sweep a narrow chimney.

A highlight of our Sunday School year was the Anniversary which took place the last weekend in May. It was often a very cold day but that didn't deter us from wearing our new dresses, for every girl had a new dress for this special day, and very smart we looked too. Weeks before, Mr Savage, from his shop in the market place at Grimsby would have brought samples out to the village and if we liked them they would have been ordered well beforehand. Often they were made of pretty voile, a very dainty material, and we had new shoes to match.

Our Mum helped to train the children who were reciting and we also had to learn ten new hymns from a special hymn sheet. The men erected a special platform based round the pulpit and it had to be safe and strong as there would be about 60 people on it. We had a special preacher for the day and the Chapel was full to overflowing. All parents and friends came to hear the children recite and sing.

The following day, Monday, we were given a half day holiday from school. Mr Pye, who had lots of experience in sports, and who was a lighthouse keeper, arranged the races and the little prizes, and he also had lots of sweets and monkey-nuts which he threw up into the air and we had to scramble for them. At four o'clock we would go to the Chapel for a lovely tea prepared by our mums. Then at seven o'clock a service again in the Chapel when the minister would take part, more special hymns and recitations, and after the service everybody would go to Mr Chapman's field again and everybody would play games, such as Nuts and May, Jolly Miller, Kiss in the Ring, and Musical Arms. If the night was fine we would stay until 10 o'clock and everyone went home very tired but happy.

After the Anniversary came another big day for the Sunday School. In June we would be granted a full day off from school so that we could go on our annual day trip to Cleethorpes. Beforehand, Dad and Mr Gorbitt, the other superintendent, would have been to see some farmers to ask if they would kindly take the children and parents to Habrough station. When the day finally arrived we would all be up early and the farmers would have been up even earlier because all the wagons would be clean and the horses all trimmed up with plumes and ribbons and wearing shiny horse brasses. There would be forms down the sides to sit on and we would load up in the middle of the village. The Wesleyan Sunday School would be doing the same thing and it was a happy, cheering throng who rode to Habrough station. That day Killingholme was a deserted village. At Habrough there was a special train which had picked up children from New Holland,

Goxhill, and Ulceby. Dad and Mum knew lots of people when we got off the train at Cleethorpes.

On the sand before the station was Bert Coulbeck's service. He was a blind Methodist minister and he played and sang to a concertina. Then came Hancock's Jolly Boats, a very noisy roundabout where they sold tea, etc. Then came the lighthouse slide, the aerial flight and the helter-skelter. There wasn't a Wonderland in those days but on the land side of the prom was the Figure 8, and the Dip-the-dip, two very high rides. Also the Ghost Train and the Fairy Ride. If you sat too far back in the boat on the river, your bottom got wet. Then there was a bowl slide and a wide slide with bolt heads sticking up. This had a draught half way down which threw you backwards. This was called Bump-the-bump but somehow the last 'P' had been lost.

We were given 6d pocket money and 1/- to buy food but our mums took our food and we had all the money to spend. The night before the trip whoever fetched the milk was given by Mrs Hockney three silver 3d bits, one for each of us.

After all the excitement of a day by the seaside we got the train back to Habrough where horses and wagons would be waiting to carry us home. I often think that the farmers must have had a great interest in Sunday Schools because they performed this service year after year. There was Mr Mawer, Mr Staves, and Mr Chapman and Mr Dinsdale.

We also had some lovely concerts for Sunday School Funds. We once had a Christmas Operetta and it was performed in the big room, in the Day School. A huge platform was erected and all our family were performers, except Mum who helped with the dresses. Dad sung a solo dressed as Father Christmas. It was something like this:

'Oh yes, I am Santa Claus, jolly old Santa Claus,
Friend of the children both young and the old,
I come to you once a year,
Bringing you Christmas cheer,
Happy and glad some small kindness to do.
Chorus: Merry, merry Santa Claus,
Dear old father Santa Claus,
In your honour joyous carols now we swell.'

Arthur was the dream-man with a cloak covered in stars and moons and he twirled a large paper umbrella over his head. He sang:

'I am the dream-man, dream-man with my umbrella so gay,
Come haste with me o'er the sunset bridge to the dreamland, far away.'

Ivy was a fairy and I was one of the six children being taken to dreamland. Miss Bontoft, and Mrs Dennis trained us and they were helped by Miss Vincent. She was a very pretty young Australian lady who was staying with her sister and brother-in-law, Mr & Mrs Plaskitt,

When the minister rode over from Goxhill for a midweek service he would sometimes bring text cards to sell. They were quite attractive and would be hung on the wall. I remember one especially because it started off as "Live at peace with all men". The next time the minister came "and women" had been added, and finally it said "Live at peace with all men, and women if you can". Arthur could get away with anything.

In about 1927 Dad started to go out preaching in the surrounding villages. First with Mr George Green from Ulceby, and after he had passed exams and preached a 'trial sermon', he went alone. Sometimes he would bike to South Ferriby, Bonby, and Barton on the far side of the circuit. Once when preaching at Wootton he discovered there wasn't an organ and hymns were led by a man playing a tin whistle. This Sunday no sound came from the whistle and the man shook it and out dropped a beetle, then they were able to proceed.

Sunday was always a busy day for all the family. Sunday School in the morning and back again at 2pm and 6pm, but if Dad was preaching away, it meant we had an earlier lunch so that he could get to another chapel for 2pm. He was always very smart with a dark suit and a stiff white collar which had to be specially laundered. Mum would have washed them previously and allowed them to dry, then they were soaked in cold Robins Starch, wrapped in a clean linen cloth for about half an hour and then ironed dry. This brought a shine to them and about six collars were done at one time because it was a special job. There was always the same questions asked of Dad, "Have you got got clean handkerchiefs, your pocket flaps pulled out and your sermon notes?". When he got home the first question was ; "Have you had a good time?", and he always said "Yes" ,and then Mum would laugh and say "But has the congregation?". Sunday was a very happy day for us. We never cleaned out the pigs, gardened, washed, got the vegetables or cleaned boots on a Sunday. It was a very special day for us.

The First Bus

Our reading matter in those far-off days, apart from books in the bookshelves, consisted of Sunday Companion for Mum, Arthur Mee's Children's Newspaper, Hull and Lincolnshire Times on Saturdays, and Joyful News of Sins Forgiven, of Hell Subdued and Peace with Heaven from Uncle Joe (weekly), and the Christian Herald and Signs of our Times, from Mrs Smith next door.

We kept a few chickens and two pigs but when we were getting bigger we were allowed to have a kitten. Ivy had been given a Lewis Wain cat book as a Sunday School prize so we looked in it for a name. There were Peeps, Pansy, Tops, Timsy, Puds, and Paddy. Puds was a coal black kitten in the book so that was the name we chose. We used to dress him up in baby clothes and push him round in a doll's pushchair.

Sometimes after Chapel on a summer night we would all walk over to the Gorbotts' at North Killingholme. We would walk across the fields home and at times it was really scary, especially when we met a herd of cows on the railway bridge. But Dad didn't worry because he would have his walking stick with him, and I once saw him get hold of the tail of a bull as it rose up in front of us as we walked along the Pingle. He chased it up the bank and away across the field.

Talking of animals, when I was a little older I was allowed to go and play across at Dinsdale's farm after school. The two eldest girls were Blanche and Gertie, and Madge Farrow, who also lived in Town Street, would join us. Now Mr Dinsdale, like a lot of other farmers took in a Cleethorpes donkey from the end of the beach season until Easter. Someone would put a halter on Neddy but we didn't have a saddle and riding bareback wasn't easy. Someone would get on the donkey's back and the rest would shout and clap hands to get him moving. Sometimes he refused to move but one afternoon things altered. He took off at a gallop and headed straight for the pond. Poor Madge was astride him that day and when the water reached her shoes she thought she would be drowned. He stayed in the water for about half an hour and then quietly walked out but he'd certainly given us a scare. Dad also told a tale about their donkey. He went to a meet of Brocklesby Hunt on it. He was last as they moved from Gillat's Wood to Chasehill Wood but when Mr Fox suddenly turned about he was amongst the first and the huntsman yelled at him to "Get out of the way - boy".

The first bus for the village was a low motor lorry and for Saturdays a shed-like construction was fastened to it. One of the Bennett family owned it. It seated about fourteen people sitting down each side, and had small windows with an entrance door at the back with one step to help passengers to board it. It would be used to take the football team to away matches and maybe run into Grimsby on Saturday evenings. The driver was completely cut off from his passengers. The first proper bus to the village was called Immingham Queen and was owned by Bacon's Garage in Immingham.

Anyone working in Grimsby still had to cycle to Habrough Station to catch a train. The Royal Mail was also based at Habrough. Mr Will Drewery was the postman, and he had to cycle from Habrough to Killingholme bringing the letters and parcels in and taking the outgoing mail on his return trip. It wasn't too bad when the weather was fine but during bad weather it was terrible.

One highlight I remember very clearly was when the Pilgrim Fathers Monument was unveiled at Immingham Creek. I was allowed to go with the Drewery family, using Mum's bike. We cycled down to Killingholme Haven and then walked along the Humber bank towards Immingham Dock. The monument was situated at the end of the creek and the topmost stone was a block of granite, brought from the place in America where the English families first landed from the Mayflower. An American warship was berthed at the western jetty and there was a long procession of American sailors, Lord Mayor and Mayoress of Hull, lots of very important people including the American ambassador. A service was held and then someone spied a local Salvation Army man called Ted

Jackson. He had a full beard and he was known locally as Ted Jesus. Someone asked him to say a few words and he almost preached a sermon. Whenever I hear of anything to do with the Pilgrim Fathers I always think of that day.

All the older generation of the Clarks were Wesleyan Methodists and they all gathered together at Uncle Joe's on a Good Friday, Uncle John from Scunthorpe, Uncle Edward from Grimsby, and Uncle and Aunt Dexter from Ulceby (she was Emma Clark). There was a service and a tea which consisted of plain bread and butter, yeast plum bread and butter, and seed bread. The seeds were caraway and it was often referred to as 'slow bread' because it was the country custom to eat it at funerals.

Uncle Joe was a very small man and being a tailor he was always well dressed, his nickname was 'Natty' which suited him very well. When he had made a suit he would deliver it, and on one occasion he had walked to Ulceby and the customer had invited him to have a drink of 'bully wine', wild plums gathered from the hedgerows. Uncle Joe didn't realise how potent the drink was, and later on he was found asleep on a stone heap on the side of Ulceby Road. It became a family joke.

Talking of hedgerows, I think I knew every bank in the village where violets grew, down Dixons Lane, Fauldings Lane, and from Gillatt's farm gate on Humber Road round the corner along Back Lane. We always referred to the Baptist Chapel end of the village as 'yon end'. I suppose it was because it was beyond the village. We also knew the best brambling hedges and which farmers' fields we dare go in. Arthur would go down Musmer Lane and into Zincs Wood but it was forbidden territory for us girls. When we came home Mum would get the big jam pan out and it would hold seven pound of brambles, and seven pounds of sugar, and as it was cooked over the coal fire it had to be watched all the time until it was ready.

I once went potato picking for a farmer. He had appealed to Mr Parritt for bigger children to help him. We worked all day on a Saturday and received two shillings each and we did more than that damage to our clothes.

One of the games we played was called Shag. We all wore scarfs in those days and a big girl would put hers round her waist, and the next girl would hold on to it, and maybe we would finish up with about thirty. It was alright when we started to run but as we gathered speed the ones at the back were flung around as the leader turned corners. The only way to avoid being flung into walls and hedges was to let go of the scarf but then the ones behind finished up in a heap on top of you.

Pig Cheer

Drewery's cycle shop in Town Street also sold hardware, and looking in there one day, Arthur, Ivy, and I saw a small glass tray with a cream jug and sugar bowl on it, so we decided it would be nice for Mum's birthday. It was priced 3/6d and the label on it said

'Here today, gone tomorrow'. Now we only had 1 penny a week pocket money, it was then July, so we reckoned that, there being twelve pennies in a shilling, we would need fortytwo pennies. It would be hard work and we wouldn't afford anything else, but when October thirteenth came we hadn't enough money, but the glass tray was still in the window. We checked daily and when Christmas came it was still there and three very happy children went in and bought it, and on Christmas morning our Mum was delighted with the gift.

We kept a few chickens in a shed behind the pig sty and we enjoyed eating the eggs but we never killed the chickens. They were our friends and were allowed to die a natural death.

There were two bakers came into the village from Ulceby, Mr Clare and Mr Stothard. Their goods were carried in box-like carts drawn by horses, with the baker sitting high on the top with his apron tied round his waist. And from East Halton came Mr Chapel. He had a huge horsedrawn covered cart, groceries and bread inside, and hanging outside were buckets, bowls, brushes, and lots of other household goods, and underneath a paraffin tank because everyone needed paraffin for their lamps. Also into the village from Goxhill came a man called Dickie Border, and he made and sold oils - black for bruises and white for sprains, stiffness and rheumatism. The white oils had a very pungent smell, a bit like the present-day embrocation.

If we had a cold or tummy ache we were sent to Gunson's shop because he used to sell some remedies. We would buy half an ounce of sweet nitre and half an ounce of tincture of rhubarb. It was very pleasant to take when when mixed with water. It also helped to ease toothache when mixed with hot water and rubbed on the gums. Dad used to tell of the time when he had toothache - it was about 1900. He knew there wasn't a dentist so he was persuaded to visit Mr Drewery, the blacksmith at North Killingholme. Dad was told to lay on the floor and Mr Drewery, in his leather apron, and a pair of pincers in his hand, was ready. He called for his wife Sarah to sit on Dad's chest and he pulled the tooth out, no antiseptics, just a cup of cold water and then he remarked "by gom, that made me sweat!"

Lots of people in the village kept pigs so there was a pig club and Dad was one of the valuers, which meant that, if a pig died, the valuers had to go and look it over and decide how much it was worth and how much money they could give the owner to help cover his loss. We used to keep two pigs and early in December Mum would order a block of salt, about two stone, and saltpetre. Then the butcher was asked to come and Dad would go to Mrs Hockney's to borrow the pig cratch (a long flat barrow) and tub and also a set of legs or tripod. The first job was to fill the copper with pump water and get it boiling. When the butcher arrived one pig would be let out of the sty and brought up the yard and then stunned with a stun gun. It was then bled and rolled off the cratch into the tub where boiling water was poured onto it. The butcher and Dad then started to scrape off all the hair with special tools like short handled garden hoes. Trotter nails also came off.

Then it was fastened to a pulley and hauled up, head downwards. Then it was cleaned out and left to hang until about four o'clock.

During the day Mum cleaned the 'tharms' and left them in salty water. When the butcher came back the whole carcass was cut up, the hams and flitches (sides of bacon), and the backbone was sawn into about eight pieces. These were called 'chines' and the largest would be stuffed with parsley, etc., and sewn into a white cloth and boiled. This was a special Lincolnshire dish eaten at Whitsuntide. There were lots of small pieces of pork trimmed off and the red meat was made into pork pies, and the pink into sausages. The two large lumps of white were known as 'leaf fat'. These were rendered down and the solid bits were called scraps and the liquid was the lard which was poured into the stone pots, and it lasted for months for pastry making. The pig fries which were given to friends and neighbours were beautiful, and with onions added made a delicious meal, and we always had to tell the recipients not to wash the plate because that was unlucky.

When we lived in the small house Aunt Annie came to help with the pork pies and they were of the best. The sausages came next and everybody had to take a turn at the sausage machine. The pluck was boiled and minced up and with dried fruit and sugar added it was made into mincepies. Lastly the trotters and head were boiled and when the herbs were added it became the most delicious brawn I've ever tasted; it also went through the mincing machine.

On the night when the pig was cut up the salt would have been broken up into powder and the salting board placed in the pantry. Dad would then take the pieces of bacon and ham and rub salt all over them and put saltpetre in the holes where the knuckle bones had been. This was a long job because the meat must be cured properly because it had to last a long time. It lay on the board for three weeks and every morning the brine had to be dried up or the floor would have been flooded. The meat was then hung on hooks in the kitchen ceiling and when it was finally dried out muslin bags were wrapped round it to keep off the dust and any insects. Altogether it took a week to get the pig out of the way, but we enjoyed the ham and the bacon all the year round.

People in the village rarely went away on holiday in those days. If men took time off from work they lost their wages. I can never remember my parents going further than Cleethorpes on the Sunday School trip day. Sometimes we would take a picnic and walk down to the Humber Bank. We could watch the ships sail by and wonder where they came from and what they carried. We could also take off our shoes and stockings if the tide was up and paddle near the stones and the narrow strip of shingle, but if we went too far we sank into thick black mud. It sucked at our feet and it took ages to clean off.

Our Dad worked at the brickyard at Killingholme Haven. It was owned by J.R. Mitchell of Grimsby. Dad was a brick and tile maker and we children were allowed to see how the clay became bricks. In the deep pits men were digging out the special clay. It was put into tubs and pulled up into the yard on a special narrow gauge railway. The clay was then taken into the brick mill where all the 'foreign' bits were extracted. Here it was

kneaded and cut into the exact size and weight. Then the bricks were placed into chesses to dry out. The chesses were open shelves but roofed over to allow air to circulate. When the bricks reached a certain dryness they were moved into a large kiln. Both ends were sealed and the fire was lit. The heat was gradually increased and it took about a week for the bricks to be baked. Each night a man had to 'sit up' with the kiln to keep the temperature even. Towards the end of the week the fires were allowed to die out. When the kiln was opened out the bricks were red hot and the men wore leather hand covers to prevent burning.

Rustic, facing, and common bricks were made at Killingholme Haven and the bricks were taken away by barge from the Haven, or by horse and cart to the surrounding villages. When Immingham was being built the horses and carts had to come through Killingholme village and round by Habrough Church. There wasn't a Manby Road in those days. Mr Hanson was the brickyard foreman in those days, and he and his family were keen violinists and often accompanied choirs in the district.

Harvesting in those far-off days was very different from the present time. When the corn was ripe the farmer would take the scythe and 'open up' the field, then the horse drawn reaper would go in. Now the cutter was a very vicious blade which fell sideways from the reaper. As the horse walked along the cut corn fell in rows on the ground and men came along and with straw bands they gathered the corn into sheaves. The sheaves were then stood upright and about 10 sheaves made a stook. When the corn was dry it was carted in wagons to the stackyard. After the reaper came the binder. [It was then that we had a new word - 'binder-band'.] This was indeed progress. Not only did the binder cut the corn, it also tied up the sheaves with binder-band and shook them off a platform on to the ground. They still had to be put into stooks by the workers. Often farm workers had binder-band tied below the knees and, if asked why, the usual reply was to "keep dust out of the eyes", but the real reason was to stop mice running up their trouser legs in harvest time.

After the binder came the tractor, and from then on the horses were not used so much, maybe for 'muck spreading', but machines had taken over and fewer men were employed on the farms. The fields were made bigger by the removal of hedges so that the motorised implements could move about more easily, but for the birds and small animals it was a disaster and the whole landscape was altered.

Country children quickly learned about cures for ordinary ailments. For nettlerash we made a dash for a dock plant. A dock leaf rubbed on quickly eased the irritation. For frost on the feet a run in bare feet to the bottom of the garden and back, when there was snow on the ground, helped with the cure. A cure for hiccough - drink from the opposite side of the glass. For whooping cough, a small amount of hot tar in a bucket was placed in the bedroom to help with breathing difficulties during the night. I remember having warts on my right hand, all across the knuckles. I was down Dixons Lane with Renie Drewery one day when she said I could get rid of the warts. She took a fat slug from the

roadside, rubbed it across the back of my hand, and then pinned the slug on a thorn in the hedge, and as the slug withered away so did the warts. It really worked.

I still feel a great fondness for the village where I was born, and for a very happy childhood I spent there.

"I remember, I remember the house where I was born,
And the little window where the sun came creeping in at Dawn."

First job

Ann Dale wrote this around the time she entered 'The Dale' Residential Home, Conisbrough, in 1998.

I left school at the end of the Summer Term in 1925. I had reached the top standard several months before, but I had no idea what kind of a job I would get. Because I was good at sewing Aunt Sis wanted me to go as an apprentice dressmaker to someone she knew at Habrough. However, I would have had to 'live in' for six nights a week, and only be at home on a Saturday night. In other words, I would have been doing housework and all the odd jobs as well as sewing, so that was a non-starter.

Then Dad met someone who wanted an 'office girl' on Immingham Docks. I was to be trained to answer the telephone, to learn to type and do the filing. It was a very strange new world to me, and the first time the 'phone rang and a voice asked 'who are you?' I remember saying 'I'm the new girl in the office'.

For the first week my dad rode round at lunchtime, tapped at the window and asked if I was alright. I was the only girl working in our office block or anywhere else on that side of the dock.

The only things I could see from my window were shunting engines and miles of timber pit props, all neatly stacked in different sizes, until they were moved to the coal pits in different parts of the country.

My starting wage was 10/- a week and I gave my mum 5/- and I opened a Post Office Bank account and started to save a little each week.

I had to be at work at 9am and I finished when the buzzer on the power house chimney blew at 5pm. I took a packed lunch and made tea from a kettle which was boiled on the round iron stove that heated the office. During the winter it was a dark lonely ride across the docks estate and back home, but often village men who knew our family would ride alongside me and keep me company.

Sometimes I'd come out of the office only to discover that some joker had tied my bicycle to two or three others. It often took about five minutes to get things sorted out. I never really discovered who did it, but one hot weekend I had my revenge. When I arrived at work one very hot August Bank Holiday Saturday I discovered a fish swimming around in my washbowl. I think whoever had put it there expected me to cry for help but instead I just pulled the plug out. I waited in my office until everyone else had left the block and

then I posted the fish through the letterbox in the office next door for I was sure they were the 'jokers'. It was a very hot weekend and when I returned to work on the Tuesday morning the smell of rotten fish was everywhere. As soon as I entered the outer door it was quite obvious that I'd had my revenge and from that time all the silly tricks ended.

Paragon House

About this time we moved house, just across the village to Paragon House which faced towards Ulceby. In fact when we stood on Ulceby station we could see the chimneys. When we had been to Hull for a day out we kept our eyes on the chimneys as we walked up the long road home.

The house was twice as big as the one we left and I remember that the kitchen had several layers of rotten lino on the floor and it was taken out by shovels. It took a long time to get it shipshape but we all had to work hard and help. There was three times as much garden and lots of fruit trees. We also had a stable for a pony and a large shed with double doors. Someone had had a pony and trap, before us of course. We also had a large pigsty.

In those days before wireless or television were invented, after the indoor chores were finished, we could always give a hand outside, feed the pigs, cut the grass or help in the garden. It was all part of country life. During winter months we had homework for the studious ones and rag rug making, knitting and sewing to keep us occupied. We all gathered in the living room where the large lamp used to stand on the table. It was then we learned to be quiet until the homework was finished. After that we could be as noisy as we wanted to.

There was the stackyard belonging to Elmtree Farm at the bottom of our garden so there were always a lot of birds about looking for a meal. Young George who lived next door to us was a 'dab hand' with an airgun and many times he missed the birds and the pellets went through our sheets. The poor lad, though, was one of the first to be killed in the war at Arnhem and he was only eighteen.

Also in the stackyard were scores of rats and mice and when it was threshing time they came into our garden in droves and we had to use sticks, etc. to kill them or they would have got into the house. If rats got into the pigsty and walked in the feeding trough, the pigs knew and would refuse their meals.

Our garden to the side of the house nearest to the road was never very profitable. It was full of stones, etc. so Dad grassed it down. It meant more grass cutting but less digging. Apparently there had once been a row of cottages on the side called Bedlam Row.

It was customary in the Primitive Methodist Chapel to hold a Camp Meeting during the summer. Three or four local preachers were invited to take part, preferably those with the loudest voices. On the Sunday morning the whole Sunday School with the preachers would tour the village, stop at certain points and sing a hymn and invite people to the open air service in the afternoon. This was usually held in Mr. Chapman's field opposite the chapel. I remember one time the weather was very unsettled and the clouds were getting lower, and blacker, and the hymn we were singing had the line 'And Devils fear

and fly' in it. There came a loud clap of thunder and the rain siled down and everyone left the seats, took their hymnbooks and fled to the shelter of the Chapel.

About this time Dad decided we needed a dog so he bought a small white and tan terrier from the farm next door. We called him Mike and he soon became one of the family. He learned a lot of tricks and he always stood on a chair in the window to watch for us coming home. He hated cats though and one day he chased a small kitten up the holly tree and when it grew tired of his barking it jumped on his back and tore one of his ears quite badly. It certainly got its own back and Mike had to receive first aid treatment inside.

Before setting off for work one morning, I glanced through one of the front windows and there was a strange man running down the road wearing only a shirt. However, I had to get on my bike and go to work and I hoped the man had gone into the far end of the village. There wasn't anyone about on Humber Road, nor on Rosper Road, but when I got to the dock gates he was being detained by a dock policeman and several other men. Apparently he had escaped from somewhere and must have done a four-minute mile to have got so far in the time.

I never did like Rosper Road with its corrugated iron fence and lots of bushes on the docks side and the big drain on the other. There was a small man with very big feet who looked after the drains. His job was to cut away the reeds from the bottom and sides so that the water could flow smoothly. Many times he startled me when he popped his head over the bank and shouted 'Good morning!' He was a bachelor and lodged in the village. His nickname was 'Water Rat Joe', a very suitable name. He wore rubber dykers which reached up to his armpits.

Our Great Uncle Dexter who lived at Ulceby Skitter was planned to preach at Rosper Road Mission one winter's night. He had walked up Ulceby Road, through Killingholme village, down Humber Road, and had got as far as the bridge over the drain when he walked on the wrong side of the fence and finished up in the icy water. He scrambled out and had to turn round and walk all the way home as there wasn't any transport available. No street lights in those days, only the stars to guide you.

Annie Dale

1998