

Bird nesting or collecting birds eggs was done in the spring. We used to walk miles and climb trees etc. I had a good collection when I was a lad, everything from big hawks to the little wren. I wish I still had them now.

Cigarette cards were another craze, most men smoked years ago and all tobacco firms put cards in their cigarette packets. I must have had hundreds at one time. As lads we used to smoke if we could get fags, perhaps two of us would have 1d each and buy a packet of woodbines, five for 2d. We would break one in half and have two and a half each. I never actually smoked in front of my parents until I was eighteen years old. I gave smoking up for lent many times and eventually gave it up altogether about thirty years ago.

As my father worked at Deptford farm owned by Mr Tucker, dad was allowed to grow some potatoes in the field with the farmer's. The potatoes were tilled in drills and one knew which drills were ours, by a stick put in at the end of the drills, or by the different colour of the stalks of the potatoes. I had to help him dig these and bring them home, a good day's work - How my poor back would ache!

We had two bakers in the village who used to make their own bread. Mr Wonacott who used the old type oven where you put in faggots of wood to get it hot, (What a job). Mr Turner the other baker used the coke oven. They both baked their bread in the morning and delivered bread around the village in the afternoon, after which they did a country round with a horse and bread cart, getting back around nine or ten o'clock at night. After a time, Mr Turner's business changed hands to Mr Eddie Owen, who was a baker and confectioner ! His oven was kept going almost all day. I have seen women bring a dish of potatoes with a bit of bacon on the top to the bakehouse to get it cooked for their husband's supper. This would be collected just before their husband came home from work. I think the baker charged about 1d.

The main shop in the village 'Gooding's and Sons' employed a groom - delivery man who took one of the staff out around the countryside with a horse and trap to take orders and the next day delivered the goods.

My brother Albert, who was 12 years older than me, served his four years apprenticeship at Gooding's, as a grocer's assistant. During his first three years at Gooding's he had no pay, just his food, and the last year he had two shillings (20p) a week. Obviously my parents helped him out with pocket money. At work he wore a white coat and a white apron fastened at the waist. Everything in those days was wrapped by hand. Tea, sugar, flour, cheese, lard, meat etc. were purchased in bulk. Every article had to be weighed or cut in 1/2lb or 1lb and wrapped by hand. This was done during shop hours whilst there were no customers. Each article was weighed on a piece of paper with the name of the shop printed on it. When they thought they had enough weighed they would make them into neat packages. Very little string was used and of course there was no sellotape. It was interesting to watch them working, hardly looking to the job they were doing whilst talking to a customer who wanted something wrapped. They sold almost everything one would normally need. Men's boots, ladies shoes, kiddies boots and socks, a large selection of ladies dress material, wool's, as most socks were hand knitted. They also sold petrol,