

## Rose Hip Picking.

During the Second World War when at school, and into the early 1950s we were encouraged to go out into the fields in the autumn, this was to pick as many rose hips as possible, from off the hedge rows and such likes, and for every pound of Hips in weight we were paid three pence, also we were given badges to the ones that had collected the most.

One very tall Home Boy, named Richard Macconachie who lived with Mrs Polly Wooding on the Gayton Road up Camp Hill used to be always being able to pick the most nearly every time, when he took his collection to school, I suppose it was due to his height and reach that had something to do with it, as he did not have the problems that us smaller built people had, we would hand them over every morning at the start of class as they would be weighed up and tipped into large sacks ready to be taken away, along with us getting some money for collecting them, I used to put my money into buying saving stamps for my savings Book, that also took place in morning assembly.

The favourite places for us lads to go collecting these rose hips, was along the side of the tow path along the canal, and railway banks, they were so many of them to pick and at times we had quite a job carrying them back home, due to the weight of them, every spare minute we would be out and about picking them, the hedges on the banks between Bugbrooke Wharf and Jimmy Rainbows Level Crossing were absolutely full of them, also on the bushes and hedges up on Bugbrooke Downs, us smaller boys found it quicker and better to help one another and to share the money from what we had picked, we found that we could pick as many as our elders and at times even more, especially when one held the briers down while someone else picked them, by doing it this way we were to be rewarded by earning more money for our savings.

We would use all sorts of tins with handles upon them, along with Wicker Baskets all shapes and sizes, the best for collecting them in, and anything to make it easier to carry them home, we found that old army Haversacks, or even empty sand bags as they were small and comfortable to carry, we took old walking sticks with us to pull the highest briers down so that we could pick them, and one lad always took a very short ladder with him and his partner while picking these Rose Hips, and they carried them back home using this small ladder like a stretcher, some took small hand carts for it could be quite a burden to get them back home or to school.

It was not only Rose Hips that we were paid for collecting, but Black Berries as well but the rose hips were the most popular one to be picked, as you could earn more money by doing so.

A little of what life was like when a small boy and what we got up to. S.J.Clark.